Interethnic Mothering

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Abstract

The number of interethnic relationships is growing both internationally and in New Zealand. In 2013, nearly one in four New Zealand children between the ages of 0-14 identified with more than one ethnicity, up from one in five in 2006. There are an increasing number of mothers having to negotiate the way they raise their children within an interethnic relationship. It is mothers who largely take the primary responsibility for, and carry out the daily practice of raising children and cultural transmission of both theirs and their partner's background. Traditionally, motherhood, as an institution in patriarchy, was shaped by men's expectations and structures. The scope of this research is to analyse how migrant mothers in interethnic relationships construct their mothering.

This research adds to the body of interethnic mothering knowledge by including perspectives not previously researched in New Zealand. It starts from a migrant mothers' standpoint and inquires how migrant mothers value, negotiate and transmit elements of their ethnic background intergenerationally. It targets specifically the negotiation of mothering in interethnic relationships.

To analyse and interpret the stories of how mothers in interethnic relationships construct their mothering, I used a theoretical triangulation of, feminist, social constructivism and critical theory perspectives. Under this theoretical perspective, the enquiry is presumed to be for mothers, rather than about mothers, it focuses on the construction of the interethnic mothering, and it challenges a status quo defined by patriarchal interpretations of mothering.

I interviewed 16 migrant mothers whose first language is not English to elicit ethnically diverse stories about how they value, negotiate and transmit elements of their ethnic background intergenerationally. I looked at how they negotiated time and changed their priorities when passing different milestones. I recorded how they negotiated their worldview with their partner's worldview and what value they gave to the result of these negotiations. I asked them to describe how the world around them has influenced these negotiations, and how they integrated these negotiations in relation with the world surrounding them.

I used narrative inquiry to analyse mother participants' stories. This methodology allowed them to shape their interethnic mothering from a site of empowerment, and to create validated counter-narratives of mothering against dominant narratives of motherhood. The narrative inquiry emplotment's constitutive elements of initiating action, complicating action, climax, resolution strategies and coda structured the analysis of interethnic mothering negotiations in a congruent story. I analysed how the narrative time dimension affected both mothering and stories about mothering.

Interethnic mothering is subject to the framework of patriarchal motherhood with the added challenge of having to negotiate two master narratives of motherhood in their own construction of mothering. Mothers in my research performed most reproductive activities in their relationship. In reproducing culture, they positioned towards or against mothering master narratives of their countries of birth and of their country of migration. Participants have storied their pursuits of culture reproduction in personalized ways, focusing over three negotiation spaces. These are reproduction of culture through food, reproduction of culture through language and reproduction of culture through education, including the transmission of cultural values.

My research will benefit mothers raising children in interethnic relationships. It also aims to inform practices of health care, education, employment, services delivered by central and local government, the business sector and Non-Governmental Organisations of the diverse reality of interethnic mothering in New Zealand.

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1. Introduction

1.1   Research background

Interethnic relationships through marriages and partnerships, are becoming more and more common worldwide. Internationally and historically, New Zealand has a high intermarriage rate between ethnic groups, with 43,695 interethnic marriages recorded in 2001 (Callister, Didham, & Potter, 2005). The increase in reporting multiple ethnicities is evident in New Zealand's census: from 4.9% of total population in 1991, to 9% in 2001, to 10.4% in 2006, and to 11.2 per cent in 2013. Also, in 2013, nearly one in four, or 23 per cent, of children between the ages of 0-14 identified with more than one ethnicity, up from one in five in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand, 2015).

There is a growing research internationally on interethnic relationships, and researchers have started to address the topic of negotiating parenting within interethnic couples. In New Zealand research has targeted mostly the Māori – Pakeha relationship dynamics (Kukutai, 2007; Gabriele Schafer, 2010). Ip (2008) studied Māori Chinese relationships, focusing on children with mixed Māori -Chinese heritage (Ip, 2008). My research contributes to the body of knowledge of interethnic mothering by addressing an existing gap. Firstly, I start from an immigrant mothers' perspective, how they value, negotiate and transmit intergenerationally elements of their ethnic background. Secondly, I target specifically the negotiation of mothering in interethnic relationships. There is no similar previous research in New Zealand.

Bernard (1981) noted that worldwide, the mother is seen and defined as the 'natural' primary care giver, who is best suited to the acts of mothering (Bernard, 1981). This perception can generate expectations that become the ideal to which mothers aspire, and by which mothers are measured (Bennett, 2007). It is mothers who largely take the primary responsibility for, and carry out the daily practice of children's upbringing,

including the passing on of cultural heritage, even where it isn't their original background (Edwards, Caballero, & Puthussery, 2010). Regardless of their ethnic or cultural background, the disproportionate responsibility of marriage and cultural transmission rests heavily on women who have to negotiate multiple roles and identities (Inman, Altman, Kaduvettoor-Davidson, Carr, & Walker, 2011).

Women enter interethnic relationships with a set of values, a way of doing things, a worldview. They encounter another worldview. In raising children within interethnic relationships, parental ethno theories, aspects related to the use of maternal language, cultural rituals, life events, celebrations, may require a degree of negotiation. Cultural intergenerational learnings are more likely to be questioned, negotiated, revived in their inner strength or abandoned within interethnic couples' context. My research foregrounds mothers' experiences in negotiating their interethnic mothering.

To analyse and interpret the stories of mothers in interethnic relationships I use a theoretical triangulation of social constructivism, feminist and critical perspectives. Bruner (1991) calls social constructivism a world making paradigm. In this paradigm mothers can actively create and recreate mothering to suit their circumstances, rather than accepting a passive role. Therefore, the main objective and effect of applying a social constructivism approach to my research is to displace attention from mothering-as-entity and focus on the methods of constructing interethnic mothering from the perspective of immigrant mothers in New Zealand. The object of critical theory is the human beings (mothers in interethnic relationships) as producers of their own historical form of life (Horkheimer 1993). Critical feminist narrative research is designed to be for research participants (mothers in interethnic relationships) rather than about them and it focalizes the research as such.

1.2 Research question

How mothers in interethnic relationships construct their mothering?

There were five conceptual questions that guided my inquiry towards fulfilling the rationale for the research and responding to the overall research question:

> How do immigrant mothers in New Zealand value, negotiate and transmit intergenerationally elements of their ethnic background?
>
> What elements of their partner's culture do they integrate in their ethnic mothering?
>
> How do they position their mothering in relation with motherhood master narratives from their countries of birth and in relation with New Zealand motherhood master narrative?
>
> How do they reproduce culture (their culture and their partner's culture) in a migration context? What are their resolution strategies?
>
> What changes do they perceive in their mothering as a result of such negotiations?

1.3 Context of the inquiry

These questions were addressed in semi-structured interviews with 16 immigrant mothers in New Zealand. The inclusion criteria were that their first language was not English, to elicit ethnically diverse stories on how they negotiated mothering, and that they had a history of mothering, having mothered a child for at least two years. Participants whose partners were New Zealanders (of Pakeha – Caucasian or Māori descent) were selected. Within semi structured interviews I looked at how they negotiated time, changing priorities when passing different milestones. I recorded how they negotiated their worldview with their partner's worldview and what value they gave to the result of these negotiations. I asked them to describe how the world around them has influenced these

negotiations, and how they have integrated these negotiations in their rapport with the world around them.

1.4 Methodological standpoints

The methodology applied was narrative inquiry. Through narrative inquiry it is acknowledged and assumed that mothers organize their knowledge in stories and analysing the way they produce, organize and tell these stories is of benefit for a deeper understanding of interethnic mothering negotiations they held. Methodological standpoints that guided my research at various degrees were:

- That we live immersed in narrative and we can reconstruct the past, order experience, and construct reality, through telling a story (Bruner, 1990, Polkinghorne, 1998).

- That mothering and storying mothering are contextual, interactional, continuously developing and gendered processes (Crossley, 2000).

- That production and reproduction are gendered. Traditionally performed by women, reproduction, including biological reproduction, has less monetary value (Chodorow, 1978, Waring, 1988).

- That mother's stories develop within or against master narratives of their worlds presented through regulatory capital D discourses (Bamberg, 2013).

- That in New Zealand, motherhood is constructed on a Eurocentric perspective, where models of good mothers stem from white western middle class mothering, and against which immigrant mothering is evaluated (DeSouza, 2011).

- That through mothering, women assert agency to develop counter-narratives, challenging the institution of patriarchal motherhood (Rich, 1976, O'Reilly, 2014).

1.5 Chapter structure

The chapters of the thesis are organized as follows:

Chapter 2: Context – a reflective journey

In chapter two I follow my own interethnic mothering journey, starting with the way I was mothered in my country of birth, Romania. Through my personal journey, I contextualize the space that I inhabited when starting this research. This exploration includes how I internalized and responded to motherhood master narratives from both my country of birth and my country of migration, New Zealand. I give examples of my own stories of negotiating my interethnic relationship, and negotiating values and parental practices with my New Zealand partner of Māori descent, and with New Zealand institutions.

Chapter 3: Literature review

This chapter reviews the existing literature with the scope of describing the framework on which the interethnic mothering research developed. I start with defining mothers from a feminist perspective that recognizes a hierarchical structure of a patriarchal society where production and reproduction are gendered. I distinguish *mothering* as a women site of empowerment from *motherhood* as a patriarchal institution. I define immigrant mothers and describe different challenges their mothering encounters. This chapter also shapes the terminology that my research uses, by assuming definitions of ethnicity, interethnic, and culture. It provides examples of parenting in interethnic relationships and of interethnic mothering from the existing literature.

Chapter 4: Theoretical perspective and methodology

This chapter explains my ontological approach within a Heraclitean ontology of becoming, in which reality is seen in perpetual change, therefore it validates claims to temporal, personalized truths. The epistemology derived from the *becoming* ontology is subjectivism, in which meaning is imposed on the object by the subject. This epistemology allowed me to center my research not on the construction of mothering per se, but on mother's agency in constructing their mothering. I explain how the theoretical triangulation employed (critical theory, social constructivism and feminism) contributed to

a more comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of mothering in interethnic relationships. I show how the methodology used, narrative inquiry, honored mother participants' stories of interethnic mothering, by allowing knowledge to be considered valuable even when owned by only one person, and by acknowledging the situated, partial, contextual and contradictory nature of storytelling. During the analysis, mothers' stories were presented as responses to the particular topic analyzed, which may have fragmented mothers' personal narratives. Therefore this chapter introduces participants' profiles with the scope to enhance the reading's comprehensibility.

Chapters 5-8: Narrative analysis

The analysis is divided into the following four chapters:

Chapter 5: Negotiating Spaces of Cultural Reproduction

This chapter introduces mothers in their role of cultural reproduction. Relevant negotiation spaces are grouped within three sections representing reproduction of culture through food, reproduction of culture through language and reproduction of culture through education, including the transmission of cultural values.

Chapter 6: Time

This chapter anchors the analysis on the *time* dimension, contextualizing interethnic mothering and mother-participants' narratives of interethnic mothering. It presents *Time* as concept, describing how mother narrators structured the time themes in their stories, how they assumed and negotiated control of time or control over time, and how they used time markers to intensify particular stories of interethnic parenting negotiation in their narratives. It presents *Time* as aspect, following the chronology of how mothers enrich their experience, identifying and passing milestones, in their interethnic mothering construction. It distinguishes between *Chronos*, the chronological time, marked through family routines, achieved or expected milestones, anchored in birthdays on a narrative timeline, and expressed by mother-participants in past form (memory) and future (imaginary time), and *Kairos*, the cyclic time of ritual and celebrations.

Chapter 7: Plots of Interethnic Mothering

In this chapter I analyse mothers' stories on how they position within or against motherhood master narratives of their worlds: one from their countries of birth and one from their country of migration. This chapter structures mothers' narratives into meaningful units through plot analyses, grouping stories within plot constitutive elements: Initiating action followed mothers' journey of migration to New Zealand and parenting within interethnic relationships complicated the action. The climax proved to be negotiations mothers held while positioning towards two master narratives of motherhood, one belonging to their countries of birth, and one regulating motherhood in their country of migration. The analysis included mothers' resolutions on these negotiation processes and the final coda presented mothers' storied reflections over their unfolding interethnic mothering.

Chapter 8: Character Mapping

This chapter describes and maps characters that mothers introduced in their interethnic mothering narratives to support revolving plots and to express their positioning towards or against master narratives of motherhood. I show how mothers presented themselves as participants in this research, as narrators of interethnic mothering stories, their own or others, and, within these stories, they unfolded as mother, daughter, partner and many other characters. Other focal characters that mothers brought together in their narratives, and are described in this chapter, are their own mothers, introducing in their mothering narratives of countries of birth, and their partners, often with their families, introducing the otherness.

2. Context of the research – a reflective journey

This chapter follows my mothering journey, from the way I was mothered in my country of birth, to my interethnic mothering in New Zealand. It contextualizes my research position within my personal experiences of migration, of mothering and being mothered and of negotiating interethnic parenting. It presents the significance of this research for my own mothering, for other immigrant mothers parenting in interethnic relationships, and for New Zealand institutions that immigrant mothers are in contact with.

The origins of this research are derived from my own experience of interethnic mothering. I was mothered in a communist Romania, where discourses of power brutally regulated reproduction, through pro-natalist measures including the prohibition of abortion and contraceptives, a celibacy tax, penalties for childless couples, and disincentives for divorce (Rebeleanu, Hărăguș, & Mureșan, 2014). I didn't realize that back then. The way I was mothered and how it shaped my childhood, reproduced around my neighborhoods and communities, was normalized. Equality meant uniformity. Only later, in New Zealand, I heard about the Romanian orphanages full of unwanted children, and that made me re-conceptualize the narratives I had previously. Growing up, what I noticed was the Romanian women's resistance to reproducing biologically. Somehow, despite contraceptives and abortion being illegal, mothers in my urban environment mothered only one or two, rarely three children. I noticed also the commitment to reproduce a traditional culture that was undermined or even prohibited. Throughout the year, mothers would save rationed food items, like sugar, flour or butter to celebrate traditional events, like Christmas or Easter, which were un-legitimized by the communist authorities. I also remember my family driving out of the city in the middle of the night to attend the Christian Orthodox mass, outside of the gaze of political surveillance.

The 1989 Romanian Revolution, which I experienced in my teenage years, brought freedom, and reproductive freedom as well. This freedom, however, was an abstract concept that needed to be negotiated. My mother, women folk, neighborhoods and communities who have mothered me, still held strong to their mothering narratives of

resistance, this time resistance to new ideas of freedom which were threatening their world views. In my traditional Romanian family, getting married and reproducing children and culture, remained the ideal. The stigma of having children outside of marriage was very much present. Not that I wanted to have children anyway. My ideal was to take advantage of a new liberating environment and to pursue a career in mass-media, which I started quite successfully.

The impasse came in 2003, when the pressure of my family to abide to their own narrative, became overwhelming: *"Why you don't marry? All your younger cousins are married, what's wrong with you? Why can't you be normal?"* was the constant refrain. At 28 years old, just after publishing my first book, on the supreme freedom of choice, the vote, I ran away, leaving everything behind (or at least I thought so). Presented with an opportunity to visit good friends in New Zealand, with options to migrate, I basically ran away to reinvent myself in new territories, and to script my stories, as I lived them, in a different language. It seems that my grandmother knew those words charged with the magical power to build one's destiny. These were words saying that you can't escape your fears, that what's written for you, sits on your forehead. So how did my story unfold, how did these words catch up with me?

It could have happened this way:

My exotic looking Māori work colleague and later boyfriend, with long black locks making me feel that I could lose myself in them, with so naturally spoken stories, using words which didn't describe or reconstruct the world, they were the world, told me one day:

"Let's have a child together." I explained him that, being a good Romanian girl, we would have to get married first. He said ok.

Or this way:

My mother, finding out by chance that I was living with a man, phoned me. She said calm, but resolute: *"If things have gone so far, you better come home and get married."* I turned to my boyfriend and said: *"we have to get married."* He said ok.

The story unfolded following a well-known discourse: happy wedding, first child, second child soon after, approving family, and a feeling of self-content: at last I did the right thing, fitting in the narrative I grew up with. I'm still looking for stories to ascertain what freedom did I have, and what agency could I have assumed to express this freedom within an all-compassing powerful narrative? As Eakin (1999) said, *"The individual's experience of selfhood is mediated by available cultural models of identity and of discourses in which they are expressed"* (Eakin, 1999, p. 4).

One thing I did differently, though, I married outside of my culture. Interethnic relationships through marriages and partnerships, are becoming more and more common worldwide. They still account for a minority of all marriages (Stanley O. Gaines, Clark, & Afful, 2015), endogamy (intra-ethnic marriages) being the norm for most ethnic groups. Clark et al. (2015) noted that while all relationships, including the interethnic ones, help build and maintain the self-esteem and sense of belonging of the partners, the most common reason for entering an interethnic relationship is love. There are costs associated with interethnic relationships, such as a real or perceived sacrifice of cultural background. Also, an interethnic relationship requires more investments in terms of time, energy, and effort towards negotiating cultural backgrounds (Clark, Harris, Hasan, Votaw, & Fernandez, 2015).

In the early years of my interethnic marriage, negotiation topics ranged from how to do the dishes to when to put up the Christmas tree. While I deemed them trivial, I was amazed of how much time and effort they required. They announced what was yet to come, negotiation of interethnic parenting spaces, of biological and cultural reproduction, of mediating educational goals and expectations, of consistently re-assessing populated time and space, and negotiating our changed identities while navigating these other negotiations.

Skowroński et al. (2014) recognized that an issue encountered by all marriages is different views on child rearing, resulting in different parenting practices. The tendency to revert to own experiences of growing up poses challenges for interethnic couples to synthetise two different cultural backgrounds into a consistent one in which their child can develop. Also,

one *"tends to presume that their cultural values are representative of the global truth or the way things should be in the world"* (Skowroński et al., 2014), including parenting practices.

Needless to say, my children are the purpose of my life. I wrote this thesis with their voice in the background, interrupted by parenting chores, and often with one of them in my lap. I wrote this thesis while performing two paid jobs, volunteering in my Romanian community and attending my husband's Māori family cultural functions, and I found the journey, while overwhelming sometimes, not conflicting, but smooth and natural, all activities stemming from one goal: contributing to a better world for my children.

Nevertheless, it was not easy. I knew very little about motherhood and mothering in New Zealand. Being the first one in my circle of friends to give birth, I didn't have any models to apply. I started my mothering narrative positioned as an immigrant mother, trying to reproduce the way I was mothered in a New Zealand motherhood context. Migrant mothering is often seen as a threat to the mainstream institutions of motherhood. DeSouza (2011) researched that at stake are:

> *"different conceptions of what constitutes caring, language and communication problems, poor access to appropriate information; barriers to accessing care, cultural competence, tensions between models of care; tensions between professional intervention and family and community involvement"* (DeSouza, 2011, p. 10).

As a consequence, immigrant mothers are often perceived negatively and our cultural needs are often ignored or denigrated.

My experience reflected some of the issues described above. Instead of going to Birthcare classes, I choose to attend Māori Language courses, and, while gratified with excellent results, I know now that it was not a good choice. Birthing caught me totally unprepared, as unprepared as the hospital midwives were in accommodating for such an alien mother as I must have presented to them. I remember being in labour and sent home from the hospital twice, because, despite my pain, I wasn't dilating. At home, my mother would have told me that in our family history, women need specialized assistance to dilate, but I

wasn't at home. Finally, a midwife told me that they couldn't believe that I was in pain, when they saw me arriving at the hospital well dressed, with make up on, and my hair combed; next time better to show the pain of contractions through my appearance. I followed her advice and I arrived to hospital the third time completely disheveled, and finally I was admitted to give birth.

I took my second birth seriously. The midwife was very young, and didn't have children of her own. Nevertheless, she was wonderful in accommodating for my cultural wishes, even my wish of wearing makeup during labour. During the labour's small talk she mentioned that she did not really like children. When my husband and I both asked her in shock if she didn't think she had chosen the wrong job, she replied smiling: *"No, I'm here for the mothers."*

My mothering negotiations with New Zealand's institutions continued through the early years of parenting. One day I took my four year old to the doctor. A lovely elderly Pakeha (New Zealander of European descent) nurse was fussing over him with questions and little checks. She knew me as a patient, but didn't know about my mixed Romanian- Māori family. *"Are you looking after him today?"* she asked. *"What?"* I said confused. *"You are not his mother, are you?"* "Yes, I am", *"No, can't be ..."* she replied. After a couple of minutes filled with silence and more little checks and a bit of notes writing, she turned back to me: *"Is he adopted"?* I have to add here that I wasn't offended by this experience, as others might think. I was just amazed by this sudden new perspective in which my genuine story of interethnic mothering was unimagined in an institutional context.

Later on, it was my decision to send our children to a Kura Kaupapa (Māori full immersion school) attended by their family and I was the one driving four hours a day to make it happen. In turn, my husband attended Romanian functions and church, not necessarily because he enjoyed them, I think he did, but to normalize a way of living as part of their heritage. In time he learnt to love it.

Not easy, but certainly enriching stories of adapting to a new culture, struggling to reconstruct my own culture within the home-space, a culture that was un-legitimized and

invalidated outside of that contained space, followed. They included negotiating food and food practices, school and educational expectations, time and the passing of developmental milestones, proper attire, wearing or not wearing shoes, language, cultural values and celebrations. The negotiations were held not only with narratives of New Zealand, but also with narratives from my country of birth, which followed me throughout my interethnic mothering journey. I will never forget my parent's big shocked eyes when I showed them proudly my husband's heritage in a video where his family was performing a haka on the stage. A long silence followed. In turn, my husband's family was mesmerized by my literally embracing and my loud Romanian family. In time, our parents followed our journey of transformational parenting, and like us, they learnt to love it.

Through this research I wanted to validate my interethnic mothering experiences, through listening to similar experiences of immigrant mothers negotiating parental practices, culture, values and traditions within interethnic relationships. I've encountered similar, but also different, sometimes opposing stories. These experiences, and the richness of applicable resolution strategies mother-participants have shared with me for the purpose of this research, benefited my mothering. While I contest the patriarchal motherhood definition of the good mother, I realize that through listening and analyzing counter-narratives of interethnic mothering, I truly became a better mother.

New Zealand has had historically high rates of intermarriage across both ethnic divides. In 2014, 23 percent of births registered belonged to two ethnic groups, and 4 percent belonged to three or more ethnic groups. Just over half as many mothers (14 per cent) as babies (26 per cent) identified with more than one ethnic group (Chen, 2016).

My first thoughts are for mother-participants in this research, I hope that the experience of telling their story and then of reading it alongside other stories of interethnic mothering is of benefit for them, first and foremost. I hope that the increasing number of mothers performing mothering in territories of immigration and in interethnic relationships, will find themselves within these stories, and that they can use these stories beneficially in their own histories of interethnic mothering. Health agencies, governmental and

nongovernmental organizations in contact with mothers in interethnic relationships may use the results of my research within their cultural processes. Other stakeholders that may benefit from this research are schools, social workers, ethnic community organizations, churches and community centers.

In this chapter I reflected on my personal experiences of being mothered and mothering in an interethnic relationship and I contextualized these experiences in the time and space where they happened. I described my personal interest in the research topic and my subjectivity in formulating the research process.

3. Literature Review

This chapter presents definitions of mother and mother's role from a feminist perspective, where mothering is reproduced intergenerationally and performed against a patriarchal motherhood ideology. Within the limitations of this ideology, mothers not only reproduce biologically, but they reproduce culture. Challenges of migrant mothering include conflictual models of *good mothers* as reproduced intergenerationally, and models of the *good mother* pressed by the nation where they mother.

My pursuit considers definitions of ethnicity, interethnic and culture, and describes the concept of parental ethnotheories to differentiate amongst different mothering common ground expectations. I review research on interethnic relationships and interethnic negotiation of parental ethnotheories, looking for conflict spaces and resolution strategies these mothers used.

My approach stemmed from an empowered mothering perspective, as defined by O'Reilly, a perspective which recognizes that both mothers and children benefit when the mother practices mothering from a position of agency, authority, authenticity and autonomy. From this perspective, mothering can effect social change (O'Reilly, 2006). Hirsch (1981) declared that to know the mother, we have to begin with her story. Therefore, in my pursuit of researching interethnic mothering, I looked for mothers' voices *"in all their rhythms and ranges"* (Ostman, 2010).

3.1 Defining mothers

For the purpose of this research, defining mothers, motherhood and mothering was situated in a feminist context. It placed the definition of *mother* in a society seen as patriarchal, within a hierarchical structure, considered oppressive.

Who am I? and who's telling my story … I am more and more the mother of two Romanian – Māori boys, recognised and celebrated for their unique identity by families on two sides

of the world. Between "*I love you mommy*" and "*I'm not your best friend anymore*", I measure their words, trying to construct their world and my role in their world. When I pick them up from Te Puna Reo (Māori Kindergarten), other children are greeting me with "*Kia Ora, X and Y's mum*", "*X, it's your mommy*!" One evening, my three year old tried to convince me to join in their boys' fighting game. I told him *"But darling, I am a lady, I can't fight."* *"You're not a lady, you are a mommy!"* came the answer.

Rich (1976) wrote that *"most of us first knew love and disappointment, power and tenderness, in the person of a woman"* (Rich, 1976, p. 11). Chodorow (1978) followed the argument affirming that women mother, and mothering implies not only, and not necessarily, the act of giving birth to children, but to take primary responsibility for the care of these children, offering physical, also emotional sustenance. In most societies, women, more than men, invest most time and effort to care for children. Women mother not only as a *"biological inevitability"* (Chodorow, 1978, p. 31) but because they've been trained to mother, mothering being reproduced intergenerationally:

> *"Women's mothering, like other aspects of gender activity, is a product of feminine role training and role identification. Girls are taught to be mothers, trained for nurturance, and told that they ought to mother. They are wrapped in pink blankets, given dolls and have their brothers' trucks taken away, learn that being a girl is not as good as being a boy…They "identify" with their own mothers as they grow up, and this identification produces the girl as a mother… Girls choose to do "girl-things" and "women - things" like mothering as a result of learning that they are girls"* (Chodorow, 1978, p. 31).

I am a mother and mothering is my role (or one of my roles). This role gives me a social position which is part of a social structure acknowledged and understood by those around me and by the institutions I am in contact with, like schools, health providers, and others (White, 2005). My role guides me through a comprehensive pattern of behaviour that is socially recognized, providing a means of identifying and placing myself in a society. It gives me a strategy for coping with recurrent situations and dealing with the roles of others (White, 2005).

Mothering is an act of love; through assigning mothering to women, mothering work entails less economic value than other activities, Chodorow (1978) considered. Mothering happens mostly in private spaces, and is less visible. The economic assessment of mothering is paradoxically regulated within a patriarchal society. When the skills, effort and energy women invest in their mothering are transferred in the public world of men, they are assessed as bringing economic benefit. My children being cared for and educated in public spaces such as day-care or school – by mostly women – is paid work and it brings economic benefits to society. Providing exactly the same care and education (arguably better) to my children at home is not paid work, therefore it doesn't bring any economic benefit (Waring, 1988). Despite the discriminating contradictions in assessing work, this is a reality largely accepted, perpetually reinforced and reproduced:

> *"Parenting, as an unpaid occupation outside the world of public power, entails lower status, less power, and less control of resources than paid work. Women's mothering reinforces and perpetuates women's relative powerlessness"* (Chodorow, 1978, p. 31).

The word *'role'* is borrowed from theatrical usage, and it keeps the distinction between the actor and the part. I do what is expected of me, but I do it my way. A role remains relatively stable even though different people occupy the position: mothers are expected to behave in a particular way. Certain mothers may have certain styles, but these variations are exhibited within the boundaries of the expected behavior.

Role expectations include both actions and qualities. Kotre (2000) distributed the actions of the role of mothers over four concurrent dimensions: the biological dimension in which, for example, I give birth, the parental one where I raise my children, the technical dimension in which I teach them necessary skills, and the cultural one, which consists in passing on a meaning system. On achieving these actions, mothers are expected to be loving, informed, responsible, and resourceful. They are expected to enjoy the process all along. Being a mother goes further to that next emotional level, a participant in Pedersen's (2012) study of defining *the good mother* declared:

"I think there's more expectations put on mom. "Parent" is just kind of general, maybe providing some of the necessities. But I think that "mom" is looked at more for the nurturing and the support … cooking dinner and holding the family together. I think there is a lot more pressure on mom. I think that you see … that it is hard for mom to juggle some of the demands on her because there is more responsibility, versus dad. Being a mother goes to that next emotional level. I would expect something more from a mother than a parent. I think if your family falls apart, then they look at mom and say "it's your fault." (Pedersen, 2012, p. 236).

Concerned with an alternative framework to the reproductive labour that mothering entices, Ruddick introduced the concept of maternal thinking (Ruddick, 1989). Maternal thinking includes the cognitive capacities, metaphysical attitudes, criteria of truth and conceptions of virtue involved in the maternal practices:

"mothering is a conscious activity that calls for choices, daily decisions and a continuing, alert reflectiveness that may seem so ordinary as to be unnoticeable but that is fully as challenging and important as more ''elevated'' forms of thinking" (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 17).

Maternal thinking evolves through responses to the many layered gaze of the other, stemming from the mother's own family, or from people who control resources and opportunities, *"who exclude some, include others, often openly enforcing racial and social arrogance"* (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 30). This requires negotiations with institutions inseparable from mothering practices, such as schools, clinics, hospitals, community places, public libraries:

"A mother's relationships with these authorities, who exert considerable power in her children's lives, will likely require of her psychological strength and social skill. Ideally, a mother complies with rules that are harmless, resists those that harm, and learns to tell the difference. She remains loyal to her child but listens to the teacher, therapist, or doctor who sees her child clearly and kindly. Most important, she learns to fight productively on her child's behalf despite the temptation to walk

away or scream and curse. Her ongoing efforts to create or preserve relationships
outside the family are not seen as mothering, though they may be as necessary for
a struggling older child as food is for a hungry infant" (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 20).

I am a mother. I am also a daughter, a wife, an employee, a PHD student, a neighbor, a citizen. I am like other individuals, occupying several positions, performing several roles in a society, which may or may not be compatible with one another. Each role entails certain obligations, duties, privileges, and rights in regards to other individuals. Sometimes the roles I perform are convergent, sometimes they diverge and demand a degree of negotiation (White, 2005).

Mother's role definitions are subject to evolving ideologies on what constitutes good and bad mothering. Hays talked about *Intensive motherhood*, a dominant mothering ideology of our culture in which mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture and development of the *sacred child* and in which children's needs take precedence over the individual needs of their mothers (Hays, 1996).

O'Reilly (2004) described the *sacrificial motherhood,* through which the role of mother takes over any other roles a woman may envisage and overwhelms different goals and aspirations, focusing effort, energy and resources towards the only suitable goal of mothering. Through this process, mothers relinquish power to expertise situated outside of the private space of mothering, and are expected to embrace its control and regulations:

> *"children can only be properly cared for by the biological mother, mothering must*
> *be provided 24/7, the mother must always put children's needs before her own,*
> *mothers must turn to experts for instructions, the mother is fully satisfied, fulfilled,*
> *completed, and composed in motherhood, and, finally, mothers must lavish*
> *excessive amounts of time, energy and money in the rearing of their children"*
> (O'Reilly, 2004, p. 14).

This is an ideal impossible to attain, which means continuous struggle for mothers, intensified by internalized feelings of recrimination, anxiety and guilt for not being *the*

good mother a society demands (O'Reilly, 2004). It is to be remembered that even without ideological pressure and patriarchal models of *good* and *bad mothers*, mothering itself *"is a challenging endeavour, regardless of the circumstances, resources and support for the undertaking"* (Mullings & Mullings-Lewis, 2013, p. 105).

3.2 Motherhood and mothering

In Rich's analysis of motherhood as an institution in patriarchy, mothering is a women's experience that is shaped by men's expectations and structures and virtually unrecorded by women themselves (Rich, 1976). Patriarchal Motherhood is socio-historically specific and constructed based on the ideals of a given culture and society. DeSouza (2011) stressed that mothering, which is *"the maternal work of being a mother and meeting the needs of and being responsible for dependent children"* (DeSouza, 2011, p. 3), occurs in the context of motherhood which is moulded by the society's historical, political, cultural, and moral discourses.

While currently *"we live in an era of contested motherhood ideologies"* (Johnston & Swanson, 2006, p. 509), definitions and roles, preponderantly Western representations of motherhood shape *"what we perceive as normative or appropriate through social and cultural institutions"* (Beatson, 2013, p. 74).

Within this patriarchal Westernized perspective, *"motherhood is a political status where women become incorporated into the political order through their capacity of reproducing the nation"* (DeSouza, 2011, p. 75). This fact transfers mothering from the private space to the public space where it is subject to regulations. Thus the imaginings of the *'good mother'* cover only the mothering activities socially approved within the state-nation where they happen, neglecting to acknowledge migrant models of '*good mothers'* instilled in other places:

> *"Normative patriarchal motherhood assumes that a mother is participating in the process of "mothering for a nation" and has been mothered within this nation. Therefore, women who have conflicting associations with their understandings of*

"home" are faced with another set of barriers in their roles as mothers as well as in their alignment with the "good" mother. The process of migration whereby mothers are no longer closely associated with their immediate family, culture, and community presents an isolating process for them" (Beatson, 2013, p. 75).

Rich (1976) distinguished *mothering* from *motherhood* where mothering stems from women's own experiences of reproduction and childrearing. While motherhood is male-defined, mothering is women defined. Mothering, thus, can be assumed as a site of empowerment where mothers' (including immigrant mothers) counter narratives of reproduction and child-rearing are being developed.

3.3 Production and reproduction

Traditionally, production and reproduction are gendered, with production covering the male-sphere activities, and reproduction the women's sphere activities. Care, regeneration and reproduction are mostly performed by women, to a degree where women are defined by these activities. Bernard (1981) affirmed that:

"Since the female contribution to the reproductive process is so much greater than the male contribution in terms of time and vital energy invested in it, reproduction comes to be viewed exclusively as a female function. Women come to be seen almost exclusively in their reproductive function. Their world is shaped with this perspective in mind" (p. 165).

Reproduction is a vital part of the economic system:

"In the case of mothering, the economic system has depended for its reproduction on women's reproduction of particular forms of labour power in the family" (Chodorow, 1978, p. 35).

However, reproduction, traditionally performed by women, happens mostly in the private space, and it is not acknowledged and rewarded in the public sphere.

Reproduction is not only biological. Walks (2011) affirmed that from an anthropological perspective,

> *"social aspects of mothering include, but are not limited to, everyday tasks such as being responsible for children's nutrition, health, education, spiritual development and language learning"* (p. 5).

Through these tasks, mothering involves cultural reproduction. Rapp and Ginsburg (1991) have insisted in acknowledging mother's role in cultural reproduction, within the complex social arrangements within which the children are born and socialized and where positions, rights and values are negotiated.

3.4 Immigrant mothers

Beatson (2013) commented that immigrant women face different challenges under patriarchal motherhood. They are presented with conflicting definitions of *mothering* *"while negotiating their experiences from being mothered in a different culture and how to mother for a "new" nation"* (Beatson, 2013, p. 74). They are transitional mothers, Maatita (2013) researched, analyzing how she has been mothered by an immigrant mother, *'transitional mama'* (Maatita, 2013, p. 43), and stressing immigrant mothers' work in weaving their ethnic identity with new ethnic identities.

In New Zealand, DeSouza (2011) argued, motherhood is strongly constructed on a Eurocentric perspective, where models of good mothers stem from white western middle class mothering, and against which other mothering is evaluated. In this context, DeSouza (2011) continued, migrant mothering constitutes a threat to the status-quo, imposed upon mothers by the liberal and neo-liberal discourses of motherhood.

Yax-Fraser (2011), in her research about migrant mothering in Canada, found that even in multicultural societies (in which immigrants' integration goals are promoted as a two way process of adjustment, on the part of immigrant mothers and the host society) there are normative expectations of uniformity and conformity:

"these mothers in their particular circumstances, inhabiting borderline spaces and living and operating in a diaspora space, exercise their agency in asserting what constitutes desirable integration and notions of home and belonging, in asserting and reconstructing their identity, in negotiating their mothering and parenting practices and in negotiating and transmitting important cultural values to their children" (Yax-Fraser, 2011, p. 252).

Mother-participants in Yax-Fraser's (2011) study responded differently to these expectations. Some conformed, assuming that their immigrant status involved raising their children to integrate within the mainstream culture of the host society, and keeping their ethnic cultural values within the private space of the family. Some argued that they should be allowed to *"be your culture, because that is who you are"* (Yax-Fraser, 2011, p. 255) in the private and the public space where they perform mothering. Generally, mothering in migration territories was assumed to be more challenging than mothering in the country of birth, and more labour intensive, because of the need of continuously negotiating cultures and the reproduction work of transmitting values and parenting frameworks.

In this reproduction work, immigrant mothers are distanced from their extended family and networks of support, found Foster (Foster, 2013), in her study researching Caribbean immigrant mothering in Trinidad and Tobago. Other research has reported that immigrant mothers feel a sense of loneliness and homesickness during this period of intense emotion, where family support is particularly needed in their lives. Nabeshima (2005) noted that new Japanese mothers missed their family, and particularly their own mothers, during their parenting years. Their mothers would have been helpful in the caring for the child and would have loved to see their grandchild. The distance is augmented by the new home-land experienced as unfamiliar and presenting foreign markers of mothering.

On the other hand, Dariusz et al. (2014) found that immigrant mothers, through childrearing practices, catch a glimpse into the past, reliving memories of their own childhood and re-evaluating their past experiences. Therefore, Kuroczycka Schultes (2016) considered that immigrant mothers are under the pressure of conflicting ideals of the new

ideology of motherhood encountered in the space where they mother and the demands of global migration. This places immigrant mothers *"in a precarious position: whether to 'perform' motherhood based on the cultural norms of the host country of whether to abide by their own definitions of motherhood"* (Kuroczycka-Schultes, 2016, p. 174). In this context, immigrant mothers have to negotiate continuously their mothering, between cultural norms of their country of birth and cultural norms of their country of migration.

3.5 Ethnicity, interethnic and culture

In my research, I use the Statistics New Zealand (2007) definition for ethnicity, where ethnicity is the ethnic group or groups that people identify with or feel they belong to. From this perspective, ethnicity is a measure of cultural affiliation, as opposed to race, ancestry, nationality or citizenship. Ethnicity is defined as self-perceived. Mother participants would be cognizant of their cultural distinctiveness in contrast with their partners, as belonging to two different groups, each of these groups sharing some or all of the following characteristics:

- a common proper name,

- one or more elements of common culture which need not to be specified, but may include religion, customs, or language,

- unique community of interest, feelings and actions,

- a shared sense of common origin or ancestry, and

- a common geographic origin.

In their belonging to their ethnic groups, mothers experience a sense of *people-hood* resulting from a combination of race, religion, geography, and cultural history (Frame, 2004).

The term *'Interethnic relationships'* is often used interchangeably with intercultural and interracial relationships, and is sometimes referred to as '*inter-married', 'intermixing' or 'heterogamy'* by researchers and in popular culture (Luke, 2003; Seshadri & Knudson-

Martin, 2013). Other terms used are cross-cultural marriages (or relationships), transcultural families, and cross-ethnic intermarriages, in slightly different, yet largely overlapping ways. In this research, interethnic is seen synonymous with intercultural, but broader than interracial. Although partners in an interethnic relationship may have different racial backgrounds, what makes their relationship interethnic is that it is described by greater differences between the partners in a wider variation of areas, including race, religion, constraining culture and national origin (Silva, Campbell, & Wright, 2012). A single ethnicity may include individuals of different races, brought together by historical influences.

Bolaffi (2003) cited Max Weber's distinction between the concepts of race, ethnicity and nation, and saw the first as being founded on the community of origin, the second on a subjective belief in shared origins and the third as characterized by a more intense political 'passion'. In this distinction, ethnic groups are groups of humans who have a subjective belief in shared origins, a belief which is founded on a similarity of habits, customs and a shared history.

Ethnic groups assert the existence of an '*us*', which belongs to a common identity different from '*them*', the concept of 'other'. In the process of assuming '*us*', the group is mirrored by the *other's* perception through more or less comprehensible stereotypes ascribed to the ethnic group in question (Bolaffi, 2003).

The use of the term interethnic in my research is in congruence with Bystydzienski's (2011) perspective, in which 'ethnicity' is often used synonymously with 'culture'. It refers to shared beliefs and patterns of behavior including a perceived common ancestry, an assumed shared historical past, and symbolic elements such as kinships patterns or nationality, as well as a consciousness of kind among members of the group (Bystydzienski, 2011, p.5). For the purpose of this research, ethnicity and culture will be used interchangeably.

Culture is practices, values and traditions one absorbs from the environment. The cultures of all people change, and it is assumed that both partners in interethnic relationships may have forgone cultural changes to accommodate for their partner, but in ways that

maintain an underlying cultural core, preserving their anchor values and ideas (Frame, 2004). From a sociological perspective, culture is *"the way of life of a group of people"* (Kidd, 2002, p.5), including the dominant values of a society, shared linguistic symbols, religious beliefs, what is considered to be the correct way for people to behave in their day-to-day lives, what is considered to be the highest intellectual and artistic achievements of a group, from science, to art, literature, music, arts and so on, formal behavioral traditions and rituals. Culture gives us rules by which to live our lives. Culture is a map of meaning that we carry around inside us, created by interactions with others. Culture creates the world we live in. It allows us to interpret our own actions and the actions of others. Culture allows us to interact with others, to share common meanings, patterns of behavior and ways of communicating (Kidd, 2002).

The passing on of a culture involves norms (culturally patented patterns of behavior) and values (the ends that 'normal' behavioral patterns attempt to achieve) (Kidd, 2002). Values are described by Gaines et al. (1997) as both features of the world towards which people are oriented and features of people that govern their orientation to the world. Kağıtçıbaşı (2007) acknowledged that different ethnicities with different values organize different parental theories and their expression in the organization of daily life settings and customs of childrearing.

3.6 Parenting in interethnic relationships

The literature on parenting within interethnic relationships presents two dichotomous approaches, a divergent and a convergent one. The divergent one focuses on two different, arguably conflicting cultures, competing for supremacy in regulating the parenting environment. The convergent one engages both cultures in creating a new space, in which original parenting values and practices are brought together, sometimes transformed, to create an inclusive third culture. While culture is broader than ethnicity, I narrowed the selection of examples to highlight the interethnic perspective of these approaches.

Within a divergent approach, cultural values provide individuals within ethnic groups with particular ways of viewing the world as well as expectations regarding individual's behaviour in a variety of social contexts (Duck, 1994). Mothers enter interethnic relationships with a set of values, a way of doing things, a world view. They encounter another worldview. In the process, everything has to be negotiated. The transition to parenthood for interethnic couples brings another dimension, which is negotiating different parental values and practices. In raising children, parents tend to revert to parenting models learned as children themselves in their respective countries of origin and these approaches may be quite different and conflicting (Perel, 2000).

Skowronski et al. (2014) argued that *"one tends to presume that their cultural values are representative of the global truth or the way things should be in the world"* (p. 346); therefore, within interethnic relationships, these assumed perspectives are likely to generate intimate negotiation processes.

In a study of relationship satisfaction of interethnic Mexican American and non-Hispanic White American interethnic couples, Negy and Snyder (2000) found that interethnic couples expressed significantly higher parenting distress. The causes were motivated by experiencing unique difficulties such as ambivalence over performed ethnic identity, but also conflicting parenting roles and expectations.

Parenting styles may also clash as a result of cultural differences (Frame, 2004, p. 224). Arguments over parenting may be linked to fundamental differences in beliefs, values and philosophies which the parents had not resolved prior to becoming parents. When two parents have been raised in different cultures, discussions concerning issues such as parenting roles, parent-child relationships, feeding, sleeping, disciplining and education may be sources of conflict (Nabeshima, 2005).

Complexities around *'difference'* can be at once both affirming and alienating, and go to the very heart of each partner's identity and the new or the third space identity that the couple attempts to craft (Luke, 2003). Translated in parenting terms, an equal split in the exposure to both parent's cultures will not be sufficient enough (Perel, 2000), one parent having to accommodate for the child to be raised in the culture of his or her spouse in

various aspects of child raising such as parenting roles, parent-child relationship, feeding, sleeping, discipline, education, and others (Dariusz et al., 2014).

To transgress differences, parents in interethnic relationships build bridges from a cultural *'us'* to a cultural *'them'*. In an Australian study on interethnic families, many of the men and women of European Australian and Indo-Asian descent rejected their *'own kind'* and claimed to identify more strongly with the culture of their partner:

> *"It's difficult to explain but I do feel that Chinese way of feeling from being with Charles [husband] and more so with his mum. I want our daughter to be able to speak Mandarin so she can go back to China and stay with relatives. She'll have a big family in China, much bigger than my family"* reported an Australian-born and raised mother (Luke, 2003, p.393).

Parents in Luke's study (2003) went to great lengths to support their children in acquiring the first language of one of their parents by teaching them at home or enrolling them in after school language programmes offered within churches or ethnic community centers. Driving children to language classes after school or on Saturdays, in addition to the many school-related events and activities, was part of families' everyday routines. A few parents had sent their teenage children to study abroad for a school term or vacation period in order to improve their language skills. Most parents considered some fluency in the native language of the non-Australian-descent partner important because it facilitated communication and relationships with grandparents and extended family back home (Luke, 2003).

However, there are different concerns and fears that go along with raising one's child in a culture that is not of his or her origin. These concerns develop into feelings of hesitation and reluctance when it comes to accommodating the other parent's values and practices, leading to marital conflict. Dariusz et al (2014) noted that one such fear is that the child that is brought up in a different culture or religion, with different growing up experiences, might alienate his or her parent. The parent must then learn to transmit a culture or language, in some cases, that they themselves may not be completely familiar with to their child (Dariusz et al., 2014).

Crossing the ethnic line positions a network of immediate and extended family members into a spectrum ranging from approval and support to hostility. Couples researched by Luke (2003) received cautionary warnings:

> *"They were worried about the children and how the children would be accepted and how we would be accepted as a couple. I had an aunty who wouldn't attend the wedding (Anglo-Australian woman married to a man from mainland China)"* (Luke, 2003, p. 392).

The findings above should be regarded in their temporality. Within a convergent approach, culture, and redefining oneself in a particular culture, is never either black or white, *them* or *us*, but a fluid and malleable *"alterity – a fused interiority/exteriority of otherness that inhabits my 'interior' sense of self, how I see others, how others see me and how I see others see me"* (Luke, 2003, p.394). Take for example bilingualism: in the interethnic families, members are using mixed words, phrases and sentences that make up a family's 'insider language': childhood phrases, the naming of foods, events or activities, greetings, non-translatable concepts . Cultural and linguistic blending is an ongoing process, influenced by its *"diasporic hybridity, insider/outsider perspective and the politics of othering at the level of the subject in its most intimate habitat: relations with partners, parents, children, in laws and extended family"* (Luke, 2003, p.394).

While the literature was primarily selected to support the argument of ethnically bound parenting negotiations, it is evident that cultural, temporal and spatial factors, plus the complexity of the interrelation matrix, play an inevitable role in negotiating parenting within interethnic relationships.

3.7 Parenting ethnotheories

The *parental ethnotheories* concept brings the child rearing practices closer to the cultural context in which they formalize (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002).

Parenting ethnotheories are parental beliefs and attitudes which are regarded as filters through which a child's behavior is culturally tuned (Keller, 2007, p. 109). They include practices concerning the suitable way to raise a child, from providing affection and warmth, an agenda for feeding and weaning, a developmental agenda (when a child should walk, talk, be toilet trained) (Hall, 2005), to cultural events to acknowledge the passing of developmental milestones.

Parenting ethnotheories represent an organized set of ideas that are shared by members of a cultural group. Keller (2007) described ethnotheories as publicly patented and historically reproduced symbolic practices that are available to members of a cultural community, which they use to make sense of their environment (Keller, 2007). They are translated in recognized norms, explicit or sometimes implicit ideas about what is right and wrong in raising children (Keller, 2007). Parents raise children in a certain way, encouraging them to follow a certain developmental pathway following organically ingrained parental ethnotheories, often without realizing (Berry et al., 2002).

Different aspects of development come together in the notion of parental ethnotheories:

> *"First, the parents are observers of their own children and those in their social environment. Second, parents likely reflect the standards and expectations of the cultural environment they live in, not only in their treatment of children, but also in their perceptions. Third, parents and other caretakers will influence the development of children through socialization practices that reflect their beliefs"*(Berry et al., 2002, p.38).

There are many examples of how parental ethnotheories evolve in particular cultures, influence childrearing practices and, through this process, reinforce those particular cultures. A study mentioned by Barry, Poortinga et al. (2002), shows that different parental ethnotheories determine different children's sleeping routines: Dutch parents believe that children do need more sleep for their growth and development; if children do not get enough sleep, they will become fussy. USA parents believe that every child will develop a sleeping routine, at their own pace, and forcing them into an early routine will harm, rather than help the child. US children were observed to be in a state of *"active*

alertness" and the explanation was that US mothers speak more to their children and touch them more. Dutch children were observed to be in a state of *"quiet arousal"* because the Dutch parental ethnotheory encourages children to organize their own behavior and keep themselves busy, in order to become independent later in life (Berry et al., 2002).

In studies presented by Shiraev & Levy (2010), Japanese mothers generally viewed the autonomy of their children as their ability to interact with other children. In contrast, for Israeli mothers, children's autonomy is attained by the ability to perform in certain tasks, like answering the phone and setting up the table (Shiraev & Levy, 2010). Once a belief becomes a societal norm against which society members are being measured, that norm is likely passed from that generation to the next. Traditional African cultures value obedience and instill it into their children's expected behavior, as a safety measure of survival in harsh living conditions. Obedience is critically viewed in Western societies, which condemn most forms of adult-child coercion (Shiraev & Levy, 2010).

