

CLASS, GENDER AND ETHNICITY PERFORMANCE
AMONGST POLISH WOMEN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND
NEW ZEALAND/AOTEAROA: AN INTERSECTIONAL
PERSPECTIVE

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Declaration

I, Kinga Goodwin, confirm that I am the author of this thesis, and all the work presented in it is my own. I also declare I personally collected all the data upon which this thesis is based.

Work from other sources and authors is accurately referenced, and those fragments of the thesis that were already published are marked and referenced.

Abstract

In recent years, there has been considerable interest in the migration of Polish citizens within Europe, especially post EU accession. There is, however, little research on the movement of such migrants further afield, especially in the context of individualised lifestyle migration. This thesis is based on in-depth interviews and ethnographic observation/participation with Polish women living in United Kingdom and New Zealand/Aotearoa. Using Butler's theory of performativity and Goffman's dramaturgical approach to self-presentation I consider how class, gender and ethnicity intersect, and how they are expressed in Polish women's behaviour in two very different geographical, socio-economic, cultural and political environments. My data show how Polish women's femininity and gender practices change in a response to their different social location in both New Zealand and the UK, and how these are affected by varying levels of social inclusion of women, Poles and migrants in both these countries. My findings demonstrate that although in both NZ and UK Polish women feel more included as women, in the UK their ethnicity and migration status locate them in a lower societal strata. Further, in NZ Polish women felt more included as women, Poles and migrants, and the way they performed gender and ethnicity did not require 'resistance practices' to counteract ethnic and class stigma. I also show how discourses of migration to both these places are rooted in the history of the Polish-English and Polish-New Zealand relations, and inform the way Polish women narrate their experience. As I use an intersectional approach in both methodology and theoretical framework, the focus is on the intersecting nature of my respondents' social identities, and the way their migrant experience is classed and gendered. Although my work is anthropological/sociological in its approach (ethnography) and subject (e.g. focus on class), I also draw on my background from cross-cultural and social psychology (e.g. the work of Hofstede) to broaden the theoretical perspectives traditionally adopted in migration studies.

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Terms and Abbreviations

Aotearoa: Māori name for New Zealand, conventionally translated as the ‘the land of the long, white cloud’ (Te Ara, The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, 2009)

EU: European Union

GUS: Główny Urząd Statystyczny (Central Statistical Office of Poland)

NZ: New Zealand

‘Pahiatua Children’: 733 Polish children, originally from the Kresy (Eastern Borderlands of Poland annexed by the USSR during WWII), mainly orphans whose families died in Siberian camps. In 1944 they arrived in New Zealand from the refugee camp in Isfahan, Persia (today’s Iran). They were located in a small town of Pahiatua 163 km north of Wellington, where they lived for a while in a Polish camp (Tomaszyk, 2004). Most of them (648 out of the initial 733) stayed in New Zealand after the war has ended.

Pākehā: New Zealanders of European (mainly British) origin

UK: United Kingdom

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WWI & WWII: First World War and Second World War

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this Chapter I set out the subject of my thesis and its background, and describe the context in which the idea of this work originated. I start by presenting my main research questions (over-arching questions are also listed in Chapter 2, section 2.5.1), very broadly talking about my major findings (presented in more detail in Chapter 7) and the contribution my thesis makes to the existing research. I also draw on the background of my thesis and explain how I became interested in this particular subject, and what role my own experiences as a Polish woman abroad played in it. I then justify why I chose only women - Polish women - as my study subjects. Afterwards, I explain the rationale behind data collection in two countries, and give reasons for choosing England and New Zealand as research sites. Additionally, my research is discussed in the context of its place within current social sciences and the contribution it makes to these (more on impact in Chapter 7, section 7.2). At the end, I outline the structure and content of my thesis, to provide the reader with the order in which I present the theory, data, and thesis conclusions.

1.1 Main research questions

This thesis is structured around two main research questions:

- What constitutes ‘being a Polish woman’, and how is this performed by Polish female migrants of different ages, generations and social backgrounds?
- How, and why, does this performance and its components (class, ethnicity, gender) differ between Polish women living in New Zealand and those living in the UK?

These questions can be answered by adopting both a micro and macro perspective. The first of these is specific, related to Polish female migration and considers how, specifically, Polish women construct their identities, what influences (or has historically influenced) them, and in

what way factors such as age, generation and social background affect the way in which these identities are (consciously and unconsciously) assembled, and change in different contexts. The second, macro perspective, is more universal, concerned with the limited and static concepts of ethnicity and gender that are prevalent in today's public discourse (especially when it comes to migration). These concepts have very real impact on people's lives, and are often at the core of various prejudices and institutional inequalities (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006). It is very common to think of ethnic and gender identity as inherent and unchangeable characteristics, stable and set once and for all, unsusceptible to transgressions and changes. My thesis suggests that these conceptions (or rather misconceptions) are out-dated, not compatible with the reality of lives of many, and ultimately limiting. In that sense, asking 'what constitutes being a Polish woman' is linked to wider existential questions on our nature as gendered, ethnicised/racialised and classed humans, on 'what it means to be a woman', what it means to be a woman of a certain ethnicity and class, and the interplay between these various identities. As I mention later on in this Chapter (section 1.2) the intersectional nature of my work provides a way to see these identities not independently from each other, but the way they are in life, complex in their inseparability and mutual relationships.

Focusing on a group such as Polish women, especially in the context of migration, is designed to illustrate, through example, how identities are constructed and reconstructed in practice, and to demonstrate this via concrete cases from my respondents' everyday life. This is explained extensively in sections 2.2.1 (Performing Identities: Performance vs. Performativity) and 2.3.2 (Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity) of Chapter 2, and later in empirical Chapter 5 and 6. However, discussing identity formation and its performative aspects during migration to one single country only can be misleading. I came to realize that stable notions of identities are so persistent that there is a temptation to simply ascribe potential changes merely to the fact of migrating out of one's 'home' country. Instead, I want to accentuate how

these identities actively interact with their surroundings, and how there is more than one way of ‘being a Polish woman’ outside of Poland. I believe that the comparative aspect of my thesis, choosing two geographically, economically, culturally and politically different countries, shows the variety of Polish women’s experiences depending on where they are. There is also a more immediate political aspect. In post-Brexit Britain, and with rising nationalism all over Europe (as is currently observable in Poland under the right-wing government elected in 2015), and with a concurrent refugee crisis across the Continent, questions of identity, especially ethnic and gender identity, are not only present in public discourse, but also often used as a tool of prejudice and legitimising existing social inequalities and hierarchies of power. This is discussed in Chapter 7, section 7.4 on dissemination plans. Although this is beyond the topic of this thesis, by undertaking comparative studies similar in approach to my own, researchers could explore whether we can extrapolate from Polish women’s experience in the UK and NZ, and if their intersectional identities provide us with a more universal understanding of identity formation and manifestation in different contexts.

In this work I explain how the history of Poland’s struggle for independence, starting with 123 years of partitions (from 1795 to 1918 when Poland disappeared from the map), through two World Wars (1914-1918, 1939-1945) and, subsequently, communism and the social transition of the 1990s shaped Polish gender roles, and the way Polish women of different backgrounds perform their femininity. (I discuss the Polish historical background and its relations to migration in more detail in Chapter 4, section 4.2) These intersections of gender, ethnicity and class become important, and often problematic, when abroad, and interlink with pre-existing discourses of migration rooted in the historic realities and migration policies/practices of the UK, Poland and NZ. These affect the way Polish women are racialised and positioned in both countries. As behaviour does not occur in a vacuum,

women's ever-changing social location informs their performance, and the way they express their Polishness, class and femininity. As being a Pole, a woman and a migrant differs quite radically in the UK and NZ, being a 'Polish woman' in these countries is also not the same (Temple, 1999:17). In the UK, where being a 'Pole' is politicised and migrants' position is constructed through race (Gilroy, 2006a:56, in: Rzepnikowska, 2015:51), my respondents report many 'resistance practices' (Edwards, 1995:284) aimed at diffusing any possible negative and inferior image, utilizing different types of capital (class position, beauty, resourcefulness) in order to avoid class-ethnic stigma. In NZ, where there is no 'Polish labour migration narrative', and settlement itself requires possessing capital, Polish women are rather positioned as 'white Europeans', and any displays of status are not only unnecessary, but also frowned up by New Zealand's cultural norms (Chapter 6, section 6.2.1). As I describe in empirical Chapters 5 and 6, the way my respondents see and perform their 'Polishness' and 'Polish femininity' varies, the main difference between these two being the lower class-ethnic position assigned to Poles and migrants in the UK, and Polish women in the UK having to perform in front of two audiences, one Polish and one English (Goffman, 1959:57), their behaviour being subject to various moral panics and judgements. Still, being a woman in the UK context seems to possess certain liberating qualities which mitigate 'being a Pole' and a 'migrant', and shows that the layered systems of oppressions (Brah, & Phoenix, 2004:78) do not always work in a predictable way.

1.2 Contribution to existing literature

This thesis makes a contribution to different areas and disciplines within the social sciences, bringing together topics and concepts that rarely intersect. It covers a wide range of subjects, and although it is anthropological/sociological in its approach (ethnography) and subject (e.g. a focus on class), I also draw on my background in cross-cultural and social psychology (e.g. the work of Hofstede) to broaden the theoretical perspective traditionally adopted in

migration studies. In doing so, I believe I am contributing not only to gender, migration and Polish diaspora studies, but also adding to comparative diaspora research. There also seems to be no published scholarly work on Polish contemporary migrants to New Zealand. This makes my thesis a novel contribution to Polish diaspora studies, dominated by a narrative of economic (usually European) migrations of larger numbers of peoples (more in Chapter 4, section 4.3.1). As I seem to be, to the best of my knowledge, the only scholar who researched Polonia in NZ (Chapter 3, section 3.6.3), the work I conducted in NZ serves not only as an unusual comparison point with other studies on the Polish diaspora, but adds something original that was missing from these studies altogether.

My research should also be of particular interest to a NZ audience, since it adds a new voice to the ongoing New Zealand multi/bi-culturalism debate by researching a group that has not been researched before, potentially explaining how non-British Europeans settle and perform in New Zealand. This potentially makes the impact of my study broader, and allows for data to be disseminated to a very different audience from the usual recipients of Polish migration studies. I discuss this in Chapter 7 in section 7.4 (Dissemination plans).

Despite these smaller contributions, I believe that the real strength of this thesis lies in its intersectional approach, and through operationalizing intersectionality, a task that is considered notoriously methodologically challenging (McCall, 2005). There is an acknowledged difficulty in applying the intersectional framework to the 'lived experience' of people (McCall, 2005:1774), and gathering and analysing the data in such a way that retains intersectional links (more in Chapter 2, section 2.1 and Chapter 3, section 3.3). As I demonstrate in my thesis, different identities cannot be treated separately, as they always exist in relation to each other (Warner, 2008:454; Bowleg, 2013). However, this complexity is often missing from migration studies that look at migrants as a one-dimensional group -

without specifying the ways in which gender and class aspects shape people's experience of migration.

When talking about women and – especially – ‘work’ migrants it is also easy to forget the context in which people operate, and attribute certain behavioural patterns to their ethno-national ‘character’ or gender (Chapter 2, section 2.4). In my work I attempt to show the contextuality and interactive nature of our identities and performances, and their changing nature. ‘Who we are’ and ‘what we do’ are a product of a place, but also change through interactions manifesting the same identities across a variety of context-specific settings. As I show in my work, the way we narrate our behaviour is also localised, with the meaning we assign to it prone to fluctuations (Juan, Syed & Azmitia, 2016:227). Although in my thesis I talk about a specific group living in concrete countries at a defined time in history, it is very important for me to point to the more generalisable implications of my study. It is my ambition and intention to add a more abstract understanding of the contextuality of performances and their intersectional and dynamic nature, as well as the possibility of applying a similar approach and framework to analysing other ethnic and/or social groups.

1.3 Thesis subject: background

After I first came to live in the UK, in July 2005, I was recommended to read the popular book *Watching the English: the hidden rules of English behaviour* by Kate Fox (Fox, 2004; updated version 2014). It was an entertaining and light introduction into English society, and – for the first time – it made me aware of the complex English class relations and markers which seemed, at first glance, completely counterintuitive to me. My initial reaction as an ambitious and somewhat anxious new resident was, of course, to look at myself and try to establish my own position in the English class system, and maybe improve it by some clever alterations to my behaviour and my outfits. But I quickly noticed that – although more or less

accurate for the English – Fox’s observations simply did not apply to foreigners and migrants living in England.

In 2007-2009 I was working as a research assistant on a longitudinal British Academy project about value change amongst Polish migrants, and interviewing Polish women and men about their life in the UK. One of the questions I asked was how they saw their position in British society. Their answers only reinforced my interest and convinced me that this was an area worth a closer look. I started observing fellow Poles (mainly in London, where I lived at the time) and saw that their ideas on class and its manifestation were not only rooted in different cultural traditions and practices, but were also affected by the fact they were coming from the outside, and were automatically (accurately or not) classified as work (and working-class) migrants from the poorer East (Chapter 4, section 4.4.2).

Although my interest started with class, I soon realized there is no such thing as class alone. The performances I was observing were a product of complicated intersections of not only class, but also gender and generational factors: and these were entangled in various Polish and English discourses on migration going back to before the Second World War (Chapter 4, sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.2). This led me to the concept of intersectionality, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 2 (section 2.1). Further readings made me appreciate how gendered class and migration experiences are, and focus my research solely on Polish women (Chapter 2 section 2.3).

Another important realization was that these performances – no matter how complex – are highly contextual and dynamic, taking place in the frame of a specific country with its geographical, historical, cultural, ethnic, political and socio-economic climate. This made me include one more country (in addition to England) in my research: one that is different enough to help us understand how context shapes people’s performances and ideas of place, but has enough similarities to make comparisons possible. It was important for me to choose

a country in which Poles are not associated with work migration but are (or are seen as) ‘lifestyle migrants’ with individual migration trajectories, and where the numbers of Poles are small enough for them to be unable to participate in large, socially varied Polish communities. ‘Lifestyle migration’ is usually ‘conceptualised as a “quest” for a better life’ (Ahmed, 2013:232), and juxtaposed with ‘economic migration’. This division (not that black and white in the real life experiences of people who move countries and later stay there for a variety of ever-changing reasons) draws on people’s motives, but most importantly has a political aspect that is then employed in a ‘work migration’ narrative. This narrative is connected with the terminology and the meanings attached to the much politicised subject of migration and perceived inequalities between countries and ethnic identities, the ‘global class divide’ (Bettie, 2003:25) discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.4.1. I dedicate a whole section of Chapter 4 to this issue (section 4.1), explaining the difference between various types of migration and migration narratives, and how these relate to Poles and Polish women migrants throughout history. Although not all Polish women in the UK went there to work, and not all from the NZ have moved there for the lifestyle, it is this political aspect and the narratives of migration to these two countries that was of interest. As Polish migration in the UK is more often than not equated with work migration, and the word ‘Polish migrant’ became almost synonymous with ‘work migrant’, it was important to me to show Polish women in a context where Polish identity is not stigmatised through ‘lower’ migration status, and where there is, to date, no history of organised Polish economic migration. This also means that Polish women have limited opportunities to face a Polish audience, and migration to NZ is not politicised in either NZ or back in Poland. I return to this topic in Chapter 4, discussing my respondents’ different migration trajectories and social location in the UK and NZ.

1.4 Choice of Polish women migrants

Poland has a long established migration culture and one of the largest diasporas in the world; up to 20 million Poles and their descendants live abroad (Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). In many countries Poles are therefore the largest – or a significantly sizeable – ethnic minority group. At the end of 2014 Polish was the second non-British nationality in the UK, with 853,000 Polish nationals (Office for National Statistics, 2015): the 2011 Census counted 579,00 Poles living in England and Wales, out of which 292,681 were women (Office for National Statistics, Census 2011). This group is still, however, somewhat neglected in migration studies and often treated as dependants rather than migrants in their own right. There is a vast amount of research on Polish women in the context of family mobility and migration strategies (e.g. Ryan, Sales, Tilki & Siara, 2008, 2009; Ryan & Sales, 2011; White, 2011a, 2011b; Moskal, 2011; Botterill, 2014). Even when they are regarded as independent agents, their family status is used to frame their experience (e.g. Cieślińska, 2014, writing about different reasons for migration for married and unmarried Polish women). There has also been a certain amount written about Polish women as mothers (e.g. Pustułka, 2012, 2014; Urbańska, 2009, 2010 & 2015; Rzepnikowska, 2013), with focus on the impact of migration on motherhood (e.g. women’s reproductive behaviour, Janta, 2013) and the way being a migrant affects the role of an ‘ideal’ Polish mother (Urbańska, 2015).

These roles, of course, cannot be discounted; it is however important to note that they are inexplicably linked with other identities such as class and ethnicity (Pustułka, 2012:162). However, although there are studies on class that do not treat Poles as homogenous group and point out that intra-group differences often surpass ethnic similarities (Eade, Drinkwater & Garapich 2007; Garapich, 2012:41), they often do not fully explore the gender angle. To bring these different aspects of identities together an intersectional approach is needed; and few studies using a similar framework have been conducted (e.g. Bettie’s study on

American/American-Mexican young women, Bettie, 2003). Although there is a scholarly literature on intersectionality, there are not many studies which actually operationalise the concept; through the process of operationalising it in this thesis, I hope to be able to contribute to the theoretical literature on wider women's migration and gender studies.

1.5 Choice of a comparison country

Virtually all studies on Polish migrants (female and male) - even the few that explore intersectionality (e.g. Rzepnikowska, 2013) - are conducted in the context of European labour migration (usually to the UK, but also to Ireland, Italy, Germany, Norway, Spain, the Netherlands or Belgium, e.g. Trevena & Napierała, 2008; Bell, 2012; Cvajner, 2012; Erdal, 2014; Urbańska, 2015) with little analysis of non-European lifestyle migration (and no data on New Zealand). As the assumption of this thesis is that different social locations produce very different context-related performances, it seems that a logical step to fully understand the way Polish gender, ethnic and class identities can be constructed and exercised abroad is to depart from the usual labour migration narrative. As Polish (and other East European) women migrants are often portrayed as part of a care-chain/service migration (e.g. Sokół-Rudowska, 2011:110), much is written about the stereotypical way in which they are perceived (Cvajner, 2012) and how their profession is often ethnicised in such way that being a Polish woman equals being a cleaner (Kołbon, 2013:77). This stigma encourages women to engage in 'positive self-presentation' and playing against/with the stereotype (Cvajner, 2012:195-196). Many women engaged in transnational practices are also acting within a 'suspicion culture', judged by their compatriots for any gender or ethnic transgressions (Ryan, 2010:370; Urbańska, 2015:245).

All this creates a situation which heavily affects the way Polish women construct and manifest their Polishness and femininity. This is common in those countries where the economic nature of Polish migration has resulted in the receiving society's perceiving Poles

through their work position (Parutis, 2011) – but is absent from countries with lifestyle migration, where relations between the receiving society and new arrivals are more symmetrical. It is all too easy to forget this context when talking about Polish female migrants' performance and to attribute various aspects of their behaviour to their ethnicity or gender, ignoring how much of what they do is shaped by their (often lower) migrant status.

It is also important to note that as my UK respondents came mainly from London (implications of which are explained in the Introduction to Chapter 4), referring to the whole of the UK in the title and, in some cases, throughout the empirical Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis, is obviously not accurate and suggests a broader analysis than the one actually presented in this work. However, after careful consideration this format was kept as a functional way to signal this work's comparative, cross-country nature, and a reminder of the juxtaposition of my data on the cross-country level. Still, wherever possible I avoid using 'the UK' and use 'England' or 'London' as more accurate to delineate my respondents' location.

1.5.1 Why New Zealand?

The country I initially chose for my fieldwork was Japan. In winter 2011 I was, with my husband (who was on sabbatical at Tokyo University), living on Kashiwa campus in Tokyo, where we were supposed to stay for another six months. I intended to use this time for my research; it was going well, and I was interviewing Polish women and attending various Polish-Japanese events. Then, on the 11th of March, our house shook in one of the biggest earthquakes in history (Tohoku earthquake), and we were faced with a growing radiation threat from the subsequent Fukushima Daiichi disaster. We left – temporarily, we thought – for Korea, but as the situation was growing unstable, we were unable to return. My husband managed to transfer his sabbatical to New Zealand: I was, at that point, worried about my work, but also keen to continue it in my new – if rather unexpected – surroundings. I provide

more information on the impact this sudden change of fieldwork site had on my data collection in methodological Chapter 3, section 3.1.1.

Although my focus on New Zealand as a place of fieldwork was tied to my circumstances and opportunities at the time, New Zealand proved to be a great choice as a comparison country when it comes to contextuality, performance and Polish migration. It has similar characteristics to those I was attracted to in Japan – no Polish ‘work migration’ history, discourse or stereotypes, a small number of Poles with individualised trajectories and motives for settlement (‘lifestyle migrants’), and geographical distance that does not enable transnational migration practices. Both Japan and New Zealand are also seen in Poland as ‘exotic’ and uncommon places for relocation, and moving there is not surrounded by any moral panic (Cohen, S., 1972) and often romanticised. At the same time, unlike Japan, New Zealand is a predominantly English speaking country that was a British colony. In that way it is not only a convenient and culturally close comparison point to England, but also a clear illustration of the role of location in moulding people to fit to their new geographical and cultural demands. From a geopolitical perspective (Marshall, 2016), New Zealand’s role on the world’s political and cultural scene was – and still is - shaped by its geography (Sinclair, 1961:31). New Zealand was one of the last places to be colonised by Europeans (Sinclair, 1961:27), and the harsh realities of travel and early settlement ‘probably acted as a selective agent’ as to who actually was able to get there (Sinclair, 1961:28). But New Zealand European settlers were ‘not only at the antipodes; they were mainly British at the antipodes’ (Sinclair, 1961:32). Living away from its ‘parent state, Great Britain’ (Chapman, 1961:57) affected New Zealand’s society and altered settlers’ ‘topographic identity’ (Chapman, 1961:72). From this perspective, New Zealand became ‘an experiment in European civilization, removed geographically, climatically and in social pattern from its original source’ and ‘conjoined to an indigenous Polynesian culture’ (Tomory, 1961:63). The

beginning of New Zealand, and what became of the country as it is now, shows how the context of the geographical remoteness (the distance from Great Britain, but also the climate and local topography) shaped the ‘basic character’ of the settlement (Sinclair, 1961:31) and the behavioural conduct of the people (e.g. accent, customs, cuisine). To summarize, New Zealand’s history of cultural evolution and adaptation, in combination with the specific situation of the Poles living there, makes it a very relevant research site for the purpose of this thesis.

1.6 Thesis Overview

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical background and framework for this thesis and introduces concepts and theories used in this work through a literature review, rooting the thesis in existing research. It explains the concept of intersectionality and the rationale behind choosing it to approach women as ‘intersectional subjects’; it also discusses the challenges of operationalising this concept in my study. ‘Performance’ and ‘performativity’ are then discussed, clarifying the terminology, and showing how these concepts may be beneficial in approaching the behavioural/performative aspects of identities such as gender/ethnicity and class in the context of migration. Notions such as ‘gender’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘class’ are also reviewed and defined for the purpose of this thesis, and related to the situation of migration, showing the role of context in the way these identities manifest and interact with each other. This Chapter thus outlines the theoretical and conceptual framework for this thesis, and places my research and research questions within existing scholarship.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the technicalities of my research, discussing the choice of research tools, the practicalities of data collection in two very different fieldwork sites, data analysis and the ethics involved in collecting and handling the data. It also explains how the theoretical framework of intersectionality and my interest in performance/performativity was

operationalised in the data collection to ensure the correct type of data was gathered, and presents the epistemological standpoint that guided the research design. The realities and challenges of the New Zealand and UK fieldwork are presented, and I explain how these affected recruitment techniques and the subsequent interviewing process. I also acknowledge the role my own position as an ‘outsider-within’ the Polish community (Beoku-Betts, 1994:414:419) played in recruitment, the interview process, and data analysis.

Chapter 4 describes the settings in which my respondents operate, and shows the role that specific cultural, regulatory/political and geographical factors may play in their experiences, narratives and performances. The ‘push’ and ‘pull’ approach to migration is discussed, and I explain the capacity in which this is functional, despite its many limitations in approaching forced, female/children and lifestyle migration. The historical background of Poland as a migrant-sending country with a rich migration culture is described, laying the basis for understanding specific migratory movements and the currently existing discourses of migration (particularly female migration) not only in Poland, but also Polish migration into NZ and the UK. Migration to NZ and the UK is discussed in two separate sections, with a historical overview and focus on the specific local geographical/regulatory/ethnic/political and socio-economic environment of these two countries in relation to Poland. Those factors that can have direct impact on Polish female migrants’ performance of social identities like gender, ethnicity and class are analysed. This Chapter provides a necessary background for understanding the social location of my respondents in both the UK and New Zealand, contextualizing the empirical data discussed later in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5 is the first of two empirical Chapters based on interview data. It focuses on the way gender and ethnic roles, ideals and responsibilities conflate, discussing this first in general terms, and then in relation to the performance of Polish female migrants in the UK and NZ. The historical background in which Polish gender roles and femininity ideals were

formed is described, as is the way that these still affect Polish women's gender and ethnic/national identities and their performances. Through respondents' stories I show how various identities and their manifestations change when confronted with NZ and English gender/femininity/motherhood practices, and the way in which being a Pole and a migrant affects these. A comparison of women's practices, narratives and social location across countries draws attention to the contextual nature of performance, and shows how identities may become an advantage or disadvantage depending on the location. This Chapter demonstrates how gender identity and its manifestations/practices are inseparably linked with ethnic (and also class) identities, and how they are affected by women's different migration status and the social inclusion of women, Poles and migrants in NZ and the UK.

Chapter 6 adds yet another dimension to the topics explored in Chapter 5 by discussing Polish women migrants' views on stratification systems, and the distribution and markers of wealth and poverty in the UK, NZ and Poland. It continues the themes presented in Chapter 5, but focuses more on Polish women's position in NZ and UK from the perspective of being a Pole and a migrant. Here the notion of self-positioning is employed, drawing attention to Polish women's multi-group ethnic and class memberships (including those of the Polish community abroad). As such groups are often differently stratified, and there are different cultural codes in which membership is manifested, I analyse how this affects Polish women's gender and ethnic practices, and their ideas on social inclusion. This Chapter provides insight not only into different stratification systems but also cultural practices regarding the display of status, and shows how various identities are assigned with a different value, depending on a place.

Chapter 7 summarizes the findings from empirical chapters, and provides an overview of the theoretical, practical and political implications of this thesis. It also discusses this work's limitations, outlining possible opportunities for future research and dissemination.

Chapter 2: Theory

This Chapter provides the theoretical framework for my work, and reviews in detail those concepts and theories I use in my thesis. It starts by expanding on the concept of intersectionality, explains its various approaches to identities and hierarchies of power, and shows in what way they are later utilized in approaching my research questions and sub-questions. I show how intersectionality links with the idea of ‘performance’ and ‘performativity’, and explain why it is important to employ both in order to study women in the context of migration. I also review concepts such as ‘gender’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘class’, ‘age’, and discuss them in relation to the situation of migration, showing how various identities may be defined and interact with each other depending on the context. This Chapter provides the theoretical, conceptual and terminological basis for my work, explains terms used throughout the rest of this thesis, and embeds my work within larger literature on the topic, outlining the way it contributes to the existing body of research.

2.1 Theoretical Background/Framework

2.1.1 Intersectionality and Intersectional Subjects

Intersectionality of gender, ethnicity (or race) and class has been a topic of feminist debate for around thirty years. The term was created in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006:187) and initially referred to layered systems of oppressions (Brah, & Phoenix, 2004:78) and ‘cumulating features of discrimination and social exclusion (...) interwoven in various ways’ (Bürkner 2012:182). Nowadays this term is usually defined as ‘the mutually constitutive relations among social identities’ (Shields, 2008:301), where ‘one category of identity (...) takes its meaning as a category in relation to another category’ (Shields, 2008:302). However, although intersectionality has moved ‘from oppression to

diversity' (Bürkner, 2012:182) and is often simply used to describe 'multiple group membership' (Shields, 2008:304), we should not too readily forget that not all identities are seen and valued as equal. Belonging to a minority and/or 'subordinate groups' has disadvantages and political implications that cannot be ignored (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:2). These disadvantages, depending on circumstances, stack up on each other in a cumulative way ('double jeopardy model'), or camouflage¹ each other by disrupting the 'prototypic exemplars of a subordinate group' in a way that may create an advantage or 'intersectional invisibility' (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5).

As the prototype of a migrant (and especially a Polish migrant in the UK) is usually a (young, working class) man (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5), I explore how my female respondents' gender, age and, in many cases, middle class position confuses this stereotype and, depending on the context, may work to their advantage even amongst existing gender and ethnic inequalities. This is discussed in empirical Chapters 5 and 6. The contextual nature of what I term 'intersectional mathematics' is, however, not that straightforward. When it comes to identities, what is repeatedly stressed is the 'non-additional approach' (Staunæs, 2003:105; Bowleg, 2008:312): identities are not like 'beads on a string' (Spelman, 1988:15), but rather different ingredients of a cake blended together (Bowleg, 2013), creating 'more than a summary of the social groups to which a person belongs' (Warner, 2008:454). The fact that different identities give each other meaning, and cannot be treated separately, was also noted in 1984 by Bourdieu, when he remarked, while writing about class relations, that 'sexual properties are as inseparable from class properties as the yellowness of a lemon is

¹This was mentioned by Jennifer Teege, the granddaughter of the German war criminal Amon Göth ('The Butcher of Płaszów' concentration camp). Jennifer, who is herself bi-racial, describes how 'her dark skin camouflaged her German-ness' in her contact with Holocaust survivors (Pukas, 2015; Teege, & Sellmair, 2015:175).

from its acidity', (Bourdieu, 1984:122); he also observed that migration status intertwines with gender and class (Bourdieu, 1984:123). It is the purpose of this thesis to capture these identities in their inseparable state, and show Polish women are 'finding coherence when integrating [unique intersectional] experiences' (Juan, Syed & Azmitia, 2016: 227).

Some question the 'geographical limits' of this concept and ask if intersectionality, originally related to layers of oppression, applies to 'white, middle-class, heterosexual women in countries of the North', and if they can be considered 'intersectional subjects' at all (Lewis, G., 2009:5). This, however, is not that simple. First of all, intersectionality originated from women's studies and a 'critique of (...) not incorporating women as subjects of research' (McCall, 2005:1775). In this sense, women were the primary intersectional subjects, their gender making them, in the context of the androcentric approach to social science and their everyday experiences, a sub-ordinate group (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:1). Gender is at the heart of power relations between various groups and social hierarchies (Pratto & Sidanius; Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:295) and will be discussed more in section 2.3.1 of this Chapter. Secondly, the way people are racialised has often very little to do with their skin colour, and more with the social spaces they occupy (which are highly gendered), and the cultural and political leanings of the country.² As someone can be perceived and racialized as white or black depending on the context (Hulko, 2009:49; Harper, 2011:111), my respondents can also become Northern, Western or Eastern depending on the

² The most extreme case of how social categories (with their disadvantages and privileges) are socially constructed and subject to political whim comes from the story of Sandra Laing, a black girl who (through a 'biological quirk') was born to white parents during Apartheid in South Africa. Throughout her life, she was variously categorised as white, black, white again, and then 'coloured', each time being relegated to different sections of the heavily divided society, losing and gaining privileges and rights (Caroll, 2013). Although this is an unusual case, many people experienced (and are still experiencing) arbitrary racialization (Mandela, 1995:140) based on the way their looks, background, and position are interpreted and politicised.

geographical place in which they find themselves. ‘Social location is context dependent’ and in no way fixed (Hulko, 2009:49): it matters not only *who* you are, but also *where* you are.

Although Poles usually think about themselves as ‘white Europeans’³, that is not always how others place them and their position is rather seen through their ‘lower’ migration status. This is explored later in Chapter 4, sections 4.3.2 & 4.4.2; see also (Rzepnikowska, 2015:20). The mechanism is well captured by Carling et al., who quote a woman from Cape Verde talking about her children living in Europe: ‘they are white and we are black’ (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:43). In this way, intersectionality deals not only with oppression, but privilege as well (Hulko, 2009:49). Moreover, what can be oppression or disadvantage in one culture or circumstances can become a privilege in another, or the balance between them can shift (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5). For example, being a woman in a highly masculine culture like Japan can be to an extent mitigated by being a white Westerner, socially locating a woman in a male space with all its privileges. Being foreign can become a privilege or oppression in itself, depending on a culture. Therefore, I believe that there is a need to focus on ‘both advantages and disadvantages simultaneously’ (McCall, 2005:1787): this also can prompt interesting questions as to when and where ‘being a Polish woman’ is an advantage or disadvantage.

Categories such as gender, ethnicity (or race), class, age and sexual orientation are overlapping, inseparable, unstable (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006:90) and often highly politicized (see e.g. studies on colonialism and post-colonialism, McClintock, 1995). Therefore, an intersectional approach often presents (and is criticized for being) a theoretical and methodological challenge for empirical research (McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008). These difficulties usually arise from the inadequacy of applying pre-existing strict divisions like

³ Recent polls show that Poles feel ‘culturally closer’ to Westerners, Americans and Canadians (67%) than to Ukrainians (51%) (Ipsos for IOM - UN Migration Agency, 2016).

gender, class and race to the intersectional subjects (Winker & Degele, 2011:53), and the dynamic processes of ‘gender-racial formation’ (Hancock, 2007:73). This is usually imposed by the necessities and limitations of the (usually quantitative) research methods that use unitary or even multiple (instead of intersectional) conceptual approaches (Hancock, 2007:64). As we are forced to separate categories that are inseparably intertwined and in constant motion, we may lose their meaning in relation to each other and ‘divorce [them] from their institutional contexts’ (Dubrow, 2008). Qualitative methods also face this challenge: if open empirical questions and ethnographic observations are used, the data collected still need to be categorized and described (Winker & Degele, 2011:53-54). These obstacles, however, stem rather from the complexity of the intersectional identities themselves and only point to the usefulness of using an intersectional approach. As Hancock writes, this approach allows for unique, ‘problem-driven research’ which ‘moves beyond earlier approaches to studying the problem, and develops a more powerful model to test for its effectiveness in addressing the problem’ (Hancock, 2007:75). Even if confusing at times, an intersectional approach seems to be the only one to fully answer ‘questions left unanswered by the unitary and multiple approaches’ (Hancock, 2007:71) and the only one that acknowledges potentially important and delicate information (for example the meaning people assign to their identities (Juan, Syed & Azmitia, 2016:227)), often otherwise lost. As I faced similar challenges in my research, I describe this in more detail in Methodology Chapter 3, section 3.5.1, explaining how I operationalized intersectionality in my research process, and my epistemological standpoint (section 3.3). Despite the difficulties in incorporating intersectionality into a research design, it seems to be ‘a generally applicable descriptive solution to the multiplying features that create and define social identities’ (Shields, 2008:303) and is successfully used in a variety of disciplines (e.g. sociology, psychology, anthropology, gender and political studies, public welfare and counseling, even

criminology, Trahan 2011). Qualitative research, ethnography, and mixed-method approach seem to fit this model best (Trahan, 2011, Harper, 2011), letting the researchers grasp the ‘complexities and multiplicity of experience’ much better than when using quantitative methods (Warner, 2008:458). These research methods are also, through their openness to the research subjects/interviewees, ‘more compatible with the theoretical language and intent of intersectionality’, and therefore seem to be a natural choice (Shields, 2008:306).

In this thesis I use intersectionality as a framework and methodological tool, as the most effective way to capture and understand the complexity of my respondents’ experience. There are three approaches to intersectionality that deal with the theoretical and methodological aspects of intersectional research. The ‘intracategorical’ approach is concerned with ‘particular groups at neglected points of intersection’, and focuses on ‘the complexity of lived experience of intersectional subjects’. This informs the type of methodology (for example ethnography) that can be used effectively to capture these complexities (McCall, 2005:1774). This is a broad approach, connected with feminist epistemology (McCall, 2005:1793) and the ‘inclusion of women and femininity’ in social research (McCall, 2005:1776). ‘Anticategorical’ and ‘intercategorical’ approaches also consider the methodological challenges of gathering and analyzing intersectional data, and are discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (section 3.3). Despite methodological difficulties, the intersectional framework has proven to be effective in approaching the complexities of multiple identities, and the way these shift when people’s social location changes. As my work is purely qualitative and consists of semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observation/participation, it supports the principles and agendas of intersectionality, in which a qualitative approach is central (Syed, 2010:61). This is extensively discussed in Methodology Chapter, section 3.5.1.

Considerable research suggests that a focus on intersectionality ‘allows a more complex and dynamic understanding’ not only when studying gender, but also social class and diaspora (Brah & Phoenix, 2004:75), and the inequality of migrants (Bürkner, 2012). Focus on dynamism emphasizes that identities are not only not fixed, but also constantly ‘interlocking with other categories’, accentuated and emphasized when needed (Adib & Guerrier, 2003:417:430). Identity is both self-ascribed and also ascribed by others. Also, the way people (self-)position themselves is often subjective and a consequence of cognitive categorization (Social Identity Theory, Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and may differ from what could be assumed or anticipated from the outside.⁴ As various identities can be pushed to the front of a person’s performance we must assume certain agency in the way people manage their multiple group identities (especially if some of these identities can lower their standing and expose them to discrimination), and the degrees of malleability with which they are able to do so. What is more, as I show in my data (Chapter 5 and 6), sometimes people’s behaviour does not change as such, but there is a shift in the way it is understood and narrated. These processes are subtle, and require an in-depth qualitative approach (this is expanded in Chapter 3). As the change in narrative is not easily quantifiable or observable it involves a comprehensive analysis of the way women talk about their experiences and meanings they assign to them (Juan, Syed & Azmitia, 2016:227). It is also sometimes not consciously realized, and only a detailed analysis of women’s narratives reveals these changes.

Although, from researcher’s point of view, all the categories are of equal importance, in practice it is often impossible (or not necessary) to include all. Researchers are often faced with the choice of which of the intersecting identities to focus on, and how to determine the

⁴ Buitelaar’s idea of a ‘dialogical self’ describes identity as a ‘temporary outcome’, and is suggested as a useful tool for intersectionality studies (Buitelaar, 2006:261)

‘master’ and ‘emergent’ categories (Warner, 2008:458), with these identities all ‘couched within status and power relations’ (Warner, 2008:455). (For example, although in my research I focus mainly on gender, ethnicity, class and migration status, I also pay attention to generational and regional differences between my respondents.) These categories are also ‘tools of positioning and making hierarchies’ (Staunæs, 2003:104)⁵.

There are, however, problems with intersectionality that have led to a number of critiques. Nash (2008) lists four ‘uninterrogated paradoxes’ of intersectionality literature that require attention (Nash, 2008:3). Two of these are well known methodological difficulties and definitional ambiguities, which I have already discussed: I also address this more in Chapter 3, section 3.5. The third is concerned with intersectionality historically using ‘black women as prototypical subjects’ and possibly not being applicable to subjects that are not marginalized (Nash, 2008:4). (I have also discussed this earlier, quoting Hulko, 2009) The major problem is the fourth one, and that is the lack of coherence ‘between intersectionality and lived experiences of multiple identities’ (Nash, 2008:4). This is a question of conscious employment of ‘multiple identities to interpret the social world’ to explain how this is done in real life (Nash, 2008:11). I hope that my thesis will help to shed some light on these issues and contribute to the understanding of how multiple identities operate in practice.

2.2 Performance

When we talk about social identities and the complicated relations between them, especially if some of them are considered potentially disadvantageous or stigmatized, we naturally ask how people manage these identities and manifest them in their behaviour. Goffman (1959) defines performance as ‘all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which

⁵ One theory that deals with social hierarchies of power and systematic inequalities in various societies, especially when it comes to gender, is Social Dominance Theory (Pratto & Sidanius, 1999: in Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:272).

serves to influence in any way any of the other participants' (Goffman, 1959:26). He uses the dramaturgical approach to performance, with its language of stage/back-stage management and enactment, in an ancient metaphor of the social world as a theatre. In his work, Goffman emphasizes the importance of first impression (entering the stage) and its power and practicality in 'establishing a new person's socio-economic status, his concept of self, his attitude toward them, his competence, his trustworthiness' (ibid.). These ever-present enactments are how individual people express themselves in the tradition of the group to which they belong, choosing their 'fronts' (or masks) from already available options rather than creating them (Goffman, 1959:38). This means that their performance is judged as comparable to previous 'roughly similar' performances by others (Goffman, 1959:26).

Goffman speaks of 'sign vehicles', of which some are fixed (for example some biological features) and others mobile and transitory (e.g. work role, name, dress, way of speaking etc.) (Goffman, 1959:34). But are these performances conscious? As Goffman says, some are – especially those connected with upward social mobility, where the know-how of the 'proper sign-equipment' (Goffman, 1959:45-46) has been gathered and used for social mobility and personal gain. Certain awareness is also necessary when it comes to the varied demands of different audiences and the perceived need for 'audience segregation', which Goffman calls 'a device for protecting fostered impressions' (Goffman, 1959:57). Contradicting expectations and the inability to keep the different audiences separate may cause considerable dramaturgical problems and calls for negotiating and 'impressions management' (Goffman, 1959:139). This seems to be a particular issue for migrants, who often belong to multiple social and ethnic groups, each with different codes of behaviour and practices. In a situation when being a migrant, or a member of a certain ethnic group, is stigmatised, this may cause additional stresses and attempts to subdue or hide some identities or their aspects. It may also, as I will show in my empirical chapters, drive people to

accentuate those aspects of their identities that disrupt stereotypes, and which render them temporarily ‘intersectionally invisible’ (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5). I also give examples of how emphasizing an identity that is usually considered a disadvantage can work, in a specific situation, to my respondents’ advantage. Some point to the potential ‘dangers of intersectional invisibility’ (Onyeador, 2010) and its potential in rendering more serious the problems women (especially black women) face. As I show in my work, however, amongst my specific group of respondents this invisibility seemed to protect them from ethnic or migrant stereotyping.

As I discuss in Chapter 5, this can be also especially difficult for women, whose behaviour abroad is often scrutinised for any gender and ethnic transgressions. As gender and ethnicity is inseparably linked, changing gender practices (for example the way women dress or approach their gender roles) may be seen as ethnic disloyalty (Huisman & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2005:47, discussed in more detail in section 2.3.2). Moving between a receiving community, a migrants’ community and their ‘home’ community may call for the ‘impression management’ mentioned by Goffman (Goffman, 1959:139), and attempts to behave in such way as to comply with different practices and expectations. (In Chapter 5 I describe in detail how some of my respondents changed their dressing practices to avoid class stigmatisation, only to be disciplined by their mothers who saw this change as not upholding gender standards.)

As Goffman remarks, sometimes a performer can identify so deeply with the act and be so taken in by it, that he starts to believe in the sincerity of the ‘reality which he stages’ (Goffman, 1959:28). This belief may strengthen the societal need and approval for a ‘real, sincere, or honest performance’ versus ‘false fabrications’ that are the work of – in Goffman’s words - ‘a conman’ (Goffman, 1959:77). This may be, again, problematic for

someone who belongs to various groups, and who may at some point realize the performative aspect of his or her multiple identities, and their contextual nature.