The examples presented above are generic, and generalized. I argue that within each parental ethnotheory there are variations, parents positioning themselves on a changeable continuum, compliant or oppositional to what that parental model defines as good and bad parenting. Within the context of my research I drew from these examples in which ethnic groups refer to a common ground to define parenting, while acknowledging that, within interethnic relationships, this common ground may be different for the partners.

This research doesn't aim to research particular ethnotheories used by mothers in interethnic relationships in New Zealand. The answers sought by the research questions aim to establish if mother participants register different parental ethnotheories in their interethnic relationships, and if they do, how they negotiate the difference with their partners.

3.8 Interethnic mothering

Mothering is shaped by the cultural values embedded in mother's evolution (both individual and social) as a human being. Culture is:

> *"a system of solutions to unlearned problems, as well as of learned problems and their solutions, acquired by members of a recognizable group and shared by them"* (Ullman, 1965, p. 5).

> Values are *"both features of the world towards which people are oriented and … features of people that govern their orientation to the world"* (M. B. Smith, 1991, p. 5).

Ling is a Chinese mother married to Howard, a white British man. She mirrored a world where competition differentiates between success and failure:

> "*In China we work very hard to reach a higher aim in life, but Howard's much more laid back. So the school is not a competitive school, but the world is a competitive world, so you need to prepare yourself to face that kind of thing"* (Edwards et al., 2010, p. 962).

The mothering she's constructing reflects her culture's values and practices, perceived as tools for success, as points of reference.

Remennick (2009), in her study of Russian immigrants married to Israeli, explored what factors her Russian mother participants consider important for their children's healthy upbringing. These are physical nourishment (food), educational achievement (as a result of cutting down on leisure time), and family support - relations with extended family, notably grandparents. Their children's appropriate response to the world should be defined by politeness and good manners, respect for adults, being subdued in expression of anger and protest, avoiding violent conflict with peers, and motivating them for learning. This is in contrast with what Israeli fathers in the study pictured for their children, as one participant confessed:

"I think that pressing children to finish their food and say thank you every ten minutes can do more harm than good. For me more important is to encourage independence and free expression of opinion" (Remennick, 2009, p. 735).

A conflicting issue in childrearing practices was the central place children held in the Israeli style parent-children relations, and the freedom children had to pursue their own interests. This contrasted Russian mothers' childrearing principles *"based on setting clear goals and limits, respect for age and social distance, reasonable discipline, and investment in the studies and future career"* (Remennick, 2009, p. 730).

Cultural values provide individuals within ethnic groups with particular ways of viewing the world as well as expectations regarding individual's behaviour in a variety of social contexts (Duck, 1994). Research showed that sometimes mothers felt that it was their duty to change their view on life, to adapt to a new environment and to raise children who would reflect their father's environment, so the family they married into will cherish them.

In an intercultural context, cultural identity is a matter of "*becoming*" as well as "*being*" (Choudhry, 2010). To construct appropriate reflections of the world for their children with multi-ethnic backgrounds means more than just communication, negotiation and compromise. One needs to see the world from the other's perspective as well, to *"put yourself in the other's shoes"*, advised Jenny (mother from Timaru, in an interethnic relationship (Phillips, 1988, p. 135).

Spouses in Remennick's (2009) study, either immigrants or native, felt that it was part of their gender role to accommodate the needs of their husbands in keeping their family ties. To cite one Israeli born wife, *"I knew that when I married Oleg, I also married all his Russian family… Marriage is a package deal - take it or drop it"* (Remennick, 2009, p. 732). Quite a few Russian wives (but not the husbands) perceived their deference to the social and cultural imperative of their Hebrew milieu as an inevitable price to pay for making their marriage work.

In a New Zealand context, Schafer (2010), studying intercultural couples, noted that:

"some female Māori participants were prepared to sacrifice their cultural identifications for their Pakeha husbands whereas Pakeha women supported their Māori husbands to the degree of total commitment" (p. 18).

One of the study's participants considered that:

"for me as a Māori woman, (I) was brought up to believe that if you went into a relationship then you were there until the time you died, and whatever happened in that relationship, you both had to agree that it was up to the woman to follow the man" (p. 15).

Kukutai (2007) also talked about the readiness of European mothers to identify their child as Māori, underscoring their role in diffusing Māori ethnicity.

Certainly, navigating between worlds presents difficulties. Building a shield to reflect the world as perceived by a mother in her cultural "*becoming*" may leave regrets *"Maybe I gave up too easily on who I was, trying to fit into my husband's life and family circle... As a result, our kids will miss their Russian side and won't even know what they are missing"* (Remennick, 2009, p. 733); it may create dilemmas: *"How do you deal with keeping the importance of Diwali and putting all these things together"* (Inman et al., 2011, p. 257); or it may generate astonishment: *"I never considered putting up a Christmas tree would be a discussion"* (Inman et al., 2011, p. 257).

3.9 Conclusions

This chapter defined mothers from a feminist perspective, which refers to a patriarchal institution of motherhood where women are intergenerationally trained to be mothers. It reviewed literature on immigrant mothers and on parenting. The literature stressed that immigrant mothers negotiate continuously their mothering with the way they were mothered in their countries of birth, and with mothering ideologies from their country of migration. Mothering within interethnic relationships adds more challenges, mothers having to negotiate culture, values and parenting practices with the father of their

child/children. Mothers are mostly in charge with reproduction activities in their families, including reproducing a culture which is not their own.

4. Theoretical Perspective and Methodology

This chapter explains the theoretical perspective that underpinned my research. My ontological approach sits within a Heraclitean ontology of becoming, which emphasizes a changing and emergent world. The epistemology derived from the *becoming* ontology is subjectivism, adopted to guide my research. The theoretical triangulation used included critical theory (to challenge a status quo, patriarchal interpretations of a mother's role and allow for different, personalized affirmations of mothering), social constructivism (to displace attention from the role of mothers-as-entity and focus on the methods of constructing mothering) and feminism (to focus my research for research participants - mothers in interethnic relationships - rather than about them).

The chapter presents the methodology chosen, which is narrative inquiry, and describes the reasons for choosing this methodology and the way it is used. I explain how the Treaty of Waitangi principles of participation, protection and partnership have guided my research ethically. I address the validity and reliability of the research process, being mindful that in qualitative research, interpretive truths are partial and incomplete, and ultimately about value.

I detail the research process, including strategies of sampling and recruiting participants – immigrant mothers in interethnic relationship - and I introduce the 16 participants who valuably shared their stories of interethnic mothering with me.

4.1 A Heraclitean ontology of becoming

I approached this research on interethnic mothering from the Heraclitean ontology of becoming, as opposed by the Parmenidean ontology of being (Gray, 2014). From this perspective, reality is seen in perpetual change, without fixed definitions. Grasping a changing reality defies the existence of one overarching truth; in contrast, it opens towards continuous assessments of reality and claims to temporal, personalized truths.

The epistemology derived from the *becoming* ontology is subjectivism, in which meaning is imposed on the object by the subject. This is different to constructionism where meaning is constructed by the subject's interactions with the world. Choosing subjectivism allowed me to center my research not on the construction of mothering per se, but on mother's agency in constructing their mothering. *"Even in subjectivism we create meaning out of something, we import meaning from somewhere else"* Crotty (1998) warned:

> *"the meaning we ascribe to the object may come from our dreams, or from primordial archetypes we locate within our collective unconscious, or from the conjunction and aspects of the planets, or from religious beliefs"* (p. 9).

Therefore, I chose a theoretical triangulation of methodologies that allowed the research to record and analyse mother participants' agency in constructing their interethnic mothering in response to different impacting factors within the ever changing reality of becoming.

4.2 Theoretical triangulation

To analyse and interpret the stories of mothers in interethnic relationships situated in a subjectivism paradigm, I used a theoretical triangulation of critical theory, social constructivism and feminism.

Theoretical triangulation *"implies that the relative autonomy of each perspective is an essential aspect of its ability to contribute"* (Kushner & Morrow, 2003, p.38) to analytic and interpretive processes. Critical theory, social constructivism and feminism were not merged together but rather each explored for their independent yet complementary contribution to a more comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of mothering in interethnic relationships. Each theoretical perspective was used as an independent lens to interpret mothers' stories, to reveal the world they situated themselves in and to describe negotiation processes with that particular world.

4.2.1 CRITICAL THEORY

Critical Theory originated in Frankfurt School, where the prime concern was to explore possibilities for social transformation in a world dominated by ideologies concentrating the power in the hands of a few and perpetuating a prejudicial status quo. Horkheimer considered that the principle underlying Critical Theory is that human beings are producers of their own historical form of life outside or against dominant ideologies of power (Horkheimer, 1993). Critical Theory is concerned with deconstructing how knowledge is produced, whose knowledge is valued, and how control of such knowledge equates to power in society, *"with the purpose of preventing people from becoming slaves to the ideas and activities that societal institutions push upon them"* (Ryoo & McLaren, 2010, p. 348). There were three main focal points that critical theory brought to analysing and interpreting the stories of mothers in interethnic relationships. Firstly, I attempted to establish a connection between knowledge and the everyday practice of power, questioning the way mothers and significant people around them create reality. Secondly, it placed mothering, not in a continuing present but in a continuous process of historical change. Thirdly, it challenged a status quo, patriarchal interpretations of a mother's role (Buchanan, 2010) and allowed for different, personalized affirmations of mothering to be voiced and shared, therefore assumed.

4.2.2 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

My approach is grounded on Bruner's theory of the narrative construction of reality (Bruner, 1991). From this perspective, mothers organize their mothering in narratives, seen as the object of knowledge, and through narrative discourses, seen as the way of knowing. The main objective and effect of applying a social constructivism approach to my research is to displace attention from interethnic mothering-as-entity and focus on the methods of constructing the role of mothers in negotiating mothering with significant others and the worlds that they represent.

Mothers' experiences and behaviours are meaningful. In order to understand mothers' role in the weaving of social interactions and construction of a day–to-day mothering life, I

needed to explore the *'meaning system'* that gives those roles names, substance and orders them in structures (Polkinghorne, 1995). There are seven lenses that alter a meaning system Crossley (2000) affirmed, and these are: time, connections and relationships, seeing mothering in an interactional process, seeing mothering in a developmental process, applying gender limits to mothering, positioning mothering in society's moral discourses, and choosing the modern world to re-construct mothering. In the next paragraphs, I reflect on all of these parameters.

Firstly, the meaning of mothering is not timeless, nor related to a tangible thing or substance with various but limited components. Mothers vision mothering in its process, including the agency involved. The process incorporates temporal sequences. In time, mothering changes and so does the mother. The temporal sequences do not separate, but form the role of mothers, as in Calvino's metaphor of time, designed by a bridge which is not supported by one stone or another, but by the line of the arch that they form (Calvino, 1972). Travelling in time, there are common experiences (pregnancy, giving birth, breast or bottle feeding, wiping tears) and cultural and individual touches (chasing away the night demons from the crib, scolding the steps that hurt the baby). The becoming is sometimes defined in terms of dilemmatic spaces (Bamberg, 2011), negotiating the passing from one milestone to another and recreating a new world with new rules and new taboos.

Secondly, personal connections and relationships define mothering, feeding it with every bit of sensory information available and with an acute responsiveness. Mothers share this *"perceptual openness"* to the world with other organisms (Crossley, 2000). But they filter it through stories that they know, from childhood times or neighbourhood places. Their plots and sequences shape their decisions and the meanings that they attach to those decisions comes from knowledge of connections and relationships transmitted intergenerationally.

Thirdly, mothering is an interactional process. Crossley (2000) uses George Herbert Mead's concept of the human order of meaning, distinguishing between the *'I-mother'* and the *'me-mother'*. The *'I -mother'* is the part of oneself, which perceives, acts, speaks

and feels; it is the agent. The *'me-mother'* recollects, assesses, evaluates and projects my *'I-mother's'* sensations, actions, words, and feelings towards future events. *'I-mother'* is a point in time; many *'me mother'* are a constant in time, engaged in dialogue with past and present representations of the *'I-mother"* (Crossley, 2000) (Crossley, 2000) (Crossley, 2000) (Crossley, 2000). The '*me's- mother'* are the projections of mothering into future events; through them mothers invest in hopes, fears and dreams. At any particular point in time it is in relation to mothers' consideration of the continuity or discontinuity between the *'I- mother'* and the *'me- mother'* that they can engage in dialogue about the kind of mothering they perform and the kind of mother they have been in the past and want to become in the future (Crossley, 2000).

Fourthly, mothering is a developmental process. Sharing similar life events, mothers experience a feeling of '*we-ness'*, or *'togetherness'* – identifying as part of a social unit, differentiating within the social structure by a particular role. This role is described in a particular language. There are funny sounds to be oozed, new vocabulary to be learned from scientific terms defining scary illnesses to *urban language*. On a semantic level, there are new meanings attached to concepts we thought we knew. For example, we may not perceive time by its numerical objectivity; feelings experienced in its length stretch the minutes over the clock's boundaries. This common language that we keep on learning and developing constructs milestones, boundaries and grey areas in defining one's own mothering from the others.

Fifthly, mothering is gendered. Games constitute a crucial forum for mental and social development because they facilitate the child in the process of learning to take on the role of the other and coming to see themselves through the other's eyes (Crossley, 2000). From an early age, girls are encouraged to play with dolls, and to partake in games that socialise future caring responsibilities.

Sixthly, the role of mothers is constituted through 'webs of interlocution' in a defining community (Taylor, 1989). One of our basic aspirations is the need to feel connected with what we see as 'good' or of crucial importance to us and our community. The 'good mother' concept does not exist on its own. Different societies (cross-culturally or historically) will incorporate very different conceptions of self and morality, formulated on

and imposed through narratives (Crossley, 2000). We position ourselves somewhere around that 'good mother' central point, embracing its comfort, or turning our back on the demands of discourses that may not speak to our reality. How the society defines the 'good mother' ideal and how we position ourselves in terms of that definition, defines our place in the society. It tells us how others see us and, mirroring or rejecting projections, how we see us, constructing our role of mothers, of who we are, on an imbalanced act of negotiating 'good'.

Seventhly, in previous centuries, mothers lived in 'unchallengeable frameworks' of meaning which, while clearly (and strictly) defining motherhood, made 'imperious demands' on them (Taylor, 1989). Modern 'frameworks of meaning' have themselves become problematic. We have a sense that no one framework is shared by everybody, that the frameworks of meaning no longer exist (Crossley, 2000). Within a labyrinth of frameworks, mothers are freer to define, to construct mothering. This can be seen as liberating or, in contrast, as an overwhelming responsibility. A complicating factor is attaching feelings to mothering. Therefore, the stress is not only about what mothers do, mothering, it is about how they feel in relation to mothering.

4.2.3 FEMINISM

In a feminist mothering approach, the women's experiences are the major object of investigation (O'Reilly, 2010). As a researcher using this paradigm, I attempted to see the world from the vantage point of a particular group of women, mothers in interethnic relationships, seeking to uncover the ways in which they negotiate the world and the wisdom inherent in such a negotiation (Seibold, Richards, & Simon, 1994). Critical feminist narrative research is designed to be for research participants (mothers in interethnic relationships) rather than about them, as a means to raise individual and social consciousness, and an opportunity for the personal to become political (Pitre, Kushner, Raine, & Hegadoren, 2013). A feminist approach task is to transform both the social relations of knowledge production and the type of knowledge produced. The contextual

questions are: who holds power, how power is constituted and how this relates to defining/constructing mothering in interethnic relationships (Pitre et al., 2013).

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Bruner (1990) distinguished between two modes of thought, each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality:

"*we can reconstruct the past in two ways: using arguments, verifying data, establishing a universal truth, or telling a story*" (Bruner, 1990, p. 11).

In my research, I opted for Bruner's second option of ordering experience and constructing reality, asking mothers in interethnic relationships to tell me their stories of interethnic mothering, about how they value, negotiate and transmit intergenerationally elements of their ethnic background. The methodology used to interpret and analyse mothers' stories was narrative inquiry.

Narrative is employed in many ways in different fields of knowledge and it is argued that it sits at the core of how knowledge is organized and transmitted. The word *"narrate"* derives from the Sanskrit word *"gna"* via the Latin *"gnarus"*, words associated with the passing on of knowledge by one who knows (Kreiswirth, 2000). Perhaps there is no knowing that does not involve narrating? Wondered Hayden White (in Hanne, 2001, p.1).

Gregory Bateson, biologist and anthropologist, defined narrative as*: "a little knot or complex of the species of connectedness we call relevance"* ([in Hanne, 2001, p.1](#)). Other definitions that I found relevant when embarking in this narrative inquiry approach came from the literary theory and sociolinguistics. From a literary theory context, narrative is someone telling someone else something that happened (Smith, 1980). The sociolinguist William Labov defined narrative as a sequence of clauses which contains at least one temporal juncture, as such, we locate first an event, recognize it as reportable and decide to initiate the narrative, which involves telling the others ([Labov, 2006](#)).

Beyond its characteristics as object of study, narrative is recognized as a way of organizing human mind and knowledge acquiring and transmitting processes. The philosopher of history, Louis Mink, referred to narrative as *"a primary cognitive instrument"*; the cultural theorist Fredric Jameson claimed that narrative is *"the all-informing process … the central function or instance of the human mind"* ([in Hanne, 2001, p.1](#)). In this sense, as Bruner (1991) distinguished, in a narrative account the *"central concern is not how narrative as a text is constructed, but rather how it operates as an instrument of mind on the construction of reality"* (Bruner, 1991, p. 6). Thus, the researcher should move the focus from getting the story right to why a story is told and how it is told (Hendry, 2009). Consequently, in researching mothers' stories of interethnic mothering, I looked at how the telling of their stories helped them make sense of who they are, reshape their past, grow, build bridges, invent and reinvent themselves by the world around them. As Lyotard (1986) confirmed, narrative is a mechanism for consuming the past, for forgetting, remembering forgotten stories, reshaping life. Strawson (2004) emphasized the importance of one being able to tell a good story about one's life to accomplish oneself *"A rich narrative outlook is essential to a well-lived life, to true or full personhood"* (p. 428).

In this sense, Polkinghorne's definition of narrative as an all-encompassing attribute of human life, stretching continuously over a life span, was particularly relevant:

> *"Our lives are ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories that we tell and hear told, those we dream or imagine or would like to tell, all of which are reworked in that story of our own lives that we narrate to ourselves in an episodic, sometimes semi-conscious, but virtually uninterrupted monologue. We live immersed in narrative, recounting and reassessing the meaning of our past actions, anticipating the outcome of our future projects, situating ourselves at the intersection of several stories not yet completed* (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 160).

Reality is increasingly built by means of narrative ([Huttunen, Heikkinen, & Syrjälä, 2002](#)). Barthes wrote in 1977 that every age, every place and every society has their own narratives, adding that the world's narratives are numberless (Barthes, 1977). Because human beings are fundamentally story-tellers who lead storied lives, to research their

experiences of the world, implies researching their stories (Clandinin, 2007). In other words, people's lives consist of stories. There is broad agreement that narrative plays a valuable role in constituting and interpreting the self and the social world: *"we organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative — stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing"* (Bruner, 1991, p. 4). Therefore, narrative inquiry focuses on the organization of human knowledge more than just on the collection and processing of data.

The *"primary human mechanism for attaching meaning to particular experiences is to tell stories about them"* (Brody, 1987, p. 5). In this sense, the use of a narrative inquiry research to collect and analyse stories of interethnic mothering proved valuable for different reasons. Firstly, *"Narrative thinking is more closely attuned to expressing human experience then paradigmatic thinking"* (Polkinghorne, 2010, p. 395). Secondly, individuals and groups use narrative to make sense of their lives and their sense making activity is deeply shaped by their cultural settings ([Bruner, 1991](#)). Like any other, mothers navigate prefabricated narratives, choose among available cultural stories, get stuck in particularly strong narratives, operate within contradictory narratives and sometimes seek stories that transgress the culturally condoned ones (Hendry, 2007). Thirdly, however, within a narrative approach, knowledge itself is considered valuable even when owned by only one person. Fourthly, narrative research has been characterized as providing a method for *'telling stories'*, giving voice to those traditionally marginalized, and providing a less exploitative research method than other modes. Fifthly, Hendry (2009) observed, by acknowledging the social construction of knowledge, narrative inquiry has provided a methodology that has taken into account the situated, partial, contextual and contradictory nature of telling stories.

4.3.2 ETHICS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATION, PROTECTION AND PARTNERSHIP

An ethical approach to my research through the guiding principles of participation, protection and partnership (honouring the Treaty of Waitangi) was used to do justice to the mother participants and to the stories they told.

The Treaty of Waitangi was signed on 6 February 1840 between the British Crown and Māori chiefs, creating the foundation for a new country, New Zealand. The document, comprising of three articles written in both languages, English and Māori, was signed in 1840 by the British crown and the indigenous people. Te Puni Kokiri (2001) confirmed that the text of the Treaty is dated, also that differences between the Māori and English texts have led to different understandings of the Treaty's meaning, encouraging institutions to refer to the principles of the Treaty. The Treaty extends its principles to include all immigrant settlers to New Zealand towards establishing a positive relationship with the indigenous population and the land they inhabit. In 1988 the Royal Commission on Social Policy identified partnership, participation and protection as Treaty principles (Hudson & Russell, 2009). Incorporating these three principles to the way knowledge was shared and gained aimed to ensure a sustainable ethical process all throughout my research.

The reference to the Treaty of Waitangi has two intentions. Firstly, I use it as a sign of respect for the people of the land (mana whenua) and their unique culture.
Secondly, through this reference, I abide to a safety net: the Māori world is governed by *tikanga*, which means literally the correct way of doing something: *"this involves moral judgments about appropriate ways of behaving and acting in everyday life"* (Mead, 2016, p. 14). Tikanga are also guidelines for daily life and one's interaction with others and with the environment. It is commonly based on experience and learning that has been handed down through generations (Maori Language Commission, 2017), as a response to specific historical and environmental threats. By ingraining the ethics of my research in The Treaty of Waitangi principles, I acknowledge the indigenous ways of knowing and their power to keep this research journey safe for the researcher, for the participants and for the reader.

Principle of Partnership

The methodology used was narrative inquiry. In narrative research, ethical issues are embedded in the epistemological ones, reflecting aspects like the ownership of the

stories, the contexts surrounding the stories, and the telling of the stories, the plurality of voices, the dilemmatic negotiation of time and its impact on the stories, and my own positionality as mother, interviewer and researcher.

A story reveals its meaning in its own context. I recorded and interpreted several stories situated in particular contexts and I inserted them in the wider context of my research of interethnic mothering. I took steps to ensure that the meanings of particular stories are not lost, but enhanced by their contribution to the meaning of my research. I recorded carefully the context of the stories and I kept reflective notes to monitor the adjacent factors not recorded by words. Participants received a copy of their interview's transcript and were invited to comment, making sure that their stories stayed true to themselves during the research processes.

I recorded mothers' stories as a true account of their experiences. While I asked clarifying questions to understand the context of such experiences, I didn't question at any point the validity or the opportunity of such experiences.
In the process of collecting data, I was entrusted with mothers' stories, heavily invested with one's personal meaning and sense of identity. I recognized my duty of going beyond the words and understanding the meaning behind their words.

Principle of Participation

I acknowledge that the research procedures should be appropriate to the participants and I took responsibility to inform myself of, and take the steps necessary to respect the values, practices and beliefs of the cultures and social groups of all participants. Participants were required to be part of an approximately one hour semi structured interview in which they shared stories on how they value, negotiate and transmit intergenerationally elements of their ethnic background. They were invited to choose a place for the interview where they would feel comfortable.

Josselson exposed the conflict of interest that may arise from *"taking myself out of relationship with my participants and entering a relationship with my readers",* in the writing process (Josselson, 1996, p. 65). I took my participants with me in this methodological journey, keeping their identities and voices in mind when writing their story, writing the story for them as readers. Mothers interviewed are not only the *'story-sources'* but the recipients of this research as well. Like other mothers in interethnic relationships, it is supposed that the participants will benefit from the results of the research, as recipients of the final research.

The Principle of Protection and ethics of care

DeSouza (2011) commented on the fact that: *"Reflexivity can be a mechanism for building confidence in the scholarliness, merit or value of a study through exposing the ideological nature of the research, particularly when it has transformative ends"* (p. 115).
My reflexive journey included my own narrative of interethnic mothering in New Zealand. A narrative inquiry is a symphony of voices. I am a mother, raising children with a multi-ethnic background. I have my own story, my own perspectives, my own mother-voice. I am also the researcher and my researcher's agenda was to elicit stories from other mothers; in this instance I held the authoritative voice of the interviewer. I interviewed other mothers who, like me, negotiate ways of raising their children in an interethnic relationship. My role was to record the stories in an accurate way. While being aware of the power I had, to guide the story through questions, I used a semi structured interview model, open to various turns and plots valuable to the mother telling her story. This allowed me to elicit particular stories, rather than imposing a course of action, from my personal assumptions or previous stories that I may have recorded.

A relevant factor when ethnic diversity is considered is the importance of the researcher's discernment on who and what can be known, as well as the complex dynamics attached to accessing experiences, both similar to, and different from one's own (Jones, 2002). From the beginning I engaged with, and sought assistance on cultural matters through

institutions specializing in diversity services, such as the Office for Ethnic Communities, and I adhered to AUT Ethics Committee guidelines and procedures.

Telling stories brings one's individuality into the public arena. I negotiated a process in which participants in my research were conscientiously revealing as much of their identity in the stories they told, as they felt comfortable. My role in this negotiation process was to identify possible areas of risk and to give an honest prognosis of how my research would unfold. I took steps in protecting participants in my research and third parties who figure in their narratives from undue harm and exploitation in the process of telling their stories (Graves, 1996). I used pseudonyms in the thesis, however, participants were given the choice to use their own name, if they wished to do so.

4.3.3 ADDRESSING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity

Riessman (1993) claimed that there *is "no canonical approach in interpretive work, no recipes and formulas"* (p.69). Interpretive truths are partial and incomplete and ultimately about value. In narrative research, issues of validity are embedded in the epistemological ones, reflecting aspects like the ownership of the stories, the contexts surrounding the stories, and the telling of the stories, the plurality of voices, the dilemmatic negotiation of time and its impact on the stories and my own positionality as mother, interviewer and researcher.

Within a social constructivism paradigm, *truth* is constructed, personal and multiple. Within critical theory, *truth* is defined within systems of power, where mainstream, institutional *truth* is contested as oppressive by marginalized actors. Within feminism, *truth* is seized by patriarchy. The temporal dimension of the narratives renders sequences of *truth* changeable, evolving, in a continuous process of (possibly fortuitous) development. Consequently, in recording the data on interethnic mothering, the stress was not on the *truth* of the stories as they relate to reality, but on how these stories were recorded as representing mothers' agency in their meaning construction within a

particular time and space. The data analysis was not concerned if the stories told by mother participants were a true account of their interethnic mothering experiences, but acknowledged them as meaning making pursuits. Polkinghorne (2007) affirmed that:

> *"storied evidence is gathered not to determine if events actually happened but about the meaning experienced by people whether or not the events are accurately described… Storied texts serve as evidence for personal meaning, not for the factual occurrence of the events reported in the stories"* (p. 479).

Sandelowski (1993) argued that issues of validity in qualitative studies should be linked not to *'truth'* or *'value'* as it happens in positivist paradigms but to aim towards *'trustworthiness'*, which "*becomes a matter of persuasion whereby the scientist is viewed as having made those practices visible and, therefore, auditable"* (p. 2). Trustworthiness has been further divided into credibility corresponding to the positivist internal validity), dependability, which relates to reliability; transferability (external validity); and confirmability (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). The process of dependability can be achieved by ensuring a clear decision trail, supporting the recipient of the research to navigate from the end result to methodological judgements and epistemological and ontological paradigms so that the reader would be able to track and verify the research process unproblematically and unquestionably. Validity in a narrative approach is reoriented therefore to refer to the integrity of the research process rather than the findings and assertions of the research (Rossman, Rallis, & Kuntz, 2010). Narrative research is an unfolding process (Chase, 1996) with rather possible than certain results. Therefore, my researcher approach was grounded on detailed attention and ongoing refinement of the research process and the examination of my own positions and assumptions. The rigor of such decisions was presented at the beginning of this chapter.

Reliability

Sandelowski (1993) argued that if reality is assumed to be *'multiple and constructed'*, then *"repeatability is not an essential (or necessary or sufficient) property"* (p. 3) of the research results to ensure reliability and credibility. Researcher, reviewers, participants, we all

embark in our own meaning making journeys, which we shouldn't assume identical, therefore we shouldn't expect similar results outside of an artificial consensus and conformity in the analysis of the data, which may come at the expense of the validity or meaningfulness of the findings (Rolfe, 2006). This research did not seek to verify one historical truth, but searched to find the meanings mother participants have made of historical truths. The focus was on understanding the various contexts and perspectives that impacted on the agency established by mother participants in defining their reality of interethnic mothering. Credibility was achieved through making space for mother participants' voice, through a rigorous methodological pursuit and through anchoring results in existing literature and presenting analogue findings.

To determine the value of the interpretive work, the criteria mentioned by Walker (1996), and assumed within this research, are: wide (involving a consideration of the whole text), deep (pushing to the heart of the phenomena under inquiry, which is mothering in interethnic relationships), contextual (clearly anchoring the stories told in the time and space of the interview), connected (to past and current research on the topic, as a means of making new connections and insights) and authentic (being true to mother participants and allowing for their voice to come through).

4.3.4 DATA COLLECTION

For the purpose of this study, I collected data through:

1. A review of the research literature relating to how mothers in interethnic relationships negotiate parental values, ethno theories, and practices and negotiate the transmitting of elements of their ethnic background intergenerationally.

2. Semi-structured interviews with 16 immigrant mothers with a maternal language other than English, parenting children from a heterosexual interethnic relationship with a New Zealander of Caucasian or Māori descent.

While I found that in the research literature and in New Zealand community development settings, the terms *migrant* and *immigrant* are used interchangeably, for this research I chose the word *immigrant*, to describe mothers who come to live permanently in a foreign country, different to *migrant*, defined by Oxford Dictionary as a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, n.d.).

At the time of the interview, with one exception, Miyuki (Japan), mother participants were in New Zealand for over ten years, eight participants immigrating to New Zealand more than 20 years ago. They assumed their immigrant position through responding to the research invitation which was addressed to immigrant mothers, who have been mothered in a different country and in a different language. I considered assessing their stories from the perspective of variables such as the age when they arrived in New Zealand, the time spent in New Zealand, and the age when they had their first child. It proved irrelevant for this study. Some mother participants despite a lengthy period of time lived in New Zealand before and after giving birth, described themselves strongly through the lenses of their culture of origin, while some other mothers, with less time spent in New Zealand before and after giving birth, identified with New Zealand mothering practices.

The invitation to participate within this research was open to all ages, expanding the time spectrum of interethnic mothering experiences in New Zealand over nearly 60 years. Despite the difference in mothering times, the stories, abiding to narrativity specifics, didn't contradict, but complemented each other.

Adna (Bosnia) was born in 1970. Her first language is Bosnian. She migrated to Christchurch, New Zealand in 1993, with her New Zealand husband, initially as a temporary solution, to escape the war in Sarajevo. Soon after migrating, she gave birth to her two boys, (they were aged 20 and 21 when the interview took place, in 2014). Giving birth in hospital, Adna found that *"things that were important for midwives or doctors here were not so important to me, having just come from a war zone, so I found that that was probably just my situation, rather than, you know, typical migrant situation, I guess."* Because the war was prolonged, they eventually settled in Christchurch, where, with the help of her husbands' family, they sponsored her family to immigrate as well. Adna's highest level of education is a Bachelor of Arts and she stated her occupation as graphic designer/writer. Her parents are Muslim, but not practicing, while her husband's mother (the father died before the interview) is a practicing Catholic. Adna, with no religious affiliation, expressed respect for both families' cultural and religious practices. Adna is the oldest of 10 children. She spoke fondly of both of her parents' involvement in her upbringing, and of their support in maintaining Bosnian traditions through language, food and music within Adna's household. After the 2010 Christchurch quake, Adna moved to Auckland with her family, a city whose multiculturalism they all enjoyed, in contrast to a less diverse Canterbury. At the time of the interview, her children were still living at home, Adna crediting that to her Bosnian upbringing, in contrast with the mainstream parenting in New Zealand.

Anett was born in Hungary, in 1977, and her maternal languages are Hungarian and German. Her religious affiliation is non-practicing Catholic. Anett migrated to Auckland, New Zealand, in 2005, because she loved the country and her husband is a New Zealander. Her highest level of education is a diploma and, at the time of the interview (2015), she was working as an administrator. Anett has a daughter, five years old at the time of the interview. Anett is trying to parent differently from how she was parented, giving her daughter choices and being interested more in her emotional wellbeing, not so much in her academic achievement. Compared with what Anett has experienced in her home country family, where fathers were not so much involved in looking after a child,

Anett's husband is very supportive. Anett appreciated her husband's family's style of support, encouraging her to take her own parenting decisions, in contrast with her own family's involvement, which seemed controlling at times.

Anne was born in Denmark, in 1937. Her maternal language is Danish and her religious affiliation is Catholicism. Anne migrated to Auckland, New Zealand, in 1952, following her father's decision to bring the family across. With both parents and her older sister working, and her two younger sisters going to school, Anne quit school when 14 years old, to look after the house. Her highest level of education is six and a half years of primary and intermediate school. Just recently Anne went to a night school to learn Māori. Anne met her Māori husband to be at a Saturday evening's dance. They married after twenty months of courting, with the blessing of their families, despite the stigma associated with racially mixed couples in those days, as Anne recalled. They lived with her parents to save for a house, and eventually they built their own house, supported by the Māori Affairs. Anne has two daughters, aged 59 and 55 at the time of the interview (2015). Her husband died after 42 years of marriage. Anne talked about her children and grandchildren having experienced instances of racism and having to affirm their identity and double heritage when in contact with New Zealand institutions (school, hospital, funeral homes, society), but she spoke fondly about relationships within close and extended family, neighbourhoods and local community and their openness towards interethnic couples.

Barb was born in Israel, in 1970. Her maternal language is Hebrew. She came to New Zealand to travel as backpacker, and she met her husband to be in a Queenstown backpacker site that he was managing. Her husband is of Scottish descent, and his family has Anglo-Saxon values. That meant that *"they don't value as much academic achievement, they are much more about fishing, building, rugby",* Barb described. Barb's religious affiliation is Jewish and bringing up her children in the Jewish tradition was non-negotiable. She is part of the Jewish community in Auckland and her family life is ordered by ritual, with children having attended a Jewish primary school. Barb's husband, a lawyer -partner in a big Auckland firm, is so supportive of her tradition that for a long time close friends didn't

realize that he is not a Jew himself. In her interethnic parenting, Barb had to negotiate with her husband's family, rather than with her husband. She came to realize that they had a class difference that her husband's family found easier to express in terms of an ethnic mismatch, as Barb resumed: *"I was a Martian, and then my parenting was an extension of me being a Martian".* Other differences that Barb mentioned were in terms of celebrations: *"you celebrate, you drink a bottle of wine, or as for me, culturally, you celebrate, you eat"* and the place of children in the family. Growing up, Barb was expected from a very young age to have an opinion, speak up, challenge and contribute to adults' conversations. This is in contrast to what her husband had experienced in a family where children were to be seen and not heard. A developmental psychologist by training, Barb has a Master's Degree and, at the time of the interview, she was studying for her PHD degree. Her occupation stated in the socio-demographic profile was Executive Coach. Educational achievement was an expectation imposed on her by her family, and she was pursuing that expectation for her children. Barb's biggest challenge of parenting in New Zealand was introducing and maintaining her maternal language. What she has learnt from parenting in New Zealand is the value of team sports, which she ignored before, and their contribution to business attitudes in this country:

> *"being part of a team, learning to be a team member, learn not to let the team down, play your part in a team, get over things with somebody who annoys you so the team as a whole succeeds, really does translate later on to the way people behave as adults".*

Cristina was born in Peru, in 1984. Her maternal language is Spanish. Cristina migrated to Auckland, New Zealand, with her mother and siblings, in February 1997, when she was 12 years old, to reunite with her father and in search of a better future. Her father migrated earlier, when the situation in Peru was difficult and he lost his job there. Cristina's highest level of education obtained is a Bachelor of Education, and she stated teacher as occupation in the socio-demographic survey for this research. She met her New Zealand husband of Irish and Tongan descent here, and they parent together their daughter, who was two years old at the time of the interview. Living with them was her husband's niece; Cristina and her husband being her legal guardians, a situation about to change at the time of the interview (2015). Christina is Catholic, but while she loves the Catholic Church,

she considered herself more spiritual than religious in the New Zealand context. She reminisced about her upbringing in a society where 90% of the population was Catholic, and their faith, expressed in a proud and vibrant way, constituted a big part of her life. She didn't encounter the same joyfulness within her first contacts with New Zealand's Catholic Churches, and while she got married in a Catholic Church and they baptised their daughter Catholic, that was done rather in the spirit of tradition than faith. However, Cristina is fond of re-enacting Peruvian religious or national celebrations, like Christmas or the Independence Day, following the style of her upbringing. These celebrations are supported by a big Peruvian community in Auckland, and by a close-knit extended Peruvian family she has here. Cristina practiced her first two years of parenting in her mother's house and her mother's Peruvian parental practices have influenced her parenting. These manifested in terms of sleeping routines, feeding the child, the use of homemade remedies for colds and colic, and early educational practices: instead of reading to the child, *"we listen to a lot of music, it's all about making them dance, our culture is very vibrant".* In turn, she didn't internalize the New Zealand child delivering and raising models, accessing a midwife late in her pregnancy, and adapting Plunket nurses' advice to her family circumstances. But she appreciated her husband introducing their daughter to New Zealand's culture, teaching her how to swim and encouraging her to love the outdoors. Cristina summarized a Peruvian profile through being polite, being proud and taking pride in your appearance, the importance given to the extended family and vibrant celebrations through food, music and dance. Even if she lived more of her life in New Zealand, Cristina still considered herself a Peruvian representative. She found similarities between her culture and her husband's Tongan side of the family, much less with his New Zealand side. However, Cristina agreed that she couldn't live in Peru again, not appreciating the Peruvian norms stressed upon women, like being expected to cook every night and cook well. She enjoyed mothering in a multicultural environment *"which teaches us to be more flexible with our thinking, more accepting."*

Donna was born in Beijing, China, in 1970, and her maternal language is Mandarin. Her religious affiliation is Buddhist. Donna came to New Zealand in 1997, to study. With her

New Zealand husband, she parents a boy (seven years old at the time of the interview, 2014), and Donna was pleased that in his birth certificate *"we both decided that we tick all the boxes that relate to him, that he is Chinese, he is European, he is Māori, which he has part of history in him."* Donna's highest level of education obtained is a Master's in Education, and, at the time of the interview, she was pursuing her PHD degree. The occupation stated was Coordinator collaborative provision. While Donna has seen parenting in China performed by close relatives, and was aware of specific practices, like keeping mother and baby inside the house for a month, avoiding cold water and cold temperatures, she had learnt how to be a parent in New Zealand, and adapted those practices to her new environment. Donna's parents came to New Zealand to support the young family, but *"they were open minded, they liked me to be a mother, first time mother, not to put their influence over me."* Donna's mother encouraged her to talk to her baby in Chinese all the time, which she did, and supported her in her wish to have the baby sleeping with her, finding it unacceptable to separate a baby from mother at night time. Donna acknowledged the different cultural backgrounds in her interethnic family, and the challenges they brought. She had to negotiate from simple things, like not drinking cold milk straight out of the fridge, a negotiation that she lost, to which sports her child was involved in, Donna preferring swimming, rather than her husband's love for the New Zealand's national sport, rugby, a sport that Donna found rather unsafe. What Donna considered non-negotiable was the academic achievement, and her duty as a parent to push for it. She found the New Zealand school system too relaxed, and lacking engagement with parents; she also didn't appreciate the absence of eating facilities for children in schools. Being interested in other cultures, and enjoying the fact that she can experience them so closely, Donna reflected on how New Zealand's society should be more accepting of these cultures. That reflection came after stories she related in which her son's belonging to the New Zealand's society was questioned by children attending the same holiday program.

Dyia is Indian and was born in 1974, in Malaysia. Her maternal language is Malayalam, an Indian dialect from Kerala. She came to New Zealand in March, 2000, to be with her New Zealander partner, and they parent a boy, six years old at the time of the interview (2015).

They previously had a daughter, who died at 11 months. Dyia reflected on her experience of growing up an Indian in Malaysia as negative, and recalled rebelling against the gender inequality and the lack of freedom. She begun to embrace being an Indian again and redefining what that means for her once in New Zealand, an environment allowing you *"to be who you are."* Diya's highest qualification is a Master's degree. When she came to New Zealand, she chose to give up her corporate job and to work with women in community settings, a decision her parents couldn't comprehend, so they still default to her previous job, when speaking about her. Filling the research socio-demographic survey, she stated *"mother"* as occupation. While she found herself using parenting methods from her upbringing, extremely structured and *"forcing upon, rather than offering",* Dyia appreciated her partner's influence, *"laid back"* and *"flowing with the wave."* At the time of the interview, Diya was on a journey of reconnecting herself and her child with her culture, but in her own terms, insisting on values of origin, translated through art forms, and celebrating a specific relationship with the universe and divinity. She embraced the interview as part of this journey.

Elisapeta was born in Samoa, in 1947. She came to New Zealand in 22 June 1966 *"to earn money to support my family",* and she still remembered the freezing winter cold in a city lit like for Christmas. Her maternal language is Samoan and, when she immigrated, her English was limited and voiced with a hard to understand American accent. Elisapeta worked in a hotel, as a waitress, and there she met her husband to be, a *Palagi* (New Zealander of European descent). They got married the *Palagi* way, in a church built by her grandfather. They have a daughter and a son, aged 46 and 44 at the time of the interview, and four granddaughters, two living in New Zealand and two living in Canada who visit them regularly. Parenting in New Zealand was an isolating experience for Elisapeta; while the hospital where she gave birth felt like a hotel stay, once at home she missed the Samoan nannies, who formed the support system for a mother back in the home country. She also had to learn to use a washing machine, which kept on flooding neighbours downstairs while she was lost in the play with her baby, and she had to learn how to drive a car, one of her first experiences being driving into a dairy. That allowed her to

experience local friendship, with the dairy owner offering support rather than getting angry. Elisapeta recalled fondly her growing up in a large family, *"our house was choker blocked full of kids. Oh my gosh and it was so lovely."* Happy childhood meant whistles made up from the bush, kids teaming around a ball for a volleyball competition, evenings full of stories and birthdays where the best gift was the presence of community. This was in contrast with the structured lives children have in New Zealand, where safety is paramount: *"here you've got to protect your children on your own. You have to have eyes on the back of your head."* She enacted Samoan hospitality in her neighbourhood and church, and her morning teas became famous. Main negotiation points with her husband were around children's discipline, and the financial help for family in Samoa. While Elisapeta still considered strictness as essential in raising successful and happy children, she changed her mind on physical discipline. One of Elisapeta's hardest moments was her beloved grandmother dying a month before her trip to Samoa to introduce her husband and children to her.

Eva was born in Poland in 1974. Her maternal language is Polish. She met her Māori husband in 2002, in New Zealand, where she came to study English. It was love at first sight, and she decided to migrate to New Zealand to be with him. Her highest level of education attained was a Master's degree, and she stated research analyst as her occupation in the socio-demographic survey for this research. At the time of the interview (2015), Eva had two children, a boy (four years old) and a girl (two years and a half). While acknowledging her lack of experience in caring for children at the arrival of her first baby, Eva relied on the *"know-how"* of her husband, who was the eldest of ten siblings. Eva is Catholic, and she appreciated the support of her non-Catholic husband in maintaining her religion alive in the lives of their children. That included baptizing them, going to the mass, and practicing specific rituals for Christmas and Easter. While they use English to communicate within their interethnic family, both parents support each other in familiarizing the children with the Polish and Māori languages. Eva mentioned with sadness that her husband is not fluent in Te Reo Māori, because his parents' generation was prohibited to speak Māori. In her parenting journey, Eva, who comes from an Eastern

European background, very structured, where being late was unacceptable and *"you had to have three years plan, five years plan"* to survive and thrive, found it difficult to adjust to a more relaxed pace of life and to relinquish control, despite acknowledging the wisdom in her husband's advice to do so. Other than that, she appreciates the balance in their interethnic parenting: her husband's love and skills for sports and arts, and her striving for academic success, to create the perfect learning environment for their children. One thing that Eva appreciates in her Māori family is their connection to the land. Eva's Polish family owned land, but *"one day they woke up and [the land] didn't belong to Poland anymore, so they lost everything."* For her children to have a link to land in Aotearoa, New Zealand, through their Māori family, is very important to Eva.

Jenny was born in 1978, in China, her maternal language being Chinese. Jenny came to New Zealand in 2001, to study. Her highest level of education obtained was a Master's degree and she worked as a counsellor at the time of the interview (2015). She met her New Zealand husband at a common friend's birthday party. They married after three years, and decided not to have children straight away but, as Jenny remarked, *"We made sure we learnt from each other, we found a common ground for both of us to advocate for our culture, and also to adapt to each other's culture."* Jenny was happy with the New Zealand model of delivering babies, she found that she had more choices here than in China, and appreciated a warm relationship with her midwife, in contrast with China's more medicalized model. When growing up, her grandparents looked after her and her brother, her mother having to return to work soon after giving birth. Jenny's parents came to New Zealand for six months after the birth of her baby, to support her and her young family. However, because Jenny's mother had never looked after a baby before, that responsibility being relinquished to the grandparents, she didn't impose a way of parenting, and allowed Jenny to find her own way. Jenny's academic background is in psychology, which is, as Jenny described, a Western discipline. Therefore Jenny's perspective on parenting was westernized before meeting her husband. For Jenny, academic achievement is important, and she credits this fact to her Chinese ethnicity. However, she changed her parenting principles, and allowed her children more autonomy,

rights and freedom in choosing what they want to study. Despite a different background and different growing up experiences, Jenny spoke fondly about a united family, actively involved in both New Zealand's celebrations, such as Christmas, and Chinese traditions.

Miyuki was born in Japan, in 1985. Her maternal language is Japanese. She came to Auckland, New Zealand in 2012, because her husband, a New Zealander, wanted to raise their baby here. They met in Japan, where her husband lived for 12 years, so he was well accustomed to Miyuki's culture. In turn, Miyuki learnt about the Western culture through him and his friends. Miyuki stated that she enjoyed giving birth in New Zealand, where she *"had a really nice midwife"*, more options, and the support of her husband's family. This was in contrast to what her sister had experienced giving birth in Japan. She finds it easier raising her child in New Zealand, with so many parks and friendly people around to talk with. When visiting Japan, distance and transport were an issue, she indicated. Her challenge was to teach her son Japanese, because they mostly used English in their interethnic family, and also the child's interactions with his New Zealand's grandparents were in English. Another challenge was the different medical system, having to visit a GP first, and then being referred to a specialist, which Miyuki found confusing. Miyuki's highest level of education obtained is a Bachelor's Degree; she stated her occupation as house wife, enjoying the fact that she can spend more time with her child (two years old at the time of the interview), something that she didn't experience growing up, her parents both working.

Nina was born in Samoa in 1967 and her maternal language is Samoan. She came to New Zealand in 1977 to pursue education goals and future opportunities. Her highest level of education attained was a Master's degree and at the time of the interview, Nina was studying towards a PHD degree. She stated social work adviser as occupation in the socio-demographic survey that she filled in for this research. Nina married a New Zealander of Irish descent, and they parent two girls and a boy, aged 17, 15 and 14 at the time of the interview (2015). At the time of the interview, the parents were separated. Her husband was the eldest of six siblings, and his upbringing influenced his way of parenting, helping

with the house chores, as he saw his father doing, a fact that Nina appreciated, but also needing a routine for their children, which opposed Nina's parental practices learnt in Samoa. Nina was raised by her grandparents, because her parents were not married, she mentioned, but her stories brought in a large extended family within a close knit community evolving around the Sunday mass. Nina stated her religious affiliation as congregational (Christian) and her stories about weekly crossing the bridge to take the children to her Church and negotiating with her daughter's sports club her absence from Sunday's games, show how important a role religion plays in Nina's parenting values and practices. In these practices, babies eat when they are hungry and sleep when they are tired, and the extended family is there to attend to baby's needs. Nina comes from a culture characterized by belonging to a community, and that is influential from a baby's first days, when family comes over with food, love and support to claim the child as part of their ethos. With that belonging comes responsibility, and these features define a purpose for the future community member. Children have to be guided and supported to accomplish that purpose, which for Nina, who was raised by people who were successful in education, comes under the form of academic achievement. That contrasted with her husband's family, who stressed freedom and individual values and less their roots, history and family connections. Challenges in interethnic parenting consisted for Nina in presenting to her children two sets of rules derived from two different agendas, and parents having to explain over and over again their worldviews. In terms of parenting in a migration context, Nina defined as a challenge keeping alive in her children's lives her Samoan language and tradition and having to rely on one's own:

> *"You are away from family. You have to think of so many things. If you were at home, mum could think about these things, or aunty, whereas here you have to think it all yourself, so we are a lot more careful, a lot more deliberate about things we do and things we choose not to do anymore."*

Saha was born in 1982 in France. Her maternal language is French. Saha came to Auckland, New Zealand, in 2005, to study. Her highest level of qualification was a Master's degree. She worked as a teacher until she got pregnant. At that point, her Māori partner got a job in Coromandel; feeling sick throughout her pregnancy, she decided to quit her

job in Auckland and they moved to Coromandel, where they were living at the time of the interview. Saha was the main carer of their daughter (who was two years old at the time of the interview), while her partner was working full time. That allowed Saha to be the major decision maker in terms of their child upbringing, and to attach to this upbringing elements like her maternal language and own parental ethno-theories. These were reinforced though frequent visits to France, and through Saha's parents' visits to New Zealand. Saha recalled her own upbringing in a city setting, with her parents taking them, children, for outings to encourage them to connect with the natural space. She enjoyed being able to raise her daughter in a natural space, five minutes' walk to a beach with real sand. Saha was pursuing threads of her own culture, like eating habits and dinner etiquette, education achievement for her daughter and wishes that she will be more politically involved and argumentative rather than complacent in a perceived relaxed New Zealand environment. She also appreciated a more natural approach to giving birth, to breastfeeding, and to her Māori partner's culture mentioned in the interview through the honouring of the placenta, the singing and the tangi (funeral process). She appreciated as well the opportunities of mothering in a multicultural New Zealand.

Sheena was born in 1972 in Malaysia. She is of Chinese descent, and her maternal language is a dialect mixing Teochew and Hokkien. Not many people understand that dialect, Sheena mentioned, and she took a conscious decision not to teach it to her children because they won't be able to use it in an existent community setting. Sheena came to New Zealand in 1989 to study; her highest level of education obtained being a University degree. Her occupation at the time of the interview was agent of a clothing label from Australia. In New Zealand, Sheena married a Māori and they parent together a boy, seven years old, and a girl, five years old at the time of the interview. Sheena's religious affiliation is Tibetan Buddhist, and she takes her children to Temple's festivities, and her husband joins them. Unfortunately, Chinese celebrations are quite quiet in her family, consisting of a Chinese New Year lunch with her older sister, who lives in Auckland as well. This contrasts with how she remembered celebrations growing up, festive and embracing, with her mother spending months to prepare the house and the food for

guests. While Sheena appreciated having more institutional support in New Zealand than her mother would have had parenting her, she missed the family support when having her babies. Her mother died when Sheena was 22 years old, and other women family members that she loved have died as well, causing her to have a pre-natal depression when she found out that her second child would be a girl, and she described her experiences of giving birth in New Zealand as traumatic. Sheena found many resemblances between her own culture and the Māori traditional way, like respect for elders, extended families, close-knit communities, and clear expectations on what to do versus what not to do, and she felt comfortable raising her children in a familiar environment, with familiar values. Unfortunately her husband was raised as a Mormon, rather than a Māori, in a dysfunctional family, and Sheena found it hard to negotiate her values with those of her husband's family, reaching a breaking point soon after her son's first birthday. Nevertheless, Sheena took on her own the responsibility of reclaiming the Māori culture for her children: she enrolled them at a Māori bilingual unit, and started Māori night classes to be able to support them. In that role, Sheena found the New Zealand's school system discriminatory, for isolating children who want to learn Māori, a New Zealand official language, in special units, not well resourced, making them feel like second-hand citizens.

Sonia was born in Iran, in 1972. Her maternal language is Persian. From when she was 13-14 years old, Sonia lived overseas, going first to England with her family, where Sonia went to school, and then moving to Spain and Canary Islands. She lived in San Francisco for a couple of years, then went to Dubai, where she met her New Zealand husband. They married in 1990, moved to New Zealand from 1993 to 1996, went back to Dubai and Abu-Dhabi, where her husband's business was, and finally settled in New Zealand in 2002, where Sonia founded her own business. They parent a son, 16 years old at the time of the interview (2016). Her sister lives in New Zealand as well, and her mother visits often. Despite this support, Sonia found the distance challenging:

"I had aunties and uncles and, you know, cousins and one of my closest cousin, he lives in Frankfurt, on the other side of the world, with his kids who are my son's age, and they never ever met".

In terms of interethnic parenting, Sonia mentioned: *"I did not really feel how different I was until we had kids."* At that point, Sonia started to feel like the *"odd parent out."* A foreign parent experiences unfamiliar environment and food, lonely celebrations, lack of ritual and even discrimination. Sonia wanted to pursue her mother-role, as learnt within her culture, protective, feeding the body and the soul with fresh items rather than take-away, insisting on respect, decency and reciprocity, and encouraging academic pursuit. Her attempts were not encouraged by her husband's too relaxed parental practices and by a time in the host society that accepted unhealthy behaviours, like partying and drinking: *"I find that the alcohol culture is huge here. Far too early, far too much. The wrong stuff."* At the end, the negotiation was between her and her son, who would like his mother to be like other *"Kiwi mums"* allowing him the independence his peers have. Sonia was born a Muslim; she respects Islam and all religions. She defined her religion *"humanity."* She is the one who makes the Christmas decorations, a celebration that she loves, alongside other celebrations that contribute to unite the family. Interethnic marriages need patience, Sonia claimed, respect for each other's culture, respect for the host country and also respect for the sacrifices the immigrant spouse has made to live in the new country. She summarized an interethnic relationship in positive terms: *"I think for someone who marries someone else from other culture, that must have been a good reason for that, you know?"*

Taurea was born in 1967 in Hungary, and her maternal language is Hungarian. She migrated to New Zealand in 1990, because her ex-husband was a New-Zealander, part Māori. They lived in Papamoa, Tauranga, with his family close by. They had a daughter (23 years old at the time of the interview, 2015), and they divorced three years later. After the divorce, while Taurea kept the relationship with her ex-husband at more than an arm's length, she maintained contact and good relationships with his family, for the benefit of her daughter. Even now, mother and daughter spend holidays on Stewart Island where the grandmother currently lives. After the divorce, Taurea moved to Hungary for less than a year; she loved her work there, but didn't like how that work separated her from her

daughter. They moved back to New Zealand, in Tauranga first, but as her daughter's family was moving away and she started studying for her Master's Degree at Waikato University, they moved to Hamilton, where Taurea had to *"re-establish myself without any markers, not having family around."* Later on, they moved to Auckland, where Taurea currently lives with her partner who has a child as well. Noticing his cultural background: *"born in Africa, ethnically Indian, raised as a Muslim, but not currently practicing and growing up in England",* Taurea reflected on the fact that they could not have parented together, because they were so different. Taurea was baptised a Roman-Catholic, but her religious affiliation stopped there. However, she cannot imagine a Christmas without a Christmas tree, and she continues to maintain strong traditions in the process of producing and consuming traditional food for specific celebrations, like Christmas and Easter. Taurea enjoyed a more natural way of delivering her baby in New Zealand, in contrast to the medicalized model in Hungary and she appreciated a more relaxed view on baby's growing milestones. But she considered herself a stricter mother than the New Zealand norm, expecting routines built around the child and expressing amazement at these *"two different worlds, having no overlap between these two worlds, that when I actually said that I don't want this, they couldn't even understand that."* Taurea found similarities between the Māori traditional way and her own culture. She was glad to introduce Hungarian traditions to her Māori family, who enjoyed being involved, but she was saddened that *"they had nothing to offer",* having lost their language and ancestral traditions. It was Taurea who had encouraged her daughter to learn both languages, Hungarian and Māori, and to walk comfortably in both worlds. From her interethnic parenting journey, Taurea appreciated the most having learned more about her own culture and about herself: *"what is important out of your own culture and what you keep."*

4.3.6 SAMPLING

This research focused on stories that mothers in interethnic relationships have about negotiating interethnic mothering and negotiating the transmitting of elements of their ethnic background intergenerationally. When selecting the participants for my research, I

looked for information–rich mothers for study in depth, which represents purposeful sampling as defined by Patton (2001).

Participants were mothers born and raised overseas, with a maternal language other than English. They were parenting a child/children from a heterosexual relationship with a New Zealander (Caucasian or Māori) born and raised in New Zealand. Some of the mothers were not in that relationship anymore. To ensure the richness of information, I contacted mothers with a history of parenting children from interethnic relationships – that is having children aged two years plus. To ensure the accuracy of the study, participants presenting a good level of English, an ability to translate concepts, and to describe specific cultural practices in English were recruited. To reflect on the diversity of New Zealand, I used the strategy of sampling for maximum variation, as described by Jones (2002): I continued to sample until the point of redundancy was reached, keeping the *"eye on the prize"*, which was mothers with different ethnic backgrounds.

4.3.7 PILOT INTERVIEW

The very first interview was a pilot interview with myself, as part of the cohort - immigrant mother, parenting children with a New Zealander. At the advice of my supervisor, I used an elaborated interview setting, with two opposite chairs between which I would move to consciously separate the role of the researcher from the role of the participant. The experience revealed many aspects of the interview journey that I was about to embark on.

Firstly, it struck me how emotionally powerful it was, and how, at times, my feelings took on expressing themselves over the facts that I wanted to relate. Secondly, the interview, how it was at that stage, was too long and extremely tiring, encouraging me – the researcher – to revisit the questions. Thirdly, despite me the researcher having constructed from thorough literature review well-meaning translated questions, I, the participant, sometimes found it difficult to grasp what the question actually expected from me. This experience helped me rearticulate the interview towards enhanced

comprehensibility. Fourthly, I was mesmerized how my stories unfolded. Even if I was talking with myself, I chose not to voice some details, while stressing others. While I knew very well the structure of the interview, its background and scope, the telling of my story took me at times to landscapes I didn't think I would include. When I read the transcription, it was different from what I expected. However, I had to agree that it was true, it was accurate, it was an honest account of my experience and it represented a particular perspective of revisiting moments in my life.

This journey of revisiting my experiences of parenting in an interethnic relationship didn't stop with my interview. I found myself rediscovering more of my stories when other mothers would prompt an experience I didn't reveal, and, internalizing or externalizing, I would assess my experiences against the other mothers' experiences during the interview process or later on, during transcribing and analyzing the data. I decided therefore not to process my interview the same way I processed the other interviews, but to use my experiences within a continuous reflective progression alongside my research journey. With this in mind, I started my field work.

4.3.8 RECRUITING

I recruited participants through purposeful recruiting from my immediate networks, followed by snowball sampling, where existing participants recruited future participants from among their networks. Fortunately, it was easy to find participants within my personal, work and study networks. Prior to the interview, possible participants received an invitation to the interview and an interview information sheet, which included a structure of the questions to be addressed.

Before the interview, participants were asked to sign a consent form and to fill in a socio-demographic survey. They were invited to choose a pseudonym; some participants did that, while others preferred to use their own name. I had to choose some of the

pseudonyms, which I did by researching websites with names from specific countries and times my participants were born in.

Sixteen immigrant women, parenting in an interethnic relationship, accepted my call to tell their stories. They were born between 1937 and 1985. They immigrated to New Zealand between 1952 and 2012 from Europe, Latin America, Middle East and Asia. The majority of them immigrated because their partner was a New Zealander. Others immigrated with their families, or came for study or for work, to support their families back home.

Their first language was Polish, Samoan, Hebrew, Chinese – Hokkien dialect, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese, Hungarian, German, Bosnian, Malyalam, French, Dutch, Parsi. Thus, they told me their non-English stories in English. They translated themselves in another language.

Taurea was my first interviewee. After the interview, we discussed her experience, and that helped me articulate better and simplify more the interviewing process for an improved interviewing experience and enriched results.

4.3.9 PLACE OF THE INTERVIEW

Gray (2003) motivated the significance of space within the interview process as *"moving from the external view of the researcher to the internal view of the participants"* (Gray, 2003, p. 84). Mothers' stories unfolded in a one hour – one hour and a half shared space.

Participants were invited to choose the place of the interview, with the scope to integrate the interview in their day-to-day life, rather than decontextualizing it into a foreign routine. Their choice was motivated by convenience. Six mothers chose their own home as the place to tell their stories. Anett (Hungary), Anne (Denmark), Barb (Israel, Cristina (Peru), Elisapeta (Samoa) and Taurea (Hungary) invited me to their homes. The encounter was unstructured and I made efforts to make as little impact in their day routine as

possible. That involved hosting the researcher (myself) as well, and they did it gracefully, involving elements of their personal lives informed by the culture of their families, that were highly appreciated. Elisapeta (Samoa) had a big fruit platter prepared for me and a coffee plunger that she kept on worrying was getting cold. Cristina's (Peru) husband went to buy us coffee, and during that time her daughter was part of the interview's landscape with Cristina demonstratively engaging with her in Spanish, using the interventions as a prompt for future stories. Anne (Denmark) had tea and cookies prepared for me in her lounge, whose walls displayed family photos that she described in the context that they were taken. She showed me family photo albums, particularly to illustrate elements of Danish cooking prepared for family celebrations. Her daughter, 55 at the time of the interview, was with us, and their dialogue helped with clarifying points and perspectives from Anne's story.

Sonia (Iran) welcomed me at her business office, and proudly showed me the innovative product that her company was developing; in doing that she introduced me to her son and niece who, being school holidays, were helping with the packaging. For convenience, I interviewed Jenny (China) at her work office; at the time of the interview (2015), she was pregnant with her second child. Nina (Samoa) was interviewed at the University, to fit with her busy schedule of working, studying and mothering. The other participants were interviewed either at Planet FM, whose management kindly offered me the space, or at my work premises. I met Miyuki (Japan) at a café close to her home, where she came accompanied by her little son. She shared the time gracefully between responding to my questions and performing mothering duties, such as engaging her son in play activities and modelling behavior for him in a public space. Saha (France) booked the interview at her friend's place in West Auckland. She was on her way from Coromandel Peninsula, where she lived, to France, on a family visit. She used the interview place to illustrate the concept of friendship in a multicultural New Zealand.

Outside sharing the space and time of the interview, we also shared the country of immigration, New Zealand. Except Saha, who moved in Coromandel after the birth of her child, to follow her husband who was teaching there, all mothers were living in Auckland at the time of the interview. Liisa Malkki within a sociology of displacement, or

nomadology paradigm, talked about the importance of place in the construction of identities insisting that we attend to the *"multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering them and imagining them"* (Malkki, 1992, p. 38). In the context of my inquiry, Auckland was the space where participants' interethnic mothering was being performed, it was also the space from where they engaged in revisiting other significant spaces to share memories of interethnic mothering for the purpose of this research.

Mother participants described Auckland as multicultural and open towards other cultures. *"Auckland is fabulous, multicultural, very accepting, it feels like an international city and we all feel very much at home in Auckland",* Adna (Bosnia) defined her new city. It is a place enabling immigrants to express their culture, Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) considered, because "*it is very open, it really encourages you to express who you are and when I think of Auckland in particular and how multiracial it is, over 200 ethnicities in here, I feel there is a place here that really allows that culture to come forward."* For Barb (Israel), Auckland is the space where her ethnic traditions and rituals involved are expressed through community, synagogue and school and where the family of her New Zealand husband can join in. For Cristina (Peru), Auckland represents a place where ethnic celebrations can be re-enacted at community level: *"I think there is a Peruvian community in Christchurch as well, but anyway, in Auckland we celebrate the Peruvian Independence Day, that's two main parties."* Auckland, as the city containing her Samoan community's history, was reflected in Elisapeta's personal story of belonging:

> *"my grandfather and some other people, they passed on now, in Grey Lynn in Auckland, they started a church, in a garage, and then they got to buy a house, and then my grandfather passed, and then my uncle from Samoa took over the whole congregation and they were building a beautiful church in Grey Lynn. First week they celebrated the church. The second week I got married there."*

Auckland as reconstructed above, was the space from where mothers revisited other significant times and spaces to bring in my interviews their stories of and reflections on interethnic mothering.

4.3.10 TRANSCRIPTIONS

I decided to transcribe the interviews myself. This decision came from a personal experience: just before taking the interviews I had the chance to be a research participant. The researcher chose a transcriber, and then she sent me the transcriber's notes for revision. While the transcription was technically correct, I found it hard to connect the words in front of me to the lovely relationship I experienced with the interviewer, and the vivid dialogue that resulted from it. Consequently, I decided to transcribe the interviews and that allowed me to format the transcriptions in a way that allowed mothers to recognize themselves in the scripts; for me, the transcriptions resulting were a constant reminder of the warmth of the contextual relationship all throughout the analysis process.

Participants in my study had very good English, despite the fact that English was their second or third language. Their maternal language was coming through a different accent, a different sentence structure, or the rare use of a word. In the context of this research, different has a relative meaning, as my own experience is of English as third language, and the standard used may not be a fully internalized New Zealand standard.

However, these differences did not impact on the clarity of the text, they only brought colour and style to mothers' stories. It was difficult to discern if that style was personal, or was part of an ethnic way of narrating that the mothers involuntarily brought with them in the research.

When transcribing I made the following choices:

•   I corrected minor grammatical errors;

•   I cut some of the repetitive words like "you know", "very very";

•   I aided the flow of the stories by eliminating pauses and hesitations that didn't help with the nature of the material collected (while keeping those that did).

The tone of the stories varied in concordance with participants' enacted personalities in telling their own stories: some mothers distanced themselves from the characters described, some mothers performed those characters with great skill, like a revived

experience. While I decided from the very beginning not to produce a performance analysis, the vivacity of some of the voiced quotes followed me through my research journey, informing the narrative analysis and keeping my enthusiasm alive.

<u>4.3.11 DATA ANALYSIS</u>

I started my research from a narrative approach perspective, as a human-sense-making process, essential for configuring lived experiences, and I anchored the beginning of my research journey within a social constructivism paradigm, where I looked for mothers' experiences, what they meant to them (Vygotsky, 1978), opening as well to how stories were used to make sense of these experiences (Bruner, 1990). I streamlined these experiences, using NVivo, on three negotiating spaces as defined by Bamberg (2011):

(1) How mothers enrich their experience, from the time they were mother to their interethnic mothering, identifying and passing milestones, negotiating a *"successful diachronic navigation between constancy and change".*

(2) How mothers negotiate the *"synchronic connection between sameness and difference"*, defining and re-defining their role in regards *to the other culture*, the other world view they come in contact with.

(3) How mothers position themselves within *"the management of agency between the double-arrow of a mother-to-world versus a world-to-mother direction of fit"* (Bamberg, 2011, p. 3).

Very soon it became evident that the analysis needed other dimensions to fulfil its scope, which was to recreate the narrative of interethnic mothering in New Zealand. I performed a second NVivo analysis of data, this time focusing on narrative elements of contextualizing these experiences in a particular space and time and searching for their narrative plots. Research participants were recognized not only as immigrant mothers, but as owners and tellers of their stories, and as characters in their own stories. A character mapping narrative analysis was performed, to investigate how mother participants introduced significant others as characters in their stories, to help the shaping of their

own character. The data collection process (the semi-structured interviews) and the data themselves (the narratives) were contextualized. Therefore, the space from where mother-participants reflected on their memories and wishes for the future was described, and the research process insisted on the time element as fundamental dimensions of narratives. I followed the narrative's plots and, mesmerized at their diversity, I only classified the process, leaving the content to overflow in its multitude of possible options. In terms of what negotiations here held, the development of mothers' agency, and the diversity of resolution strategies manifested, I attempted to stay true to the narrative approach employed, which was that knowledge itself is considered valuable even when owned by only one mother. As much as possible in the context of a PHD thesis, I aimed to honour every story, however situated, partial, contextual and contradictory it may have been.

In collecting and analysing mothers' narratives it became obvious that they were feeding from other, bigger narratives distinguishable within interviews as loci of power. These master narratives (Lyotard, 1986) diffusely constituted institutional and ideological forms of knowledge regarding motherhood and attempted to regulate mothering. Mothers made use of different discourses to position themselves towards or against master narratives of motherhood.

Mullings and Mullings Lewis (2013) affirmed that *"Storytelling and narrative are used as hybrid strategies, simultaneously addressing transformative resistance and knowledge dissemination"* (p. 108). In this sense, counter-narratives of mothering alter the discourses around the legitimacy of motherhood as patriarchal institution and bring mothers' perspective within researching social realities of motherhood through lived experiences.

"Discourse is always realized temporally and in present", considered Ricoeur (1971, p. 530). Discourse is self-referential, it is always about something, refers to a perspective that it aims to describe, to express or to represent. It is in discourse that all messages are exchanged. Francis (1999) argued that discourses are *"socially produced patterns of language, which constitute power by constructing objects in particular ways"* (p. 383). DeSouza (2004) added that within such definition, mothers can be *"positioned as*

powerless within one discourse whilst positioning themselves as powerful in another" (p. 465).

This distinction is compatible with Bamberg's (2014) differentiation between capital-D discourses (also called dominant discourses or master narratives) and small-d discourses (the everyday stories). Motherhood, mothering and the world these are performed within, are constructed as the product of the existing capital-D discourses. Small-d discourses are used in interactive settings to construct a sense of self, of the other, of their interethnic mothering, and of the world, with mother narrators as agents who are involved agentively (and responsibly) in this construction process.

4.4 Conclusions

In this chapter I presented the theoretical framework under which my research was developed. I showed how the theoretical triangulation employed (critical theory, social constructivism and feminism) guided my research. The methodology chosen to collect mother participants' stories and to analyse them was narrative inquiry. I addressed ethical issues and described how I will address the validity and reliability of the research. I described the research process and I introduced the research participants. In the next four chapters I will use a narrative inquiry methodology to analyse mother participants' stories of interethnic mothering.

Analysis Chapters

The analysis is divided into the following four chapters:

The first chapter introduces mothers in their role of cultural reproduction. Relevant negotiation spaces are grouped within three sections representing reproduction of culture through food, reproduction of culture through language, and reproduction of culture through education, including the transmission of cultural values.

The second chapter anchors the analysis on the time dimension, contextualizing interethnic mothering and mother participants' narratives of interethnic mothering.

The third chapter structures mothers' narratives into meaningful units through plot analyses, grouping stories within plot constitutive elements: initiating action, complicating action, climax, resolutions and coda.

The fourth chapter describes and maps characters that mothers introduce in their interethnic mothering narratives, to support revolving plots, and to express their positioning towards or against master narratives of motherhood.

DISCLAIMER

I used the 'story' concept to define a piece of life related by mothers interviewed, determined by action, and generally with marked beginnings, visible punchlines and noticeable ends. Many stories and their evaluation would form mothers' narratives. Within the thesis, a mother's narrative will appear under the small-d discourses category, as defined by Bamberg (2014), contrasting the existing capital-D discourses category which express the master narratives towards or against a mother would position.

Within my research journey, I was struck by the beauty of mothers' stories, reflected not only by the interethnic mothering content, but also by the authentic way their narration

unfolded. Therefore, within the writing process, I allowed the stories to unfold through mothers' voices.

My analytical stance made use of selecting and combining different mothers' stories to build the meaning, while keeping mothers' voices in the text as much as possible. I considered that assuming this stance will enhance the authenticity of the final narrative of interethnic mothering in New Zealand

Narratives are not linear and orderly; and to organize them in a rigid system of analysis may lose some of the meaning intended. In the writing process, there were instances where I cited the same story, to enhance its meaning through repeatability, or to enrich different meanings represented in the same story. When taking this decision, I used my experience of re-reading mothers' stories many times. Every read presented and/or enhanced meaning, thus, was fascinating. I hope other readers will have the same enjoyable experience.

5. Negotiation Spaces of Cultural Reproduction

Within this chapter I acknowledge that production and reproduction are gendered activities, where reproduction is mostly performed by women. Consistent with the literature, mother participants in this research perform most reproduction activities in their interethnic families. This chapter introduces mothers in their role of cultural reproduction. Relevant negotiation spaces are grouped within three sections representing reproduction of culture through food, reproduction of culture through language and reproduction of culture through education, including the transmission of cultural values.

"Children may be viewed as public goods whereby both parents receive equal genetic benefits yet one parent often invests more heavily than the other" (Gurven et al., 2009, p. 151). This is because production and reproduction, as necessary activities to sustain human life (Joshi, 2002), are traditionally gendered, production being habitually assigned to men, and reproduction (including care and regeneration) being usually performed by women (Waring, 1988).

The reproductive sphere pertaining to giving birth extends to the intergenerational reproduction of culture manifested largely within the effort intensive activity of raising children. Interethnic mothering adds many questions:

Whose culture mothers parenting in interethnic relationships reproduce? What negotiations they hold to reproduce elements of their own ethnic culture? What mothering practices they employ and how practical and successful they tend to be in this endeavor of reproducing culture? How master narratives of motherhood, from the countries of birth and from the country of migration, affect the mothering practices of culture reproduction and how mothers position themselves towards and against these master narratives?

The reproduction of culture is performed in obvious and subtle ways within all expanses of living. Mother participants within this research have storied their pursuits of culture

reproduction in personalized ways, highlighting three negotiation spaces. These are reproduction of culture through language, reproduction of culture through food and reproduction of culture through education, including the transmission of cultural values. While these three negotiation spaces do not exhaust the stories told, they certainly and attentively touched many aspects of interethnic mothering.

5.1 NEGOTIATING LANGUAGE

This section describes the motivation and efforts mothers invested in transmitting their maternal language to their children, their work in recreating linguistic environments within their sphere of influence, their homes, and their struggles against the lack of own language validation within the mainstream society.

Fifteen out of 16 mothers interviewed stressed the importance of transmitting their maternal language to their children as part of their efforts of intergenerational cultural reproduction. However, their efforts in securing language transmission in a space of immigration were barred with obstacles. Language is acquired and maintained in social places, and it has to be validated institutionally and socially. The lack of social places to validate mothers' maternal language, and the lack of active support from their partners, affected negatively mothers' individual efforts to reproduce their language.

5.1.1 LANGUAGE AS investment

Norton Peirce (1995) insisted on introducing the concept of investment in language learning, a concept extracted from Bourdieu's theory on linguistic capital. In Bourdieu's view *"some forms of cultural capital (including linguistic capital) have a higher exchange value than others in a given social context"* (p. 17). This theory explains the difficulties experienced by mothers in teaching their children their maternal language, and some mothers' motivation not to even try. Sheena's (Chinese born in Malaysia) maternal language is a dialect mixing Teochew and Hokkien. Very few people speak that dialect in New Zealand, Sheena remarked, and, without a community of speakers, Sheena's competency in this language decreased: *"I haven't spoken it for so long, even if I wanted to, I won't remember most of the words, you know, you don't use it, you lose it."* Sheena decided not to invest in teaching her children the Teochew-Hokkien dialect because *"they got no-one to talk to in that dialect."* If Sheena was fluent in Cantonese or Mandarin, she would have taught those languages to her children, she said, as that may have been perceived as a

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good investment, Sheena herself having benefited from their use in business settings, at the level of competency she had. However, Sheena invested in her children's acquisition of Te Reo Māori to an extended degree, enrolling them in a Māori full immersion unit, and herself starting Māori classes at *Te Wananga o Aotearoa*, to support them in their learning. Do Sheena's actions adhere to Bourdieu's linguistic capital theory? Certainly, Māori has a higher *exchange rate* in New Zealand than the Teochew-Hokkien dialect, however, if we follow Sheena's story, the experience of Māori full immersion units, less resourced than mainstream education, Sheena observed, is an isolating one, and *"it makes them feel like second class citizens."*

Elisapeta (Samoa) came to New Zealand with *"very little English"* and her efforts to increase her English competency were detailed in her narrative. She identified more benefits in investing in her English proficiency, than in transmitting intergenerationally her maternal language, Samoan:

> *"I spoke very little to the children in Samoan because I was wanting, I needed their help to keep me going talking in English so I can understand, so I can talk to my friends, talk to the neighbors, talk to the teachers in English",* Elisapeta confessed.

Like in Sheena's experience, Elisapeta didn't have a community of speakers close by to motivate the investment in the Samoan language for her children's education:

> *"I was the only Samoan here for twenty odd years and no one to speak to, so why would I, you know, continued in Samoan with my children."*

However, her regretful re-evaluation in not doing so, *"that was bad, that was the saddest thing not teaching my children Samoan, my language",* and her daughter's decision to re-claim Samoan when an adult, showed Bourdieu's linguistic capital theory's limitations for this study. Anne's (Denmark) decision to learn Māori, her husband's language, later on in life, after his death, transgressed this theory as well; in her early parenting years, Anne having invested in benefit bringing behaviors:

> *"I think we spent our time learning to live a life together and we didn't have the time to worry about languages. Now perhaps educated people might do, but we didn't"* (Anne, Denmark).

Nevertheless, we can observe a sense of investment, other than in the economy of scale, in mothers' efforts to transmit their maternal language to their children. When reproducing their maternal language, mothers felt they invest in their children's identity construction, in their ability to communicate with their ethnic family and, overall, in their development.

Language plays an important role in identity construction (Benson, Barkhuizen, Bodycott, & Brown, 2013). In teaching her daughter Spanish, Cristina motivated:

> *"I just think that a human being is whole when all parts of their identity are alive, you know? And I think that language is an important tool, it helps to communicate, it helps to articulate our feelings, and it's an amazing tool to have. And I think that there will be something a little bit, not incomplete, but I think she's more complete, she's more whole, knowing that language."*

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) confirmed the importance of defining identity through language, and shared a personal story:

> *"I think I learnt what it means to be a Malaysian because of the language, you know? I understand what being a Malaysian means, but I can't say what it means to be Indian because I can't speak the language so maybe… I think it gives you an insight, you know, the words, the language, the way it's structured."*

Benson et al. (2013) noted that *"knowing a second language influences both the learner's sense of self and possibilities for self-representation through language use"* (p. 1). Significant for mothers was that their children were able to communicate with their families, in an imagined time when visiting their home country:

> *"I want her to be able to speak and communicate and interact with the family and with my friends and just being able to experience that culture in a deeper manner, and also I think that, you know, it's part of her"* confirmed Cristina (Peru).

When this goal seemed out of reach, mothers experienced guilt:

> *"I feel a bit guilty about that, and when my family asks me, and they ask me every time: Does she speak Hungarian yet? And I feel very bad saying to them no, she doesn't really*

speak Hungarian, and neither my mum nor my dad speak English, so it will be interesting to see, when I take her home, what their reaction will be. I think sadness will come to them, that they can't communicate with their grandchild" projected Anett (Hungary).

Mastering a second language was considered as being extremely favorable to children's development:

"You read all these articles about how a different language is almost like learning an instrument and how good it is for your brain, and then my mother-in-law comes, and my mother-in-law very much encourages me to speak to her in Hungarian, and she brings me articles from the Herald to say look, now they say that it even prevents Alzheimer, to know more than one language, and how much more clever kids are… I think she's trying to make me feel good about it, but it makes me feel like Oh my god!" Anett (Hungary) narrated her disappointment.

The stories mother participants told emphasize their efforts to invest in transmitting intergenerationally their maternal language. While some mothers chose to invest in the *higher capital* language of the country of immigration, maternal language was considered an important component in the development of their children, also a critical communication tool with families from their countries of birth.

5.1.2 FATHERS AND THE REPRODUCTION OF MATERNAL LANGUAGE

Fathers adopting mothers' maternal language was seen as a positive factor in validating an ethnic linguistic context in the country of migration. Anne's (Denmark) husband learnt a few Danish words. "*And even K. speaks to her in Spanglish, you know?*" Cristina (Peru) talked about her husband, who, in this instance, entered as a minority in a Peruvian household.

However, mothers in interethnic relationships usually used English to communicate with their partners, and that communication in the *higher capital* language extended to communication with children. Also, fathers were more inclined to adopt other cultural practices from their partners' heritage, than their language. One exception was presented by Miyuki (Japan); she met her husband in Japan and he speaks Japanese, so sometimes

they talk to their child in Japanese. However, even Miyuki accepted the overwhelmingly English environment: "*We live in New Zealand and most of time we speak in English.*"

Barb (Israel) noticed that if her partner was speaking Hebrew, they could have recreated a language environment in their household, with more enticement for their children to learn her native language:

> "*The main thing is, if A. spoke Hebrew, we would have spoken Hebrew. And they would have heard it more. But A. doesn't speak Hebrew, never learnt Hebrew, so that's my big, my one big criticism of my husband is that he never learnt Hebrew and, to be honest, it's quite deliberate, cause when we go to Israel, he's quite happy not to understand anything (laughs). So I have to deal with everything and he's just on holiday*" (Barb, Israel).

With a non-negotiable stance, Nina (Samoa) recreated a Samoan language environment in her house, supported by the fact that her children were able to reduplicate that language environment within communities of language outside of home (extended family gatherings and churches) and within New Zealand institutions such as schools:

> "*It kind of happened naturally, because I was speaking to them, to the babies in Samoan, when I said to my husband, look, I would like them to go into preschool, there was no debate about that, it was kind of yeah, ok, so they just went like that… because he knew how important language was, so there was no negotiating whether it's gonna happen or not, it was more like ok, so it's your turn tomorrow and my turn today.*"

It was an environment to which the non-Samoan partner had to adapt:

> "*Interviewer: Does your ex-husband speak Samoan?*
>
> *Little bits. I mean he had to, because we were speaking all the time and the kids would come from preschool and they are talking and singing, so he picked things up, so even now if I say things for the kids, he can pick up generally what I'm saying, he just can't speak it. So he did benefit, you know? (laughs)*" (Nina, Samoa).

The language capital was what Nina's partner tried to deny the children, after their divorce:

> "*When we separated, my ex-husband went through this phase of banning the kids from speaking Samoan in the house, yeah, so he had this dark moment.*"

By that time, however, most of her children's lives were translated in Samoan:

> *"Anyway, he got over it now. Cause I would go to pick the children up and speak to them in Samoan, as I normally do, and I'm telling them that I'll pick them up, and he would say don't speak, don't speak that in the house. So we had about maybe a couple of months, two-three months of that, so whatever it was and he got over it, cause mama would ring them, and speak to them on the phone in Samoan, and he would hear the kids responding to the old lady in Samoan, so it's not exactly like he could cut them off. But that was really a tricky time. Apart from that, no, he was really flexible around the church, the religious celebrations, things like Easter, he may not come to church, but he would bring the kids to church and he would leave them there, cause they nearly do everything in Samoan, they pray in Samoan...",* Nina (Samoa) explained.

5.1.3 RECREATING MATERNAL LANGUAGE CONTEXTS

Most mother participants made a conscious effort to speak with their children in their maternal language: *"I spoke with my boys in Bosnian"*, Adna (Bosnia) acknowledged. *"I just speak to her in Spanish, that's it"*, Cristina (Peru) said. *"I speak to my kids in Samoan. Yeah. Because Samoan was their first language"*, Nina (Samoa) agreed. *"Right from the beginning I spoke in Hungarian to her. So her first language was Hungarian"*, Taurea (Hungary) remembered.

The exposure to the language varied. *"I speak to him every now and then in Malay, so he can hear it, so he's got the sound like, but at the moment I don't speak it"* Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) confessed. At the other side of the spectrum was Donna (China) who, at her parents' advice, spoke extensively to her child in Mandarin, in his first months of life:

> *"When he was born, I started talking to him, same as my parents were talking to me, in Mandarin, talking to me all the time. My parents believed... the influence I have from my parents is, you know, talk to babies all the time, don't worry about whether they understand or not, or if they listen of not, even if they are asleep, talk to them, say, you know, whatever and I started, at the beginning it seemed just madness, talking to a baby who was asleep. I think in a way I got the point after, it was kind of like I let my feelings, stories out, even talking to a baby who doesn't respond or interact, as it's kind of giving me that space, you*

know, drawn in maternity leave at home, not alone, but being a first time mother, there is huge amount of work, to learn to look after a new born. After a period of time, I found that I can talk to baby, like communicating with my baby, so I didn't feel that it was a madness talk, [but] rather mentally healthy" (Donna, China).

The time that the mother spent at home with her child was significant in creating a congruent language environment: *"I speak French to her and I am with her everyday so I am a mum at home, so it means that most of the time she hears French and she's with me",* Saha (France) acknowledged. Present family members fluent in the ethnic language and even partners joining in the conversations have helped legitimizing the maternal language in the family, for the child's benefit:

> *"We are a bilingual family. So at home, I always speak Chinese to the kid. And my husband speaks English. And he learnt a little bit of Chinese and sometimes I try to speak Chinese to him as well. From my friends' experience, it is pretty hard, so I'm doing my best to keep the bilingual, at least",* considered Jenny (China).

Reproducing a setting, in which the use of maternal language was legitimized and validated, contributed to familiarizing children with the sound and the use of that language. Cristina (Peru) admitted: *"Because we lived in mum's house for almost two years, that's all she was listening to. And all my family, they know to speak to her in Spanish only."* Saha (France) benefited from frequent visits from her French family, and her own visits to France, in validating language environments:

> *"My parents, because they spent quite a lot of time here, like my mum came here twice for three months, so six months of my daughter's life, and we went there for three months, so she spent nine months of her life also with my mum and sometime with my dad as well, so that means that there were a lot of French people around her, probably more than anything else",* (Saha, France).

Extended family, educational institutions and community spaces reproducing Samoan language environments, legitimized the use of the language outside of the house, and supported Nina's efforts in transmitting her native language intergenerationally:

> *"All my kids went to a Samoan preschool. And then they channeled into a bilingual primary school. And then they went into mainstream. Cause there are not many bilingual Samoan*

units after primary. My eldest is fluent. My second one is semi fluent, cause once they go to mainstream is all gone, hey?

Interviewer: But at least they have the basics,

Yeah, so we went to a tangi up north for two days and they got up and sang a Samoan song, a song I didn't know, but a song that they knew from church, so they go to church almost every Sunday and that's the Samoan church, so they are surrounded by the language, and also they listen to the discussions, so they listen to the formal language, and there is the common language, so that is my exposure for them. And we go to mama. Mama is my aunty. And we go there every Sunday. So they eat the food, they hear the family business, if somebody is dying or is whatever. So that's the ethnic part of it. Plus the way that I raise them. My expectations and that. That's culture. So they are surrounded by that, all the time. Yeah", Nina (Samoa) storied.

In some cases, the maternal language remained that 'secret code' to share family's stories outside of the children's ears, like Anne (Denmark) using Danish to chat with her sister, or to create secretive mother-son games, as Donna (China) shared:

"Me and my son, we kind of get to the stage when we talk about things we didn't like or we don't want his dad to hear. So we talk in our own language and we think is quite funny, yeah, and we laugh at that, we say, oh, don't tell dad, and, you know, we can use our own language and he thinks is quite funny too. And his dad doesn't mind" (Donna, China).

5.1.4 Challenges of transmitting the maternal language

Barb (Israel), while initially very committed to speak to her son in Hebrew, stopped when she noticed that he had learning delays, and the advice received from experts was to speak in English. I do recall a similar experience: when I noticed the effort that my oldest son was putting into processing two languages, and how that delayed him in constructing more elaborate sentences, I started to question the benefit of my good intentions to raise him bilingual. Like Barb, I put much less pressure on the second child towards using both languages:

"I spoke to my son in Hebrew when he was young, but then he had learning delays and the advice was to speak in English; by the time my daughter was there, we already spoke in English, so that's the main thing that I didn't succeed and that's that they don't speak Hebrew. My son can understand Hebrew a lot better than my daughter can, even though they get taught in the school", Barb (Israel) acknowledged.

The change of setting, moving from the home environment to kindergarten and school, was the most difficult challenge for maintaining the mother's maternal language alive in the children's changed routines. The activities interiorized and shared in the native language became *"only a very small bit of our life"*, as Taurea (Hungary) explained, and those were related to *"the household stuff: go and brush your teeth or get dressed and let's have dinner, those sort of things."* The change to the mainstream language, English, was motivated by the practicality of continuing a daily activity, like homework, in the same language that it was initiated:

"And I kept that up, but unfortunately, or that's just the way it is, ... school was a turning point, we had to interact in English more and more, because her homework was in English, she can't do all those sort of things in a different language" (Taurea, Hungary).

For children, it was also a desire of conforming, not being seen as different, as Adna revealed: *"when they started school they stopped speaking Bosnian, they switched to English and refused to speak that language, because they didn't want to be different."* Taurea (Hungary), discovered that her daughter *"lost almost all of her language when she was at school"* and assessed the process of keeping her maternal language alive throughout the years as *"hard, very hard."*

Sometimes the children would be resistant to a language different from the mainstream one in which they used to process reality. Anett (Hungary) storied:

"I'm driving the car and I would say to her: Look this is how this is called in Hungarian and so on, so I try to build up her interest, because she gets upset with me when I speak to her in Hungarian, cause she gets frustrated, cause she doesn't understand."

"Does your son speak Mandarin?" I asked Donna (China). *"Yes. But he prefers English... In the last few years I used Mandarin, I speak to my son in Mandarin most of the times. Just give him that opportunity that he can hear me talk, he can hear a lot, but he doesn't say a*

lot; he can hear me when I talk to him in Chinese, but he usually responds in English",
Donna recalled.

Shin (2000) asserted that language identity is contextually embedded and constructed through interaction (p. 206). Donna involved other Chinese friends to re-create language spaces where their children could interact in Mandarin:

> *"It's a funny thing though, like most of my friends' kids were born here, same as my son and when they meet together, we actually wanted to give them an opportunity to speak Mandarin. And when the kids get together, they tend to speak English. And we keep emphasizing, you know, talk to each other in Chinese, you know, Chinese, Chinese. And then ok, and then,*

> **Interviewer: And when they think you don't hear them...**

> *Yeah, they find it easier in using English",* Donna (China) recognized.

This made me recall similar experiences of Romanian parents organizing Romanian holiday camps to recreate a Romanian space in which children were encouraged to partake of their parents' ethnic heritage through interacting in their language. The children connected very well, they had similar experiences to share, for example how most of their Romanian names were mispronounced or misspelled, but these experiences were shared in English.

A factor interfering negatively with the use of the maternal language was the inconvenience of a yet another task within mothering work. Mothers in my study were, like all mothers, busy with doing their best to provide for their children. Speaking in English was just easier, Anett (Hungary) recollected:

> *"I think because my partner is a Kiwi and we speak English at home, it seemed... when you have a child is so overwhelming and it just seemed easier, an easy solution, an easier way of communicating with her, yes. I didn't think it's going to be a job to speak with her in Hungarian, it's like a job, it's like a task, and I never thought it will be like that. So it takes conscious effort to speak to her in Hungarian and it just makes the home life harder*

somehow, it makes it harder and it was very easy to remove that and just speak in English" (Anett, Hungary).

A lack of language diversity was another unhelpful factor. Adna (Bosnia) was living in Christchurch when she was raising her children, and *"I guess Christchurch is not so multicultural like Auckland is, so we lived in Christchurch at the time. So I found that really tricky"*, she said.

Annett (Hungary) mentioned another factor and that was the wish to separate her mothering from what she experienced as a child:

> *"I didn't want to sound like my mother, for whatever reason, in particular, yes, yes, but I remember thinking, God, I sound like my mother!"* Annett (Hungary) recalled.

Not being able to communicate in their own native language was associated with regret. Adna (Bosnia) acknowledged: *"I missed that kind of communication in my mother tongue, communicating with my children."* Years later, Elisapeta (Samoa) expressed regret and negative judgement for not reproducing her language intergenerationally. Anett imagined a time when her daughter would accuse her for not teaching her Hungarian:

> *"I made the mistake not to speak to her straight away in Hungarian, after she was born, and I was struggling with that a bit. I would very much like to change that and speak to her in Hungarian, because I know that she's going to tell me when she's twenty that I was a terrible mother, and maybe she's nice and considerate, but she doesn't speak Hungarian. And I think the day will come when she will really, really tell me off for not talking to her in Hungarian, not teaching her the language..."* (Anett, Hungary).

Some mothers recounted with relief how their children took the responsibility to learn later on in life their language. Elisapeta's daughter went to Samoa to connect to that side of her heritage. She taught her daughter, Elisapeta's granddaughter, Samoan as first language:

> *"N. went to Samoa and she came back speaking the language and my granddaughter didn't speak any English at all, it was just Samoan, it was "oh nan, you speak Samoan to me, I don't know any other language", that's S. (laughs). S. never ever started speaking English, only Samoan"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Norton Peirce (1995) emphasizes very forcefully the role that language plays in identity construction. Language connects people to culture, cultural values and practices, and it is through language that people negotiate a sense of self. Language is a mean and a mark of identification, as well as an object of identification: we learn the language of the community we wish to become a member of, to identify or affiliate with (Benson et al., 2013).

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) told the story of her son negotiating identity through language:

> *"When A. said I'm not Indian because I don't speak Indian, I'm English, that's what he claims to be, he thinks he's English because he speaks English and at that point I said to him, actually I speak English but I'm Indian."*

Diya and her partner supported their child in assuming an identity fully inclusive of both ethnicities he inherited:

> *"When we speak to my son A., we used to say, you're 50% Indian and 50% Kiwi but now I'm kind of thinking actually you're 100% Indian and you're 100% Kiwi, but of course, that concept for him, he doesn't get that, but I'm starting to see that, I'm not just claiming this is half/half, it's actually full/full"* (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

"I hear from him talk about who he is" Donna storied, as she observed with interest her son processing identity through language use within an environment stressing difference:

> *"He kind of said things like "I'm not Chinese because I don't speak much the language". That's from his point of view. And also he says "but I'm not English either". So he noticed that he is different, I think it's kind of a growing milestone that he recognizes the difference from some of the kids and he talks about it. I'm quite pleased to hear when he says things like that, even if he says "I'm not Chinese." I'm not offended, because he is not. It is part of him. But interesting to learn that he says he is not Chinese because he doesn't speak much the language. Even if he understands a lot more than he can speak. Yeah, I found that for me is interesting to hear. That's how he thinks, you know, where he belongs, language plays*

*a big part of it. I think it's a good thing. It's part of the fact that he is growing to another stage, to discover himself as a mix, cause he also has a **Māori** part integrated in the side of the family, so he has some **Māori** influence as well, which we encourage him to discover, that part of Kiwi. They have been to the Marae to the **Māori** side for all kind of celebrations and, you know, **Māori** food, he has been exposed to. And they also learn **Māori** at school which we encourage him to learn"* (Donna, China).

Even if her son doesn't master her maternal language, Donna still considered his appurtenance to several cultures as an opportunity to a constitutive sense of belonging:

*"I think it is a good thing that he has this advantage. I see it as advantage that he has a connection to a different, to so many different cultures, you know, people from overseas and even locally, they are different cultures as well. When he was born, because in his birth certificate, we both decided, I'm quite pleased that we both decided that we tick all the boxes that relate to him. That he is Chinese, he is, you know, European, he is **Māori**, which he has part of the history in him. So that we identify him as belonging to all these ethnic groups, on his birth certificate, which we both feel proud of. I think now he started to discover that's where he belongs. You know, shows interest. I think it's a positive thing myself"* (Donna, China).

Identity is contextual, Anett (Hungary) considered, observing her daughter's identity claims in response to different environments:

"She's a Hungarian-Kiwi, she says. Yes. And when it suits her, she's a Hungarian, and when it suits her, she's a Kiwi. Because she has a couple of friends who are also Hungarian, or have Hungarian mothers and then she's a Hungarian, but then she comes home and she tells that she's a Kiwi, you know, sometimes she's very proud to be Hungarian, she will tell people she knows this word, or that word, and also there are lots of ethnicities in her day-care and then, suddenly, if someone is Chinese, or Portuguese, or Japanese, then she is Hungarian. Because I think she wants to be like them, but most of the time she is a Kiwi. Me and Daddy, we are Kiwi, and you are Hungarian. But it can change daily. But she knows I'm from Hungary and, and she knows English is not my first language, and she knows about my parents, how they don't speak English, so she's very well aware that English is not my first language" (Anett, Hungary).

While reproducing their maternal language intergenerationally was seen as significant for immigrant mothers, interethnic mothering raised substantial obstacles for this reproduction to eventuate. Bourdieu's theory of linguistic capital, while presenting limitations for this study, still accounted for some mothers' decisions not to reproduce their language because of the minimal capital it had in migration territories. Mothers choosing to invest in transmitting intergenerationally their language and recreating language environments at home, struggled with this task when their children's activities and education were translated within mainstream settings. External settings, like extended family, educational institutions, community places or churches, where the language was validated and legitimized were scarce. Even partners who embraced their spouses' culture, preferred to invest in less demanding reproduction aspects, like food and celebrations. A significant factor was that mothering in their maternal language required from mothers extra effort, adding to other mothering tasks:

> *"You have to keep reminding them and, you know, keep connecting them and that sort of stuff. So I take them home, I take them to funerals, I pull them out of school. Cause that's really important, so they grow up knowing, not just that they are part Samoan but they know in here (pointing to the heart) that they are part Samoan. What it means for them, yeah",* Nina (Samoa) acknowledged.

Reproducing their culture through language, at degrees where language proficiency could have been powerful enough to contribute to their children's identity construction, proved to be difficult for most mothers mothering in interethnic relationships, in territories of immigration. These efforts were complimented within other spaces of cultural reproduction, such as food and education, which are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

5.2 Negotiating Spaces – Food

This section of the Negotiation spaces of cultural reproduction chapter describes the efforts immigrant mothers in interethnic relationships invested in reproducing their culture through food and practices around food. It follows immigrant mothers' culinary itineraries as a reflection of their interethnic mothering journey.

Food is as exclusive a human behavior as language, Parasecoli (2014) assumed:

> *"Among other strategies, immigrants cope with the dislocation and disorientation they experience in new and unknown spaces by recreating a sense of place around food production, preparation, and consumption, both at the personal and interpersonal levels"* (p.416).

Food has nutritional, cultural and emotional significance. Thus, in a migration context, *"food is at the center of processes of negotiation of meanings, memories and identities"* (Greco, 2016, p. 29). These negotiations are inescapable because

> *"When migrants find themselves in unfamiliar sensory and cultural environments, eating is an inevitable component of daily life that forces them to interact physically, emotionally, and cognitively with the surrounding Otherness. When it comes to ingestion, the contact is intimate to the point of becoming, at times, uncomfortable or even invasive, because the positions of the Self and Other involved are fundamentally different in terms of sociopolitical power, cultural capital, and sheer economic clout"* (Parasecoli, 2014, p. 418).

Within mothering, food represents intergenerational cultural reproduction, might be used as a connection to mothers' home country and also, understanding mothers' food trajectories means understanding their personal and unique process of learning and adaptation (Greco, 2016). Greco analyzed the reproduction of food in migrant territories from the perspective of the Tartu school of semiotics, which views culture both as a grammar (a set of codes) and as a set of texts. Within this approach, when reproducing their ethnic food, mothers rely on particular recipes (the food grammar) to organize

specific ingredients (set of texts) in an intelligible food language. Migration changes culinary grammars, Greco (2016) assessed:

> *"International migrants live one or more ruptures and changes in their status quo due to their adaptation to the receiving country, which puts their cultural habits into question. In this framework, even "normal" and well-established culinary practices might need to change"* (p.59).