2.2.1 Performing Identities: Performance vs. Performativity

‘Performance’ is usually described as a more or less conscious self-presentation act, designed to have a certain effect on the audience. It assumes a subject who ‘does’ the act, even if automatically and without awareness of acting. But Goffman mentions that sometimes it is not so clear-cut, because ‘self itself does not derive from its possessor, but from the whole scene of his action’ and ‘a correctly staged and performed scene leads the audience to impute a self to a performed character, but this imputation – this self – is a *product* of a scene that comes off, and is not a *cause* of it.’ (p. 245). This idea can be relevant when it comes to identities such as gender or ethnicity that are often treated as one’s inherent, unchangeable characteristics. This interaction between the performance and the performer, and the ways they affect each other, has also been noticed by those writing about ethnic identity, who noticed that its enactment can, via feedback, strengthen the sense of identity (Klein, Spears & Reicher, 2007), creating a self-affirming loop. The notion that these are not only actively constructed, but also a product of an environment (and thus prone to change) is at the heart of this thesis.

Judith Butler goes a step further and in her studies on gender dismisses the idea of the ‘performing subject’ and its agency. She defines performativity as the ‘reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains’ (Butler, 1993:2). In her theory of performativity (Butler, 1990: in Butler, 1999) she states that gender is a discursive *product* of acting: it is fully created by the performance. In this theory, there is no one behind the ‘mask of manner’ (Goffman, 1959:65); the mask is fully created by performance.

This process, however, is not unique and confined to gender. As Julie Bettie argues, ‘we are always performing our cultural identities, and the performance *is* the self’ (Bettie,

2003:52). She agrees with Butler, but extends her views on race/ethnicity and class, stating that ‘performance is all there is, because no identities are natural: they are all constructed’ (Bettie, 2003:52). This is in clear opposition to the belief that we have a ‘real’ self (although, as Bettie puts it, we can have a ‘provisional, temporary ‘real self’ that feels solid enough to serve its purpose) but it does not mean that the constructed self is without consequences, or that our choices of identities are unlimited (Bettie, 2003:53, 54).

If we accept that ‘performance is all there is’, then both the dramaturgical theory of performance and performativity theory seem the obvious choices as a theoretical frame for my research agenda. While they differ in their conceptualization of the self - it is non-existent prior to performance in Butler’s theory, and a performing subject in Goffman’s - they both focus on behaviour and practices, looking on what people *do*. Both these frameworks can help me understand and explain the way in which the identity of Polish women is created (in the historical and cultural contexts of gender and class: these are discussed in empirical Chapter 5 & 6). More importantly though, they can help me show how identity *manifests itself* in a changing environment of migration, and how it is often assigned multiple and changing meanings. In approaching Polish female migrants as social actors in dynamic situations, and through the use of other examples of intersectional research (e.g. the ethnographic work of Julie Bettie), I have come to a conclusion that these theories are essential for understanding the way people behave, and how this shapes who they become and how they interpret these changes. These narratives, also contextual, are responsive to changes in Polish women migrants’ surroundings and the way their ethnicity, gender and migration status is seen, interpreted and valued by others. As Polish women face narratives they have not encountered, and have not thought of before (such as, for example, a class narrative), their understanding of their behaviour may change, and they may modify not only their behaviour, but also their interpretation of what they do.

2.3 Performance and Gender, Ethnicity and Class

In Butler's view (grounded in Simone de Beauvoir's 'one is not born but rather becomes a woman', 1973:301) 'gender is always doing' (Butler, 1999:33). It is 'the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of natural being' (Butler, 1999:43). As Butler suggests, a 'gendered stylization of the body' is achieved through a 'sustained set of acts' and wholly manufactured (Butler, 1990; 1999, preface), its norms 'deeply inscribed upon our bodies' (McNay, 1999:98). In other words, gender is an artificial creation – it does not exist *per se*, but is something one produces while performing it. Competent performance of gender is an accomplishment and achievement (West & Fenstermaker 1993:152), which is judged. This is a continuous process, which – as Butler stipulates - must ultimately lead to failure (Butler, 1999:179), as the goal of 'becoming a woman' is a mythical construct. Still, this performance takes place in a context of social situations (West & Fenstermaker, 1993:157) – and as these change, the expectations of what it means to be a woman (e.g. look and behave like one) may change too. We can speculate that in societies with more gender inequality the expectations placed on women and their behaviour (for example being sexually attractive) would be stricter (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:280), while at the same time women would occupy the lower strata and engage in the low-status behaviour associated with 'sub-ordinate groups' (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006: 273). Comparing two countries that are different in their gender, class and ethnic structures, gives me an opportunity to focus on the impact specific contexts have on such behaviour.

So if we were to ask 'what does it mean to be a woman?' we have to acknowledge that there is no such thing as a classless woman, or a woman with no ethnic/racial affiliation. Although they are often seen simply as 'demographic variables', class and race/ethnicity are relational 'social and political constructs' (Bettie, 2003:37), and their production is a

continuous, and very much gender specific process (Bettie, 2003:41-42; Skegg, 2004:3). As class and ethnicity inform manifestations of gender, those women who move abroad and experience different cultural/class related performances of gender may have to (or want to) modify 'doing gender' as a part of wider acculturation process and integration in their new culture, or to avoid possible ethnic/class stigmatization.

As a result of the wider history of power relations and historical inequalities between the sexes (Cole, 2009:564), it has been also common to interpret the construction of femininity in opposition to masculinity. As femininity and its affairs are often ridiculed, women find that the way they express themselves, e.g. through dress, can be moralized and (if they cross social norms) can potentially disrupt the established social order (Entwistle, 2005). I will come back to this topic and discuss dress and fashion in more detail in Chapter 5.

But women 'become women' also in relation to other women. In particular, class differences amongst women have been at the core of the 'historical constructions of 'beauty' (Bettie, 2003:5:36). This is often overlooked as women are rarely seen as 'class subjects' (Bettie, 2003:123), and are rather interpreted through gender and, sometimes, ethnicity. She also argues that women's class position is often seen only through 'consumption and leisure' (e.g. fashion), making them more 'visible target for class envy' (Bettie, 2003:34:124) – but easier subjects for researching intersectional performance. In this thesis I use Bettie's definition of class as 'a sense of one's place(s) in a cultural economy of meaning' (Bettie, 2003:43), focusing mainly on the cultural, lifestyle and subjective, instead of purely economic, aspects of class.

Embodiment (in the sense developed by Butler, see above) differs between the classes, too. Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus: a system of durable, transposable disposition' shows how different social groups display specific dispositions, 'which are acquired through

education, both formal and informal’, and taste, which is ‘a highly embodied experience’ (Bourdieu, 1990:53). Material wealth – or what Bourdieu calls ‘economic and cultural capital’- is displayed through status symbols (Goffman, 1959:46), and the distribution of power varies in different cultures. This is another aspect I discuss in this thesis. Where are Polish women migrants positioned in the various hierarchies of power (Sidanius & Levin, 2006:295), based on their gender, ethnicity, migration status (and also age), and how can this be discerned from their behaviour and behaviour changes?

2.3.1 Class

But what exactly ‘makes a class a ‘class’ (Wright, 2000, xiii), and how to use this concept in intersectional research? There are different theoretical models trying to define the boundaries, divisions and dynamics of social classes, as different disciplines focus on different aspects of class dimensions. Economists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and psychotherapists conceptualize class in a varied manner, and use multiple measures to make the concept theoretically and methodologically functional within their field. As class is a broad and complex social construct, born out of an observed reality of social stratification, its basic and most established models usually derive from economics. The core class theories are still those of Marx, Durkheim and Weber, and it has been said that ‘almost all contemporary stratification theory and research in sociology traces itself back, in some fashion, to one of these three’ (Bowles, 2013:32-33).

In his attempt to formulate an integrated theory of social stratification, Bowles uses Kerbo’s definition of social stratification as ‘the systematically unequal distribution of power, wealth and status’ (Kerbo, 2000, quoted in Bowles, 2013:33), and explains how different class models ‘takes a different view of the relationship of these three dimensions’ (Bowles,

2013:33). Marx,⁶ he writes, with his model based on ownership of property and means of production, is concerned with ‘wealth as the primary dimension’, with ‘power and status derivative’; Durkheim⁷ is more focused on social status; and Weber⁸ sees these three as ‘theoretically independent’, but ‘places great emphasis on the power dimension’ (Bowles, 2013:33). There are other class models built on the Marxist preoccupation with labour relations, for example the Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero model (EGP). This scheme makes a distinction between ‘service relationships’ (salaried: those who are skilled, have greater flexibility in their long-term contracts and have work which is less easily monitored) and ‘labour contract’ (manual workers often trained onsite, highly supervised and often without opportunities for advancement) (Bihagen, 2008:523-524). The European Socioeconomic Classification (ESeC) model (often used in sociological and psychological research) is largely based on EGP employment positioning (Rose, 2007:460).

These models are usually concentrated on the ‘objective’ aspects of class, such as the position of workers in the division of labour, or their material resources. Both Marx’s and Weber’s models are very much politically oriented towards the structural aspects of class systems and the opposing interests of the different classes (which, they thought, causes inevitable conflict and struggle) and very little towards quantifiable ‘class attributes’ (Wright, 2000, preface xiv). That makes class notoriously difficult to measure, with a ‘lack of

⁶ Although in this thesis I am not discussing Marx’s original class model and am presenting this second-hand, these ideas derive from Marx’s and Engel’s ‘Communist Manifesto’ and their concept of dialectical and historical materialism (Marx & Engels, 1948; in Marx, Engels et al. 1992)

⁷ Durkheim introduced the notion of social status through an idea of the division of labour and dynamic density in a growing society (Durkheim, 1883, also in newer edition: Durkheim, 1984)

⁸ In his class model Weber included three dimensions of class: economic resources, social status based on shared values and lifestyle, and political power, and relations and overlaps between these (Weber, 1922; also Weber, 2009)

conceptual clarity and consensus' as how to do it (especially in the social sciences) (Diemer, 2012:2). Depending on the definition, each discipline adopts different tools, very often combining economic demographics (for example using SES, a socioeconomic index measuring 'occupational prestige, educational attainment and income' (Diemer, 2012:17)) with subjective social status measures (for example SSS, scaling 'individual's subjective perception of his or her 'place' in society' and his/her rank on the social ladder in relation to others (Diemer, 2012:28). The Social Class Worldview Model (SCWM) handles the internal and cultural aspect of class self-identification such as 'dress, language, and etiquette' (Diemer, 2012:30).

Today, when social scientists talk about class, it is less about Marx's 'distribution of resources between the capital and labour' but rather the 'distribution of resources among individuals' (Johnson, 1996:1). Being a member of a certain (usually 'lower') class is no longer merely an economic or political issue; it can affect people on an individual level and produce 'guilt, shame, frustration' (Liu et al., 2004:97) by threatening their sense of self. When 'social hierarchy is seen (...) as if it were a ranking of the human race by ability' (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009:40), it is just one step to start seeing it in moral categories and to use it as a tool of prejudice (Jones, 2012). A family can be called 'good' or 'bad' based on the 'economic resources available to them', and poverty can be linked to the collapse of traditional values (Bettie, 2003:116). With inequality increasing 'status competition' (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009:227) and becoming a measure of one's worth and value, its markers become 'outward signs of success or failure' (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009:40).

Working classes are often framed 'as tasteless and anonymous, yet somehow threatening' (Stenning, 2005:835), their 'lifestyle factors' (for example choice of clothes) ridiculed (Young, 2012:1148). This sentiment comes from seeing class as a matter of aesthetic taste, where not only are aesthetics related to ethics (Bourdieu, 1984:44), but the

taste of the dominant class is deemed superior (Bourdieu, 1984:319): ‘taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier’ (Bourdieu, 1984:6). In the course of life, people are expected to learn the correct codes and understand their meaning (Bourdieu, 1984:2), which are later reflected in their cultural practices and ‘cultural consumption’ (Bourdieu, 1984:6). Choices such as food, hairstyles, clothes and music, have different ‘social value’ (Bourdieu, 1984:21), and become markers that communicate one’s social position to others.

But these markers are unsteady: what designates ‘low-brow’ today can be tomorrow’s high-class, or the other way round (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009:164). They are also culture specific. The importance of these markers and their social survival value differs as well, depending on the stratification system and its rigidity (for example, socialist countries significantly differed from capitalist ones). From the perspective of a migrant, understanding the structure of the new country (and the way it is displayed) may help avert marginalisation and allow one to position oneself in a more favourable social place. This would, however, depend on how flexible the stratification system is, and whether it allows for class mobility and related gender and ethnic transgressions.

There is no unified ‘socioeconomic classification system’ across countries (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009:276), but there are some indicators about how power relations are balanced, for example Hofstede’s Cultural Dimension Model comparing Power Distance (PDI) of 76 countries. This measures ‘the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally’, and is ‘correlated with income inequality in a country’ (Hofstede, 2011). As inequalities trigger ‘social evaluative threat’ linked to an array of social problems from obesity and cardiovascular problems to physical and symbolic violence (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009:37:164), they are good predictors of certain behavioural manifestations and dynamics between people. Inter-generational (moving up or down the social scale compared to one’s parents’ position) and intra-generational mobility

(changing position during one's lifetime) can also be measured (for example, Corak 2006), which is a useful way of determining how rigid or flexible social structure is in a certain country, and how it affects potential life opportunities. This topic is explored in Chapter 4, sections 4.3.3 and 4.4.3, and in Chapter 6. The aspect that is, however, often missing from many class models and theories is how 'integral' gender is to 'understanding social hierarchy' (mentioned in 2.1 section of this chapter) (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:295), ignoring the fact that 'distribution of resources among individuals' (Johnson, 1996:1) often reflect gender inequalities.

2.3.2 Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity

There is no agreed definition of ethnicity; existing definitions vary, and the term is often used without being defined (Chandra, 2006:398). Although it is, however, a 'slippery construct' to grab theoretically (Zagefka, 2009:229), experiences of ethnicity can be substantial enough to become people's psychological reality (Zagefka, 2009:231) and push them into violent conflicts (Cartrite, 2003:7). There are also varied ideas of what ethnic identity and ethnic group comprise, and what would count as their components.

Although there are some overlaps, ethnicity is not a synonym for race, nation, caste, clan, cultural group or minority/dominant group (Zagefka, 2009:231). Common language, shared land, autonomy of the group or beliefs system do not necessarily make up ethnicity (Fearon & Laitin, 2000), although they are sometimes contained within. It seems that 'uncertainty is inherent in the conception and measurement of ethnicity' (Mateos, Singleton & Longley, 2009:1437).

According to Cartrite (2003:19) components of ethnicity are (from most to least cited): culture, (myth of) common descent, territory, language, history, will to be a group, group symbols, mutual recognition of group membership, threat of cultural existence, religion, economic ties, and (shared) psychology. Others point to 'values' or 'cultural norms'

(Zagefka, 2009:229). Jean Phinney, an author of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (which proved to be a reliable research tool), breaks ethnicity into ‘person’s heritage, parents’ ethnicity, country of origin), self-identification, ethnic belonging, ethnic involvement (participation and practice of being a member of an ethnic group), and ethnic attitude’ (Phinney, 1990, quoted in: Burton, Nandi & Platt 2010:12). Ethnicity can also be defined as ‘an umbrella concept’ which ‘easily embraces groups differentiated by colour, language, and religion’ (Horowitz, 1985:53).

An ethnic group is a group ‘of people who are of the same nationality or ancestry who enact a shared culture and lifestyles’ (Wilkinson, 1987:185) or the one that shares ‘a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization or migration’ even though ‘it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists’ (Weber 1978:389). It can be ‘larger than a family for which membership is reckoned primarily by descent, (...) conceptually autonomous, and has a conventionally recognized ‘natural history’ as a group’ (Fearon & Laitin, 2000:20) or possess a ‘myth of collective ancestry’ (Horowitz, 1985:52). Ethnic identity is ‘generally seen as embracing various aspects, including self-identification, feelings of belongings and commitment to a group, a sense of shared values, and attitudes toward one’s own ethnic group (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001:496). Some see it as a ‘dynamic concept that measures the balance of commitments to both the origin and host cultures’ (Constant, Roberts & Zimmerman, 2007:6).

Difficulties with defining (not to mention measuring) ethnicity often stem from different ways in which ethnicity is theorised. There are two very different ways of perceiving the nature of ethnicity and, consequently, ethnic identity: its ‘objectivity’ vs. ‘subjectivity’. The idea that ethnicity is ‘objective’ places it within the ethnic subject as his/her inherent and unchangeable ‘essence’. Its fixed (primordial) nature has a ‘biological

(i.e. racial) basis', which is deterministic and inheritable (Zagefka, 2009:229). In this view people of different ethnicities are structurally different from each other, with their positions set at birth and immune to transgressions and conscious or unconscious changes.

There are, however, a few problems. Treating ethnicities as 'objective realities' makes the primordial approach an easy tool in the discourse of racism (Zagefka, 2009:237). Objectifying people with ethnic labeling that is impossible to shed is not only ideologically dangerous, but also ignorant as to the complex nature of ethnicities and identities and reductionist. This way of seeing those 'ethnically' different from us has also implications on how we relate to them and how close we wish to engage with them. (This is explored in more detail in Chapter 3, section 3.2.1 on ethnic bias in understanding insiders/outsiders). It is especially important in the context of migration and, as in some of my respondents' cases, willingness to form relationships with non-Poles.

A much more popular view among scholars is the one which sees ethnicity as 'subjective', pointing to its constructed nature, subjected to a person's agency (Zagefka, 2009:389). Far from stable, it is a 'dynamic construct that evolves and changes in response to developmental and contextual factors' and can 'differ from ascribed ethnicity (...) perceived by others' (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001:496). Underlining 'construction and choice, rather than blood and inheritance' (Laitin, 1998:12, quoted in Zagefka, 2009:230) points to the behavioural and changing aspect of ethnicity as something you may gain, lose or 'construct' over time. Ethnicity, understood this way, is relational, interacting with its surroundings; and even if there are limitations to the way it can be constructed and deconstructed, this process can become much more creative than the fixed essentialist approach predicted. It can be accurately depicted in an anecdote about two brothers: 'Stavro (...) was a Greek with a German father (...) his brother Karl thought himself as a German with a Greek mother' (Douglas Adams, *Mostly Harmless*, 1992:39). It may be even more

complicated for those migrants (and their children) who spent all their lives abroad, especially in places so far removed from Poland as New Zealand. As I also show in my empirical Chapter 5, intersections between ethnic and gender identities often negatively affect women's subjective national belonging, particularly if they feel they cannot adhere to certain gender expectations.

The definition I will be using in this thesis lies within a 'moderate constructivist position' and treats ethnicity as a 'social construct and not grounded in biological differences, although popular lay theories might often suggest this, and although possibilities for ethnic category malleability are limited by existing constructions' (Zagefka, 2009:230-231). The constructive nature of ethnicity implies an active process, and this focus on the behavioural aspect is compatible with my interest in performance. It is useful to note that, for example, 5 out of 12 statements from Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) are concerned with behaviour and active identity building (e.g. trying to find more about a group's tradition, history and customs; being active in organizations and social groups; talking to others in order to understand more about one's ethnic background; participating in cultural practices (Phinney, 1992). These practices create and reproduce shared experience amongst group members, strengthening their identity. People 'do ethnicity' to symbolically confirm their belonging to a particular group (Verkuyten & de Wolf, 2002:783). These performances 'tell others who you are, to which group you belong, and what this group membership means to you' (Verkuyten, 2009:48).

Therefore asking respondents about 'lived ethnicity' - for example 'how people use their time [and] who they associate with' (Burton, Nandi & Platt 2010:11) – can help us understand in what way they create and perform their ethnic identity. Also, when we investigate a minority like Poles in New Zealand, we may consider how they perform their Polishness in order to be recognisable to other Poles, or, on the contrary, how they hide it

from others. The fluid nature of ethnicity is best tackled by qualitative methods, where the multidimensional nature of identity is better captured and understood. Therefore in my research I conduct in-depth interviews, but also spend time with my respondents and attend various specific ethnic events as a participant and observer. (This topic is expanded in the Methodology Chapter, Chapter 3).

Finally, ethnic identity is nested within a broader concept of social identity which ‘indicates what a person is, how she or he is socially defined and defines him- or herself’ (Verkuyten, 2009:42). The expression of gender (e.g. dress, certain roles undertaken in a family) may also be tied to the ‘collective identity of groups’ and ‘represent national and traditional culture’ (Huisman & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2005:47). This is even more the case for women, whose bodies often ‘serve as a vehicle to maintain the collective identity of the groups’ (Huisman & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2005:47). Therefore, even small changes, e.g. in appearance or behaviour, may potentially be perceived as ethnic betrayal. Moreover, gender role performance is an indication of the whole cultural set-up of a country/community, and the way it operates (Hofstede, 2001), which may put an extra pressure on women to perform it correctly. In Chapter 5 (section 5.1.2) I return to this topic explaining how Polish history affects, to this day, the way gender roles in Poland are tied to national identity, and demonstrate through my interview data how these manifest in different social and cultural settings, and how they acquire different meanings.

2.4 Performance and Migration

The psychological impact of migration on migrants can be significant, as a result of ‘patterns of behaviour a social identity (or various identities) imposes on them’, and their ‘freedom [being] restricted and their actions (...) influenced by the expectations prevalent in their living environment with regard to those patterns’ (Verkuyten, 2009:42). Being ‘ethnically labeled by others’ is usually impossible for new migrants to avoid, ‘regardless of their degree

of acculturation' (Liebkind, 2009:17). Mary Patrice Erdmans, writing about the Polish diaspora in Chicago in the 1970s, notices this 'involuntary structure of the immigrants' identity' and points that it is the very 'presence of and (...) interaction with the Other' that unifies the group and makes its identity 'meaningful' (Erdmans, 1998:221). As she says, 'group identity is most visible and most important at the border because it orders relation with Other' (Erdmans, 1998:6). This means that, in a situation of 'relation to the dominant or majority group that has the power to distribute resources and define the situation', identity will be built in a different manner (Erdmans, 1998:6), responding to new 'social needs' (Erdmans, 1998:221). Being confronted with other cultural norms and the Other can prompt migrants to question the nature of these differences and the way 'different forms of culture affect them' – often erroneously attributing 'a certain viewpoint to one cultural influence when it is in fact due to another or to the combination of several' (Cohen, A., 2009:201). Being engaged in the 'interactive nature of social identities' (Verkuyten, 2009:50) - often simultaneously with other challenges of migration (for example new language, living and working conditions, climate change, possible discrimination etc.) - may use energy reserves and cause considerable stress and mental anguish (Bhugra & Jones, 2001:216:218). Moreover, the identity of a migrant can be ascribed from the outside as well, even if the person him/herself does not perceive him/herself as a 'migrant' and sees the stay as temporary (or, alternatively, sees him/herself as local and 'at home') (Garapich, 2010:51-52).

Although migrants' shared experiences and (not always conscious) representations of their mutual past result in layers of cultural commonalities, these may also be complex and vary even within one group (Liebkind, 2009:15). In the same way that political maps rarely overlap with geological ones, *countries* – as Cohen reminds - do not equal *cultures* (Cohen, A., 2009:194); there are regional, religious, political and socioeconomic differences (among many others) that can 'undermine consensus on group identity, group membership and group

collective behaviour' (Erdmans, 1998:7). There is a tendency to perceive migrants from the same country as a homogenous group, but in reality migrants 'share some cultural practices but not others' (Erdmans, 1998:7) and they do not all 'act similarly in emigration' (Erdmans, 1998:217). The receiving society also possesses its own varied sets of norms and demands (Horenczyk, 2009:72). In his studies on multiculturalism, Cohen concludes that 'there are many forms of multiculturalism and (...) all people in fact are multicultural'. In fact, there may be considerable similarities between members of similar classes in different societies and 'small towns in Australia may look a bit like small towns in Japan' (Cohen, A., 2009:199). Therefore we need to stop looking at majority and minority cultures 'in a rather monolithic way, failing to take into account the diversity within each of them' (Horenczyk, 2009:72), and pay attention to the complexities often overlooked by traditional acculturation models. There may also be similarities (or difficulties) in being a woman (or a person of a certain age, or a mother) that surpass ethnic differences. As the 'prototypical exemplars' of an ethnic group are usually men, migrant women tend to be less stereotyped and may, to a certain extent, become 'intersectionally invisible' evading the same levels of discrimination, their 'sub-ordinate' gender position not making them an ethnic threat (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5). I delve into this topic in Chapter 3, section 3.2.1, when talking about the concept of insiderness/outsiderness.

The three-dimensional model developed by Cohen combines the society of origin, community of co-migrants and receiving society, versus group/individual integration and group/individual acculturation and nostalgic insulation (Cohen, A., 2008 in: Horenczyk, 2009:73). There is a difference between identifying with the home culture and community of co-migrants, he writes, as 'the sub-culture of co-migrants is generally *not* identical to the prevalent culture in the home country' (Cohen, 2008 in: Horenczyk, 2009:74). There is also not one community or diaspora but many, composed of migrants of different ages, from

different regions, or migration waves. Also, those who migrate may from the start differ (e.g. in their values, but also health) from those who do not (Goodwin, R., Bardi & Polek, 2011:366), and life following migration has its impact on their culture (Horenczyk, 2009:74). This puts migrants in a curious position, striving to negotiate their identity not only in relation to the receiving society members, but also to their 'own' community or communities (Verkuyten & de Wolf, 2002:781), and juggling performances as they interact with different groups (e.g. in a different language). It is therefore not surprising that those writing about the Polish Diaspora have noticed that 'being Polish is not the same for a Polish woman in England and a Polish woman living in America' (Temple, 1999:17): as I show in my thesis, being a Polish woman in the UK is certainly not the same as being a Polish woman living in New Zealand. Moreover, these differences may grow over time and distance migrants even further from their home culture, which actively changes over time as well (Horenczyk, 2009:74).

However, when migrants confront different audiences, all this complexity may be ignored and they may be expected to give a performance coherent 'between appearance and manner' (Goffman, 1959:35) and to learn new roles (Bhugra & Jones, 2001:216). This expectation may put greater awareness on the act of (maybe previously unquestioned) performance. Some may start to realise that what they previously took for granted as their individual in-born traits are perceived from outside as cultural traits they share with other migrants. Others, migrating somewhere where their cultural practices are unknown, may find these are attributed to their personality and treated as a sign of amusing eccentricity. On the other hand, some traits they assumed to be characteristic of their nation/ethnic group may be regional or related to specific segments of a society, and not ubiquitous. While settling in the new country, migrants may also suddenly find themselves socialising with fellow countrymen of a type they have never met before (and maybe ones with whom they do not want to be

associated). Adjustment to a new place may also be complicated by the discovery that ‘cultural practices that may appear to be culturally unique may serve a function or have an underlying meaning that is similar to that of an apparently different cultural practice’ (Cohen, A., 2010:60). This may all provoke an identity crisis, or at least some existential questions. The focus on *being* rather than *doing* is well documented in a prevalent UK stereotype of the ‘hard-working Polish builder’. ‘Being hardworking’ is seen as an intrinsic trait of a Polish *person*, and interpreted with disregard not only for gender and class but more importantly the context of upward mobility and/or the simple reality of the lives of migrants (who sometimes just have to ‘try harder’). This kind of ‘positive’ stereotype can be met with surprise by Polish newcomers (who may never have thought of a ‘Polish builder’ as ‘hard-working’ before), but can also be incorporated into their migrant identity (‘we are hard-working people’). It may also be resisted by a performance that is based on conscious (and sometimes ostentatious) resistance of the (imagined) stereotype (e.g. refusal to be seen in a Polish shop or socializing with other Poles) (Andrejuk, 2011:296). These are all issues I address in my work, describing Polish female migrants’ behavioural changes, or the way different narratives are employed to discuss existing behaviour.

Building on the social capital of the ‘success stories’ (Bettie, 2003:154) of their predecessors, migrants can also adopt or resist the prevalent discourse of their compatriots’ past in their chosen country. This pre-existent discourse (very different for Polish migrants in New Zealand than in the UK, discussed in Chapter 4 section 4.3.2 & 4.4.2) will influence how migrants’ identities develop, and whether they see their ethnicity as a source of pride, shame, or irrelevant. I explore this in Chapter 6 on Polish female migrants’ self-positioning in both the UK and NZ, and their sense of belonging to various social structures and spheres based on their gender, ethnicity, class and age.

2.4.1 Migration and Class

Every society has an internal stratification system, reflecting the unique way in which the power is distributed amongst its members, with gender and race often at heart of the power relations. On arrival, incoming male and female migrants often fall into pre-assigned, often gendered social spaces, depending on (and to a certain extent mitigated by) their country of origin, reason for migration, their legal status and cultural/educational capital. (This is expanded upon in Chapter 4.) At the same time, as described in section 2.3.1 of this Chapter, class divisions and their markers are culturally specific, and migrants are usually coming with their own class background, from a place that has a different class system, with its different signifiers. It may require time, effort and willingness to not only establish oneself economically amongst unfamiliar power relations, but also to gain competence in the new system of codes and meanings (Bourdieu, 1984:2). Even for upwardly mobile migrants, these new, (high)-class coded cultural practices (Bourdieu, 1984:13:21), may be initially inaccessible due to lack of language proficiency, time and/or money. Certain legal regulations (for example regarding the recognition of degree certificates) may mean some migrants are unable to translate their educational capital into the cultural practices and statuses associated with counterparts in their new country; the prestige of similar professions may also vary across countries. Their access may increase as their cultural competence grows, providing that they perceive their integration and participation in the receiving country's stratification system as possible, necessary and/or worth investing in. Indeed, some migrants may not wish to engage extensively with their new culture, and see no reason for doing so. Such an attitude may be more prevalent amongst transnational migrants (Chapter 4, section 4.4), or migrants living in a large community/communities of co-ethnics, where in-group power relations are a more important point of reference, and more useful for everyday functioning. The quality of in-group, and out-group relations is vital not only for 'defining one's place in society'

(Verkuyten & de Wolf, 2002:782) but also for acquiring a different and, hopefully, better position (Verkuyten & de Wolf, 2002:795). This also depends on the receiving society's willingness to include women and migrants and its regulatory and cultural opportunities for social mobility. I highlight this aspect in my thesis by focusing on Polish female migrants in two different systems of social inclusion, pointing to the interactive nature of social participation and advancement.

An assumed relationship between class and race (as well as migrants' possible lack of cultural competence) also means that migrants can frequently be 'automatically' perceived by members of the receiving community as coming from low-income families (Bettie, 2000:16). This, of course, is only reinforced when encountering (and portraying) migrants performing low-status jobs, and may provoke certain 'resistance practices' on the part of migrants to 'construct a more positive, alternative sense of self' (Edwards, 1995:284). In his dramaturgical analysis of performance (and performance management), Goffman suggested that those of a lower status may keep the 'backstage' manner (Goffman, 1959:104). This may be a useful reference to the different ways 'the stage' (public) and 'backstage' (private) appear to migrants/ethnic minorities, who are often doing 'backstage' jobs or reside at the margins of a society. There also seems to exist a 'global class divide' (Bettie, 2003:25) with its language of First and Third (or, more currently, Developing) world, and usually migrants are well aware where in this hierarchy of countries they find themselves. This often emerges in migration research. In Brettel's interviews with Salvadoran and Vietnamese migrants in the US, who gained American citizenship, respondents talked about being 'upgraded, like from economy to first class' (Brettel, 2006:90), 'being protected', and becoming an 'international figure, because of both the power and the image of the country in the rest of the world's minds' (Brettel, 2006:91). Although this new 'belonging to the world' and being 'part of a superpower' (Brettel, 2006:92) can empower new citizens and residents and

improve their image and status on the world scene, moving to what is perceived a ‘better country’ can also be intimidating. Feeling somewhat like ‘poor cousins’, some migrants may feel inferior, and this can affect the way they see their social place in their new society. These ethnic anxieties may be framed as class anxieties, and a class narrative may be used to discuss them; this can, I believe, contribute to class tensions within a community of migrants, and accentuate pre-existing in-group class differences. Various class/status related practices may be also employed to counter ethnic stigma.

Different migration waves often correspond with different age cohorts. Younger Polish migrants, who did not experience Cold War isolation, are often more confident abroad, seeing themselves as more equal to their foreign peers than, for example, the refugees who left Poland in the 1980s as adults. Some of these will also have greater opportunities to engage in a more balanced cultural exchange, shifting any hierarchical notion of a ‘better’ or ‘worse’ ethnicity. Those who enter as students, or young professionals, may find that their student status ‘imposes cultural practices (...) which belong to the attributes attached to the position it assigns’ (Bourdieu, 1984:26), and they automatically gain a higher status by participating in the cultural practices and lifestyle of the institution they join. In Chapter 4 (especially section 4.2) I explain in more detail how certain historic realities may shape migrants’ position and sense of status in both the UK and New Zealand.

As habitus is ‘context dependent’ and transnational (Dowling, 2009:836), migrants ‘use several reference points (...) to construct their social class position’ (Garapich, 2007:36) depending on their migration plans, and in a highly subjective way, for example seeing low paid work abroad as improvement of class position (Garapich, 2007:35). This finding is in line with Bettie’s argument that class is ‘a cultural identity and subjective experience’ (Bettie, 2003:38), and differences in status can therefore be seen as material (new car) or aspirational (university education, better future for the children) (Bettie, 2003:11). (This is expanded in

Chapter 6.) It is also relational and based on social comparison – therefore, people can place themselves on the social ladder differently depending on who they compare themselves to (Bettie, 2003:13): their home society, other migrants, the older migrant community (if present), the receiving community with its different sectors, or even the researcher who is interviewing them. (This is discussed in Chapter 3.) In a way, migrants can be said to challenge the existing class system in their new country, by breaking and embracing the categories that are seen as – and usually are – inseparably connected. They can participate in various social groups, and cross many class and cultural boundaries: they may have high levels of education but work in a menial job, or have high status, but socialise with other migrants who, for example, work as builders or cleaners. Because of an initial lack of cultural competence or continuing exchanges with their home country (where, for example, they buy clothes), they may acquire an eclectic lifestyle that is not easily classified by the receiving country members. As these power relations are ‘dynamic and context-specific’ (Heyse, 2010:70), they may be also actively influencing the ever-changing class relations and markers in both countries and/or communities.

2.4.2 Migration and Gender

Goffman’s idea of the backstage manner of those of lower status seems to be consistent with the way social spaces are gendered (Entwistle, 2000:34) and the ‘privileging of public over private spheres of life’ (Bettie, 2003:28). But what is public and what is private, when you are not at home? And what is public and private for women, often historically confined to the domestic sphere and excluded from full participation in public life?

Women were traditionally - and not entirely without basis - associated with family migration (reunification with those who migrated beforehand and migration through marriage (Kofman, 2003:4)), but since the early 1990s there are growing numbers of women migrating for other purposes, for example to study (Kofman, 2003:6) and they now fall within the

global trend of independent migration (White, 2011:12). The reasons for moving, migration processes and options in the new place differ for men and women. Although migration in Europe over the years has become steadily more feminised (Lutz & Palenga-Möllenberg, 2011:349), ‘gendered divisions of labour mean that women and men circulate differently in the global economy’ (Kofman, 2003:1). For example, the ‘gender balance differs considerably between sectors’, still associating women with domestic labour and welfare (Kofman, 2003:4). Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg write about a ‘gender regime’ (in which ‘tasks and responsibilities are coded as either feminine or masculine’) coinciding with ‘care’ and ‘migration regimes’ and resulting in the heightened need for female workers (mainly in care homes and as domestic workers) (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg, 2011:350). Although this may promote female mobility, it often happens in a frame of the ‘post-feminist paradigm’ of ‘outsourcing (...) care work to migrant women’ and therefore maintains the status quo of the ‘gendered division of labour’ (Lutz & Palenga-Möllenberg, 2011:353). It is still women who do domestic and care work; they are just *different* women. This suggests that female migration is as equally governed by gender expectations as by economic factors (White, 2011:5), and these can be present in both sending and receiving communities. (This is discussed with more detail in Chapter 4, section 4.1.)

These norms are, however, sometimes challenged and revised, changing the balance of power between the partners and children (White, 2011:13), and disrupting pre-existing (and expected) family dynamic across the gender and generational lines (e.g. children acting as interpreters for their parents, older siblings advising mobility routes for the younger ones (Bettie, 2003:151)). These issues, although signalled here, are discussed fully in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

2.4.3. Other Intersectional Categories: Age and Migration

Although in this thesis I focus mainly on gender, ethnicity, class and the migration status of Polish women, there are, of course, many other categories that could be taken into account. One of them is age. Although it is ‘a concept which is assumed to refer to a biological reality’ the way its different stages are conceptualized and performed (Hopkins & Pain, 2007:287) is culture-, gender- and class-specific. Therefore, in establishing ‘who and what is socially old’ (or young) we need to refer to a ‘change in social or economic roles’ and relations within a given culture (Armstrong, 2003:186).

Migration to a different country may disrupt life stages – which are ‘socially constructed categories’ (Hopkins & Pain: 287-288) – in a number of ways. First of all, starting anew may place migrants on a different level of the social ladder than they would expect to be at this point of their lives. They can, for example, experience ‘an extended adolescence’ favoured by the middle classes (Bettie, 2003:6:62), without actually conforming to middle class life trajectories of education. For women the ‘timing of particular role transitions’ occurs at a different time than for men, usually earlier (Crockett & Beal, 2012:1728): moving to another country and organising a life there may take time, so a decision to marry and have children may be significantly postponed. Lack of language, cultural/legal competency or property ownership in a new location may lower the occupation prestige of migrants, and make their situation not comparable to other people their own age in both the new and home country.

Secondly, as life expectancies in different countries (and between classes) may differ, this may place certain important life milestones at different times, or omit them altogether. The estimated acquisition of certain social and family roles (for example becoming a mother or grandmother) and the assumed life course (Armstrong, 2003:185) can be disturbed. (Migration can also disturb the roles of those who stay behind – for example, grandparents

may not be able to play an active role in their grandchildren's up-bringing). The 'length of the occupancy in the role' may differ too (Armstrong, 2003:185) – or there may be roles unknown to the migrants before, that do not have their equivalents in their cultural mindset (for example 'kuia', Māori female elder, whose role was an overlap between a community leader, grandmother and nurturer of the young generation, Te Ara, 2013). These roles change within one society as well, so what was an estimated life course for the mother may not be for the daughter; they may also be class-specific. For example, as I show in Chapter 5, there are many similarities between the old Polish communities in the UK and NZ related to their (pre)war experiences. Depending on a culture, they can also be both 'ascribed' or 'achieved' (Armstrong, 2003:190). Transition to a mothering role, for example, can be seen as automatic once a woman bears a child; but it can also be seen as 'achieved' through various expected performances ('what a real Polish Mother should be doing') or just by reaching a certain age (kuia can be socially recognized and expected to perform a grandmother role even if biological grandchildren are not present).

Thirdly, social roles are usually reflected in a country's 'institutional pathways' (Crockett & Beal, 2012:1727), which can exclude those migrants for whom it may be too late to catch up with the new educational and formal system. The younger the migrant, the easier the transition (Aslund et al., 2009), the more competent their functioning in both structures, and the more the opportunities and skills they have for upward mobility.

2.5 Conclusions

The role of this Chapter is to delineate the theoretical framework behind this thesis, and describe the theories and concepts I use to approach my research questions. I began by giving a background to the study of intersectionality, and described its ideological and scholarly roots, showing how these relate to my work and the aspects I found relevant to my study. I accentuated two approaches: one connected with 'diversity' (Bürkner, 2012:182), another

with ‘oppression’ (Brah, & Phoenix, 2004:78). As I explain, both these approaches are functional and effective in explaining multiple identities in the context of female migration and the various structural inequalities my respondents experience as women, Poles and migrants. I also discussed the performative aspects of multiple identities, and applied this to the concepts of ‘doing’ gender, ethnicity and class in the context of migration to two different countries with their varying underlying systems of inequality. As I discussed the relevant literatures on theories and terminologies of gender, ethnicity and class, I explained the definitions I find the most fitting for this thesis.

The concepts and theories I discussed in Chapter 2 are closely linked to my research questions and over-arching questions, and further reflected in the way my interview questions were constructed (see below). The main focus of these questions was on a) establishing intersectional links between identities (and observing the circumstances under which these identities are relevant to people’s lives) b) the performative aspect of these identities (‘doing’ (Butler, 1999; Goffman, 1959)), and any (potential) changes after living abroad (with comparison between countries). As further explained in Chapter 3 (section 3.4.5 and 3.5.1) these semi-structured, open response interview questions allowed my respondents to be flexible in the way they narrated their stories and linked together the various topics and themes (for example gender and class). The phrasing of the interview questions also reflected my focus on the performative aspect of identities: I was asking what people ‘do’, and how they (Polish women (Q2), Polish mothers (Q12), ‘rich/poor people’ (Q13/Q14) etc.) can be recognised by the way they presented themselves and behaved. Other, more specific sub-questions (discussed in empirical Chapter 5 and 6) were designed to obtain more detailed answers, such as the differences my respondents observed in the UK and NZ when performing gender roles and manifesting their femininity through behaviour and dress, but also how their existing practices can acquire a new meaning and become a manifestation of a

different identity. Concepts such as Goffman's dramaturgical approach to performance, audience segregation (Goffman, 1959:57), and impression management (Goffman, 1959:139) were operationalised in questions on my respondents' behaviour/dress in public and private, their ideas on what 'public' and 'private' means in both countries, and also dealt with class markers ('sign vehicles') and the way they are displayed. I also pay attention to these changes in behaviour that result from a different division between what is private and what is public, and the way my respondents' negotiate this. Other notions such as class/status self-identification and gender specific class formation (Bettie, 2003), links between ethnicity and class, and racialisation of migrants were operationalised through various questions on how women saw themselves and other Polish women/migrants, and the descriptions and narrative they used. To conclude, the theoretical framework I discuss in Chapter 2 is the basis for the way my Framework of Analysis and research tools were constructed (the topic of the next Chapter), but also who my respondents were (Polish female migrants), and the countries chosen for fieldwork.

2.5.1 Framework of Analysis: Specific Research Questions

Main Research Questions

What constitutes 'being a Polish woman', and how is this performed by Polish female migrants of different ages, generations and social backgrounds?

How, and why, does this performance and its components (class, ethnicity, gender) differ between Polish women living in New Zealand and those living in the UK?

Other over-arching questions

How much, and how do migrants reflect on their experiences?

Under what circumstances are intersecting (clashing/mutually reinforcing) identities relevant to people's lives?

How much self-conscious identity performing takes place?

How do Polish women migrants' identities (their individual identities and sense of belonging to a wider Polish collectivity) evolve as a result of migration and do their views change on how other people view them?

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this Chapter I discuss the realities of my data collection at two different fieldwork sites in London and NZ, starting with the circumstances of my arrival in NZ and the way these affected my position as a researcher. As I describe these, I underline the way the differences between these research sites shaped my recruitment procedures, later interactions with my respondents, and the ethical aspects of collecting, handling and presenting the data in my thesis. As I expand on my role during the data collection, and my ethnographic work, I consider notions of insider and outsider identities, and the way my own social location interacted with that of my respondents. In doing so I clarify the philosophical and epistemological paradigms underlying my research methods, showing how these relate to the intersectional theoretical and methodological approaches used in this research.

3.1 Fieldwork background.

3.1.1 New Zealand

In my first days in Wellington, New Zealand's capital, I was asked to give a presentation to the weekly meeting of the cross-cultural group of the School of Psychology at Victoria University. I was presenting with my husband, and we were both introduced as 'refugees from Japan'. On the poster advertising our presentations I was portrayed as a committed academic who 'took her interview tapes and left her jewellery behind'. This poster seemed to capture very well my positioning in New Zealand: I was someone who needed help in saving her PhD after having to abandon fieldwork elsewhere. These circumstances, although, technically, not very relevant to my research, became a framing narrative that shaped my whole experience in New Zealand as an ethnographer and researcher.