5.2.1 FOOD AS IDENTITY AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

Food, including ingredients, dishes, and practices, is a cultural marker that has the potential to identify ethnicity through bringing history, experiences, and memories at the table. It is a highly salient tool used to signify identity: *"you're part Indian, you need to eat this food"*, Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) tells her child. *"Eating is biological and social reproduction",* Vallianatos (2016, p. 124) explained. Within this research, mothers took the responsibility of reproducing social practices, their own, or adopted from their interethnic cohabitation, to formulate belonging to a specific culture, as identity marker. For example, in the Māori culture, sitting on the tables is *tapu*, forbidden, because tables are associated with food. Saha (French, parenting a child with a Māori partner) contextually reproduced this tapu for her daughter:

> *"I wouldn't let her sit on a table, you know, things that are not acceptable for [my partner], but at the same time, if in France people sit on a table, then she will have to accept that too."*

In reproducing her cultural norms, Barb's (Israel) house is pork and shellfish free:

> *"I don't eat pork, no, no. My husband eats pork, not at home, he's not allowed at home, we don't have, in the house we don't have pork, we don't have bacon and we don't have shellfish."*

But food and eating, as malleable rituals (Greco, 2016) are products of ongoing processes of negotiation:

> *"Interviewer: Shellfish neither?*

No you're not allowed shellfish, but we'll have shellfish outside of the house, because it's too good to say no. And I'm secular. And it's not because I'm a religious person, I do these things to remind me of my culture. The most observant is our son. He would eat none of it. Our daughter would eat everything. And that's her choice", Barb (Israel) assessed her family's culinary itineraries.

Consuming food models desired social practices. Saha (France) described her expectations in regards to eating settings, a reproduction of practices from her country of birth:

"*I think eating habits, like you know, honestly, being seated when you eat, and having family having food all together, sitting with no TV, no computer and nothing like... I think it's quite important, you know, it is a social scene.*"

Taurea (Hungary) insisted in re-enacting an inherited celebration practice; for her, at the Christmas Eve table, people have to dress up, an element that she had to negotiate every time, she said:

"*I demand that Christmas Eve men put a shirt on and pants, put shoes on, so we can take nice pictures. They don't have to wear a tie. In my family you wear a tie. So you know, there was some negotiation around that, and every year: Do I have to wear a shirt? Yes, you have to wear a shirt. Do I have to...? Yes you have to... So every year, it was like yes, you have to dress up*" (Taurea, Hungary).

These stories express mothers' negotiations to introduce familiar social practices within territories of immigration.

5.2.2 IMMIGRANT MOTHERS' FOOD ROUTINES AND TRAJECTORIES

Vallianatos (2016) assessed that *"as a key component of everyday life, food is inextricably linked with reproduction, where reproduction is defined as a combination of social and biological propagation"* (p.124). In a mother's world, food routines are regulated and regulate other activities. Jenny (China) made sure that eating has priority over playing: *"It's like if he wants to play with a toy before food, you have to have food before play, otherwise you can't play."*

In patriarchal societies, reproduction falls on women's shoulders. Cristina (Peru) reflected on her food reproduction role in her interethnic marriage, compared with a Peruvian marriage:

> "I think that would probably be more different in regards to food, because food is a big thing, I think Peruvian husbands would expect, they do expect their wives to cook every single night and to do it well. I don't like cooking. I'm really bad at cooking" (Cristina, Peru).

The problem that many mothers mentioned is that reproducing traditional recipes in a migration space is time consuming:

> "So we actually talked about introducing her to some Hungarian dishes. But they take ages to make. It's a completely different cuisine, as you know it. And it's not a simple thing, people will be in the kitchen for three to four hours to produce a two-three course meal. So yes, it's very, very different", Anett (Hungary) detailed.

Also, it can be hard to recreate a recipe in a different space, with unfamiliar ingredients, tools and kitchens, and the efforts may not match the results:

> "Because you put so much time into it, and then when I eat it, I go, oh, this is not how it should be, did I miss the chilly, or some of the freshness of the spices?", Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) echoed her difficulties.

One option was to adopt recipes from the country of immigration, as Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) mentioned:

> "I do cook but not every day, so you know, the curries are maybe once a week, and then the other day is just easy pasta, yeah, I am more drawn towards doing what's easy, Indian food is hard."

Another option was to change the private space with the public space:

> "So what I've done in the past is, you know, we had people around and I tried to cook the traditional food, and it's just too much work, it's really a lot of work. But I make sure that we still talk about it, and if we are not going to cook, we go out to an Indian restaurant and eat on that particular day" (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Anne (Denmark), having lived in New Zealand since 1952, and in an interethnic marriage with a Māori, adapted to a timeline of food opportunities:

> *"We lived pretty much the Māori way, as much as food was concerned. But of course, we had Danish food as well, and then Chinese became interesting and then you got a lot more you never had. But it came over the years and we tried all of these things so yeah, but mostly **Māori** foods, really."*

Even after the death of her Māori husband, Anne still continued the Māori culinary journey, she confessed:

> *"I still do Danish food now and again and Māori food too, because all of a sudden I look up the garden and see there is a lot of puha. So I want a bit of brisket and puha, so I go and buy brisket or pork bones and cook up for myself"* (Anne, Denmark).

5.2.3 FOOD FOR THE RECOVERING MOTHER

In patriarchal societies, production is claimed by men, while reproduction, including through food, falls on women's shoulders. This generalization reflected the accounts of mothers in my research, with 12 participants holding the meal providers responsibilities in their families. When recovering from giving birth, being provided with food for themselves and for their family was a practice embraced, or missed in an immigration context, by many mother participants.

In Nina's stories, food is a part of a process in which families are present around a new-born, bringing food and help for the mother, and intrinsically claiming the baby:

> *"So that's why they come, it's like they claim the baby as part of this family... And sharing the food, like your kids, does your family give all type of food from your own culture? That's part of the claiming, so that the kid grows up and is part of us, this is what identifies us"* (Nina, Samoa).

Elisapeta (Samoa) spoke about missing the *"nannies",* the support system that organized meals for the family, while the mother was recovering from giving birth. There is often a particular kind of food, deemed as nutritious and helping with the recovery, as Donna

(China) mentioned *"particularly the mother, after giving birth to a child, they, you know, they try to avoid cold water, cold of everything."* Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) confirmed this practice of selecting specific food deemed healthy and nutritious to support the new mother's recovery from birth:

> *"You have a lot of rules to follow when you have a baby, so in Malaysia, if a woman gives birth, they would hire someone to come and take care of you. So this lady would come and cook for you because you can only eat certain food, you can't eat all different kind of food, you can't eat like KFC and stuff like that, you know? And for a whole month they do that."*

Unfortunately, Sheena didn't benefit from this kind of support, giving birth in migrant territories, without family from her country of birth around to reinforce the tradition.

Mother participants spoke about rules that limit a new mother's involvement in food reproduction activities: mothers *"don't usually go outside of the house",* said Donna (China). Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) confirmed this tradition: *"the mum is not supposed to exert herself for a whole month, the mom is not supposed to get out of bed and walk around too much."* Some of the mother participants had their own mothers coming to offer support, while others had to rely on themselves: *"... but here because I'm by myself, I have to cook, I have to clean, I still have to take care of the children and stuff so I had to do everything"* Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) continued her story. Anett (Hungary) relied on her husband's support, something rather unusual in her country of birth:

> *"I think Hungarian women, because family comes and helps you, they cook your meals, they clean your house, they help with the baby, whereas here in New Zealand we didn't have that support basically because families are further away from you, so yeah, I think that was a big difference after the birth, but we handled it well, my husband was a great support, he took off two weeks, paternal leave, which I think also in Hungary, people don't necessarily do, the husbands don't necessarily do",* Anett (Hungary) remembered.

Not all the mothers welcomed the familiar practices. Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) couldn't embrace her parents' support, perceived as interference with her own journey of recreating a different mothering from what she experienced growing up: *"You know, my mum would bring me something to eat and drink and I didn't want it, but she would force it on me."*

In contrast, she preferred her mother-in-law's approach who *"would ask me what I needed, rather than tell me"* (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

5.2.4 Food and intergenerational connections

Food reproduction marks intergenerational connections. Like many other mother participants in this research, Adna (Bosnia) continues to cook Bosnian food. With her extended family here in New Zealand, her mother is in charge of the intergenerational transmission of food practices: *"because I have my mum in New Zealand, she is in charge of that so she is basically carrying on the tradition through food."* The preservation of tradition through food is an intergenerational learning, as Anne (Denmark) proudly storied: *"And my grandchildren, they make that carrot and apple salad that my mother used to make. So it goes within the family a bit."*

But there were exceptions in which a specific upbringing environment broke this intergenerational link of food reproduction. Anett (Hungary) was brought up to be an academic and she talked about her experience of not being introduced to food reproduction practices: *"I was kept out of the kitchen for my whole entire life. My job was to study and have a good job, in Hungary, so I have no idea how to cook Hungarian food."* Anett judged her parents' decision as unhelpful, because to learn how to cook is a life skill, she said. She had to learn this skill in the New Zealand context, which restricted her to simple Kiwi dishes. Incidentally, it was her Kiwi husband who reproduced the Hungarian food heritage in her family:

> *"My husband is a chef, so he taught me well, actually he is the one who cooks Hungarian food for us. We got lots of cook books from Hungary, in English, so he makes my favorite dishes every now and then, I like pea soup, pea soup is very nice and paprika is very nice, and I just said to A., you know, we have to start making some Hungarian food for Aa., cause she's a great eater, and I think she will enjoy the Hungarian dishes",* shared Anett (Hungary).

Jenny (China) was brought up by her grandparents because *"in China we don't really have long term maternity leave, so most of the mothers, after they give birth and recover from the*

delivery, pretty soon they just go back to work, and normally the grandparents look after the kids."
So when Jenny asked her mother about traditional food items and ways to feed her child, her mother couldn't really remember. This was perceived as positive by Jenny because it gave her the opportunity to recreate cooking patterns according to the time and the space reality of her family life in New Zealand: *"I just found a way that was suitable for us."* That included both parents sharing the preparation of the food.

5.2.5 PARTNERS REPRODUCING THEIR OWN FOOD PRACTICES

Partners usually stepped in to cook, when reproducing their own food practices. Eva (Poland) introduced her children to some Polish food items: *"Some things yes, sauerkraut not yet, I think that they are a little bit too young, but when I cook Polish sausages they munch even as they are cooking, they just love them",* and she finds the time now and then to cook elaborate Polish food. But *"if it's sea food and fish",* her Māori husband takes the lead.

Anne (Denmark) recalled the practice of hangi (Māori traditional food) enacted by her husband for the entire neighborhood: *"my husband used to do hangi, he would do one for the whole neighborhood."* Her daughter completed the story: *"we had many hangi. We actually had a hangi piped in by a Scottish man. He used to live next door, we brought the hangi up, he came up with his big pipe and piped the hangi. So that was interesting."*

Nina (Samoa) brought in her Samoan perspective in which food reproduction belongs to men's activities: *"the preparing, like cooking the food and that sort of stuff, that's men's role in my culture."* This cultural background was complemented by her partner's background, with a father who did the washing and did the cooking in the family, modeling this behavior for his son. As Nina confessed, *"there was an alignment there, so what I expected a father to do, he did."* That had an impact on the family meals and cooking expectations:

> *"He cooks a lot of vegetables (laughs) so, you know, then I started making salads and the kids go, that's healthy, so that's a good thing. Or as in my culture, you eat a lot of meat and that sort of stuff, not necessarily a lot of vegetables, you know, it's like potatoes, so that's a good thing I've got of him..."* Nina described.

As he was taught, the father continued to model this behavior for their children. While it didn't align with Nina's food reproducing practices, she grew to appreciate the results:

> *"One of the things where it differs, he gets the kids to cook a lot, whereas in my culture that's different, that's mum, mum or aunty or uncle's role to cook, the kids do other things so… and even though I disagree with him giving them so much responsibility, I know that they are kids, but still. But it's a good thing because when they come to my house, you know, they can cook these little things and I go, oh, ok, that's all right"*, (Nina Samoa).

5.2.6 FOOD DISCOURSES: ETHNIC AND MAINSTREAM

"A food's meaning comes from its analogous physical properties, its association with particularly symbolic festivals, and its connections to long-standing traditions" Vallianatos (2016, p. 123) asserted. Parasecoli (2014) added that:

> *"For migrants, locality is experienced through the production, preparation, and consumption of foods, the performance of practices, and the reproduction of cultural categories that reinforce their connection with their places of origin and with other migrants in other countries, with friends, family members, and with other nearby or far away migrants"* (p.432).

Some mothers brokered distance and built food bridges to introduce their children to food that they grew up with, while other mothers adapted to the New Zealand mainstream food discourses. Saha (France) found *"a bit weird"* that *"most parents I know now, who have children one year and a half – two years old would feed, like the normal feed would be Weet-Bix in the morning."* But she agreed with porridge, *"because I feel it's good for her."* Other than porridge, she feeds her daughter a different diet than the New Zealand mainstream one:

> *"She usually has mashed veggies for lunch, like carrot and potato with a bit of meat, and for dinner she has some grains with things like rice and cous cous, you know, which is quite unusual here, I guess, the cous cous."*

Saha's daughter's diet included French staple food items, reemerging locality flavor:

"She would eat a lot of cheese, and strong cheese, like, you know, she is a year and a half and she would eat like blue cheese and she loves it; people are quite surprised to find that such a young baby can eat such a strong cheese, but in France is normal, it's not weird that kids like cheese" (Saha, France).

Cristina (Peru) justified a Peruvian diet for her child for its nutritional qualities and to reproduce food practices from her country of birth:

"I was giving her meals that babies eat in Peru and not many Kiwis would eat here, chicken liver for example, full in minerals and full of really good nutrients for babies."

In doing so, she differentiated herself from her New Zealand peers:

"While my friends would be giving the children food from cans, I hardly gave her can food, it was always homemade" (Cristina, Peru).

In contrast, Donna followed the New Zealand mainstream food discourse, at the advice of her midwife and Plunket:

"I didn't know how they feed the baby, what they feed the baby myself in the Chinese way. I just used whatever the supermarket shelves have or recommended by my midwife. And the food charts they provided to all the mothers from Plunket, so I used what New Zealand kids or babies feed" (Donna, China).

With perseverance, Donna managed to introduce Chinese food as well in her child's diet when he was older, following food traditions from her country of birth:

"My son now loves Chinese food, particularly Yum Cha, he loves going there. We have taken him back to Beijing a number of times. His first time, we went to Beijing when he was just before one year old, and second time I think about three and then five. I think when we went to Beijing when he was three, he didn't quite like Chinese food at all, we tried a range of different Chinese food, dishes, he just refused, doesn't matter if really nice and delicious, he did refuse to try. When he was five, when we went there, he started to try, I'll just have one bite, mum, I'll just try it, but he gave up in most of dishes" (Donna, China).

The presence of Chinese restaurants in Auckland, reproducing at a society level the taste, texture and look of the food Donna cooked at home, validated for Donna's son the Chinese food:

"Two years from when he was five, because we have Chinese restaurants everywhere in Auckland, he's changing. I notice he likes a number of Chinese dishes, like I mentioned earlier, he loves going to Yum Cha and I cook Chinese dishes at home specially in the weekends when I have time to do the preparations. At seven, now he's starting to have that range of food and he doesn't distance himself from any particular type of food at all. And he tries, you know, Indian and other nations' ethnic food himself, he says I want to try that, he shows interest" (Donna, China).

When ethnic food presented similarities with the mainstream food, it was more likely to be embraced by partners and children. Therefore, it was demanded more in the family's cooking calendar. Eva (Poland) explained how her husband enjoys a particular Polish dish which resembles to a dish from his own culture:

"Funny but there is some Polish food similar to Māori, like the Māori boil up, we have something similar, but with cabbage and sauerkraut. So he's always: when are you going to do it? When are you going to do it? He just can't wait, and, you know? Sometimes just Polish food requires a lot of time, and you know, when you work full time and pick up kids from childcare, you don't worry about not having the time, but he goes like we should have more often because he just loves it. And he really has to love it because when we went to Poland, within three weeks he put like six kg" (Eva, Poland).

In contrast, unfamiliar tastes, aromas, shapes, colors and textures were avoided by partners and children, and, because mothers mostly cooked for their families, rather than for themselves, they were rarely reproduced. Sonia (Iran) described her culinary solitude:

"I was brought up with Persian food, which I love and my husband probably likes about four or five Persian foods but the rest are no good for him. He's not used to legumes or lentils or, you know, turmeric and cumin and other sort of things that we use in Persian food. Three or four meals he likes, but the rest I have to make, if I get a chance, for myself, you know, that's another thing that I do miss. I'm not like how I used to eat Persian food anymore, and I don't crave it every day, but if I get a chance; so often I still find it quite healthy that I should make for myself. But that is one thing that I still find quite difficult because if I have to go through the trouble of making a Persian meal, I don't want to make a second one for my husband and my son" (Sonia, Iran).

Sonia mentioned another culinary threat to ethnic food and this was the scene of globalized fast food eateries. She deplored the loss of natural connections between food and gardens and was worried about the health consequences this loss may have:

"To tell you the truth, here is very Americanized in terms of McDonalds, you know, Subway, this and that, so teenagers, I find, they are eating junk. That might be the rest of the world now, but that's again unfortunate because it's very unhealthy. I grew up, honestly, I never ever saw my mother open a can. Until later on in life, I saw it, you know, cans in supermarket and that, but we had a garden and we had pomegranate trees, she used to juice the pomegranates for our sweet and sour meat ball dish. We had sour cherries on the trees. We would even help her to store them, I put them in the rice, and it was like all fresh. Never ever I saw take-away in our own house. Never. So I was brought up like that and for me is shocking to see eating really unhealthy food" (Sonia, Iran).

Her worries, though, were not validated within the mainstream society, creating conflicting expectations between her and her son in regards to food:

"And then my son started going to other people's homes and was thinking that I was a bad mum because I was depriving him of junk food (laughs)" (Sonia, Iran).

Donna (China) storied similarly her child's temptations from globalized fast food recognizable outlets, impacting on her attempts to reproduce her culture through traditional food:

"When we went to Beijing when he was three, he didn't quite like Chinese food at all, he didn't like, he preferred, he kept saying Mc Donald's, Pizza Hut. We didn't feed him, when he was three, we didn't feed him much MacDonald or Pizza Hut at all, but somehow kids just get that message and they wanted that particular food they saw, they see something similar like in New Zealand, Mac Donald's catches them" (Donna, China).

Celebrations take us to a different space, breaking the quotidian, and invite the cyclical time of the ritual. Celebrations entice particular food practices, meaningful within the space they've been created. Mothers' felt the need to recreate that space through food, bringing within territories of immigration, familiar tastes, shapes, colors, aromas, and textures. Anne (Denmark) talked about introducing culinary proceedings from her birth country, to attach a Danish perspective to celebrations:

> *"To this day I cook the Danish Christmas pudding on Christmas Eve for the whole family. These days I go always over to my daughters. My youngest daughter has got ten children. Grown up now, most of them, she's got four grandchildren. But we all gather at her house for Christmas Eve and I bring the pudding."*

In Anne's family, weddings display the famous Danish pastries and the Danish cake, whose beautiful intricacies Anne had to show me throughout the family photos album, being too different for me to imagine:

> *"This was our wedding. We were married at St Benedict church. Here, with the cake. That's Danish. We don't use wedding cakes like they do here. That's a Danish one and it is with almonds, made of almonds, mostly, and you start little rings, they are five of them and stick them together, decorated them like that. And we had one made for her. And we had a Danish style lunch and we had it here. Yeah, that is how it looks like"* (Anne, Denmark).

In Barb's culture, *"food is massive"* (Barb, Israel). She detailed:

> *"The whole religion evolves around food. So yeah, it's a big part of our life, is Jewish and Middle Eastern food. Yeah. So all the rituals are around food. Except when you don't eat. So most of the time we eat and then we fast, one day a year, and then we eat at the end of it. So the food has huge symbolism. Food is a big part of the culture. I cook a lot of ethnic Jewish food."*

Big celebrations, like the Jewish New Year, include considerable food preparation and their hosting and organization go beyond the family boundaries:

> *"We do it with friends and we allocate responsibilities. So for the Jewish New Year, that's coming up in September, that's a whole lot of foods that you do, that have meaning and*

that you bless, and things like whole fish, special things with carrots, honey cake, they all have symbolism. So my girlfriend is hosting us this year. And I said, we can have it here because my house is bigger, but she is supposed to come up with a menu and we will do bits. So that's how we organize it, that's how we negotiate it. And then we have the Delve atonement when we fast and then we have meal at the end of it. So you prepare it in advance, every Friday we do a dinner, Shabbat, like I am, so it's in the slow cooker, making chicken soup and then Passover is the biggest production."

Time has made Barb's efforts in reproducing cultural ritual through food easier; nowadays, needed ingredients can be found in New Zealand's shops. Not long ago, she had to produce traditional food items at home:

"In the early years I had to make everything. But now you can buy stuff. So one of the foods for Hanukkah is jelly donuts. We never had jelly donuts in New Zealand. And then five-six years ago, Nosh started making them, so I just go and buy them. But until then, I used to make my own. And find my own. Yeah. So takes a lot of time."

One thing that Barb still needed to accommodate, though, was related to hosting food celebrations. She found it difficult to re-enact hosting settings from her country of birth in New Zealand, because she couldn't buy an extendable table to seat her guests:

"Most of us, if we host a big Jewish event, most of my girlfriends Jewish we have houses with, you know, anything a little bit big, we all have big tables. And it was really interesting because we wanted to buy a table that extended because we have a lot of guests, it was very hard to find. Because in New Zealand people don't have… we very quickly will have fifteen people because by the time you have four families with a couple of children, sixteen people... and Kiwis don't do that, whereas in Europe you get extendable tables. In Israel everybody has an extendable table. Cause that's what you do" (Barb, Israel).

Christmas Eve is celebrated in Eva's (Poland) tradition *"with 12 dishes, like 12 apostles".* While Eva's family lifestyle moved away from the traditional heavy meals: *"We don't eat meat so, you know, it's just fish and vegetable meals but it is just for this particular day of the year"* and the time pressure means they celebrate the Polish way every second year only, Eva re-enacts a food ritual that breaks distances of time and space:

"On Christmas Eve my mum sends from Poland a kind of a flat bread, very, very flat, is almost like a waffle, and it is blessed by priest, and before dinner we all break it, and we wish each other not only just to have a nice Christmas but it's also very personal, so what we want another person to achieve next year or something that we strictly design for this person. So this is what we do."

For Easter, Eva was able to exchange the chocolate eggs from the Western consumerism with the old tradition of painted eggs:

"We have Polish way of celebrating Easter, we are going to Polish Church, blessing eggs, kids are terribly bored because they are for an hour sitting and don't understand what they are saying around but we notice they like just the old traditions and we try to avoid chocolate eggs, we do it in our Eastern European way, just proper boiled eggs" (Eva, Poland).

Vallianatos (2016) defined food as a *"social object, laden with social values; in turn, through digestion, people incorporate a food's meanings and morals"* (p. 123). For Elisapeta (Samoa), celebratory contexts imply the sharing of food as a complex social activity. In the next paragraph, Elisapeta is re-enacting Samoan hosting for her neighbors. Her children know the process and know when they have to step in to contribute:

"Well, Christmas time and birthdays, I make some of the Samoan food that all my neighbors looove. Whenever we get together, "don't forget to make the chop suey and the rice, don't forget this, don't forget that"… oh, ok, ok. So I make them up for them. But I still prefer to do the English, the food here. But that's why my neighbors across the road whenever something here (sniffing sound) smells nice, "what is it? Run across and see what she's cooking". And then I call out, get on the phone, "hey, you fellas, you want something to eat?" "Yes, we're coming". So they come here. And I cook a couple of roasted chicken and roasted kumara and I make some coco rice, you know, chocolate rice pudding and tell the children to go outside, they know, they put a Samoan mat on the floor, on the lawn, everybody is sitting around waiting for. I say, "hey I'm not bringing it out to you, you fellas come here and get it yourselves. I'm not your slave" (laughs)" (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Parasecoli (2014) remarked that *"migrants can, around food, establish spaces and experiences that they can open to outsiders on their own terms, thus experiencing a*

stronger sense of control over their choices" (p.430). When there was no ethnic community around, to join in the celebrations, mother participants reproduced their food culture as a gift for the host society, for their delight. Taurea (Hungary) talked about her celebrations culinary calendar negotiations:

> *"Like for example Christmas Eve we have fish, but it works perfectly for New Zealand.*
>
> *Interviewer: Absolutely!*
>
> *And we have this wine soup beforehand.*
>
> *Interviewer: Wine soup?*
>
> *Yeah, some warm soup that you make with eggs and cinnamon and a bit of sugar. So it's lovely. It really warms you up! I mean of course, Christmas is warm here, but yeah, just have a little bit of that and it's wonderful. And then you have the fish. So everybody just loves that, of course. And I don't mind cooking it, because it's quick and easy.*
>
> *… and then Easter again, we have ham, we have this [Hungarian name of a dish] which normally you make it out of sheep cottage cheese, but there is no sheep cottage cheese in New Zealand, so I just use feta cheese… But I make it up and people love it. So people just embraced what we brought into the family and love it and yeah..."*

Taurea (Hungary) continued her story, explaining her difficulties of recreating ethnic dishes in migration territories where familiar ingredients were missing:

> *"My experience is that people love it, people really enjoy something different, they embrace it. What I find difficult is that some of the ingredients are impossible to get. You have to substitute or whatever, or it takes so long to make because in Hungary you could buy certain ingredients in certain format, but here you have to [improvise], so it's a lot more labor intensive here and takes a lot more time to do certain things because it's just not available, or there are no tools around that you could utilize for it, but people love it, people, oh my God, when I do my Christmas baking, everybody says why don't you do this more, and I'm just thinking, Oh my God it takes me a day and a half to produce this. Once a year and I do it for myself, because, you know, because without those things it wouldn't be Christmas or whatever. But what I found that almost all people, they love it, they want to try it, someone wanted the recipe and they were like, gave them what they have to do and they were ah, ok then, no, (laughs) it's too hard"* (Taurea, Hungary).

Gifts in traditional societies invite a system of social obligations: there is the obligation to give, to share, that generates an obligation to accept. After the gift is consumed, there is an expectation to reciprocate the gift (Mauss, 2002). Anchored in this perspective, Taurea resented the lack of reciprocity towards her gift of ritual:

> *"There was no real structure, there was no real ritual what they had, so I introduced these things and we still do it. And they still do it and like I spent Easter with them and of course we did the painting of the eggs and there were sort of new cousins who have never done that, never done that with us, and they all got into it, and loved it, but they had nothing to offer, like there was nothing from their end said, oh, but we have to do this or whatever. So again, the negotiation was something like oh, we are going to do this, are you going to be part of it or… but of course, everybody wants to be part of it because it was so much fun (laughs)"* (Taurea, Hungary).

5.2.8 BIRTHDAY CAKE AND BIRTHDAY PIG

Birthdays are platforms of ritual marking *rites de passage* negotiations, and traditionally are enhanced by a particular food item, such as cake, in Western cultures. Its significance does not rely solely on this food item, but is enriched by the way the food item is consumed. In time of birthdays, mothers remember the way they were mothered:

> *"In Hungary, when I grew up, we kept it as a family affair, grandma or mum makes a cake and a couple of presents, nothing big, nothing large, and here it is very, very different"* remembered Anett (Hungary).

Elisapeta (Samoa) recalled celebrating birthdays in her country of birth, where the staple celebration food item was a pig:

> *"In Samoa, a child's birthday, everybody in the church group and everyone will come, celebrate. Not necessarily bring a gift. You had to be there to celebrate with singing and dancing and music everywhere. And we do a hangi and cook a pig and everybody is joining in. Aunty will bring some little pudding and another aunty or another uncle being pigeon hunting and they bring something, it's just beautiful."*

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Recreating such birthday celebrations in territories of immigration was not financially viable, Elisapeta having to adopt the Western birthday cake ritual:

> *"But here, you know, make a cake, invite a few friends, because you can't feed every Dick and Harry on the road"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

For birthdays, some mothers re-enacted their own tradition, reproducing meaningful dishes, as Donna (China) mentioned:

> *"At traditional birthdays we eat noodles, meaning longer life, so we provide him in a bowl, apart from birthday cake and presents, I cook noodles for him, even if just a small amount. Get him just to know that side of the culture as part of him as well"* (Donna, China).

Other mothers opposed the pressure of tradition, adopting food discourses from their country of migration, perceived as more relevant than discourses from their countries of birth. Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) storied her culinary migration:

> *"I've kind of quietened down. I see my other Indian friends, they are under the pressure to have… they must have the party, the big party every year, so I've gone to one just recently and I'm thinking no way, I'm not doing this, you know, it's just too much, so yeah, this is where I adopt K.'s approach, just laid back, keep it easy, you know? Even, even asking people to bring food (laughs) we just, you know… crazy… just yeah. They will never think, in Malaysia or, you know, you always provided for everyone, yeah, so we really adopted that. Bring a plate!"* (Diya Indian born in Malaysia).

5.2.9 ALCOHOL DISCOURSES

One contested aspect of the host society's celebration space was alcohol. Drinking was not part of the ritual of celebrations ethnic mothers related to:

> *"[in New Zealand] you celebrate, you drink a bottle of wine, or as for me, culturally, you celebrate, you eat. You make a beautiful meal. You don't think about the bottle of wine, is quite different",* Barb (Israel) confessed.

Christmas for Cristina (Peru) doesn't traditionally include alcohol:

"It's cool, you know, we just eat and dance and celebrate, it's not really part of the Peruvian culture to drink on Christmas. I feel that drinking is a big part of New Zealand's culture. It's nothing wrong with that, you know? But yeah, I always felt kind of weird like drinking on Christmas. I never grew up seeing that."

Mothers feared the negative consequences on health, family and society of what they saw as a binge drinking culture in New Zealand. Elisapeta (Samoa) was relieved that her family doesn't drink the *palagi* way:

"Drinking. But they don't drink. They don't drink that much at all. Is the drinking, when we have dinner, they have a glass of wine. But for me, I thought aaah. But when they are working at the back, they'll have a beer. My brothers would join, my dad would have a beer as well, but as for me, when I look at the palagi way, when they are going parties, always it is a stupid beer in the hand, and I thought, oh, now I understand, when you're happy, have a beer, what about a cup of tea? Oh, no, no, no, that's different. That's every day thing, but cup a tea and stay away from the beer. Now I understand why. At first, when I saw people with a beer, and I was frightened, I thought beer, when they have too much beer they argue, and the next thing they argue, they'll have a fight, the next thing then, one will be hurt, the next one, ambulance will be here. That's why it scares me. You know, how it's gonna end up. But as for his family, no. They just have a beer, have a music and that's it" Elisapeta (Samoa).

Within this framework, mothers worried the degree in which drinking was considered a rite of passage in New Zealand. Barb (Israel), envisaging her children's 21st milestone celebration, hoped that it will not center on alcohol:

"In terms of Kiwi, yeah, they'll have a 21st. … I'm hoping and that's something that we do negotiate, because my husband is a Kiwi, he drinks, as part of the Kiwi culture, he's not a big drinker or drunk or anything like that, but, you know… so I am hoping that the 21st will not be so boozy. But lots of Kiwi are saying now that they don't want to have a very boozy 21st as well. But they will definitely have a 21st, yeah" Barb (Israel).

Saha (France) explained the difference between drinking cultures in terms of drinking to enjoy and drinking to get drunk. She, like other immigrant mothers in this research, felt

that the binge drinking culture in New Zealand was partially caused by allowing alcohol to be used as a rite of passage marker of entering adulthood:

> *"I'm hoping, I'm not really sure it will happen, but I'm hoping that she will, in terms of drinking that she won't take the culture here, which I found pretty terrible, it's a lot of binge drinking here for teenagers and where alcohol is looked at the thing that, you know, you can't touch until you're 18, so then you have access to it and the only point to it is to get really drunk and as fast as you can. Yeah, I just hope like to be able to have M. to really have an understanding that you can have a drink because it's nice, not because you want to get drunk, just because it's nice",* (Saha, France).

Adna (Bosnia) confirmed the difference between the drinking cultures, and hoped that she will be able to bring her country of birth influence of drinking wisely in her children's perspectives:

> *"Back at home drinking is not big, you know, you don't go out and drink much and here it is. So because the boys are growing up in New Zealand, they are embracing New Zealand culture more, so I had to kind of influence them quite a bit that, you know, in my culture, it's not acceptable for them to go out and get really drunk, for example, you know, they are very clear, and they also know because they go to Bosnia quite a lot, so they can see that as well"* (Adna, Bosnia).

Sonia (Iran) was shocked by how her husband's family normalized the drinking of alcohol. At a family function, she was shocked to hear her mother-in-law advising her son to start drinking slowly, instead of discouraging him completely:

> *"I heard my mother-in-law tell my 14-year-old son who was telling us that all his friends are allowed to drink, say: "Start slowly". Whereas in my culture a grandmother would advise against it." "Alcohol is a big problem here in New Zealand",* Sonia concluded.

5.2.10 CONCLUSIONS

Mothers are likely to be in charge of cultural reproduction through food, trying to meet their own expectations, that certain dishes and meals maintain similarities with

preexisting customs while competing with different tastes, shapes, colors, aromas, and textures.

Food is invested with great emotional significance, therefore negotiations around food reflect not only biological reproduction, but cultural reproduction as well. Through eating, children embody nutrients and cultural values. Mother participants in this research aimed to introduce a sense of belonging to their countries of birth through food. They also modeled social practices and behavior through food settings and hosting events. They responded to the different food environment by adopting at various degrees food ingredients and practices. The food trajectories mothers travelled, reflected their interethnic mothering personalized experiences and itineraries.

5.3. Negotiating Spaces – Education

Generally mothers, in their reproduction roles, are their children's first educators, through teaching and modelling responses to the world they come in contact with. This role begins with mothers interpreting the world for their children. Within immigration contexts, the world mothers and their children come in contact with may not be as familiar, as the world mothers grew up in. Upbringing experiences from countries of birth can be reproduced within close settings, like the family home, even in territories of immigration. However, they have to be renegotiated, when educational activities move outside of these settings. This section will introduce negotiations mothers held between different educational styles, values, practices and expectations.

5.3.1 NEGOTIATING EDUCATION SYSTEMS

New Zealand Ministry of Education's philosophy is based on student-centred principles:

> *"Education in New Zealand aims to be student-centred. It is focused on supporting students to problem-solve, process information, work with others, create and innovate. Each student is able to develop their potential along a number of possible pathways, academic and/or vocational"* (MoE, 2016, p. 4).

Such principles were received with mixed feedback by mother participants in this research on interethnic mothering. Saha (France), a teacher in New Zealand before becoming a full time mother, explained the student-centred system as beneficial:

> *"In New Zealand it is much more individualized education, where a child is looked at as an individual and should progress at his own rhythm, at his own pace, so …*
>
> **Interviewer: How did you find that as a teacher?**
>
> *It's great. It's a lot more work for the teacher, because you're not delivering one program, but you're delivering three, four programs in the same hour, but it's great for the children, I think. It's changing in New Zealand, little by little Universities are pushing for standards, so it is changing, unfortunately"* (Saha, France).

As a parent, Anett (Hungary) appreciated positively a system in which children are allowed to learn at their own pace, and there was no fear of having to repeat a school year for not keeping up with peers:

> *"My daughter is going to start school, and I asked about how it would work learning to read, learning to write and they pretty much gave me a year, a year time frame of learning, to read and write, and I asked them, what if she doesn't perform successfully? But that's alright, everyone is different, there is no staying a year behind, so I think it's a very different way of looking at education here, than it was in Hungary."*

This results in less pressure for the children, Anett considered, and the school thus contributes towards the whole development of a child, including the child's mental health and emotional wellbeing, not only towards the academic success. This is in contrast with what Anett experienced when growing up:

> *"I think looking back now, the Hungarian way was too strict. [Here] I hope it's better because it doesn't put such a pressure on a child from a young age. I want her to be happy, I want her to do what she wants to do, if she's going to be a hairdresser or a truck driver and she'll love it, I will love it. If she's going to be a doctor or a vet, I will love that to, as long as she's happy. So I don't want to put an expectation on her, that she has to go to University, she has to have a degree, she has to excel in everything. Because some people are not academic, some people are just not, and as long as she is happy and she does her job, which she enjoys and is proud of, I really don't think it matters, you know, what she does in life and, especially when she is an honest, reliable person, nice, kind and considerate, I think that's the biggest achievement in life"* (Anett, Hungary).

However, this educational philosophy, embraced by Anett, and one that the New Zealand partners took as a given, was quite foreign to most mothers and impacted on what they assumed to be the role of schools. Most immigrant mothers in my research linked education to the academic success, and the options of other educational pathways included in New Zealand's education system, came in the way of their expectations.

For Barb's (Israel) children *"there are still high expectations of achievement... And the whole focus that we place on doing what is called going to university, and is absolutely expected of our children."* Academic achievement was seen as providing more options for children's future

and it couldn't be replaced by other educational pathways. Eva (Poland) confessed:

> "Academic development is very important for me, if our children could have a degree, just to give them chances for the future. Even if they are very good at sports, I think it's not enough. It has to be a balance."

Eva appreciated positively the performing arts pathway, celebrated within her Māori husband's heritage, and hoped to include this in her children's education, but again, this was seen rather as a hobby than as a solid career pathway, which Eva would expect:

> "Ah, as well, this is my husband's part, we really want them to develop artistic needs, this is, you know, just music, singing, dancing are very important for my husband's part of the family, and I'm happy about it. I absolutely have no talent whatsoever. My sister has, but not me, so… but I think it is a good channel to express your emotions and just have some hobbies" (Eva, Poland).

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) credited her own academic achievement to her family's high expectations:

> "So like me and my sister like you know, even if my mum and dad couldn't even read and write in English, you know, they could only read and write in Chinese, but every Chinese family always has high expectations of their children."

She followed the same approach of high expectations with her children. While she didn't plan to interfere with her children career's choice, Sheena did see the academic achievement as fundamental to create options for whatever they choose:

> "So if they want to be a doctor, they want to be a carpenter, they want to be a singer, they want to be an actor, they want to be whatever, after they've done their education, they have all these choices" (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

Jenny (China) confirmed the significance given to education in the Chinese culture, and wanted her children to achieve academically. However, she won't pressure her children to study, as she experienced when growing up in China, she would rather encourage them:

> "For Chinese, academic achievement is very important. So, I'm not going to force my kids to study the things they don't want to study, but I will strongly encourage the kids to study, to have higher education, tertiary would be the minimum. But if my kids really don't like studying, I'm not going to push them, but I will try to encourage."

For some mothers, the choice of possible educational pathways, academic and/or

vocational that the New Zealand schools offer was in contrast with how they defined a successful career pathway. Donna (China) considered her expectations on academic success, and her definition of success, unchangeable and unnegotiable:

> *"I still have a strong belief that I like my child to succeed academically. Which his dad didn't or still doesn't see achievement in academic field is the only way or direction to go. I accept in general that kids can succeed in so many different areas, so many different ways, in sports and rugby, in anything, in other areas or, you know, being an electrician, or carpenter or farmer, or doctor, or whatever, there are so many options to define or put your child through achievements, but I'm kind of a strong believer that I like my child to achieve in an academic way. They have to have a degree. There is no negotiation… I will not like to see my son being a successful plumber (laughs). Put it that way. As people see as successful if they enjoy doing what they do and they make good money and so on. I definitely will not accept or encourage my son to do that, definitely not"* (Donna, China).

Sonia (Iran) shared the same approach when defining what constitutes success, and her definition is different than the New Zealand one:

> *"I noticed in New Zealand, going into a trade, if they don't study, oh, a trade, get a hammer and a van, go into trade, become a painter or a plumber or… In my culture that's the last resort, you know? (Laughs). That's for people who couldn't make it, you know what I mean?"* (Sonia, Iran).

High expectations came from a competitive environment to which mothers related. Saha (France) talked about a highly competitive job market in France, which increases French parents' expectations of academic achievement. In a much more relaxed New Zealand environment, Saha's expectations decreased in intensity from *have to* to *would like to*:

> *"Yeah, definitely, France is very academically based… like parents would really push for their kids to… I mean to have a degree, not only a degree, having a master would be, you know, like the norm. The unemployment in France is really high and the competition is really high, so it creates lot of stress for parents so kids are pushed a lot more. In New Zealand is much more relaxed. But I would really like her to have a degree or something, but yeah, we'll see"* (Saha, France).

For Nina (Samoa), the family and community support towards the children's academic achievement has to be returned to that family and community, in a belonging framework opposed to the Western individualism:

> "We have high expectations of our kids. And when they grow up, we expect them to look after the big family, not just the extended one. So that's why success and responsibility and the sense of purpose to look after the family are inbred right from the beginning. So in my husband's family, my ex-husband's family, you live your life as you like and be independent and when you're independent is a good thing, go live your life; for us, no! We want them to stay connected. I mean, you still have your life, but stay connected with whom you belong with. Yeah. And then you're not alone, you're never alone, you're not supposed to be"
> (Nina, Samoa).

Donna (China) saw the children's agency in defining their own goals and structuring the learning process as interfering with her educational beliefs system. This is still an issue of negotiation in her interethnic family, where for her the act of learning has priority, and it is separated from play, while her husband stresses the importance of enjoyable environments of learning:

> "We sent him to karate, after school classes, for about a year. He hated it. His dad used to take him to the karate class. He didn't see it as necessary, he seems like if the child hated it, didn't want to go, why you force him? Get him to do something else he enjoys. He sees after school activities, you know, like the music lessons, and sports and everything else should be fun orientated, rather than a learning process. For me, I see it the other way, I see you go there, we spend time and money for certain classes then you learn, and having fun is secondary. And dad sees, I don't know if it's common for Kiwi men, or is just him as individual, he sees it that kids after school should have fun, get some opportunities to do things differently, which I agree, something different, you know, from school activities. Yeah, I think that is different, where is learning priority and fun secondary, or the other way around. So we still hold our different views, even now" (Donna, China).

Some mothers negotiated roles of educational support, based on parents' different strengths and perspectives on achievement. Jenny (China) claimed:

> "Instead, my husband, he doesn't really... I think in New Zealand, the academic achievement is not really... like back in China is highly regarded, so yeah. I've negotiated with my

husband, because in New Zealand sport is really important, so he is going to be the main

coach for sport activities, physical activities, so I'm going to be more responsible for the

academic side, so like studying, so that's how we negotiated the roles."

A similar parent's role negotiation took place in Eva's (Poland) family, resulting in a perfect balance of skills to enhance the children's development:

"I always had a book all the time so as you can see, I wasn't, I'm still not very, very sport fit

person. For my husband was the opposite, he was the best always in sport and everything

so when I grew up I was jealous of other children, that they knew how to ski, they were

going in camps, you know, just a lot of sports, I didn't have it. So for me it was quite

important to have this balance in life, so our kids will be going to soccer trainings and stuff

like this, so, you know, just say, we are lucky that he's going to use his muscles and I'm going

to use my brain, you know, just to teach our kids so is, I think, just the perfect balance,

because I think both things are very important and not to go either way, just in the middle.

We're lucky" (Eva, Poland).

Within a student-centred educational system, some mothers reported feeling left out. Donna complained about not having enough feedback from the teachers on her son's learning development, this making it very hard for her to support him, in the areas needed:

"I don't have a lot of feedback from teachers, I found. Apart from the Communication book,

they don't tend to respond to e-mails much. And sometimes I hear, you know, when my son

comes home, what they say about it, you know, how their experience was at school, I want

to know more from the teacher, not the child. I find the communication is not as frequent as

I would like. And even, you know, once a year or once a semester, the parents' interview

with the teacher, 10 minutes, that's it, you're out and next parent comes in. And I didn't feel

there is enough time for the parent to have that opportunity to talk to the teacher face to

face. Most of times we parents are busy. You go there, pick the child up. Usually you can't

because you finish at 5'o clock. Someone else picks the child up and you don't get to see the

teacher to ask, you know, how your child is doing in class. As a parent I would like to see

them face to face more, or to respond to e-mails more. Or to say to parents, oh, e-mail us,

we'll tell you, or even a summary every month, so the parents know how the child is

progressing. Usually you don't get until the end of the semester the report and by that time

is too late. And there are some areas when we read the report where we could help more, if you tell us earlier. We didn't know, or not being told" (Donna, China).

Donna would have liked to be more involved in her child's education, by understanding more about an unfamiliar education system. She was disappointed by the lack of opportunities to invest more in an area in which she had a special interest as a mother in charge of cultural reproduction.

Eva (Poland) reflected in a way Donna's frustration in regards to the way that the schools in New Zealand engage parents, and critiqued a too high emphases on children's privacy, eluding parental support in life decision-making:

> *"I think it is political correctness that sometimes teachers are not allowed to tell parents what their children do because of their privacy. I think it's going to extremes and if you can't tell that your daughter is pregnant, and it just going to plan to have abortion without you knowing it, it's just wrong. But it's not only a Kiwi thing. It's just how the world changes"* (Eva, Poland).

5.3.2 NEGOTIATING SCHOOLS

Overall, the New Zealand education system was seen as relaxed, impacting on the quality of learning, as Donna (China) admitted: *"Yeah. In general, the schools in New Zealand, they are too relaxed."* New Zealand's education system *"is focused on supporting students to problem-solve, process information, work with others, create and innovate"* (MoE, 2016, p. 4). While New Zealand partners were happy with this, most mothers found it too relaxed, in terms of the content covered, Adna (Bosnia) considered:

> *"A. was quite happy with the New Zealand education system and I wasn't; I just thought that was not as good as the European one."*

Adna who *"found New Zealand schools to be too easy",* in comparison to what she had experienced going to school in Bosnia *"expected more from the boys when it came to the academic side because what I did at school and what they were doing."* Like other mothers, she

took on herself the responsibility to address the gap between the two different academic standards:

> *"So there was another Bosnian family in Christchurch and their kids also went to the same school with W. and S. So we organized after school academic kind of sessions in math and certain things to kind to come up to our standards, so that's what we did and because of that the boys did really well at high school, and found it relatively easy, and they were very good at Uni, so that's probably one thing that was different"* (Adna, Bosnia).

Donna (China) found as well the New Zealand curriculum too relaxed: *"I think they are too relaxed. They don't have a lot of homework"*, so she took the responsibility to complement the homework herself:

> *"I give my son a little bit more at home, some extra like readings, readings he enjoys, he did it from day one at school like writings, and math. When he started year three I realized I will give him a little bit more to do at home and I encourage him to write Chinese as well, just a little bit, even if he hates it. Yeah"* (Donna, China).

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) storied how she took an active approach in engaging with the school, with the aim to assert control over her child's learning outcomes*:*

> *"While I go in there, and I look at what's going on, talk to the teacher, you know, try to suss out what's happening, and then now I'm getting some harder books, like K. is on the red so I'm trying to get the next level books for him to read at home as well, well, the teachers are all kind of so busy with so many different kids sometimes, he gets left out, not left out, but, you know, it's not like they are pushing him to his level, so they should be getting new books all the time, and he's not getting new books, the teacher is not kind of changing the books, is not interesting, so I try to go to the next level books, get them for him, I take it and I bring it home and we read the harder books a little bit, we work through it, and then we repeat it and repeat it, and then we get new books because otherwise is boring for him, you know? Otherwise, every time he does something, he thinks it should be easy, oh, that's hard, I won't do it. I don't want that attitude, you know? Because ah, is not his level. Yeah, so what? We try, you know? That's what I think, you know? I need to push him to think that if it's worth getting it, it has to be a little bit harder, cause he's a boy, and they need to be pushed, I think, a little bit."*

Sheena discouraged her husband to speak about his own struggles at school, as a form of empathy, wanting to focus on positive role-modelling and to create a confident attitude towards achievement:

> *"So C., he would say to the kids, like he would say to K., cause he's dyslexic and stuff, C. is, you know, yes, you know I struggled, papa struggled too when, you know, when I was young, I said don't tell him that. I said don't tell him stuff like that because then he thinks, oh, I'm like papa, you know, I struggle and stuff, you know? So that's no need to, to tell him stuff like that, you know? You just say it's ok if you find it hard, you know?, but we work through that, and it's not that hard, once you work harder you'll find it easy, don't tell him papa can't do this as well and bra, bra, bra, cause that's just giving him an excuse"*
> (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

For some mothers, though, the pressure that they felt in their education journey back in their country of birth encouraged them to adopt a different approach, positioning more towards New Zealand education master narratives. *"I think looking back now, the Hungarian way was too strict"* remembered Anett (Hungary). She favored the less pressuring New Zealand model:

> *"I hope it's better because it doesn't put such a pressure on a child from a young age. I always loved school, but I was always under a lot of pressure. School was fun slash pressure. There was always a combination of the two of them: even if you enjoyed it a great deal, there was always a pressure to perform better and nothing seemed to be good enough until you got A-s. And even if you got A-s it was a how you didn't get an A plus? So I don't think my child will be… I don't think the New Zealand system is that strict. And I think that would be fantastic cause, remembering, I didn't like that pressure. I don't cope very well under pressure"* (Anett, Hungary).