The timing was also relevant – only a month earlier, on the 22nd of February, New Zealand experienced its deadliest earthquake, which killed 185 people in Christchurch. There

were many survivors from Christchurch re-located to Wellington, and – with the earthquake still in the media (and aftershocks on the ground) - the general mood towards us and our situation was overwhelmingly positive. Later on, during the course of fieldwork, I was amazed and almost shocked by the amount of kindness and help people offered. I believe that this was not attributable to the earthquake situation only, but reflected the genuinely friendly attitude of New Zealand people, Poles included. Strangers went out of their way to help me look for respondents, drove me around and arranged social events so I could meet more Poles. My arrival was also mentioned in a Polish newsletter. I was especially moved by two women – whom I approached on Facebook – who travelled to the airport in Christchurch to be interviewed between my flights: they did not even allow me to buy them coffee and insisted on paying for my drinks. I was invited to many meetings and parties, and in my honour the Polish Women’s League let men attend their meeting: I was asked to tell them about Japan and show how to properly bow and greet people in Japanese.

This all, however, caused a few changes in the way I conducted my study. I planned to immerse myself slowly in a community and gain people’s trust, but this was no longer possible. I had no prior knowledge of the country and no pre-arranged contacts. Luckily, I could use the experience gained during my fieldwork in Japan, and the fact I had tested and adjusted my interview questions to a non-European interview scenario: moreover, the theoretical framework of my research remained the same. Also, people were very approachable: without the warmth I received recruiting and interviewing as many women as I did in the limited time I had would have been much more challenging. As I felt very grateful to the women who were making sacrifices to meet me, I felt obliged to make these encounters more personal and reciprocate by contributing more than I would in any other research setting. I shared a great deal about myself, and expressed my opinions and impressions: this ‘willing to give’ created a more symmetrical and closer relationship between me and my

respondents (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:49). However, seeing as I was still confused by recent events, my professional composure was occasionally challenged. In such a small and remote country and in such a small Polish group my arrival would not be low-key at the best of times, but it seems that I did manage to draw even more attention to myself than in any other circumstances. Thankfully, my respondents were extraordinarily accommodating and relaxed. I also planned to implement 'image management' to present myself appropriately (Fetterman, 2010:47), but I left almost all my clothes in Japan. New Zealand winter is damp, and houses are usually not heated. There was no dryer in a place we stayed for two months, so I spent a lot of time drying socks with a hair-dryer, and simply wearing anything that was not wet. At one point I went to the meeting with the Polish Women's League in an oversized man's top borrowed from the wardrobe of our landlords, as everything else was drying on the rack. On another, I conducted an interview at the airport dressed in pajama trousers. Luckily, that fitted perfectly well with New Zealand fashion practices and expectations (which I discuss in Chapter 5) and made me more of an insider (section 3.2 of this chapter), suffering through the New Zealand winter just like everyone else. I came to a conclusion that – despite some initial upheaval – this was the best way I could actually present myself in the New Zealand setting, and had I arrived in a different, more pre-planned way, I would have been less authentic, and not so successful.

3.1.2 London

In comparison to the somewhat dramatic and (from my perspective) exotic experience of being in New Zealand, fieldwork in London was more formal. The relationship with my respondents was also less personal and 'communal', as most of them did not know each other, and were recruited in a more structured way. (This is expanded on in section 3.3.2.) Whereas in New Zealand I spent a great deal of time with Polish women, often staying with them after the interview for hours, in London my contact with a respondent rarely extended

beyond an interview. At the time of my fieldwork I had been living in London for almost ten years, and had previously worked on a Polish migration project. I had not only an extensive personal experience of being a 'Polish woman in the UK', but also an academic background in migration studies and ready-made, available narratives to understand and describe this. I also had enough local knowledge to not rely on my respondents to be my guides. This kind of cultural competence is usually an advantage, but can also instigate cultural blindness (Arzubiaga et al., 2008:311; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:59; Unluer, 2012:6) that comes with too much familiarity. Still, during my fieldwork I visited many parts of London and neighbourhoods I had never been to before, which expanded and changed my ideas about the city and the various communities to which my respondents belonged.

Interestingly, I had more difficulties in recruiting women in London than I had in New Zealand: being there and being Polish *simply was not enough* (Beoku-Betts, 1994; Arzubiaga et. al, 2008:318, Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:58). I remember a surreal moment when I was walking through a park in Greenford, and almost every woman around me was speaking Polish to her children – this was at the time when I was desperately looking for Polish mothers. Although I was physically surrounded by them, successfully approaching them was out of the question – I was a stranger, and just speaking the same language did not justify initiating a conversation and inspiring their trust.

I also believe the order of the fieldwork sites made a difference to the way I interpreted my data, and influenced my positionality (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:44). Had I interviewed women in London before New Zealand, I would have had a very different outlook. It was impossible not to compare their stories to the ones I had heard before, and my frame of reference shifted. Looking from a New Zealand (and my previous Japanese) perspective, the cultural differences between Poland and England – two European countries – seemed inconsequential, and I worried about the importance of my data. (These fears were,

luckily, ungrounded.) My experience of having spent time in New Zealand, which I shared during recruitment as part of explaining the topic of my thesis, also changed my position amongst my London respondents. For some (and there were a few) who had travelled to New Zealand themselves my story made me someone with an assumed similar social background and access to similar resources. For others, it was rather distancing information that bore no relation to their own experience (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:47). This was not always a bad thing: as trust levels amongst Poles (in both Poland and the UK) are low (Giczi & Sik, 2009:76), approaching people is often met with suspicion and fear of exploitation. I believe that placing me outside the European context may have helped some of the respondents to overcome this. (I come back to this in section 3.2.1.)

Last but not least, my position and perception would be very different had I arrived to any of these countries directly from Poland, and if I experienced New Zealand without having had the experience of living in the UK beforehand.

3.2 Researcher's Role and Intersectionality as a 'lens of inquiry' (Botterill, 2015)

In the previous section I described my fieldwork experiences, hinting at the way my positionality affected the way my study was conducted. It has been increasingly recognized that research results do not 'represent a view from nowhere' and the researcher is a *part* of the fieldwork rather than an alien body coming from the outside (Ryan & Golden, 2006:1192; Arzubiaga et al., 2008:321). As an 'omniscient point of view' is impossible for humans (Mengxuan & Storr, 2012:14), the researcher's localization within the fieldwork has to be explained (Ryan & Golden, 2006:1194), and the inevitable subjectivity (Ahmed, 2013:234) and 'awareness of one's biases' incorporated into research (Rose 1985 in Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:55). We can also say that a researcher is not only a part, but also a *product* of a field, as she/he operates within a larger ideological frame where their research subjects understand the concept of 'research' and their role as 'respondents' (Arzubiaga et. al 2008:315). Conducting

research (especially qualitative) is also interactive (Fetterman, 2010:61, Fink, 2000), and this makes the researcher essential to ‘all aspects of the research process’ (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:61:55) as a subject as well as an instrument (Fetterman, 2010:13:33; Mengxuan & Storr, 2012:3:14). After all, it is a researcher who makes decisions about ‘data generation’ and interpretation (Mengxuan & Storr, 2012:5), and these choices often reflect his/her positionality (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:43). This positionality is particularly important in migration studies, where the ethno-national identity of the researcher and his/her other identities and affiliations make a substantial difference to how the research situation is constructed, funded, what information is volunteered, how (and to whom) it is later disseminated, and how it is received (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:37:38). This is of a great significance not only from a methodological, but also political and ethical stance due to possible ‘neo-colonial connotations’ (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:41), power imbalances, and conflicts of interests. As I conducted my study as a Polish woman (albeit with an English surname) under the auspices of an English institution, my roles, loyalties and agendas should be made clear – especially as positionality is the topic of a large part of my thesis (Temple & Koterba, 2009; Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:52).

My chosen research method, the interview, is a highly ‘intersectional process’, where existing identities are ‘destabilized in the dynamic space of the research encounter’ and where we witness the ‘power dance’ (Ryan, 2015) of ‘shifting positionalities’ (Botterill, 2015). To understand my respondents’ social location it is impossible to ignore the many roles I played during my study (Weber et al., 2001:480) and the intersectional nature of both my own and my respondents’ identities interacting.

I believe that the complexity of my own positionality during fieldwork supports the intersectional premise of my thesis, and draws attention not only to the multiple roles we play, but also the role of the social location in shaping these. (This is discussed in more detail

in Chapters 2 and 4.) Before I go into the more nuanced aspects of this, I want to quote Botterill's publication title 'we don't see things as they are, we see things as we are' (Botterill, 2015). It is important to remember that what my respondents provide is a subjective 'meaning' (Dey, 1993:28), which is coming from their positionalities, and individual life stories. Even at the early stage of our interaction, my interviewees were always trying to place me, actively constructing me as an 'outsider' or 'insider' based on the way I looked and dressed (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:46). My respondents' perception of me differed vastly due to their various projections, associations, or the stereotype of a Polish woman they acquired while outside Poland. One respondent said I looked just like her 'typically Polish looking' blonde haired and blue eyed cousin, another one complimented me on my red hair and green eyes (despite my looking the same all the time). Although I would be careful not to overestimate my impact on my respondents' answers, it is notable that my first interview question was about 'a typical Polish woman'. In Chapter 4 I write about the wider cultural and geographical context in which my respondents operate, but I think it is also important to keep the micro-context of our interaction in mind as well. (I also want to draw attention to how my respondents were constructing their own identities on the insider-outsider spectrum: this particular aspect is discussed further in Chapter 5.)

The way my respondents saw themselves in the relation to me also influenced the role they adopted in our interaction, and – to a certain extent – information they shared (Nowicka & Ryan, 2015). Those who were older than me were keen to 'help a young person', whereas the younger ones treated me more formally, with respect reserved for someone their parents' age. (This, of course, worked both ways, although my contact with older respondents in New Zealand was significantly less formal in both speech and manner than with those in England. I talk more about this in Chapter 6.) This was also linked to our migration experiences – in New Zealand women of all ages were in a position to give me advice (which was very much

appreciated) and act as a cultural guide. Similarly, I brought my own ‘perspectives, assumptions, and expectations’ to the interview process (Arzubiaga et al., 2008:321). As I conducted my research in two very different fieldwork sites (comparison in Chapter 4) I had an opportunity to witness the shifting nature of my own positionality depending on the social context and my respondents’ situation (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:49). As I recounted in section 1 on the realities of my work in the UK and NZ, my position in these countries varied, requiring me to ‘strike a balance between and across positions’ (Botterill, 2015).

3.2.1 Insider/Outsider and the Space in Between

The basic definition of an ‘insider’ is ‘a person who chooses to study a group to which they belong’ (Breen, 2007: in Unluer, 2012:1) – but what exactly does it mean? Would I be considered an ‘insider’ by a group of eighty-year old Siberian camp survivors from Eastern Borderland/Kresy (an area that, during my entire lifetime, was not even a part of Poland) who spent more than half a century in New Zealand? Or would I be considered an insider by working-class Polish mothers, being a childless middle-class woman myself (Matejskova, 2014:7)? And where would the fact I chose to take my husband’s English surname place me? Would I be seen as a woman following traditional gender expectations, or rather someone ready to discard her Polish roots (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:44) (Chapter 2, section 2.3.2)?

Unfortunately, being an ‘insider’ or an ‘outsider’ is often treated as binary (Matejskova, 2014:3), with the assumptions of a stable ‘one dimensional group’ (Adler & Adler 1987 in Dwyer & Buckle 2009:55) to which you either belong or not. This division usually gives precedence to ethno-national categories (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:41, Ryan & Nowicka, 2015; Ryan, 2015), assuming cultural homogeneity within national borders (Cohen, 2009:194) (Chapter 2, section 2.4). From this stems the presumption that belonging can be objectively measured, which does not take into account the subjective nature of identity, nor

complex identity dynamics (Matejskova, 2014:2). It also ignores the situational nature of ‘insiderness’ (Arzubiaga et al., 2008:318), where one can be an ‘insider’, ‘partial insider’, or an ‘outsider’ depending on the context (Matejskova, 2014:13). The ‘dynamic nature of insiderness’ (Matejskova, 2014:4) is in line with the premises of intersectionality, and acknowledges the situations where our positionality shifts, and our insiderness is negotiated (Beoku-Betts, 1994:416), or – as often happens during ethnographic studies - is a process (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:61). This fluidity is captured in a concept of an ‘outsider within’ (Beoku-Betts, 1994:414:419) – someone who can, at times, belong to the group, but whose researcher’s role is placing her/him outside of the group she/he researches, in the ‘space in between’ (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:61). I believe this concept accurately depicted my location, from which I stepped ‘in’ and ‘out’ during various interactions, often consciously changing roles to build a bond with my respondents.

It is conventionally thought that ‘insiderness’ equals ‘cultural and institutional competency’ (Unluer, 2012:1), making researcher’s work easier through a ‘pre-established trust and legitimacy’ that comes from ‘shared origins’ (Matejskova, 2014:5). Although this was true when it came to language (Fetterman, 2010:40, Unluer, 2012:5), in my experience being Polish or a woman did not, in itself, produce ‘insiderness’ (Beoku-Betts, 1994; Arzubiaga et. al, 2008:318, Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:58; Ryan, 2015), neither – as mentioned before - did it inspire trust. In the UK the Polish community was simply too diversified for such a broad category to matter, and commonalities such as gender, age, or social background played a greater role (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:50:51). As is the case with many high-skilled Poles in the UK, I do not consider myself a migrant (Bell, J., 2012:111), and – as I came to London to join my British husband whom I met in Poland – I feel I do not share the same experiences as many others, whose arrival circumstances were different. I also felt

disjointed when my respondents were telling me about their Polish identity, missing Poland and dilemmas regarding returning there, as I do not experience these feelings myself.

In New Zealand, it was rather my *experience* than my role that was important (Unluer, 2012:6, Botterill, 2015). It may seem that – after living for many years in the UK – I would feel more connection with Polish women who lived in London; some of them were my neighbours. Still, I felt I had much more in common with New Zealand Poles, despite having lived in New Zealand for no more than three months. Coming from Japan and having lived many years outside of Poland, I felt I shared the life trajectories of many of my cosmopolitan respondents: most of them were educated and, like me, married or in a relationship with non-Polish partners. The importance of ‘making it all the way there’ was acknowledged by one of my respondent:

Polish women who come here, they are not here by accident. So it is maybe that to come here they had to **come the long way** [emphasis KG]... maybe they are more selected. Not that they are better but just, I don't know, different than the rest. (Marta, 36, R27NZ)

The idea of ‘coming the long way’ falls into the ‘quest plot typology’ previously noted in narrating lifestyle migration (Ahmed, 2013:236). It conveys an image of a voyage during which various ‘monsters and obstacles’ are overcome (Ahmed, 2013:236), and new arrivals are seen as ‘quests companions’ (Ahmed, 2013:239). As only nine of my thirty-one respondents came to New Zealand directly from Poland (eleven came from the UK after living there for up to ten years beforehand, and eight reported living in different countries - US, Mexico, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sweden - prior to their move) the image of a long quest seems fitting.⁹

⁹ For the post-war arrivals this journey was even longer, and led them through Dachau, Siberian gulags, refugee camps in Iran, and a long boat trip through the Indian Ocean during which their ship, USS General Randall, had to avoid torpedoes (Choroś, 2004). Although we would not call war-time and the 1980s refugees (who came to

Although I shared many identity markers with the younger generation of New Zealand respondents (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:39), as someone who had just arrived, I was clearly not an ‘insider’ to their tight group. At the same time, the fact that I was physically there signaled that I must have had the resources to overcome many financial and geographical ‘monsters’, and that made me (even if for a short while) a member of their club (maybe an ‘honorary insider’ (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:50)?) Also, the lack of a transnational lifestyle option meant I had to participate in local reality fully, and truly share – even if for a while – their New Zealand life.

3.2.2 Selective Self-Presentation

To recruit prospective respondents and gain their trust I had to ‘balance proximity and distance’ (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:48) through revealing or disclosing my different identity markers (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:44). In most cases I was consciously ‘constructing insiderness’ through selective self-presentation (Matejskova, 2014:14:17; Botterill, 2015) (although, as I later explain, in some cases ‘outsiderness’ was more effective). To do so, I was trying to find ‘points of contact’ (Botterill, 2015) accentuating similarities of our ‘dominant identity markers’ (Matejskova, 2014:12) (‘I am also a Polish woman’) and experience (‘who currently lives/arrived in the UK/NZ’). At the time of my fieldwork I was 34-37 years of age, which I often brought up at the time of recruitment (especially when various governmental institutions were concerned). This was to convey I am not ‘just a student’ but a ‘mature’ student and an adult woman (with previous research

NZ through the refugee camps in Austria) ‘lifestyle migrants’, we can see how a similar typology can be used to describe their sojourns. This typology can be also used by the post-war refugees (and, to a lesser extent, the political migrants of the 1980s) to the UK (Galasińska, 2010:942). I acquaint my readers with the historical background in Chapter 4, section 4.3.1 and 4.4.1.

experience), with the hope it would portray me in a more serious light. Once past the recruitment stage, when meeting my respondents for an interview, I tried to ‘tap into (...) multifarious field of identity’ (Matejskova, 2014:14:17) by accentuating different aspects of my identity or experience, alternately emphasizing my role as a ‘Polish migrant’, PhD student, a wife (of an English man), a woman, or someone from Gdańsk (when I met someone from there). When I was talking to a twenty-five year old, sophisticated Oxbridge graduate in her trendy Aldgate apartment, I was drawing on my travel or my University’s reputation. Similarly, when I was talking to a fifty-seven year old woman in Croydon, who worked as a cleaner, I was focusing on being a woman and a Pole in the UK, bringing up the difficulties of being a student at my age. This kind of strategic impression management (Goffman, 1959:139) – although inevitable - does, of course, create some ethical dilemmas (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:52.) I want to make it clear that I never lied to my respondents, and I was not omitting any significant information about myself when I approached them. Still, I tried to find something that connected us, and strengthen the bond between us by putting it to the front of my performance.

This was, however, not always the right way to inspire trust. Some respondents in the UK did not seem to think there was any excitement or incentive in meeting someone ‘like them’, and the more status difference they saw between us, the more flattered they were to be approached for an important research project. Some of them wanted to see me as a migration success, a ‘super-citizen’ they could identify with on a more collective level (‘one of us who made it’) (Matejskova, 2014:22).¹⁰ In that situation minimizing differences between us could

¹⁰ I had the experience of one respondent – an older woman who worked mainly as a cleaner – who saw contact with me as an opportunity for expanding her pyramid scheme to more ‘high profile’, English speaking clients and collaborators. During the course of an interview it transpired that this was her main reason for agreeing to meet me, and although I hugely enjoyed talking to her, I was sadly not able to fulfil her expectations.

be harmful to my perceived authority (Matejskova, 2014:15) and – paradoxically - inspire potentially hurtful comparisons and class injuries, which did not surface if they saw me as different from the start. In that case, in the UK my professional status and representing an English institution was usually not a ‘major stumbling block in establishing trust and rapport’ (Beoku-Betts, 1994:429), but rather legitimized leverage in a community known for very low trust levels (Giczi & Sik, 2009:76). (It is also important to note that my ideas on social hierarchies and power dynamics between identities were not always accurate. Not everyone was impressed by my academic status or being a student at the age of 30+, and some of my UK respondents felt rather dismayed I did not have children - in their hierarchies of priorities I was certainly no one to admire. I would also question the popular assumption that the power balance is more often than not tipped in researcher’s favour. I encountered many intelligent and glamorous women whom I found quite intimidating, and can confirm that ‘class injuries’ are not only inflicted by ethnographers, but sometimes also received.) Managing impressions and identities worked both ways, with my respondents adjusting their performance to me (for example happily criticizing English men until they remembered my husband was English and tried to back-track), and stepping into various, often age related roles.

To conclude I should stress that although in this Chapter I focus on the subjective nature of identities within my research situation, ‘existing social categories’ and ascribed identities have to be acknowledged, no matter whether we identify with them or not (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:39). From the perspective of a passing observer stumbling upon me and my respondent during an interview, we would clearly be two Polish co-ethnics (or at least Polish speakers) having a conversation in our common language. It is also obvious that the interview situation itself, in its essence, was constructed around ‘insiderness’ – after all, I approached my respondents as a Pole, and they – even if they spent almost their entire lives abroad and did not hold Polish citizenship - identified as Polish women strongly enough to

respond. I also want to emphasize that although in this section I focus on my position to explain how realities of different fieldwork sites affected the data collection, I attempted not to engage in the ‘self-indulgent narcissism’ of reflexivity (Ryan, 2015), and I always gave priority to my respondents and their stories.

3.3 Research design: Theoretical and Epistemological Approaches

To successfully operationalise intersectionality and capture performativity/performance in my research I used a qualitative approach (Shields, 2008:306; Syed, 2010:61, Harper, 2011; Trahan, 2011), focusing on semi-structured interviews supported with ethnographic observation/self-participation. Qualitative methods are often dis-regarded as ‘second class’ to a ‘superior’ quantitative approach (e.g. Dey, 1993:5; Mengxuan & Storr, 2012:1). It is, however, important to point out that these comparisons are very much misguided. Qualitative research is not merely ‘a different methodology’, but first and foremost a different *philosophy* on research (Mengxuan & Storr, 2012:3), which not only provides a complexity often lost in larger data collection¹¹, but also incorporates a researcher and her/his positionality into its core. This difference stems from variations in the ontological and epistemological approaches to research that inform different research paradigms (Tuli, 2010:99). The choice of methodology is very much a consequence of our ‘beliefs about the nature of reality (...) the theory of knowledge that informs the research (...) and how that knowledge may be gained’ (Tuli, 2010:99). The most basic division is between the ‘positivist’ and ‘interpretivist or constructivist’ paradigm (Tuli, 2010:101). The first of these is traditionally rooted in the view that ‘social observations should be treated (...) the same way that physical scientists treat

¹¹ Dey used a T'ai Chi T'u diagram of ‘dynamic balance of apparently opposing forces’ to illustrate the ‘mutual dependence’ of the qualitative and quantitative studies, and the way they should – ideally – complement each other, contextualizing ‘meaning’ within ‘numbers’ (Dey, 1993:28). I do this by using statistical data in Chapter 4, and empirical analysis in Chapters 5 and 6.

physical phenomena’: it accentuates the empirical, objective nature of social reality, and advocates it could be measured with quantitative methods such as questionnaires (Tuli, 2010:104). This approach excludes the researcher from the research process as someone who ‘exists apart’, independent from the reality he/she researches (Tuli, 2010:100; Antwi & Hamza, 2015:218). A positivist paradigm calls for a deductive approach (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:222), larger research samples, repeated measurements (Bryman, 1984:77; Tuli, 2010:98) and generalizable findings (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:222). Coming from this standpoint we see reality as something independent from us, stable: a reality that can be objectively approached, but remains unaffected by the research process itself. The second, interpretivist/constructivist paradigm makes different assumptions about social reality, and does not approach it the same way as the natural sciences (from where the positivist paradigm arose) (Tuli, 2010:98). A constructivist approach sees social reality as ‘subjective, multiple and socially constructed by its participants’ (Tuli, 2010:98-99), full of interpretations and non-generalizable phenomena (Tuli, 2010:100). It is concerned not with the descriptions or measurements of facts, but rather the meaning of these facts, and the contextual understanding of them (‘verstehen’) (Bryman: 1984:78; Antwi & Hamza, 2015:221). This paradigm pays attention to the ‘insider viewpoint’ (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:222) and, consequently, employs methodology that can capture narratives and ‘people’s own history’ (Tuli, 2010:101): ethnography, observation, in-depth interviews and case studies (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:222). These methods are thought to effectively approach ‘human behaviour (...) changing over time and place’ (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:222). From this perspective, the researcher is part of a researched reality, actively interacting with it, and the respondents are rather active informants than ‘research subjects’. Some theorists however advise caution in automatically equating epistemological differences with technical ones, pointing out that the technicalities are secondary to underlying philosophical differences, and one should not too

easily treat ‘epistemological and technical spheres of discourse’ as synonymous (Bryman, 1984:89).

As already mentioned in Chapter 2 (section 2.1), an intracategorical approach to intersectionality is concerned with the ‘complexity of lived experience of intersectional subjects’, especially those ‘at the neglected points of the intersection’ (McCall, 2005:1774). This aspect of an intersectional approach is therefore very much in line with the interpretivist paradigm, focusing on women’s stories and subjective experiences. Although the research I conducted stems from the interpretivist/constructivist approach it is important to mention that these paradigms are not, and do not have to be, antithetical. They can, and usually are, used in a mixed-methods design (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:223), complementing each other and placing the subjective within the larger, more objective and measurable reality.

In my work I try to contextualize my respondents’ stories by describing their social reality through measurable, quantitative data (for example census data), thus combining their narratives with various verifiable and quantifiable aspects of their new countries. (This is the topic of the next chapter, Chapter 4.)

I used similar approaches while acquiring and analyzing my data, combining ‘anticategorical’ and ‘intercategorical’ approaches to intersectionality (McCall, 2005:1783). The ‘anticategorical’ approach is ‘based on a methodology that deconstructs analytical categories’ (McCall, 2005:1773), and methods that are designed to capture the complexity of social identities: for example (as in my research) interviews and ethnography (McCall, 2005:1778; Rodó-de-Zárate & Jorba, 2012:191). This approach avoids methods that are focused on categorization and looks at various social categories as separate from each other, thus favouring use of qualitative methodology (Rodó-de-Zárate & Jorba, 2012:191). I used this approach not only while collecting the data, but also during further data analysis, looking for emerging intersectional links and patterns, and analyzing not only specific interview

questions, but acknowledging the context in which they appear. However (as discussed later in more detail in section 3.5 on data analysis) with a large amount of qualitative data some sorting procedure had to be implemented. This corresponds with an ‘intercategorical’ approach (McCall, 2005:1783), which advises researchers to ‘adopt existing analytical categories strategically’ by acknowledging their existence but focusing on understanding the intersections and relationships between them (Dubrow, 2008:86; Rodó-de-Zárate & Jorba, 2012:192). This uses, for the sake of practicality, categories such as gender and class, but treats them as inseparable, and without a ‘valid social meaning on their own’ (Dubrow, 2008:88). As I show later in empirical Chapters 5 and 6, combining these two approaches and the intersectional ‘lens of inquiry’ (Botterill, 2015) in both my theoretical framework and methodological approach proved to be a very successful tool. Using semi-structured interviews is also in line with a feminist research standpoint, and gives voices to women’s ‘inner stories’ in a non-oppressive way (Westmarland, 2001).

3.3.1 Recruitment criteria

I was, as a rule, looking for Poland-born women over the age of 18 living in the UK or NZ who were willing to talk about ‘what is it like to be a Polish woman living in the UK/NZ’. There was only one Wellington born woman included in my study, a daughter of Pahiataua children; she was very active in the Polish association and provided very interesting insights into the second generation of Poles living in NZ. All of my UK respondents were Poland-born.

3.3.2 Recruitment Techniques

The techniques I used to recruit my respondents were adapted to the local environment (Fetterman, 2010:34), most importantly the size of Polonia and the time constraints of my fieldwork. In NZ I relied on a snowballing technique (King, N. & Horrocks, 2010:34), which

was viable and effective in a small Polish community where most people knew each other. My initial search started through Victoria University, and after I met my first respondent (who was a friend of my acquaintance from the School of Psychology/Te Kura Mātai Hinengaro) she gave me an e-mail distribution list to other Polish women she knew. I found out there were monthly first Friday meetings of Polish women, and the list she gave me was the one used for communication. As I arrived just before Easter, I sent round an e-mail entitled '*Świąteczne wołanie o pomoc – respondentki!*' (*Easter cry for help – respondents!*), explaining my situation and asking for assistance. I received five replies in the next hour, and started arranging interviews the same day. After that, it was a snow-ball effect, with respondents recommending me to their friends. In some cases those who initially did not want to be interviewed, after seeing all of their friends meeting me, relented and volunteered. (One woman agreed to take part in my study if I 'tell her and her daughter everything about Japan.') It is an accurate representation of life in New Zealand that most of my respondents – even if I found them independently of each other - knew one another to some extent, and very often had heard about me before I contacted them. As one respondents said 'there are only three degrees of separation in Wellington'¹², and another mentioned that people – especially Poles - are so connected with each other that one quickly learns not to gossip. Virtually every time I went out I met one or two of my respondents by chance, and I kept running into them in shops, cafeterias, parks and dance clubs. (I also met their husbands and children, and almost all of them met my husband.) This proved to be problematic when it came to anonymity; although I originally planned to conceal who took part in my study, this was

¹² The comment about 'three degrees of separation' in New Zealand was soon proved to me to be true, when a New Zealand man sitting next to me and my respondent in a cafeteria interrupted our conversation by saying he knew who I was, and congratulating me on my husband, whose lecture he said he attended at some point. He also wished me luck with my research (about which he also seemed to know a great deal).

simply impossible to maintain. In the end I decided that the criteria for taking part in my study were not in any way compromising - the only requirement was to be 'a Polish woman' – and did not keep this information confidential, during the time of the study. I certainly do keep it confidential now, which I discuss more in section 3.6.2.

I also relied on institutional support from NZ-based Polish organizations (mainly the Polish Church in Berhampore, the Polish House, Polish Women's League and the Polish Embassy). I was invited and attended the monthly Friday meeting of an informal Polish Women group in one of Wellington's pubs. In the search for respondents (but also for ethnographic purposes) I attended many formal and informal events and parties. I also designed and printed a poster introducing myself and offering coffee to any Polish women interested in getting in touch. This poster was hung in the School of Psychology of Victoria University.

In the UK, because of the number and variety of Polish women living there, I had to choose my respondents strategically. To do that, I used strategic purposive sampling (Mason, 2002 in Duda-Mikulin, 2014) and targeted recruitment of pre-identified categories of respondents from different migration waves, and of different professions, ages, social backgrounds, educational levels and lifestyles. To do so I used informal networks and Facebook. Because I am based in the UK and I had more time to look for women interested in taking part in my study, I did all the recruitment myself, by-passing Polish institutions and organisations (or not receiving assistance from those whom I approached). I also used a snowballing technique in the UK, but only within particular clusters, with people recommending me friends from a similar background. I also recruited one woman through the Gumtree website, emailing those who advertised themselves as a 'Polish cleaner'.

3.4 Conducting the Research

3.4.1 Timeline and Place

My interviews were conducted – by necessity – at different times. The interviews in New Zealand were conducted between the beginning of April and the end of June 2011 (New Zealand winter), and the UK ones were conducted in autumn 2012 (interview 1-9) and March-May 2014 (interview 10-31).

In total, I conducted 62 interviews with Polish women: 31 in NZ (29 in Wellington and 2 in Christchurch: 1 respondent, although interviewed in Wellington, was from Auckland) and 31 in the UK (conducted in London and Greater London; one respondent was from Oxford, and was included on the basis of being a doctoral student actively involved with the Oxford University Polish Society). I spoke to my respondents in cafeterias, pubs, respondents' homes, at a respondent's work place (in an empty conference room), at Christchurch airport, and my own residence in NZ/London. Except for a couple of unusual circumstances, the choice of interview places was determined by my respondents' convenience (King, N. & Horrocks, 2010:42-43). While in NZ safety was not an issue and I never hesitated before visiting my respondents' homes or entering a car with them, in London both my respondents and I were more wary and often chose more neutral, public places.

3.4.2 Recording the Data

To record interviews, I used a Sony tape recorder. As it operated with tapes, which could be seen as old-fashioned, it was a useful ice-breaker. Only one respondent felt intimidated by the size of this recorder and offered her mobile phone as a recording alternative (which I refused). Others expressed opinions that 'it does not matter as long as it works', and a respondent who was a trained opera singer told me that tapes are the best medium for recording a human voice. Although it was problematic to travel from the NZ to Europe with 31 tapes protectively stored in my hand luggage, it was fairly easy to use them later on. I used

an identical recorder during my interviews in the UK. Only one recording (from the UK) was compromised, resulting in the loss of half of the recording. These tapes were not (to date) digitalised.

I did all the transcribing myself, documenting all conversations in full and making notes of a specific ‘paralinguistic’ information (for example aggressive or ironic) tone of voice (when it was not obvious from what my respondent said) and non-verbal noises such as sighs, laugh or a longer pauses (Fink, 2000; King N., 1994:26). I also marked as ‘inaudible’ those fragments where something obscured my or my respondent’s voice (loud music, children interrupting or – as in one case – a security alarm at the Christchurch airport). I also edited the transcripts to make them more readable (Fink, 2000), during which my linguistic and cultural competence in the Polish language and its subtleties played a large role. I also made a decision, in a few particular instances, to remove from the transcription private information I shared about myself or my family (this is, however, marked in the transcript, with the reason for removal summarized shortly). At the end, I had 541 pages of transcripts from the UK and 567 from NZ, comprising 1108 pages in total (double spaced).

3.4.3 Interview Protocol

I informed my respondents about the interview procedure (recorded conversation) before we met, emphasising that the interview was anonymous, and although I would ask about their biographical details, I was more curious about their opinions on certain ‘light’ topics such as fashion (King & Horrocks, 2010:37). After we met, I always explained the procedure again, and assured them that although I was very interested in their opinions and experiences, I was even more interested in their comfort, so if they did not want to answer a particular question it could be skipped. I also said we could stop the tape if they felt uncomfortable. (That happened once, when my respondent talked about missing her mother and started to cry – I immediately switched the recorder off.) I informed my respondents that the recordings were

for me and my convenience, with a very low probability that anyone else would ever listen to them, and the transcripts would be used for academic purposes only. Still, I asked for two permissions: storing the transcripts and storing the recording. Most of my respondents were not very concerned about that, and gave me their oral consent. (I always received written or oral consent prior to recording.)

To the interview I always brought a sheet of paper with the University of Bath (where I was placed at the time) logo, and printed interview questions. During the interview I consulted this printout, but also followed my respondents' narrative. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, in a one-to-one conversation and during one meeting – although there were exceptions. One respondent turned up with her husband and insisted he was present during the interview. (He features as a comic relief, jokingly disciplining her when she strays from the subject, and providing some banter - all of which is documented in a transcript - and provides some interesting male perspective missing in this study.) Another interview was conducted in two parts: my respondent was busy, so we had to meet twice to complete our conversation. There was also an unusual case where I interviewed two respondents at the same time. A woman I arranged to meet brought her friend along and said she wanted to be interviewed as well. It was impossible to refuse – and indeed it was extremely helpful to have another willing prospective respondent – but it was also impossible to make her wait, so I talked to both of them at the same time. (They were happy with that and declared they knew everything about each other anyway.) Although this method undoubtedly affected what has been said, it also showed an interesting dynamic between two friends. I also had a respondent with a sensitive privacy status, whose presence made me revise the way I presented other respondents' data (which I discuss in section 3.6.2 on confidentiality).

All interviews were conducted in Polish, the 'insider language' (Unluer, 2012:5), linking me and my respondents through a 'commodity of discourse' (Fetterman, 2010:40).

Although ‘all linguistic communities are differentiated’ (Botterill, 2015) and – as I wanted to prove in my thesis – there are generational, regional and class differences that make us not ‘speaking the same language’ (Unluer, 2012:5), language still acts as ‘cultural shorthand’ in evoking shared symbols (Fetterman, 2010:27:28:29). When I was talking to my respondents in Polish we were both using not only a similar linguistic system, but a similar system of meaning, rooted in certain cultural values (Fetterman, 2010:40; Unluer, 2012:5). This was important not only during interviews, but also later transcription and data analysis (Fetterman, 2010:71). As I was interested not only in the content of my interviewees’ stories but also the narrative and the way they relayed them, Polish was an obvious choice. As ‘words and expressions have different values in various cultures’ (Fetterman, 2010:40) it was also an interesting exercise for my respondents to translate their experiences from another culture to a Polish discourse. This difference was especially noticed by me when talking to the older Polish community in New Zealand (‘they speak Polish but they do not *sound* Polish’ I noted at the time). It is also relevant than although all of my NZ respondents spoke fluent English, that was not the case amongst the women I talked to in the UK, with some of my respondents speaking very little to no English.

Usually, an interview lasted anywhere from 1-1.5 hours, filling both sides of a 90 minute tape.

3.4.4 Incentives

Although my respondents were not offered and did not receive any incentives (financial or any other) for participating in the study, I always offered to buy them tea/coffee during the interview, or (occasionally) brought cakes/chocolates when invited to their homes. This arrangement was always explained to my respondents ahead of the interview, during recruitment.

3.4.5 Interview Process & Questions

I used semi-structured, open-response interviews with a pre-designed list of questions (King R., 1994:17) (Appendix 3). These questions were open-ended and used in a flexible way, with priority given to respondents' narratives. In terms of their content, most of these questions were not of a strictly personal nature but rather tackled opinions on various subjects, allowing women to decide for themselves how much to share. This in itself provided an interesting insight into different levels of trust between me and Polish women, and a possible speculation on how perceived similarity between us was reflected in their willingness to engage in different levels of closeness. Some of my respondents were more articulate or willing to talk than others, whereas others needed more encouragement. When I noticed that a respondent was struggling with certain topics or did not feel comfortable, I moved on to another subject. In the course of interviewing some questions proved not to be very successful and were, subsequently, dropped; other were added (King, N. & Horrocks, 2010:28). When respondent mentioned something particularly interesting, this theme was pursued, and the order of questions changed. When interviewing older community members, priority was given to their life story and biographical narrative, and those questions that were no longer relevant were not posed.

3.4.6 Ethnographic data

In the most basic sense ethnography is an 'interactive' (Fetterman, 2010:61) way of 'giving voice to people in their own local context' (Fetterman, 2010:1) In the section about my position and role during the fieldwork in both NZ and the UK (section 3.2) I presented my research activity within a frame of a 'multi-integrative' (Weber et al., 2001:479) and 'reflexive ethnography' (Weber et al., 2001:477). As with all fieldwork engagement and 'working with people for long period of times in their natural setting' (Fetterman, 2010:33) an ethnographic approach is inevitable. Every time I saw a respondent I made a note of the

circumstances of the meeting, what she was wearing (clothing, make-up, jewellery), and in what way we interacted. Sometimes this was very short, but in some cases it provided a great deal of supporting information to complement and contextualize my interview data (Fetterman, 2010:37), for example by showing a class-related power dynamic, or (as in the case on NZ) shorter social distance and greater trust between me and my respondents. In a few cases, when I saw something of interest in a respondent's home (for example a traditional Polish doll) I asked for permission to take a picture. In New Zealand, I took many pictures in the Polish House in Newtown, and outside a Polish Church in Berhampore, but also photographed different neighbourhoods, city streets and street fashion. (In that way I was able to confirm my NZ respondents' observation that people in Wellington often wear black; I also captured people walking barefoot in the city centre in the middle of winter.) I was also allowed to take pictures of The Women's League's meetings reports, through which I could gain some understanding of the nature of the League's activity and the way it was protocolled. I came back to the UK with three notebooks full of notes and observations (about New Zealand's culture, society and geography in general), and posted short articles about cross-cultural matters on my blog www.greenteabottle.wordpress.com. This is something that is rather missing from my UK fieldwork: although I was making detailed notes, London was my home for too many years for me to see it with the same, anthropological eyes.

Most of these notes did not make it, in their original form, into my thesis. As my research spans from 2011 to 2016, they serve as a reminder of many relevant observations that could have been otherwise forgotten over time. They also act as an invaluable aid to understanding the local and national context of my research. Spending time with my respondents on-site and getting to know the environment they functioned in contextualizes the interview data, and allows me to confront their narrative with their actual performance.

3.5 Interview Data Analysis

3.5.1 Operationalizing Intersectionality

Intersectionality is known to be methodologically difficult, and requires some acrobatics in data organisation. The very principle of intersectionality is the ‘non-additional approach’ (Staunæs, 2003:105; Bowleg, 2008) to various identities, and the way these intertwine and mix in creating a unique, indivisible identity, that is more than its parts (Bowleg, 2008). (As one researcher phrased it, ‘Once you’ve blended the cake, you can’t take the parts back to the main ingredients’ (Bowleg, 2013)). It is therefore a challenge for researchers to sort and present their data in such way that would preserve the intersectionality principles, and draw attention to the way various identities give meaning and create each other: I described the methodological difficulties of an intersectional approach in Chapter 2, section 2.1. It is worth noting that there have been some very creative methods employed by social scientists in approaching this, for example turning interview data into poetry or ‘constructed conversations’ to avoid ‘privileging one discourse over another’ (Petersen, 2012:810:815). Although turning interview data into poetry may seem unorthodox, it reflects the observation that systematic analysis of intersectional data is problematic, and ‘lived experiences’ may be better captured ‘in a holistic manner’ by art and literature (Petersen, 2012:811).

I faced the same problems as many others before me, namely how to analyse different themes (related to gender, ethnicity, class, age, and migration status) without missing important connections and intersections between them and without losing the big picture (Dey, 1993:47). (This was especially overwhelming when taking into account the amount of data - 1108 pages.) In my data acquisition I followed two intersectional principles: ‘intercategorical’ and ‘anticategorical’ ((McCall, 2005:1783). The interview structure was based on my main research questions and sub-questions, and guided my respondents’ narrative in such way as to make sure that various topics and tropes were explored. At the

same time, my respondents could talk freely and were not disrupted when they veered off-topic. I was particularly concerned with two aspects: what my respondents had to say about certain topics, and when, during the interview, they said this. Therefore, I initially organised the material by questions and question clusters: there were, however, obvious intersections with questions from different clusters, and inconsistencies within the same interviews. This required not only the standard coding and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79), but also noting how the themes related to each other and where they appeared. This involved arranging the same data in various configurations, and comparing answers with the answers from other interviews, and then checking for congruency in the same interview. Certain themes, not particularly tackled by interview questions, emerged on their own, guiding inductive template analysis (King, N., 1994). This was done separately for the UK and NZ data, and these were then subsequently compared.

The fact I translated fragments of transcripts myself accentuated my role as someone who takes respondents' stories, interprets them through translation, and – as a 'co-producer of data' (Rzepnikowska, 2015:69) - disseminates them, second-hand, to the larger audience. Although I acknowledge that my positionality could have altered its 'cultural meaning' (Temple & Koterba, 2009), I made efforts to keep the translation as culturally and linguistically close to the original version as possible.

3.6 Ethics

3.6.1 Ethics approval

My data were collected according to the regulations and ethical guidelines of the University of Bath; as a former research assistant in a Psychology Department I also ensured that data collection abided by the regulations of the British Psychological Society. This thesis is also in line with the UCL Ethics Committee recommendations for the confidentiality, data protection and overseas data collection. Throughout, Polish authorities and organisations in NZ were

made aware of my presence, and enabled my data collection. In Wellington, I was in touch with the Polish Embassy, and consulted the Polish Consul Sławomir Stoczyński. I was also a part of the Cross-Cultural Research Group at the School of Psychology at Victoria University during my fieldwork, and kept contact with local academics and social researchers using their advice and expertise.

3.6.2 Confidentiality

As mentioned in the 3.3.1 on Recruitment Criteria and section 3.3.2 on Recruitment Techniques, I aimed to keep the identity of my respondents anonymous at all times, concealing (when possible) who took part in my study. Some of my New Zealand respondents insisted on giving an interview under their real name: others asked for their names to be changed. I initially changed the names only of those respondents who specifically requested this, and in such cases when the same name repeated more than once.¹³ However, after careful consideration, allowing for the small size of New Zealand Polish networks and complex ties between my respondents, I decided it would be safer to change all the names. While doing this, I used the names of similar connotations and prevalence in their age group. However, as there were multiple name repetitions in both of my datasets, this required quite a lot of creativity to make sure there were no overlaps. As a result, the most frequently used Polish female names are missing, as they were replaced with similar, albeit less popular substitutes. I did the same for the UK respondents – interestingly, almost no one in the UK wanted to give their name, so I automatically changed these using the same technique as in my NZ dataset. I also made an effort to conceal other potentially identifying characteristics. I additionally decided not to include participants' demographic information

¹³ It was in this form that parts of my research were published (Goodwin, K. 2013), and explains the difference between this publication and the names used in the final version of this thesis.

‘per participant’ (Johnston, 2015:3) or ‘line by line’ (Morse & Coulehan, 2015:151), but rather used ‘data ranges’ to describe the whole sample (Johnston, 2015:3) (Appendix).

3.6.3 Representation

As I am, to the best of my knowledge, the only scholar who researched Polonia in NZ (which I jokily refer to as ‘an uncontacted tribe’), I became an ‘expert’ on Poles in NZ. Still, I am very careful not to give the impression that I am somehow hijacking my respondents’ experience by representing them without actually living in the NZ myself for a longer period of time than the duration of my fieldwork.

It is also important to note that, whenever possible, I try to acknowledge the bi-cultural nature of New Zealand and include information on its Māori population. However, as I spent a great deal of my time in New Zealand recruiting and interviewing Polish women, I am in no position to discuss the nuances of the Māori culture and Māori-Pākehā relations beyond the information garnered from the academic literature or from my respondents.

3.7 Respondents

My respondents were 62 Polish women living in the UK (31) and NZ (31) (Appendix 1 and 2).

3.7.1 Respondent clusters

My NZ respondents form only a few groups based merely on their migration wave: Pahiātua Children, post-war non-Pahiātua Children, Solidarity migrants/refugees, and new arrivals with very much individualised migration stories.

The UK respondents are divided into more clusters: post-war generation, Solidarity migrants/refugees, students at Oxbridge, students at other universities, young professionals (20s-mid-30s) educated in Poland, young professionals educated in the UK – both performing

either professional (so called ‘Eurostars’, post-EU ‘cosmopolitan high skilled elites’ (Andrejuk 2011:291)) or non-professional job in the UK, older (35+) professionals, pre-EU and post-EU migrants of different ages, young cleaners and older (50+) cleaners, with a rural and city background etc. They also came from very different parts and zones of London (Appendix 2).

3.8 Unused (but valuable) material

There was a lot of interesting material that – although unfortunately not very relevant to the topic of this thesis and its limited size – could be used for future publication. There was also a material of great anecdotal or historical value, which – although provided colour and background to my respondents’ experiences – could not be very much utilized. My respondents confided some very personal and dramatic stories from the Dachau concentration camp, forced deportations to Siberia, and further journeys to various refugee centres in Isfahan and Pahlevi, Persia (today’s Iran), from where they travelled to New Zealand or England. I feel very privileged to be trusted with these often most shocking and upsetting recollections (often including deaths of family members, sometimes children), which, no doubt, evoked wounds from the past. Other accounts, like the one of my respondent waking up at night in the refugee camp in India and seeing a tiger in the moonlight, or fitting a bikini on Princess Diana, were humorous and poignant and will stay with me forever. I was lucky to meet extraordinary women in both New Zealand and England, and some of their stories go much beyond the purposes of this thesis, which means that some truly fascinating details are not given full appreciation or audience. At the same time, I believe that sharing those memories has built a bond between my respondents and me, and helped to build the rapport so much needed in this type of data collection.

3.9 Conclusions

Chapter 3 explained the technical side of my research, and the way my research interests and questions informed my choice of methodologies and their later execution in the field. In this Chapter I show how these methodologies relate to the wider, theoretical frame of my study (explained in Chapter 2), and how they capture the ‘complexity of lived experience’ of my respondents. I describe how I approached the challenges of the two very culturally and geographically different fieldwork sites of the UK and NZ, and the way I conducted my study and interacted with my respondents. I also expand on the philosophical and epistemological premises of my research (Tuli, 2010:101), showing how the methodologies I chose were not only the most effective for gathering the type of data I was interested in, but also consistent with the principles of intersectionality and its feminist standpoint. As I talk about my role as an ‘outsider-within’ (Beoku-Betts, 1994:414) I show how the issue of insiderness/outsiderness is an integral part of my chosen research paradigm (Tuli, 2019:102), and how understanding this is crucial when discussing the dynamic nature of interacting multiple identities (my respondents’ and mine). When I talk about selective self-presentation strategies (Matejskova, 2014:14:17; Botterill, 2015) employed by both myself and my respondents during our interactions, I touch upon the performative and contextual aspects of identities, so central to this thesis. At the end of the Chapter, I present how theoretical approaches to intersectionality (McCall, 2005:1783) were used in my data analysis, and the ways in which I operationalise the reality of multiple identities within changing environments in my empirical chapters. Chapter 3 gives the background to the practicalities of my data collection, discussing recruitment techniques, interview processes, and the way the material gathered was analyzed. More importantly however it expands on the theoretical aspects that informed the technicalities of my research in the field, and prepares the base for empirical Chapters 5 and 6, clarifying how the empirical data were obtained and handled.

Chapter 4: Migration from Poland to the UK and NZ/Aotearoa

The social location of Polish female migrants in both New Zealand/Aotearoa (NZ) and the United Kingdom (UK) needs to be understood within the context of the demographics of the migratory population during specific migration waves throughout history; the economic, political, regulatory, cultural and geographical environment of the sending and receiving country; and the degree of similarity and/or difference of the receiving country in relation to Poland, especially in those areas that can have direct impact on migrants' performance of social identities like gender, ethnicity and class. As discussed in Chapter 2, these identities are contextual and constantly in process. Using the intersectionality model we can therefore anticipate that different circumstances will set a scene in which specific identities will form and intersect with each other in a specific way.

The migratory experience is – on the group and individual level – a dynamic interaction of cultures, and what emerges is very much specific to the place, time and actors in this interaction. Therefore, while describing the social location of Polish women migrants in NZ and the UK, it is important to understand the broader picture of the mix of cultures from which they come (Cohen, 2008), and the specific conditions of the places to which they move. It is also important to remember that migration is a politically and emotionally charged topic, and can be interpreted in a number of ways. The interaction (and sometimes even clash) of discourses of migration plays a major part in the interaction of cultures. These discourses are rooted in the historical realities of Poland (migration 'from' Poland), and the UK and New Zealand (migration 'to' the UK and New Zealand – and also 'Polish migration' as seen from Poland's/the UK's/NZ's perspective). These discourses are also gendered, highly dynamic and prone to change, for example following the economic crisis (Rzepnikowska, 2015). (I talk about the racialization of Poles in the UK and NZ in sections 4.5.2 and 4.4.2 of this Chapter.)

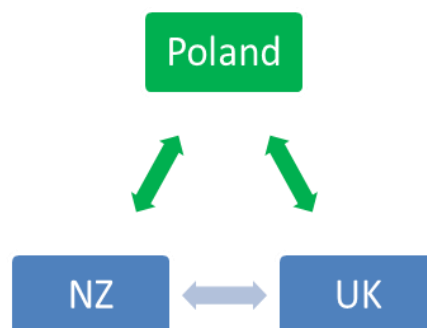
These combined factors create a multi-dimensional matrix of migratory experience, which I discuss in detail in this chapter, with a particular focus on those elements that relate to my research questions and the theoretical approaches to migration I use.

This chapter begins by introducing the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ approach to migration, which will be used to frame the dynamics of the migration movements from Poland to the two receiving countries. I explain why I find this model operational, but also show its limitations and the nuances needed when approaching forced migration, and female migration. I discuss the specific push and pull factors that played a role in Polish migration to NZ and the UK, focusing on those of special relevance to Polish female migrants. As I describe the push and pull model, I consider the role of networks in facilitating migration, and also lifestyle factors as opposed to the more frequently discussed economic ones. Then, I proceed to outline the historical background of Poland as a migrant-sending country with a rich migration culture, laying the basis for understanding the specific migratory movements and discourses of migration I discuss later. Finally, I show the historic, cultural and economic contexts in which different migrations took place with special attention to those relevant to Polish women.

In the next part of the chapter I split NZ and UK migration into two similarly structured sections, discussing all the factors listed above (e.g. demographics/age/education of migrants and contextualising them within the specific geographical/political/economic/cultural environments of NZ and the UK. In the conclusion of this chapter I focus on comparing Poland to NZ and Poland to the UK, but also NZ to the UK when there are significant similarities that may make migrants’ experiences comparable. There are, indeed, some historical points of comparison between migration to both NZ and the UK, and these are discussed alongside some background on the general discourse of migration present in Poland. I also list the characteristics all three countries share. As these factors often overlap, I sometimes refer to them more than once, indicating in which section they are fully explored.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the context in which Polish female migrants operate, and their social location in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Different aspects of both NZ and UK culture are discussed and compared to aspects of Polish culture (as much as it is possible to speak of individual national cultures), in an attempt to understand how similarities and differences between these may affect my respondents' performances. These two migration movements are also shown as part of the bigger picture of the historical realities of Poland that created a specific migration culture and a widespread Polish diaspora. As a push and pull model is used, it is also acknowledged that the decision to migrate is always complex and needs to be understood from both a micro (for example, personality) and macro (for example political and economic situation) perspectives, while taking gender and class dynamics into account. The gender factor is especially important, as the migration practices and narratives around female (especially mothers') migration in Poland differ vastly from those of men's, and happen within the frame of traditional gender role divisions and expectations (Urbańska, 2015:94).

In this Chapter I give a background to my respondents' stories, and show how specific cultural, regulatory/political and geographical factors may affect their migration experiences and narratives.



4.1. This diagram shows links between the cultures discussed in this chapter, with green (diagonal) arrows indicating major points of comparison.

It is important – while comparing my NZ and UK data – to note that many differences that could be, at first glance, attributed to a country difference are, in fact, an effect of comparing differently sized cities with very different dynamics. It is obvious that life in a city populated by half a million people (471,315 living in the Wellington Region registered at the Census 2013, Statistics New Zealand) differs from living in a city of almost nine million (8,538,689 in Greater London, Office for National Statistics 2014). This makes Wellington and London difficult sites to compare. As New Zealand’s general population is only 4,242,048 (Census 2013, Statistics New Zealand), there is, however, simply no New Zealand equivalent of London that would make these comparisons more symmetrical. Although Wellington is New Zealand’s second largest city (after Auckland with its 1,415,550 residents, Census 2013, Statistics New Zealand), it is the country’s capital, and its governmental and administrative centre. This – and also the historical importance of Wellington for the Polish community (which is explored in section 4.4.1 of this Chapter) - makes it, despite obvious differences, a relevant comparator to London. London itself was chosen for a variety of reasons – the most important being the great ethnic and economic diversity of its inhabitants, Poles included. It is however important to remember that my respondents’ answers have to be seen in the context of a large, international city not necessarily representative of England or the UK.

4.1 Differentiating between different groups of migrants: varied ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors as migration motives

This chapter discusses migration from Poland to the UK and NZ largely in terms of different push and pull factors. Although applications of the push-pull metaphor are often criticised by scholars, especially non-economists, for being too simplistic, academics from many disciplines retain the basic principle of distinguishing between features of the origin country which make people leave and attributes of specific destinations which make them attractive to migrants (Hollifield, 2008:194; Teitelbaum, 2008:55-6; Castles and Miller, 2009:22-3).

Although I acknowledge (and address) its shortcomings, I still find this model functional and convenient in explaining certain dynamics of migration processes.

As Kline describes, what we call ‘push’ factors will be forces such as high unemployment rate, overcrowding (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:5), or unfavourable political conditions, while ‘pull factors’ will be those that are attracting, pulling prospective migrants elsewhere: both must be ‘operating for migration to occur’ (Kline, 2004:108). Pull factors may be – for example – real, imagined or the advertised characteristics of the destination (Ritsilä & Ovaskainen, 2001:318), or a legal scheme that allows migrants to undertake labour in the receiving country: the open labour markets characterizing the European Union or, historically, free passage and the promises of a ‘moral and political paradise’ advertised to recruit potential new settlers as part of the New Zealand colonization scheme (Durrer, 2006:181). Adopting a push-pull approach to migration often implies an assumption of ‘utility maximization’, suggesting that ‘relocation takes place if the expected economic utility from migrating exceeds the economic utility from staying in the present location’ (Ritsilä & Ovaskainen, 2001:318). Also, it implies that the decision to migrate is always predated by logical calculations of economic advantages and disadvantages, and made according to the cost-benefits balance (Nowok, van Ham, Findlay & Gayle, 2011:1), with the pull factors outweighing ‘natural inertia’ (Lee, 1966:51). To a certain extent, and as Kline suggests, there need to be these two (push and pull) forces operating for migration to take place – but the way these two forces intertwine suggests that more nuanced variations within this model are needed.

First of all, this approach assumes a certain amount of agency on the part of the prospective migrants, and calculations made largely within the context of free choice. At this point it is important to add that, historically, Polish migrants were often refugees (or, as in the NZ case, child refugees), responding not necessarily to the attractive pull factors of countries

of their choice, but rather to often random parties that offered help. This is, of course, not in contradiction to the push-and-pull model, but locates the 'pull' within the inviting/helping part rather than with the migrant. Even if push factors are multiple (e.g. the unstable political situation in Poland before Martial Law), and the pull factors strong (e.g. better living conditions elsewhere), there may be policies at work that will not allow people to leave the country or to legally settle elsewhere, no matter how rational and calculated their motives. There are many levels on which these decisions are made and exercised, and they all need to be analysed from 'individual, familial, and societal' perspectives (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). Some people are recruited for migration as certain jobs become available, and agency lies almost entirely on the side of the recruiter or agent (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:49-50). Other migrants are 'recruited' by their family and friends. Female migrants are less likely than men to make their own migration decisions, as migration processes are often highly gendered at the economic, cultural, institutional, and political level (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). The agency of women migrants may be compromised by, for example, conservative gender expectations of their culture which preclude women migrating alone. Even when they do migrate, women's migration often takes place in the context of 'gendered responsibilities' which define the way in which they migrate and perform in the new country (Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Urbańska, 2015). For example, they may be targeted by certain (usually highly gendered) market sectors (for example the care sector) and recruited on a basis of their specific age and gender profile (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:48). This 'demand-driven' or 'induced' (Mahler & Pessar, 2006:47) migration may create an attractive pull even for those who do not experience many 'push' factors to move, and are content where they are. Others may be headhunted from abroad by countries looking for talented workers, as is happening in sparsely populated countries such as New Zealand, which is losing its talented workers to Australia (Thorn, 2009:441-442). There are also universities recruiting students and staff

from abroad (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:7). Research shows that those who study abroad are more likely to look for employment there (Parey & Waldinger, 2011:212), utilizing social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) acquired, which, in consequence, facilitates a ‘brain-gain’ for the recruiting country.

Even if we assume perfect agency¹⁴ in decision making, migration is not always rational, and the migration process not always linear (Tabor & Milfont, 2011:819). What is more, many people experience similar ‘push’ conditions and are exposed to the same ‘pulls’, but not all of them migrate (Boneva & Frieze, 2001:478; Polek, Oudenhoven & Ten Berge, 2011:312). Research points to the existence of a ‘migrant personality’ that predisposes some people to moving and adapting more quickly (Polek, Oudenhoven & Ten Berge, 2011:311-312), and which operates independently of the economic reality and its pushes and pulls (Boneva & Frieze, 2001:478). Thorn writes about self-initiated mobility as an ‘increasingly common’ reason for migration undertaken by those operating under ‘boundaryless career paradigm’ (Thorn, 2009:442): we can speculate how it affects country choice. There are also certain psychological/personality traits and values that may incline people to be more open to (or deal better with) change. This was found in Poles moving into the UK (Goodwin, R., Polek & Bardi, 2012:366), and Polish migrants who moved to the Netherlands (Polek, Oudenhoven & Ten Berge, 2011). These traits may play a role of internal push factors, prompting people to look for opportunities and adventures elsewhere, and also making it easier for them to adjust.

¹⁴ ‘Agency’ is not the same as ‘volition’ – as migration research shows, there are degrees of graduation between being a refugee and a fully volitional migrant: often those who do have certain amount of agency and make a decision to migrate do not *want* to do this. They may feel that – due to economic and/or family factors – they simply have no choice and have to make/are expected to make (very gendered) sacrifices (Urbańska, 2015:176, writing about Polish mothers working in Belgium, while their children stayed in Poland, and describing what she called ‘a trajectory of suffering’ (Urbańska, 2015:62).)

It may be more important to focus on general life satisfaction and well-being as pull factors instead of only economic aspects: this approach can still be ‘encompassed within a utility-maximizing framework’, but recognises a bigger picture (Nowok, van Ham, Findlay & Gayle, 2011:1). For example, in a recent study of British migration to New Zealand respondents listed a clean environment, better standard of living, relaxed pace of life, less class division, more racial harmony and better future for their children as their primary motives to move (Tabor & Milfont, 2011:821). It has to be noted that New Zealand has a long history of marketing itself as ‘God’s own country’ (Bracken, 1890: in Fanning, 1940), Utopia, ‘Bountiful Eden’ and Arcadia (Bell, C., 1997:146; Dew, 1999), cultivating its reputation as a great migration and tourist destination (Dew, 1999:53, Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002:653; Durrer, 2006:173). This creates an image of a place you actively go ‘to’, with the migration narrative focused more on ‘pull’ than ‘push’ factors. After all, moving to an ‘egalitarian paradise’ (Ryan, C., 2002) and ‘paradise on Earth’ (Dew, 1999) does not require any more reason or explanation.¹⁵

This is very important when talking about contemporary Polish migration to New Zealand, which is usually not calculated on financial profits (and can actually be quite costly), and separates migrants from their families and networks on a much larger scale than any relocation within Europe. It is also important when talking about women, as their motivations for migration may be related to factors like higher gender equality and more equal wages in the receiving country.

Being ‘pushed’ or ‘pulled’ does not end with a move, as migrants continue to be under the influence of many (often conflicting) pressures: they may, for example, not be sure for how long they are going to stay, and feel pushed and pulled in opposite directions (White,

¹⁵ On one ‘ex-pat’ blog I found a poster that claimed ‘New Zealand – you’d have to be evil to not want to come here’ <https://brokenluggage.wordpress.com>

2011:2): their legal status and economic situation may also change (for the better or worse).¹⁶ These pressures will be very different for those moving within Europe, and those settled in New Zealand, and are connected with the transnational nature of European migration (see section 4.5.1) and individual migratory strategies. They are also connected with the specific conditions of life in both countries (e.g. immigration laws), and the way their migration is seen in Poland. It is important to mention that migration decisions – with their varying degrees of volition and choice – are also taking place in a frame of culturally embedded gendered migration narratives (which are discussed in the next section 4.3, and then explored in more detail in empirical chapters 5 and 6).

Economic calculations alone, however, do not explain why people migrate from high income countries to ones where their wages would be lower (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:5). There are other factors such as general life quality/lifestyle - this is the case in New Zealand, where lifestyle is often a reason for relocation quoted by migrants. In the Longitudinal Immigration Survey from 2009, 76% of the interviewed long-term migrants listed safety and feeling safe as an important factor in their decision making (LisNZ Wave 3, 2009:10), others were ‘pulled’ by ‘clean environment and water’ (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:5). It is true that in the post-accession migration to the UK some of the newcomers reacted to ‘push factors’ like unemployment rates in Poland at that time, but others were rather ‘pulled’ by the new opportunities of an opened Europe (for example university options) and wanted ‘simply to see the world’ (Górny & Osipovič, 2006:94).

For example, the scale of the Polish migration to the UK produced a multitude of migration strategies and led scholars to construct migrant typologies based on people’s motivations. Eade et al. observe and define four possible types: storks (20% - seasonal or

¹⁶ Political changes like Brexit (June, 2016) can also affect the way people feel about their future, and potentially affect their choices, social location and status.

short stay migrants), hamsters (16%, gatherers, intend to invest gains in Poland), stayers (22% - those who intend to settle for good), and searchers (42%, 'intentionally unpredictable' and ambitious) (Eade, 2007:33).¹⁷ With different goals (at least at the beginning, as these strategies can change), potential migrants may find different 'pull factors' attractive. If 'storks' or 'hamsters' would be more attracted by economic opportunities, 'searchers' may respond to 'opportunities to travel and improve English language skills' (White, 2011:33) or the challenges of living abroad and gaining independence. Trevena describes 'drifters' (those who 'pursue other goals than professional advancement or gathering savings for investment'), 'career seekers' and 'target earners' (similar to 'hamsters') (Trevena, 2013:181). Other typologies revolve around planned duration of stay and family ties (Düvell & Vogel, 2006) or links with the home and receiving country while exercising different migration goals (Grabowska-Lusińska & Okólski, 2009).

Economic and lifestyle factors overlap, as higher wages often mean less of a financial struggle and a more relaxed lifestyle too. For Poles, who were isolated for years behind the Iron Curtain, freedom of movement and speech has always been very important, sometimes more than the freedom of markets (Stola, 2010:9). For women (especially those from more traditional communities), migration could also be seen as a liberation from unequal conditions (for example high unemployment and unequal pay) (Coyle, 2007:40), and a socially acceptable separation strategy (Urbańska, 2015:99), although the degree to which these are conscious choices is a matter of discussion. Still, Polish women often face discriminatory recruitment procedures such as age limits - and even in some cases pregnancy tests before being accepted for a new job - and, since 1993, tightened anti-abortion laws, which may indirectly affect their decisions to migrate (Coyle, 2007). Even if prospective migrants are unaware of certain factors, such as greater gender equality and lifestyle options

¹⁷ This paper was initially published as Eade, J., Drinkwater, S., Garapich, M. in 2006.

in the new country, these may be discovered and appreciated later on, and play a part in a decision to stay (or not). This new-found liberation may coincide with – as in the case of many of my respondents – meeting a new (often non-Polish) partner, and deciding to settle.

The post-accession wave of Poles to Britain does not have its equivalent in New Zealand, being part of a European phenomenon, but there are also some cross-overs. If I look at the trajectories of the women migrants (and my respondents) to New Zealand it very often transpires they did not move there directly from Poland, but for example via the UK (sometimes following their New Zealand partners/husbands), which makes them initially participants in a larger migration movement. Still, these two migration destinations are discussed using very different narratives, which often clash.

4.2 Migration from Poland (in general)

Poland is a country with a long history and culture of migration. The Polish diaspora (or Polonia, as it is known in Poland) is not only spread all over the globe, but is also of considerable size. According to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs up to 20 million Poles and their descendants live abroad (MSZ website, 2012), forming the largest ethnic minority in many countries (for example in Iceland (Statistics Iceland, 2016; Napierała & Wojtyńska, 2016)) and Norway (Statistics Norway, 2015)). Polish data for 2011 show 2,060,000 Poles living ‘temporarily’ outside Poland, of which 1,754,000 reside in other European countries. (These numbers describe all those who are abroad for more than three months.) Considering that the 2011 census showed the population of Poland to be around 38 million (GUS 2012, p. 70) it easily makes Poles an established ‘nation of migrants’ (Mazierska, 2009:107).

Turbulent history in Poland has created many powerful ‘push’ factors that initiated migration or migration attempts. Of course, not all migrants’ (and my respondents’) experiences are part of bigger migration movements (and indeed not all of them are, or identify themselves as ‘migrants’). It is, however, important to note that some resettlement to

both New Zealand and Great Britain was triggered by the same, largely political events (unlike Polish migration to the USA or Germany, which was more continuous; on a larger scale; and generally economic). First were the partitions of Poland (from 1795 to 1918), which caused its subsequent 123 years of formal non-existence, which - for Poles - meant oppression and uprisings in 1830-1 and 1863, which created waves of political exiles. Secondly, the Second World War and its aftermath were marked by 'unprecedented population movements' and dramatic forced relocations in and out of Polish territory (Polak 2002:8): these affected about 6.5 million Poles, Germans, Ukrainians, etc. in the six years following World War II (Iglicka, 2001:16, citing Pilch 1994). Although it was not easy to leave the country during the post-war years of the communist regime, 100,000 Poles migrated to the US (1950-1980) and about a million to West Germany (mostly in the 1980s) (White, 2011a:31). Some groups were encouraged or even forced to depart: in March 1968 an aggressive anti-Jewish campaign made 13,000 Polish Jews and those accused of being 'Zionists' leave the country (Stola, 2006).

Interestingly, some of the future 'New Zealand' and 'British' Poles crossed paths in displaced persons camps in Iran, after their 1942-1944 exodus from the USSR, where they were forcibly relocated at the beginning of the WWII after the USSR annexed Kresy, the Eastern Borderlands of Poland. Although very different fates awaited them, at that point often only coincidence decided to which hemisphere they went. Finally, opportunities to exit Poland during the 1980-1 Solidarity period, together with the politically-based rejection of Poland after the imposition of Martial Law in 1981, resulted in an exodus of over one million émigrés during the 1980s. They settled mostly in Germany (Iglicka, 2001:25), but also in other countries such as the UK and NZ; this is the background these migrations share.

The economic difficulties experienced in Poland just before and after the transition of the early 1990s saw waves of economic migration movements to the UK that showed patterns

absent from the migration to New Zealand. In 2005 the unemployment rate for women was 20% (in some areas closer to 50%) and 18% for men (Central Statistical Office 2005:7); this contributed to seeing migration as an ‘unpleasant necessity’ (White, 2010:565). Still, a lack of opportunities at home on its own might not have been enough to undertake the risks and uncertainties of a move. In the parts of Poland where migration is embedded in the culture, it appears as a viable livelihood strategy (White, 2010:565) because of the encouraging example from other members of the family/community, and already existing networks that provide necessary resources and information (Ryan, Sales, Tilki & Siara, 2008:673, White, 2010:574, White, 2011:3). This pattern has certainly been seen in post-accession migration, where quickly developing Polish communities became active in inviting their friends to join them in the UK, and sharing necessary information on the practicalities of the life there. Migration networks reduce the risks and enable ‘chain migration’ (White, 2010:578, White, 2011:6); when confronted with established and available migration paths, young people may join their friends abroad almost ‘automatically’ (White, 2010:572). They may also be invited by family members who have migrated beforehand. Although the traditional migration model constituted a husband-breadwinner sending for his wife and children, there is evidence of a greater tolerance (often brought by an economic necessity) for certain gender role transgressions (White, 2010:566, White, 2011:29), for example mothers migrating and sending money from abroad (Pustułka, 2012:170, Urbańska, 2015).

4.2.1 Migration from Poland: Discourse

Emigration certainly is a large part of Polish history, and its discourse is ever present in Polish culture, although it arouses many conflicting opinions. In the words of Mazierska, who analyses the way migrants are portrayed in popular Polish films, they are treated as ‘an anomaly from the norm and a problem for which somebody is to blame’ (Mazierska, 2009:123). There also seem to be different moral judgments imposed on migration depending

on its political or economic character, with political emigration viewed as heroic and labour migration as shameful (Garapich, 2008:130). Juxtaposed with the size of Polonia, this tendency to condemn ordinary economic migration may appear bizarre. These judgements are also gendered, with specific moral panics and a ‘suspicion culture’ arising around women’s migration and behaviour of Polish women abroad (Urbańska, 2015, chapter 2, 245-292). To understand where these contradictions and ambiguities come from we need to take into account the historical and political context in which the most significant migration waves took place, the role of emigrants in creating the Polish romantic nationalist tradition, and the traditional Polish family model and gender roles that were formed in the context of the independence struggle. (This is discussed in detail in Chapter 5, section 5.1.2.) As Garapich reminds us, the experience of unstable Polish borders (and thus threatened Polish national identity) makes migration ‘a political act’ and is often treated symbolically (Garapich, 2011:6), discussed in moral and highly emotional terms. In Wejs-Milewska’s book about the anthropology of 20th century Polish migration, the post-war emigration of Polish artists is presented through words such as alienation, shock (that shakes every individual migrant, but also the diaspora as a whole, Wejs-Milewska, 2012:16), existential drama, internal moral struggle, tragic conflict, mission, betrayal, escape, and the hell of isolation (Wejs-Milewska, 2012). These are highly charged terms, and this was the narrative that was used by both those who stayed, and those who decided to leave. In the 1950s, during the Cold War, there was much debate in intellectual circles over the question of loyalty: was the traitor the one who left ‘choosing freedom’, or the one who stayed, collaborating with the totalitarian regime? (Wejs-Milewska, 2012:229). Those who did leave often wrote long manifestos explaining their motives (Wejs-Milewska, 2012:103), and made sure everyone knew they remained loyal, and their migration was a political, intellectual and moral mission to improve Poland from the free world.

This discourse may impact on the way migrants – especially women – construct their identities and migration narratives. As with all cultural practices or beliefs, these are tendencies that, when observed in the dataset, require explanation: but, of course, it would be a simplification to say all my respondents displayed them. Still, it is valid to note that the long history of thinking about migration in the context of either escaping war and/or poverty coloured the narrative and even the language Poles use to discuss their own migration experiences. This narrative, in the context of a culture that treats expressions of optimism with suspicion¹⁸ (Doliński, 1996:1001, Kowalski, 1996:180, Wojciszke, 2004:41), combined with the possible economic and lifestyle disparities between migrants and non-migrants, creates a climate in which migrants may have to be careful about what they say and do so as to not ignite ridicule, resentment, or envy.

One way to justify the move and ‘desertion’ from the country (or gendered responsibilities) is to accentuate the necessity of this move (‘for bread, not coconuts’, White,

¹⁸ Complaining is an important part of the Polish (and other East European) culture, and the ‘behavioural scripts’ and ‘rituals’ of ‘expressing dissatisfaction’ are widespread and expected (Wojciszke, 2004:38). In this way Poland is very different from ‘cultures of affirmation’ (for example the US) (Wojciszke, 2004:38): ‘demonstration of optimism’ is simply not a ‘cultural norm’ (Doliński, 1996:1001), and may be even considered ‘boastful’ and impolite (Doliński, 1996:1002). This practice is often recalled and criticized by Polish migrants, who sometimes lament about it at length, and declare that they avoid other Poles on the basis they complain too much. This was visible in my dataset as well, with some Polish women saying they avoid having Polish partners for that reason. Complaining plays a non-instrumental role, which means it is not directed at changing anything, but rather ‘venting frustrations’, ‘soliciting sympathy’ (Alicke, Braun et al. 1996:287), or simply building rapport with a fellow Pole through a well-known cultural script (Wojciszke, 2004:40). This was present in my interviews, when I was invited by my respondents to participate in complaints about, for example, dirty English houses; it was obvious this critique was very light-hearted, and served primarily as a bonding exercise, and a probe to see whether we belonged to the same ‘identity group’ by complaining about the same things (Parzuchowski, 2005:40).

2011:4, conflating two common Polish sayings), with the message that the life of a migrant is not simple. If this type of discourse does not meet a contradictory one – as seems to happen in the case of a ‘lifestyle quest’ to New Zealand (Ahmed, 2013:236), or is further enabled by corresponding discourses of Polish migration in the receiving country – there is a probability that it will be used by Poles to communicate their migration story, no matter what the reasons for arrival actually were. These discourses are so pervading that (as mentioned in Chapter 3, section 3.7.1) those who arrive in the UK not looking for a job, or to perform a high-status job, do not see themselves as ‘migrants’ at all (Andrejuk 2011:291), but rather construct their identity as ‘atypical’, and maybe even ‘less Polish’. It seems that migration to NZ, not very common and less frequent, fails to fall into any available narrative and/or the moral panic present in Poland, and is – to a great extent – counteracted by NZ’s enthusiastic advertising mentioned in section 4.2. Women who venture this far are therefore largely free from being seen through any ready-made narratives. This may be partially because (as discussed later in section 4.4) migration to NZ is rather clear-cut, non-transnational, does not require any systematic community response back in Poland, and does not seem to produce any threatening social remittances (Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011).

4.3 Migration from Poland to New Zealand/Aotearoa¹⁹

New Zealand/Aotearoa (Māori for ‘the land of the long, white cloud’) consists of two islands which lie in the Southern hemisphere, surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. New Zealand’s islands are seismically unstable, with a risk of earthquakes, tsunamis, eruptions of volcanoes, and also storms, landslides and floods due to high levels of rainfall and harsh weather

¹⁹ Fragments of this section (with minor changes) were published in Goodwin, K. (2013). Pole with a twist: the performance of class, gender and ethnicity of Polish women living in New Zealand. In *Immigration: Policies, Challenges and Impact* (2013). Ed. Tartakovsky, E. New York, NOVA, pp. 319-339.

(McSaveney & Nathan, 2012). These realities are not familiar to Poles, as Poland lies in the middle of the Eurasian tectonic plate away from faultlines, and is geologically older. NZ is one of the most remote places on Earth, its nearest biggest neighbour (Australia) being 2000 km away. Its capital, Wellington, is almost 18,000 km away from Warsaw, capital of Poland: there is a +11 hour time difference between these two countries, and the seasons are the opposite to the ones in the Northern hemisphere. A journey from Poland to New Zealand consists of multiple flights, out of which two would take longer than 10 hours. New Zealand's population is currently 4,242,048 (Census 2013, Statistics New Zealand) – in comparison, there are 38 million people living in Poland (GUS 2013:17). These extreme migration conditions and the remoteness of NZ can repulse or attract with the same force. In one respect, those who travel so far may be perceived as less mainstream, more adventurous and ultimately mobile; after all, they have travelled to the world's end (seen from a Polish perspective). (As mentioned in Chapter 3, they have completed a 'quest', conquering many 'monsters and obstacles' on the way (Ahmed, 2013:236)). On the other hand, New Zealand itself is isolated, and living there may be seen as being cut off from everything that goes on 'in the bigger world'. (Indeed, NZ was often seen as suffering from a 'peripheral survival' (Sinclair, 1961:33) and the complex of the provinces (Sinclair, 1961:40).) Such physical distance and travel logistics do not allow for transnational migration: communication, for example through Skype, is to a certain extent hindered by a time difference, and there are fewer 'comings and goings'. Flying to Poland is an expensive and time consuming endeavour undertaken less often, and – based on what my respondent told me – visits to Poland are longer. If relatives visit, they stay longer too. The opportunities for such visits may be limited for family and friends, making it difficult for them to relate to the everyday problems faced by Polish migrants and to participate in their lives. Complicated and multiple travel routes reduce the chance of meeting other Poles on the way, and creating a communal travel culture.

Net migration in New Zealand is currently 15,174 (Census 2013, data from September 2013). During the last 10 years the number of long-term permanent migrants has never exceeded 8,000 per year and oscillated between 6,643 (2003) and 7,728 in 2013 (International Migration and Travel, Statistics New Zealand 2013). At the same time there is a slight increase in the numbers of New Zealanders leaving for jobs in Australia, although it has been suggested that general population growth has been responsible for this, and this migration trend is actually decreasing (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2013). Nevertheless, New Zealand is described as ‘fairly unique’ among developed countries, as 24% of its skilled citizens live overseas (Bedford & Poot, 2010, in: Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:4), and levels of emigration and immigration are ‘both extremely high’ (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:4). In 2007 44,273 New Zealanders left, looking for opportunities elsewhere, and only half as many returned (Thorn, 2009:446).

There are currently 2,004 Polish born residents living in New Zealand, with a further 1,965 claiming Polish identity and belonging to more than one ethnic group (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).²⁰ As Poles make up 0.04% of the total population of New Zealand these numbers are, however, often rounded and not fully explored (for example, Census 2013 showed 2,166 Poles living in New Zealand, but, although it did mention that 64.7% of these were born overseas and 35.5% were born in New Zealand, we do not know how many were actually born in Poland).

²⁰ While writing about New Zealand I use two sets of data from the 2006 and 2013 Census. Although the 2013 data seem closer to the time of my fieldwork and may be more relevant, it is important to note that I wrote a large part of my chapters in 2011 and 2012 (based on 2006 data), which I later corroborated with the new dataset released by Statistics New Zealand in 2013. It is also worth mentioning that the 2011 census was cancelled due to the Canterbury earthquake, and my research fell within an unusual seven year gap between the censuses.

Some of these are new arrivals, some members or descendants of the established Post-War community. It is not known how many of these are women – in the 2006 Census report the number of Poles was not broken down into sexes, and my private inquiry at the Statistics New Zealand Office did not shed any light on this question. Historically, Polish communities developed in a) Nelson (19th century) b) Wellington (after WWII), and there are now Polish Associations functioning in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton and Wellington. The fastest growing regions in terms of general population growth currently are a) Auckland (8.5% increase) and b) Nelson (South Island) (8.2% increase) (Census 2013), so we can speculate that that is where the Poles settle as well. And indeed, according to the 2013 census 36.8% of those declaring Polish ethnicity lived in Auckland region, with the median age being 35.7 years (2013, Statistics New Zealand).

Wellington, where I spent three months interviewing my respondents, lies in the southern-western coast of the north island, and is (since 1865, when it replaced Auckland) New Zealand's capital (Maclean, 2015). Wellington's Region has a population of 471,315, out of which 58,338 are Māori (Census 2013, Statistics New Zealand).

4.3.1 Poles in NZ: Historical context and its impact on today's community

Who are the Poles who live in New Zealand? Quite unexpectedly, Polish-New Zealand liaisons have always been more frequent than their geographical distance would lead us to anticipate, and they left their mark on the make-up of today's Polish community there. It is therefore impossible to fully understand the experience of Polish migrants (and the way they are seen and received) without placing them in the historical context of relations between these two countries. As mentioned before, Polish history has always been turbulent, and indeed, all 'organized' settlements of Poles in New Zealand seem to be connected directly to the difficulties Poles were undergoing at home.

In the 1840s about 1000 Poles arrived in New Zealand to escape the unstable political conditions in divided Poland (and therefore were often recorded as Germans, Austrians or Russians) (Sawicka, 2009). Although we know that this Great Migration movement saw mainly Polish intelligentsia moving abroad (usually to France, and some to England), we do not know much about the profile of these settlers. In the early 1870s more Poles arrived, using a scheme funded by the government of Julius Vogel (New Zealand's Prime Minister from 1873 to 1875), and later formed small settlements on both North and South Islands (Sawicka, 2009).

The most important event was, however, the arrival of the Polish children. The unusual and moving story of the Polish children and their later success in integrating and functioning in New Zealand society has had a lasting effect on the way Poles are still perceived in New Zealand. On 1st November 1944 the boat USS General Randall arrived in Wellington harbour, carrying 732 Polish children and 102 adult staff (Manterys, 2004). Most of the children were orphans who had lost their families in the Siberian gulags, and they came from the refugee camps in Isfahan, Iran. Originally, they were from Kresy, the Eastern Borderlands of Poland annexed by the USSR at the beginning of the WWII. After Germany's attack on the USSR those who survived were murdered or evacuated further east, mainly to Iran (Faruqi, 2000): 20,000 of these were children. In 1944 New Zealand's government issued an invitation. It is hard to overstate what an event this was in the post-war history of New Zealand. The children were greeted by New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser, Polish Consul Count Kazimierz Wodzicki and his wife Countess Maria Wodzicka (a Polish Red Cross delegate). A crowd of well-wishers gathered on the shore, and hundreds of New Zealand children waved Polish flags (Skwarko, 1974). In the words of the Polish Honorary Consul John Roy-Wojciechowski (himself a war orphan) the children 'were not immigrants but guests, invited for a short but undetermined period of time' (Polish Consulate in New

Zealand): inviting them was ‘not so much a deliberate immigration policy, but rather a humanitarian vision’ (Manterys, 2004). 163 km north of Wellington, near the small rural town of Pahiatua, a Polish camp was established. Krystyna Skwarko, who came to Pahiatua as one of the staff members, recalls many joyful moments from the camp’s life, and how, after arriving, all the children and staff believed it was just a temporary stay (Tomaszyk, 2004). These dreams, however, were dashed. Following the Yalta agreement Poland fell to a Soviet-controlled communist regime, which was suspicious of those who had ‘been in the capitalist West’ (Manterys, 2004:23). The eastern parts of Poland, where most of the children came from, were now permanently incorporated into the Soviet Union (and never recovered), and Poland lost its sovereignty for the next 50 years. Consequently, in 1949 the camp was closed and the children sent to schools, universities or apprenticeships. Polish hostels were established for the younger girls and boys: the last of these closed in 1958.

We know that 648 out of the initial 733 children stayed in New Zealand. 75 graduated from school (43 girls and 32 boys) and 50 from university (14 girls and 36 boys) (Skwarko, 1974, part 3 B). As they grew up together, they kept in very close contact and often married in their own circles. When the war ended, some 200 ex-soldiers found their children in New Zealand and joined them (Sawicka, 2009). Many of them are still alive and active in Polish communities. In 1956, in one of Wellington’s suburbs (Newtown), the Polish House was opened, which still hosts a significant number of formal and informal activities. There is The Women’s League, Orleńa Polish Dance Group, Returned Ex-Servicemen's Association, Senior’s Club, Polish School and Polish Chaplaincy with a Church in Berhampore (Polish Community New Zealand website, 2013). It is important to add that religious education was an important part of the camp’s life, and the Catholic faith was cultivated as an integral part of Polish ethnic and national identity and of being patriotic.

Former New Zealand MP Gerald O'Brien commented that 'the Polish character melded well with that of New Zealanders' (O'Brien, 2004) and expressed the opinion that Polish migration had had a very positive impact on New Zealand's politics and culture. A short film about the Polish children made by Kathleen O'Brien concludes with the comment that 'The children of the Polish children, these bright-eyed New Zealanders, prove that the migration to this country back in the 1944 has been a success – for them, and for us' (O'Brien, K., 1966). This positive attitude and shared history creates a very inviting climate for more contemporary migrants. That is not to say that Polish arrivals never experienced any discrimination on the individual level (I will come back to this in Chapter 6, section 6.3.2); still, the public discourse is rather positive, with Pahiatua Children earning the reputation of being 'self-sufficient, hard-working loyal citizens' (Wellington City Council, 2004).

After the war 700 Poles arrived in New Zealand through the International Refugee Organization, which helped former prisoners of war and concentration/labour camp survivors. In the 1980s, 300 Poles from the refugee camps in Austria²¹ re-located to New Zealand (Sawicka, 2009), in some cases sponsored by New Zealand's churches and communities. Since then only individual 'free emigration' has taken place (The Polish Association in Christchurch, 2013). We can expect – basing this on the demanding immigration regulations (these are discussed in the next section 4.4.2) – that new arrivals will be young, highly educated, working and/or married to New Zealanders. The 2013 Census states that the median age for those declaring Polish ethnic identity²² is 35.7 years (this seems

²¹ During the Cold War (1945-1989) Austria became a popular country for a transit migration for around two million people from Central and Eastern Europe. In late 1981 the Austrian refugee camp in Traiskirchen accepted more than 20,000 Poles: from there, they travelled to various countries, including NZ (Lewis, P., 1981; Tagliabue, 1981; Jandl & Kraler, 2003)

²² Unfortunately these data do not differentiate between those who were born in Poland and those born in New Zealand, nor between the sexes.

to be reflected in my sample: out of 31 women interviewed, 16 were in their thirties, with an average age of 34. The average age for the overall sample was 37, with ages ranging from 22 to 77), and 89.5 percent of those ‘age 15 and over had a formal qualification’, with a median income of 27,100 New Zealand dollars (Census 2013, Statistics New Zealand). This seems to be reflected in the ages and high education levels of my respondents (Appendix).

Although there is quite a lot written about the history and fate of Pahiataua Children (often memoirs printed in volumes with small circulation or self-published), there seems to be virtually no published academic literature on this diaspora, especially when it comes to more contemporary migrants. There is some potentially useful data from neighbouring Australia and, where the Polish community has been well researched; and there are certain similarities these two communities share: for example, the role of geographical remoteness and the ‘tyranny of distance’ on community formation (Markowski & Kwapisz-Williams, 2013:14). (This was also explored in Chruścińska’s research on Poles in South Africa (Chruścińska, 2015).) These studies definitely contribute to the understanding of how a ‘stable [and] structured Polish diaspora’ develops in places far from Poland, and how it compares with more transient, mobile Polish communities in Europe (Dzięglewski, 2012:15). The main difference is that the Polish community in Australia amounts to 48,678 people (Census 2011, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012), which naturally generates more research (and research funding) possibilities, and also more interest. This puts me in an interesting position of treading on a fairly unexplored field; it also means there is little scholarly background and few publications about this particular community against which I can set my data.