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) recalled the same educational pressure, going to school in Malaysia:

> *"My experience of growing up in Malaysia was all about academia, I mean study, study, study and, you know, you constantly from the time you start school, you are going to tuition."*

Within the New Zealand school environment where *"I notice it is such a laid back feel, right?, they come home with a little book to read, which is, you know, unheard of in our environment…"*, Diya felt sometimes the need to re-enact her educational experience, but then, remembering her negative feelings towards it, she pulled back:

> *"There are times when I go: Ok, you know, I really think you should be doing a bit more, so I get a bit caught up as well so I wanna get him to start doing these things online and he will say to me, I don't want to, and then I go ok, ok, fine, you know, I have to stop pushing this at him, because that was what I experienced growing up"* (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

5.3.3 NEGOTIATING Māori LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS

Māori language in schools has a troubled history. To assimilate the indigenous population into the mainstream culture, the Māori language was suppressed in New Zealand's schools at the beginning of the 20th century, and its use was strongly discouraged even in informal settings:

> *"In the mid-1980s Sir James Henare recalled being sent into the bush to cut a piece of pirita (supplejack vine) with which he was struck for speaking te reo in the school grounds. One teacher told him that 'if you want to earn your bread and butter you must speak English.' Many Māori parents encouraged their children to learn English and even to turn away from other aspects of Māori custom. Increasing numbers of Māori people learnt English because they needed it in the workplace or on the sports field. 'Kōrero Pākehā' (Speak English) was seen as essential for Māori people"* (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2015).

From the 1970s a resurgence in people's Māori identity affirmed the language as an integral part of the Māori culture. The fear that the language may be lost, with only 20% of Maori speaking the language fluently at that time, promoted vast efforts led by indigenous leaders to educate younger generations in the language of their ancestors

New Zealand's first officially bilingual school started in 1978. The first kōhanga reo (early childhood education which immersed Māori preschoolers in the Māori language) was

opened in 1982. It was followed by other educational programmes, such as kura kaupapa, a system of primary schooling in a Māori-language environment.

In 1985 the Waitangi Tribunal (a permanent Commission of Inquiry that makes recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to Crown actions which breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi) accepted that the Māori Language was a *taonga* (treasure, mentioned in the Treaty of Waitangi) and recommended a number of legislative and policy remedies. In 1987, Te Reo Māori became an official language of New Zealand under the Māori Language Act (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2015).

Mothers parenting children with Māori heritage found appalling the difficulties parents and children encountered when learning their Māori language. The accounts are historical, starting with Anne's (Denmark) stories from a time when Te Reo Māori was not taught in schools:

> *"At the time when my kids went to school, you could not learn Māori at school. And I really find that in their own country that they couldn't learn their own language at school, I found that really disgusting. Because I think that's... you know, it doesn't matter about the Danish so much because Denmark is there and you can go there and learn Danish, but if... yeah, that they couldn't even learn it that was... they do now, of course. But they didn't then"* (Anne, Denmark).

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia), because her Māori husband *"wasn't brought up in a Māori culture, so they didn't speak Māori at home, his parents didn't speak it and his sister doesn't speak it, so they actually don't know much about like the whole tikanga of like the Marae and all that stuff"*, decided to fill that heritage gap herself, studying Te Reo Māori at Te Wananga o Aotearoa, encouraged by the similarity in her Chinese upbringing values and the Aotearoa's indigenous culture ones:

> *"I've learnt a lot of that from there and I've kind of, you know, tried to bring it home to my children because I find it quite comforting to have those similar things that I grew up with, being taught when I was growing up and, you know, their practice."*

She found the New Zealand's educational system discriminatory, in the sense that:

> *"Every school should be teaching Māori. We shouldn't have to choose to send our kids to a special unit and put them and segregate them and create all these problems. Every child should be having it as a school subject, there should be a noho Marae [overnight stay at a Marae] for every child in New Zealand, so that there is no racism and something like that"* (Sheena, Chinese).

Taurea (Hungary), who felt *"very strongly about Māori language, I mean that's the national language. This is Māori land so even if she didn't have any Māori heritage I would have done the same thing because that's the only unique thing about New Zealand"*, found shocking as well the lack of emphasis on Māori in the New Zealand education system:

> *"I really wanted her to learn Māori in school. It was really hard because they didn't have it, it wasn't compulsory, which was like wow, how could you not have that?"*

Like Sheena, she took the lead in supporting her daughter's Māori language learning:

> *"I was really strong on E. learning Hungarian and Māori, but because nobody speaks fluently Māori in the family, I spoke more because I studied Māori at school when I went to Uni and after that, so I would say that my Māori vocabulary would be better than the majority of the family, which is really sad"* (Taurea, Hungary).

When mothers stepped outside of the comfort of their own culture and from the safety of the mainstream culture to engage with marginalized culture through language, they did more than just reproduction work to transmit to their children the cultural heritage of their partners. They actively engaged to compensate for and counteract the effects of racism on their children. Their voices became political in demanding equal opportunities for a language that is not their own, but it is their children's heritage language.

In assuming this role, mothers positioned themselves as the outsider within (Hill Collins, 2000). When confronted with the educational racism their children experienced, mothers assessed them from perspectives anchored in educational experiences in their countries of origin. Hill Collins (2000) argued that such perspectives enable solidarity across differences of ethnic/racial identity.

Providing care and safety are major components of mothering. Immigrant mothers' own concepts of safety and how responsibilities for children's safety are distributed were sometimes at odds with the New Zealand's dominant discourses on safety.

Elisapeta mentioned:

> *"In here you have to follow the rules, protect your children. And you run after them. Make sure they are all right; they don't put anything in their mouth to choke them, make sure there are clean toys and things. In Samoa you don't bother with that."*

In Samoa, Elisapeta recalled, a child is raised by the village, and responsibility to elicit safe behaviors is shared:

> *"Everybody, the whole village looks after the baby and the only time you look for your baby is the feeding time and then the bath because someone else, the next door neighbors they come "where is the baby?" Oh, "is gone with aunty", "where are they?" "They've gone shopping". And you don't worry. But here you've got to protect your children on your own. You have to have eyes on the back of your head. Where is the other one? You're looking for the other one, change the nappy and the other one is somewhere else, you are on your own. Over in Samoa is different. Hmmm. It's free sort of thing. Happy!"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Adna (Bosnia) remarked on the difference between protecting children, by providing artificial safe spaces for them to conduct their play, and teaching them safety by exposing them to controlled risk:

> *"The only thing is that I think that is too much emphasis on safety and protection of children, so it's kind of gone to extreme a little bit, that kids have to be protected at all times, they are not allowed to play bull rush or, you know, going on a flying fox, because they might hurt themselves. I think kids learn the best when they hurt themselves a little bit. So that's why we tried to expose our boys as much as we could to sports and they are both sailors, so we sail a lot as a family, and when you are sailing you have to... you know, we sail across oceans together and when it's just the four of you, you have to rely on each other. We never tried to protect them too much, we have to protect them, but we also have to expose them."*

She found the dominant discourse on safety in New Zealand confusing and unhelpful, by not preparing children to discern and minimize risk when they are adults. Road safety

standards were a matter of concern for Eva (Poland):

> *"I'm definitely going to sign my kids to learning driving lessons. I'm not going to teach them myself. I think it's good they don't have just someone they know in front of you sitting, or close to you, it should be somebody else, but it's probably as well something I brought from Poland. And I know my husband is a very good teacher but you know, sometimes is good to have just someone who has absolutely not bias"* (Eva, Poland).

Threats to safety are defined, internalized and responded to with safety norms within geographical boundaries defined by cultural norms. Transgressing those geographical boundaries required some sort of safety norms negotiations for mothers. Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) recounted how, in a visit to Malaysia, her husband was absolutely adamant not to allow their child in a car without a booster seat:

> *"There were times when he would be like no, no, no we can't take that car unless we will put the booster seat on. There were times when that was just impossible. The car didn't come with safety belts or whatever, but if K. was there, he would be no, we are not doing it, you know it's very… quite unsafe, and I accept that but it was also nice to say great, we don't use it, just leave it, A. could sit in the back just like how we used to, you know, so that sort of stuff would be easier. There are aspects about, you know, I guess it's more the safety and hygiene aspects which K. would be very particular about, whereas I would be a lot more flexible mmm so sometimes I don't even try to negotiate, it's like ok, we'll just go with what K. is comfortable with at that point"* (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

When Anett (Hungary), in a visit to her country of birth, wanted to take her baby-daughter to introduce her to her dying grandmother, she encountered her mother's opposition. Her mother brought within Anett's story her dominant narratives on safety, where to take a small baby to a hospital is deemed unsafe:

> *"So when I took home my daughter who was three months old, my mother nearly fainted because of course she didn't have her immunizations, she had her first six weeks immunization, but we sat in an airplane, in two airports, I was very much frowned upon. And my grandmother was in hospital so we went to visit my grandmother every single day and my mother basically accused me that this is child abuse that I'm taking my child to a hospital, there people are sick and dying, because in my grandma's unit, you know, people died daily, she just thought it was despicable and, you know, I shouldn't do that. But I did it anyway"* (Anett, Hungary).

Children's educational goals of immigrant mothers' stories for this research transgressed the school system, and approached journeys of preparing them for life. Mothering is shaped by the cultural values embedded in mothers' evolution (both individual and social) as a human being. Values are "both features of the world toward which people are oriented and… features of people that govern their orientation to the world" (M. B. Smith, 1991).

My favorite metaphor about the role of mothers in preparing their children for their life ahead, comes (mediated by Bruner's interpretation) from the Greek legend in which Perseus defeated Medusa, the world's evil, a terrifying monster who turned whoever dared to look at her into stone. Perseus is helped to prepare for the fight by Athena, his mother's goddess, the symbol of wisdom. I call Athena here the wisdom in Perseus' mother. She gave him a shield so well polished that the hero could see Medusa's attack reflected in the shield, and he could respond appropriately, without looking directly at Medusa (Bruner, 1983).

In the next paragraphs, I will use mothers' stories to exemplify how immigrant mothers mirrored the world for their children with multi-ethnic heritage and what negotiations they held. Taurea (Hungary) summarized a multicultural stance in her maternal approach of preparing her daughter for life:

> "I think safety, on every level, physical, spiritual, mental. For her to learn the world through different lenses and value the different ways of living, being, thinking, believing. To give her that palette of colors, so she could paint her own life, rather than you only have black and white, or you only have yellow and red, you know, whatever that is, I did not want my child to be limited in any way on making choices for herself later on."

While opening the future for her daughter, Taurea assumed a mother-agency role of guiding:

> "Of course, I mean, I had to make choices for her, because I was a parent. It's a funny one because I believe giving choices for children, but not too many, because they lead to loss,

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they just have no idea what's going on. So it's like shaping her world, but keeping that world as accessible and open as possible" (Taurea, Hungary).

Turner (1969) argued that society is a *'structure of positions'* (p. 93). This structure is bound by values, enhances roles, and it is reproduced through specific practices and protocols. Nina described *va* - a cultural protocol designed to ensure healthy individual and communal relationships within a structure of positions:

"We have protocols in our culture; we have this thing called va. So that's the space between you and the other person. And you don't violate that space, is not your right. So we raise our kids to know this thing around space and you protect that space through your behavior, through your words, that sort of thing."

Va guides the three folded respect value: respect for oneself, respect for the family, and then respect for the others. Within a structure of positions, obedience was part of a child's role, as Nina described:

"Obedience for us, as a parent in my culture means that you don't answer back, that you do what you are told type of thing, so silence it can be misinterpreted as obedience, when actually the child is unhappy. But, you know, we were taught to be silent and keep your unhappiness to yourself. And just do the dishes, and just do what you're told (laughs)" (Nina, Samoa).

In the family/societal structure, children's boundaries around their agency is determined by the position they hold. Eva (Poland) explained:

"You know, we are like this with kids. Kids have to know their place but it's never ever, you know, no shouting, nothing violent, but you know, they have to know what they can do and what they can't."

She assumed her point of difference within the mainstream culture of the country of migration based on own view on family structure and liberties:

"Not because I parent with a Māori but because I'm Polish. I think. So yeah, I'm definitely more controlling, stricter. But it's nothing with my husband, it's just me. And yeah, my husband is, let them be kids, let them make a mess, and stuff like this" (Eva, Poland).

A practice reproducing the *'structure of positions'* is the rite of passage, following the passing milestones towards adulthood, in a traditionally safe way.

Mothers joined the negotiation of milestones with their own culturally embedded experience of rites of passages. Barb (Israel) followed the Jewish tradition of coming of age, organizing her son's Bar-Mitzva, in the Synagogue, an event for which he had to learn and practice due ritual:

> *"He worked for a whole year, he studied in Hebrew to do his portion, and you have to do it to a music, so you have to learn not only Hebrew but also the music that comes with it and perform in front of the community."*

Bar-Mitzva (son of virtue), and Bat-Mitzva (daughter of virtue) mark the entry into adulthood in the Jewish tradition:

> *"It means that in the eye of the Jewish community, they are now adults. So my son will have voting rights in our community. Because he's done that. And my daughter, once she's passed through this milestone, she will have voting rights in the community as well, and can take office basically. So that's the big Jewish milestone"* (Barb, Israel).

While other mothers didn't talk about specific cultural rites of passage, they held their own beliefs on specific milestones, following their own lived experiences. These experiences were not necessarily validated by the host society, nor accepted by partners. Nina (Samoa) spoke of differences in defining freedom, therefore responsibility assigned to children in her family:

> *"I think the difference in terms of developmental stages emerged more as my kids became teenagers, so their father was more inclined to let them pack a tantrum or to express a difference in views, what I would call talk back (laughs). Their father would call that expressing a view. So their father was a lot more accepting of that. Whereas I wasn't. Like in my culture you express your view when you are much older, when you've had a few stumbles in life and, you know, you've earnt your right to express your view (laughs). So I'm quite old fashion"* (Nina, Samoa).

Ullman (1965, p. 5) defined culture as *"a system of solutions to unlearned problems, as well as of learned problems and their solutions, acquired by members of a recognizable group and shared by them".* In a foreign land, immigrant mothers had to negotiate which elements of their own culture are important to transmit intergenerationally.

Cristina (Peru) storied how she choose to transmit to her daughter the vibrant pace of her culture through music and dance:

> *"She loves music. And so it's so funny because since when she was little, you know, music is a huge thing. And I always make sure that while we are at home, that I'll play Latin music, I'll play salsa and merengue, and then I'll play some of the Peruvian traditional music that I really like, as well as English music as well, but I make the effort to show her some of the Spanish. And yeah, it is so funny, there is this thing that we always say to her, like when somebody is dancing they would say esso esso esso esso. And it's so funny, she does it now. When she wants to dance she comes mama esho esho esho, and I was like oh, she actually, you know?, and you know, if I'm dancing salsa she would come and copy me and then I try teaching her and things like that. It is really important, dancing, it's a huge part of the Latin American culture and the Peruvian culture"* (Cristina, Peru).

Elisapeta (Samoa) spoke of specific clothing *"pulitasi, that's Samoan style, you know, top and matching dress and hibiscus in the hair",* as a way of keeping culture and history alive. Pulitasi that Elisapeta doesn't wear anymore, have a place in her house, representing instances of the past:

> *"I got pulitasi for me. None of them fit (laughs). I put so much weight and they are there in the cupboard. My husband says, what we are going to do with them? Just leave them, they are my memories (laughs). Yeah, they are my memories."*

Her daughter and granddaughter claim their Samoan heritage at social functions through wearing pulitasi:

> *"N. wears pulitasi. The older granddaughter, she's the same. You know, at university, when they have a function she'll ring her mum, "mum, I'll borrow your pulitasi!" "Which one?" and*

she takes the whole lot there to see which one she would like to wear. And I looove that, I'll tell you what, I love that in my girls. Stay with the culture" (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) talked about values:

"Values, … from an arts perspective, the singing, the Indian singing, Indian dancing and what the singing and dancing is actually about, you know, it is the celebration of who we are, celebration of our relationship to the universe and God, … and I sort of bring that into my relationship."

Close knitted families is a value that Jenny (China) mentioned:

"In China we support each other, even the extended family. Here they support each other to a certain extent. Not too much. But I'm pretty lucky, my husband, his family is also quite close, and I will keep the family close as much as possible."

Nina (Samoa) reflected this value through the concept of whakapapa, family genealogy, reinforced through regular family reunions, where *"everybody comes, from around the world. And that brings that sense of belonging, so you grow up knowing you are connected to all these people, yeah. It's, it's lovely. Yeah, it's quite different, hey, those cultures."* This sense of belonging was so important for Nina, that she wanted to extend her children's whakapapa knowledge to her husband's family, of Irish descent, without much success:

"I really would like my kids to go and you know, find where their grandfather came from, but is not a big deal for them so, I certainly filled my children's life with everything I could from my background so that they know who they are and if they want to go look for it when they are adults, you know, so yeah, yeah…" (Nina, Samoa).

Valuing and contributing to the family's status, maintaining high its reputation was another important value for Nina (Samoa):

"As children, you know, you are naughty and do your things, but you wouldn't do anything that would bring your family's reputation down. So that was a biggie. So it's kind of like… if a Samoan young person commits a crime, stealing a car, breaking into houses, that brings a lot of shame to the family, and we take it quite personally, so our young person might be disciplined by the family before the police gets in, because, you know, it's a big shame thing for us."

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While teaching her children these values, Nina had to negotiate her Samoan culture with the *"youth culture"* expressed in the *"urban language"*, a metaphor for swearing:

> *"So I raised my kids to have respect, and not to hurt other people, so it's still a shock to me now that my eldest daughter swears, because we raised her not to swear, cause for us is a violation. You know? Whereas in the youth culture is quite normal, all their songs are swearing. Mum, this is what she says, that's the urban language (laughs). And I said, yes, that is normal urban language, but is not normal in your life, it hasn't been, so it's not normal, cut it out."*

Nina accepted, though, different settings in her children's lives, as long as they learn how to navigate the two different worlds:

> *"So we raise them with certain things but because we never did that, is urban language, whatever that is, yeah, they are free to do a lot more things and they are exposed to a lot more things, but when she comes to me or she goes to a Samoan aunty or Samoan grandma, she knows the rules. And you don't speak in a certain way cause that's a violation of that space, yeah. So they know the two worlds, but I like to think that, because we are holding on to that, that that contributes to the low crime rates for our Pacific young people in this context, because you don't have that surrounding environment, where you know, that's not right, here they can get away with things. But people associate poverty with crime rates, it's not necessarily so with Pacific kids because, the lack of money doesn't determine your dignity and how you treat somebody else, if you are raised in a certain way. So yeah, I'm quite proud about that"* (Nina, Samoa).

5.3.8 NEGOTIATING RESPECT

A cultural value mentioned by many mothers was respect. Respect is translated in Cristina's (Peru) stories through being polite, enacted in a clear structure of norms and formalities, learnt in family settings and normalized societally:

> *"Being polite is a huge part of our lives up to the point when like, if we picked up the phone at home, we would answer, there would be like, good afternoon, this is Cristina, who am I speaking to? And that was like that. And that's just like normal. And if you saw anybody, your neighbor, any adult, especially, you will always say, in the afternoon you always say,*

Good afternoon Mrs. Lopez or Good afternoon Mister Perez. How are you today? I'm very well, thank you for asking. And that's the everyday interaction."

Cristina was shocked to experience the lack of formality in the host country, something that she didn't translate as rude, but as an unfamiliar structure with roles that children enact in that structure, and boundaries of respect:

> *"So for us it was a big shock when we came to New Zealand, you know, and... I remember having our neighbors in our first home here in Howick, and you know, they became really close to my younger brother. And so in the summer, during summer holidays, they would be in and out and they would just come into the house without knocking and things like that. For me that was a big shock, I was, oh my God, mum is going to be so angry. These boys are just coming in. And it was just like, Hi, so we are here. They weren't being rude in any way, but it was just... I think that we have statuses, you know, like how you would relate to somebody like your peers, and how you would relate to an adult. You know, we really respected those."*

A show of respect is one's appearance, demonstrated differently in the public space, outside of the familiar place of one's house:

> *"K. did say to me that he was fascinated at how he feels like we always have to dress up. I don't do it as much anymore because I don't have time, but I mean, and I told K. that is not that I want to... it's just this is how I grew up, I've never seen my mum leave the house in track pants, or without make up, you know? My mum and everybody, when you leave the house, and all the women would look amazing, all the women will have that, you know, hair done, they would have make up on and they would be like, you know, done up. And it is part of the culture, you know? We really take pride, like I said, like pride is a huge element of who we are. You know? And so, you know, we take pride on our appearance because we believe that how you present yourself is how people perceive you and is showing respect to the other person as well"* (Cristina, Peru).

Many stories emphasized the respect towards the elders, and this respect was taken for granted, Anett (Hungary) explained: *"You expect them to know more than you, you do because they lived longer, so I think that was a very good value".* She added:

"It is very important to be polite with your elders. Extremely, extremely important. Even if you don't agree with them. You don't necessarily say that to your elders, you just sit and listen and if you disagree, you just better don't say anything than voice your opinion, because it's very much like the older generation knows better, and they can teach us, so even if you don't agree, you just have to listen, because later on, it can be a life lesson for you" Anett (Hungary).

Jenny (China) added:

"They respect elderly. I don't really expect my kids to look after me when I get old but I would like them to still involve us with their life, be there, being involved, not like being two individuals living two different lives" (Jenny, China).

Respect can be enacted in specific settings like public transport or at the dinner table. Anett (Hungary) elaborated:

"Simple things as well, like with the older generations, when you sit on a bus in public transport and then someone older gets on and there isn't more space, you will get up and you'll have to give that seat to a person who's older than you."

This is a behavior that Eva (Poland) wanted to role-model for her children because

"I struggle sometimes seeing people are not respecting elderlies, like you see that in trains here, you know, chewing gum, ... probably this is going to be my way just teaching my kids how to do it and they have to, you know, just adjust to the situation, and it is important for me to teach kids about the ownership of the decision for every action we action" she argued.

Respect for elderly included a personal commitment to look after their own elders in a traditional way, at home, and while assuming the option of older people's villages for themselves, that wasn't something that they would choose for their parents:

"The idea of having your parents in an old folk's home in Malaysia or in India, that's just not a done thing. I'm open to it here, myself, I've got no issue with that, but I wouldn't do that to my parents, you know, who live in Malaysia, yeah, so respect to elders" (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Cristina (Peru) had the same attitude regarding her own mother:

"I told K. like my mum, you know? I'm not going to let mum go to an old people's home. I can't do it, and here is very common and mum says, no, I'm gonna go and live in a very nice retiring home, there are some really nice in Howick and Botany. K. goes you're not gonna let your mum go and live there. I was like no, I'm not."

She motivated this attitude through her cultural values of a close knit family:

"I wouldn't do that to my mum and K. knows, you know, family, we'll always stay really close. That's with any culture anyway, but I think that with cultures like mine you really need to understand that the family are going to be present. A lot" **Cristina (Peru).**

5.3.9 DIFFERENT SPACES, SIMILAR VALUES

Immigrant mothers with Māori partners found a common ground between their own traditional values and the Māori traditional ones:

"What I found was that the traditional Māori way is very similar to my own culture: to respect the elders, to behave in a very respectful manner, like when we had big dinners back in Hungary, it was my granddad who was the head of the family and we all knew that until he allowed anybody to stand up off the table, you were glued to your chair and you behave" (Taurea, Hungary).

Anne (Denmark) appreciated as well these interethnic similarities between the Danish values and her Māori family ones:

"I think I brought them up pretty much with the values I had myself, but then also the Māori values were similar as well. Just the things about being honest and truthful and… (Anne's daughter: Respect. I always remember respect. Politeness. Having good manners.) Yeah, that sort of things. Saying please and thank you. (Anne's daughter: and just build from that).

One value that she appreciated benefiting from was the Māori hospitability: *"They are very hospitable",* she mentioned.

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) found it comforting to raise her children in the Māori culture, a culture that she viewed very similar to her own:

"In the Chinese culture, respect for elders is really important, that's why I say, so similar to the Māori culture, cause they have a lot of respect for elders, you know, we always… when we were young in Malaysia, everyone was an aunty or uncle, it was a sign of respect, and that's the same as the Māori culture as well, everyone is an aunty or uncle, so that's very, very similar already and you know, we always had to call an elder an aunty or uncle so and so, and aunty and you know? And they also have respect for things around us so you're not allowed to sit on the table, and in the Māori culture that's very important as well, you don't put your feet or your bum on the table, you have respect for, you know? like your pillows, you don't sit on your pillow as well in Chinese culture, that is the same, so I was brought up to have all this respect and tapu that you can't do this, you can't do that, you have to be respectful, so it's nice actually bringing up my kids [here]" (Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia).

Eva, Polish married to a Māori, agreed: *"for funny reasons even Polish and Māori values are quite similar so it's, you know, being close to your family, respecting elders, so mostly this".* She added to her family values mix her own contribution: *"I think it's mostly going to be our religion and being close to whanau and language."*

5.3.10 CONCLUSIONS

Mother participants assumed their role in their children's education as an essential act of cultural reproduction. They anchored their efforts in pursuing educational values and practices as experienced within their country of birth, or their adoption of New Zealand educational values and practices in a specific, personalized process of internalizing the world around them and formulating success, a concept of continuous negotiation. Mothers invested in teaching and modeling for their children cultural values and practices from their country of birth. At times, such investments isolated them from the dominant cultural discourses in their country of immigration. Mothers parenting in a relationship with a New Zealander of Māori descent, found similar cultural values in their partner's tradition.

6. Time

Time is an essential dimension of both mothering and narratives about mothering. The analysis of narrative time has to take into account both these perspectives: that mothers use time patterns to perform their mothering and to anchor it within an interactional world, and that time is one among the range of tools mothers use to organize their memory and intentions (Daiute, 2014). Introducing an interethnic aspect added more complexity to the analyzing of this time dimension, through the occurrences of culturally different timelines, of different perceptions of and approaches to time, and even of different definitions of what constitutes time.

This chapter is discussing the time dimension in mothers' interethnic parenting narratives.

What surprised me when searching for instances of *time* in mothers' narratives was that *time* was presented not only as aspect (temporality) but that *time* was accounted in many instances as concept (theme). To better understand how mother participants assumed the timeline of their mothering contextualized within the timelines of their narratives, I found it necessary to begin the chapter with introducing the time concept: to describe how mother narrators structured the time themes in their stories, how they assumed and negotiated control of time or control over time, and how they used time markers to intensify particular stories of interethnic parenting negotiation in their narratives.

Ricouer (1990) described the time of narrating as three dimensional. There is a present of past things, identifiable as memories. There is a present of future things, imaginary time, identifiable as dreams, wishes, fears, expectations. The third dimension of the threefold present is a present of present things, which recognizes a set perspective in a time to which the other two dimensions evolve. The second section of this chapter presents mothers' trajectories over the time described as such.

The three-dimensional time is punctuated by ritual. The third section of this chapter differentiates between Chronos, the linear, never-ending, quantitative time, and the rhythmic time of Kairos, the time of ritual and celebrations. An inherited calendar of immigrant mothers' ritual and celebrations can be alienated in a space of immigration.

This third part will analyze mothers' efforts to re-claim their ethnic celebratory calendar in the upbringing of their children and/or to adapt to a new celebratory calendar.

6.1 Time as concept

6.1.1 TIMES' THEMES

Time was not only a dimension to support mothers' narratives, but also evolved as an element with nominal qualities within mothers' stories. As such, mothers identified *time* as cultural invention, value added, a constitutive part of the social fabric hierarchy, recovery ingredient or inevitability. In the paragraphs below, I present how these themes were defined by mother-narrators.

Time is a cultural invention (Daiute, 2014). For Eva (Poland) *"for years it was unacceptable to be late. This is part of my culture; when someone tells me for example I will be there in 15 minutes, I expect that to be 15 minutes."* Her husband was *"born late, always late, and he grew up with this like it's his destiny, so you know, he can't fight it, he's going to be always late, so this was a big struggle for me. One of the first dates, he came late, four hours late."* His explanation was that *"in Māoridom, time is made by people, it's not something natural, we just make it, so we can always adjust it",* an explanation that Eva internalized as valid in her interethnic time negotiations. Cristina (Peru) recalled similar experiences of abiding to time demands in her home country: *"at school we all had to be there really on time. If you are not in time, there will be consequences"* (Cristina, Peru), as did Anett (Hungary): *"punctuality is very important in our culture. You cannot be late."* Exposed to a more permissive time culture, Eva, Cristina, Anett and other immigrant mothers had to re-think their mothering pace.

Time is value added: *"Polish food requires a lot of time"* affirmed Eva (Poland), so does Hungarian, Indian and other ethnic food. Anne (Denmark) found that in New Zealand *"the vegetables didn't have the same flavor we were used to. And I think it is because they grow faster over here, so they don't have the time to develop as much flavor we were used to."* Keeping up with ritual is time consuming, where the time invested is drawn from and adds to the significance of the ritual: *"The holy days take a lot of time"* agreed Barb (Israel).

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In some cultures, time is part of the social fabric hierarchy, where there is a set time for parents and a set time for children, reinforced by parenting practices and societal rules:

"In Samoa there is a time for children and time for adults. You never step back. If you do that, you are banned from the house. And you get in trouble with the neighbors, whoever is in the house, they will give you a hard time, because you are breaking the law in the house, and all the families are doing like that", remembered Elisapeta (Samoa).

In certain cultures, time is set aside for recovery from giving birth *"like in China, normally the month after giving birth is crucial for us to recover, so normally people don't really come to visit you either, just give you plenty of time to rest and recover",* Jenny (China) confirmed. This recovery time was not welcomed by all mothers, as Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) remembered:

"*With An. we did the whole thing of the first month, you are not allowed to step outside the house. I didn't do that with A., you know, but with An. I did because my parents were very keen for me to do that, so the first month. Yeah, I can't actually believe that I did that, the first month; that was hell, it was horrible, sitting inside, but you know, there are cultural reasons for it.***"**

Diya also mentioned an instance when this cultural recovery time was contested by a New Zealand body:

"*With An. when she was born, she was quite jaundiced, so quite yellow, and she just kept getting yellower and yellower and the nurse tried to get the lab test guys to come to the house to take a blood test. And she said to the lab test guys, look, for cultural reasons, can you come to the house? And so because of that, we needed the guys to come and do the blood test at home, which they said no to. And they said that that was a lie and I'm just making it up, that's not such thing, yeah"* (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Time was perceived as inevitability in Elisapeta's story on missing the chance to introduce her interethnic family to her grandmother in Samoa:

"*Back to my grandmother: So when the time comes for us to prepare to go to Samoa to meet my grandmother, to take my children over, a month before we are due to go, my grandmother passed and that was so, so sad. So sad, I was looking forward to show my grandmother my children and my husband. It didn't happen. It was a sad time over there, and then evening meals, when we have our prayers, it was a crying time. I don't think my*

father could have said much. Cause he couldn't speak, we were all crying. Very emotional time."

In this story, Elisapeta reproduced the sad time in Samoa caused by her grandmother' death through repetitive time remembrances at the dinner table in New Zealand.

The different definitions that mothers used to describe time, of which I mentioned time as cultural invention, value added, a constitutive part of the social fabric hierarchy, recovery ingredient and inevitability, are relevant to the opening of diverse mothering negotiations and to the multitude of storied resolutions. How mothers assumed the *time* in its conventional meaning of chronological movement, structured by mothering or structuring mothering, was different again, and this is the focus of the next section.

6.1.2 Controlling TIME OR CONTROLLED BY TIME

Mothers told stories about time developed as a social construct, prone to interethnic negotiations. People belong to time or time belongs to people, Nina (Samoa) reflected, telling the story of different upbringing expectations within an interethnic family:

> *"In my husband's family, there were things like bed times, routines, things like that. And in the way I was raised, the baby gets fed when the baby is hungry, goes to sleep when the baby wants to go to sleep, and we can hang out whenever until the child gets tired. And then we go to sleep"* (Nina, Samoa).

Adherence to a controlling structure of time was experienced by couples with less extended family and community support, Nina considered:

> *"In the way I was raised, if the child is hungry, doesn't matter what time, day or night, you feed the child, you get up and feed the child, but at the same time I grew up in extended households, so it was not just one person responsible, you got other people helping, so perhaps that's where I believe was different, ... whereas in my husband's family I suppose, he only grew up with his parents, and there were six of them so there were routines, I suppose there had to be routines, cause there were only two parents, so for him, he was*

about routines, you know, the child eats now and then the child sleeps or whatever so if the child is hungry in between, it doesn't register" (Nina, Samoa).

Elisapeta (Samoa) reflected on similar differences in upbringing experiences, as Nina:

"In Samoa, when a baby sleeps, sleeps on auntie's leg, there is no need to put it to bed. And if he wakes up, another aunty will come along, "I'll take over". Here you have the routine. 7.30, after dinner, bath, clean teeth, get ready, have stories in the bed, that's it. Shut the door. Turn the light down. Bye children. This is mummy and daddy's time. You – bed. Yeah."

Elisapeta, who was brought up in an extended family, with many uncles and aunties to share time with, and nannies coming over to look after her new born siblings, had to adapt to *"a lonely, lonely time"* in Auckland:

*"We were living in a flat, a nice beautiful flat in Manurewa. My husband leaves early in the morning, at about 5.30 in the morning he leaves, comes home at a quarter to seven at night, is getting darker, it's just the baby and me **all day**".*

Applying time measures learnt in a traditional village in Samoa to the time constraints of the apartment living in a city in New Zealand, got her in trouble, as she described in a story:

"And I tried to learn how to do the washing machine, I don't know how many times I overflowed that washing machine, and the people downstairs, they are working in their garage, they look up, it rained inside the garage, and they call me, and of course I was attending to the baby and I forgot the washing machine is going. You are supposed to watch the washing machine it doesn't go up the line, but I thought, oh, it will only take a minute and play with the baby, next thing they knock on the door, "pleeeease", "oh no, not again" (Elisapeta, Samoa).

In contrast, Adna (Bosnia) had to negotiate a time controlled by structures, as experienced in her birth family of ten siblings, with a relaxed time, fashioned around her baby:

"My mother was always very disciplined with feeding babies, she will only do it like every four hours because, I guess, she had lots of routines in our lives, so when I gave birth to W., I was told by midwives that I should feed whenever, all the time, and actually they criticized me for sticking to an every four hours rule, they said oh, that's old fashion. That was, for example, different", Adna (Bosnia) remembered.

Taurea spoke of encountering a different daily structure, in which learnings from her culture, where a mother's routine is organized around her baby's needs, were undermined by a different time approach to mothering in New Zealand:

> *"When you have children, life becomes a lot more structured around your child or children because when they are little, they have to sleep in the middle of the morning, and then they have to sleep in the afternoon, certain time, therefore you build your life around that: so you do your shopping when the child is up or you don't go out, or you go out and have a baby sitter or whatever. Here in New Zealand it took me a while to sort of adapt to it and sometimes I didn't really like it because it didn't suit my daughter's routine... So, I found that in New Zealand, it was a lot looser that, you know, the child is asleep, well, doesn't matter, they just put them in the car seat and off you go, or have meetings or coffee groups or whatever in the middle of when your child is asleep and it did go against my grain because I felt that there is only one time that my daughter is six months old and one year old and whatever, and they have different routines, and they have different needs and I felt that my need or my routine should be secondary to my child's needs and bodily requirements"* (Taurea, Hungary).

The different social conventions around visiting time were another source of frustration in Taurea's narrative:

> *"And again it was very difficult, like my daughter would be asleep as a young baby and I would try to have a little rest because she didn't bloody sleep through [the night] until she was 14 months old, so I was exhausted, so I tried, and in the middle of that, somebody would call in, which is a lovely thing, but I just wanted to sleep. So I struggled with that, that people never sort of tell you that they are going to come, they just come"* (Taurea, Hungary).

While *"having family pop over sort of unannounced all the time to see the baby, cause everybody wanted to see the baby"* was culturally, and therefore socially acceptable for Nina (Samoa) as an intrinsic part of belonging to a community group, that was a difficult time for her husband:

> *"In his family, you would give notice, so in terms of the baby being woken up every time, he found that a struggle, while for me it is quite normal"* (Nina, Samoa).

It was evident that mothers had to adapt their mothering in relation to how they felt they controlled or were controlled by time and time structures, and such perspectives were brought in spaces of immigration from their countries of birth. Encountering other interpretations of how the time structures mothering required vivid negotiations within their interethnic family and within the different world they lived in, channeled through a different pace of time.

6.1.3 A DIFFERENT PACE OF TIME

Time's features are influenced by the location where it is experienced. Sonia (Iran) reflected on the pace of time in a city setting, different from the pace of country living:

> *"Usually when you are in the city, it's business, work, people who go and live in the country they are not exposed to things that we are exposed to, so it might be easier"* (Sonia, Iran).

However, even the city time can be appeased by filling it with family heartwarming activities, Sonia explained:

> *"One trick I found is that I play backgammon with my husband now every night. Backgammon? Who is going to argue while playing backgammon? ... Also, you know, like baking at home is very good, very therapeutic. In fact my sister who had the same challenges, no, she's not married into a different culture, she's married to a Persian, but you know, when her daughter came to teenage years it was quite the same, in New Zealand it was quite difficult and actually it was quite challenging because they came from another culture to here and it was quite overwhelming, but the baking, warm family environment, changed things. That's quite a big thing"*, Sonia (Iran) assessed.

In the preceding paragraphs, I have described the time within a referential phase of meaning, which *"tells the story"* (Daiute, 2014, p. 155), in an evident, directly noticeable way. What was apparent within the telling of the stories, was the use of time markers, through which mothers added to the meaning of their mothering narratives. In the next section I will introduce the time markers used within what Daiute (2014) called the evaluative phase of meaning, where *time* instances were not the focus of the stories told, but attributes used to emphasize particular stories.

Mothers expressed their feelings in relations to certain happenings through time expressions: in mothers' parenting stories, things were happening *"many times", "all the time", "every time", "sometimes"*.

Parenting time in Samoa was experienced as sequential:

> *"We had to do the right thing before we stepped out of the house, we beg our father "what would you like us to do today? He'll tell us. And believe you me: do it right because he doesn't speak to you again. And the second time he speaks to you, you get a (slapping sound) smack. "* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

In New Zealand, though, parenting time tends to be repetitive, Elisapeta remembered jokingly:

> *"My best friend was a wooden spoon (laughs). "Come here!" You know, I don't know **how many times** I had to go shopping and buy new wooden spoons, because I couldn't find any when I'm cooking and I find them in the toys' box"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Anett (Hungary) expressed being disconcerted by her mother's pressure on imposing a particular narrative of mothering, through insisting on the repetitiveness of her demands, such as checking on baby's developmental milestones and maternal language ability "*every time*".

Surprising difficulties or frustrations are conveyed by the time toll they take – expressed as never ending repetitiveness towards reaching a new normality that mother participants do not necessarily agree to. Elisapeta remembered a time of her parenting that she wished she could turn back and change: *"in the end I had to get myself down to the children's level and stop being angry **all the time**"* (Elisapeta, Samoa). Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) described a time of frustration with her children's teacher, whose teaching techniques she didn't agree with:

> *"You know, you don't separate the children, and punish them, so the other children can see one's being punished **all the time**, because they would say, oh, he's stupid, he's naughty, they label him,"* Sheena confessed.

Adna (Bosnia) found surprising a paradoxical New Zealand perspective on safety:

*"Kids have to be protected **at all times**, they are not allowed to play bull rush or, you know, going on a flying fox, because they might hurt themselves... And then, when they are sixteen, you put them in the car, which is such a deadly weapon. So, you know, where is the logic there? How can they assess risk at that age if they **never** before had to assess risk? So you just have to kind of slowly introduce them to that really."*

Stories marking a turn in mothers or significant others' thinking process were registered through time discontinuity occurrences such as *"first time"* and *"the only time."*

Anett (Hungary) recalled how her husband built the courage to take their baby daughter out:

"*He was a bit terrified when **the first time** I said to him, well, you know, I just want to have a bath, why don't you take her to the supermarket? And I could just see the fear in his eyes. He was: what if she cries? And I said, well, then you just leave everything, put her back in the car and bring her home. Remember, she's a baby, you are a grown man. But everything was wonderful, it went very well, so I think that that initial outing just with him and Aa. was a bit scary for him, but after that he was just wonderful and very hands on from changing nappies to burping, feeding"* (Anett, Hungary).

A first time experience didn't necessarily generate continuity, particularly if perceived as negative. In Taurea's story, the disappointment experienced by her daughter's attendance to a Dawn parade was enhanced through the dramatic use of the temporal markers *first time* and *never again*:

*"She went to the ANZAC celebration, and that was **the first time** she went to the Dawn parade and she went to Wellington, the new memorial and all that and she found that extremely white and extremely Christian, very religious. And she did not expect that. She was looking for that Māori aspect to come through and she was quite disappointed and she said she wouldn't go again"* (Taurea, Hungary).

Consistency and repetitive time was used by Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) to enhance a desired behavior:

*"If they don't brush their teeth one night I say, what? You know they have to brush their teeth **every night**. If they think they can get away with one time, then they can get away two times and three times, so I try not to be slacking in that sense."*

To stress the level of an interethnic parental negotiation, mothers evidenced it as *the only time*. For Adna (Bosnia) negotiations around driving age *"was probably **the only time** when I didn't agree with my husband."* For Anett (Hungary), it was about baby crying:

"The child is still crying and so on, and I said to him: that's fine, you know, we can do it your way, what is your suggestion? He didn't have a suggestion, so I said to him: Look, until you come up with a way to do it, then we will carry on doing it how I would like to do it. And of course these days passed, I don't know, if she had wind or gas or she was teething, but I think that was the only time when he disagreed with me about the basics, the basic feeding and so on" (Anett, Hungary).

In the stories presented, mothers made use of time markers to assign their feelings towards mothering negotiations they held. These time markers expressed that interethnic mothering negotiations may have felt overwhelming; they happened *"many times", "all the time", "every time", "sometimes"*, or, in contrast, they marked a change within mothering negotiations, therefore being differentiated as *"the first time"* or *"the only time."* They reflected the complexity of interethnic mothering, as storied by mother participants in this research.

6.2 Time as aspect - chronology

6.2.1 ANCHOR TIME AND MOTHERS' TIMELINES

Narrating always happens in a present, and it was the Auckland of 2015-2016 where mothers' narratives time-space contextual dimensions were anchored. From there, mothers revisited or imagined times and spaces in an order not always chronological and unidirectional, as the questions designed for the interview may have prompted. Instead, they made several incursions, flashbacks and flash-forwards (Bruner, 1991), subsuming the time sequence to a meaningful re-construction of their interethnic mothering.

Cristina (Peru) started her narrative, for example, at the moment her baby was born and *"I lived at home with mum, we lived there for two years."* Then, the storyline went back to her pregnancy time, which evolved around the time of her wedding with her baby's father:

> *"When we got married I was really five months pregnant, it didn't look like it, it's a good thing, I guess, for the wedding photos, but yeah, I feel like... it's not like I didn't worry about my pregnancy, it was just that it was so much going on."*

From there, she remembered the time spent in hospital to give birth. Then, to describe parental values and practices important to her, Cristina travelled to the time of her own childhood, revealing upbringing aspects within the normative spaces of extended family, neighborhoods, school, and church in Peru. The time of her migration to New Zealand was presented within the context of comparing these upbringing aspects to the host society's norms, which *"for us it was a big shock"* (Cristina, Peru).

Another contextual dimension presented in Cristina's narrative, with intersection points to mark comparisons and negotiations, was her husband's life narrative. That took us within a New Zealand's family space (*"my mother-in-law is Kiwi European from an Irish background"*), which *"is more about independence"*, as Cristina described, but also to a Pacific context, revealing her husband's Tongan side of the family, where *"the whole island is related, everybody were cousins."*

In the second half of the interview, Cristina introduced more and more imaginary times to motivate her current parenting decisions, such as teaching her daughter Spanish:

"I want her to go to Peru, and I want her to be able to speak and communicate and interact with the family and with my friends [in Spanish] and just being able to experience that culture in a deeper manner."

A positive imaginary time was justified by present efforts, *"like making the effort and participating and getting to know the culture will only make you richer and wiser, you know"* (Cristina, Peru).

In contrast, Danish Anne's narrative respected closely a chronological, mostly unidirectional line, starting in 1952, when *"my dad brought the whole family up [in New Zealand]."* When my questions were jumping over a stage, Anne would start to respond by giving me the background, which took that new story to the time the previous one finished:

"Interviewer: So where did you meet your husband?

Anne: Well I should tell you, well I went to school for two weeks because in those days you had to be... it was compulsory school until you were 15..."

The narrative continued with stories of Anne's life, unfolding one from another almost linearly, on a chronological causality: with Anne introducing her husband to be to her parents, being introduced to his family, their marriage, saving to buy a house, buying that house, raising two daughters and celebrating their weddings in the house, and the arrival of grandchildren, calling their grandparents Danish names: *"So this Māori was called morfar (grandfather in Danish)".* She talked about looking after her mother-in-law in her last years of life, and that story gave her time for reflection:

"I think my mother-in-law might have preferred to have a Māori daughter-in-law but we got used to each other and we never had a cross word between us, her and I."

Photo albums, which Anne used as prompts, respected this linearity through the way the photos were arranged and presented, in a chronological order. Her husband died, Anne summarizing: *"We managed 42 years [together] before he died",* and Anne's stories followed in revelatory consistency: *"To this day I cook the Danish Christmas pudding on Christmas Eve for the*

whole family" or new pursuits like writing her own stories. Time amendments were made: if her early years of marriage were invested in building a life together with her husband and in parenting, Anne went back to the night school and learnt Māori, her husband's language, in later years: *"I wrote a story about that"*, Anne confessed.

The two narratives summarized above showed that while the act of narrating always happens in a present, narratives are *"irreducibly durative"* (Bruner, 1991, p. 6). They are accounts of events happening over a past time and prognoses of events to happen in an imaginary time. The different timelines the narratives above presented, acknowledge a *"human time"* rather than an abstract or *"clock"* time. As Bruner (1991) confirmed, *"it is time whose significance is given by the meaning assigned to events within its compass"* (p. 6).

All 16 narratives generously offered for this research presented different timeline trajectories. This difference is accounted for only marginally by the *abstract time,* with official records of life history significant dates. I argue that the act of narrating allowed mother narrators to reconstruct their interethnic parenting history on a subjectively assumed timeline, with flashbacks and flash-forwards, turns and sidesteps which permitted them as mothers to position and re-position themselves in rapport to past, present and imagined future and to parallel timelines of possibilities and options. This was beautifully revealed in Cristina's negotiation story between different cultural practices of introducing books to children:

> *"I felt bad at one point because I had friends telling me, oh, I'm reading to my baby, we do this, then we watch a stimulation video, and I never did that with N. because in the Peruvian culture is not common, and I never heard mum talking about that, so in regards to my parenting, I feel that it's being more towards the Peruvian way of things, but you know, she is doing fine now. We got a little bit scared cause I was thinking, oh, maybe, maybe all other kids are going to be smarter than her because you know, they are reading and things like that. But I mean, she's doing it on her own now, she loves books, I don't know if she just likes playing with them or looking at them, but she loves them, she would go to her room on her own and she would be there for half an hour just looking through her books, pointing at pictures, and that came from her more than with me, you know?"* (Cristina, Peru).

Ricouer (1990) described the time of narrating as three dimensional. There is a *present of past things*, identifiable as memories. There is a *present of future things*, imaginary time, identifiable as dreams, wishes, fears, expectations. The third dimension of the threefold present is a *present of present things*, which recognizes a set perspective in a time to which the other two dimensions evolve.

There was one time and place, the present of the interview, factually common for all mothers interviewed. This commonality has to be understood as relative, though, rather than absolute, Auckland of 2015-2016 being assumed from different perspectives, generated by what this place in time meant in the lives of mother narrators and their previous history with this place in time.

Elisapeta (Samoa) and Anne (Denmark), having lived in Auckland for over five decades, reported in their early memories of the place, while Adna (Bosnia) and Taurea (Hungary) assumed it in comparison to other places in New Zealand where they had lived previously.

While not intending to generalize mothers' positionality in rapport with the anchoring point of their narratives, I noted that mothers of young children made more use of the future, imaginary time, opening the stories towards future negotiations. Many of them talked about plans to reconnect their children with their maternal heritage, mostly through visits to mothers' countries of birth. Miyuki (Japan) told me that:

> *"In Japan we celebrate 3, 5, 7 years old. So at that time kids wear a kimono and take a photo and go to the shrine, so next year hopefully, I will try to take him back to Japan and do some cultural stuff. That would be his first time with the Japanese experience."*

Diya (Indian born in Malayia) revealed her travelling plan of reconnecting with her culture in her own terms, and her desire to share this journey with her son:

> *"In August, we are going to Kerala, which is in India, to actually celebrate Onam. I specifically planned this trip for me, mostly, to reconnect to that part, to the values, the real core of being an Indian. I want to go and touch the soil, feel, feel the country, but also share*

this with A., you know, so he can experience it in that way, in the tactile way actually, and then be part of the celebration."

When the connection with their home country was perceived as stretched, Eva's wishes focused on connections with her host country, connection envisaged through the cultural significance of land and personal links to the land:

"What I like in my family is the love to land and their big, big connection to the land. So you know, for example, my whanau owns quite a lot of land up north and we have other members of the family who are not Māori or Kiwi, for example one Chinese, my sister-in-law, and some people just say oh, we should sell land and something like this, and I'm very against this. I want my kids to, not even to have the land but to have the connection, this link, because, you know, the link to Poland is quite stretched, they've never been there yet, and to have this link here I think it's really important" **(Eva, Poland).**

Many mother participants, such as Donna (China), Jenny (China), Nina (Samoa), Barb (Israel), Eva (Poland), made use of future time to reinforce their expectations on the academic achievement of their children, expectations instilled in their mothering by the way they were mothered. Other mothers, such as Anett (Hungary), used future time to project their mothering away from the way they were mothered. Saha (France) included the use of the imaginary time when comparing different ways an argument is perceived in France in contrast to New Zealand:

"I really like in New Zealand that people are really… how do I say? Non argumentative, yeah? People don't want conflict and it makes it very nice and very easy for everyone.

Interviewer: Don't you miss the debate sometimes?