4.3.2 NZ: Regulatory and Ethnic Environment in relation to Poland

The long history of mutual interactions between Poland and New Zealand seems to confirm the commonly held self-image of Poles as a nation travelling to the furthest parts of the Earth, and reinforce an image of New Zealand as a ‘New World’ willing to accommodate new

arrivals. Historically, New Zealand was itself, historically, a nation of migrants, and its diversity today 'exceeds that of Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia' (Sibley & Ward, 2013:701). Census data from March 2013 showed that 31.6% of New Zealand's population is foreign born: 74% of New Zealanders are of European (mainly British) origin (Pākehā), 14.9% are Māori, 7.4% Pacific Islanders and 11.8% are Asian) (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

This ethnic make-up of New Zealand's society is a result of many years of immigration policies that favoured European settlers, particularly those of British, Protestant, Anglo-Celtic origins (Masgoret & Ward, 2008:227). These policies were introduced at the end of the 19th century: from 1920 it became difficult for the non-British (especially Chinese) to enter. The British did not need any permits until 1974 (Beaglehole, 2012), and this ethnic preference lasted well into the late 1980s, where it was exchanged for an 'occupational priority over nationality' approach (Beaglehole, 2012). In its changed form and after many reforms (a points system for qualifications, employability, age etc.) this policy is in place today: the longitudinal Immigration Survey from 2009 showed that 57.8% of interviewed long-term migrants to New Zealand were admitted on the basis of their skills (followed by 19.6% migrating with a partner, and 6.2% following their family) (LisNZ Wave 3, 2009:3).

Prospective migrants need to prove their willingness to work, (estimated) contribution to NZ's budget, in some cases pass the language test and must be in excellent health (with certain exceptions regarding refugees; but not students) (Beaglehole, 2012). Poles do not need a visa to visit NZ – they can stay there for three months without any permits for tourist purposes – but if they plan a long-term stay, there are strict procedures to which they must adhere. The young (20-35) and skilled may apply for a Silver Fern Visa, which gives them 9 months to look for employment, but they are expected to prove they speak English and have funds to finance themselves during that time. If they find work during this time, they can then

stay in NZ for two years (Immigration New Zealand, 2013). These regulations shape the social position of successful migrants as professionals and/or contributors rather than beneficiaries of the New Zealand system, enhancing their chance of being accepted as equals by members of the receiving society. At the same time there is still an informal bias towards those from English speaking countries and Europeans (Ward & Masgoret, 2008:241); interestingly, this preference is shared by both Pākehā and Māori (Sibley & Ward, 2013:709). This migration policy has to be understood in the historical context of New Zealand being founded on a ‘bicultural framework based on an evolving interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi’ (Sibley & Ward, 2013:701). This Treaty (signed in 1840) regulated Pākehā-Māori relations, and is seen as a ‘founding document of New Zealand’ (Sibley & Ward, 2013:701) as a primarily bi-cultural nation (Masgoret & Ward, 2008:228). For example, Māori is one of the country’s official languages (there are three, the other two being English and NZ sign language), and it is widely present in the public space and spoken by 4.1% of the population. It seems, however, that the Treaty’s regulations are not adequate to grasp today’s multicultural reality in New Zealand (Sibley & Ward, 2013:701).

This is reflected in attitudes towards migration. Overall, these are very positive, and New Zealanders ‘endorse multiculturalism to a greater extent than Australians and EU citizens’ (Masgoret & Ward, 2008:227). At the same time, there is a slight difference between the Pākehā and Māori, with Māori holding ‘more anti-immigrant attitudes and perceptions’ (Leong & Ward, 2011:60; Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:9:11). The Treaty of Waitangi gave the Māori – ‘people of the land’ (*tangata whenua*) – various rights and privileges not shared by other ethnic groups, (Ip, 2003:227; Sibley & Ward, 2013:701). As Māori are currently significantly outnumbered by Pākehā and often socioeconomically disadvantaged (Leong & Ward, 2011:48-49), they sometimes see growing multiculturalism as ‘part of an effort to dilute Māori claims to an equal voice in New Zealand’s future’ (Ip,

2003:245-246) and are worried about migration diminishing their position (Grbic, 2010:126).²³ This situation also makes it difficult for those migrants who are neither Pākehā nor Māori (Ip, 2003:227), as their admission is often seen as ‘breaching the spirit of the Treaty’ and undermining Māori ‘indigenous rights [and] socio-economic progress’ (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:7). It is, however, important to note that even with these views present, acceptance of migrants is still very high (Ward & Masgoret, 2008:233).

As Poles are of European origin, they can easily pass for (and identify themselves with) Pākehā, (especially if they are women who married New Zealanders and decided to change their surnames) but at the same time they can also be seen as a part of the ‘third force’ of a growing multiculturalism. New Zealand’s ethnic profile is also in stark contrast with the profile of Poland, which is currently the most ethnically homogenous country in Europe, with 94% of the population classified as Polish (GUS 2011:18). This means they have to find themselves in a multicultural environment that forces them to structure their identity in relation to ethnic complexities they may not have experienced at home. At the same time, New Zealanders’ perception of Polish culture is largely built through the touching and successful story of the Pahiataua Children (previously mentioned in section 4.4.1), and seems to be rather positive, or at the very least neutral. This neutrality, combined with the small numbers of Poles make Polish women rather unrecognizable at first glance as Polish, or recognizable only as ‘vaguely European’. This may create what I call a ‘discourse void’, where Poles’ social location is not immediately obvious, and they have to find their place themselves:

²³ As research has shown, support for bi-cultural policy is also shared by other socially deprived groups (regardless of their ethnicity) and women, which provokes interesting questions about gender and class relations in New Zealand (Sibley & Liu, 2013:171).

I came here, and I suddenly I became Polish. Totally: I started to surround myself with Polish items ... I just didn't know any Poles. But I started wearing Cracovian shawl, T-shirts 'Only Poland', I have wooden birds everywhere ... [inaudible] lots of Polish books. And I have Polish posters hung everywhere. (...) And I think this is because we all need some, you know, identity. And I am not a New Zealander, so you start searching. (Klara, 27, R13NZ)

4.3.3 NZ: Cultural, Political and Socio-Economic Environment in comparison to Poland

As a former colony, New Zealand has retained its links with Britain (as was discussed in the Introduction, section 1.5.1): it is a parliamentary democracy but also a constitutional monarchy (Westminster system) with the Queen as Sovereign (represented by the Governor General) (plus the Māori King who is recognised but has no legal power). Poland is a Parliamentary republic. The British class system used to be present in New Zealand (especially in the South Island, with Christchurch referred to as 'the most English city outside of England' (Christchurch Star-Sun, 28 Jan 1954, quoted in Glamuzina & Laurie, 1995:29), where 'cultural values of a middle and upper-class elite' have been regarded as 'desirable Englishness' (Glamuzina & Laurie, 1995:29). Still, at the beginning of the twentieth century William Ranstead described New Zealand as a 'Socialist Canaan', a place where 'there is no aristocracy, no snobbery. There are no very rich people and no poor' (Ranstead, 1900). Indeed, New Zealand is often believed to be a country where class models are irrelevant (Nolan, 2005). Although this approach is considered to be a myth and desired self-image rather than reality (Nolan, 2007), social equality in New Zealand is high.

One of the frameworks I adopted from cross-cultural psychology is Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory,²⁴ which compares cultural values of 76 countries across six cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2010, 2011). If we look at cultural profiles of New Zealand and

²⁴ This model was originally developed in the 1960s; in this thesis I am referring to Hofstede's more recent publications.

Poland, we see some similarities, some of which are more relevant to the topic of this thesis than others. The one that seems most interesting for the purpose of my work is Power Distance Index (PDI), describing tolerance for unequal power distribution and belief that ‘inequalities amongst people should be minimized’ (Hofstede, 2011). New Zealand’s score is low (22): this tendency (prevalent across Australasia) is often called A Tall Poppy Syndrome (TPP) (Feathers 1989 in: Kirkwood, 2007:366, Peeters, 2004:5) or ‘crab mentality’, alluding to crabs in the basket that will ‘go out of their way’ to pull back that one crab who tries to get out (Spacey, 2015:1). It illustrates the pressure to ‘not stand out’ (Kirkwood, 2007; Spacey, 2015) and affects people’s behaviour when it comes to display of wealth and status. From the 1980s onwards the Gini co-efficient indicator measuring income inequality in NZ grew, and the ‘gap between the lower middle class and poor households’ widened (Statistics NZ, July 2014; OECD report 2014). Although some state this fast emerging disparity ‘killed [New Zealand’s] egalitarian paradise’, there is also evidence that these gaps are ‘muted’ because of a ‘still present pressure not to flaunt’ wealth (Rashbrooke, 2014).

This tendency is also visible in NZ’s working culture where ‘hierarchy is established for convenience, superiors are always accessible’ (Hofstede, 2011). Poland scores 68, revealing a hierarchical structure where ‘everybody has a place and which needs no further justification’ (Hofstede, 2011). New Zealand’s culture is ‘loose’ and as such has weak social norms and an acceptance of deviant behaviour (Gelfand et al., 2011). This may be better understood if we look at the low NZ Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) rank (49). New Zealanders feel relaxed in ambiguous situations, willing to try new things and ‘make plans as they go along’ (Hofstede, 2011), not feeling threatened by the new and the unknown. In contrast, Poland scores 93, showing ‘emotional need for rules’, ‘rigid codes of belief and behaviour’ and strong need for security (Hofstede, 2011).

Poland is also ‘tighter’ (a tightness score of 6.0, compared to New Zealand’s 3.9), which reflects ‘higher situational constraint’ (Gelfand et al, 2011:1102). Notably, in Gelfand’s analysis, countries such as Poland, which have experienced considerable historical unrest, have ‘much stronger norms’ (Gelfand, 2011). This may affect the way my respondents behave in public and manifest in, for example, more formal dress code. Inequality in society has been correlated with low trust levels between its members (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010:52), high levels of stress and decreased well-being, health and life-expectancy (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010:71:73).

New Zealand has a long reputation for prosperity, and until the early 1950s living standards were the third highest in the world (Galt, 1995). Today New Zealand ranks 6th on the Human Development Index (Human Development Report, Malik 2013) and number 5 on the Prosperity Index (compared to Poland in 34th position) (Legatum Prosperity Index, 2013). The image of New Zealand as a ‘safe, family friendly, and caring society’ with a ‘relaxed pace of life’ was quoted as one of the main reasons for migration by New Zealand’s long term migrants (Ward, Tabor & Leong, 2013:4-5, quoting LisNZ 2009b, Department of Labour). In Mercer’s Quality of Living survey for 2012, New Zealand appeared in 4th place among the countries of the world, with Auckland in 3rd place when life quality in cities was compared (Mercer Consulting, 2013).

International and local surveys consistently show high life satisfaction amongst New Zealand residents. 2008 New Zealand General Social Survey reported that 86% of New Zealanders aged 15+ were ‘satisfied with their life overall’ (New Zealand General Social Survey, Statistics New Zealand 2008), and the World Gallup Poll places New Zealand in 13th place on their happiness ranking (World Happiness Report, 2013:22). Poland was in 51st place. As Māori, New Zealand’s indigenous population, are still amongst the more socially disadvantaged due to previous discriminatory policies, they report lower (although still

objectively high) life satisfaction levels than the non-Māori: 81.5% Māori of 8000 people polled stated their life satisfaction was ‘high’, compared to 86.5% of the non- Māori (Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand General social survey, 2012). Overall, women reported slightly higher life satisfaction than men (86% vs. 85%), with the biggest difference for women aged 25-44 (32% reported to be ‘very satisfied with their life overall’ compared to 26% of the men) (Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand General social survey, 2008/2009).

In March 2013 New Zealand ranked first in The Economist Glass Ceiling Ranking (The Economist, 2013). It is true that New Zealand fares exceptionally well in almost all gender-related rankings, which can also be linked to the finding that women’s status is linked to general social equality levels (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010:58). In 2013 the Global Gender Gap Index - measuring gender equality rather than women’s empowerment²⁵ on various dimensions (economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, political empowerment) - placed New Zealand 7th in their general ranking²⁶ and 1st amongst 136 countries when it came to women’s educational attainment. Comparatively, Poland was in 54th place. The biggest difference is in wage equality for similar work: New Zealand is in 20th place, Poland is 122nd (Global Gender Gap Index, 2013).

By contrast, post-war female migrants faced different realities of life in New Zealand. The 1950s in New Zealand were the ‘golden age of a housewife and of female domesticity’ (Nolan, 2004) and for many years the country was a ‘male breadwinner welfare state’ (Nolan, 2007). In 1951 only about 10% of married women were earning (Nolan, 2007). This was not congruent with the experience of Polish women who were used to supporting their families,

²⁵ The Global Gender Gap Index was introduced in 2006 and, to certain extent, replaced the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) and Gender Inequality Index (GII), which is part of the Human Development Index

²⁶ New Zealand’s position seems to be fairly stable: since GGGI was introduced, it has always been in the first/top 10 countries.

especially in the absence of their husbands during wars and uprisings. Even then, though, New Zealand was one of the most progressive places when it came to women's rights. (In 1893 it had become 'the first self-governing country in the world in which all women had the right to vote' (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2013).) The 'stay at home' expectation was not, however, always an option for young women from the post-war migration, since – as orphans – they had to rely on themselves. The lack of role models also affected their own performance of the mother role, about which I write more in Chapter 5. Today the employment rate for women in New Zealand is 62.6% (Statistics New Zealand, 2012) – in Poland it is 57.5% (Eurostat, 2012), with general unemployment rates for both countries at 6.4% for New Zealand (New Zealand, Census 2013) and 10.1% for Poland (Eurostat, 2012). As there was never Polish labour migration to New Zealand and migration itself is costly, it is hard to speculate whether levels of unemployment (especially for women) in Poland influenced any individual decision to migrate directly.

4.4 Migration from Poland to the United Kingdom

As a European country, United Kingdom is physically close to Poland; there are some about 2000 kilometres between Warsaw and London, which can be easily crossed by car, coach, or plane. Historically, however, UK was on the other, Western side of the Iron Curtain, and only recently – since the 2004 accession to the European Union – did it become symbolically and economically available for Polish migrants. With (to date) free movement within the EU zone and cheap airlines available (Burrell, 2011:1024), there is an option (although of course not available to all migrants) to go to Poland for a weekend or a dental visit, and to live a transnational life commuting between these two countries. Although there is a history of mutual relations and an established post-war Polish community, the post-accession years were the most defining for the demographic and cultural interchanges between UK and Poland. (I discuss this later, in section 4.5.1.)

The United Kingdom's population is currently 63.7 million (mid 2012 estimate, Office for National Statistics) – this compares to 38 million people living in Poland (GUS 2013:17). Net migration in the UK is (as measured in August 2013) 176,000 long-term migrants – a slight fall from the previous year (Office for National Statistics, 2013). According to the latest census there are 579,000 Polish born people living in England and Wales (Census 2011, Office for National Statistics), out of which 292,681 are women (Nomis, official labour market statistics, based on Census 2011). The Polish national statistical office recorded 625,000 in Great Britain in 2011 (GUS, 2012). Even though Poles constitute only 1% of British society, the speed with which the community has grown is unprecedented (Dzięglewski, 2012:17). In a short time they had become a 'statistically significant ethnic minority' (Burrell, 2009:7), and the largest group of foreign-born residents in many parts of England. This is a huge change from the 2001 Census which recorded 60,711 Polish born people living in the UK (Census, 2001); these numbers were stable until 2004 Poland's EU accession (of which I talk in detail in section 4.5.1). Today, Polish has become England's second language (546,000 speakers), and Britain's third (only slightly losing out to 562,000 Welsh speakers) (Office for National Statistics, 2011), and Poland has become 'the most common country of origin for non-UK born mothers' with 21,156 children born in 2012 – 2.9% of all live births (Office for National Statistics, 2012).

Geographically, the Polish community is 'distributed very widely' (Burrell, 2009:7) and not limited to big cities, but the largest percentage of Polish speakers is in Greater London: 147,816 (2.1%) (Census, 2011). The largest concentration of Poles is in South-West London, especially in the Borough of Ealing, where they constitute 6.4% of all residents (Census 2011, Office for National Statistics).

All (but one) of my respondents were London residents, their geographical location within London often being a reflection of the historical concentration of Poles around London, and also their class background and their ethnic affiliations.

4.4.1 Poles in UK: Historical context and its impact on today's community

Early Polish-British relations disappear into the complicated annals of European history; during the Great Emigration of 1835-1846, at a time when Poland was partitioned, many sought refuge abroad. After WWI, in 1931, there were around 4500 Poles in London (Sword, 1996:21-22), mainly former prisoners of war (POWs). During World War II Poles were numerous in the British Royal Air Force, with Polish pilots forming sixteen squadrons (RAF website, 2013) and constituting the second largest ethnic group in the Force. In 1939 Poland installed its government in London (Coutouvidis, 1984:285): although the British government ceased to recognise it in the 1945, it continued to reside there until the early 1990s.

This discontinuation of recognition of the Polish Government in Exile in London put 249,000 Polish troops, previously serving under the British Armed forces and stationed in England, in a legal limbo. Some of the members of the Polish allied forces (and refugees) were unable to return to Poland (Błaszczuk, 2017:71), some were unsure what to do and decided to 'wait and see' how the situation in Poland would develop (Sword, 1986:370). As the post-war maintenance of Polish Armed Forces was often seen as a matter of 'honour' (Sword, 1986:369), there were also practical concerns. The main question was what to do with thousands of displaced and disillusioned troops, mainly men; 'dislocation' and 'the breakdown of administration and discipline' was feared (Sword, 1986:369). In May 1946 the Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC, *Polski Korpus Przysposobienia i Rozmieszczenia*) were founded, with the goal of providing former Polish soldiers and air force 'retraining and education' and help them to 'settle into a civilian life' in the UK (Błaszczuk, 2017:71-72).

Resettlement camps were created to temporarily accommodate Polish troops and, later, their families (Błaszczuk, 2017:72). A year later, the Polish Resettlement Act was drafted, also aimed at political refugees, regulating their employment rights, access to health services and pension schemes (Błaszczuk, 2017:72). This Act guaranteed the right to stay in the UK to all ‘Polish servicemen and women who had fought in Western Europe, and did not want to return to communist Poland’ (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:31). This was unprecedented legislation, and the first of its type in the UK (Błaszczuk, 2017:72). The Committee for the Education of Poles, founded the same year, was provided with funds by Parliament, and assisted the Poles in their ‘absorption into British schools and British careers’ (Błaszczuk, 2017:72). The Committee was an autonomous (although publically funded) organisation, and provided ‘language and work skills’ to Poles of all ages, operating until 30th September 1954 (England Board of Education (afterwards Ministry of Education), 1956).

As going back was often considered ‘sympathising with the new [Soviet] regime in Warsaw’ and betrayal (Sword, 1996:26) those who decided to stay – mainly former members of the Home Army (AK), but also POWs from German and Soviet camps – saw themselves as patriotic elite protecting Polish traditions and values (Sword, 1996:25). Not everyone stayed in the UK though, with Poles moving to Australia, Canada, and some going to Poland irregardless. (It has to be added that, although most Poles accepted the assistance to settle or move elsewhere, there were also those ‘recalcitrant Poles’ who were unable or unwilling to make a decision; they were kept in separate camps, and created many bureaucratic problems for the British government (Sword, 1086:367)). The European Volunteer Worker Scheme (EVWS), aimed at ‘recruitment [of] (...) Eastern European refugees from the Displaced Persons camps in Germany and Austria’ (Kay & Miles, 1988:215). Mixing humanitarian and economic goals was controversial, with refugees complaining of being misled, allocated to low status jobs and unable to transfer between employments, and ‘treated like mere servants’

(Kay & Miles, 1988:229). Feminization and racialization of the job market was an issue too, with various assumptions and preferences as to workers' gender, marital status, ethnic and class backgrounds (for example, 'whiteness' was seen as 'improving the British stock', but white Ukrainian women were thought to be undesirable as of 'peasant stock') (Kay & Miles, 1988:233). In total 14,018 Polish refugees were recruited through the EVWS, out of which 4,667 were women (Kay & Miles, 1988:216).

Except medical and pharmaceutical credentials, Polish qualifications were not recognised by the English authorities, so many became 'declassified' (Sword, 1996:28): for example, high ranked AK officers were forced to undertake jobs as silverware cleaners (Polak, 2002:19-20). The initial group was soon joined by their families and European Volunteer Workers: by 1951 the Polish community grew to over 160,000 people (Górny and Osipovič, 2006:31). Very much in opposition to the communist government, and forced to stay in England by the situation in Poland, this community tried to maintain the Polishness they remembered from before the war, with a lot of help from the Polish Catholic Church (Danilecki, 2002:29). The 'tendency to identify Catholics as Poles, and non-Catholic as non-Poles' (Davies, 1981:16) and the perceived inseparability of these two (captured in the phrase 'Polak katolik') is still common in the way Poles construct their identity and are seen by the British (Garapich, 2008b:748). Although traditional family roles during and after the war were upheld (as much as was possible in the unstable circumstances) and division between the gender roles followed, these roles were affected by the new realities of life in exile, widowhood, and over-representation of males, and therefore more fluid (Burrell, 2008:83-84).

Throughout the 1980s there was a regular influx of new migrants or political refugees; many of these were women escaping from 'greyness and shortages' through marriage (Burrell, 2008b:67). These Poles have very individualised migration stories (Galasińska,

2010:943), and did not easily fit into an English or Polish post-war community that often did not understand their motives and rejected them. (This was especially true for those who came after 1989 from the post-communist, 'free' Poland (Galasińska, 2010:948)). This group, the least visible and 'powerful' ideologically and economically of all the Polish migration waves, falls between a post-war community with its 'grander' narrative, and a new, more economically important wave of young post-EU newcomers (Galasińska, 2010:948). As Polish post-war community aged, and its numbers at the beginning of the new century diminished to 60,711 (Census, 2001), with numbers steadily dropping: that, of course, changed dramatically after 2004.

On 1st May 2004 Poland (along with 9 other countries) became a member of the European Union. This marked more than a decade of Poland's efforts to escape the Iron Curtain's shadows and re-enter the European community as a full political and economic partner. Citizens of the eight post-communist accession countries (the 'A8') had, from that time on, the right to travel, move and work in the EU, although not without limits (Accession Monitoring Report May 2004 – March 2009, A8 countries:1). Out of the fifteen established EU members three states (Ireland, Sweden and United Kingdom) opened their doors to A8 migrants under no or minimal conditions. This new 'wind of change' awoke a 'hibernating' migration potential in Poland and other A8 countries' (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:45) and created an unprecedented (and largely unforeseen) wave of migrants exploring new economic and life opportunities in the West. The United Kingdom witnessed the largest influx of A8 migrants. During the five years following accession 66% of those registered under the Worker Registration Scheme were from Poland (Accession Monitoring Report May 2004 – March 2009, A8 countries:8). The biggest inflow of migrants came from the South and South-West of Poland from 'underdeveloped (...) or the most densely populated' regions (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:35). But there were also significant differences, as alongside the

‘old migrant’ - a ‘new type (...) has emerged’ (Górny & Osipovič, 2006:94). For example, although the majority of those arriving had (as before) secondary or vocational education, the numbers of those with university education increased (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:30). What changed most was age. It was mainly ‘younger people who seem particularly to have responded to the pull factors of open access to UK and Irish labour markets’ (White, 2011:32). And indeed, 72% of new migrants were aged 20 – 29 (the average migrant’s age being 28), and only 16% were older than 35 (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:34-35). (This raises interesting questions about the narrative of Polish migration: are these young people really ‘migrants’ instead of people on a gap year like many of their Australian or New Zealand peers? (De Pont, 2012:221).) Since accession Poles have settled across the UK and work in all sections of the labour market. They have constituted ‘the largest proportion [of A8 migrants] in every sector’, with a total number of 605,995 working in ten major sectors (mainly administration, hospitality and catering) (Accession Monitoring Report May 2004 – March 2009 A8 countries:22), their income boosting wages back in Poland (Dustmann, Frattini & Rosso, 2012:30). Still, it is important to note that many migrants still work at a level below their qualifications (intentionally or not), which may decrease their capabilities and lead to a ‘brain waste’ (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:46).

This migration was initially characterised by its ‘temporariness’ and ‘circularity’ (White, 2011:14). For the first time moving to England was not seen as something dramatic (and often irreversible), or a political statement (although there are attempts to frame it in such a narrative, especially where gender transgressions are involved (Urbańska, 2015:293-327, chapter 3). Poles could also ‘enjoy the rights of any other EU citizen’ and explore different life options which have not been available to them before (Górny & Osipovič, 2006:94). They could often also successfully live in both cultures, without committing themselves and keeping their options open (White, 2011:1). The concept of transnationalism

– which can be defined at a very simple level as ‘connections which migrants keep with their home countries’ (White, 2011a:7) – has been developed since the 1990s by scholars who tend to see much migration as being ‘temporary, cyclical and recurring’ (Moskal, 2011:31). Although there is no ‘simplistic dichotomy of long-term settlement versus on-going transience’, but instead many different migrant strategies (Ryan, Sales, Tilki & Siara, 2009:74), it is true that many migrants living in the UK move around with relative ease and can comfortably ‘live between two social spaces’ (Moskal, 2011:36). This ‘hypermobility’ (Burrell, 2011) of Polish migrants to the UK is caused by ‘diminishing significance of national borders’ inside the EU and blurred distinctions between ‘internal and international migration’ (Moskal, 2011:30-31); it also challenges the notion of what it means to be a ‘migrant’ and who can be considered one.

Transnationalism obscures borders between ‘home’ and ‘abroad’ and even travel itself (from or to Poland) becomes engulfed in identity construction and reconstruction (Burrell, 2011:1028). Although transnational practices include very individual activities (where people go, what they eat, how they spend their spare time, etc.), they also bring Poles into contact with other Poles. Identity, as discussed in Chapter 2, is relational, and it seems important to consider how – in the 21st-century context of easier travel and communications – ethnic identity is performed in relation to other Poles both abroad and in Poland. Those who travel to Poland as often as once a month also need to perform their migrant identity in relation to those back at home (Burrell, 2011:1025). Transnational migrants may therefore be forced to undertake some creative practices, changing their behaviour not only according to the expectations of British people and other migrants, but also their family and friends at home. Taking into account the (generally) negative discourse of migration in Poland, migrants are often seen with suspicion (Garapich, 2011:33). This calls for behavioural control in order to avoid being accused of ‘showing off’ and, for example, making sure that equal time is spent

with various friends during visits to Poland. Migrants may also face unrealistic expectations from back home as to how often they should visit and for how long (Ignatowicz, 2011:42).

Of course not everyone is able to – or want to – live a transnational life. Today, twelve years after EU accession, many Polish people have settled in England for good, bought houses, and have children in schools. Some of their links with Poland naturally faded over time, as they made more friends and acquaintances locally. Although – compared to migration to the NZ – geographical distance from Poland to England may not seem substantial, it cannot be measured in kilometres alone. When for some younger, more affluent graduates from bigger cities a move abroad was not a significant change in their lifestyle, those from poorer parts of Poland often employed a ‘quest typology’ (Ahmed, 2013:236) to underline not only geographical, but the rather social, cultural and psychological distance they had to travel. In this story we can even find a ‘sage’ foretelling the voyage, narrating it as something that was simply ‘meant to be’:

Imagine this (...) my grandma was still living under a thatched roof (pod strzechą). (...) They lived in the countryside of course. (...) I was sitting by the stove under my grandma’s thatched roof, now I am in London, and you know what, these are two worlds so totally different that this is incredible. I can’t believe this, that this happened in my life (...) A few years ago I met with a person people were calling ‘a third eye’, that she knows a bit differently than others (...) And she says ‘you will go on a long journey’.

(Ala, 57, R21UK)

4.4.2 UK: Regulatory and Ethnic Environment in comparison to Poland.

The United Kingdom is, in fact, a union of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, four different countries with distinct cultures and local languages recognised. In the 2011 Census 86% defined themselves as White (out of which 80.5% were White British), 7.5% Asian/Asian British, and 3% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, an ethnic landscape that

was significantly changed by the arrival of half a million Poles. Although the post-accession migration inflow was spectacular because of its ‘scale and dynamics’ (Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009:45) it is important to notice that the United Kingdom had been a popular destination for migrants from all over the world for at least twenty years before EU enlargement (Burrell, 2009:7). In London, where my respondents lived and were interviewed, 37% of the population was born overseas (Census, 2011). Although multiculturalism and immigration are highly politicised topics in the UK, this discourse is definitely not new. In the last two hundred years more than 9 million migrants arrived in Britain, and after WWII Britain opened its door to its former colonies and Commonwealth countries (Panayi, 2011:4). As Panayi writes, the politicians’ and media’s complaint of migrants ‘not integrating’ has been a recurring theme for ‘two centuries of [British] xenophobia and multiculturalism’ (Panayi, 2011:4).

The way Poles are racialised in the UK is not simple and often surprising for the Poles. They are usually taken aback by being perceived as ‘Eastern Europeans’ – a label they do not use in describing themselves and often find geographically incorrect and culturally derogatory (also in: Chapter 2, section 2.4). Phenotypically and ‘culturally’ they are usually racialised as white (Parutis, 2011:268, Fox, Morosanu & Szilassy, 2012:681) – this is not, however, obvious. As mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.1, being perceived as ‘white’ depends on the context (Hulko, 2009:49; Harper, 2011:111) – not only ‘who you are’, but also ‘where you are’. In a UK context, Poles can be seen in a variety of ways: white European ‘insiders’, or ‘Eastern European migrant’ ‘outsiders’ (Rzepnikowska, 2015:20). And indeed, there seems to have been a shift in the way they are perceived. Initially Poles were favoured by the British authorities and considered a ‘good candidate for the influx of cheap labour’ (Fox, Morosanu & Szilassy, 2012:682); this suggests a ‘subtler form of racism’ still present in British immigration policy (Fox, Morosanu & Szilassy, 2012:684) and the lower placing of

East Europeans in an assumed ‘hierarchy of belonging’ (Garapich, 2008b:748-749). The image of a Pole – very much gendered as a male ‘builder’ or a ‘plumber’ (Rzepnikowska, 2015:21), although considered by many as patronising and not reflecting the diversity amongst Poles (Eade, 2007:38), was, however, relatively positive. As Poles were seen mainly as workers (Ryan & Sales, 2011:91), their ‘hard-working-ness’ and good work ethic were praised (Parutis, 2011:270, Rzepnikowska, 2015:20). After the 2008 economic crisis the discourse of Polish migration in the UK changed, and migrants started to be portrayed more as an ‘economic and cultural threat’ (Rzepnikowska, 2015:21)²⁷. As a consequence, many migrants developed conscious strategies either to distance themselves from those who are seen as ‘stereotypic’ (Burrell, 2011:1026), and/or to avoid discrimination and xenophobia (for example by not speaking Polish in public) (Ryan, L. 2010:363). This is compounded by a sense of ‘collective responsibility’ (Ryan, L. 2010:363) and the fear that the misbehaviour of some (for example racism, Rzepnikowska, 2013:8) will reflect negatively on the rest. Polish women’s position seems to be more ambiguous. On the one hand, their behaviour may be scrutinised by a Polish audience (Goffman, 1959:35) and ‘criticised for unladylike behaviour and for loose morals’ that bring shame on the whole community (Ryan, L. 2010:370). On the other hand, the masculinization of nationality and their lower status (Bocheńska, 1999:347) may push them more into the ‘private’ sphere (or a ‘back-stage’(Goffman, 1959:104)), and be therefore seen as less threatening. In empirical Chapters 5 and 6 I discuss how my respondents see themselves as Poles, women and migrants, and how they racialise themselves (Chapter 6, section 6.3.1).

²⁷ Although this narrative reached its peak in the recent Brexit referendum campaign and results, with subsequent racially motivated attacks on Poles and the Polish cultural centre (POSK), I conducted my research previous to these events. Although my respondents did mention their growing worry about how Poles are portrayed in the media (I talk more about the way Polish women see their position as Poles and migrants in Chapter 6, section X) the situation seemed to be less exacerbated at the time of the interviews.

In Chapter 2 I discussed a ‘global class divide’ (Bettie, 2003:25) and the way migrants can feel intimidated and ‘shamed’ by the asymmetric relations associated with coming from a poorer, ‘unsexy’ country (Pyzik, 2013:49:50). It is true that sometimes migrants are seen as ‘uprooted victims’ of ‘structures beyond their control’ (Dawney, 2008:15), and may encounter low-level, covert racism such as ‘patronising and condescending behaviour’ (Dawney, 2008:8:15). This ‘low self-esteem and a distinct lack of belief in oneself’ is prominent amongst Polish migrants in the UK (Trevena, 2012:136), and this inferiority complex is additionally fuelled by the ‘residual Cold War rhetoric’ of the Eastern Europe portrayed as ‘pre-modern, remote and undeveloped’ (Rydzewska, 2011:132). Because they are from the ‘East’, and come as immigrants, Polish people can be therefore seen through their differences rather than similarities to native British people, and ‘imagined through the category of race’ (Gilroy, 2006a:56, in: Rzepnikowska, 2015:51) as ‘less white’. We can speculate that this will produce over-compensation in performance (where possible, accentuating their high class position, or internalizing positive stereotypes) and, as mentioned before, ambivalence when performing ethnicity. The relationship between ‘Polish complexes’ and the standing of Poland in the international arena is explored in greater detail in Chapter 6, section 6.3.1, where I discuss how this cultural baggage affects people’s idea of their position in their new country.

Formally, after 2004 Poles did not need visas or work permits and travelled to the UK using passports or national IDs. Initially workers (except those who were self-employed) were obliged to register with the Home Office Worker Registration Scheme. The process was ‘expensive and bureaucratic’ (between £50 and £90), and not many bothered with (or even knew about) the need to re-register job changes (this time for free) (Moszczyński, 2010:126). This requirement stopped being obligatory in 2011. Although the future position of Poles –

and other EU citizens – is unclear after Brexit (June, 2016), as of today Poles can still live and work in the UK without any additional documentation.

4.4.3 UK: Cultural, Political and Socio-Economic Environment in relation to Poland

UK is a constitutional monarchy, with the Queen as head of state. Poland is a Parliamentary republic with a class system/relations and awareness largely affected by its communist past (something I discuss in Chapter 6). Although the existence of the royal family and aristocracy at the top of the British class system is easy to observe, matters get more complicated when we move down the social ladder. Depending on the definition of social class, the divisions in the British society are described in different ways. For example, the UK's National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) system²⁸ recognises eight class categories, and is largely based on the Goldthorpe Schema, which deals with occupational status and employment relations. It does not, however, capture status and taste (Bourdieu, 1990:53), which significantly adds to – and may in some aspects outweigh – simple 'distribution of income and education' in the description of social class (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2004:397). These were described, for example, by the anthropologist Kate Fox (Fox K., 2004), but proved to be difficult to be incorporated into the official class measurement system. Recently an attempt has been made to outline 'the role of social and cultural processes in generating class divisions' (Savage, Devine, Cunningham et al., 2013:220) and a new multi-dimensional class model has been introduced. This was based on the BBC's 2011 Great British Class Survey (GPCS) – (claimed by the authors to be, 'the largest survey ever conducted in the

²⁸ Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations (Large employers and higher managerial and administrative occupations, Higher professional occupations), Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations, Intermediate occupations, Small employers and own account workers, Lower supervisory and technical occupations, Semi-routine occupations, Routine occupations, Never worked and long-term unemployed (Office for National Statistics, 2010, Vol. 3).

UK') (161,400 respondents)) – plus a separate survey assessing 'social, cultural and economic capital' (Savage, Devine, Cunningham et al., 2013:220). Social capital was measured by asking respondents about the professions of people they know socially, while cultural capital questions dealt with cultural tastes (coded 'high and low-brow'), for example the type of music people listen to, leisure activities, theatre/museum attendance and holiday preferences (Savage, Devine, Cunningham et al., 2013:225-226). In effect, seven categories were described: elite, established middle class, technical middle class, new affluent workers, traditional working class, emergent service workers and precariat (Savage, Devine, Cunningham et al., 2013:230). These categories were based on reported levels of economic, social (for example, contacts) and cultural (high or low-brow) capital, with the 'elite' scoring high on all three, and 'precariat' scoring lowest. This study's attempt in creating a new and expanded class model has been, however, widely criticised for methodological (for example attracting a mainly BBC audience) and theoretical shortcomings, and called by some a 'fiasco' (Mills, 2013, unpublished). The heated dispute that followed proves that class is as an important aspect of the British public debate as ever, even if it sometimes proves to be an uncomfortable one.

The established order of British society makes it score high (6.9) on the 'tightness' scale (Gelfand, 2011:1101). Poland's score is insignificantly lower (6.0), possibly stemming stem from historical difficulties and a necessity to 'enhance order and social coordination to effectively deal with such threats' (Gelfand, 2011:1101). We may speculate that similar reasons account for Poland's very high (93 compared to UK's 35) uncertainty avoidance (UAI) score on Hofstede's scale, a measure that deals with 'the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known' (Hofstede, 2011). This need for 'rigid norms' and security in the face of the unknown or the ambiguous is something largely absent from UK society despite (or maybe because of) its regulated institutional and social structures that

already provide a sense of security and order. The aspect of social stratification in which I am interested (as discussed previously in Chapter 2) is ‘a sense of one’s place(s) in a cultural economy of meaning’ (Bettie, 2003, p. 43) and therefore ‘the Polish need for hierarchy’ (Hofstede, 2011) may be important to understand how Poles socially place themselves and perform in the UK. It may also be essential for describing how they are perceived and classified by others, especially if they do not fit any pre-established category. Interestingly, UK’s power distance dimension (PDI) score – describing ‘attitude towards inequalities’ – is low (35); this attitude is especially shared by the ‘higher classes’ (Hofstede, 2011). This seems to be inconsistent with the evident existence of the class system, but at the same time the belief that ‘inequalities amongst people should be minimized’ may be a direct result of the realities of living in a highly stratified and regulated society.²⁹ The Polish score on PDI is high (68), revealing once again the Polish need for a clear hierarchy and a lack of ambiguity as to ‘who is who’. This will not only affect the way Polish migrants behave, but will also be very much UK specific, with some strategies developed as a direct response to living in a British class system, which is directly related to my main research question about differences in class performance between the countries. As also discussed in section 2.4.1 of Chapter 2, migrants – just because they come from outside – do not fit easily into British class measurements, as their current occupation may not reflect their education level, and their social circle may be composed of other migrants who are in the same position. They may also – having just arrived – not be in a position to purchase a property, or built potentially powerful and helpful social networks, or trade their cultural capital (for example Polish qualifications) for an economic one (Bourdieu, 2002). Also, there are cultural differences in what is considered high or low brow; these have been to a certain extent acknowledged in the

²⁹ It may also stem from the difference between ‘class structure’ and ‘status order’ which – as theorised by Goldthorpe – may not be exactly the same (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2004, p. 383).

Cambridge Social Interaction and Stratification Scale (CAMSIS) (used for NS-SEC) when talking about different competences for acquiring similar qualifications and evaluating social networks (Bergman, 2005:23). This scale also acknowledged certain untranslatability and flexibility in class categories, allowing them to work differently for different populations (Bergman, 2005:26). This points to the fact that recognizing and reproducing class (or at least class markers) always requires cultural competence.

The World Gallup Poll places UK in 22nd place in their happiness ranking (World Happiness Report, 2013:22); Poland was in 51st place: although lifestyle factors such as this one may not be realised by people migrating, they may be important for those who decided to settle. Personal Well-Being Across the UK data for 2012/2013 showed average 7.45 out of 10 reported life satisfaction score and 7.29 happiness score (Office for National Statistics, 2012/2013); apart from a small temporary drop in 2007, these scores have been stable over the last ten years (Self, Thomas & Randall, 2012:11). The UK is also ahead of Poland when we compare the 2013 Global Gender Gap Index, which measures various aspects of gender equality (economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, political empowerment) rather than women's empowerment; here the UK is placed 16th in its general ranking, while Poland is 54th. According to the latest Ipsos MORI report on the changing role of women it was noted that there are already 'three generations [in the UK] where both men and women are in agreement that (...) blunt distinctions in gender roles are a thing of the past' (Ipsos MORI, 2013:35). For Polish women living in the UK this may mean more opportunities, but also the loss of some 'privileges' stemming from more traditional role divisions. Also, those women whose relationships are based on the traditional model may learn to switch between different gender performances depending on where they are, and with whom. I discuss this at length in Chapter 5 when talking about the 'Polish Mother' and culture specific gender expectations.

Another important aspect of Polish identity may be being Catholic: and specifically, a ‘Polish Catholic’, one that exercises and certifies his or her ethnic affiliation through participating in Polish religious celebrations. Many Polish priests were relocated to the UK to serve this new community; the Polish Catholic Mission in the UK acts ‘independently of the British Roman Catholic hierarchy’ and ‘administers over 134 parishes’ with Polish mass ‘heard every week in at least 224 places of worship around England and Wales’ (Moszczyński, 2010:131-132). The Catholic Church in both the UK and NZ is not a dominant religion, and occupies a place reserved for a minority religion in a secular society (Trzebiatowska, 2010:1056). This position, combined with a lack of ethno-national association makes British (and, we can assume, New Zealand) Catholics treat their faith in more universal terms, confining it to the private spheres of life (Trzebiatowska, 2010:1064). For Poles, coming from a country where Catholicism is a ‘symbolic extension of their national identity’ (Trzebiatowska, 2010:1059; Stetkiewicz, 2013:5) this shift of positions may be difficult to understand and feeds into the Polish Church’s rhetoric of Polish Catholics (and therefore Polishness itself) being ‘under oppression’ and at risk from the ‘secular lifestyle of the west’ (Trzebiatowska, 2010:1063). This ethno-cultural aspect of religion gains a new meaning for migrants, with religious practices becoming a way of cultivating their Polishness, socializing, and exchanging information within Polish networks (Ryan, 2010:363). Choosing a Polish Catholic church over the British Catholic church has ‘linguistic and cultural reasons’ and evokes feelings of home (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Hay & Krotofil, 2011:228). Attending a British mass may be seen as ‘pretending that you are someone else’ (non-Polish) (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Hay & Krotofil, 2011:228). This is important for understanding apparent discrepancies between Polish women’s religiosity (abroad and in Poland) and their behaviour with regard to Church’s teachings. There is evidence that some religious practices in Poland (for example First Communion or a wedding) are de-sacralised

and treated more as cultural rites of passage (Stetkiewicz, 2013:10). In a way, Polish churches abroad became community places, a ‘home away from home’ (Ebaugh, 2003:238 in Trzebiatowska, 2013:1065), and sharing this with non-Polish Catholics is often seen as an ‘invasion of a personal space’ (Trzebiatowska, 2013:1066): some people would rather not practice at all than attend non-Polish masses (Trzebiatowska, 2013:1065). At the same time, some may not be interested in continuing Polish cultural traditions, or are not interested in doing so within their migrant network; this may be due to their distrust of other Poles, or not wanting to socialise with other, more working class Poles. Those people may attend English masses, or – if they are not religious – feel liberated and not attend church at all. Those who are not religious (or of a different faith) may experience their Polishness being questioned and feel defensive; they may even question it themselves. This can be difficult especially for women in mixed faith relationships, those who converted, or those who do not follow normative Polish gender or sexual roles approved by traditional rural communities and the Church (Urbańska, 2015).

4.5 Conclusion: Comparing migration to NZ to migration to the UK

In this chapter I compare New Zealand and UK as destination countries for Polish women migrants. While migration to the UK has the potential to become transnational for many (mainly because of geographical proximity), a move to New Zealand cannot be classified as such. For example, relocation to New Zealand rarely creates split, ‘transnational’ nuclear families in the manner of migration to the UK (for example the migration of mothers who support children who are still in Poland). In both countries there are established post-war Polish communities, but the circumstances of their arrival differed, as do the size and demographic profile of the community. As the UK exiles were predominantly adult and male, whereas NZ’s refugees were children, their reception and further social location, life

trajectories and opportunities were very different. While the 2004 EU accession saw a large migration wave of Poles to the UK, there has never been substantial migration to New Zealand. Although there are historical similarities between New Zealand and the UK, their geographical locations create quite varied pull factors, which may appeal to quite different prospective migrants. The different cultures of these receiving countries, differently sized Polonia, and the way migrants are perceived create specific atmospheres in which Polish identity is re-created and negotiated.

The most important difference (from which many other differences stem) is the size and density of the Polish population in the UK, as compared to the small and ethnically insignificant Polish diaspora in New Zealand. Burrell found that the sharing experiences with other migrants Polish migrants share in the UK with other migrants has the potential to antagonize them from one another by ‘undermining the individuality’ of their ‘autobiographical narratives’ and making them aware that they are just one among thousands of Poles engaged in the same lifestyle (Burrell, 2011:1028). This kind of ‘identity threat’ does not exist in New Zealand; being a Polish woman there is quite rare, and meeting others does not in any way threaten this unique narrative and self-image. Also, in the context of New Zealand’s vast landscapes and low population density it is also impossible to experience ‘enforced closeness with other Poles’ (Burrell, 2011:1027) (or anyone else for that matter), and other Poles are not seen as competitors over scarce resources. When there is little opportunity for in-group competition and migrants are (due to tight migration procedures) in similar legal and economic positions, new arrivals are welcomed as ‘quest companions’ (Ahmed, 2013: 239) rather than feared, and there is not much place for the hostility and dependence on Polish networks so often seen in the UK (Garapich, 2012:31). There is also no need to adopt ‘resistance practices’ (Edwards, 1986) in response to stereotypes or covert/overt racism. Those in New Zealand do not face ethnic-labels common in the UK, for

example Polish cleaner or builder; we can also speculate that in the Tall-Poppy culture status disparities based on types of labour will not be commonly used to indicate stigma. Different immigration procedures also ensure that those who settle in New Zealand have qualifications that are sought after and needed, and migrants would not face accusation of stealing jobs and benefits, as happens in the UK (Rzepnikowska, 2013:1). The size of the community also diminishes background differences between migrants in favour of ethnic and language commonalities; although a qualification-focused immigration policy guarantees that migrants will have rather a lot in common. Still, migration to a country ‘at the end of the world’ has specific demands; unlike many migrants within Europe, Poles in New Zealand cannot keep their reference point in Poland and their involvement with New Zealand has to naturally be more permanent. For those living in the UK the size of the community enables a lifestyle revolving around Polish community and Polish infrastructure, where integration and/or language is not necessary. At the same time, having to participate in two communities requires more performance negotiation (for example when it comes to different gender expectations), in order to please two audiences.

One of the aspects these migrations share is certainly language; although in both NZ and UK there are other languages spoken, English is the official (or one of the official) languages. In recent years there has been a huge increase in Poland in self-proclaimed English knowledge and confidence (White, 2010:571), and living in English speaking countries such as the UK and NZ presents a comparable challenge for Poles. NZ and the UK also share some similarity in culture profile, for example low Power Distance (PDI) scores: 22 (NZ) and 35 (NZ) versus 68 in Poland (Hofstede, 2011). This means that Poles have to learn how to live in a more informal setting where there is a tendency to ‘equalise inequalities’ rather than accentuate them; this is an interesting aspect of performance of class, but also gender. At the same time, Britain’s multiple social divisions may be confusing for

migrants, and may seem contradictory to the informality they experience. At the same time, British culture is more available for the prospective migrant through the experiences of others and popular culture (for example mainstream TV series and literature); we can therefore assume greater levels of cultural competence on entry and acquaintance with more aspects of the British culture than in the case of New Zealand. (However, we may also speculate that the trajectory of migration to NZ is usually not straightforward, as – as in case of my respondents – it was usually through another country. In this case Polish women are arriving in NZ with an experience of having lived in an English speaking country and a similar culture beforehand.) Another dimension of culture NZ and the UK share is Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI): 49 (NZ) and 35 (UK) versus 93 in Poland. These scores may explain the view held by some Poles that UK and NZ are relaxed places, attractive from a lifestyle migration perspective.

Migration to the UK is usually – unlike migration to NZ – entwined in a multitude of dramatic narratives and discourses, gendered moral judgments and moral panics (Rzepnikowska, 2015; Urbańska, 2015). There are also many different migration and travel trajectories possible for Poles, sending them to very different strata of English society. Migration to NZ does not produce the same response, and is seen with less emotion. Due to lack of a specific Polish narrative for ‘going to New Zealand’, the only available narrative to use seems to be the old colonial one, still present in Commonwealth countries, an idealised one of ‘Arcadia’, a romanticised place one can escape to ‘when everything goes wrong’.³⁰

³⁰ During the April 2016 protests against the abortion ban in Poland a Facebook group ‘Azyl polityczny dla miliona Polaków w Nowej Zelandii’ (*Political asylum for a million Poles in New Zealand*) was launched: it was not a realistic plan, but an escapist fantasy where New Zealand was portrayed as a place of last hope and last resort.

Chapter 5

Conflation of Gender and Ethnic Roles, Ideals and Responsibilities and the Way these are Performed by the Polish Female Migrants in the UK and NZ.

This Chapter is the first of two empirical chapters based on my interview data. As explained in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3 on research design), operationalising intersectionality provides methodological challenges and requires some gymnastics with data analysis. In Chapters 5 and 6 I try to employ both anticategorical and intercategorical approaches in order to capture the complexity of social identities (McCall, 2005:1778) but, at the same time, implement a form of sorting procedure (McCall, 2005:1783). This results in two chapters: Chapter 5 focuses on being a Polish woman (and mother) of various ages in the context of migration to the UK and NZ, and Chapter 6 discusses my respondents' ideas on social location and social hierarchies (also from the perspective of being a woman, a Polish woman and a migrant). Although these topics had, for the sake of practicality, to be presented in two chapters, it is important to remember that the intersectional nature of these identities was recognized and acknowledged throughout, which leads to some inevitable repetitions over chapters, as same the identities and performances were discussed from different perspectives.

This Chapter starts with an explanation of how gender and ethnic roles and responsibilities conflate, and the kind of expectations this may present for women as ethnic and gendered beings. I discuss, in general terms, the link between national identity and (symbolic) motherhood, leading on to the case of Poland. I show how the specific Polish situation, with the loss of independence and the independence fight during the partitions, two world wars and the communist period, affected gender and ethnic role formation and division in Poland, producing roles and identities such as the 'Polish Mother'. I then describe how these roles, identities and performances interact with English and New Zealand concepts and practices of

motherhood (as seen by my respondents), and how my respondents see themselves and perform their Polishness and motherhood in these two countries. Starting this Chapter with the topics of ‘Polish Mother’ and motherhood is not accidental, but reflects the way family roles were often at the forefront of my respondents’ gender and ethnic identities, and how inseparable my respondents’ ideas of a ‘typical Polish woman’ and a ‘Polish Mother’ proved to be. In this Chapter I explain why they so often conflated the concepts of the typical Polish woman and the Polish Mother, and the changes my respondents report to their behaviour in the UK and NZ.

I then expand further on other aspects of gender roles and discuss how ideals of femininity and gender role division are affected by being a migrant, and also how these are classed. I explain how the realities of communism and post-communism affected femininity and beauty ideals in Poland, and how encountering different ideals has changed my respondents’ performance in both the UK and NZ (as well as the differences in this between these two countries). I also show how the different social location of my respondents as women, Poles and migrants of different educational and social background in these two countries influenced the way they behave and narrate their behaviour, and also their feeling of attractiveness. This last section shows how social context and different ideas on the inclusion of women and migrants in the public sphere affect women’s behaviour, and how – through discovering different ways of expressing gender and ‘being a woman’ - some of my respondents rediscovered or re-defined their ethnic identity.

The purpose of this Chapter is to demonstrate the historical circumstances in which Polish gender roles and femininity ideals were formed, and show how these are still prevalent in the performance of Polish women today. I also show how inseparable ethnicity, gender, class and age identities are, how these are a product of their surroundings, and prone to modifications and reconstructions when they stop being necessary or functional. Showing Polish mothers and women in both UK and NZ underlines the notion that it is not merely being

outside of Poland that matters, but the interactive nature of these identities and practices, and their susceptibility to the specifics of their various surroundings.

5.1 Mothers

5.1.1 Symbolic Motherhood and National Identity

The idea of a ‘nation’ is socially constructed, and – as such – it is often ‘anthropomorphised’ and symbolically conceptualised as a ‘caregiver’, and object of ‘primordial attachment’ (Ferenczi & Marshall, 2013:1-2). This conceptualisation is reflected in the words ‘motherland’ and ‘fatherland’, present in many languages. They mean more, however, than just ‘the land of the mother/father’, and imply a more symbolic participation in the ‘family of a nation’ (Ferenczi & Marshall, 2013:15), which is treated rather as a ‘place of attachment’ than physical reality (Ferenczi & Marshall, 2013:2). And indeed, some researchers look at national identity through the lenses of attachment theories, especially in those societies that link ‘internal representation of the country’ with internal representations of a mother (Walsh & Tartakovsky, 2012:185). As, in many countries, national belonging is seen as a ‘second birth’ to a wider community, the nation itself is therefore more frequently seen as a ‘mother’, accentuating a special corporeal, emotional and spiritual bond she shares with a child (Dreby, 2006:35-36). Nation as a ‘mother’ is or was present historically in 19th century India (Banerjee, 2003), Iran (600 year old mother, Vatan) (Ferenczi & Marshall, 2013:2), but also Israel, Mexico (Dreby, 2006), Spain, and Eastern Europe (with the special case of Poland). To give one example, a 2012 study on Jewish Russian adolescents (migrants to Israel and non-migrants) described the way in which ‘the ability to attach to a country’ is rooted in the attachment an infant develops with his primary caregiver (here: the mother) (Walsh & Tartakovsky, 2012:188), and stipulated that a positive attitude to one’s country is linked to a successful attachment strategy during one’s childhood (Walsh & Tartakovsky, 2012:189). This suggests that a secure bond with the mother becomes, so to speak, a seed from which stems a positive country affiliation (Walsh &

Tartakovsky, 2012:193-194). What is particularly interesting is that a mere national *identification* can be formed without a secure attachment, but a *positive attitude* to one's country is heavily influenced by a positive mother representation and the 'care element' she represents (Walsh & Tartakovsky, 2012:193). While it is of course difficult to say how specific these results are to Israel, and how applicable to other groups, they do seem consistent with most attachment theories and frameworks (for example Bowlby, 1973) that link a person to their smaller (mother) and larger family (nation). Using the example of India, Banerjee, writing about the gendered nature of nations and nationalism point out how various masculine and feminine attributions intersect (Banerjee, 2003:167) and how 'motherland (...) as woman' is thought to be 'protected by brave citizen warriors in a common metaphor of nationalisms' (Banerjee, 2003:168). But when nationalism is masculinised and 'negative national stereotypes [being] stereotypes of men in those nations' women 'across nations' are often seen as those who nurture (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:274-275) and 'symbolize national honor' (Banerjee, 2003:168).

This, obviously, puts a lot of responsibility and pressure on the mother, and places her in a position of being the vessel for passing on ethnic/national affiliation. If she fails, the transfer of national and cultural practices and values is disrupted. This leads to the great importance of, and idealisation of a mother's role, seen not much as a woman, but rather half angelic idol/deity (for example, in Catholic countries, 'the Virgin Mary'), sacrificing and 'self-negating' herself for her children (the 'marianismo' concept in Mexico) (Dreby, 2006:35). As mentioned in Chapter 4 (section 4.2) the symbolism of a 'sacrifice' is often the only one that legitimises migration by Polish mothers, and the one that not only temporarily absolves them from leaving their gender and ethnic responsibilities (Urbańska, 2015:234) but also further conceptualizes them as 'saints' and 'icons' (Urbańska, 2015:239).

Superficially, being elevated to a pedestal may be flattering for women (and it is usually portrayed as such), but the impossible standards and expectations such a position entails may be very oppressive, and retributions for not living up to them costly. Projecting ‘special’ spiritual and moral (Dreby, 2006:35) attributes to women exclude them from an everyday discourse as ‘normal’ citizens, and is often used as a tool of discrimination, balancing between a hostile sexism (HS) when the standards are not met, and benevolent sexism (‘evaluatively positive but patronising attitudes to women’) (BS), when they are (Zawisza, Luyt & Zawadzka, 2015:38). In a situation when a country’s independence is under attack, and - looking from the attachment theory framework - the most basic bonds threatened, a huge obligation to maintain national values is delegated to women, supressing everything less crucial at the time of the crisis, for example stunting women’s emancipation movements (Titkow, 2007:53).

This was, historically, the case of Poland. As Walczewska writes, before the partitions (1795-1918) women were not recognized as proper citizens, and only after Poland lost independence were they awarded honorary citizenship of a non-existent country and thus became incorporated into the 123 year long fight for independence (Walczewska, 1999:54). Their role was to support men as daughters and wives, pass on patriotic ideals and Polishness to their children (especially sons), and keep traditions alive (Titkow, 2007:52-53). This was a rather passive role, limited to the private sphere of the home, and even those who took a more active stand as independence fighters were stripped of much of their agency through a discourse that saw their actions as ‘self-sacrifice’ (Walczewska, 1999:52). ‘Matka Polka’ – Mother Pole, or the Polish Mother - became a ‘formula of participation in the national community’, and maternity a ticket for national belonging (Walczewska, 1999:53). The link between Poland, Polishness, femininity and motherhood was therefore established; the ‘Polish Mother’ and ‘Mother Poland’ merged on the frontline of the fight for freedom (Oleszkiewicz, 2003, in: Pustulka, 2014:23). (This also explains why any departure from expected gender

performance may be treated as ‘unpatriotic’.) Maybe Mother Poland, victimised, pushed into the ‘private sphere’ and ‘in chains’ (Janion, 2004:15), had to symbolically become a woman in her suffering and oppression – the image we must ‘bid farewell to’ (Janion, 2004) as it started to resemble ‘a grotesque caricature’ (Graff, 2007). This image of Poland as a ‘degraded female’ (Pyzik, 2013:145), and Poles as ‘the orphans of Europe’ (Pyzik, 2013:144) is interesting in the light of the attachment theory discussed above, and may explain the somewhat ambivalent emotions and relationship of Poles with their country. (It is also a poignant metaphor when it comes to Pahiatua Children, the Polish war orphans adopted by NZ.)

The reward for ‘marinating national identity’ (Titkow, 2007:51) was, declaratively, high prestige (Titkow, 2007:53), but in reality the work was overbearing, and the benefits symbolic. Although it may seem that the partitions of Poland have little or no meaning for today’s women, their legacy in forming women’s role is still evident in Polish women’s stories, even if the discrepancy between the official discourse and the reality is noticed:

I was brought up in this way that during partitions and wars men had to go fighting (...) and women were the ones who were teaching children to speak Polish, when at school children were taught Russian and German. And my mother was saying that thank to Polish women the Polishness survived (...) So I suppose that should lead to special respect for Polish women in Poland. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. My husband always told me that Polish women ... were putting themselves on a pedestal (...). But I would question this a bit [laugh]. (Helena, late 70s, R23NZ)

These ideals, born out of historic difficulties, are still prevalent amongst Poles. Although the context in which Polish women’s identity was formed may seem remote, it lies at the foundations of today’s gender relations and a ‘distinctive Polish discourse on femininity’ (Kulakowska & Łuksza, 2015:5). 2004 EURONAT data showed that Polish identity is perceived in ethnic-cultural rather than an economic and political way (EURONAT data

2004:17; Górnjak, 2005:125). This kind of understanding and construction of the national belonging is based around symbolism, traditions, emotions and ideals. One of these is the myth of a ‘Mother Pole’ (or a ‘Polish Mother’) and her ‘heroic’ (Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:59) and ‘servant role towards the Homeland and the Family’ (Titkow, 2007:59). This myth is still alive in my respondents’ stories: as a first-hand experience, or a family model they witnessed at home:

We were not allowed to learn to read. Mummy, and other people – some, not all of them – were teaching their children to write and read in secret. (Sławomira, 74, R24NZ)

The ‘honorary’ and not obvious national belonging (Walczewska, 1999:54) turned ‘being a Polish woman’ into something you ‘achieve’ through performing the right actions (‘doing’), and a hard-to-reach ideal.³¹

5.1.2. Contemporary Polish Mothers (and Grandmothers) in Poland and in Migration

When asked about ‘a typical Polish woman’ most of my respondents referred to the idea of a ‘Polish Mother’, even though in some cases this was to deny that they personally attained such an ideal.

I am very domineering so in our house there is matriarchy. Actually, this is typically Polish! [laugh] As, after all, it is a woman who is the most important person in a family (...) We are the priestesses of the home fire and we are expected to create a home atmosphere – and we do this. English women, New Zealand women, they are not so devoted to their children or parents or family as we are. (Halina, 59, R15NZ)

³¹ Some material featured in this section (with minor changes) was published in Goodwin, K. (2013). Pole with a twist: the performance of class, gender and ethnicity of Polish women living in New Zealand. In *Immigration: Policies, Challenges and Impact* (2013). Ed. Tartakovsky, E. New York, NOVA, pp. 319-339.

[(KG) Do you think that you are a typical Polish woman?] I would like to be. Am I? I don't know, I don't know. I would like to, but to say it about myself, that would be ... how do you call it? Arrogance. I wouldn't like to put myself on a pedestal. I would like someone else to think about me this way or say this about me, but I am not sure if I am like this. (Patrycja, 32, R2NZ)

In some cases it was viewed as a handicap and a burden that is not easy to shed:

It definitely sits inside me, something hard to get rid of, this responsibility. And it seems to me that ... it is my responsibility to have a cleaned house, fed kids, everything cooked, and that the house should be a showcase. That this is my role. And although my husband helps me and we do all sorts of things together, that is something that comes to my mind first. (Ewelina, 36, R27NZ)

This conflation of motherhood and womanhood is a good example of an intersectional overlap in creation and 'articulation of individual and collective identity' (Jolluck, 2001:464).

Today, the mother is still seen as the 'soul of the house' (Hipsz, 2013:10) and the 'emotional core of family life' (Fitzpatrick, Błażek & Kaźmierczak, 2014:934). In research conducted in 2013 92% of respondents declared their bond with their mothers to be strong³² (Hipsz, 2013:10). Mothers were also seen as more emotionally accessible and loving than fathers (Fitzpatrick, Błażek & Kaźmierczak, 2014:934). Family bonds in Polish families are close and durable (Grabowska, 2013:7). One fifth of Poles live in multigenerational households (Boguszewski, 2013:21), and grandparents (usually grandmothers) often actively participate in the upbringing of their grandchildren.

The European Social Survey from 2002 showed that Poles (alongside Hungarians) achieved top scores on a 0-9 scale asking 'how important is the family' (Titkow, 2007:182),

³² Although this is of anecdotal value, I found it very interesting when the blog *Polandian* (run mainly by foreigners living in Poland) published a short comic article about '10 things to remember when you have a Polish girlfriend' and listed 'she has a mother' as an important aspect of a relationship (Stokes, J., February 2008).

and three quarters of respondents considered family happiness a number one priority (Boguszewski, 2013:15). My respondents often mentioned the particularly strong bonds they have with their mothers, or parents.

Recent data (2014) showed that Polish children leave their parental home at the mean age of 28.5 (women) and 30 (men), with many young adults living with their parents much longer than their peers from any other EU country (Fitzpatrick, Błażek & Kaźmierczak, 2014:929). This tendency was observed in a comparative cross-cultural study conducted in 1993 (the time when many of my respondents were in high school), when Polish teenagers surprised British researchers by the amount of time they spent with their parents (Roberts & Jung, 1995:144).

For some of my respondents, migration was a way to move out of the parental house, and gain physical and psychological independence: ‘Coming here means considerable freedom for me. I’ve always had very tight bond with my parents, and at some point it really started getting in my way [*bardzo przeszkadzać*]’ (Inga, 26, R5NZ).

Not following certain customs, or not participating in the same symbolic representations of the threatened culture may be seen – especially for those who live abroad - as ethnic betrayal, loss of national identity, and cast a shadow of doubt over their femininity. This explains (as already mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.4.2) why Polish women’s behaviour abroad is scrutinised, and why their behaviour and appearance outside of Poland causes so many moral judgements and emotions (Huisman & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2005:47, Urbańska, 2015:290). For example, Urbańska, in her book about transnational Polish mothers, quotes a female respondent who was working in Belgium saying how someone informed her husband (who was living in Poland) that she ‘goes to discos in short skirts’ (Urbańska, 2015:290). She also mentions how she had difficulties arranging interviews in cafeterias, as her respondents were worried this could be noticed by other Poles and reported home as evidence of them ‘having fun’ instead of working (which would violate the ‘self-sacrificing mother’ narrative)

and shady (sexual) morals (for example by being promiscuous with foreign men) (Urbańska, 2015:291). (This is also mentioned by my respondents when they talk about how they changed in NZ, section 5.3.3 of this Chapter). These fears and practices were also class related: Urbańska's respondents, mainly from a farming background, were not used to spending time in public places, from which they could feel excluded not only by their gender, but their 'lower' class and/or financial³³ background (Urbańska, 2015:291).

We can also anticipate a potential conflict of roles when dealing with women who married non-Poles and – for example – changed their surname, or raised their children in their partner's/husband's faith or culture. On the one hand, they could be seen as fulfilling traditional gender expectations but, on the other, as disassociating from their ethnicity and/or possibly going upwards or downwards class-wise through marriage, depending on the nationality ('high' versus 'low' status countries) and ethnicity of the partner (Bettie, 2003:25, Brettel, 2006) (Chapter 2, section 2.4.1) This is present in my interviews as well, and is resolved in various ways. Some of my respondents' parents were more dismayed by their unregulated relationship status and cohabitation rather than the partner's ethnicity, and once the couple was legally married (and they had children) their relationship was approved. One of my

³³ In Ewa Kaleta's article about the exploitation of cleaners in Poland one woman says 'I don't remember when I was in the Warsaw's city centre – what would I go there for? This is a city for those who have money. Poor people sit at homes' (Kaleta, 2016). This shows that the 'public' and 'private' spheres are not only gendered (with women being 'invisible' and exploited cleaners), but also classed, accessible for those who are richer, and have more confidence to feel in public places 'at home'. In the same article she mentioned someone advising women to go to England or Germany, saying they would still be cleaning, but they will have more respect and money. This notion of social hierarchy and status is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. As we also know from research on the construction of class markers through privatization of public spaces in post-communist Poland, Poland became the leading country in Europe when it comes to the number of gated communities, visibly materializing existing post-transformation inequalities (Polańska, 2010:422).

UK respondents, Kamila, married and Iranian man and converted to Islam: something she did not openly discuss with her parents. She said they knew and did not really mind as long as she did not wear a hijab (especially during her trips to Poland, something she did not have any plans to do anyway). It seemed that her newly acquired cultural practices (for example eating halal) were accepted as long as she kept them to her London household, but would not necessarily be welcomed in the little town she came from. My other respondent, Marzena, mentioned that her parents did not mind her marrying an Italian man as he was Catholic: as she saw it, this guaranteed some similarity in their practices and values.

It is worth mentioning that previous research from Poland showed that women who have no children felt less Polish than those who were mothers (Titkow, 2007:139-140). Titkow herself mentions that she started researching Polish identity through researching parenthood, soon realising they were inseparably intertwined (Titkow, 2007:17).

One interesting aspect of the 'Polish Mother' is how the focus on her symbolic maternity over the wounded nation surpasses her physical motherhood. In recent research it was found that, amongst women in Poland, the 'idea of having a child', or a duty to do so, seemed 'more important than actually having a child', or 'wanting to have one' (Titkow, 2012:40; Młodawska, 2012:98). Although there is a pressure on women to have children (Młodawska, 2012:110), and being childless is considered 'unnatural' and even 'unpatriotic' (Łaciak, 2012:416; Młodawska, 2012:118), these pressures are not actually reflected in Polish women's reproductive behaviour. Currently, there is a big 'gap between the plan and reality of family formation', with the fertility rate in Poland being 'one of the lowest in Europe' (Fitzpatrick, Błażek & Kaźmierczak, 2014:931). If we compare this to other pro-natalist societies which link motherhood with the nation, like Israel (Remmenick, 2000), we see curious discrepancies. When a childless woman living in Israel can be, effectively, rendered 'stateless' (Remmenick,

2000:822), my childless respondents never mentioned their childlessness as an issue. There was only one 25-year-old married woman who expressed some doubts:

Am I a typical Polish woman? No, I am not ... I mean ... [laugh] To be honest, I don't know, because everyone is surprised ... All of them at home – ‘God, Anita, you've been married for two years, maybe some children?’. Mum, please, leave me alone! [laugh] So, I don't know myself, if I am such a typical Polish woman – but I think I am. (Anita, 25, R15UK)

Still, neither she nor other respondents thought not having children (or not having them yet) made you less of a woman (consistent with the data of Korolczuk, 2012:224 on younger women), or in any way undermined your femininity. Also, not having children was never (except in the one quotation above) mentioned as something ‘not typically Polish’ or something that makes you ‘less Polish’ (unlike, for example, as quoted in my interviews, such ethnic and gender transgressions as not being Catholic³⁴, having short hair, not being blonde or wearing sport clothes). What was described, however, was not being ‘typically Polish’ because of not being ‘family oriented and overprotective’. It points to the notion that being a ‘Polish Mother’ or a ‘Mother Pole’ is more about woman’s ‘maternal’ caring and self-sacrificing role in her family and society in a wider sense, when being a ‘mother’ - in a physical, biological sense - is only a fraction of this, and only important when it accompanies the fulfilment of other social expectations. As I discuss in sections 5.1.3 and 5.1.4, this stereotype of a sacrificing woman and mother (which is important to the concept of the Mother Pole, but is not exclusive to Polish culture³⁵ (Dreby, 2006:35)), is, in my respondents’ stories, interpreted

³⁴ In an article titled ‘I don't believe in God, I don't have children, but it doesn't mean I am a traitor’ Maria Peszek, Polish vocalist and lyricist, was quoted addressing an accusation made by Anna Zalewska, current Minister of Education, that her songs were ‘anti-Polish’ (Pudelek, Polish celebrity gossip website, 26th of July 2016).

³⁵ There are various, culturally and/or religion specific values that result in the ‘sacrificing mother’ trope. Some, as in an example of Ireland, are connected to Catholicism, the icon of Virgin Mary and the service role occupied

through ethnic and age lenses (with my respondents stating that younger Polish women do not abide to such standards as much as older ones).

These were, however, women who lived in the UK and NZ, countries where one's procreation plans are rather confined to the private spheres and are not of particular public interest (Młodawska, 2012:109), and where a childless lifestyle is one of the available options on the social menu. Some of my respondents mentioned their great desire to become mothers (R14UK; R4NZ), and their frustration with the lack of partner/opportunity, but these were not discussed in the frame of social stigma or pressure, but a very personal, intimate need, that was entirely internal. It would be interesting to ask the same question of Polish women who live in Poland, and see if this signifies ambivalence about having children in the Polish culture, or is an effect of Polish migrant women successfully adopting local discourses to explain their life choices. I discuss this in the next section, showing how the 'Polish Mother' traits are seen in relation to English and New Zealand practices.

5.1.3 Polish Mothers in England and English Mothers

In this section I talk specifically about the way my UK respondents interpret and evaluate English women's upbringing practices and their motherhood roles. Much of the material is similar to that above; this time, however, the focus is on a country-specific behaviour and narrative, which is later compared to that from NZ.

by women (O'Connor, 2001:84). Others, as in the concept of a Jewish mother, an ultimate 'nurturer' living through her children (especially sons) (Antler, 2007:8) come from the mixture of a patriarchal nature of Judaism and experiences of living in the diaspora. We can see, from Antler's writing, similarities between a Polish 'gastronomic mother' (Walczewska, 1995) and a Jewish mother, confined to the literal and symbolic kitchen by the male dominated religious sphere, and exercising her 'power' from there (Antler, 2007:25). Although there are similarities, there are also differences as to how these values manifest in these very different cultures with their different historic circumstances.

Among the English interviewees, the ideal of ‘Mother Pole’ (discussed in previous sections) was evoked both when I asked my respondents about ‘the typical Polish woman’ and when we discussed Polish and English mothers. Some women mentioned that a ‘typical Polish woman’ is rather confined to the private sphere ‘at home, in the kitchen, with children, waiting for her husband’ (R8UK), with ‘no prospects for the future’ (R17UK). Those who mentioned ‘Polish mothers’ described them as over-protective, (over)caring, hard-working, demanding, and ready to sacrifice themselves for the children:

A Polish mother is a person who will do everything for her child, sacrifice herself for this child. Obviously, she cooks, teaches, bakes ... (Ada, 33, R17UK)

Older Poles’ descriptions of the Polish Mother had a distinct echo of a more traditional ‘Polish Mother and Patriot’ (Fidelis, 2010:25), who takes care of children’s Polishness and religious education – an important role in the forced post-war migration:

Polish mothers engage more in their children’s lives (...) But I think that yes, Polish mothers have this extra feature. And she lives with those children, does homework with them, always look after, will give a lift to the Polish school, and to church. (Alina, 78, R30UK)

Some women described themselves in opposition to English mothers, while admitting they do not know any English mothers in real life; we can speculate how much this was based on anecdotal observation, and how much it was gender and ethnic identity re-creation and reinforcement:

I don’t know English mothers, but I know the stereotype [laugh] of English mothers, that there is less ... that they are more relaxed (...) kids are left a little bit to themselves, that there is no definite direction; parents don’t really try to direct them in any way. (Tosia, 24, R12UK)

What was particularly mentioned was English mothers' 'lack of care' in both domestic and child-rearing spheres: they were seen as not willing to discipline their children, and had dirty houses (and children):

When I see, for example, that it is cold outside, the mother is wearing a warm jacket, a hat, and a child is, for example, without socks, only a thin top. (Klaudia, 35, R23UK)

In contrast, Polish children were seen as having better manners and being more disciplined, better behaved in public, less vulgar and aggressive:

Behaviour and culture. Polish kids are taught manners more (...) they know ... well, maybe not all of them, but people generally try to (...) behave that way (...) And they will not [inaudible] enter the shop and start screaming (...). (Martyna, 29, R1QUK)

We can risk the speculation that children, often 'assigned to women', occupy the same spaces, and are therefore expected to behave better in public, and in a more restricted way. As descriptions of Polish mothers were shown in juxtaposition to English mothers, we must remember that it cannot be taken out of the context of migration: as one mother put it, 'after all we are migrants, and I am always scared that someone will say to my child, for example, you are Polish' (R16UK). Polish mothers were consistently portrayed as more demanding when it comes to children's education, and putting more focus on doing well at school: this is a well-known behaviour of many first generation migrant families, who may in some cases have chosen migration in order to give the children more opportunities elsewhere. Describing Polish mothers as 'demanding' not only fits into Polish gender expectations, but also into the 'hard-working Pole' and 'model minority' narrative (Flynn, 2013:339), which in the UK is 'constructed along the same lines as the model minority myth common for Asian pupils' (Li, 2005, quoted in Flynn, 2013:344).

As Poles in the UK are often seen – as East Europeans and migrants - as occupying a lower place in the ‘hierarchy of belonging’ (Chapter 4, section 4.4.2) (Garapich, 2008b:748-749; Rzepnikowska, 2015:21), trying to improve their position through education and upward mobility seems to be a popular and viable strategy.

What my respondents thought when they meant ‘English mothers’ was often related not only to ethnic variation (for example Indian or Jamaican mothers), but also class differences. This was usually correlated with my respondents’ social location, which informed their networks and communities they lived in:

You know, there are multitude of options here ... from the mother who is bringing her children up in Chiswick, Richmond, or South Kensington, and – I don’t know – a council house family from East London. Here, you know ... not everyone is the same. (Iwona, 36, R3UK)

Some respondents thought English mothers were more relaxed and open, including in their relationship with their daughters (this was voiced by younger respondents who knew the mothers of their university friends)³⁶ (R25UK, R9UK). Respondents were not always sure if the difference was cultural, economic or generational:

I can’t say that my mum wouldn’t go for a drink with her friend, but it is not a norm: it would be something (...) they would think about for a month beforehand, and they would wonder if they could go at all. And [English friend]’s mum of just goes for a drink! (...) I don’t know if this is a question of being more feminist, liberated, liberal, or some cultural British issue. But I cannot imagine that three women my mum’s age just go to the pub after work, just like that. (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

³⁶ Some of these young women, however, attended elite high-schools and/or Oxbridge universities, and described their friends’ parents as upper-class and wealthy, so we may assume there would be some class aspect added to the mix as well.

There are also financial issues, they have better position, better pay (...) and that's why a woman can afford to hire a nanny to take care of herself at the same time, rest a bit (...) on the Polish side (...) often because of financial reasons ... but maybe not only that, maybe this is still a stereotype which I know from Poland, that it is a woman who takes care of the kids, and the house, and the food, cleaning, shopping, and the man ... well, from time to time [he spends time] with the child. (Lidka, 37, R4UK)

These two quotations capture intersectional overlaps between gender, ethnic and class identities in an interesting way. While Izabela is not sure if women her **mother's age** spontaneously going to a pub is a British custom or a 'feminist thing' (probably related to the greater inclusion of women in the public sphere, and – possibly – having less pressing duties at home and being able to spend an afternoon out), Lidka brings up financial factors. As British families, she observes, have a better financial situation than Poles, English mothers can afford more help, and also relaxation. She acknowledges that there is a cultural side to this too, with English partners sharing their responsibilities, while in Poland it is rather a woman who is expected to do everything at home. But it did seem, however, that life outside of Poland without a larger family circle and grandmothers available for help did change the gender role division in my respondents' families, with fathers being (by necessity) more involved in child rearing. Even for those coming from very traditional families that would be willing to continue a traditional gender role division model the realities of a life abroad did not often allow for that, forcing both partners to find different ways of parenting.

To conclude this section: the English interviewees' impressions depended on a social group with which they socialized. As Izabela's friends' parents were, as she described them, wealthy members of the upper class, the behaviour she noticed may be a conflation of class, gender, ethnic, age, or even regional factors. Another finding is that the same performance can be seen in different lights by different observers. Some women saw English mothering practices as positive, 'giving themselves a right to pleasure, to have time for themselves as well' (R5UK), there were also voices interpreting English mothers' behaviour as neglect and

indicating a lack of care. Older respondents who settled in England after the war were more likely to see Polish mothering practices in the context of maintaining endangered Polishness (also discussed in section 5.1.3), while younger respondents often focused more on the sacrificing aspect of womanhood itself to validate their femininity and ethnic belonging (Walczevska, 1999:53). As Graff writes, the Polish Mother's discourse of a sacrifice was tied to the national discourse of sacrifices for the oppressed Poland and self-denial in a face of other, more pressing issues such as the independence fight (Graff, 2010). This sacrifice model (called by Graff 'matriotyzm', a Mother-patriotism) positions Polish woman in the national community as someone who serves and supports (Janion, quoted in Graff, 2010), and selflessly provide for others (Walczevska, 1995).

It may be that (as discussed in section 5.2.1) Polish women, lacking control and not included in public spheres, try to compensate by exercising absolute control at home (Walczevska, 1995; Titkow, 2007:69; Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:60). Retaining this control may be especially important in the context of migration, for those whose lack of language and cultural competences excluded them not only symbolically, but more literally from the public sphere. We can speculate that maybe English mothers are envied their freedoms, but – in the face of limited power in other spheres – Polish women may feel unwilling to relinquish their control, thus displaying ambivalent attitudes. Here I also want to return to the topic of migration discourses and complaining culture (mentioned in Chapter 4, section 4.2.1). As I mentioned in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2, my encounters with Polish women in London were less symmetrical than those in the NZ, and often required more effort in finding 'points of contact' (Botterill, 2015). One of the bonding exercises is complaining (Parzuchowski, 2005:40), and some of the things that were said were designed to build the bond between us (often formulated through open-ended phrases such as 'you must know yourself, living here' (e.g. R10UK)). It could also be that complaining about English women (with some accompanying envy) served

as a resistance strategy to the migrant's perceived inferior identity by accentuating Polish women's superior mothering skills.

5.1.4 Polish Mothers in NZ and NZ Mothers

The way my NZ respondents, overall, described the 'Polish mother' bore many similarities, but also some differences to my English respondents' descriptions. The Polish mother was thought to be very strong and resourceful, a woman who feeds her children, pushes them towards achievements (by, for example, checking their grades at school), teaches them manners and is strong, warm and caring:

She sacrifices everything for the child. Child is number one, and her children's children are number one too. Yes. Lots of sacrifices. She suffers for her children and her private life ends the moments she becomes a mother. (Sylwia, 37, R16NZ)

She is, however, rather a 'mother-hen' (Duda-Mikulin, 2015) than a Mother Patriot, filled with energy and agency:

My mother is a typical Polish mother. She arrived [in Christchurch] on Saturday [from Poland] – she is seventy – with huge jet lag. On Sunday she rolled up her sleeves, washed all the windows, scrubbed all the floors, made pierogi [laugh] and started feeding my neglected daughters. (Aneta, 42, R20NZ)

She is also over-protective (for example, dressing her children too warmly), overbearing, demanding, always stressed, and nagging:

I was in Poland recently and what really got on my nerves was that mothers shout at their kids on the street.. (Dominika, 34, R18NZ)

I don't know if you ever read the (...) Supernanny comment that a typical Polish mother has (...) a tight arse. (...) she is always stressed, she always makes some demands on her kids and herself and they are notoriously not fulfilled, so she is always irritated and she wants more. I also have these features and I try

to fight them. Polish mothers are over-protective or they always nag, nothing is good enough. Here children are brought up in a completely different way (...). (Ewelina, 36, R27NZ)

In comparison, New Zealand mothers were thought to be 'less caring', although not all of them:

The only thing here that is more home-like and family oriented are the families, Samoan, or other from the Pacific Islands. Because there the family consist of one hundred and fifty people and one hundred fifty will be coming and visiting a family member who is ill or something. (Halina, 59, R15NZ)

Children were thought to have more freedom, and be 'set free' to play and get dirty. The description of 'what a New Zealand mother is doing' is similar to that voiced by the UK respondents, but the narrative is much more positive and the same practices are seen in a different light:

A typical Polish mother walking with a little girl: 'be careful my child, do not stain your dress, no, you can't sit on the ground, no, because you will get dirty, no, because we have to go to Church'. A foreign mother – child is playing in the mud? Let him play! Children have more freedom, they are more relaxed. They have more opportunities to deal with life. If a child falls, he falls. (Julia, 26, R11NZ)

Children are brought up to stand on their feet from the very beginning. Listen to this, here kids pay their parents board, weekly board to their mothers for food. (Sylwia, 37, R16NZ)

New Zealand's looser culture (Gelfand et al., 2011: discussed in Chapter 4) with less rigid rules made a difference to up-bringing style, and is contrasted with Polish culture in this way:

A Polish mother would never let her child put dirty shoes on a chair in a restaurant, a New Zealand mother would. (Dagmara, 31, R10NZ)

As discussed in the previous section, on England, children's behaviour in public was very much tied to a woman's position. This issue is brought up again in a section 5.3.3 of this Chapter. My respondents talk about the way they were initially shocked by the way NZ women

behave in public (for example going to the cafeteria or a cinema on their own, sitting in a café in a relaxed manner and drinking beer straight from a bottle, playing rugby, swearing in the presence of a man and talking openly about being hungover and approaching a man asking for his phone number). The ‘lack of manners’ amongst NZ children fell into the same narrative, as the same standards were applied to them as to their mothers.

In contrast to my respondents from England, who seemed to resist adopting practices they identified as ‘English’, the NZ interviewees, after the initial shock subsided, saw these transgressions in a positive light, with many respondents talking about changes in their own performance. For my NZ respondents this relaxed attitude was tied to the more egalitarian way NZ operates, and the differences between genders being minimized in a wider pursuit of social equality. As my respondents in NZ did not have to build their identity or performance around avoiding ethnic and class stigmas, they seemed to be more willing to adopt NZ practices and become more relaxed themselves. It also seems that the notions of a ‘Polish Mother’ were, at least amongst younger women, more tied to the stereotypical representation of a ‘sacrificing mother’ and ‘mother-hen’ prevalent in other cultures (Duda-Mikulín, 2015) than to a specifically Polish manifestation of patriotism. Just as amongst my older UK respondents (section 5.1.3) older NZ respondents, drawing on their experiences from the war, still equated certain practices of motherhood with maintaining national identity, especially in the context of forced migration.

5.2 Being a ‘Polish Woman’: introductory comments

In Chapter 3 (section 3.2.1) I discussed the issue of ‘insiderness’ and the assumption of a ‘one dimensional’ stable group (Adler & Adler 1987 in Dwyer & Buckle 2009:55), usually an ethno-national one (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014:41; Ryan & Nowicka, 2015; Ryan, 2015). This idea was also pursued in Chapter 2 (section 2.3.2 on the nature of ethnicity and ethnic

identity). This limited concept of a stable, fixed and ‘intrinsic’ ethnic identity is often taken for granted, and affects how people position themselves, and are perceived by others.

In my UK interviews, many migrant women asserted they were still, despite living abroad, faithful to Polish traditions, for example cooking Polish food. This was especially visible amongst my older UK respondents, for whom it seemed important to convince me they lived a totally ‘Polish life’.

Of course, although I live here, in England, I lead a Polish lifestyle, like a Mother Pole [laugh]. I meet with my children, prepare Sunday dinners (*obiadki*) together with my children, we spend Polish celebrations in a Polish way, as always, we go to church, confession, communion – a Polish way (*po polsku*). (Jadwiga, 62, R22UK, 14 years in the UK)

This was true even of the two women who had spent most of their lives in England (R28UK, R30UK). Adela (84), who left Poland when she was 9, and spent 67 years of her life in England, took pride in the fact she cannot cook English food (‘I cook in Polish’); she will eat it when she has to and ‘say nothing’ out of politeness, but – as she tried to convince me - she does not enjoy it (R28UK). She also said she ‘thinks more about Poland than England’ and watches only Polish TV. Another respondent, Alina (78), who is also 75 years outside of Poland, insisted she did not befriend – or even know – any English people. She married a Pole as she wanted to have ‘Polish children’ (R30UK), and she made sure they indeed ‘were Polish’.