Yeah, that's exactly what I mean, I'm like Oh my God… and I really enjoy it, because I find it easy and nice and it's actually welcoming and when I go back to France, I'm like, oh, people are wanting to argue for the sake of arguing, really. So I'm tired of the French way, but on the same time, I find here like well, but what about disagreeing, what about protesting, what about being more politically involved? I hope in some ways my daughter will have a bit more of this French side, I would like her to be, I guess, more politically involved… (Laughs). More a bit, being less like a sheep" **(Saha, France).**

In contrast, mothers of older children used mostly past and resolution times, opening their narratives towards evaluation and reflections on past negotiations.

Taurea (Hungary) reflected on her daughter's ability to negotiate her Māori-Hungarian heritage:

> *"So I think she feels comfortable in both places to an extent. I think if she was dropped onto a Marae without any guidance, she would feel lost, but she would be equivalently lost if she was dropped into a Hungarian celebration, or a Hungarian [context] without some guidance. So, in a way she can walk in both worlds, but she limps in both worlds. She can walk very well in the middle"* (Taurea, Hungary).

Adna (Bosnia) appreciated her sons' cultural competency as a result of their interethnic upbringing:

> *"I think W. and S. have got the ability to relate to other people easier because of their ethnic, you know, diversity, so they are not intimidated, they can relate to people easier, I guess"* (Adna, Bosnia).

Elisapeta (Samoa) revisited her discipline practices and, while she couldn't turn back the time, she made amendments with her grandchildren:

> *"I think my anger about the children, bringing them up, is to do with the Island way. If you discipline the child, really give a good hiding, I found it here that is abusing the child. I just realized that it is going on. In Samoa it's natural. Just smack the children, or send them outside and not give them any food because they are naughty, until you learn, then come back and apologize, but here, "sorry mummy I won't do it again". But then again, and again, and again. But in Samoa is different. For the last few years I looked at it in another way, I see the difference from here and children over there, it's abuse, you're doing the wrong thing. And I felt, I wish the clock turn back so I can correct this to my children and I wish Samoan parents would correct themselves. This is not the way to do. And I thought hmm. But we are learning. Now the grandchildren come along, we don't care about our children but we care about the grandchildren, and we argue with the parents, "don't do this to the children", "you did that to us, mum". "I know, I don't really care about you. It's the child we are looking for". Oh, and they say "gees you spoil the kids but not us", I said "I know"*
> (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Nina (Samoa) evaluated her interethnic parenting challenges and credited her children's strong connections with their Samoan heritage to her resilient resolution to maintain the strong links:

> *"Because I'm a strong woman, you know, if I wasn't, my kids probably won't be this strong. So parenting for me was still hard cause you still had to negotiate, you know, all those things, and you have to do it yourself, whereas, as I said, it would have been much easier if you married within your own culture, cause you know, you are just doing the same things, and your kids grow up with one set of rules and all that sort of stuff, but as you know, you have to negotiate all the time. It is tricky but I think if you are a strong woman, then your children will benefit. If you're not, then you could lose that side of you, that influence in their life. So for me parenting was tricky, but I do think that the cultural element, spiritual, everything, I think my children have that. I certainly see within my extended family where that hasn't happened. And you've got these dark kids, dark skin kids, who can't speak a word in Samoan. So like a couple of times I've taken my children to Australia and their cousins were married to other Samoans and their kids can't speak Samoan. And then here my kids are speaking, having conversations with elders in Samoan."*

There were mothers who positioned themselves on a happening stage (happening being an event or occurrence with theatrical heritage, typically involving audience participation, audience being me, the interviewer). It was the acute phase of negotiation, with reality kicking in, where past and future were to be resolved.

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia and parenting children with Māori heritage) just recently had to move her children from a Māori full immersion school unit to a bilingual one, to enhance their learning experience. She used present time to express her revolt for her children's segregation in the school environment for learning in Māori, a New Zealand official language:

> *"Why do we have to send our children to a special unit and make them feel like, you know what I mean? … Why are our children treated like second class citizens for wanting to learn the national language? It bothers me, it pisses me off big time… In Malaysia, as bad as we are with racism and everything, at least you can go to school and learn Chinese as a subject, if you want to take it and then you can learn like, you know what I mean? You can learn your own language, you know? And here, it's a national language, and it's not even taught in the*

schools! It should be a subject in every school where children have to pass, it should be a compulsory subject, not one that you elect to take, and it should be that every child in every classroom go to a noho Marae once a year… Oh, and I'm just like, you know it pulls my hair up, what is going on and you know it pisses me off even more because it's getting worse nowadays. By creating these units, it's creating more antagonism towards the Māori, isolates, separates, different funding, different set of rules. Yeah. So that drives me crazy, because I'm thinking, why our children are being punished and made to feel like second class citizens? It drives me nuts" (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

Present time was used by Sonia (Iran) as well, to present her current struggle of negotiating Persian mothering with New Zealand's norms:

"Persians are very, very… it is their duty to be a loving caring mother. Even if your son is 40, married, even has children, he is still your baby. You know, this is in my culture. And this is part of us... but to a Kiwi's eye it's overprotective, you are spoiling the kid and whatever, but it's not, for us is love. If you don't have that, part of you is missing" (Sonia, Iran).

6.3 The cyclic time of ritual

6.3.1. CHRONOS AND KAIROS

The chronological time, marked through family routines, achieved or expected milestones, anchored in birthdays on a narrative timeline, and expressed by mother participants in past form (memory) and future (imaginary time) is complemented by celebration time. Greek mythology separates time between Chronos, linear, never-ending, quantitative time, in charge of the past, the present and the future, *"mastering the orderly passing of time through these three temporal orders"* (Rusu & Kantola, 2016, p. 3) and Kairos, the rhythmic time, *"a cyclic loophole into the linear movement of chronic time"* (Rusu & Kantola, 2016, p. 3). Celebrations turn Chronos into Kairos.

Van Nieuwkerk (2005) remarked that celebrations give time its rhythmic form. They are ritual means of socially patterning time. Assumed at an identity level, a celebrations calendar is part of an ethnic heritage, where exerting control over the calendar of celebrations means having control over time (Van Nieuwkerk, 2005).

Through celebrations, time is marked symbolically at a collectivity level. Rusu and Kantola (2016) presented the celebrations' *"paradoxical disruptively-regulatory nature"* (p. 3), interfering with the rhythm of the day-to-day life, on one hand, while introducing a cyclical pattern of symbolical repetitive events, on the other hand. I argue that this regulatory nature is altered in a migration context, where home country celebrations may not be mirrored by the host society, and where, in turn, the host society's celebrations may feel unnatural.

In the next sections of this chapter, I reflect on how mothers negotiate the time and space dimensions to allow for the reproduction of inherited or adopted cultural celebrations and ritual within their interethnic parenting.

For Nina (Samoa), Sunday means Church and family time, and that has priority over other programs:

> *"The sport clubs were really important to the kids. Especially my second girl plays a lot. So they know she doesn't play on Sunday, and sometimes they have tournaments on Sundays, so I said, she's got Sunday school so (laughs) only on a very, very exceptional times will we let her play, but they know that generally Sundays, G. is not available, and it's not because she can't, you know, she's sick, but that's time for family, it's church and then family"* (Nina, Samoa).

For Barb (Israel), Friday is Shabbat, *"every Friday we do a dinner, Shabbat, like I am, so it's in the slow cooker, making chicken soup"* (the interview took place on a Friday); this *"is a big part of the Jewish identity"* and if her children's friends come over, they are included in the family's ritual: *"if they came on a Friday, there is the ritual, so that's different for them, but they are very open."*

Ritual is mostly expressed through celebrations. Celebration time is experienced subjectively, mostly informed by a cultural heritage manifested in repetitive practices transmitted and adapted intergenerationally within family and community contexts. The celebrations' calendar of mother participants in this research included inherited celebrations and adopted celebrations, in congruence with their partner, their partner's family or generally New Zealand society's calendar.

Eva (Poland) recalled: *"We introduced kids to the international children's day, 1st of June, so that's what we do."* There is also the Polish Andrzejki, *"a day of finding your future, it's very old, and it may be rubbish, but we celebrate it as how we read the future from certain things that we do"*. This is instead of Halloween because *"we don't get scared, the catholic culture wouldn't allow us, it's the Polish way."*

Nina (Samoa) introduced in her family's calendar the Children's Sunday:

> *"We have one Sunday, normally in October, we call it the kids' Sunday, so it's when they put on plays and that sort of things, just to celebrate the children. That's the focus on the children, so that's the one day in the year when we do that. And we've had that for as long*

as I can remember. So in terms of our ethnicities theme, so my husband, he's not a church goer but he knows that this Sunday in the year we go to church and we celebrate the children, so that was one of the things that we discussed before marriage, that spirituality is important and that if we have kids, then this day is, you know, sacred, so if there is any trip anywhere, is not gonna happen on this day. So to this day, he's kept a brave commitment, so the children know, so that's one consistent thing. "

Unlike the Samoan celebrations calendar, the migration space is quite poor, Nina reflected:

"In terms of other cultural festivals, I suppose not many here, hey? If we were in Samoa, it's different. Cause we are always celebrating something" (Nina, Samoa).

In contrast, Barb's celebration calendar is rich in festivities:

"The holy days take a lot of time. So there is, how many? Let me count them. There is two … there is three big holy days. In the diaspora there is a few big holy days, there is lots of holy days all year round. So it's a lot of work to be properly observing the Orthodox Jewish, which I am not."

Barb's family celebrate the Jewish New Year, the Delve atonement, *"Passover is the biggest production"*, and then there is Hanukkah. Regarding her in-laws celebrations, *"we never celebrated Christmas, we never celebrated Easter. We celebrated with other people, with A's mother, we'll go to her house and she'll have a Christmas tree, but we will not have a Christmas tree. We'll have egg hunts with other friends, with A.'s mum, but we won't have egg hunts"* (Barb, Israel).

Sonia (Iran) celebrates the Persian New Year, on 21st of March every year, valuing it as compensation for missing on other times of importance for her family of birth:

"I think for intercultural marriages is quite important to have as much celebrations and happy occasions as possible to fill the gap, you know? Because you've got, you will feel those gaps whether you didn't celebrate a great auntie's birthday in the foreign land, you didn't go out with your neighbor and it was his birthday, or something and you will feel it. You know? Because you are away. But it is good" (Sonia, Iran).

While adopting the New Zealand celebration calendar, *"we kind of follow the Kiwi culture, you know, Christmas and the public holidays and the celebrations what we have in New Zealand'*, Donna uses her traditional celebration times to unpack meanings enclosed in cultural ritual for her son:

> *"The Chinese New Year. I think that's the biggest one we try to get him to learn, you know, where is from, when is it, what we do during the Chinese New year celebration, like the dumplings and why we are doing this"* (Donna, China).

6.3.3. THE STRUCTURED TEXTURE OF INHERITED CELEBRATORY TIME

Celebration time is symbolically structured, a part not often presented being its preparation time. Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) remembered:

> *"Mum used to wake up for months early in the morning and bake cookies; the Chinese New Year is a buildup, because for months and months mum used to start cleaning the house, changing the curtains, or doing whatever she does, cleaning everything, washing the house down and then making cookies and waking up early to make stuff and put it in big tins, so when there were Chinese people coming and visit for the New Year, we've got Chinese cookies and stuff to give them."*

In the space of immigration, though, preparations are futile because *"some of the stuff kids don't really eat, and there is no one to come and visit."* In consequence, Chinese New Year for Sheena and her children *"it's kind of like really quiet... the only thing that we do during Chinese year is that we go to Chinese New Year lunch, with my sister which is not saying, because you know, it's not fun for kids to go to lunch and stuff, it's just another lunch day for them. Yeah, so it's kind of loss there"* (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

Work expectations (Chronos), and the absence of her mother, impacted on Jenny's family time over the Chinese New Year:

> *"Chinese New Year, normally for the little kids, the elderly, the senior ones give the kids a red envelope with money, like pocket money for the year, we haven't really been doing that,*

because my mum had gone back to China. And I've been back to work, otherwise I would be doing that, but if my mum was here, I'm pretty sure we would do that" (Jenny, China).

A symbolic metaphor of passing time was described by Cristina (Peru) in her story of the traditional Peruvian New Year celebration, transported in the New Zealand's space:

"New Year, we are supposed to eat 12 grapes at midnight, and you make a wish with each grape, and then another big thing is that yeah, New Year actually we have differences. To welcome the New Year and say good bye to the old, people would make, and it will usually be a big family project or even like the whole neighborhood, like the whole block, and you'll make like a doll made up of old clothing or paper of anything, you put clothes on it and then you burn it. Some people have like those castles, they are made like of wooden sticks and they have like color and stuff so, you know, it's like a huge torch. They are very, very popular. And then another thing is that some people go around the street holding a luggage, like a huge luggage bag, and that is supposed to bring travelling and everything for the next year to come, so it's supposed to bring good luck and they will be doing a lot of travelling in the next year. And then another thing is wearing yellow. So yellow. So some people they buy yellow underwear or they put yellow undies on their heads or whatever, so yellow is a color that represents new beginnings and is supposed to bring good luck and prosperity and success for the New Year" (Cristina, Peru).

6.3.4. NEGOTIATING INHERITED AND ADOPTED CELEBRATIONS

Adna (Bosnia) commented on her family commitment to include celebrations in their calendar, despite religious differences:

"For us New Year is very important, so we will make sure that we have New Year's parties and then A.'s parents, for example, for them, for his mother, Christmas is very important, so we make sure that we celebrate Christmas as well."

Six mothers specified Christianity as their religious affiliation (Catholic, Congregational), with two of them non-practicing. However, even the non-practicing mothers talked about the importance of reenacting traditional practices during Christmas and Easter.

For five mothers, Christmas Eve would be the celebratory time, not Christmas Day, which is usually celebrated in New Zealand: *"we celebrate Christmas on the 24th at night time, the midnight is Christmas and in Peru that's how people do it"* (Cristina, Peru). That was mostly perceived as convenient, allowing these mothers to organize their own traditions on Christmas Eve: *"the most important is Christmas Eve, with 12 dishes, like 12 apostles"* (Eva, Poland), and to attend to their partner's family traditions on Christmas Day:

> *"We started to have Christmas Eve in my family and on Christmas Day we would go have Christmas with my husband's family. So that worked out very well"* (Anne, Denmark).

The day in the calendar may be however impaired by the seasonal change, as Anett (Hungary) revealed: *"The difference is, of course, it's cold there and hot here. It never feels like Christmas to me."* That takes Anett in an imaginary time:

> *"Hopefully one day we can take [my daughter] there to experience a white Christmas. Cause that's just lovely, I think. But we celebrate it the same, really, here and there, I don't see any difference"* (Anett, Hungary).

Christmas marks a time for celebrations for nearly all mothers in this research, convening to their partners' families' celebratory timeline. Sonia (Iran), born Muslim, agreed:

> *"Yes, I love Christmas myself, because any excuse for a celebration is great. Why not believe in the magic of Christmas? You know? I actually make, my husband is the one who doesn't like the Christmas decorations, I do."*

Saha joins in the Christmas celebration in New Zealand, for cultural rather than religious reasons:

> *"I'm not coming from a religious family, so my family is atheist, so we are not doing much in terms of celebrations, because most celebrations in France would come from the religious side. No, I guess it's just the normal birthday, and yeah we do Christmas and that's it really"* (Saha, France).

Jenny (China) adopted the New Zealand celebration calendar as well: *"Every Christmas we get together. Presents and food"* and so did Donna (China): *"We kind of follow the Kiwi culture, you know, Christmas and the public holidays and the celebrations what we have in New Zealand and we'll do the same."*

Some mothers do contest the time of Christmas in New Zealand, perceived as unnatural, therefore inconvenient. Diya was one of them:

> *"Christmas is just one day everyone struggles to find the ability to meet and it seems to be this Kiwi thing where all the family have to meet on that one day. But that one day is got no spiritual significance or deeper meaning, you know, it's just Christmas for them, so this is where I struggle with that. I go: why? We can meet actually in July, July is a good time to meet. Why can't that be Christmas Day?"* (Diya, **Indian born in Malaysia**).

6.3.5 SECULARIZED TIME

Van Nieuwkerk (2005) mentioned that in a migration context, time is secularized, requiring extra efforts from mother participants to include the celebratory rhythms of their home country within their chronological schedules in the migration space. Barb (Israel) had to take time off work to go to synagogue with her children. Also *"Passover is in April and you tell the story of the Exodus, it's a big table and I have to take the day off. If I host it, I have to take the day off."* What comes as naturally for her celebratory calendar didn't come necessarily within her husband's pace of life:

> *"Little things like I have to, but now he's good, you know, when it comes to the high holy days. I have to put it in his diary so he knows not to book a meeting. So I have to work on it."*

Eva (Poland) negotiated a less demanding celebratory schedule, because of work demands:

> *"and sometimes I'm just as well too tired, you know, just working, so we decided to do it every second year Polish, and every, you know just next year Māori or Kiwi way with BBQ-es and stuff like this"*, Eva confessed.

6.3.6 LOSS OF CELEBRATORY TIME

Taurea (Hungary) and Eva (Poland) talked about one date difficult to negotiate in their celebration's calendar, and that was the *name day.* The origins of the name's day go back to the times when babies' names were selected from the religious calendars. In some

countries, the practice of celebrating that day is common, even for atheist or non-practicing people:

> "I mean one thing which nobody in New Zealand never ever got, our name day celebration. They have no clue what that is. And then it's like I just can't, I don't have enough fingers and toes to count how many times I explained what it is and it just goes well over the head and they have no idea. But that's ok, you know they don't know" (Edit, Hungary).

Eva (Poland) reflected on the loss of this celebration as well:

> "In Poland we have name days as well, so you know, just on top of birthdays, but the problem is with our children, my daughter's name is not in the Polish calendar so, you know, we stopped doing this."

The time of *Mothers' Day* was another negotiating point in some of the narratives. Eva (Poland), while sending a card to her own mother, decided to celebrate motherhood with other New Zealand mothers:

> "We have 26th of May in Poland and it is a fixed day, so it's not like on Sunday in here.
>
> *Interviewer: You have both?*
>
> No, I have to admit, I didn't even tell my husband about Mothers' Day but I celebrate it, I always send a card to my mum."

Adna (Bosnia) assumed the same attitude:

> "We celebrate as much as we can both sides, obviously, but there are also practical kind of issues; for example in Europe you celebrate 8 of March as Mother's Day but here, because, you know, Mother's Day is in a different day, our boys will bring me a present for Mother's Day in New Zealand, not in Europe. So, I guess if we were in Europe, it would be the other way around. And I don't expect them to, you know, to give me two presents every year for Mother's Day, if you know what I mean".

Kairos, celebration time, remodels the world in a socially accepted structure. Negotiating a celebration calendar means negotiating worldviews as a response to different structures socially accepted and widely reproduced. It was evident that participants in this research anchored these negotiations in their mothering journeys, with motivations of reproducing their values inscribed in ritual for their children. While they pursued this aim strongly,

against odds sometimes, they regressed from it when they deemed it incongruent with beneficial mothering within territories of immigration.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I argued that time is an integral part of immigrant mothers' ethnic identities. Mothers bring with them, from their countries of birth to territories of immigration, definitions and structures of time and specific chronological assumptions on mothering. They aim to reproduce intergenerationally their culture through a particular celebration calendar. These time perspectives, shared largely by their ethnic communities in their countries of birth are singularized and challenged in the country of immigration. Therefore *time* represents an important negotiation space, where reproduction of cultural values and practices are attempted through interethnic mothering.

From a narrative perspective, time is an essential feature of living a storied life. Traditional timelines, seen and experienced when growing up, couldn't be reproduced entirely after mothers left the space where these timelines unravel. Migration to New Zealand triggered the plot of living different mothering stories which they had to negotiate with both mothering they had experienced and with the prevalent mothering within the country of immigration. These stories of negotiating interethnic mothering will be discussed in Chapter 7.

7. Plots of Interethnic Mothering

Polkinghorne (1988) described the narrative landscape of our lives as a constant interconnection of stories: *"Our lives are ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories that we tell and hear told, with the stories that we dream or imagine or would like to tell"* (p. 160). Narratives are ways of knowing, they encompass, transmit and regulate knowledge. Lyotard coined the term *master narrative* in his classic 1979 work *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* to differentiate the institutional and ideological forms of knowledge within the array of narratives. Bamberg continued the argument with describing capital D discourses, as a way of introducing the influence of master narratives in one's experience of the world, and small-d discourses that define one's construction of self in interaction with the master narratives present:

> *"The world, including our sense of who-we-are, is the product of the existing capital-D discourses [master narratives]; whereas in the latter, small-d discourses [mother participants' narratives] are used in interactive settings to construct a sense of self, of the other, and of the world, with us, the speakers or narrators, as agents who are agentively (and responsibly) involved in this construction process"* (Bamberg, 2014, p. 133).

Mothers' narratives did not develop in a vacuum, but within or against master narratives of their worlds where capital-D discourses defined, regulated and policed motherhood and devised polarizing *'good mother'* and *'bad mother'* models, with the aim of channeling the acts of mothering towards socially accepted norms. There are two master narratives within or against which mother participants developed their own stories to construct their mothering. One belonged to their country of birth, reproduced in their experience of being mothered, through inbred cultural values associated with motherhood. The other one impacted through their migration experience, as a reflection of the adopted landscape with its own cultural values associated with motherhood.

Both master narratives present a history of legitimacy, which didn't escape mother participants, who, in a balancing act, found themselves taking for granted (or distancing

from, but still justifying) regulatory institutions of motherhood. The master narratives governing motherhood were created to respond to specific environmental, political, economic, historical, social conditions experienced in the targeted setting. Therefore, their capital D discourses on why mothering is performed the way it is, there and here, and all over the world, may have aligned accidently (or not accidently, if we adopt the idea that we are all the product of a great unconscious humanity narrative), but mostly differed, sometimes to the point of contrast, in the sense of motherhood regulatory norms, and the way they were inscribed and prescribed.

Māori motherhood narrative is another discourse towards which mother participants, particularly mothers parenting in a relationship with a Māori, position their own narratives. Within a colonized context, Māori motherhood narrative is a marginalized discourse, rather than a master narrative, *"the reproduction of Indigenous people, who have experienced ongoing cultural and ethnic marginalization, having long been a source of contention"* (Le Grice & Braun, 2016, p. 151).

Māori motherhood narrative stems in the Māori genesis story of Papatūānuku, the Earth mother, and Ranginui, the Sky father. The first children were conceived within the embrace of Papatūānuku and Ranginui. Searching for light and freedom, the children pushed away their parents in a struggle that equates the birthing process. The primordial mother, Papatūānuku, remains the metaphor for *"how women, like land, nourish future generations, culturally, spiritually, socially, politically and economically"* (Le Grice & Braun, 2016, p. 155).

Le Grice and Braun (2016) acknowledged that Te Ao Māori (Māori world) is interrelational, and within this worldview motherhood is seen as a consistent part of a complex biological, social, spiritual and ecological system, where the wellbeing of one element depends on the wellbeing of the others. In this system, children are gifts from gods, manifestations of ancestors from the past, and unborn children of the future. From this perspective, the maternal body is te whare tangata, which translates *"house of humanity"*, and it is graphically reproduced by the Māori wharenui (the Māori meeting house) which has a

mother's womb characteristics (exposed internal beams depict a backbone and ribs, with the entrance representing the vagina).

My Māori mother-in-law told me that pregnancy, birthing and parenting are governed by customary law that differentiate actions between tapu (under gods' protection) and noa (permitted). She also taught me that the placenta is called whenua; whenua also means earth. It is traditionally buried in a place of significance, to confirm belonging to a particular land and genealogy (whakapapa). The children will always return to that land, their home, towards which they have responsibilities of care (kaitiakitanga). Within Te Ao Māori, parenting is a collective investment. The children belong to whanau (extended family) as part of their belonging to their parents, and the whanau has responsibilities of care towards them.

It was not the aim of this research to present, describe and compare different master narratives on motherhood, nor to order them in terms of their validity. This research started from the mother participants' stories, small-d discourses, on how they assumed motherhood and their lived experiences of mothering, and how they constructed their mothering through balancing sometimes conflicting master narratives. The master narratives towards which mothers positioned themselves were defined from the mothers' perspectives. Their accounts on these master narratives were assumed, and no efforts were made to check their validity against research literature.

We live storied lives, Bruner stated, and Polkinghorne's (1988) description of these storied lives is utterly relevant for mother participants in this research of interethnic mothering. Mothers, like any other, live *"immersed in narrative, recounting and reassessing the meanings of past actions anticipating the outcomes of future projects, situating themselves at the intersection of several stories not yet completed"* (p.160).

These stories, *"temporal happenings"* (Polkinghorne, 1988, p.160), are shaped into meaningful units through plotting (Polkinghorne, 1988). A plot analysis identifies the basic structure of a narrative which includes setting, initiating action, complicating action,

climax, resolution strategies, ending and coda (Daiute, 2014). Outside of this elementary classification, mothering narratives are what Purnell and Bowman (2014) described as *"never-ending stories"* (p. 176), and therefore, they should be allowed to be taken from the middle:

> *"Writing from the middle of an experience may not allow for an ending, but more accurately reflects lived experience. Experience written from the middle is ongoing. Turning points in stories are diffused throughout the narrative. Any point on which the reader chooses to focus is a turning point that both ends and begins, ties and unties"* (Purnell & Bowman, 2014, p. 176).

7.1 BEGINNINGS

Mothers' narratives, while they weren't told linearly, throughout the interviews anchored beginnings in the unchangeable, definite time and space of mothers' childhood in their countries of birth, where they first experienced family, and modelled family roles. In recounting experiences of growing up, they referred confidently to master narratives of parenting from their countries of birth, as a worldview that was taken for granted, and which they internalized in personalized ways.

7.2 INITIATING ACTION

Initiating action was the time of migration, and mother participants showed different degrees of agency in how migration unfolded. Eight participants migrated to New Zealand because their partner was a New Zealander. Five participants came to New Zealand to study, and they met their New Zealand partner here. Anne (Denmark) migrated with her family when she was 14 years old: *"my dad brought the whole family up back in 1952."* Elisapeta's (Samoa) aim was to earn money to support her family back home, in Samoa: *"I came here to work, I was just about nearly 18 years old."* Some decisions were storied as responses to dramatic histories. Cristina (Peru) came to join her father after *"the situation*

in Peru was a bit difficult, and my dad lost his job and he came to New Zealand". Adna (Bosnia) was getting away from a war zone in her home country: *"my decision to come to New Zealand, to immigrate to New Zealand, was more sort of a temporary solution, because I thought that the war will end up relatively quickly back home."*

Participants spoke positively about entering a relationship with a partner from another ethnicity, and their stories showed that their decision was generally accepted by both families and community at large, in more or less welcoming ways. Elisapeta (Samoa) detailed:

> *"We have in Samoa a lot of our aunties and uncle's children marrying Australians and New Zealanders, and aunty M.'s second husband is Australian, the first husband was a New Zealander, so we mix, we know what the mixture is. It's just natural, is no fear, it's just a normal thing to do; if you married a bush man from Australia, that is all right, but if you marry a Kiwi that's, you know, shooting ducks and things, yes.*
>
> ***Interviewer: What about your husband marrying a Samoan?***
>
> *Aaa, I don't think he came into it. All he wanted was a wife (laughs)"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

While sixty years ago, where Anne's story took us, interracial couples were not common, Anne (Denmark) didn't encounter any opposition from neither her Danish nor her Māori partner's family:

> *"Eventually my family didn't quite know what to think of it. We came from Denmark and that was no colored people there and they didn't have any preconceived ideas or prejudice. So, you know, we didn't have that, but it was just that I was young and my mum thought is too early yet, but eventually she allowed me to ask him home for dinner and we were vegetarian of course and I cooked the normal meal that we had, but I'm sure that he went and had a feed of steak and chips in some restaurant afterwards. But he never said a word about it... in those days you hardly ever saw any Pakeha girls in all the time that we were courting, we were courting for twenty months before we married and at no time I never saw another Pakeha girl with either Polynesian or Māori"* (Anne, Denmark).

Barb (Israel) spoke about her family's attitude towards her non-Jewish husband: *"they adore him. Absolutely love him... my mother struggled with him not being Jewish to begin with, but he just… They absolutely love him."* That was, however, different from the reception that she

received from her husband's family: *"I could not have been more different to what they would have thought, his sisters and his mother that he'd marry."* This attitude, while making it hard for Barb, *"yeah, it was very hard for me. Very hard"* didn't impact on her interethnic couple parenting negotiations.

Sonia (Iran) justified interethnic relationships beautifully:

> *"For someone who marries someone else from other culture, that must have been a good reason for that (laughs). It's not like in the older days when it was arranged. You know what I mean? You choose to do that. It's a big risk. It's like getting into a new business, isn't it? (Laughs). So you must have been interested in that person, so respect that when the challenges come, you have to remember those days. And don't give up, when it becomes tough sometimes, don't give up"* (Sonia, Iran).

7.3 COMPLICATING ACTION

Interethnic family negotiations were complicated by parenting: *"I think I did not really feel how different I was until we had kids"* Sonia (Iran) confessed. These complications came at times unexpectedly, as Nina (Samoa) described:

> *"You don't sort of grow up thinking, oh, you're gonna be negotiating bed times or church, or, you know, you just sort of take things as they come along, but then, when you meet someone of course who comes from a different world, well, all of a sudden going to church is something that you have to ask, will you be ok to go to church tomorrow?"*

Generally, complications arose from negotiations of supremacy between two strongly reproduced master narratives:

> *"I can see the more challenging nature if the other side is very staunch and strong and demanding, cause you don't particularly buy into all of that and again, depending on the negotiation of what is non-negotiable for them, and what you say actually, nah, I'm not going to do that, it's just, you know, in my world it doesn't make any sense and I just don't want to do it, and vice versa"* (Taurea, Hungary).

However, the lack of substance of the host country master narrative of motherhood didn't necessarily make negotiating mothering easier, as Taurea found out: *"on the other hand it was a bit harder because I had to learn through other channels of what would be the salvation or the norms or whatever."*

7.4. CLIMAX

Mother participants constructed their mothering in relation to other family and societal roles they performed, in a continuous balance of motherhood narratives from their country of birth and narratives from their country of migration. The climax is the pivotal conflict of the plot, where mothers' motivations conflicted with elements of master narratives they tried to balance.

Barb explained the different approach to motherhood in her country of birth in contrast to New Zealand. While acknowledging that in the context of a globalized world things may have changed in Israel since she moved to New Zealand, Barb remembered an environment where everything evolved around children, *"children are everything in Israel."* Not being a mother is not an option:

> *"Even women who don't find a husband or don't find a life partner, then they become solo mothers, and culturally speaking, when you say single mothers in Israel, symbolic interactionism, what you think of that, the first thing that comes to your mind is 30 something years old career woman who chose to have a baby, paying a significant amount of money to a fertility doctor to have that baby and will have a baby that would be absolutely adored and looked after by her entire family. And here is quite different. So when I first came here, when I heard people talking about single mothers, I thought that's what they meant. And in the context of New Zealand, a single mother is a sixteen years old woman who couldn't, didn't find any… it's a completely different construct"* (Barb, Israel).

Both Adna (Bosnia) and Saha (France) found that in the country of migration, the family life revolved around the children, in contrast with the narratives from their countries of birth, where the children fitted within the already existing family life:

"I find a lot of parents here are very much setting their life around the children, whereas I find a lot of French parents make their children fit their own life, and I think this is a difference, like more French parents go out with their children, they have their children but they still carry on with their lives, whereas here, I feel here lots of people have their children and they are parents and that's their main thing, really", Saha (France) detailed.

Adna complemented the story:

"Back at home you have your own life and the child kind of fits into your life. What I found in New Zealand was that children were much more precious, and I kind of didn't agree with that, you know, the kid will do what I'm doing and the kid will just fit in, that's how it is, that's how it's back home, and luckily my husband kind of understood and he was on the same path with me, so that was relatively easy, yeah."

This positioning elaborated particular characteristics of the mothering mothers performed and involved specific negotiation processes.

In contrast, coming from other motherhood narratives, Donna (China) and Taurea (Hungary) found that in New Zealand, families are less child-centered than in their countries of birth, and constructed their negotiations and mothering accordingly to this positioning. Donna (China) detailed:

"I think in China the child is, since he is born, very important to the family and they look after the child very well and usually baby sleeps with the mother, in the same bed, or in a shared room with the mother and at early stage, I don't think the baby is taken to a lot of events or, you know, activities, but [stays] in the house. The difference in New Zealand is that people seem to treat a new born in a normal way, I put it, as they don't see the baby should've make to people's normal life any difference. They still take the baby, go out, attend events, and involve in family activities or sports. So the babies born here are more part of the family activities, people, and family members can give baby a cuddle and that's not a problem, but in China, specially for the first month or three months, they try to avoid the baby to contact the outside world, in case, you know, they bring viruses and germs and baby couldn't handle. Baby is not immune to those so they don't expose the baby to too many activities or people outside the close family" (Donna, China).

Taurea (Hungary) confirmed the different array of mothering decisions derived from positionality to two different master narratives of motherhood:

> *"When we talk about children, both cultures would say that the center is the child … but in my own culture, in my up-bringing, any family with a child, the whole family's lifestyle and routine is built around the child or the children."*

In contrast to the way she envisaged mothering, she felt that the New Zealand master narrative on motherhood pressured the child to fit into the mother's routine.

Mother participants shared their balancing act of conflicting motherhood narratives by remembering stories from significant mothering stages: giving birth, negotiating developmental milestones, negotiating narratives of healing, and mothering teenagers. In the next paragraphs I will present their approach in constructing their interethnic mothering through positioning towards or against motherhood master narratives from their countries of birth and from their country of migration.

7.4.1 CONFLICTING NARRATIVES OF BIRTHING

New Zealand has its own narratives of birthing, in which mothers are encouraged to choose a free midwifery service who coordinates the care throughout their pregnancy, giving birth and the first six weeks after giving birth. The midwifery practice of care was lobbied with the aim to empower mothers through giving them increased control over their own birthing. DeSouza (2014), researching Korean mothers experiences of giving birth in New Zealand, claimed that *"one woman's empowerment is another's oppression"*, showing how different narratives of birthing clashed with this model of empowerment.

"Here they treat you like in a normal day" declared Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) her shock after giving birth in New Zealand. In contrast, in Malaysia, *"they would never do that. You have to have a rest first and they really take good care of you."* Sheena expressed her disappointment when her expectations of being looked after and helped to recover after giving birth were met by the health system's expectations to bounce back and actively

control her own recovery, which for her was culturally unimagined. When Sheena detailed her experience, she assessed herself in rapport to a New Zealand mother, as a representative of New Zealand's model of birthing:

> "I remember when I had K., it was so funny, she's a friend now, but the lady next to me, she was getting up the next day, having a shower, taking the baby for a full wash, and I was lying there thinking, Did she get up? Like I just felt I couldn't, I didn't have energy to even go to the toilet, I was at the point where I was so tired, then they found, they said, Ah, sorry, but I think you lost more blood than we thought you did, so I was really, really shattered and I remember looking at K. in the photos, cause I didn't give him a bath for ages, and he had this blood on his forehead and I was so tired, and no one wiped it off for days, like a birthmark, because we didn't clean him until like five days later, and then this girl next to me was showering, and giving her baby his first bath, just right after the thing and after the... how can you do that? I mean how can you get up and walk? You know? So that's how wasted I was, I really wanted someone to come and cook for me and you know?" (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

Sheena tried to negotiate her needs and expectations while making sense of the new birthing landscape, a hospital in New Zealand, populated with what she saw, helpful and less helpful hospital staff: *"it's hard because it's the only thing I know, it's the only place I know that I've been a mum, so I haven't got something to compare to, so it's hard."* Her image of hospitals came under her ethnic master narrative, where *"hospitals are quite dirty places, I don't know if you understand that, dirty means like a lot of lost souls, people die, lost souls, spirits floating around, so when you have a baby, that's quite vulnerable the baby and the mother in hospital."* Sheena reclaimed the hospital space, through resorting to traditional solutions:

> "I had this Buddhist thing like a charm or whatever you call it, like a picture of the Dalai Lama and I put it on a shelf, high up, as respect and for him to watch over us kind of thing. To make me feel better. Whether it works or not, I don't know, but it makes me feel a bit safer, you know?"

Her partner's family visit, bringing in an unrecognizable narrative *"they are not Māori, they are Māori but they don't follow the Māori culture",* broke that safety net:

> "They came and visit and then the sister... I was very tired, and I was, oh, yeah, whatever,

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and then the sister came and she always tries to... you know the word hori? She always tries to act really hori, I don't know why, but I think to annoy me or something, so she brought in a bunch of flowers, I said thank you, and she put it in the jar, and the jar, you know, if you go to the hospital and ask for a vase of flowers they give you a vase. This jar, she went and found it, and this jar I used to pee in, she just found it. You know is the one we all the hospital women pee in and then it gets taken away, don't know if it is the same jar or a different jar. She put the flowers in it and she put it where my charm, my Buddha thing is, on the shelf, she put it on the same shelf. And then the next day when I woke up... so all this time you know they think that I am snobby, I was fine, I took it because I didn't have a child, it was just me and C., and we can take it, it doesn't matter, whatever they dish at us, but then, so then she put this jar, the peeing jar, with the flowers in it, and next morning I woke up and I look at the flowers and they were all dead. They were all dead. Right?"

In her story of recreating motherhood in spaces of immigration, Sheena positioned herself metaphorically within her master narrative of birthing, while being completely aware of the new environment, regulated by another master narrative, whose shortcomings in looking for her and her baby's needs she was trying to address:

"Feeding time was a major, major problem. Had to put this tube on top of my boobies, tiny tube and put the syringe like a tiny syringe with milk formula up here, so he would suck and we slowly pushed the syringe down, so you need about two persons to feed him, so he would still suck on my boobie and press the syringe down. So that was it, and then one day this crazy midwife, cause we changed midwives all the time, right? At the hospital, this crazy midwife came up and she was, Ah this is a waste of time, she took him away and stuck it down his nose, and he went blue and stopped breathing, and I don't know, but you know how the mother has instincts so I said to C., I said when she took him away, I said, go with her because I just have this bad feeling, I couldn't get up, I would have followed her if I could. I said go with her because I feel that something like, you know, she's just not right. So he went and luckily the premature babies unit was just beside us so she just rushed him next door and they revived him."

Sheena approached this story from a causal traditional perspective of interfering over the course of ritual (her sister-in-law's action of disrespecting the ritual) and the consequences created by the interference (her baby's brush with death the next day).

In contrast, Taurea (Hungary) appreciated what she perceived to be a much more relaxed New Zealand master narrative of birthing:

> *"I was surprised how natural it was, how easy it was, how little I had to go and, for example, see the doctor, I had a wonderful midwife, who was Māori as well, my daughter's father is part Māori."*

Saha (France) comparing the two master narratives of birthing, welcomed the New Zealand natural approach, in contrast with the French medicalized and sterile environment:

> *"I think it's quite different. France is much more medicalized. I gave birth in hospital here which wasn't my plan; my plan was to give birth in Birthcare, it didn't go this way because I was bleeding too much, so they transferred me to hospital, but it was still very natural, I didn't have any pain killers, I didn't have anything, I was alone with my midwife, I requested that there will be no doctors in the room, unless I needed it, and I had my normal clothes on and then I went in the shower, I was naked, whereas in France you are likely to be asked to wear the hospital robe and it's not really... well, you could give a home birth, but that's really not the norm, so it's quite different. And it is very medicalized, like here, if she wasn't on time, I could still wait for two weeks before they would induce me, in France they wait maybe three days, that's the maximum. And then the process around the baby is quite different after, like I know in France they really clean it with alcohol, they sterilize it, like they want it to be sterile and here there was nothing about sterilizing, everybody was like no, you don't need to do that, that was quite different"* (Saha, France).

Like other countries of birth evoked in this research, Israel was presented as much medicalized in terms of child birth. Barb (Israel) considered that *"we are great believers of using professionals in medical system"*, a model that she reproduced in New Zealand, using an obstetrician, like many of her friends. Having grown up in a child friendly society, around children and babysitting siblings or neighbors' and friends' children, relieved some of the anguish associated with child rearing:

> *"So you grow up in Israel, you are always surrounded by little children, I babysat from a very early age, it's a very child friendly society and, as a consequence, there isn't that much angst as there is here around feeding and sleeping, it's much more natural because everybody has*

got babies and you always have babies and when you are the older child, you're always expected to look after the younger children" (Barb, Israel).

Some mothers reflected on conflicting breastfeeding discourses. Saha (France) noticed that in New Zealand mothers are encouraged to breastfeed for longer, and this is normalized at a society level, while in her country of birth, breastfeeding for more than six months is uncommon:

> *"The norm in France would be to breastfeed your kid, it's getting a bit longer, I mean dad's generation used to not breastfeed, really, and now it's coming back but the norm would be six months is already quite a lot. So a lot of women would breastfeed their kid for three months, and six are like women who are considered to breastfeed for a long time, whereas here in New Zealand, if you are not working, it's quite normal to breastfeed your kid until two. That's a big difference as well. And well accepted, whereas in France is weird"* (Saha, France).

Barb remarked that in Israel there is less emphasis on breastfeeding than in New Zealand, and she mentioned the pressure of breastfeeding discourses in her story:

> *"I think that here the emphasis on breastfeeding is more solid than in Israel, again, things may have changed, but when I had my babies, there was a lot of pressure to breastfeed here, my girlfriends in Israel didn't experience the same cause they were having babies at about the same time, they weren't experience it as much. I was talking with my girlfriends and here there was a lot more pressure around breastfeeding"* (Barb, Israel).

Mothers whose partners were Māori appreciated and embraced the Māori ritual of returning the whenua (the placenta) to the earth, after giving birth. Saha (France) storied her experience of honoring the whenua:

> *"We did the Māori way, so we kept the placenta and we buried it in M.'s place. In France I don't know what they do with it, they just put it in the rubbish… I was happy with that, actually. It's nice. This thing has been growing in you and then after nine months I felt it was nice just to honor it, instead of just putting it in the rubbish. When I gave birth to the placenta, the midwife opened it and showed it to me, and explained how it was working, and I don't know, but I doubt that it would have happened in France, really. I don't think they would have let, you know, just giving birth and then look, this is your beautiful*

placenta, isn't it amazing, and then she opened it up, and we had to look at it, and we were, oh, fab! It's different" (Saha, France).

Eva (Poland) embraced the whenua ritual as well and participated in the process of burying them in places that signify belonging:

> *"This was quite, you know, just bizarre for me, but when I found what was the reason, I thought that was beautiful and I told my mum, she was oh, you know what? I love it as well, so both placentas were almost a year in our freezer, which was quite a strange thing, but they are both buried under trees in cemetery with both nanas, and one has already a beautiful tree grown on top of it. So one is up north and one is in Waikato."*

To give birth in territories of immigration, away from familiar birthing master narratives, is a challenge I experienced myself. All mothers gave birth for the first time in New Zealand, therefore they couldn't compare personal birthing experience and some felt unsure of what to expect. Some mother participants missed the support accompanying birthing in their countries of birth. Other mothers felt liberated from their countries of birth master narratives and empowered to construct their own experience. They appreciated a more natural approach to birthing in New Zealand, compared with more medicalized models. The fact that giving birth is such a personal experience was revealed in the variety of stories they told and the negotiations they held.

7.4.2 NEGOTIATING NARRATIVES OF DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Different ethnicities with different values organize differently parental theories and their expression in the organization of daily life settings and customs of childrearing (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007) and prioritize different milestones. Taurea (Hungary) enjoyed the more relaxed discourses on child developmental milestones, in contrast with the more regulatory ones in Hungary:

> *"I was surprised, but I actually quite liked the slackness in New Zealand around those milestones, you know, when to potty train, how to potty train and whatever. It is a lot stricter in Hungary, people sort of do all these rituals and if somebody is not potty trained by a certain age is, Oh my god, it's a lot stricter, a lot more structured when certain things*

should happen and how and all of that, here is like, oh, yeah, whatever, people are a lot looser around that" (Taurea, Hungary).

Anett (Hungary) confirmed as positive the change to a more relaxed view on developmental milestones, where it is accepted that every child is different, children are deemed to grow at their own pace, and mothers' decisions are less regulated than in her country of birth:

"I think Hungarian are much more rigid, there is much less space for difference, for when people are different; I remember, I kept my baby off solids for as long as I could, and when I spoke to my mother, she didn't understand, she thought I should put her on solids as soon as possible. But for me it was… I think this is great because now suddenly the feeding is going well and I don't want to stop that and introduce something else, and she was adamant I talk to a doctor about this because it's not good that she is still not on solids; then I spoke with the midwives and with a Plunket nurse and they said this is perfectly fine… even the milestones here, it is looked at as an individual, every time she reaches them, within the spectrum, it's fine. The Hungarians like facts as well, very much, for example my mother asked me the last time we had a conversation, how tall is she and how many kilos she is, and I couldn't answer (laughs) and that was unbelievable to my mother. Again that was like child abuse that I don't know how tall my daughter is and how much she weighs. So last time when I took her to the doctor, I said to the doctor: Can you weigh her please and can you measure her? Not because I care, because, you know, for my mother it was very important. So I think, still, the attitude of the facts are very important and my mother also asked me if she's clever. Is she clever yet? And I didn't know how to answer the question, so I said, look mum, she's got fantastically clever moments, when she surprises me with her answers and with her ideas, and then she would do something really dumb two seconds later, so, I said, I really don't know. And my mother didn't know what do to with that answer. She just said: Is she or she is not? So I said: I don't know, but who cares? But they care, you know, they expected me to say she's extra clever, of course she can already read, just doesn't go to school, and that sort of things."

In these examples, Anett distanced herself from the controlling discourses of mothering practices, voiced though her mother, adopting the more relaxed ones of her migrating space:

"So I think, yes, my husband's influence was good. And the Kiwi influence is good. Of not putting them in a box. It is very nice. I think the Kiwi culture looks at a child as an individual, rather than looking at the milestones very rigidly."

However, when her daughter's physical wellbeing was perceived to be vulnerable under the too relaxed dominant discourses of New Zealand's motherhood master narrative, Anett returned to her home country master narrative:

"I think in Europe we look at the physical wellbeing of the child a little bit more seriously than here. It's a very different attitude to clothing and being appropriately dressed for the seasons. For me, it's unacceptable for my child to walk barefoot in the winter, and another thing that I noticed is when kids have a runny nose and Kiwi parents are perfectly happy not to wipe their kids' noses or, you know, when their face is super dirty, I just want to go and clean her quickly, I want to blow her nose, I want her to put shoes on, and I think the Kiwi parents' attitude is so relaxed and so laid back, it's a bit more oh, we have to get sick and they will get through it, and it is all right... and several times I had to talk to the teachers, and I just couldn't understand, I couldn't understand why it wasn't... for me it's common sense to dress my child properly or wipe her nose so the snoot doesn't get in her eyes, and she used to get eyes infections, but, I think, even for the teachers it wasn't a big deal, it was a big deal for me, but it wasn't a big deal for the teachers."

This experience set Anett on a mission:

"I have spoken with several teachers, I have spoken with the manager, but nothing was really done until I put things in writing. Yes. So I had to put it in writing. And then everything became fine, then they took it over seriously, I thought, we had a chart to check on her if she's dressed properly and this and that, and I said to them, you know, it doesn't have to be that strict and I don't expect her to wear, you know, six layers and so on, but just common sense, just common sense" (Anett, Hungary).

Similar to when negotiating master narratives of birthing, mothers positioned themselves towards or against master narratives of children's developmental stages to negotiate their mothering in migrant territories. While most of the mother participants enjoyed a more relaxed attitude towards developmental milestones, when they perceived a threat to their children's wellbeing they tended to revert to familiar master narratives.

7.4.3 NEGOTIATING NARRATIVES OF HEALING

While children's wellbeing is seen as an important aspect of mothering, mother participants defined wellbeing in their own terms, constructing their own discourses of pathways to health. This is specific to immigrant communities in Western environments, where Lorenc, Richton and Robinson (2013) found a common use of traditional and complementary healthcare approaches. As part of aligning to own master narratives of wellbeing, health choices are identity-infused habits, answering to and negotiating with multiple wellbeing realities (Ceuterick & Vandebroekb, 2017). When Taurea told her story on how she recreated Hungarian standards of recovery for her child, she addressed it to a generic audience expressed by *you*, reinforcing its guiding meaning:

> *"Around illnesses, in Hungary we take it a lot more seriously. When a child is sick, you don't take them to kindy, you don't take them to school. You are at home, healing, and then you have certain healing stuff like eat more honey, have nice warm teas, use a cold cloth on their head, for certain coughs you make certain herbal teas or whatever."*

Taurea found it difficult to balance the New Zealand's more relaxed approach towards children's colds with her standards of care learnt in her country of birth:

> *"In New Zealand I'm just amazed that kids go to gatherings or whatever and their nose, just… and then no wonder that everybody gets sick so quickly because they catch it from each other. And I mean E. tells the story of how I was when she was unwell, it was: you either go to school because you're well enough to go to school, or kindy or whatever, or you stay at home, go to bed and you are sick. When you are sick, you go to bed and you get better"* (Taurea, Hungary).

Cristina (Peru) was fond of the home-made remedies that healed her as a child and preferred to use them instead of the Western pharmaceutical medicine:

> *"I found that even Peruvian doctors, that's one thing that I really admire, is the fact that they are always going to go to homemade remedies before giving you a prescription for a pharmaceutical remedy. And so, I think it's been only a little bit more now that she's a little bit older that I've given her Panmol a few times, but even when she was little, chamomile is*

something that a lot of Peruvian mothers use. So chamomile works in so many ways, you know, like you have an upset stomach, there's chamomile. It's very soothing and instead of using bonjela when babies are teething, you can actually use chamomile, you can put it in the milk so you know, it's very, very common to use those homemade remedies. So those herbs are very, very essential type for baby's wellbeing in Peru."