Adela concurs:

[My children] they all speak Polish, they are all Polish. But now my son found himself a Dutch girlfriend, and it hurts me a bit [laugh]. (Alina, 78, R30UK)

However, despite their declarations and their actual lifestyle choices, their Polish identity was not an easy one to construct. When I asked Alina to compare her lifestyle to that of a Polish woman her age, she admitted:

Compare, well ... You know, I don't know Poland nowadays ... I mean, I don't know Poland at all!
(Alina, 78, R30UK)

Interestingly, the older New Zealand respondents were often more ambivalent:

In the Polish House you find typical Polish women. They are very religious. And, for example, the priest likes me because he knows I do not go to church and do not believe in religion. He likes me because he knows that if there is anything to say, I will tell him straight. (...) and how many Polish women are there who don't believe in religion? (Sławomira, 74, R24NZ)

[(KG) How it this happen that you chose a Polish man as your partner?] (R) (...) my aunt's acquaintances introduced us to each other (...) And my aunt was rejoicing, that [he was] a Pole, she was very worried in case I might marry a New Zealander. (KG) Why? (R) These were older women, and they cared about Polishness (...) And me ... I mean, I left on my own volition, so I didn't care that much. (Emilia, 69, R8NZ)

This could be attributed to a couple of things: a more inviting society, less outward pressure and judgment, but also fewer opportunities to sustain Polishness and long-term links with Poland. Although geographical distance does not always automatically produce 'isolation' (Sinclair, 1961:33), New Zealand seemed – at the time – to suffer from 'characteristics not of an isolated community, but of a provincial one' (Sinclair, 1961:40). If New Zealand - despite quite frequent contacts - 'lagged behind' Great Britain (Sinclair, 1961:33), then Polish people's ties with Poland were even more difficult to keep alive. Although patriotic ethos was a large part of the upbringing of Pahiataua Children, it is important to remember that they arrived in NZ as children, and their cultural competence in Polish customs was – to a certain extent – limited or re-learned. Country-less and often motherless women had to re-invent their ethnicity and gender, and they were free to do so – it was also not very likely they would be met with any outside moral judgements from the country that did not want them back (Manterys, 2004:23; also quoted in Chapter 4, section 4.3.1). Those in the UK faced similar obstacles when it came to the political situation in Poland, but because they were living in a numerically larger and

ostracised community, they were less able to get involved in local, non-Polish life, and were more likely to be disciplined by fellow Poles if they strayed from expected ethnic and gender performance.

The way my respondents described their identities was often through contrast: mainly with English women, but also with other Poles, for example those from different social classes or migration waves, as well as other East Europeans and Russians. As already discussed in Chapter 4 (section 4.4.2) Poles generally see themselves ‘culturally closer’ to the West (Ipsos for IOM - UN Migration Agency, 2016), and dislike being seen as East Europeans (Rydzewska, 2011), a term they see as derogatory. This was mentioned several times by my respondents, who used the phrase ‘looking like a Russian’ as a synonym of ‘looking tacky’ and lower class. When we take this into account we can more easily understand the contradictions often voiced in my respondents’ narrative:

And this generation now, that come here, it’s so money orientated, only money matters. And this is very un-Polish for me (...) I see that this youth from Poland, that comes here, is rather more eloquent, more interested in life and their surroundings ... and our (young people) here only television, now the computer, all the time only games [laugh]. (Alina, 78, R30UK)

In this example, Alina juxtaposed ‘new migrants’ with the ‘old migrants’, and it is obvious that the ‘old migrants’ are the real Poles, and the ones who uphold Polish values (Galasińska, 2010:946). But when she compared the same group to their English peers, her sentiments changed radically. Cooking food at home, for example, was discussed as something only Polish women do and are good at, in contrast to English women, who prepare and serve ready meals.

I am grateful to my mother that she taught me to bake and cook. And I have acquaintances, English friends, and they (were) deli ... well, maybe not delighted: they were terrified! [laugh] that I spend so much time on this, yes. Because I will not go, not buy any ready-made cake, but I will bake it myself. (Alina, 78, R30UK)

I don't buy anything artificial, as here in England, but one does everything on one's own: one bakes, cooks, everything on one's own. And English people don't do that! English people (put) ready (meals) to the oven, reheat – this is something dreadful. (Jadwiga, 62, R22UK)

In these two quotations, we can clearly see how 'English women' were used to demonstrate what a Polish woman is *not*. Jadwiga (who had lived in England 14 years) admitted she did not know any English women and could not really describe what they do, and Alina, elsewhere in the interview, spoke about English women and their customs in a very positive way. Complaining about the English did have, however, a functional role in allowing them to describe themselves as performing the role of a Polish woman correctly (through, for example, a 'prejudice against conserved food', Fidelis, 2010:57). (The same practice is discussed later, when Polish women talk about feeling attractive, and compare themselves to Polish and English women (section 5.3.1)). When looking at these two women, both saying a similar thing, we have to acknowledge a class and cultural competence aspect. Jadwiga came to England as a grown woman with little education and no English skills and her life evolved, as she admitted, around her family and Polish community Alina, however, has spent all her life in London, speaking fluent English and having an English education. Taking into account the different social standing, status and life story of these two women, we may suspect that Alina's assertions are more calculated at 'correct' ethnicity performance and convincing me 'she is still a Pole' (and not just any Pole, but one from a family that enjoyed, pre-war, a high social status), while Jadwiga simply does not know any other way to perform, not having enough social networks in the English speaking communities to experience ethnic or class variations in eating and cooking practices.

5.2.1 Polish Woman and Mother: Gender Role Division and Expectations

The 'knightly gender contract' that emerged from Poland's pre-war situation assumed men to be 'knights' and protectors, and women 'ladies', delicate 'pure creatures' (Yakushko,

2005:589) to be admired and taken care of (Walczevska, 1999:93; Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:59). It also divided the social spheres into the public, masculine one, and private, which was the domain of women (Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:67). During WWII, and in post-war Poland, under communist rule, keeping this traditional gender division became a tool of resistance to the new, totalitarian system (Fidelis, 2010:10). This was supported by the Catholic Church, which saw the Polish mother as someone who would raise younger generations in the Catholic faith (Fidelis, 2010:25).

At the same time, however, women were expected to be resourceful and energetic. The ‘strong tradition of self-reliance’ amongst East European women (Remmenick, 2007:330), who, during both wars, had to deal with a lot on their own, was repeatedly voiced by my respondents, who praised Polish women’s resourcefulness and strength in the face of various adversities:

[In a refugee camp in India] there was no running water, and no gas or electricity (...) But they cooked – our ladies are so crafty (...) Tins were used as saucepans [laugh]. Easter cakes – how did they bake them on this fire [admiring whisper], I will never know! But they were delicious (Alina, 78, R30UK)

While talking about their mothers, my respondents invoked dramatic stories such as the tragic death of a child (my respondent’s brother) during the transportation through Siberia, women’s struggle to provide for their children in the Dachau concentration camp, and various refugee camps later on.³⁷ As Polish women had to adhere to two different norms, they were often overburdened with the many demands (Titkow, 2007:66). Although the state propaganda promised equality, this was seen as an attack on traditional Polish values and ‘sense of order’ (Jolluck, 2002:12), and a Soviet ‘lack of civilisation’ (Jolluck, 2001:478). Maintaining the gender division, at least at home, was the way to preserve Polishness in the communist system. For these women, being forced to ‘emancipate’ meant simply working ‘two shifts’ – outside

³⁷ Sadly, two of my respondents (I decided not to specify from which countries) lost their mothers to suicide.

and inside their homes (Titkow, 2007:66) which suddenly felt like ‘too much equality’ (Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:59). This double burden (Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:60) of keeping up with their traditional home roles while joining the workforce produced a ‘social genotype’ of a ‘superwoman’, someone who sacrificed herself for the country and her family (Titkow, 2007:52:69:73), successful and competent on all fronts, indispensable, overworked, and always attractive (Titkow, 2007:144-145:177). This genotype was recognized even by my younger respondents who did not experience the said burdens themselves:

A typical Polish woman is a bit like a super-woman. Because she has to look gorgeous, have some kind of career, take care of the house and have children, take care of these children, the house should be clean, of course, the dinner made, and at the same time she has to earn to support herself, be independent, and everything should be top-notch. (Janka, 27, R7UK)

Cooking for her children and forcing them to eat. Very resourceful: always finds a way. If there is no food, we would boil flour. If there are no clothes, we would sew something out of a potato sack. (Matylda, 32, R1NZ)

The term ‘managerial matriarchy’ (Walczevska, 1995; Titkow, 2007:69; Kułakowska & Łuksza, 2015:60) was coined to reflect the phenomenon of the absolute control the mother has over certain areas of life (for example, the kitchen), and how this control substitutes for the real power she lacks in the public sphere. Walczevska writes about the ‘gastronomic mother’, who infantilizes and terrorizes her family through various food distribution rituals (Walczevska, 1995). Taking pride in feeding one’s family and a ‘prejudice against conserved food’ is a frequently observed way of asserting national identity through gender roles (Fidelis, 2010:57). This was mentioned before by Jadwiga and Alina, who insisted they cook themselves, and they cook ‘in Polish’. Both household and kitchen matriarchy featured heavily in my data, often seen as a sign of power, with English and New Zealand women criticized for serving their families ready meals.

As Walczewska notices, however, managerial matriarchy is not power at all, but simply the Polish mother's last bulwark: the only place in which she has something to say, and where she is irreplaceable (Walczewska, 1995):

You know, people say that dad is the head, and a woman is the neck: that's how it was in my house. Dad always used to say 'it has to be done this way', but mum, you know, twisted this, turned, so mum ... so, basically, mum. Because mum always knows where everything is. (Patrycja, 32, R26NZ)

This type of matriarchy is somewhat typical of post-communist societies (Titkow, 2007:65), but although the gender framework in which it takes place is systematically disempowering, it would be objectionable to deny women any agency. Indeed, many household managers did have a lot of power over their families, and were quite unwilling to give it away for a more equal family model (Duda-Mikulin, 20013:115).

Grandma (...) is (...) a silent family leader. My dad thinks he is the head of the family, but in reality it is grandma who is the head of the family. She has (...) two sons and a husband, and they will do [everything for her], grandma doesn't literally have to say anything, it is enough that she just sits there. (...) I need to learn it from her [laugh]. (...) And she is a small silent leader, small dictator. (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

Although gender relations are becoming more equal today, recent research shows it is still the woman who engages herself unequally in household duties, even when she works (Hipsz, 2013a:24-26; Duda-Mikulin, writing about return UK migrants 2013:111). For overworked women, be it during communist times or in today's capitalist rat race, traditional gender divisions, even with their 'benevolent sexism', may seem an attractive option (Zawisza, Luyt & Zawadzka, 2013:42). The sentiment to 'have a chance not to work' (Štulhofer & Sandfort, 2005:176) or at least delegate some of the household duties to the man was present in my data too. For some of my (especially older) respondents the traditional role division with the man earning the money and doing the 'masculine' things at home was not seen as oppression, but

liberation from a gruelling workload, and the burden of constant responsibility. Resentment at having to do too much was voiced by some of my UK respondents:

I was the head of the house, unfortunately, I had to ... (...) My mum was the head of the family and she didn't mind – and I started to mind that I had to think about everything – so why do I have [a husband] after all? And my mum didn't mind, but I started to mind, and it started tiring me (...) and I said 'no, stop!' (Stasia, 59, R18UK) divorced

In my relationship it was me who was a despot [laugh]. No, I had to do everything for myself and for him, you know. (Ala, 57, R21UK) divorced

It is worth noting that Polish women who migrated to NZ straight after the war or during the communist period were often shocked by what they thought as the traditional approach in their new countries. Helena, who came to Wellington from Isfahan, mentions:

Young women here were raised in a way that they would leave school, get married and stay at home bringing up their children. That was the New Zealanders' approach. I knew that I would not do this. I worked before we started our family and that was all right. But when I came back to work after my daughter was born I was very much criticized (...) that my children will be neglected, that my husband will be neglected, that the house will not be looked after. (Helena, late 70s, R23NZ)

Bogumiła arrived in NZ in the 1980's, from a refugee camp³⁸ in Austria:

They all sat at home and had children. It was shocking that they could afford this. In Poland it was unheard of! So for us, for me it was a shock that they were at home. (...) Our friend's wife, who was a radiologist, had a child and went to work after three months or even earlier. People were gossiping what kind of mother she was. (Bogumiła, 58, R21NZ)

Another point which emerged in my interviews was that eleven New Zealand, and seven UK respondents said their fathers were absent during their upbringing; for the NZ Poles this was

³⁸ My respondents' trajectories and different migration waves from Poland are discussed in Chapter 4, section

mainly due to divorce and death, while for the UK respondents usually this was because they worked abroad. For these women, men's involvement was not strictly a necessity, but rather a relief and, as mentioned before, liberation from at least some of life duties, which were often treated symbolically:

As for the help with more practical things, such as [carrying] some heavy objects (...) I would like to involve my partner, so he could also feel that he's doing something for the house. Actually, that may be the only reason for me to involve him, so he could feel that he's taking care of the house as well. (Justyna, 33, R8UK)

5.2.2 Narrating 'non-typical' role divisions.

It was interesting to analyse the narratives used by my UK respondents when their family model did not correspond to what they called the 'traditional one'. As West & Zimmerman note, 'to do gender' is not only about fulfilling expected gender roles, but rather to 'to engage in behaviour 'at the risk of gender assessment' (West & Zimmerman, 1987:136); in this way, my respondents' narratives had to incorporate the 'non-normative' elements into the wider gender narrative, in a way that would make them fit, and further support the traditional model. While a mother doing household chores (e.g. cooking) never needed additional justification or explanation, a father doing the same, often on a regular basis, was portrayed as merely 'helping' (e.g. R5UK), or doing them as a hobby: for example, cleaning 'relaxed him', because he was a 'pedant' (e.g. R6UK, R30UK), or cooking comfort foods rather than boring everyday meals (R13UK). One respondent felt it important to explain why her father 'was helping' (although from the context it was obvious he was actually doing most of the work), saying he had lost his parents early on and, in effect, learnt to 'respect his family' and therefore went out of his way to take care of it. The father's nominal role as the breadwinner was often maintained even when, in reality, there was nothing much to support it. One respondent mentioned that her

father worked ‘in theory’ – (in other words, the pretence was kept that he worked) - while in reality her mother supported the family through working two jobs. Another insisted that even when her father was not working for months he was still providing the money through his ‘mafia connections’: clearly a criminal was thought to be more ‘masculine’ than a man unemployed. This theme was repeated during interviews, especially when I asked who was the head of the family. Even when the father actually was the one whose decisions were followed, it was described this way:

Probably dad and his life choices were dragging the whole family behind him. I was often saying that it is an anchor, which is dragging all of us to the bottom. (...) And, as it is known, men never grow up, they grow old, but they are still big boys, and sometimes (that’s how) their adult life looks, as if they were still playing. (Honorata, 27, R27UK)

When describing their mothers and grandmothers, my UK respondents painted a less positive image, using terms such as suppression, complexes, sacrifice, lack of fulfilment, unhappiness, depression, bitter/difficult life, disappointment, fatigue, struggle with men’s alcoholism, unfaithfulness, war, unemployment, and inability to leave unhappy marriages. Problems with femininity and ‘not accepting femininity’ were raised, and the general impression was not overly optimistic, with my respondents trying to escape the hardships of their mothers’ lives. Interestingly, eleven (out of thirty one) of my NZ respondents grew up in a family with an absent father, often raised solely by a (usually maternal) grandmother. That compared to seven absent fathers amongst my UK respondents, who were usually working abroad, so it may be puzzling that they were not the ones who discussed hardships. Polish women in NZ attributed much more agency and resourcefulness to their mothers, and saw them as strong, leading women:

[Mother] she was independent. Maybe that’s why I am independent too [(KG) And your husband is Polish?] (R) A Pole, yes. And he was very disappointed – he’s still disappointed, because I simply disagree

that only a husband can be right, only a husband can have an opinion, and women not. (Sławomira, 74, R24NZ)

It may be that their mothers were indeed unusually resourceful, for example having the strength to step against conventions and to divorce their husbands. It is different with the post-war Polish women in both NZ and UK, but since my younger NZ respondents were, as a group, more educated and coming from bigger cities more often than my UK respondents, we may speculate there is some class aspect to this, and that NZ respondents' mothers had, on average, more social capital and resources to deal with life's adversities. These resources and capital may have been then passed on to their daughters, giving them the courage to undertake 'a quest' (Ahmed, 2013:236) to the 'world's end': many of my NZ respondents mentioned how they inherited their love of travel from their mothers, and one even told me about her elderly grandmother visiting her in NZ. It could also be the case, however, that NZ respondents, seeing their mothers very rarely, are more prone to idealisation, driven by the feelings of homesickness and nostalgia.

5.3 Femininity Ideals and Beauty in Post-Communist Society

Faced by many historical difficulties and burdens, Polish (and other East European) women experienced something often called by Western feminists a 'culture lag' (Štulhofer & Sandfort, 2005:176). In the frequently used quotation from the Russian writer Tatyana Tolstaya 'while American feminists were fighting for the right to work in coal mines, Russian women were fighting not to do so' (in Štulhofer & Sandfort, 2005:176). This was similar for many women from post-communist countries who, overworked and – as they sometimes perceived it - forced into 'male' roles, longed to reclaim the femininity of which they felt they were robbed (Remmenick, 2004:89). As was noted by many scholars, Western feminist concepts 'often do not work' in Eastern Europe (Štulhofer & Sandfort, 2005:175), and cannot be interpreted in the

same way. As Remmenick notes, years of socialism made women harbour ‘unattainable bourgeois ideas’ (Remmenick, 2007:336) of being ‘beauties and homemakers’, emulating the image of sexy housewives from American films (Remmenick, 2007:328). This was considered by many women as more ‘natural’ and desirable (Remmenick, 2007:336), and Western feminism was rather seen as force that would gladly ‘push them back to the equality labour camp’ and occupations where they ‘do not belong’ (Remmenick, 2007:336-337), stripping them ‘of their attractiveness, femininity, and sex appeal’ (Remmenick, 2007:337). The belief that being a feminist means negating the differences between the sexes, undermining motherhood, and disapproving of ‘beauty and self-care’ (Remmenick, 2007:336-337) is still present in public gender discourse in Poland, despite the wide distribution of alternative and/or new feminist theories.

This longing was also reflected in ideals of beauty, and the way Polish women’s appearance (perceived and expected) is described by my respondents. If I could sum up and generalise the data from both countries (ignoring, for the moment, the differences between them), one theme that was present throughout the interviews was ‘Polish women are more feminine’. Bogumiła, who came to New Zealand in the 1980s from a refugee camp in Austria, remembers how, before leaving, the local Polish Embassy gave them a presentation about the country:

And the more she talked, you looked at the women’s faces ... sadness on their faces: we are not going!
[laugh] She warned us: there is no wool, there are no leather shoes, buy yourself woollen clothes in Europe.
I did not mind as I wanted to escape as far as I could but there were women who said ‘we are not going!’
Because, you know, it is important for the Poles to dress nicely. (Bogumiła, 58, R21NZ)

Of course not all of my respondents necessarily identified with or approved of this description, but this opinion was repeatedly voiced and present in the narrative. ‘Being feminine’ meant different things for different women, and descriptions differed across countries and my

respondents' age and social background, but a few themes featured (with various frequency) in both UK and NZ interviews; Polish women being 'more groomed', 'taking care of themselves' (and their children's appearance and hygiene, 'not letting themselves go'), being more 'ladylike' in their behaviour (for example not getting drunk in public, and having more feminine manners), and (mainly in NZ) the way they dress (with 'taste', 'grace', and 'everyday elegance'). This is consistent with Heyse's research on Ukrainian and Russian women migrating to Belgium, who saw themselves as 'more feminine, more beautiful' and 'more home loving' than Belgian women (Heyse, 2010:72). These women felt their femininity was 'desired by Belgian men', and they are more attractive as partners than Belgian women who 'have lost something' (Heyse, 2010:72). Remmenick's respondents (2007) admitted that they were, initially, shocked by the appearance of American women, and the 'plainness and lack of style in their dress' (Remmenick, 2007:338). This was echoed in my interviews:

When she (my mother) came to Britain (...) she was in absolute shock when she saw British women. (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

New Zealand women don't have everyday elegance. So if I see a woman in the middle of the week in the middle of a city and she looks elegant, I suspect she is European or she spent some time in Europe and switched to the European system. (Aneta, 42, R20NZ)

They also thought Polish women were better wives, sought after by foreign men:

It's nice to have a Polish wife: they are good women, they will clean, cook, give you love. (Celina, 30, R14UK)

The stereotype of Polish women being 'the most beautiful in the world' is deeply ingrained in the Polish culture, and very much present in public discourse. In the 2011 publication of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs titled 'Polish Symbols', the beauty, modesty and resourcefulness of Polish women was given two pages, on which the 'beauties of the Vistula' were highly praised for their natural looks, and also their modesty in understating their own

attractiveness, even though it is obvious for others (especially foreigners, who ‘thought Polish women to be better wives’). (Interestingly, this publication attributes the Polish women’s lack of confidence in their looks not only in modesty, but also to ‘national complexes’). The fact that this was a publication aimed at a foreign audience may indeed raise questions about complexes, and overcompensation for the perceived ‘inferiority’ of Eastern Europe compared to the rich West. What is, however, important, is how widespread this stereotype is – and how it fuels expectations towards women. Later on in this Chapter I will be discussing how Polish women respond when they face different expectations, and how this affects not only their performance, but also their confidence and self-perception.

In this kind of cultural and gender set-up good looks are seen (and used) as ‘indispensable assets’, and if an ordinary East European woman started to neglect her looks, she ‘would deprive herself of the chance to get started and/or settled in life’ (Štulhofer & Sandfort, 2005:176, writing about Belarusian women), and her femininity might be questioned. Also, she might be thought to be uneducated and a peasant, rather than an ‘independent urban woman’ (Cvajner, 2010:193), as well as disrespectful to others (Cvajner, 2012:196). Therefore, certain practices are not only expected, but also highly functional and potentially rewarded³⁹. In those countries where women’s position is more sub-ordinate than in others looks may be more valued as a capital, and even advance social mobility.

There are, of course, different ideas on what it exactly means to be ‘well dressed’ and ‘groomed’, and varying aesthetics between different social groups and generations that share different tastes. Nevertheless, the importance of performing a specific version of femininity is

³⁹ An expectation that women ‘should be sexually attractive’ is not, of course, confined to Eastern Europe (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:280); there are, however, quite substantial differences across cultures in how large the difference in performance of gender roles and looks between the sexes should be.

still highly esteemed amongst Polish women (and men), accentuating and underlying the difference between genders, and being part of a wider gender model.

5.3.1 Being a ‘Polish Woman’ Changes in Performance and Narrative following Migration

These practices and performances of femininity are highly localised, and in constant dialogue with their specific social location, life stages, age, or changing social roles (for example becoming a mother). As they are a part of the wider gender set-up of a society, we may speculate that they are also subject to change when women move to countries with different histories of gender (and class) relations. We can suspect that, when moving to a new country, and trying to establish her (sometimes vulnerable) position there, some women may see these practices of beauty as a form of social capital that helps them secure their position, evening out economic or status difference, and boosting self-esteem. After a while, however, different strategies can be adopted to adjust to the ‘new normative milieu’ (Remmenick, 2004:327), with some migrants changing their appearance when they find their previous style no longer functional and needed (Remmenick, 2007:338), or as result of class/ethnic stigma (Cvajner, 2012:196). Others may hold on to their previous practices as an important embodiment of their ethnic and personal identity.

I want to propose – based on my data - two types of change: change in performance, and change in narrative (not altering, but rather re-defining existing habits). The latter is particularly interesting from an intersectional perspective: no change may be visible, but woman’s intentions or awareness may shift, and women may start interpreting their performance in a different way than previously. All these changes are culture specific, and a direct response to specific conditions and the social climate of the receiving country (as discussed in detail in Chapter 4). These changes (if occurring) may, in turn, impact on the way

women see themselves, and positively or negatively affect their gender identities by expanding them, including new behaviours and re-defining what it means to be ‘female’ or ‘to be attractive’, and/or compromising an important aspect of how they see femininity for other (for example class related) reasons. This also leads to an interesting, contextual confidence, with my respondents feeling more or less attractive depending on where they are (which I discuss in a section 5.3.5).

5.3.2 Changes in Performance: UK

My UK respondents did not, overall, report much change in their practices – and if they did, they preferred to attribute these to internal and personal circumstances (for example changing life stages such as becoming a mother or stopping being a student) rather than location. Some did report, however, that they became more relaxed, and had more financial opportunities to express themselves through fashion without worrying ‘what people would say’. One woman mentioned how living in a big, diverse city creates a different dynamic and makes her feel more courageous:

We are in the country where no one cares how we look, no one will gossip about us on the street, no one will try to peak through our windows - as in my village specifically - and observe what we [wear], because it's Sunday, and what is this lady wearing when she's going to church (...) And I had a break-through (...) And since then I wear shorter skirts, shorts, I go to the beach in bikini, which I would never do in Poland before. (Honorata, 27, R27UK)

Being more casual in public was also mentioned. In one case the respondent felt ‘ugly and un-groomed’ on her trips to Poland (R10Q11UK) which, she felt, was due to the different codes of dress in the two countries: although this respondent was very glamorous when I met her she mentioned that, when in the UK, she would not think to ‘dress up for a friend’ or ‘for the mall’ the way this is practised in Poland.

In Poland I always wore make-up, people laughed I would not go to put the bin out without make-up. Here make-up is different, very different than in Poland. It is more subtle (...) the way Polish girls do their every-day make up, here it would be seen as an evening make-up. (Ala, 57, R21UK)

It could be, however, that public and private spheres are divided differently in the UK than in Poland, and are more inclusive for women: it would therefore seem that my respondents did not *substantially* change or abandon their performances, but simply display them on different social occasions than before. This is very interesting in the light of Goffman's 'stage' and 'back-stage' division (Goffman, 1959): it seems that, for my UK respondents, the 'back-stage' sphere was expanded, and included – for example – local shops and informal meetings, whereas previously everything outside of their front door would be considered 'being in public'. Another interesting issue is, however, whether they feel – as Poles and migrants – equally included in the public sphere, and how much 'at home' they feel when they are in their English homes).⁴⁰

Another aspect was changing behavioural strategies to counteract being included in unfavourable ethnic and class stereotyping. Dawney, writing about Poles in Herefordshire, mentions how local people she interviewed used a 'symbolic language of style to assert cultural superiority' over migrants (Dawney, 2008:15). Clothes were one of the areas they discussed, and Polish migrants were described as 'less cool', 'less sophisticated', 'unfashionable', and recognizable because of their 'bad eighties fashion' (Dawney, 2008:15). Although some of my respondents were too young to remember the Polish People's Republic (PRL) with its empty shelves, there are still many women in my sample who grew up with limited access to trendy clothing, and had to rely on their own (and their mothers') resourcefulness in that area. Fashion

⁴⁰ Although that was not a great issue during the time of my interviews, we may imagine that the post-Brexit uncertainty of the status of EU-citizens in the UK may influence the way Polish women behave and feel in public and in private.

during PRL was described as ‘doing everything to look like those from the West, rather than those from the East’ (Fedorowicz 2011:142), and there were not only aesthetic, but also political implications of these aspirations. Being seen as East European, or a Russian, was not seen by my respondents as a compliment, and was associated with lower status. One respondent mentioned that she stopped wearing heels and toned down her style after she realised this was something that ‘Russian women did’ (and which they thought ‘tacky’ and lower-class):

I was wearing high heels in Poznań, every day – and here I never wear heels. I stopped in England ... I mean, in the boarding school I was wearing heels, as all Russians did. (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

The same respondent mentioned how her new habits were not fully appreciated by her mother:

My mum always shouts at me when I come back home, what do I look like, that I have to put make-up on and dress normally [laugh]. (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

It seems that many women face contradictory expectations and a disciplinary force as mothers, but also Polish husbands/partners observe if certain gender norms are followed.

The class aspect was, however, interestingly affected by the fact that by facing two audiences – a Polish and an English one – the same practice could be seen differently, depending on the perspective. Wearing heels, for example, could be seen as ‘tacky’ – but, on the other hand, wearing casual clothes was also seen (by some Polish women) as an ‘obvious sign that a girl is heading to her cleaning job’ (R31UK). A visible class division was also noted in how Polish women displayed their femininity, and this was described through taste:

And because I lived with blondes, chavs (*siary*) ... (...) That’s why it was difficult with the blondes, as I didn’t want to, I was not interested in wearing fake nails and long blond hair, right? Sort of, having hair extensions done is, sort of, beyond my circle ...of interest [snorting laugh]. (Iwona, 36, R3UK)

My respondents listed things such as ‘tight white dresses’, ‘sun-bed tans’ (*‘solara totalna’* – quite a pejorative phrase), ‘high heels’, ‘bleached hair’ with ‘visible roots’, putting ‘everything on show’ and ‘white boots’ (*‘biały kozaczek’*) as things that are ‘laughed at by everyone’. (*‘Biały kozaczek’* – in Poland a symbol of tackiness – is usually associated with lower status and countryside background: it is often described as ‘wiocha’ which literally translates as a pejorative description of the countryside, and more figuratively signifies something embarrassing and shameful.) (I discussed associating class with taste in Chapter 2, section 2.3.1, Chapter 4 section 4.4.3, and Chapter 6 section 6.1.1) But the ‘lack of taste’ was also mentioned in another context, signalling divisions amongst Poles in London, and implying that many of the practices are designed to impress each other (and maybe also friends and family in Poland):

Usually they hang too much [jewellery] on themselves (...). This is a, sort of, manifestation that maybe they can afford certain things in London, so maybe the more they put on themselves (...) the better.
(Honorata, 27, R27UK)

Interestingly, there seemed to be a great deal of criticism addressed at both Polish women in London and Poland and English women in general. Some Polish women compared themselves (quite favourably) to English women, for example by saying that Polish women dress ‘modestly’ while English women are ‘vulgar’. When asked, however, if they were themselves ‘typical Poles’, they complained about other Polish women often using the same arguments, saying, for instance, that Polish women’s dress sense is ‘too conservative’, and English women are more ‘courageous’. Read in a literal way, these comparisons do not make much sense (although they often appeared within the same interview) and show no consistency: but when we employ an understanding of the relational way by which Polish women construct their identities we may gain a deeper understanding of the ambivalent ways in which they talk about their own group and the English. There is also another possible way to read this. When my

respondents were comparing themselves to – real or imagined – English women⁴¹, their positionality was different than when they were talking about Polish women, and their focus was on different things. In the first case it could be that they tried to accentuate their traditional gender-ethnic attributes through contrast. In the second, they may have tried to communicate their migration success, or even attempted to distance themselves from Polish women unacquainted with London fashion, or those from a lower social group. We may also speculate that some of the critique directed towards other women (English and Polish) may be seen as a self-defence mechanism, activated when threatening economic or status differences were observed (‘poor but sexy’ (Pyzik, 2013)). This negative image was somehow reflected in the way that those of my UK respondents who described themselves as ‘not being typically Polish’ mentioned being better educated than an ‘average woman’, not wearing ‘tacky clothes’, being more tolerant, and not judging people by their race or religion. There was also an age aspect: in two cases my respondents said that women their age in Poland **were** ‘old’ (R21UK, R22UK): that was not simply a description of their looks, but recognition that the vibrant and active lifestyle my respondents enjoy in London is often unavailable to their Polish peers (both women who mentioned this were over fifty).

Many respondents mentioned they did not change their style, but some of them thought that Polish women living in Poland looked ‘better’ (R10UK). The high expectations towards Polish women were discussed, with one respondent describing women in Poland as ‘showing off their femininity’ in a rather overt way, with standards she felt she could never live up to. It was only after she had moved to the UK, she told me, that she had realized that you ‘could be a

⁴¹ While talking about ‘English women’ only some of my respondents mentioned London’s ethnic diversity, for example, Indian or Asian women. It is difficult to say if this was due to them being thought of as ‘not really English’, or to London’s demographics. 36.7% of the London is foreign-born (Census, 2011), so it may be that most of my respondents’ friends and acquaintances were migrants, and therefore not used for comparison.

woman in a multitude of ways’, and ‘accepted her femininity’ (R6UK). This is an interesting example of expanding the idea of what it means to be feminine, and – consequently – feeling more inclusion within a revised idea of ‘Polishness’.

When talking about changes in appearance, it is also important to bear in mind that such changes often follow broader acculturation patterns, and depend on individual commitment to the receiving society (often dependant on migration strategy), cultural competence in noticing differences and their meaning, or simply interest in local fashion, with some women more willing to explore this than others.

5.3.3 Changes in Performance: NZ

Compared to my UK respondents, Polish women living in NZ acknowledged that they had made more changes to their practices, although these were often seen as being out of necessity rather than a choice. Besides the intricacies of the NZ cultural and social climate, there was a much more pronounced geographical reality, which affected my respondents’ behaviour. I was told that, until recently, NZ was behind the times when it came to fashion, and if one could not buy clothes in Europe, one must simply wear whatever was sold in the local shops. These complaints are not new. Thomson writes that ‘early emigrants were so bewitched by the spell of the New Zealand Company’s publicity that they believed they were sailing towards civilisation and not away from it’: it seems that the first European inhabitants of New Zealand were aware of the ‘dangers of becoming semi-barbarous’, and anxiously looked up to Great Britain to ‘keep up’ with the Armstrong-Joneses’ when it came to fashion and culture (Thomson, in: Sinclair, 1961:40). Many women mentioned that living in NZ was like living ‘in a village’, and there was no point in dressing up, and no one to dress up for, as most people knew each other. Different climates and seasons were mentioned, with differently built houses (wooden structures), and the need for warmer clothes and outdoors/sport gear. In addition,

many women said they got involved in various sports in NZ. One interesting issue that came out was the topic of tattoos – with the Māori *tā moko* (traditional/tribal tattoo) present in the culture, some of my respondents felt tattoos were generally more accepted, often in situations where they would not be accepted in Europe. For example, one of my respondents was a practising lawyer who acquired two tattoos in NZ.

Just as in the UK, my respondents mentioned New Zealand women having a more relaxed approach to fashion, but on a much greater scale:

My grandma is 86 and she always wears lipstick [laugh]. Polish women are more elegant, have more grace. Yes, grace is the word for a European and for a Pole. I think our women are more feminine. And in New Zealand women play football and rugby. We have more feminine women and here women are half-in-half: mermaids! [laugh] (Maria, 38, R1NZ)

This was contrasted not only with the ‘Polish way’ of doing things, but rather a European one:

I would recognize a European. Women are groomed, differently dressed, have more fitted clothes. Everything is classy, colours fit, styles fit, not like here. New Zealand is a very interesting place, because – I think – the majority do not pay any attention to what they wear. What they wear is tragic, tragic. (Daria, early 30s, R14NZ)

As there are not many Poles in NZ, and (unlike in the UK) ‘Polishness’ would not be easily recognised by New Zealanders, my respondents gained a new, European identity, which they performed without the need for any resistance practices. Without the considerable Polish audience to monitor them or set the tone some of my respondents started treating their performance of gender as an expression of their ethnic identity, and found themselves in a space where they could do this without fear of ethnic or class stereotypes and discrimination. (I write about being a migrant in NZ in Chapter 6, section 6.3.2.) As one of my respondents explained, some women refused to ‘give up’ and ‘slide into mediocrity’, and they often try to meet in a Polish female circle and dress up for this.

A lack of pressure when it comes to clothing is, in the New Zealand case, a product of a couple of factors. First of all (as discussed on Chapter 4, section 4.3.3), New Zealand – as compared to Poland - has a loose social structure, with weak social norms and high acceptance of deviant behaviour (Gelfand et al., 2011). This shows in the lack of a well-defined dress-code, and unregulated rules:

We pay attention to what we wear, I mean there are rules from Europe, that when you go out to town you have to dress better (...) When I was in Poland, they were drilling us at the medical school, that you need to dress better – because you are a doctor, you need to dress in a special way. (Halina, 59, R15NZ)

Also, New Zealand's focus on egalitarianism stresses the importance of fitting in rather than standing out (class aspects are examined in detail in Chapter 6): being overdressed may therefore be seen in an unfavourable light:

If I go [here] to the theatre I wouldn't dress too elegantly, because I don't want to stand out in the crowd, because later it is so, it causes a small discomfort, that you don't fit to your surroundings (...). (Dagmara, 31, R10NZ)

Bogumiła, who arrived in New Zealand in the 1980s from an Austrian refugee camp and was sponsored by a Presbyterian church in Dunedin, mentions how awkward she initially felt:

I had a sheepskin coat with fur I bought in Austria, elegant boots, jewellery ... For us it was not a symptom of being rich but something normal, that's how we dressed. And when we arrived here, these rich people who sponsored us, women especially ... I felt so overdressed, awkward, so uncomfortable ... People were turning their heads on the street. I had big hair then, and this beautiful coat and leather shoes. Also, when I was in Austria, I was cleaning at a rich doctor's house and this woman gave me her very elegant clothes. And when I walked to my sponsors dressed like this ... It was idiotic. (Bogumiła, 58, R21NZ)

In all these descriptions there is an echo of thinking of New Zealand as removed from the (European) civilization, which positions Polish women – even if they are refugees – not as the 'poor relatives' from the East, but rather as sophisticated and cosmopolitan Europeans (more

about this is Chapter 6, section 6.3.2). There was only one respondent – incidentally from a very high class background herself – who voiced a less positive, class related observation (which echoed Iwona’s descriptions of the ‘Polish chavs’ she distanced herself from in London (R3UK)):

These Polish women I know here, who arrive from Poland as grown-ups ... tacky. High heels with pointy toes, always made-up. (...) They have dyed hair, they are drawn to kitsch. (...) it is not that I will spot a Polish woman on a street: I will spot a Polish woman or East European from a certain social group. Because there are Polish women I would never spot – I would maybe notice they are Europeans, that’s all – but they are from a different social class. (Klara, 27, R13NZ)

When describing New Zealand women as ‘more relaxed’, my respondents did not only refer to their dress, but also to their behaviour in public spaces and in their male-female relations (this was described as showing a ‘courage not many European women possess’) (R10NZ):

Even the way of sitting in the restaurant. Here next to us sits a girl [inaudible], who sits with her legs tucked under, she holds a bottle, drinks from the bottle ... in Europe girls drink from glasses; you have a beer, you pour it to the glass. These are, I don’t know, simple things, that for us are normal (...) I can’t generalize but girls from Europe always have completely different way of behaviour in public places. Not as relaxed as here. (...) Well, I wouldn’t do it. (Dagmara, 31, R10NZ)

This ‘courage’ may be linked to greater inclusion of women in public spaces in NZ (Global Gender Gap Index, 2013), and a focus on minimizing differences (Chapter 4, section 4.3.3, Chapter 6). (I discuss male-female relations in NZ more in the next section, 5.3.4.) For some these practices, combined with other cultural and geographic differences, were initially quite overwhelming:

It took me two years (...) to adjust to how people dress here, how they behave (...) I was simply taught differently, that it’s not fitting; that there is Christmas Eve, so you prepare (...) I don’t only prepare spiritually, but also when it comes to dress. I experienced a shock [in NZ] Christmas Eve is prepared as

barbecue, the house hasn't been cleaned, it is very dirty, I was speechless. (...) I was so shocked I had tears in my eyes. (...) Christmas Eve in sandals, shorts, barbecue (...) (Dagmara, 31, R10NZ)

These differences, however, were to a great extent adopted, with my respondents changing their behaviour and becoming more relaxed, casual and feeling 'at home' in public:

Before I would never go to buy milk in sweat pants. (...) I also became more courageous and daring. When I was in Poland I would never think of going to the cinema on my own. (...) how could a girl go to the cinema on her own? A guy maybe, but a woman? Now I want to laugh that I was like this. (...) I couldn't imagine going to the restaurant on my own, order a coffee and a cake (...) in Poland, unfortunately, there is an assumption, when a woman goes to the bar (...) she's waiting for a man to approach her. (Julia, 26, R11NZ)

5.3.4 Changes in Narrative: UK & NZ

When it comes to describing Polish women, and recognizing them abroad, my UK and NZ respondents often gave me identical (or very similar) descriptive answers, but with a substantially different interpretation: this was already shown in a section on Polish mothers (section 5.1.3). The most notable differences concerned the newly emerged European identity of my NZ respondents, and re-defining potentially stigmatised 'East European' practices as attractively European. The most explicit example of this was when I asked my respondents if they would be able to recognize a Polish woman on a street and – if so – what would catch their attention. In both the UK and NZ my respondents mentioned Polish women not wearing loose clothing. In the UK this was phrased as 'tight clothes' and was seen as something very East European, maybe a bit tacky, similar to that worn by Russian women. In NZ, however, my respondents called this 'well-fitted clothes', and saw it as a sign of European 'everyday elegance' and style. This type of varying narrative provides a fascinating glimpse into how a different social location produces a very different evaluation of the same practices and behaviours, depending on the context.

A second interesting example of a varying narrative was how my respondents described inheriting femininity ideals from their mothers, and how they spoke about these. Recent work on Polish mothers and daughters, enquiring about ‘what it means to be a woman’ (Korolczuk, 2012:216), found that women in Poland are taught, by their mothers and grandmothers, to ‘look attractive, but modest’, always ‘take care of themselves’, but also to be careful ‘not to be suspected of being too focused on themselves and their attractiveness’ (Korolczuk, 2012:218). Emulating femininity ideals and practices of their mothers was mentioned by my respondents, although with differences amongst my UK and NZ respondents. In NZ, women expressed greater psychological insight in discussing these inherited traits and behaviours (realising, for example, how they perpetuate some unwanted habits, and how they made an effort not to repeat some of their parents’ family model), and mostly saw these habits as positive and worth passing on:

My mum always insisted that one should always look neat even when at home, elegant, no holes and so on, so I also pass this on to my daughter, and I will dress like this myself. (Karolina, 38, R9NZ)

They also spoke more positively about their mothers, often calling them their ‘role models’, and (as I mentioned already in section 5.2.2) attributing the fact they were in NZ to the love of travel their mother (or, rarely, both parents) instilled in them (R1QNZ, R11NZ, R14NZ, R27NZ). This trend – except for in one or two cases – was largely absent from my UK data: being in the UK was not, for most of my respondents, an unusual story, and did not require additional explanations.

5.3.5 Feeling Attractive in the UK and NZ: Contextuality

Did these changes and comparisons affect my respondents’ perception of their own attractiveness? When I asked my NZ and UK respondents whether they feel attractive as women, answers differed quite significantly. In the UK ‘attractiveness’ was seen in merely

physical terms, and those who claimed they did feel attractive (11 out of 24) often laughed with embarrassment, blushed, or voiced their opinion through men (for example saying they are ‘attractive enough, judging by men’s reaction’, or that ‘men don’t run away’, ‘my boyfriend tells me so’, or ‘the best proof of this is that my partner left his English wife for me’). Some admitted – with defiance – they do feel attractive, but adding that ‘they know it is shallow’, complaining about ‘false modesty’ amongst Poles, or volunteering the explanation that they ‘gained self-confidence through psychotherapy’. Although my respondents were somewhat shy in admitting openly they feel attractive themselves, they usually had no problems with voicing more general opinions about Polish women being better looking than English ones. One woman said she did feel attractive in the UK, but not in Poland:

[In Poland] I could have worn high heels, or do my hair-style a bit better or take off my glasses, put on contact lenses and make-up. And here when I walk I always feel great [laugh]. Really! (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

NZ respondents (10 out of 22) saw attractiveness in a broader way, for example as being independent, active, educated, muscular/sporty, being able to ‘offer something to others’, and gaining confidence, skills and value during their ‘quest’ to a country that is so far away (Ahmed, 2013:236). This expanding and more inclusive idea of what ‘being attractive’ means made my respondents felt more confident:

I feel more attractive I’ve ever felt in Poland, that’s for sure. And not only in regard to clothing, but generally as me: that I am way more active in many different areas, professionally, and socially, because I feel ... I have this confidence I lacked in Poland. In Poland I was full of complexes. (Aneta, 42, R20NZ)

This was attributed to different gender relations and expectations, and being treated more as a ‘human’ than a ‘woman’ (as one respondent phrased this, she felt that male-female relations were as in a ‘scout’s movement’ (R12NZ)).