Positive experiences of using traditional natural remedies, extracted from her own parenting but also from her family parenting, encouraged her to position herself towards healing narratives of her country of birth, Peru:

"So I used that with N. as well, and it seemed to work and I told other friends, hey, why aren't you trying this, you know, give it a try, you don't lose anything but do it, even my sister who's very practical and she would be like, no, just give her Panmol, she actually tried it; I think my nephew had maybe colic when he was born, he was always crying, and then mum said to him look! You're not gonna feed him with Panmol, you don't know what's wrong, maybe he just needs to calm down if it's something to do with his tummy, see if this works... and then it did, and he slept to the point where always my brother in law was, ok, just give him the chamomile, drug him with it. So yes, so homemade remedies are very important, I mean that comes before any prescription drugs, really" (Cristina, Peru).

7.4.4 NEGOTIATING THE OBVIOUS

Mothers were puzzled by things that they took for granted within their child rearing discourses, and didn't fit within the master narrative they encountered. Donna (China) couldn't understand the lack of warm food opportunities for children's school lunches and found it hard to integrate it within her mothering expectations:

"The biggest thing that still gets me is the lunch. Because most of schools don't have warm lunches. Cold sandwiches every day. Every day. And we, as a parent, we run out of ideas to provide a selection of food in the lunch box. It is such a headache."

Dona positioned herself towards her country of birth culture, where providing warm lunches for children, within proper eating facilities, is highly important:

"In China, because I was a primary teacher myself, kids have lunch at the school, where

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parents pay a monthly fee and they all have the same dishes, which is great. It's warm, especially in winter time, nutritious and they have a cafeteria, kids sit inside, at a table."

She felt powerless in extending her mothering in a space controlled by other narratives:

"Where here, I found it unbelievable kids sitting on the concrete, you know, cold, and just eating in the open space. They share their food and I found that is not acceptable, that kids can't sit inside. I guess they can sit inside the classroom, but that's not the place to eat. And especially in winter times, cold, windy, rainy, they take their socks off and they eat outside and I don't know if their teachers monitor them or tell them go to wash your hands before lunch, I don't know because I'm never there. But I have seen kids, five years old, when I went to school, I was shocked, they were sitting on the concrete floor, eat outside their classroom, or in the playground area, that's not a lot of facilities. Kids can sit even in a picnic chair. But again, I don't know if other schools are the same. Yeah, that's the bigger thing I used to find… I can't understand it" (Donna, China).

A disposition for walking barefoot was difficult to understand as well, as Sonia (Iran) explained: *"when I first came to New Zealand I saw everyone walking barefoot. What? People don't have shoes? (Laughs)"* (Sonia, Iran). Cristina (Peru) reflected Sonia's stupefaction:

"That's another thing that was shocking for me when I came to New Zealand, you go to school and no shoes. What? Why? You know? Like walk around in the grass with no shoes on, she's fine, but sometimes there's prickles, you know? And things like that, it happened to me."

Barefoot was an image Taurea (Hungary) recalled as well:

"Yeah, yeah, I didn't let her in the middle of winter, frost or whatever, she would have socks and shoes and boots on, yeah, I mean I'm still shocked seeing kids in the middle of winter without shoes."

Eva (Poland) internalized and justified the shoes-no shoes mothering dilemma, while distancing herself from the New Zealand model:

"I still feel a little bit cringe just seeing kids going to toilet with bare feet with water puddles and everything, so there are some things I probably wouldn't do, but I found out that Kiwi kids in general have more freedom... it's probably just again pushing between what's good for kids and good for me as a mother."

Taurea (Hungary) told a lovely story about trying to conform to a dominant narrative, the tooth fairy:

> *"There was one thing: the tooth fairy business, we don't have tooth fairy in Hungary and a couple of times I missed it because, you know, when it's not in your blood to do certain things, so a couple of times I had to write an apologetic letter from the tooth fairy to my daughter, I just forgot, you know, in the middle of morning, the tooth fell out, or at school, and went to bed, woke up, oooo the tooth fairy didn't come, the tooth fairy was soooo busy, sooo many children, I'm sure tomorrow she will arrive, and then make little notes for myself not to forget again. This is a family story that yeah, tooth fairy was busy a couple of times"*
> (Taurea, Hungary).

7.4.5 NEGOTIATING INSTITUTIONAL NARRATIVES

The motherhood dominant narrative is convened through institutional voices. Within this research, mother participants offered stories of mothering blatantly rejecting the motherhood dominant narrative, when it appeared in contrast with their worldviews on rearing children.

Taurea (Hungary) explained how she resented being introduced to a mothers' group, for the only reason that their babies were born in the same timeframe. She would have preferred the natural extension of support families and friends provided in her country of birth, rather than the artificial one, created on arbitrary selections and imposed through institutional voices:

> *"The expectation to go to this coffee groups was quite obvious, and because I didn't have many friends, cause I was fairly new to New Zealand, I sort of went along, but honestly my brain was shrinking every time I was with these women. I remember thinking I hated going, I really hated going.*
>
> ***Interviewer: Who set up those expectations?***
>
> *It was more sort of antenatal group, so it felt like a natural progression, and then in Hungary there is nothing like this. You've got such an extended family and you've got your friends, that's a natural way to get together, not like when the only reason was that somebody put*

us into the same antenatal group to do this antenatal class because we were due on similar times and lived in similar areas. There was nothing else, not other selection of, you know, who we were or whatever" (Taurea, Hungary).

Anne (Denmark) told a poignant story about a time when her mother-daughter ties were questioned by professionals:

"Remember, when you were about 12, we went to the hospital?" she addressed her daughter, present at the interview. *"You had a cyst. And I came in with her, she had this cyst on her wrist. He looked at her and he looked at me and he said, what's the social situation, and we looked at each other, what's he talking about? I don't remember how he put it but he was wondering why I have a Māori child. Well, I said, her father is my husband (laughs). But we looked at each other and we never saw anything of it because, you know, but I don't suppose it's obvious necessarily to other people."*

The fact that they were seen different than they were seeing each other in the normality of their interethnic family, created a rupture from the dominant discourses of mainstream institutions.

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) had her own way of dealing with Plunket, while accommodating for her child's needs from her mothering perspective:

"So we used to put A. on his tummy, he slept very well that way, but before the Plunket nurse would arrive we would wake A. up or turn him over (laughs)."

Diya remembered a time when a health service refused to allow her to observe a month of recovery after giving birth, important in her culture:

"With An. when she was born, she was quite jaundiced, so quite yellow, and she just kept getting yellower and yellower, and the nurse tried to get the lab test guys to come to the house to take a blood test. And she said to the lab test guys, look, for cultural reasons, can you come to the house? And they said that that was a lie and I'm just making it up, that's not such thing, yeah" (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Adna (Bosnia) recalled how she was criticized by midwifes for abiding to a feeding pattern learnt from her mother. She found understanding for her disagreement with the dominant mothering discourses within her husband's family:

"Well, luckily he totally agreed with me and funny enough his parents also agreed with my views so I had a lot of support in that" (Adna, Bosnia).

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) recalled a terrible time when her child was being humiliated in class by his teacher:

"One day I went to school and they were having lunch, my son was writing, he wasn't let out for morning tea or afternoon or lunch time. His lunch was not eaten at all. He stayed there all day. He was so scared, he sat there for the whole day, from morning to miss lunch time and just sat there and steering at his paper, she left him to it. He was too scared to move. She made him think that he's stupid. And because he didn't know any better, he didn't know to complain to me, he thought that's normal to be treated like that."

Sheena confronted the teacher, and in doing so, she realized that she was the only one to stand up, despite other mothers being unhappy as well with that teacher:

"I was so angry because all these other mothers who were there and they knew, and they weren't happy with what they were seeing, but they didn't do anything, they didn't say anything. And I thought, you know? You guys just let me go, as I was the only one, only one to complain, all the other mothers didn't complain... I'm the only freaking Chinese in the whole freaking place and I feel like a trouble maker! Like nobody else stood up, nobody has this problem, is it just me, why is it only my child, why do I feel like it's only me? I see other children being treated the same. Other parents, I think that they don't speak up against each other, they keep it quiet, they try to keep it like hush hush, they know something is wrong or detrimental but they are quite happy to keep going the way it is and not rock the boat, because it's a safe thing or something, I don't know."

Sheena found confusing that her mothering was not reflected by other mothers, who chose to conform to dominant discourses of power, despite the unfairness of the circumstances. Positioning against motherhood dominant narratives isolated mothers. Nevertheless, the agency presented in constructing their ethnic mothering supported the positive resolutions they took. Sheena moved her child to another school, where her ethnic mothering was acknowledged, and in whose supportive environment her child could flourish:

"Now he says to me, oh mummy, you must be now so happy because finally you have a

clever son" (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

Sheena's story of her child being humiliated by his Māori teacher because his Te Reo Māori proficiency was low, brings into discussion Hill Collins' (2000) theory of moving beyond additive models of oppression and understanding the ways in which different oppressions intersect and work together in producing injustice. It reminded me of my oldest son coming back from school upset, saying that he didn't want to go to a Māori school anymore, where he was grounded for speaking English. My reaction was immediate, and possibly not the motherly one he had expected. I told him amused: *"You guys cannot get it right: your grandparents were beaten at school for speaking Māori, your great-grandfather had to change your surname to an English one for that reason, and now, you are being punished for speaking English."* I wondered what tools he had to shape fairness and injustice in his mind after these incidents.

Hill Collins' perspective on intersectionality is evident here, albeit in a different context that brings more complexity to the discussion:

> *"Intersectionality refers to particular forms of intersecting oppressions. Intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice"* (Hill Collins, 2000, p. 18).

I decided that my children with Māori heritage attend a full immersion Māori school unit, to support them in anchoring their identity in the Māori world view of their ancestors. I am very pleased with the result: the children are fluent in Māori, and their perspective on life stems from Te Ao Māori (the Māori world). I commend teachers' efforts to make this happen. I understand that because of the overwhelming English environment outside of the six hours/day spent in their Māori Unit, the results may have been different if the teachers were more permissive. Still I notice that my child feels oppressed, as his grandparents felt. And I reflect on the matrix of domination (which Hill Collins (2000) defines the way in which intersecting oppressions are actually organized) and how it works to allow for feelings of oppressions in the process of one learning one's heritage language.

7.4.6 NEGOTIATING TEENAGE YEARS

Like their mothers, children live in and have to negotiate multiple cultural contexts. In teenage years, their voice became stronger in affecting mothering dynamics and negotiations. Incongruence between mothers' adherence to the master narratives of their country of birth conflicted with the landscape of immigration – country of birth for their children who were ready to conform to its dominant culture. Sonia (Iran) found disquieting a different pace of life teenagers in New Zealand experience, than the one she would have expected and condoned:

> *"New Zealand teenagers start everything far too early and I think that is not so good because by the time they become an adult, they are too tired, they are too tired! They would be tired to take their wife for a romantic dinner, probably, because they've done that, been there, done that, they've done everything, what is new?"* (Sonia, Iran).

Spaces of New Zealand teenage hood, identified as outdoors or sleep-overs, were in contrast with the home centered warm environment Sonia recreated from her experience of growing up in another culture:

> *"Kiwis like their kids to be street wise and for me, in my culture, kids being in the streets is a big no-no. (Laughs). What is the street? The street is for commuting. Or for people who are in trouble, you know? Not for, no, kids shouldn't be hiding out in the streets... Oh, and the other thing is sleep overs. You know, like sleep overs here in New Zealand is big. Yeah, but in my culture, too much of it is not good. And is like, you have your own bed and you have your own house, why do you need to go and sleep in someone else's bed? Is weird (laughs)."*

This positioned Sonia against dominant discourses of motherhood which didn't validate her mothering and isolated her decisions:

> *"I have to be careful, even my son, he has been brought up here, says you're weird, go and get a life. You know? (Laughs). Because he's seen Kiwi mums who do their job, go and do their thing, the boys are quite, you know, they do their own thing, independent. And my son is like: they are normal. He keeps telling me, be normal. But that to me is normal. You know what I mean?"*

The incongruence in mothering expectations alienated Sonia from the country of

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immigration's master narrative of motherhood to the point where she felt ostracized:

> *"The difficult part will be when it gets to a stage when you go to counseling, and then you will be the kuku one (laughs), no, no, Oh my god, you should change the way you are thinking (laughs)"* (Sonia, Iran).

Nina (Samoa) had to negotiate her children's teenage years with her New Zealand partner:

> *"I suppose where my ex came from, you know, when you are a teenager, basically you reach a stage where you can have a view about something. So we are talking about maybe 13 – 14, whatever. Whereas for us is still a child. You know, maybe when you are about 16 – 17, then, you know, kids can express a view, they can go out with friends, go to the movies, that sort of stuff, in my culture is much later on, so I wouldn't let my girls have a sleep over or go to the movies, go to the mall, is always no. Until they are about 16."*

That defined Nina as the unfair parent in the eyes of the children:

> *"The kids are like, but my dad let me, so unjust, so unfair, so I'm always the unfair one (Laughs). I can't pierce my ears; I'm always the unfair one."*

She ran this risk confidently, positioning herself strongly within her narratives of growing up:

> *"But I just ride that out because I was raised like that, and I remember being a kid at that age and I thought that was unfair, but then I appreciated later how sheltered I was that I had so much childhood and I had time; so even though my teenagers find it difficult, I still hold on because I believe in it."*

She didn't minimize though the difficulty of presenting two different discourses to her children:

> *"They know with their dad, they can go do certain things, when they come to me, they know that we are going to have family time and then there will be other predicted time for them to go and do some stuff. But I think is the hardest because you begin to have two voices to the kids, and is really hard for them, like two sets of rules"* (Nina, Samoa).

When children are leaving the family nest presented again two different discourses, one encouraging children to live independently, and one stressing the importance of the family environment:

"By example W. is twenty one and S. twenty, and they are still living at home so I tease them that I'm going to be one of those European mothers, you know, they are going to be forty and still living with us at home so … cause Kiwi normally move out when they are seventeen – eighteen, they move out and go flatting" Adna (Bosnia) detailed.

Sonia (Iran) remarked the same difference and expressed her strong preference for her culture's view on family living together:

"*For example in my culture, and in a way, it's got its pros and cons, if the kids are very family oriented, even if they go to university and they still have a room in the house and they are good kids and they carry on study and do their own bit and, you know, even until they are in their 20s, is nothing wrong with that. But in New Zealand I think, I believe in Kiwi culture is very bad. It's weird, they are a bit... yeah, they have to go out. And that's again, for me is a little bit, I think my own personal belief is that they have to go whenever they feel comfortable and independent, and they should have that warm family environment and the support"* (Sonia, Iran).

The difficulties of parenting teenagers in migration territories were augmented by other narratives mothers had to negotiate with. These were their children's narratives of being parented in New Zealand, and they were more likely to be validated within the mainstream master narrative.

7.5 RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

Migration and parenting are narratives of change. Parenting in interethnic relationships, in the new territories of immigration, increased the dramatism of the change to limits where own definitions of motherhood and mothering practices were being questioned. Within the context of this research, participants identified themselves first and foremost as mothers. When their definition of mothers was affected by change, their ethnic identity went through profound transformations. Own mothering values, practices and attitudes were reinforced, diluted or discarded, while the country of immigration's mothering values, practices and attitudes were adopted at various degrees. As resolution strategies, mothers reflected on the transformations experienced:

> *"Probably I became more staunch around what I wanted and how I wanted it. It made me realize more of what was important for me. I guess, if I did not had to do those fights or interactions, or choices, you know, not to deal with certain people, it would not have been as obvious to me how important certain things are. So I think that just made it clearer for me of where my boundaries are around what's important for me as a parent, and what I want the main influences around my child to be and who they need to be"* (Taurea, Hungary).

Mothers reflected on their parenting journey and how the contact with other narratives has changed them. While Elisapeta's family saw her as changed, she found herself the same, with an opportunity to confidently weave two worlds, the Samoan and the Palagi (European) one, within her mothering:

> *"I'm still the same. I follow the Palagi way. I also follow the Samoan. But for me, deep down, I'm still the same person. In the eyes of the family, "oh, she's different". But no, I feel I'm completely Samoan and I am completely Palagi way of doing things. So therefore, put it together, it really is exciting to learn two sides. If I'm unhappy with this side, I can switch myself into my one. Yeah, and I'm happy. And what I mean, if I'm not happy with him, I can always ring my sister and we'll be yapping, yapping, yapping, or my mum"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Reflecting on her interethnic parenting, Anne (Denmark) noticed the change that positioned her against values from her country of birth. While she always felt different

than other Danish country folk, this difference was augmented by her interethnic mothering:

> *"I do find that I don't share values with some of my Danish country folk. I have changed since, but then I think our family, my own family were different in any case, we were Catholics in a Protestant country, we were vegetarian where everyone eat meat, so we were a bit odd, so I kind of grew up being different anyway. And I think our family values too, in my own family it wasn't about getting ahead in life and making a lot of money or anything like that, really, so yeah"* (Anne, Denmark).

Anne storied this change for a compelling example:

> *"I met a... she was a librarian down at Northcote where my daughter, the one with the big family, used to take the children down. And I haven't seen her for years, and I met her just recently, we were on a trip, and she said "How's T. and her family?" "Oh, I said, they are fine", she said "And how are the children getting on?" I said to her: "What do you mean they are getting on? Do you mean are they happy and well-adjusted and doing well or do you mean have they got university education and things like that. I just wanted to make sure that we are on the same page". So I did ask her that questions, but of course she said "no, I just want to know if they are happy", so I said "yes, they are. They are a good family"*
> (Anne, Denmark).

Following on her experience of mothering within a multicultural landscape, Adna (Bosnia) found unity through bridging the dichotomy *here* and *there,* dichotomy she felt in her early migration years:

> *"[My children] are not torn, what am I, they could be both, you know, I always, when I came to New Zealand I was kind of torn, where do I belong, am I here or am I there? And then I realize that I don't have to choose, I could be both, you know, I could be who am I here and then when I go back home, slightly different because when you think in another language you are a slightly different person, so they can do the same, and your boys will be the same"*
> (Adna, Bosnia).

Cristina's stories reflected how comfortable she felt as a Peruvian mother in New Zealand, introducing many Peruvian practices within her mothering. However, she wouldn't feel very comfortable, moving back to Peru, she agreed. The contact with so many different

world views presented by the ethnic diversity in New Zealand, transformed her to a degree where she found restraining the uniformity of only one world view:

> *"I wouldn't go to live in Peru again. I feel like I'm very different to my friends in that sense, I feel that I'm more… I'm not a free spirit, but I'm more, you know, liberal in my thinking. I know that when I went to Peru a few times, like I found my friends to be not judgmental in a way that they were like criticizing everybody but they were a little bit like close minded, more like, you know, I live in a country like New Zealand is a multicultural country, I mean look at us, you are, where are you from again?*
>
> ***Interviewer: From Romania.***
>
> *You are Romanian for example, so living in a multicultural environment teaches us to be more flexible with our thinking, be more accepting and things like that, and so Peru is very, you know, is mostly Peruvians there. It's not like in New Zealand where we have people from different countries. In Peru it's only Peruvians there and it is the Peruvian way, it's only one language, one national anthem, one culture. Here I'm more flexible in my way of thinking, more liberal. I find myself more open minded"* (Cristina, Peru).

In redefining herself in a landscape of immigration complicated by parenting, Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) went through a profound transformation: she moved from the structured world of a highly skilled, highly paid and highly acknowledged professional job to the less valued work of mothering, complimented by working for women in community settings. Diya storied her leap out of her parents' expectations:

> *"Now I see it in a different light, and, you know, I really, really thank New Zealand for that. Because it's like turning away from that competitive attitude to a more embracing one, you know, going with rather than against. And that was one of the biggest challenges for me. My background was in IT project management, it was really focused and driven and structured to the max. Like oh my gosh. And yeah, there was pretty black and white. And since coming to New Zealand that has gone, I've given up my corporate job, I'm not going back into that line, I'm stepping into working with women in a community environment, that side of things, it wouldn't happen if I was still in Malaysia, that's a very clear distinction. Yeah, but very difficult. Because I'm looking for the usual social markers to validate what I'm doing, you know? And what I'm doing now doesn't get that kind of ticks, this isn't a role with status, it isn't a role with money, there isn't really a fix role, I don't really have a definition of*

who I am, it's just a person who wants to be a stand for women, and so if I am to say this to my parents, they don't get it, you know, so they just default on no, Diya is a project manager, yes, we can work with that. You know? They can't work with the...

Interviewer: Being myself.

Being myself, yes, precisely!"

From this new perspective, Diya reclaimed new definitions for her motherhood, positioned in a continuous rediscovery process:

"So I would say I wouldn't claim to adopt an Indian approach to parenting. I would be really interested in actually trying to understand how that can actually enrich it, because the woman I am now, I think I said it all. I don't know, I guess I'm more myself in it, you know? Does that mean it's not Indian? I don't know" (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Parenting in a multicultural context within an interethnic relationship, has opened Barb (Israel) towards different ways of doing things:

"I think that there is more sensitivity to the complexities of other... there are lots of cultures and there is no one way of doing things. So there is a lot more respect towards different ways of doing things."

Respect toward cultural practices was mentioned by Saha (French parenting in a relationship with a Māori New Zealander):

"Yeah, there are probably things that I wouldn't let her do just because I know that he wouldn't like it."

Subtle partner's influences have brought a more relaxed attitude towards parenting: *"I've taken a lot of cues from K., you know, a lot of cues in his laid backness, yeah"* Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) confessed. From a controlling mother position reinforced through her Polish up-bringing, Eva (Poland) was learning to let it go:

"I think it's maybe something to do with age, but I think I'm starting to be more calm, yeah, and more relaxed, and my husband always tells me like you don't have to be always in control, it's very, very tiring and you know, just time consuming, so I think that I'm just learning this."

Anett followed the thread, adopting a New Zealand stance on parenting:

"... since meeting A., and the Kiwi way of everything is going to be all right, rather than the Hungarian attitude where ah, oh my God, what's going to happen if you don't do this, I think it pushed me in the right direction with my daughter."

While some values were non-negotiable (for Nina, Samoa, these being education and keeping strong family and cultural ties), there was compromise and there were always gives and takes:

"Because you can't raise good kids without having to compromise, hey? Cause I learnt things of him, like very simple things, I don't know, I hope he got something of me... I'm very... I praise a lot whereas he didn't, so hopefully that's something he's taken of me in terms of supporting the kids. So there are gives and takes, but I will not compromise in the education and on my expectations that they succeed. So I'm quite firm on that."

Nina recognized how the space of immigration impacted on her mothering, and that her mothering in Samoa would have been rather different:

"Because in this culture children's rights is really blatant. So doesn't matter the culture that the parents are from, the children are really important and they have a place, whereas in Samoa children are part of a hierarchy, they are not necessarily the focus of the society, so to speak. Even if we talk about them in that way. So I think my parenting here, and also because of my own professional background, that influences how I parent. So I think that if I was in Samoa, I probably would parent differently. Yeah, it is a different context here"

(Nina, Samoa).

Mothers reflected on the changes they discovered in their parenting practices throughout the years. Different from her growing up experiences, where the family hierarchy was structured in *adults' time* and *children's time,* Elisapeta (Samoa) started to allow for children's interference within adults' conversations:

"I don't go too hard on the children anymore, it's just not worth it. No. I listen to them. N. very much understands what's the culture there, but she's also pointed out to my mother "you can't wait until it is the child's time, ask now. Before they forget". And that's how we do it. We don't do it like years ago. Nowadays we just ask the child, if S. wants something, "Oh nan, can I have this" while we are talking, "Yes, sure", or she will say, "Excuse me nan, can I have one of this?" "Go for it! And get out of the way, get out of the way", you know, then they go" (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Keeping the house tidy lost its priority for Eva (Poland) when compared with spending quality time with her children:

> *"I missed out a lot during my childhood just not being able to make a mess at home with painting, just crazy stuff like playing with flour, my mum would have a heart attack probably if I was doing that, and here, you know, it's acceptable and I just realize, you know, it's just a mess, it can be cleaned. And this is what my midwife told me as well, because when I was with my little baby I was oh, I'm sorry for this mess and she told me, in two years' time will you remember this? It is more important just be in this mess with your child and learning something, so yeah, I just let it go"* (Eva, Poland).

Anett (Hungary) considered that, back in her country of birth, she may have followed the Hungarian way of parenting, driving her child towards academic achievement, something that she didn't appreciate growing up:

> *"I suppose if I would be in Hungary, bringing Aa. up, due to peer pressure, maybe I would be like that as well, I would be pushing my child."*

From a New Zealand perspective, though, Anett was able to change her parenting expectations. She noticed the difference when she discussed parenting expectations with Hungarian parents:

> *"I'm sure I do things differently. Someone told me the other day that, you know, mum and dad are both Hungarian, and they recently moved here, maybe five years ago, or so, and he said, my child has to go to University and has to study maybe engineering or something like that, and then I said to him, well, ok, so what if he changes his mind. No, he can't change his mind. He has to finish what he started. And I said to him: what if it makes him really unhappy. How would he know? How would a child know, even when they are in the early twenties or late teens what would make them happy or not? And I find that very strange"*
> (Anett, Hungary).

Jenny (China), whose background is in child psychology, reflected on a similar parenting priorities shift:

> *"When I was really young back in China, I got Chinese education system. [This] is so strict for kids, so kids can learn a lot in a very short time, while the Western educational system is too lose and leaves the kids play. They don't learn as much. But since I moved to New Zealand, I changed my parenting principles. That's why I don't want to be as strict, comparing to Chinese in China."*

Showing affection, involving children in making decisions, displaying respect and allowing them more autonomy became mothering features for Jenny, who saw herself more westernized than Chinese in her parenting practices:

> *"Maybe in China, because one of our values is being humble and don't really show too much affection between people, the custom is to try to withhold our emotions, our love, our affection, but since I studied Western psychology, I learnt that actually for kids, especially for the initial developmental stage, affection, hugs and love is important in teaching them skills. So I'm becoming more affective. It is like emotional love, make sure they can feel it. Also, in Chinese philosophy we believe that the most strict you teach the kids, the kids will just grow up a good kid. But if you are too loose, then they would do something wrong. But here, I think also is like psychological development, if you are too strict, actually you restrict certain areas of their development, they can't blossom somewhere, also is not good for their self-esteem. So yeah, I think possibly there would be respect for kids. Yeah, in China is like you do what you're told. But here, so from my learning psychology, I respect my kids, I give them more autonomy, more rights, more freedom, allow them to choose, make decisions. I think that's possibly the main thing, so the father is involved more in childcare, showing more emotion, showing more love, respect. I think I'm actually possibly more westernized than Chinese"* (Jenny, China).

For Eva (Poland) mothering revived an interest in her ethnic community. Asked if she was involved in the Polish community in New Zealand, she responded:

> *"I started. Before having kids, I didn't really care about it, you know. I had a few Polish friends, but now, because of children I'm more involved. I'm even now organizing some film presentations not even for Polish community but Polish films for Kiwis, you know, just to show a little bit our culture and heritage"* (Eva, Poland).

7.6 CODA – MOTHERS' REFLECTION ON THEIR NARRATIVES

Within the plot analyses, coda is a reflection on the entire narrative. Mother participants engaged in this reflection of negotiating mothering in interethnic relationships. Parenting,

particularly parenting in an interethnic relationship *"it's hard work all the time"*, Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) agreed, but challenges of difference can be surmounted by efforts to build a united parenting front:

> *"We work through it and we talk about it and stuff. It's not easy, you know, we've been together for so long. But it's worth it for the children."*

Adna (Bosnia) added:

> *"I guess the challenges are when you have different, slightly different values or expectations, and if you can't come to an agreement, then that could be challenging and children can sense when their parents don't agree, so they will exploit that as much as they can."*

Adna emphasized on the importance of keeping these parental differences away from children, presenting children with one already negotiated and commonly assumed decision:

> **"***So one rule A. and I made was that even if we had disagreements, which were very rare, we always made sure that we did it privately, so the boys didn't witness that and they couldn't then, supply one against each other, so A. and I always made sure that we were united. I think that was important. Because now the boys are a bit older and when we tell them that we had arguments about them, they weren't aware of those arguments, they are like really? Ah… we never knew. So I think that was good for them"* Adna (Bosnia).

To prepare for interethnic mothering negotiation challenges, mother participants advised open communication on important values for both partners, prior to embarking in the parenting journey. Knowing about the other culture and negotiating differences in the early stages of the relationship will avoid confusion and surprises, Cristina (Peru) considered:

> *"I think that is important just to take the time to really get to know your partner before making any major decisions and it's really important to make the effort to participate in your partner's culture because that's not gonna go away; is a part of that person and yeah, like making the effort and participating and getting to know the culture will only make you richer and wiser, you know? So when you decide to get married and have children, then you can cope with that in the best way, with no surprises there in the way"* (Cristina, Peru).

Negotiating cultural differences and finding a common ground despite cultural parenting differences before having children, was an important step recommended also by Jenny (China):

> *"What we did is we didn't really have kids straight away. We made sure we learnt from each other, we found a way, common ground for both of us to advocate for our culture and also to adapt to each other's culture as well, so to feel comfortable at that stage and then decide to have kids. I think it's important to have a solid foundation before having kids. Because after having kids, even for a family with the same culture, things become more complex, so you need to make sure, yeah, this is what we did. So to discuss any difference. I would make an agreement that if we have differences to deal with, or disagree with each other we don't really discuss in front of the kids, we do it somewhere else and then come back, always with the same answer"* (Jenny, China).

A current and future challenge that mother participants faced was to maintain an affiliation with their ethnic heritage and to model this affiliation in their continuous process of reconstructing interethnic mothering. Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) storied this challenge:

> *"To continue to remind A. of the two different [ethnicities] and that he doesn't think that he is just Kiwi, I don't want that. I think the challenge is how I model that, and you know, that is a challenge because I am questioning it myself, what it means to be an Indian and how do I make sure that that part of me is celebrated, is actually honored, so the challenge is mine"* (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Jenny displayed similar feelings of challenge, and her strong wish to overcome it:

> *"I feel a strong sense of maintaining the Chinese culture for the kids as well. Too many kids I saw in New Zealand, they grow up, they have lost their identity, especially if they are from bicultural families like you are not fully Chinese, you are not fully New Zealander neither. So I want my kids to feel proud of having both cultures, not just feel lost in both cultures."*

She assumed agency in making it happen:

> *"We need to stand up for our culture because no one else will do it for us. We have to do it for our kids. Because New Zealand culture is the main culture. Everywhere else is New*

Zealand's culture, only in a little circle around us is our culture, so I want my kids to feel it, to relate to this culture, not just to ignore it" (Jenny, China).

When asked to assess their experience of mothering in an interethnic relationship in terms of joys and challenges, mother participants spent more time in describing the joys. They related to an enriched cultural environment which allowed their children to connect easier with people of other ethnic backgrounds as a result of integrating two different cultures:

> *"Like in New Zealand, specially Anglo-Saxon culture is very reserved and very conservative. We are not. We are loud, we are warm, if we argue we argue really loudly, if we party we party loudly, so, it's just… I think the boys are richer for that, cause they can do both, they can relate to both. And not just both, but others as well. Other outside cultures. They find, for example, because of my culture, they find it really easy to relate to Māori and Pacific Islanders, because they are more similar to my culture than, you know, A.'s family"*,
> considered Adna (Bosnia).

For Donna (China), who always had an interest in other cultures, to be so close to a multicultural environment was a worthy learning opportunity:

> *"It is my personal interest, so I found this interesting, I have the opportunity to learn very close, you know, not much distance in the daily life."*

She agreed that her interethnic family may face challenges that same ethnicity families may not experience, which ultimately only enhances other learning processes:

> *"It is a learning process, I guess, you know, how much you take, how much you give, it's all take and give, and when you are willing to give up your own and then how much. And what was the bottom line of not wanting to do this or that. I think it is also a learning process for parents as well, for both sides and kids in the middle, sometimes they are in the middle and don't know who to listen."*

Donna's resolution within the web of interethnic mothering negotiations was:

> *"To find a space that you are happy in your life and be part of it and in future life as well"*
> (Donna, China).

Mother participants spoke in positive terms about the perspective of being a *"global parent"* (Sonia, Iran) and the opportunities that a multicultural heritage brings in their children's lives. Sonia detailed:

> *"Your kids will be exposed to many different amazing cultures and because every culture has got this amazing sight with, and you will no doubt taste a variety of foods, see the world, that is the joy of parenting with different cultures."*

In similar terms, Eva (Poland) had a positive outlook for her children with Polish-Māori heritage:

> *"I think there are brighter horizons, just to be part of two cultures, it just enriches their lives, having something different just brightens their horizons."*

Their multicultural upbringing will develop their openness towards other cultures and tolerance, Eva believed:

> *"Quiziness, it's just a little bit different. I think it's really, really great, just being exposed to different languages, it's brilliant, it just makes you more tolerant, open, and you're not so narrow minded like a few, just some people, especially in my country, you know, everyone who is different, has different religion, I think people are just scared of them because we don't know, we don't' understand, and yeah, just brilliant [to be tolerant]. And I even noticed, ok, with us, but we go to childcare and we have like another five – ten different ethnicities there so we learn as well. I love it!"* (Eva, Poland).

Saha (France) mentioned exposure to other languages, to other cuisines, and to different childhood experiences as positive and enhancing, and part of the joys of interethnic mothering. Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) concluded beautifully her experience of mothering in an interethnic relationship through assuming it fully and rejecting any other life trajectory:

> *"If somebody asks me if I have a choice, would I choose to be in an inter-racial relationship? I'd say I would probably do the same thing, because, you know, looking at my children, I wouldn't have them any other different way. Cause they're just perfect the way they are. You know? So I would not do anything different. Just because looking at my children (laughs). Cause you love them so much and you think, oh, you know, to have you, I would do exactly the same thing"* (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

While most literature stressed the extra challenges that interethnic parenting engender (and mother participants accounted for these challenges), the overall perspective that immigrant mothers in this research projected when reflecting on their interethnic mothering was overwhelmingly positive. They related this positivity not only to the enriching opportunities that their children have, by being exposed to and part of two cultures, but also to their journey of personal development through interethnic mothering.

7.7 CONCLUSIONS

Mothers' interethnic mothering narratives are shaped into meaningful units through plotting. The plot analyses performed within this chapter identified how mother narrators structured their interethnic mothering stories within plot constitutive elements: *Initiating action* followed mothers' journey of immigration to New Zealand, and parenting within interethnic relationships *complicated the action*. *The climax* proved to be negotiations mothers held while positioning towards two master narratives of motherhood, one belonging to their countries of birth, and one regulating motherhood in their country of immigration. The analysis included mothers' *resolutions* on these negotiations processes, and the final *coda* presented mothers' storied reflections over their unfolding interethnic mothering.

8. Character Mapping

When narrating their interethnic mothering stories, mothers made use of different characters. They introduced themselves as participants in this research, as narrators of interethnic mothering stories, their own or others, and, within these stories, they unfolded as mother, daughter, partner and many other characters.

As narrators, they introduced characters to support the structure of the plot. Main characters in their stories were their own mothers, bringing in their mothering narratives of countries of birth, and their partners, often with their families, introducing the *otherness* in mothering. This chapter maps these characters as evoked through mothers' reflexivity on their interethnic mothering journey.

There were two persons in the room: the researcher and the research participant. It was a semi-structured dialogue, respecting the roles that we assumed: I was asking the questions, following a predetermined schedule, and the participant went through her memories, selected stories reproducing significant others and defined their relationships through characters to respond to my questions.

8.1 Who am I and who's telling my mothering story?

In mothers' narratives, the narrative voice reflects *"the plurality of self- positions that mothers possess"* (Juhasz, 2003, p. 395).

The concept of 'mother' translates in a reality of multiple identities.

> A mother can be: "*a mother-who-is-a-daughter in relation to her own mother; a mother-who-is-a-daughter in relation to her child; a mother-who-is-a-woman in relation to the social world, where she functions as lover, worker, political being; a person of a certain gender, sexuality, class, and race: a mother-as-her child's Fantasy of Motherhood (the capital M Mother) in relation to herself as lowercase mother, the everyday woman who mothers; a mother-as-her-own-*

Fantasy of Motherhood, in relation to her lowercase self; a mother in relation to her child " (Juhasz, 2003, p. 400).

In this research, mothers engaged firstly as willing and generous participants, introducing their motherhood perspective and mothering practices. They were the narrators of their own stories in which the *I woman* was being shared with *me mother*, *me partner*, *me daughter and daughter-in-law*, various narrative identities diversifying in relationship with the world around them. The concept of narrative identity locates people within dynamic social relationships and narrative identity is the view of self in relation to others and the social, told through stories (May, 2008).

In their internally assumed, family and societal role of mothering, mothers actively constructed and reconstructed a collection of identities in particular situations, complex, situational and often contradictory. The multitude of narratives and narrative identities that they developed were tied to the larger story they were telling: the story of motherhood in interethnic relationships. The main character in this story was the mother herself, recreating her identity through mothering.

The interview with Adna started as follows:

> *"My decision to come to New Zealand, to immigrate to New Zealand, was more sort of temporary solution, because I thought that the war will end up relatively quickly back home, so, any way we ended up in Christchurch and had one child shortly after we arrived. It was… internally it was fine, my husband and I have the same values and luckily his family had very similar values to my family, so different ethnicities didn't matter at all because our values were the same. What I found difficult was more the fact that I was very lonely in Christchurch back then, I had no friends, no family, you know, on my own, and no support and that was very difficult."*

Adna begun her narrative from her character's perspective: *"my decision", "I thought".* Within the action following her perspective, she moved to including her husband in a *"we"* signifying common action: *"we ended up in Christchurch and had one child after we arrived".* She followed by distinguishing between her and her husband, her family and his family, separate entities, but sharing the same values. In concluding, Adna expressed her

loneliness by reverting back to the *I* perspective, *"on my own"*, where all the other characters were negated: "*no friends, no family and no support.*"

In Bosnia, the social landscape of a mother would have been populated by many characters:

> *"Back at home normally grandparents are part of the family so my grandmother lived with us in the same house with my parents and all my siblings, so every child in my family was really raised by a village, you know, parents, grandparents, the other grandparents were very involved, uncles, aunts, so it was not just, you know, mum and dad raising a child, the whole wider family was raising that child."*

To describe the difference sensed in New Zealand, Adna reverted back to her perspective:

> *"In New Zealand I found that a lot of that only comes to the parents' shoulders, grandparents have something to do with the grandchild, but not as much, not so much hands on."*

To explain baby's feeding differences between her country of birth and her country of migration, Adna introduced two characters, each representing a master narrative, one from her country of birth: her mother, role-modelling feeding on a schedule, a stance reflecting her reality that Adna understood and justified, and one from her country of immigration: midwives, pushing towards feeding on demand, that Adna resented.

In her parenting stories, Adna used the *we* plural perspective, that included her husband, to advance her narrative thread towards a unity resolution:

> *"We lived in Christchurch for seventeen years"*, *"We both wanted them to be good people and realize their potential"; "we tried to expose our boys as much as we could to sports and they are both sailors, so we sail a lot as a family."*

She reverted back to the *I* perspective to express differences:

> *"The big problem I had was, that's more of a cultural thing, when the boys were fifteen, they were able to drive. For me that was really too early, and I didn't like that cause I thought that they should wait until they were a bit more mature, till they were eighteen, to get into driving."*

To stress the closer relationships with her birth family, in rapport with her husband's family, Adna grouped the characters in *us* and *them*:

> *"My family, we see each other all the time, and we are in each other's pockets a lot. And if there is a problem, we will all sit together and help each other, while in A.'s family, they are a bit more isolated, so they don't really communicate so much with each other. And if they do have a problem they won't necessarily come for help or advice or anything."*

Adna assumed the first person plural to capture her belonging to the Bosnian culture, framed as *we* in terms of being part of an ethnic identity:

> *"Our sense of humor is slightly different, we are much more direct, less polite, I guess, than New Zealanders. We don't say please and thank you as much, for example, and it is just a language thing. And we talk really loudly so people think we are arguing. No, we are not, we are just talking, that's how we talk."*

Translating such common practices in the language of the country of immigration, Adna resumed the self-referential *I* perspective:

> *"Well initially I... not getting into trouble, but I probably came across as rude, when I wasn't. I was simply translating my language."*

Adna's zigzagged transfers from person to person and from singular to plural and back, to express unity and difference, belonging and isolation, master narratives from her country of birth and master narratives from her country of migration, echoed similar journeys of other mother participants. Like Adna, they used these transfers to construct their positioning to significant others populating their stories. Significant others were introduced in creative ways as main characters, indicating the symbolic meaning they had in these interethnic mothering narratives (Daiute, 2014).

In this chapter I focus on three main characters towards or against whose narratives mothers positioned themselves in constructing their narrative identity: participants' mothers, the other parent and the other family. While I used this classification to sustain a comprehensible structure with readability purpose, I have to acknowledge that it was not a perfect juxtaposition: other characters creeping in to support one master narrative or another.

8.2. My mother

All mother participants were mothered, and they resorted to their memories of being mothered to guide their own mothering. Participants' mothers brought within the stories traditional capital-D discourses from their country of birth motherhood master narratives. Juhasz (2003) reminded dramatically:

> *"Mothers are daughters. Not only is the daughter who becomes a mother still the daughter of her mother, but her daughterhood is part of her motherhood. Mothers of all kinds mother as they do because of the daughtering they have done"* (Juhasz, p. 400).

The way participants introduced their mothers as characters in their stories, in this narrative context, through following, justifying, or distancing from their own upbringing, revealed their mothering stance, their positioning in relationship with the master narratives they carried, but also a reflection of the daughtering they were performing.

Elisapeta (Samoa) credited her enthusiasm on finding that she will be a mother to her mother's joy when having a child:

> *"I was excited. I was excited to have a baby. And I was excited to be finally an adult. I said to myself, I'm going to have a baby and I'm going to be an adult. And I'm going to be a mother. And I'm going to be by myself and I've got a husband to support me and, best thing all, I'm going to be a mum. A mum! Yeah, and I felt that was nice. Cause I saw my mum being so happy when she's had the children."*

She held onto vivid memories, transferred in affirmative stories about her mother giving birth and breastfeeding her babies. These memories channeled a nostalgic narrative perspective on Elisabeta's contrasting migrant territory of mothering, with different networks of support around her:

> *"The only thing I missed most when I had my first child, I had no nanny. In Samoa, my mother, whenever she had children, babies, we had so many nannies from my father's side and my mum's side, so they come in and they work and they look after us for three months,*

then they go. And then the next baby, when she's due, she would send a message to her cousins, same as my dad, and his sisters would arrive or cousins, girls in our family and we got all excited when mum was pregnant again, we got all excited because we would get all these things and all the nannies who can do the work for us. So when I had N., I didn't have much...

Interviewer: You breastfed like...

Like my mum, yeah. The difference is here you do things your own self, you breastfeed the baby, you change the baby, put the baby to bed. Over there, in Samoa, with my mum, we watch her and so many other aunties too, once the baby had enough milk, another person comes to take the baby to change, and another one sings to baby and we all watch the baby in the cot" (Elisapeta, Samoa).

8.2.1 MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS NEGOTIATING BIRTHING

Participants' mothers were often present in the stories of giving birth, generating interesting negotiations, their wisdom engendered in own experiences being so distanced from the new territories of birthing. However, participants internalized and justified their mothers' worries when presented with a foreign narrative of birthing. Anett (Hungary) talked about how she negotiated with her mother the tension between the medicalized system of giving birth in Hungary and the midwife approach in New Zealand:

> *"When I found that I was pregnant and I said to my mother, you know, I'm going to go with a midwife, she was terrified, because in Hungary at that stage you didn't have midwives. So she absolutely scared me and said: you have to go to a doctor"* (Anett, Hungary).

Saha (France) experienced the same reaction from her mother, when envisaging a home birth:

> *"First I thought of having a home birth, and my mum couldn't cope with it, like the idea was too hard for her. And I don't know if I would have done that, anyway, but yeah, my mum was really worried about home birth, whereas it is quite normal in New Zealand, lot of women do it"* (Saha, France).

Cristina (Peru) relied on the advice of her mother when feeling unsure about the master narrative on giving birth in New Zealand:

> *"I feel that a lot of my friends that were pregnant at the same time had a better understanding around the whole midwife situation and I didn't, and so mum said that in Peru, you know, it is your doctor who looks after you during your pregnancy and I did that as well"* (Cristina, Peru).

In contrast, Taurea's womenfolk appreciated the more natural approach on giving birth through a delightful image of her grandmother stating that she was ready to give birth again in such conditions:

> *"I remember talking to my grandmother who was still alive at that point, telling her my birth story, and she said, and she would have been in her late seventies, early eighties at the time, she said, o, if Hungary would be the same, she would give birth, she would have a baby now (laughs)... in Hungary it's a lot more medicalized to be pregnant, I mean you're seen by the doctor regularly, there are a lot of internals, lots of tests, and the birth is very much driven by doctors, and then you have to stay in hospital so you have a lot more freedom here to do what you want to do, you're using midwives, choosing to use midwives. In Hungary this is not accepted or not practiced"* (Taurea, Hungary).

Glimpses of the regulatory master narratives of birthing metaphors were introduced in the stories through *mother* characters. Eva (Poland) recalled how she resisted the tradition, voiced by her mother, of not having her husband with her giving at birth:

> *"My mum for my whole life was telling me: you should never ever have your husband during labour, he should be away because is the worst part, you know, just for women, and men shouldn't see women like this, but it was rubbish for me, from the beginning, my hubby is going to be with me, so yeah, so this was the difference"* (Eva, Poland).

Participants' *mother* character included the dichotomist theme of the missing mother, hence missing the support associated with the presence of the mother. For Taurea (Hungary), the absence of her own mother was filled with her mother-in-law:

> *"I guess W., my mother-in-law, really acted as my mum would have, because my mum was overseas, all my family was overseas so... it really felt like I had the same or similar feel around me, it did not feel at all that was any different. Yeah. It was loving, it was supportive,*

it was positive."

Miyuki (Japan) had a similar story of support from her husband's New Zealand family, which stood in for her birth family.

Replacing the missing mother was not always possible, and the absence was felt dramatically by some participants. Such was Sheena's story:

> *"It was kind of hard, it was sad, also because my mum passed away, I mean a lot of Chinese people have their mother or mother-in-law coming to take care of them, so I couldn't as well, because my mum passed away when I was 22, so that was, that was hard, was really, really hard."*

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) has lost other female relatives:

> *"So all these women who were really close to me died, you know, they were the only women that were in my life that I was really close to, so when I knew I was having a girl, I was struggling with that, I was thinking, should I love her, you know?, because if I love her, I may lose her"* (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

8.2.2 MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS NEGOTIATING MOTHERING PRACTICES

Other instances when participants' mothers were introduced as characters in the storylines were the times of caring for the young child, positioning participants towards or against the two motherhood master narratives that impacted on their stories. In assuming their own motherhood, mother participants reverberated their daughterhood identities, reflecting on mother-daughter similarities and differences in mothering. They assessed their mothering decisions through the lenses of an imaginary approving/disapproving response from their mothers.

Cristina (Peru) storied extensive memories of her mother, with whom she was living at the time and who was coaching her in the role of mothering, giving advice on feeding and sleeping routines, child bonding and interactions, the Peruvian way. Her mother's voice was present often in her stories: *"mum said to me oh no, no, no, don't give her this stuff yet"*, positioning Cristina towards a Peruvian mothering master narrative, in contrast with her

New Zealand's friends. This positioning was negotiated constantly against the New Zealand's mothering practices in a continuous balancing act, such as in this example of negotiating the skin-to-skin New Zealand mothering practice:

> *"Mum said that was never really a term [skin-to-skin contact] and when she would come around and she would see N. just lying on top of me, pretty much naked, just wearing a little nappy, mum would be, but it is cold, it is June, and I was, well, is not really cold in here, and she was, no, but you are meant to keep your baby warm, you know?, the lung is still very sensible, so again is that more protective nature rather than here, and I mean, I understand, like I really do think it's going to be some sort of balance and I think that I'm happy that I found that because, although I've been here 18 years, I'm still very Peruvian, like I'm still actively a Peruvian representative, you know?"* (Cristina, Peru).

Saha's early mothering journey was supported by her mother's regular visits. This brought a French perspective in negotiating developmental stages for Saha's daughter:

> *"I found it quite different for toilet training, like here it seems to happen much later, more like around two or something, whereas French people, like my mom came in January, so [my daughter] was a year old and she started with her. And I was, wow! we are starting already, because none of my friends were doing it... and my mum was like: she can start, that's when we start in France. So she started, she's not toilet trained at all (laughs) but the process has started."*

Following on with her story, Saha tried to make sense of and justify these two different toilet training practices:

> *"So it's seems like we are starting much earlier and I'm actually not sure if this is what French people do or this is just what my mother does which is leave her without her nappy, show the potty and hope that she will just do it in the potty, and clean afterwards if she doesn't... that seems not the way here because, well, I guess because of the carpets, really, we don't have a carpet at home, but most of people have carpets, so if you have a carpet you can't let your kid... you can't risk it"* (Saha, France).

In a similar story of continuing approved mothering practices from the birth country, Donna remembered the support received from her family after giving birth: *"when I had the child, my parents were here helping me with the home work and looking after me and the baby*

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same time.” The influence that they brought in Donna's first months of parenting was their language, encouraging Donna to talk to the baby all the time in Mandarin, which Donna did:

> *"I think because my parents were there, because they don't speak much English and then my mum actually encouraged me to have that influence on my baby. Language is very important to have, you know, as culture influence on the baby, as well. Yes, so that was my mum's influence on me and I carried on after they left, to talk to my baby"* (Donna, China).

Some participants rejected their mothers' voices in defining motherhood, positioning themselves towards a New Zealand master narrative, perceived as allowing them to free themselves from the regulatory capital-D discourses experienced when growing up. Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) told her poignant story of reinventing herself as a mother in an environment that allowed her to do so, and her struggles to keep that freedom when capital-D discourses on motherhood, voiced by her parents, invaded this new territory:

> *"My family was in Malaysia, and I insisted that my parents didn't come for the first month, cause I wanted to have that quiet time, me and my husband with our baby. And I had a home birth because, once again, I really wanted to reconnect with that, with nature, being a female and having that experience, so I was doing things which were more aligned with who I was becoming, and then, you know, with raising A., initially it was wonderful just me and K. doing it. But when my parents came over, I faced that immediate struggle again, they wanted to take over and they became the parents and we were almost deemed incapable, you know how it happens, and being still so triggered by that, for me it was a complete chaos, I couldn't embrace my parents' help...*
>
> ***Interviewer: So what did you do?***
>
> *I had to send them home (laughs). So they were supposed to stay with us for at least a month, or maybe even two months, but we cut the trip at three weeks, because it was too much friction, I was so stressed about it, yeah, and in hindsight, if I had another child now, I'm sure it will be different, you know, I will be able to deal with that stress in a more accommodating way, but thinking back..."*

In contrast, Diya welcomed the support from her New Zealand mother-in-law as more fitted with her mothering agenda:

"I would see my husband's mum and how she was, cause she came up as well, and she came up in her capacity to help with everything else around the house, she would do the washing, and cooking, you know, and she would leave me with the baby. Which is what I wanted. I didn't want to worry about anything else, just sit and feed, this was all we did. And she would ask me what I needed, rather than tell me" (Diya, Indian born in Malaysia).

Eva (Poland) agreed that her mother, with whom her family currently has a *"Skype relationship"*, won't impose advice on her mothering practices, because *"she never ever had forced advice from her mother-in-law, so she never ever did it to me as well, so she lets us just raise the kids our way."* She sensed, however, disapproval, when she imagined her reaction to parenting decisions agreed upon in New Zealand, but unimagined in her country of birth:

"I know there would have been some problems when my mum would think that I am a terrible mum if she saw our babies with no socks on, because they like to cover you in hundreds of blankets and stuff like this, and here is the opposite, children should sleep with nearly nothing, so this is the difference and as well our room wasn't so hot like it would be in Poland" (Eva, Poland).

Anett (Hungary), who positioned herself towards the New Zealand motherhood master narrative, had to face her mother's disapproval and to negotiate this positioning when visiting her home country. *"My mother basically accused me that this is child abuse"* remembered Anett, because she wasn't conforming to the Hungarian master narrative on motherhood, in which the physical safety of the child was ranking high:

"I think in Hungary, when a child arrives into a family, the most important thing is to keep him physically safe and inside the house, whereas here in New Zealand, people come and visit you straight away and in Hungary the child is very much more protected, specially until the child gets his immunizations and so on."

She distanced herself in uncompromising terms from her mother's mothering, when she discussed parenting practices of praise and discipline to enhance a desired behavior:

"Growing up I think I tried to do things differently than my parents did, especially with punishing, we were severely punished, smacking was common place, whereas here is not. I like to think that my mum and dad didn't know better but… yes, it was common place when we grew up. And I think that's a generational thing. Because I hear Kiwi as well saying that,

yeah, of course we used to be smacked, you know. But we try not to, we try to be gentle with our daughter whenever we can, and ask her and involve her in decisions, even though she's young, we would ask her, what you want to do?, where you want to go today what do you think about this and that? And me remembering, I was rather told than asked what to do" (Anett, Hungary).

8.3 THE other PARENT

Fathers represented another focal character enacted by the mother narrators in their stories of interethnic mothering. Out of 16 mothers interviewed, 13 were still in a relationship with the father of their children, two were divorced and one was widowed. In their stories, mothers defined themselves and recreated their mothering journey, in rapport to this *father* character.

A partner holding strongly onto his own culture introduced his own master narrative, within which mothers had to negotiate their own mothering discourses. Sonia confessed wisely:

> *"Because some men are like, you know, like lambs (laughs). My husband is not a lamb. He's a wonderful man but he's very set in his own ways. So it's more challenging. If someone marries a very soft man, then is much easier"* (Sonia, Iran).

A father positioned less within his own master narrative allowed mothers to develop their own discourses of motherhood and mothering. This rendered mothering easier, as Barb (Israel) acknowledged:

> *"His family was so not interested, they didn't have a unifying culture, it wasn't that difficult. I think it is more difficult if you both have really strong cultural beliefs. Yeah"* (Barb, Israel).

Some partners were already accustomed to their spouses' culture, they having lived in their countries before they met. That was the case of Miyuki's partner:

> "*My husband lived in Japan for about 12 years, so he knows all about my culture and I know about the Western culture from him and friends"* (Miyuki, Japan).

And Adna's partner:

> *"Before he met me, A. spent quite a bit of time in Bosnia, and so he knew the culture really well. So it wasn't unusual for him. And he loves it [the Bosnian culture], yeah"* (Adna, Bosnia).

8.3.1 A NEW ZEALAND LAID-BACK ATTITUDE

New Zealand partners were described as involved in their children's upbringing, while maintaining a laid back attitude. One thing that mothers noticed as something belonging to fathering practices in New Zealand was their partners bathing the baby:

> *"M. does the bath, and that seems to be quite the normal Kiwi way, that the dad does the bath. I don't know why, like one of my friends was like the dad does the bath, also bath time seems to be dad's time (laughs). Yeah, I don't know why but it seems to be normal in New Zealand, and I'm not sure if it is in France"* (Saha, France).

This stood up as different for Anett (Hungary) who recalled that in her home country

> *"It is looked at as a women's job to look after the babies, and I think fathers get a bit more involved when the kids get bigger, you know, and until then it is looked as the mother's job to look after the baby"* (Anett, Hungary).

Taurea's story, from the same Hungary, but presenting opposing understandings, showed how different experiences shaped different appropriation of discourses which vary profusely in close geographical boundaries and are deemed to continuous reconstructions. Taurea's Hungarian male relatives

> *"were a lot more involved, longer term than my daughter's father was involved, but I think he imagined that after a while I would take everything over and I had to sort of guide him that no, no, no: we have this child, not I have this child, and then, I think I went back when she was two and a half, and I was delighted that my brother, my brother-in-law and of course my sisters and all of them, they took such a hands on approach with my daughter, so it wasn't a problem to take her to toilet or you know, whatever needed to be done. I don't think in New Zealand men are that onto it, they have to be told, but I don't know now,*
>
> *Interviewer: It was your experience*

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Yeah, I think men of our generation are more liberated in Europe than here. Here my experience was that they are a lot more on the traditional gender lines, which I never bought into, so yeah, there was a bit of a struggle there (laughs) not for me but" (Taurea, Hungary).

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia) described her husband as

"such a laid back Kiwi. He grew up in the South Island, so at times he can be completely laid back to a point where anything goes" an attitude which Diya started to adopt: *"I found myself I need to try just letting it go and so it's actually good for me, helps me to just go with the flow rather than always fighting the flow, cause I normally feel like I'm having to push uphill and going against the tide most of the time, but if I adopted K.'s approach, it's more laid back, you're just floating with the wave so it's just, it seems to be easier."*

In contrast, for some mothers, this relaxed attitude was an ardent point of negotiating parenting discourses and at times, a big head-ache:

"I think I wanted from the beginning to be stricter. I'm the person who is going to tell kids what is acceptable, what's unacceptable. He's more mellow, he allows children to do more and he's just quite laid back", assessed Eva (Poland).

Donna recalled how she couldn't understand her husband relaxed approach to baby's crying, and in turn, she wasn't understood neither:

"When baby starts to cry, that really gets me, I go to see baby quickly to find out why he's crying and cuddle him, pick him up, all that. While dad has different views, totally different views. He says oh, just leave him for a few minutes, you know, he may just get over it himself, you don't have to panic every time he makes a noise. That's exactly the word, I still remember, you don't have to panic every time he makes a noise. I was quite shocked at the beginning, I said why you don't care, you know, I found as unacceptable whenever he said don't panic when baby makes a noise. I felt that he doesn't care. But I think, after a little while I gathered, that's kind of maybe his Kiwi way of raising a child, I don't know, but I think maybe is what they do, they've been relaxed, probably, they don't see as necessary. I think it's just me from another culture, you know, I still want to know what's going on" (Donna, China).

Sonia (Iran) encountered the same relaxed attitude as a response to her mothering worries:

"We've had a few arguments about parenting, for example when my son started going to parties and that, and I was saying no, at this age is too early or if they are smoking in that party, he's not allowed, that sort of things, but again, he [my husband] was more relaxed about these things, not that he doesn't care, he cares, but he's like, well, I told him once and if he doesn't want to listen, that's his problem. But my way of thinking is that I'm not going to give up telling him (laughs). You know what I mean? Just reminding him every so often, you know?"

Sonia storied the example of her son not arriving at home at the expected hour (later on she was told that he was helping a friend). Her reaction, motivated traditionally by her mothering role to protect, was completely opposite to that of her partner, rooted in the New Zealand's culture, Sonia considered:

"And I was quite worried, my son, you know... my husband went to bed. (Laughs). He said, I texted him, that's enough. Good bye. You know, I must be fair that my husband is got a lot on because of the business and everything, so I can't expect him to be 24/7, but I noticed that the thing that does not worry him, for example going off without a helmet on a scooter, for me is just weird, but I noticed for Kiwis is fine."

Keeping up her standards of a good Persian mother isolated Sonia, whose real struggle and efforts in perpetuating inbred mothering practices were misunderstood and unsupported:

"Not only have to adapt to the new way of living of teenagers, but also to the other culture of living. It's double the trouble. You know what I mean? So it is quite difficult. And at times you find yourself, they don't understand, your husband doesn't get it, these things, and then you end up, if you ask for parenting counselling, you end up in the chair. Because they think you are the odd one" (Sonia, Iran).

8.3.2 THE LOVE FOR THE OUTDOORS

Another New Zealand fathers' characteristic that mothers mentioned was the love for the outdoors. Sonia assessed this characteristic through differentiating how risk is perceived in her country of birth, comparing to New Zealand:

"For example Kiwi because they are nature orientated people, they grew up in New Zealand, they are more outdoor people and more... they take risks physically more than we do, like for example I am a city person, and I would take risks in things like probably business or something but physically I find it Kiwi would probably be (laughs) more outdoors, for example if we go somewhere even the grandparents would suggest, oh, we take the kids for bungee jumping, and for me is a little bit like, oh wow, you know what I mean? (Laughs). They can't be still. You know? That sort of things" (Sonia, Iran).

New Zealand partners often engaged their children in their outdoor activities, and allowed them to experience the freedom associated with open spaces. Cristina (Peru) told about her partner teaching their daughter how to swim and how to bike:

"He's more outdoors, so I suppose that's when the Kiwi side comes out, you know? So he's all about outdoors, he like to give her a little bit more freedom. Experiencing. He loves the beach. I like the beach. But I like to go there to sun bathe. I don't really like swimming in the ocean. And so he's always making sure that N. has a good go during the summer to be in the ocean, I mean he has his concerns, you know? New Zealand is an island and swimming is a big thing and K. just gets worried that I don't know how to swim and then he's always like we need to teach N. how to swim, she needs to learn how to ride a bike and obviously he's not gonna let her get hurt but he's more relaxed, a, she'll be fine" Cristina (Peru).

Saha (France) enjoyed the difference brought in her daughter's parenting by her New Zealand partner, engaging her in activities French children wouldn't be exposed to:

"I find it as a good opportunity for her to just have, you know, the two of like, for example, [my partner's] way of looking after her sometime is just... she's just a year old and he would take her to a game, you know, a basketball game, rugby game or something and she seems to be very fine with it, she really loves it and I guess in France that wouldn't really happen, unless you are a sports fan, but, you know, in New Zealand seems to be quite normal for the dad to take the kids to just watch sport on the field next door, you know? And I think that's nice, just different" (Saha, France).

Generally fathers were happy to leave it up to their spouses to take decisions regarding children's upbringing. Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) agreed:

> "We pretty much have been quite in sync so, well, I mean C. has left it pretty much to me and he kind of agrees to whatever I say kind of things."

Saha (France) confirmed this decision-making arrangement in her interethnic family:

> *"Interviewer: In terms of taking decisions, parenting decisions, who does make these decisions?*
>
> *Me… [My partner] is very laid back in the way of me taking any decisions and it's kind of happy with it so it's not that much argument in terms of how we should raise her. I think he… well, he knows as well I'm the one home and he feels I'm the one who knows her better, so… I don't know."*

Anett (Hungary) had similar experiences in negotiating parenting decisions:

> "I would say I make most decisions and A. agrees with them most of the time. I think my decisions are relevant, or I would say to him, you know, this is why I am doing it, yes that's fine. I think he trusts my judgement when it comes to Aa., and I think we are very similar, we have a very similar parenting style, so we don't really have disagreements."

8.3.4 RUGBY

If it was one thing dear to their partners, that mothers didn't feel comfortable with, that would be rugby. Eva (Poland) presented a soccer/rugby negotiation in her family:

> "When I hear about some of the different injuries with rugby I'm petrified, I'm scared, and because our son is very skinny and he's quite small, he's very fast, and he had a lot of talent with a ball before he started to walk, we just want, you know, to just push a little bit [soccer], if this is what he likes. If he in the future decides he doesn't want to play soccer anymore, he wants to play rugby, I won't be the happiest mum, but I will do it because, you know, I don't want to push kids to do something if they are not ready. And I think it's my Polish blood, you know, football is important for us" (Eva, Poland).

Immigrant mothers, while generally acknowledging that rugby is New Zealand's national sport, considered it unsafe for their children. They preferred to have their children playing sports that they felt familiar with, and rugby was not necessarily one of them. Donna (China) offered jokingly her culture staple sport, table tennis, instead of rugby:

> "I don't like my son playing rugby. That's for sure. Dad prefers he plays rugby, or, you know, have some lessons, I said no, I said my son can play table tennis rather than rugby. But it turned out, worked out in my favor, my son didn't like rugby. He goes there, plays, but it's not his favorite, his preferred sport. I don't find it very safe and his dad sees it in a different way: it is a good sport, it is the national sport, he needs to learn, he has to learn, yeah, but it worked out in my favor, anyway, he doesn't particularly love or enjoy it, he loves swimming"
> (Donna, China).

Sonia (Iran) enjoys watching professional rugby, particularly when big teams are playing. As a children's sport, though, she found it utterly unsafe. She acknowledged her isolated stance in negotiating sports for her child, within the society and media passion around the national sport:

> "I think rugby should be banned for kids. Of course it is a national pride and I go and watch it in a pub if, you know, Richie McCaw was playing and (laughs) even I enjoy cheering for them, but I think it shouldn't be allowed for school age because of the injuries. And then the parents become so engrossed in this and they start to abuse other teams when they are standing on the sideline, you know what I mean? My son did it, but I think it's a bit too... not safe for the kids. I think. Soccer would be a better game. But I think because it is national pride, they want to train rugby players from a very early age, and of course, as parent coming from another country, as much as you say no, no son, don't do rugby, is not safe, you will not win because he's listening to the, the media and the peers. That is also very challenging. Even if the choice of sports, of course you can choose the sports, they can do whatever they like, but somehow rugby for me was a little bit of a hard one" (Sonia, Iran).

8.3.5 MIGRATING PARTNERS

Partners were generally happy to support their spouses in perpetuating their tradition and generally participated in celebrations:

"C. has been quite, you know, like I like to take them for the Buddhist events and C. hasn't said anything about that and he's quite happy to come with us to our Buddhist functions", Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia) storied.

Some partners had their own migration journeys towards their spouses' narratives. Eva (Poland) has introduced her husband who *"is always into Polish history"* to her culture:

"I think every single Polish film in any video stores in New Zealand I already showed it to my husband. He loves them and we can have discussions about it for days, sometimes even longer than that. He likes it, I think he likes everything about Poland. If he hears that it's going to be some Polish documentary program, he is, oh, yeah, we have to watch it, he's very, very proud of my roots."

Eva is Catholic, and her wish to continue this tradition with her children was discussed within the couple beforehand:

"I was telling him that our kids are going to be baptized, he never ever had problems. He was even trying to convert himself, he was going to the classes, but with studying, with, you know, just starting having children, we are waiting until he has more time to do it" (Eva, Poland).

There have been other examples of various degrees of migrant partners. Arguably the most eloquent one was Barb's partner who adopted the Jewish ritual in his household, supporting his children through ethnic celebrations and the growth of their Jewish identity to such a degree that even close relations didn't realize he's not actually Jewish:

"When he stood in front of the whole community and he gave a speech at the end of the Bar-Mitzva, and he said that he is a non-Jewish father, and he talked about how it was such an important thing for him, we have invited some of the parents of our friends, the grandparents of T.'s friends and they all know us for years and they all came up to him and said: "We had no idea you weren't Jewish". (Laughs). So there you go. They all thought that he was Jewish."

Like Eva, Barb reached an agreement with her husband on the cultural identity of their children at the beginning of their relationship:

"We had negotiated from the very beginning how the kids will be brought up. So that was an explicit discussion that we had when we first dated seriously, and we both agreed that the kids will be brought up Jewish."

Barb motivated her partner's commitment to similar values and to his love for history:

> *"My husband embraced every aspect, it was never any real negotiation to be had, we see eye to eye, we have very aligned values, the Jewish aspect, he loves history and politics and from his perspective it's really important that kids know the history both, his history but my history as well, it's really important to him that the kids have a connection to what's happened before, he took our son to the Centenary at Gallipoli, so he had his Bar-Mitzva and then they flew to Turkey together and they were there for the Dawn ceremony. So we both have this deep appreciation and respect for each other's history. A. really values history and the culture and sees it in all its richness. So that was a really big part, but I mean I don't think it's just because I'm Jewish, I think if he married a Japanese woman he would be the same. It's just the kind of person that he is. So I think that made a big difference. And I think that it made a big difference that his initial experiences were very positive and he was embraced by the community, so he never felt ousted"* (Barb, Israel).

8.4 THE OTHER FAMILY

Ethnic groups assert the existence of an *'us'*, which belongs to a common identity different from *'them'*, the concept of *'other'* (Bolaffi, 2003). The birth of a child who belongs to *'us'* and to *'them'*, creates bridges. Their navigation, though, is always the process of negotiations, gives and takes from both *'us'* and *'the other'*.

Some mother participants revealed embracement and support when entering the space of *the other family:*

> *"My family is in Japan so they came here when my son was one, but my husband's family looked after my son often and we just go to see them every week. And at the beginning, for three months, we lived together, so that was big help for me"* confirmed Miyuki (Japan).

To transgress differences, interethnic families navigate from a cultural *'us'* to a cultural *'them'*. Both Anett (Hungary) and Elisapeta (Samoa) described efforts made by their partners' families to support them in their intergenerational cultural transmission:

"My mother-in-law very much encourages me to speak to her in Hungarian, and even she knows a couple of Hungarian words, so that's very nice", said Anett. Elisapeta continued: *"Of course he introduced me to his family and that, his mum was nice and his sisters were lovely and their husbands, they were nice. My husband's family, they were nice to me and they were trying to get me speaking, talking, and I was teaching them Samoan and they said Samoan [words] to me and I laughed and they thought that was a stupid thing. I said the sound of it [is funny], now I understand what all the Palagi think of me saying things exactly the same, but they sound different and silly, now I understand why they laugh at me and I was angry at first"* (Elisapeta, Samoa).

Keeping family close is an important Chinese value, Jenny (China) assessed, and she recognized the efforts from both *'us'* and *'them'* to acknowledge this value:

"We are quite close so both families are quite close. So it doesn't matter if it is Chinese celebration or New Zealand celebration, we always have both families here."

Culture is practices, values and traditions one absorbs from the environment. The cultures of all people change, and it is assumed that both partners in interethnic relationships may have forgone cultural changes to accommodate for the other culture, but in ways that maintain an underlying cultural core, preserving their anchor values and ideas (Frame, 2004). Anne (Denmark) gave a worthy example of Frame's theory in her story of integration within her Māori husband's family:

"Well, I sat back and watched everything. And I can remember having raw fish once and this, it must have been a relative of some kind and he's looking at this Pakeha girl eating raw fish, and he said that's not my raw fish (laughs). He didn't like the way it had been prepared. He didn't think it was good enough. But I tried everything and I fitted in... well, I think the fact it was that I didn't have any prejudices of any kind. But I realized of course that they didn't do things our way either."

Sixty years ago in New Zealand, interracial couples such as Anne and her Māori partner were not that common to the point where

"*People would turn on in the street when you walked together and people would turn just surprised, did I see what I just saw? That sort of thing. And you sort of became used to be a bit conspicuous. Now nobody would turn a hair. But it wasn't like that then. Well, it was sixty years ago."*

In that context, however, the Māori whanau embraced Anne as one of theirs:

"They have always, without exception, been really, really kind to me. His family I mean, you know, it made life easier, didn't it, because you just became one of the family. That's all", Anne explained.

Both Danish and Māori families included each-other in a non-discriminatory way: *"a mixture really. And we mixed with both families, both his side and mine, there was no prejudice on either side, which was really a big plus."* This comfortable cultural co-habitation created a safe space outside of the master narrative in which race prejudice was experienced, Anne considered:

*"And of course, yeah, I came from my own background and really went into the **Māori** world largely. It wasn't until later years that I went to work and had neighbors and became more familiar with the Pakehas. Yeah. I didn't think about that, really. But that's just how my life happened to turn out."*

Some memory may had her question her suitability in her mother-in-law's eyes: *"I think my mother-in-law might have preferred to have a Māori daughter-in-law but we got used to each other and we never had a crossed word between us, her and I"*, but her daughter, present at the interview, was quick to recreate the story:

(Anne's daughter: When she died, remember, she had your photo in the back of her wallet)

Did she?

(Anne's daughter: yes, she had a photo, probably from about the same time in the very early years when you were with dad)

Well, we looked after her when she became ill and not really well enough to look after herself and she stayed with us the last two years of her life. But yes, we always got on well, that's a painting of her" said Anne (Denmark) pointing at the wall.

8.4.1 *Us* and *them*

Complexities around *difference* can be at once both affirming and alienating and go to the very heart of each partner's identity and the new or the third space identity that the

couple attempts to craft (Luke, 2003). Barb and her partner found a common ground, creating a space based on common values reinforced through negotiated parental practices, a space that his family didn't embrace:

> "The difficulty was never between the two of us, it was more with his family, it was more feeling judged and criticized and judged. A lot of judgement about my own parenting and then A.'s parenting because it was so different to what his sisters and their husbands were like. So there was a lot of judgement coming from his family, particularly his mother, but also his sisters and their husbands. You know, judgement around the fact that I was a business woman and that I went back to work. So his mother kind of expected me to stop working. A.'s a lawyer. He's now a partner in a big firm so she's… her husband was a lawyer, she didn't think I should work. That was the first lot of judgement. There was judgment around the fact that we didn't do the sports thing from a very early age, you know, we didn't push them into sports from a very early age, there was judgement around that. Then there was judgement around the fact that we talk a lot with our children. There isn't that much you do as I say, cause I'm your parent. And I'll smack you. You know, it's not authoritarian, it's much more... Although we are authoritative and there are consequences, and we are quite tough, the kids tell us we are quite tough, comparing to other parents, but not what they've expected… and also I think a big judgement or discomfort is that we do a lot of cultural things. So we have a whole different way of spending week ends is what they do".

That determined Barb to set up clear space boundaries:

> "I never disagreed with my husband and his family never came into it. They didn't have a voice. It wasn't with them. Yeah. I think that earlier on, his mom voiced her disappointment that we didn't have a Christmas tree at home. And I think it was my husband not me, I think she raised with him that she thought that is not fair that we didn't have Christmas and I think it was A. who said it's not even an option."

This clear cut was eased by Barb differentiating between two different family discourses, and her and her husband's positioning within one of them, in contrast to the other:

> "Culturally speaking, he is more at ease with my family and the way we are, than with his own family of origin, which is very Anglo Saxon, so they don't value as much academic achievement, they don't value as much, you know, the sort of worldliness, they are much

more about fishing, building, rugby, and there isn't much negotiation, when the kids were little we saw more of them, and they always felt, my mother-in-law didn't think I'll have children cause I was a career woman, so in her mind, if you are a career woman you're not going to have children so she was really happy, she didn't expect me to have a child. Whereas in Israel, it's completely together, you can be a career woman and have children, the two are completely compatible, and culturally here, she's that very old style New Zealand woman and they live in the country as well, so there was a little bit of negotiation, but we don't see much of them so it's not a problem" (Barb, Israel).

Sonia (Iran) was on her own, when trying to uphold her mothering narrative, and this was an isolating experience:

"I must say, we have our differences of opinion, definitely. I find I came to the conclusion that as much as I explain, they probably won't be agreeing with me. But, having said that, they are quite nice, they haven't been, you know, bad, because on occasions, yes I have had my disagreement and I voiced it.

Interviewer: That was good that you could voice it

Umm, yes even though sometimes I find that is no use me telling them because if I see them, for example we get together every so often, we just have lunch, have a nice family get together, laugh, everything is fine, not necessarily I agree, you know what I'm saying? (Laughs)."

Sonia used her stories to access an imaginary companionship, marked textually through a generic *you,* sharing the wisdom acquired from her experiences to help other mothers in similar circumstances:

"I'm saying this because I want to help others, you know? It has to be for the purpose of helping others. So you most probably will find yourself in situations that you will not be able to even convince anybody, so you just say ok, we just have fun, we laugh, if you are in good terms, depending on your character too, there are things that could be quite offending and then if probably someone else was in my shoes, it will say I will never see them again but I'm not that person so, you know, I see everybody and laugh and that, but not necessarily I agree (laughs). Again with how the grandparents, how they are with your child, not only your husband, but the family of the husband, how they are, you may not necessarily agree" (Sonia, Iran).

Despite disagreements, some mothers made an extra effort to maintain a good relationship between their children and the partner's family. This was Taurea's case:

"My daughter was three when we divorced, and I think it is really important for your research to acknowledge that, but after that I had, not even at an arm length, but a lot of arm lengths relationship with her father, but, with the rest of the family, with grandma and all that, they were always welcome, they were always welcome to spend time with her, I would drop her to grandma, they would come and stay with us, so just because my relationship with the father distanced and broke off, I wanted to make sure that the child, who is the treasure of the family, was open and had the same or even better relationships with the aunties and uncles and grandma and all that because of that broken link between me and her father. And I think even now, they just value that and appreciate that" (Taurea, Hungary).*

Sheena's relationship with her in-laws broke down after her son's first birthday, when Sheena was accused that she didn't cater for her mother-in-law in an expected manner. While hurt, Sheena continued to send her husband and children to the family Christmas gatherings:

"So I'd say to him like when comes Christmas time, oh what should we do? Should we invite them over, I say, what if we invite them over and they don't come? I say, you just go and do your thing with them and take the kids and I'll stay home. It's not ideal to me, but is awkward, cause I hate the kids thinking that I don't like grandma and stuff, you know what I mean? I'm kind of an idealistic, I like everyone to be happy and have a happy big family and a big whanau and it hasn't happened that way, so it hurts all the time, specially mostly during Christmas, you know, when even though we haven't have a great relationship, at least it wasn't bitter, it wasn't horrible..."

Sheena differentiated between the Māori culture, as she got to know it, and her partner's family, Māori, but not reenacting Māori practices:

"His family was no help. I didn't even get like one cooked meal from them. Because if they were real Māori with the Māori tikanga, they would bring food and a lot of love and care and stuff."

One of the things that hurt Sheena was her partner's family not making the effort to get to know her and acknowledge her ethnic identity over the years:

> "When it comes to me and you can't understand whether I'm Chinese or Malaysian? They always come to me and say, so are you Chinese or Malaysian, I'm like, so after ten years being together with him now they are 20 odd years really, but after ten years being with him and they ask me that question, I got so pissed off I just couldn't even like start to explain to them anymore. Cause I think, it's that ignorance or is that just being really rude to me now, because I've been with your brother for ten years and you can't understand whether I'm Chinese or Malaysian."

She had, though, a fond memory of her partner's grandmother:

> "When I met C.'s grandmother at a funeral, at the grandfather's funeral, first thing she asked me, which really touched me, she asked me, does he hit you? Because she was hit by the grandfather all the time, so she's seeing a stranger, the first thing she did was worrying for me as a stranger and she was not protective about her own family when she tried to keep it harsh, she doesn't want to know like other things, you know, she asked me straight up, she asked me does he hit you? No, no I said, no, but I hit him (laughs). But you know what I mean? That she was so caring for a total stranger so I was very touched from that and that's the Māori way" (Sheena, Chinese born in Malaysia).

8.4.2 The Māori Family

Māori whanau (family) brought in cultural practices that mothers at the recipient end embraced. Saha (France) detailed:

> "In terms of ownership, that's quite different as well like private ownership doesn't exist as such, I think, when you are within the family. I mean, if by example [my partner's] sister or mother would turn to our place, pretty much without saying that they will come, yeah? They just come. And once they are here it's… we don't have to do anything for them because it's like their place, I think, and, you know, there will be no … I don't know, they can just open the fridge and take whatever they want.
>
> *Interviewer: And do the dishes after…*

Yeah, exactly, so that's different as well. It's nice" (Saha, France).

Those practices included the tapu-noa Māori safety dichotomy, that had to be negotiated in an interethnic household, Eva explained:

"One day I hit my father-in-law on his head, and in a very nicely way he just told me off, I didn't know that it's tapu, just didn't think so, we are probably going to teach kids that, you know, they are not allowed to do it to Māori people but if they are going to do it to the Polish uncles, we won't have problems, yeah" (Eva, Poland).

Singing was a part of the Māori culture appreciated by Saha (France):

"I really like the singing. I think we've lost a lot of singing culture in France, I mean it used to be, but it's been lost. Not for everybody but French people don't sing as much as Māori people. So I think that's really nice for her to be brought up in a culture where singing is a big part" (Saha, France).

Saha (France) spoke about the tangi (funeral service), and how her daughter's approach to life and death is different than what other French children experience, due to her extended Māori whanau:

"French kids would not go to tangi, and it wouldn't happen that many times in their lives. They may go to one or their grandparents, whereas Māori tend to go much more because they have extended families so I guess she'll probably be brought up in going to burials, tangi much more than any French kid would, and have a relationship to death that would be quite different, because I think the Māori relation to death is very different actually. First, tangi takes a long time, so it's not, you know, ok, put the person in the ground and bye, like it's a long process and it's also looked at as a very strong family reunion not only for the dead, but like for the ones alive as well, like it's looked at, I think, as a way to have family bound so it is a big difference, and also the relationship with the body is different, like lot of Māori kids had seen dead people, kissed them, walked on them... In France, you bring your French kid to... he's not used to that, he would probably freak out. So yeah, so I think that's a bit different, and she would probably be brought up very differently in her relationship to death. And I find, death for Māori people is not looked at as, it's hard to say, as dramatic.

Interviewer: How do you feel for your child to have this relationship with death?

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I think it's much better. Because it's so much more natural way of dealing with death which is part of life" (Saha, France).

8.5 CONCLUSIONS

Narrative identities do not simply provide an explanation for a life, but situate this life within a social context by holding a dialogue with various cultural narratives (May, 2004). Mothers constructed their narrative identity through introducing significant others as characters in their stories, and through employing resourceful pathways to express their positioning towards or against the narratives these characters deployed. Significant others had a substantial impact on participants' mothering. Retelling the stories of this impact allowed mothers to redefine it and therefore, to assume agency in reassessing their acceptance, conformity, rejection or ironical attitude towards mothering master narratives that these characters carried.

9. Final Considerations

This final chapter will assess how the research findings fulfilled the scope of this thesis by responding to the question of how mothers in interethnic relationships construct their mothering. It presents the limitations of this research and offers recommendations for future research on this matter.

I started this research while immersed in my own interethnic mothering negotiations, with my own stories of migration, interethnic relationship and parenting. At the beginning of my research journey, I was questioning what *"the right way"* to perform successful interethnic mothering was and I wanted to confirm and validate my experience in other mothers' stories of interethnic mothering.

Unpacking my stories and reviewing the extant relevant literature on interethnic parenting, I decided that my research scope was to gain a deeper understanding of how mothers in interethnic relationships constructed their mothering.

The research focused on Bamberg's (2011) three negotiation spaces, diachronically, following immigrant mothers' journeys from the way they were mothered to the way they mother; synchronically, looking at how immigrant mothers in New Zealand define and re-define their mothering in regards to the culture of their New Zealand partner; and looking at how they construct their interethnic mothering, positioning towards or against motherhood master narratives of both their countries of birth and their country of migration.

I interviewed 16 immigrant mothers, parenting in a relation with a New Zealander of Māori or European descent, with a parenting history, which, for the purpose of this research I assessed to be as having children two years plus. Because we translate ourselves by the language we speak, and therefore negotiating languages intensifies other interethnic relationships negotiations, I decided to recruit immigrant mothers whose maternal language was not English.

The literature review undertaken brought much complexity to what I initially believed will be a heart-warming discussion on personal experiences of giving birth in migration territories, on cooking decisions when armed with recipes from one's home country but reproducing food in unfamiliar kitchens, on negotiations of celebrations and ritual, and other similar and daily held negotiations.

It didn't give me straightforward answers to what is the right way to perform successful interethnic mothering; in contrast, it made me question that there would be a *right way*, and understand that *successful* is socially constructed. It opened windows towards understanding the underlying factors that makes interethnic negotiations challenging.

I learnt that within a patriarchal society, mothers are reproduced intergenerationally, women being trained to mother from very early ages, and mother-to-be identities are socialized and normalized. I was raised to be a mother.

I received confirmation that production and reproduction as vital economic mechanisms are gendered, traditionally men produce and women reproduce, care and regenerate. This status-quo entails different status for men and women, therefore the work that they perform is deemed of different value, with more value attached to production and less value to reproduction, including mothering. Mothering happens in private spaces, and the skills, energy and effort invested are not considered work. If the same skills, energy and effort are transferred in the public space for the same outcomes, i.e. caring for a child in child care, they are considered work and rewarded.

9.1 Research Findings

My research adds to the body of interethnic mothering knowledge by including perspectives not previously researched in New Zealand. Firstly, the research started from an immigrant mothers' standpoint, how they value, negotiate and transmit inter-generationally elements of their ethnic background. Secondly, it targeted specifically the negotiation of mothering in interethnic relationships.

Like any mothering, interethnic mothering is subject to the framework of patriarchal motherhood with the added challenge of having to negotiate two master narratives of motherhood in their own construction of mothering. Mothers in my research performed most reproductive activities in their relationship. In reproducing culture, they negotiated mothering values and practices acquired in their countries of birth with dominant discourses on mothering in New Zealand. Some mothers were positioned towards motherhood narratives of their countries of birth, feeling isolated within the motherhood master narratives in New Zealand. Other mothers freed themselves from master narratives on motherhood from their countries of birth, and recreated their mothering within migration territories perceived as enabling. All mothers, though, felt at some point at odds with a particular mothering practice in New Zealand.

Interestingly, conflictual parenting values and practices were not present much amongst partners within the interethnic relationship. New Zealand partners were generally described as relaxed in their parenting, generally allowing mothers to take parenting decisions, therefore generating less conflictual negotiations. Most partners were happy to support immigrant mothers with the reproduction of their ethnic culture, in a more or less active way. They didn't reinforce a New Zealand way of living, even less a way of parenting, in their family. However, they largely represented it. This was identified by mother participants in this research through stories that presented their partners' relaxed attitude to parenting, their different definitions of achievement, their different food practices, and their love for the outdoors and for the national sport, rugby. They brought New Zealand into the house, where mothering happens. For those immigrant mothers who tried to recreate a link between their home in New Zealand and their home country, through crafting ethnic language environments, reproducing ethnic food and practices of care, there were constant reminders that there is a New Zealand outside the door. Thus negotiations were mostly held between the immigrant mother and the world their partner represented.

In contrast, mothers who positioned themselves towards New Zealand master narratives of motherhood, re-evaluated the way they were mothered and created counter-narratives against master narratives from their countries of birth. They appreciated a less

medicalized birthing in New Zealand, a more relaxed attitude towards developmental milestones, and an openness towards difference that allowed them to construct their interethnic mothering. Their decisions in doing this had to be negotiated with values and parenting practices from their countries of birth, introduced in some of the stories by participants' mothers voices.

Mother participants within this research have storied their pursuits of culture reproduction in personalized ways, insisting over three negotiation spaces. These were reproduction of culture through food, reproduction of culture through language and reproduction of culture through education, including the transmission of cultural values.

While most mothers interviewed stressed the importance of transmitting their maternal language to their children as part of their efforts of intergenerational cultural reproduction very few succeeded. This is because language is acquired and maintained in social places, and it has to be validated institutionally and socially. The lack of social places to validate mothers' maternal language, and the lack of active support from their partners, affected negatively mothers' individual efforts to reproduce their language.

Immigrant mothers in this research considered food and practices around food as mechanisms of intergenerational cultural reproduction, and they invested in recreating their ethnic celebrations, and in marking milestones of their children development, through food and practices around food. Their culinary itineraries of adapting to different ingredients and to different practices around eating, while negotiating two different food cultures with their partner, reflected their personal interethnic mothering journey.

Immigrant mothers found the educational system in New Zealand student centred and offering options of vocational pathways, different than the one from their countries of birth, which mostly focus in academic achievement. Some mothers enjoyed the New Zealand approach, seen as providing for different developmental stages and different strengths, and encompassing personal fulfillment and wellbeing in its definition of success. Other mothers found it too relaxed, impacting on the quality of learning. Their definition of success was defined by academic achievement and resulted in high expectations for

their children, an approach justified by mothers' experiences of growing up in highly competitive environments.

Conforming to the literature on the gendered labour of cultural transmission, mother participants in this research assumed the primary role of culture reproduction, being reproduction of their own culture, or reproduction of their partners' culture. Most mother participants identified elements of culture that their partners exhibited in their household with the prevalent culture of New Zealand. A consequence was that mothers' role of transmitting their partners' culture to their children was performed in a rather passive way, by acknowledging New Zealand's celebrations, such as ANZAC Day, its national sport, rugby, and by attending family gatherings around Christmas and other celebrations. Some mother participants went a bit further, and encouraged their husbands to dig more into their own ethnic heritage prior to their ancestors' immigration to New Zealand, to enrich their children's cultural heritage. Overall, when comparing their partners' culture, diffused within the mainstream overwhelming culture of New Zealand, with their own culture, rich in practices and unique, many mothers felt that their partners had not much to give back. A hypothesis grounded in the literature of the gendered labour of culture reproduction could be explored in future studies. Might mothers may have felt that their partners had little to give back in a cultural exchange, not because they didn't have a cultural heritage to transmit, but simply because fathers didn't perform a role of cultural transmission, this being a gendered role, traditionally accomplished by mothers.

Particular findings were generated by mothers parenting with New Zealanders of Māori descent. These mothers appreciated positively their partner's culture, even if not reproduced by their partners in the interethnic family, for historical reasons (many Māori partners had lost intergenerationally their cultural heritage during colonization). Immigrant mothers were proud of their children's Māori heritage, they adopted Māori cultural practices and ritual, and actively reproduced the Māori culture in their children's up-bringing. They encouraged their children to learn the Māori language, some enrolling them in full-immersion schools and they undertook Māori classes as well to support their children's education.

9.2 Theoretical importance

Using a narrative methodology to analyze immigrant mothers' stories of interethnic mothering in New Zealand proved effective from many perspectives. Firstly, it allowed mother participants to shape their interethnic mothering from a site of empowerment, creating validated counter-narratives of mothering against Capital D discourses of the patriarchal institutions of motherhood from both their countries of birth and their country of migration.

Secondly, it allowed mothers to choose the type of story they were telling, through the way they storied. Dramatic life sequences were presented with humor or irony, in contrast, banal life sequences were intensified by the way participants narrated them. Through authoring the stories of their interethnic mothering, mother participants had the possibility to recreate their mothering.

Thirdly, the time and space dimensions required in analyzing narratives brought to the research elements of interethnic mothering, otherwise less visible, such as particular mothering negotiations of secularized and celebration time, definitions of mothering time negotiations, intensified negotiation stories through time markers.

Fourthly, it brought consistency to the research. Mothers' stories were so different and differently told that they may have challenged a different methodology. But they were stories, so they all centered on emplotment. Thus I was guided by the emplotment's constitutive elements of initiating action, complicating action, climax, resolution strategies and coda to make sense of all the stories and to structure them in a congruent way.

Fifthly, and possibly the most important thing, my biggest concern was to do justice to the stories generously told. I hope that allowing mothers to tell their stories throughout the research, with their own voice, in their own style and tone, and using my authority as a researcher to organize these stories and bring them together in meaningful threads, rather than to re-tell them, honored mother participants stories of their interethnic mothering.

9.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research

The data collected and analyzed does not allow for generalizations of particular interethnic mothering negotiations and resolutions, in contrast, because of the diversity of findings, it proves how fluid and personal interethnic mothering is. Mothers' negotiations and resolutions were contextual, recorded in a particular time and space, therefore they assume reliability for the time and space where they were formed. However, all resolutions mothers presented constitute knowledge, and present opportunities of reflection not only for mother participants in this research but for other immigrant mothers in interethnic relationships, and for institutions with which these mothers interact. To continue similar studies will bring to light an even more diversity of resolutions, adding to the body of knowledge of interethnic mothering in New Zealand and elsewhere.

This research was centered on negotiating interethnic mothering, and while the questions constructed after relevant literature was reviewed prompted mothers on particular negotiations spaces, the mother participants chose towards which negotiation space to focus their stories. Future research targeting each of these negotiation spaces, like reproduction of culture through ethnic language, through food and food practices, or through education, will offer specific findings applicable in particular sectors that support mothering in New Zealand.

10. Conclusions

This research is part of my personal journey of mothering. Deciding to tackle this journey from an academic perspective through this thesis, I was inspired by many women authors, such as Adrienne Rich, Sandra Ruddick, Nancy Chodorow, Marilyn Waring, Andrea O'Reilly, Ruth DeSouza, Patricia Hill Collins, to name just a few. I recognized myself in their writings. Their writings gave a structure, a framework to channel my mothering thoughts, ideas, emotions, perceptions, and work. They guided my research journey, and brought theoretical perspective when I couldn't see light at the end of my thoughts.

This research brings to the larger field of motherhood studies particular experiences of immigrant mothers, mothering in interethnic relationships. It presents a contextualized insight to interethnic mothering in New Zealand over a span of nearly 60 years. In territories of immigration, mothering is performed in another language than the one in which the mothers performing it have been mothered. Personal experiences of sixteen immigrant mothers in New Zealand were captured through their stories and analyzed through narrative inquiry lenses, where the participants were not only the protagonists, but also the narrators of their stories. As narrators, they gave voice to significant others in their stories and filtered their mothering journey not only through action, but also through a large array of possibilities, opportunities, regrets and redemptions. The bounded space of immigration, with its interethnic mothering constraints, was complemented by the boundless narrative space with push and pull currents of dominant discourses towards which mother participants positioned their mothering. Examining a complex process, which is interethnic mothering, from a different temporality perspective and moving from the oppression of a linear timeline to controlling time, allowed mothers to invent and reinvent themselves and the world around them. Most importantly, the situated, partial, contextual and contradictory nature of telling stories moved away from an abstract, absolute truth, and validated claims to temporal, personalized truths, in a meaning making pursuit.

This practical example of applying narrative inquiry tools has the potential to benefit other studies in the field of immigration and inter-ethnic mothering and are applicable to different geographical, social and cultural contexts. Personal experiences of immigration and of mothering are often cruelly generalized and sized by discourses of power. Returning to the story, as the universal way of telling one's truth to the world, authenticates marginalized knowledge.

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NEW ZEALAND'S ETHNIC INTERMARRIAGE

% with partners of different ethnicities

	Male	Female
● Asian	22%	8%
● Pacific	37%	48%
● Maori	71%	73%
● European	13%	12%

NZ-born with partner from same ethnic group

	Male	Female
● Asian	33%	28%
● Pacific	33%	40%
● Maori	52%	51%
● European	96%	94%

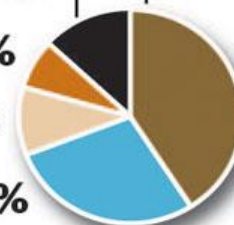**Kiwis who identify with more than one ethnic group**

Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African **16.8%**

Maori **53.5%**
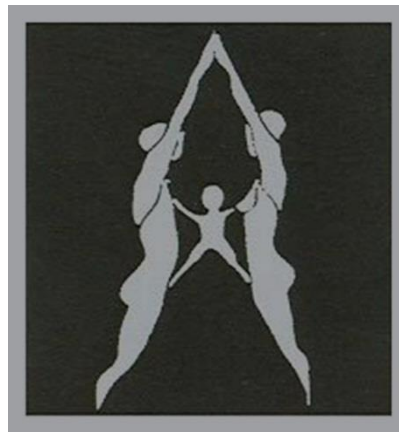
Asian **9.9%**

European **13.3%**

Pacific **37.2%**

Source: Statistics NZ, 2013 Census / Herald graphic

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Invitation to Participate

Are you a migrant mother in an interethnic relationship?

Would you like to be part of a research on how mothers in interethnic relationships value, negotiate and transmit to their children elements of their ethnic background?

When women enter a relationship with someone from a different ethnicity, there may be different values, different ways of doing things, a different world view. Raising children in interethnic relationships may raise particular issues and may require certain degree of negotiation. From this perspective, I would like to explore how migrant mothers in interethnic relationships negotiate with their partners and with the world around them, ways of raising their multi-ethnic children.

My research will focus on mothers because, from a feminist perspective, the mother is seen and defined as the 'natural' primary care giver, who is best suited to the acts of mothering. I am myself a migrant mother in an interethnic relationship, and this topic has interested me for a long time. This research is undertaken for my PHD thesis.

I am looking for mothers born and raised overseas, with a maternal language other than English, in a heterosexual relationship with a New Zealander (Caucasian or Māori) born and raised in New Zealand. To ensure the richness of information, I will select mothers with a history of parenting children from interethnic relationships – that is having children aged two years plus; the mothers may or may not be in these relationships any longer.

If you are one of these mothers, and would like to be part of this research please contact me at:

e-mail: luciatibre@hotmail.com

phone: 027 55 34 800

If you have friends, acquaintances who you think may like to be part of this research and fit the criteria above, please share with them my contact details.

What will happen in this research?

You will be required to be part of an approximately one hour interview in which you will be asked to share stories on how you value, negotiate and transmit to your child/children elements of your ethnic background.

Participant Information Sheet

AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TAMAKI MAKAU RAU

Date Information Sheet Produced:

20 November 2014

Project Title

How mothers in interethnic relationships value, negotiate and transmit to their children elements of their ethnic background?

An Invitation

My name is Lucia Davis and I would like to invite you to take part in my research about how mothers in interethnic relationships value, negotiate and transmit to their children elements of their ethnic background.

Interethnic relationships, both marriages and partnerships, are becoming more and more common worldwide and in New Zealand. When women enter a relationship with someone from a different ethnicity, there may be different values, different ways of doing things, a different world view. Raising children in interethnic relationships may raise particular issues and may require certain degree of negotiation. From this perspective, I would like to explore how migrant mothers in interethnic relationships negotiate with their partners and with the world around them, ways of raising their multi-ethnic children.

My research will focus on mothers because, from a feminist perspective, the mother is seen and defined as the 'natural' primary care giver, who is best suited to the acts of mothering. I am myself a migrant mother in an interethnic relationship, and this topic has interested me for a long time.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research is undertaken for my PHD thesis. Parts of the research may be published in journal articles, books, conference papers, other academic publications or presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been invited to participate because you are either part of my network, or someone who is part of my network told you about this research and you contacted me. You are (or have been) in a heterosexual relationship with a New Zealander born and raised in New Zealand. You have a history of parenting children from interethnic relationships – that is having children aged two years plus.

My Rights:

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation, if you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question

- Withdraw from the study at any stage prior to completion of the data collection

- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation

- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give written permission

- Ask for the recorder to be turned off an any time during the interview

- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded

I am aware that talking about some of your experiences may at times be upsetting. Your involvement can be stopped at any time. You also do not need to talk about anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.

What will happen in this research?

You will be required to be part of an approximately one hour interview in which you will be asked to share stories on how you value, negotiate and transmit to your child/children elements of your ethnic background. You will be invited to review the data transcribed.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There is a possibility that you may become emotional when talking about your family of origin and about cultural practices in your home country. I will ensure that steps are taken for a maximum of comfort possible. If risk occurs, you will be encouraged to use the counselling support offered by the AUT Counselling Team.

What are the benefits?

My research will benefit mothers raising children in interethnic relationships. It also aims to inform practices of health care, education, employment, services delivered by central and local government, the business sector and Non-Governmental Organisations about how mothers in interethnic relationships value, negotiate and transmit to their children elements of their ethnic background.

You may enjoy to have the opportunity to talk about your experiences, joys and challenges of raising children in interethnic relationships.

How will my privacy be protected?

In order to respect your privacy and confidentiality:

- All details that could potentially identify you will be removed from any research publication

- The data will be kept for six years following the completion of the research in a secure storage at AUT University (North Shore Campus)

- Everything that you tell me will be kept confidential and not be reported in a manner that could identify you, except in the unlikely case that you reveal significant illegal activity, in which case I may report it.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You have two weeks to consider this invitation.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You agree to participate to this research by completing the Consent Form attached.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

I will send you feedback on the results of this research, informing you when it will be published on the AUT website.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor,

Marilyn Waring

marilyn.waring@aut.ac.nz

Phone: 09 921 9661

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Lucia Davis

luciatibre@hotmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Marilyn Waring

marilyn.waring@aut.ac.nz

Appendix 4: Word Maps

Adna Bosnia

Anett (Hungary)

Anne (Denmark)

Barb (Israel)

Cristina (Peru)

Diya (Indian born in Malaysia)

Donna (China)

Elisapeta (Samoa)

Eva (Peru)

Jenny (China)

Miyuki (Japan)

Nina (Samoa)

Saha (France)

Sheena (Chinese born in Malaysia)

Sonia (Iran)