Here I suppose it's more ... the difference between sexes is melting, in a sense that one sees a person, not a woman or a man. (...) You don't feel that someone talks to you, or jokes with you, because (he's) flirting with you. There is no such thing. (Marta, 36, R27NZ)

Here people treat me normally, so to speak, there is such norm in treating a person as a person. And here I feel more as a person (human), than a woman – and this is very pleasant for me. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

Many respondents mentioned how living in NZ made them exotic for both New Zealanders and Poles:

I rather feel attractive, because ... maybe because, there are so many cultures here, and I am in a sense maybe exotic for them, because I don't look like the rest. There is no such a thing as in Poland: in Poland they are all pretty, they are all nicely dressed. Here there is a lot of diversity. (Dagmara, 31, R10NZ)

In Poland this attractiveness is seen through the lens of the fact I am not from there, so I am an exotic element, who visits rarely. (Matylda, 32, R1NZ)

In comparison, being a Polish woman living in the UK was not seen as something particularly exotic or unique, and was not seen as a lifestyle that requires any unusual personal transgressions. It also seems that in the UK the idea of attractiveness was more related to men, when in NZ it related more to other – especially Polish – women. One NZ respondent mentioned she would not bother dressing up for men, but she did dress up and did her make-up for the interview with me; it also seemed as women have more agency in feeling attractive, and do not describe themselves through the opinions of others:

I have a theory, that we put make up on for other women, we always want to look better. And this is it, that we really want to ... Because if you look nice, you automatically want to ... Anyway, today I am exceptionally dressed up, listen, I was laughing that I was sort of going on a date with you! (Karolina, 38, R9NZ)

I was somewhat shocked by those women saying they did not feel attractive, as to me they looked very elegant; however, in NZ I did not sense the coquetry as amongst my English

respondents. It may be that the ‘no pressure’ of NZ (R1NZ) – which women attributed to different values and being ‘at the end on the world’ or ‘as in a village’ and found generally liberating – made them feel they somehow lowered their standards, which affected their feeling of attractiveness.

Yes, however, sometimes here I don’t feel like this [laugh]. Because sometimes ... this is acquiring these cultural traits. Sometimes I do not pay attention at all anymore, and it used to be my second nature. I am not fighting for this anymore. (Karolina, 38, R9NZ)

It may also be that the image of a ‘Polish woman’ they held was very idealised, and they simply did not think they fare well in comparison. It also seems that, in a more inclusive society where gender equality is higher than in Poland (Global Gender Gap Index, 2013) and egalitarian ideals are prevalent, women cannot capitalise on their attractiveness the same way as they would be able to elsewhere, and their attractiveness would not bring them the same benefits as in a more unequal culture. It may also be that New Zealand men do not engage in the gender relation exchanges that Polish women are familiar with. As my respondents acknowledge, they enjoy feeling more as subjects than objects, and appreciate a greater feeling of equality as liberating and confidence-inspiring on many fronts: it just happens to make them feel less feminine and physically attractive. In the UK context, however, where there are many Polish women from different backgrounds and Polish femininity aesthetics are classed, Polish women may want to distance themselves, through their practices, from those from a lower background, thus avoiding the class-related ethnic stigma of a ‘Polish worker/cleaner’. It is also important to note that NZ respondents were less at risk from the disciplinary gaze of their mothers, who saw them rarely and thus could not, as some of my UK respondents mentioned, ‘tell them to look properly’. Eighteen of my UK respondents had other family members (parents, siblings or cousins) with them in the UK, and not even one woman from NZ had any family member except a Polish husband. This can, to a certain extent, explain why they had

more opportunities to explore different practices without anyone commenting. Still, Polish women in Wellington were informally meeting in a pub once a month and dressed up for the occasion – for themselves, and as a manifestation of their Polish and European roots. Although I did not have enough post-war respondents in my sample to form any definite conclusions, it seems, however, that those who found themselves in the UK or NZ after the war were more eager to perpetuate practices they saw as a manifestation of a their family’s pre-war status and the link with the Homeland they had lost. They also had no first-hand experience of communist and post-communist ideas on gender role divisions.

5.4 Conclusions

This Chapter discussed the way gender and ethnic roles, ideals and responsibilities of Polish women migrants in the UK and NZ intersect, and how this is manifest in Polish women’s performance. I summarize this Chapter’s findings by showing how these relate to my research questions with emphasis on the intersectional links between identities, differences in performance in the UK and NZ, and the changes my respondents report following migration. In this Chapter I discussed how ethnic roles are gendered, and how gender roles were, in Poland’s case, formed in the context of historical turbulence, with Polish women being assigned the symbolic motherhood role of passing on a threatened Polishness (section 5.1.1). As I show in my interview data, the ‘Mother Pole’ was still very much at the heart of my respondents’ idea of a ‘typical Polish woman’ and Polish female identity. Although the symbolic maternal role as a ‘formula of participation in the national community’ goes back as far as the partition of Poland (1795 to 1918) (Walczewska, 1999:53), some of my respondents still felt that ‘being a Polish woman’ was something they had to aspire to, or be awarded with, and required special effort. This is an interesting aspect of actively ‘doing gender’, by trying to reach the standards of an idealised icon. Such a historical link between Polish gender roles and practice, and ethnic identities, may make gender transgressions ethnically

disloyal, especially when abroad. Such an ethnic aspect to a Polish woman's identity was mentioned by my older respondents in the UK, who felt that their culinary practices, and their child rearing behaviours, reflect the true nature of femininity (and Polishness), and set them apart from English women. There were also differences in the narratives between my NZ and UK respondents on mothering practices. Women in the UK saw Polish mothering practices as superior to English ones, but also thought they carry more of a burden than English women. NZ women had a more idealised picture of a Polish Mother as resourceful and full of agency, but they also saw NZ practices in a more favourable light, and Polish practices as more negative. They were also happier to adopt NZ ways in their child-rearing style.

In section 5.3 I talk about the impact of communist and post-communist times on Polish women, and the conflict between being forced into 'male' roles (Remmenick, 2004:89), while still being expected to fulfil traditional roles. This resulted in overworked women feeling they were being robbed of their femininity, rejecting a Western feminism that was seen as a force that would further deprive them of their femininity and only add to their duties. This notion of a Polish woman being more feminine than English and New Zealand women was prevalent throughout my interviews, with femininity being defined as being groomed, neat, elegant, dressed up when not at home, made-up, and behaving in a 'ladylike' way, especially in public. This image of a Polish woman as feminine and beautiful is a large part of the stereotype of a Polish woman within Poland, and a significant part of a Polish women's identity. The way these ideals were performed was, however, specific to my respondents' age, social background and location: and so were the changes made upon migration.

In the UK my respondents attributed changes in their practices to internal, personal and life stages changes (e.g. being a student, or becoming a mother) rather than their location. They also reported feeling more relaxed and feeling less social pressure to adhere to strict

dress codes, and also felt they possessed more financial opportunities to express themselves through fashion without fearing ‘what will people say’. My respondents said they became more casual in public, and gained self-confidence, partly through a comparison with English women (whom they did not find attractive or feminine). The anonymity and diversity of a large city such as London no doubt contributed to this sense of reduced social pressure. Some of my English respondents said they re-discovered their own femininity and realised it could be ‘expressed in a multitude of ways’. This realization made them reconnect with their Polish identity – something they felt excluded from because of not adhering to the ‘right’ gender and femininity standards.

Their attitude to English women was ambivalent. On one hand they praised (or even envied) their courage and confidence; on the other hand they saw Polish women (not necessarily themselves personally) as more feminine, groomed and beautiful. They described themselves and other Polish women in a relational way, comparing them to English women, other Polish women, and Polish women in Poland. Their idea of attractiveness was very much physical and voiced through the opinions of others, usually men. They also mentioned classed femininity practices, criticizing the aesthetics of those they saw as ‘Polish chavs’, and tried to distance themselves from them. This was most visible amongst more middle-class respondents, who did not want to be seen as work migrants and/or East Europeans.

This change in performance amongst Polish women in the UK seemed to follow two patterns, as already mentioned: a greater feeling of inclusion in the public sphere and freedom from Polish gender expectations in the context of the city such as London, but also ‘resistance strategies’ (Edwards,1986), designed to avoid negative ethnic and class stereotyping. This freedom was, however, complicated by the fact that they faced two audiences, and were sometimes subject to various expectations and the moral panics of having to uphold their ethnic identity through the correct performance of gender. There was a class aspect to

negotiate too. Although some of my respondents mentioned they toned down their manifestations of femininity, so as not to be seen as East Europeans and lower class, they were aware that their casual wear in public (for example, wearing trainers) could be seen by other Poles as a sign of their working class status, and a physical (possibly cleaning) job. At the same time, it seemed that Polish women used their beauty practices as resistance practice, in the sense of trying to equalize the class and status differences of being a Pole and a migrant by using a 'poor but sexy' (Pyzik, 2013) narrative.

My NZ respondents thought changes in various practices following their migration were more the result of necessities brought on by a different climate and geographical condition, rather than choice. Because of NZ's location and its small population they were forced to participate in the NZ lifestyle to a much greater extent than Polish women in the UK. The absence of a diversified, younger Polonia placed them in a 'discourse void' when it came to their ethnic identity, which seemed to expand to include European identity, and permitted the re-defining of many gender practices as European. It also seems that many femininity practices that were negatively seen by Polish women in the UK as class/status related were positively evaluated as 'European' and cosmopolitan, and of higher status than those generally seen in NZ. For my respondents, being from Poland was not a source of ethnic or class stigma, and they seemed to be free to explore their femininity freely, through various practices that would not be recognized as 'Polish'. At the same time, they reported many changes in their dress and behaviour, attributing these to the greater inclusion of women in the public sphere, as well as the NZ cultural norm of 'not standing out' (Peeters, 2004). Their notions of femininity expanded beyond physical traits: as some of my respondents noted, they felt 'more humans than women in NZ' and more attractive as people. However, despite declaring Polish women to be 'more feminine' in their behaviour and

looks, they also felt less physically attractive, an observation which could be attributed to the smaller gender division in NZ, and their treatment as ‘more as humans than women’.

To conclude, Chapter 5 explains how my respondents in two countries manifested and changed their ethnic/gender practices in response to local gender expectations, and their own social location as migrants, women and Poles. In the next Chapter I will explore the class aspect of this, and my respondents’ status as migrants in their new countries.

Chapter 6: Stratification and Social Location in the eyes of Polish Women Migrants in the UK and NZ

This Chapter is structured around two leading, albeit overlapping, themes. The first of these is my respondents' perception and awareness of social stratification and various social hierarchies from the perspective of their ideas on poverty, wealth, education and professional standing in England, NZ and Poland. These views are usually deeply rooted and transpire from my respondents' social location in both countries, and they also reflect their cultural competence (or lack of it) in recognizing various class markers and the social complexities of their new country. In this part the data draw upon my respondents' mental societal map, spreading from those who are poor and/or low status to those who are wealthy and/or of high status, and juxtapose this with the similar maps of Poland they carry. Whether the frame of this mental map is described through different perceptions on thresholds of poverty and/or different limits of wealth in different countries, the content is composed of examples of recognized status markers such as certain goods or taste (Hayward & Yar, 2006), and/or status related behaviour (sections 6.1 and 6.2). The second of these themes (section 6.3) is concerned with the place my respondents occupy on these maps and how they see themselves as migrants, women, Poles, and people of certain education levels and professions. This goes back to the relational and subjective nature of class self-positioning through comparisons, and the 'sense of one's place(s) in a cultural economy of meaning' (Bettie, 2003:43), discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3.1). It is impossible to discuss my respondents' ideas on their position within UK and NZ society without understanding from which point they are speaking. (This was explained in detail in Chapter 2, section 2.4.1; for example with reference to Garapich, 2007.) Although I explored the notion of social location in previous chapters, this is operationalised further here. In this Chapter the data from the UK show much more variety in respondent views and behaviours than those from NZ. Many of these differences come from

greater in-group diversity amongst the UK respondents, somewhat exacerbated by the diversity of their particular location in London (as compared to Wellington).

What transpires from my data analysis is how differences in equality and inequality levels in England, NZ and Poland affect and perpetuate the practices of maintaining these disparities or equalizing them - often (as in the case of NZ) through leveling down (Brighouse & Swift, 2006: 488; Spacey, 2015). I explain these practices through the lenses of the 'social rank hypothesis', which anticipates that 'members of unequal societies are likely to devote more of their resources to status-seeking behaviours such as acquiring positional goods' (Walasek & Brown, 2015:527; also in Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009:40). (These inequalities, of course, can be related not only to economic differences, but intersections between gender and ethnicity.) Different traditions and cultural expectations in acquiring and displaying status-related goods (Brighouse & Swift, 2006; Salinas-Jiménez, M., Artes & Salinas- Jiménez, J., 2011; Walasek & Brown, 2015) are also present in my data, with substantial differences between the UK and NZ (Rashbrooke, 2014); but even greater differences when compared by my respondents to performances in Poland.

One such difference is the already mentioned Australasian 'Tall Poppy Syndrome' (TPS) (Feathers 1989 in: Kirkwood, 2007:366, Peeters, 2004:5) (Chapter 4, section 4.3.3). TPS is proposed as an explanation for some performance choices amongst my NZ respondents, for example understating or hiding their qualifications and talking down their financial and professional achievements so as to 'not stand out' (Kirkwood, 2007; Spacey, 2015), and for people's behaviour when it comes to display of wealth and status - despite the evidence of a growing income gap in New Zealand society (OECD report 2014 Statistics NZ, July 2015) (Chapter 4, section 4.4.3). I also discuss how immaterial goods such as beauty, health (Brighouse & Swift, 2006:479) and education can be classified as 'latent positional goods' because of their competitive value (Salinas-Jiménez, M., Artes & Salinas- Jiménez, J.,

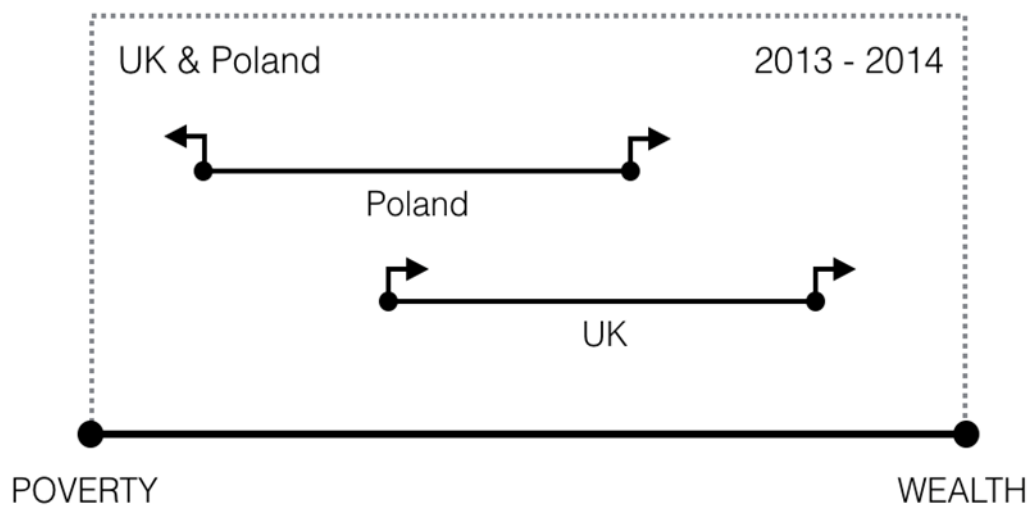
2011:409). Via a 'consumption component', these can potentially be translated into 'more jobs and other scarce goods' (Schultz, 1963, in: Brighouse & Swift, 2006:479; Salinas-Jiménez, M., Artes & Salinas- Jiménez, J., 2011:411). Importantly, from the perspective of a migrant, social inclusion - be it community acceptance, networks, residency/work permits, citizenship, or even a local sounding surname acquired by marriage - can also be seen as a positional good (Brighouse & Swift, 2006:481). The same can be said about cultural competence, for example language proficiency. (There are overlaps between 'positional goods' and different forms of capital, as outlined by Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1986).) I will, therefore, look again at the beauty ideals and sartorial choices discussed in Chapter 5, and show them in a yet different light, with an additional layer of understanding provided by the aspect of class and notions of (in)equality.

In Chapter 4 I explained how the regulatory, ethnic, cultural, political and socioeconomic environment of the UK and NZ (sections 4.3.2, 4.4.2, 4.3.3, & 4.4.3), but also discourses of (Polish) migration and racialisation of Poles, may preordain the social location of my respondents as Poles, women and migrants: I also discussed class classifications and stratifications in both the UK and NZ. Throughout the whole interview, while talking about being a Pole, a woman and a migrant, my respondents many times self-positioned themselves in relation to other (Polish, English and New Zealand) women, and other migrants. This time, they were asked directly where they positioned themselves: it is however important to remember that my respondents' views on where they are in the society do not necessarily accurately describe their standing, but rather reflect their subjective idea of the society's structure, and their place in it. This subjectivity is what I am interested in, and connects with the topic of insiderness/outsiderness I explored in Chapter 3. I do, however, refer to existing survey and census data to juxtapose my respondents' ideas on their position with more 'objective' indicators.

Although the comparisons I discuss involve three countries, it is impossible to look at subjective class without mentioning the global hierarchy of countries (Bettie, 2003:25) (Chapter 2, section 2.4.1) and various national complexes I also discussed in Chapter 5 (section 5.3.2). It is also important to note that, although for the convenience of presenting a large amount of data, these topics had to be spread across two empirical chapters, they are inseparably linked, and I always try to discuss them as such.

6.1 Perceptions of Wealth and Poverty Brackets: UK and Poland

6.1.1 Wealth: Range and Content in UK and Poland



A dynamic model of the subjective representation of the poverty/wealth gap in the UK in relation to Poland amongst the Polish women living in the UK. Arrows indicate trends either towards increasing poverty or wealth.

I composed this diagram based on my respondents' answers about their perception of wealth and poverty in Poland and the UK. It became obvious that social disparity and the gap between poverty and wealth in Poland was thought to be more visible and dramatic than in England, with a much lower poverty threshold, and growing inequality (although, notably, gender differences were not mentioned when it comes to poverty) (Polańska, 2010:424). Just as English poverty was seen as cushioned by benefits and state support, Polish poverty was

seen as becoming exacerbated because of inadequate state support, although wealth in both countries was seen as growing. Even the richest people in Poland were thought to be poorer than the rich of the UK, with the strong tendency to socially/financially climb manifesting itself through visible status symbols. This observation is supported by research on the construction of social class markers in Poland's post-communist period: as the 'social distances stretched' (Sztompka, 2014:175 in Polańska, 2010:421) and inequalities grew, it became important for the 'winners' of the transformation to find ways of signaling their newly acquired social status (Polańska, 2010:424). Of course, wealth and poverty (and their display) was not seen merely in economic terms, but also in terms of opportunities and freedoms (Mowafi & Khawaja, 2005:261). These capabilities and freedoms are very much gendered and ethnicised, often tied to the social inclusion of women and migrants.

To understand the way in which my respondents conceptualize and – to a certain extent – construct their social surroundings in the UK, we have to take a look at their perception of the local social ladder/structure and its scope. The idea of poverty, wealth, and corresponding lifestyles can change and is always relational, contextual, and based on comparisons with other groups (Bettie, 2003:13; Mowafi & Khawaja, 2005:262). My respondents' ideas on what constitutes wealth and poverty also went through changes over time, after they faced different living standards and encountered people from various backgrounds. This made them realize not only cross-country, but also inter-group differences:

Poverty here is not having Internet or TV. (Lena, 31, R13UK)

I did not realize [there were such] differences in lifestyles and prosperity within Poland, and only here in England, when the circumstances forced me to live in a typical migrant neighbourhood (...) I met people from (...) the Eastern border, from some tiny places, who graduated from vocational school or not even that, who did not go abroad like me to travel a bit, change their lifestyle. Practically, if they'd stayed in Poland, it would be difficult for them to feed themselves (...) while I was in Poland, living in a big city, I was not aware of this – I never knew such people. (Danuta, 26, R11UK)

A comparative aspect accompanied the descriptive way in which my respondents tried to convey the image of a ‘wealthy’ or ‘poor’ person, although they did this differently when talking about the UK than when they discussed Poland. Although I used two questions, and asked about recognizing wealth and poverty in the UK and Poland separately, Poland – or the Polish community in the UK – often remained my respondents’ reference point. As a result, my respondents’ answers about different cultural habits or markers of wealth (for example dress style), were usually fixed within a wider comparison of the economic levels of both countries and resulting ideas of what it meant to be ‘wealthy’ or ‘poor’, as well as how this would be manifested. Some respondents, such as Izabela, re-defined their ideas of poverty and/or wealth when they encountered different poverty-wealth brackets:

[About studying in a boarding school in Oxford] I felt pretty wealthy in Poland (...) But in comparison with these kids, who were renting a Lamborghini for a weekend ... [exasperated laugh] that was absurd.
(Izabela, 25, R10UK)

Many of my respondents (11 out of 29) felt competent to describe what a ‘rich person’ would look like/do. Unlike my NZ respondents who concentrated mostly on behavioural differences (section 6.4) which, they were convinced, stemmed from a different mentality around money and status, my UK respondents often listed ‘visible positional goods’ (Walasek & Brown, 2015:527, Bricker et al., 2014) such as designer bags, clothes, phones and cars (R9UK, R10UK, R12UK, R14UK, R15UK, R26UK). As the question mentioned ‘a rich person’, it was up to my respondents to make any class connotations, and explain how (if at all) they understood and interpreted the English class system and correlated it with wealth and/or status. The answers often revealed where my respondents saw themselves in the English society, and how aware they were of the complexities of class markers in the England. Those more acquainted with the upper class usually made a quick differentiation between ‘class’ and ‘wealth’:

Boys play rugby or polo, and in the meantime they learn so they can later manage family estates. (...) It is easier in Oxford or Cambridge as they sit there *en masse* and drink port. (...) But it can be misleading (...) This is upper-class, but there is a big group of rich English people who totally preserve their sort of cultural working class lifestyle. (Izabela, 25, Cambridge graduate, R10UK)

I was also given a very detailed, gender specific descriptions of what my respondents considered the upper strata ('skinny trousers, shirt, cardigan, jacket, moccasin shoes, Lancôme bag' (R10UK), 'woman in skinny trousers, moccasins with no socks, jumper and a bag' (R31UK), 'checked scarves and puff jackets', 'richer girls dress less courageously' (R9UK) and 'a lot of cocktail dresses, always wears a hat at a wedding' (R7UK)). Others quoted 'having a double-barrelled surname', 'snobbish accent' and specific tastes ('less shiny/kitschy outfits' (R13UK)):

Upper-class people don't read the *Daily Mail*, sometimes they talk about the *Daily Mail*, but ironically of course. It depends if this is a left-wing upper class, or right-wing upper class (...) But the boys will play cricket, not football, or rugby, or they will row. (Janka, 27 R7, UK)

Some respondents mentioned wealthy people as being 'nicer' and having 'better manners'. There was an interesting differentiation between performative/lifestyle status-related activities (having a public school education, playing rugby, polo or sailing on a private boat) versus the supposedly inherent aspects of class (e.g. being calmer). As my respondents were discussing London, geographical difference within that city was mentioned, with places such as Chelsea, Kensington and Chiswick quoted as being where 'the rich' live (R10UK, R12UK, R27UK, R31UK). Those who have not come across this group or did not possess enough cultural competence in realizing class diversity in English society usually equated class with wealth and seemed to be more confused by social classification. This was especially distressing for those who associated high status (frequently equating it with wealth) with certain obligations when it comes to the public image (Bachórz et al., 2016:121):

It's not that one should show off, but I think it obliges (...) these people should be some kind of examples for others. (...) [If] you go to a medical practice, [and] the doctor is disgusting, with greasy hair, dirty nails, a mess on the desk (...).she [the doctor] has no authority in my eyes. (...) I am scared of such people. (...) This is such a position, such status, that you should feel respect at first sight. I recently visited a GP (...) because she has a Polish background (...) I say, [in Poland] you would have your surgery closed. It's filthy in here (...) Well this was beyond my imagination. The whole circumstances [otoczka] should be, with these people, that you trust them immediately (Ala, 57, cleaner, *matura* (A-levels), R21UK)

This can be regarded as evidence of the 'Polish need for a hierarchy' and a 'lack of ambiguity' as to 'who is who' (Hofstede, 2011), which is expressed in Poland's tolerance for unequal power distribution. In a recent Polish study of cultural distinctions and obligations in the context of the stratification of Polish society, respondents mention clothing as an important signifier of status: they also express a view that there are certain sartorial rules people should abide to if they want to be 'respected', and establish themselves in society (Bachórz et al., 2016:122). However, what shocked Ala was not only what she saw as not upholding the right standards of one's position, but also gender and ethnic transgressions. If a doctor was expected to be someone you look up to, a female doctor of a Polish background would be doubly so. Although it may be that this expected rigidity is something that is, despite the established class system, absent in the UK (PDI 35), it may also be that it is displayed in other ways, which Ala was not able to recognize. Difficulties in reading status through unfamiliar clues was mentioned by many women (15 out of 29):

Rich people (...) in these neighbourhoods are dressed elegantly, often simply. But there are also rich people here who look like, well, slobs (...) they totally don't manifest this (...) don't show it in their clothing, don't need bags, shoes, brand jackets. (Honorata, 27, R27UK)

Although there were some quotations that strongly reminded me of the quotations from NZ, these were in minority, and not as straightforward. Unlike in NZ, Polish women in England

were (with small exceptions) not claiming that manifestation of wealth is not existent in someone's appearance, but rather that it is more subtle, and may be difficult or impossible to detect. Sometimes they thought it required special skills and inside knowledge. 84 year old Adela, who worked at Harvey Nichols (and helped dress Lady Diana) admitted she could recognize wealth, but attributed this to her perceptiveness developed after years of being a scout instructor.

If you are rich and an aristocrat (...) from generation to generation, that they can look very, hm, folksy. (...) wear good quality clothes, but without any logo, good jewellery, but sort of discreet (...) a leather bag, but one would have to look closely to see it is good brand. (Ela, 37, R5UK)

Those of my UK respondents who had difficulties in recognizing 'who is rich' attributed this to ambiguity in wealth/class indications, also further complicated by London's ethnic diversity and different tastes or standards than in Poland:

It is so multicultural here that people just look whatever they like, and no one pays any attention, there is anonymity. (Ada, 33, R17UK)

In the example below, my respondent (who previously voiced distress about high-status people not living up to their positions) employed an interesting strategy to deal with the financial and social disparity she witnessed in her cleaning job by using the 'Polish woman the homemaker' narrative:

I would never recognize on a street that this person is spinning millions. Or that, let's say, lives in a fantastic house. Well, fantastic – maybe in a big house. Is it fantastic? It's not done up. If we sorted it the Polish way (ogarnięty po polsku) it would be fantastic. (Ala, 57, R21UK)

Although Ala acknowledges the power imbalance she witnesses at work (she also describes herself as a 'Polish cleaner' in her Gumtree advert), this narrative may help her, to a certain extent, close the class/ethnic gap between her and her employers. They may be wealthy and

more powerful, but she is the one with the superior home-making skills, her gendered accomplishments of a ‘real Polish woman’ (and a mother) equalizing the field. As she said, Polish women may not always have money, but they look better than any other women even if they are wearing ‘potato sacks’.

Questions about the performance of wealth, although seemingly neutral, proved uncomfortable for some of my respondents, making them defensive, or even aggressive. As discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3.1) class and status are often seen in moral categories (Jones, 2012), and inspired unpleasant comparisons or a fear of lacking ethnic solidarity with other Poles. Some of my respondents automatically distanced themselves from what they saw as casting judgements by describing someone as ‘rich’ or ‘poor’:

These things are not important to me. I never paid attention (...) I think that everyone has whatever they have, and should be happy with that, that there are different values in life. (Stasia, 59, *matura*, working in catering, R18UK)

This attitude may be also interpreted as employing the view that ‘inequalities amongst people should be minimized’, present in the UK (Hofstede, 2011), and an attempt to equalize the obvious societal and economic disparity (and maybe one’s own relative low position?) in UK society by promoting a more egalitarian view (Brighouse & Swift, 2006:471). A similar reluctance to discuss and evaluate people’s practices related to their economic status was detected by other researchers, with some respondents living in Poland confused by the differences between someone’s economic standing and their participation in culture, and unwilling to ‘judge’ (Bachórz et. al., 2016:98). At the same time, Bachórz’s respondents (usually those of a lower position and upward aspirations) thought that taste in clothing, flats, cars, music, books, food and ‘aesthetics’ (cleanliness and order) were important signifiers of one’s social standing (Bachórz et. al, 2016:106).

If the highest end of wealth limit and class borders in the UK were somewhat blurred and vague due to unclear status/wealth markers and practices, my respondents did not have any problems with answering the same question about Poland. Indeed, a few of my respondents assumed I was asking about other Poles in the UK (R18UK, R31UK, R20UK), making the Polish community in London a reference point, and, when asked about contact with upper class people, listing Witek Czartoryski and the late president of Poland in exile Ryszard Kaczorowski. The vast majority (23 out of 28) said they could recognize ‘who is rich’, although some agreed that as people try to avoid being seen as poor this could be confusing, and people are ‘not so easy to label’ (R7UK). The distinction was made between ‘those who are rich’ and ‘those who have money’, while living in debt or using a company car (although, interestingly, the phrase ‘pawn but splurge’, quoted many times by the NZ respondents, was used only once). This ‘illusion of money’ and leading a rich lifestyle without actually being rich was seen as misleading (R6UK, R8UK). Showing off and being ostentatious was thought to be a common sign (R1UK, R11UK, R13UK, R14UK, R16UK, R17UK, R20UK, R26UK, R27UK, R31UK); also being rude, arrogant, looking down on others (for example not greeting them and/or holding head/nose high), and having a sense of entitlement (R1UK, R17UK, R22UK). The ‘markers of wealth’ were listed: expensive clothing, phones, shoes, cars, big houses, Ipads, brand bags and sunglasses, gold necklaces, and being ‘more stylish’.

Poles like to arrive at the church on Sunday in the best car they own. And here I can see this a bit as well, that Poles like to have a good car, to show their status maybe. (Ilona, 37, R16UK)

These descriptions resonate with the realities of the social transformation from communism to the new, aggressive capitalism (Polańska, 2010:422) most of my younger respondents witnessed in Poland while they were growing up. As new, ‘more differentiated social categories’ were formed (Węclawowicz, 2007 in Polańska, 2010:422), a dramatic gap

appeared in people's economic, educational and living conditions (Polańska, 2010:424). These contrasts were accentuated by the newly developing middle classes (or transformation 'winners') separating themselves from the rest (Polańska, 2010:424) by material, 'stronger markers of social position' (Lenartowicz, 2016:232). Although the English class system may be more diversified, it is also more established, allowing my middle-class respondents to seek more intangible ways to display status. One respondent confessed she used to care a lot about these and was 'snobbish', but changed in London. 'I used to be a horrible snob' – she confessed – 'I was a dreadful, horrible, vile person who runs after brands'. She changed when she got involved with yoga, she said, and no longer share her Polish friends' attitude:

I have a friend in Poland, who is also in the middle/in-between, but would very much want to be higher. And she came to London, and we were at yoga. And she (...) says 'What are you wearing? (...) maybe we could go shopping, buy yourself decent leggings and a bag (...)'. I say, what, leggings from H&M for 2.99, and H&M top for 3.99. And she says 'But how will you exercise? (...) you need to have proper leggings, Nike, and a Nike top' (...) My former attitude to money, brands (...) I think this is the best thing that happened to me in life, this sudden 'I don't care'.

My friends here (...) would keep working away and save, save, save, to have a designer handbag. And then they will go out with this bag and they will definitely look like rich people, but in reality no one knows that they were saving for six months for this (...) In Poland people like to show off more.
(Weronika, 31, R26UK)

Although Weronika discovered that displaying visible goods in London was not necessary to being treated with 'more respect' (Bachórz et al., 2016:122), she also realized she could utilise, in her performance, less manifest position signifiers, such as education. Education, considered a 'latent positional good' (Brighouse & Swift, 2006:479) can be bought, but it also becomes, a currency for purchasing material goods and lifestyle opportunities (Salinas-Jiménez, M., Artes & Salinas- Jiménez, J., 2011:409:411), including belonging to various high-powered societal circles. Using Bourdieu's idea of different types of capital, education

would be counted as a type of a cultural capital in an institutionalised state (diplomas and qualifications), overlapping with social capital in giving access to various networks (Bourdieu, 1986). When Weronika faced ethnic and migrant stereotyping, she tackled it by accentuating her (exaggerated) language proficiency and her job title:

Some guy started talking about work (...) ‘From Poland, and where do you work?’ I used to work at the Discovery Channel then (...) I was language operation coordinator (...) ‘And what are you doing at Discovery, are you a cleaner?’ I said no, I am language coordinator. ‘What, and you have your own desk (...) you have a computer?’ And I say, and I also speak seven languages; how many languages do you speak? And he shut up, and went away. To get this straight, I speak only two languages. (Weronika, 31, R26UK)

Izabela also admitted to using her education as a shield against various ethnic assumptions:

I studied at Cambridge ... and, literally, this is my argument, OK, you go and gain a degree from there. (Izabela, 25. R10UK)

These examples show how ethnic and class practices intersect, but also underline the importance of performance change when facing different audiences (Goffman, 1959). As both Weronika and Izabela come from big cities and middle-class backgrounds we can suspect they adopted status markers of (roughly) similar groups they joined in the UK, switching into a different cultural code from the one they were using in Poland. They may have also come to the conclusion that the Polish practices of status/wealth display through visible goods (for example brand clothes and gadgets) are not usually performed in the UK by the middle and upper classes, and rather associated with ‘lower’ social groups and mocked for being ‘tasteless’ and tacky’ (Hayward & Yar, 2006:14).⁴² This shift may be, however,

⁴² As Bachórz et. al write, there is a trend amongst some middle-class people in Poland to ‘dematerialize’ status/wealth markers and avoiding identifying these with ‘material things’ and mentioning education, freedom, and having more time instead (Bachórz et.al, 2016:107). This seems to be present, however, amongst a fairly

hard to understand by their Polish friends, who may expect migrants to show how well they are doing abroad. There is also a gender aspect to this performance change, as these new practices may be seen as not upholding femininity ideals and ‘letting herself go’. As Izabela mentioned (Chapter 5, section 5.3.2) her mother continues to discipline her and ‘shout at her’ to ‘dress normally’ and ‘put make-up on’ when she visits Poland. But there were also intersections between ethnicity, class and big cities and a small towns/villages background. Some women said they would recognize rich people in Poland but in Warsaw only, and that (with small variations and a Polish woman being ‘more stylish’) ‘a rich girl from Warsaw is similar to a rich girl from Chelsea’. There was also an age aspect: younger generations of women, no matter what ethnicity, were thought to have more in common with each other, leading similar lifestyle and wearing the same brands.

Another thing that differs between countries and social groups is the way people spend their time and participate in culture (Bachórz et. al, 2016). A younger generation of Poles, raised in a post-transition, more technologically developed Poland, participate more easily in global pop-culture, and share more similarities with their English peers than people from previous migration waves. Their financial capabilities were, however, not always the same. One of the status markers thought to be telling in Poland (but not in the UK) was ‘going to restaurants’ – which can be seen as having the economic resources for eating out, but also feeling more comfortable in the classed public sphere (Kaleta, 2016; Polańska, 2010:428). In the UK, some of my respondents said, ‘everyone could afford this’, even students working in Starbucks, which points to the greater inclusion of different social groups in the public sphere

small group of high-status people. Although it may show how these practices are changing and post-transformation Poland’s stratification system is becoming stabilized, these cannot be attributed to general practices and expectations present in Poland.

(discussed in Chapter 5, section 5.1.2), but also different cultural practices with respect to spending time.

6.1.2 Poverty: The Range and Content in the UK and Poland

Around half of my respondents thought they could recognize poverty in the UK, although they admitted that this might require a certain cultural competence and, in some cases, exposure. While some of my respondents said they were out of Poland for too long and had out-dated ideas because of ‘no longer walking the streets’⁴³ when visiting, for others it was a sensitive issue no matter which country they discussed. Some of the women I spoke to did not have to climb any social ladders and moved horizontally straight into the societal strata they occupied in Poland, by-passing many stages experienced by other Polish migrants. There was, I believe, a hint of self-presentation in their declarations that they would not recognize poverty, as they ‘have no contact with anyone like this’ (R18UK, R17UK) or simply ‘there are no people like that in Oxford’ (R10UK):

I am aware that round the corner there is council housing, and there are people who live on one hundred pounds a week with two kids or something like that: I don’t even know if this is too much, or not enough.
(Izabela, 25, R10UK)

This, as the same respondent put it, ‘sheltered experience’ was recognized though, and acknowledged as something not entirely typical for a Polish migrant (although usually typical for my respondents’ circle of friends), and maybe required a little explanation. Interestingly,

⁴³ Some respondents drew my attention to the fact that when they visit Poland it is a holiday for them, so their behaviour, clothing, and time and money spending habits would follow a holiday pattern and differ from how they would usually behave while living in Poland (even after an experience of living abroad). It is important to remember, while talking about changes in habits and adopting other cultural practices while outside of Poland that migrants visiting Poland would often behave more like tourists, even in their home cities, and not residents.

the same respondents who may have come across as snobbish when placing themselves in the UK context, did not display similar behaviour when talking about their (often equally privileged) life in Poland, for example attributing it to ‘luck’. Because of the realities of the communist period, even those who were born in the intelligentsia and/or wealthier families underwent large parts of their education within the state system, mixing with children from various backgrounds and usually sharing other lifestyle experiences, for example living in blocks of flats and suffering from the same market shortages, despite their families’ different cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Depending on the age of the respondent this could have been their whole educational path, or just the primary and/or middle school, before they had the option to transfer to private and/or international schooling in Poland or abroad. This is often described as a shift from a ‘classless childhood’ to a ‘diversifying social world’ (Bachórz et.al., 2016:88; Lenartowicz, 2016:220). Although this could be partly understood as a ‘universal nostalgia’ for the time where social differences were not realised, historical facts of the certain ‘classlessness’ of pre-transformation Poland have to be taken into account (Bachórz et. al., 2016:90). Izabela, who spent half of her school years in a Polish state school, before she went to a boarding school in Oxford, where she joined the international financial elite, describes it this way:

I would have to go back to my memory of primary school, as this was when I was in touch with the whole spectrum of society. It was the last time (...) I have friends from school, who I meet once in a while when they are collecting scrap metal [disbelieving laugh], they transport scrap metal on a cart, and I say ‘Mateusz, cheers man!’ (Izabela, 25, R10UK)

Such self-presentation in the UK context makes me suspect a certain ethnic-class intersection, where the sensitivity over being perceived (or stigmatised) as a Polish work migrant may have played a part. However, when accentuating their own high social position through education or profession and making a point of dispelling stereotypes, my respondents were

also anxious not to portray themselves as better than more working-class or less successful Poles. They used various strategies to combine these two and project some ethnic solidarity across the class divide, for example attributing their high position and/or academic achievements to luck. What is particularly interesting is the experience of jumping the class system in the UK, as in the case of Celina, who went from cleaning the students' halls to becoming an Oxbridge student. This jump, from a migrant cleaner to an Oxford graduate, marks social distance in the English society far greater than it would be for Celina in Poland, and distanced her further from other Polish migrants and the 'typical' migrant experience. I will discuss in more detail self-positioning of my respondents later in this Chapter (section 6.3.1 and 6.3.2).

Descriptive aspects of those who are poor, or poorer, concentrated around council housing and a 'benefit class', recognized by wearing 'tracksuits and gold' (with parallels drawn with Polish 'dresiarze' (young men in track-suits) (R26UK)), having tattoos and/or no shirt on, 'tacky', uniform clothes from popular shops (R12UK, R10UK, R4UK, R6UK, R5UK, R7UK, R10UK, R22UK, R26UK), and being overweight and less sporty (R5UK, R12UK). Behavioural aspects of poverty such as bad eating habits, eating fast food (especially from McDonalds) and cheap 'less healthy food products' was mentioned (R29UK, R11UK), as well as women having 'more children at a younger age' (R12UK, R10UK). However, the most common factor mentioned was council housing, where people are 'unemployed', 'just left prison or have problems with the law', 'speak louder talking about their private matters in public' (R2UK, R7UK), shout at their children, and have a distinctive accent and vocabulary (R7UK, R23UK). What was visible was the moral angle in describing 'poor people' as tasteless, badly behaved, slightly dangerous and somewhat immoral. One respondent was shocked by their 'lack of ethics':

There was a council house in front of the house where [my fiancé] lived (...) Once my bike disappeared, and [my fiancé] found it [laugh] in the neighbours' basement. OK, I can understand that someone has to steal bikes, but from the neighbours? You can't do that, this is against any thieves' ethics! In Gdańsk we lived in a town house with Mr Mafioso downstairs. And we felt the safest people in the world when he was our neighbour. (Janka, 27, R7UK)⁴⁴

Others thought that ethnic minorities, those with 'certain skin colour' and some migrant children were poorer (R12UK, R14UK, R21UK), just as those who lived in certain, cheaper areas of London or England in general (North vs. South). One person mentioned poor people using public transport, but then back-tracked saying that this cannot be an indicator in London, where everyone – 'Chinese people on the minimum wage and people who buy five million pound houses' use the Tube together (R2UK, R14UK).

What was particularly interesting was the notion of how difficult it is to judge what 'poverty' means when juxtaposed with the Polish reality. This relates to the idea of 'relative' versus 'absolute' poverty and also different aspects of poverty beside the economic ones (Mowafi & Khawaja, 2005: 262). Some thought there was no economic poverty in the UK as living standards are generally higher, and even 'poorer people' can spend holidays in Spain/Ibiza and can afford food, clothes, a place to live (even if they live in aforementioned council housing) and engage in expensive sports such as surfing. This, my respondent thought, was not always the case in Poland. This was attributed to various products and activities (food, clothes, eating out) being cheaper in relation to salaries, and a developed social benefit and scholarship system pushing the poverty line much higher:

⁴⁴ This is also an interesting example of how in Poland, during the communist, and then post-communist era, an established intelligentsia family – such as Janka's – had more trust in an organised crime leader than in state services for protection, and how living in the same house as a local crime master was not an indication of living in a 'bad' neighbourhood.

I work in Starbucks, so I am earning the minimum wage, which is absolutely sufficient for me. I mean, my mum (...) sends me money, but (...) I know that I would be able to support myself. I have friends who work and study on their own, and they live on a very decent level. (Iga, 21, a student, R19UK)

Various cultural habits were also mentioned, especially not caring about clothing (R10UK, R23UK, R27UK), and difficulties in recognising what may be poverty and what is a different cultural habit. Overall, poverty in the UK was seen less in economic terms, but as more related to limited developmental opportunities and certain lifestyle choices and aesthetics than lack of basic resources. This description, as mentioned before, was slightly coloured with a moral judgment. It may be that for those who had to establish themselves in the UK largely on their own it is difficult to understand how someone who grew up in England may experience poverty. Those who experienced harsh conditions before and do not have awareness of the various systems of social exclusions present in the UK may attribute poverty to personal choices and an unwillingness to be more mobile.

Poverty in Poland was seen differently. This was thought to have a much lower threshold, be more distinctive and dramatic, and have many facets that were supposed not to have an equivalent in the UK (for example ‘poverty resulting from drinking’ and bad conditions in the countryside after the post-transition dissolution of state farms). The welfare state was thought not to be very developed and state support insufficient:

We lived in a social flat where there was no running water for many years – and those kind of flats still exist. (...) It is impossible to describe how people live. (...) And literally ... they complain about the council flats here – God, God! (Kaja, 32, agricultural engineer, R6UK)

I come from a very small place. It is a former state farm (PGR), teeming with life at the time of my parents’ youth (...) Later on, as you know, everything collapsed (...) Everyone worked there, and then everyone lost their jobs, and the village has died. (Honorata, 27, R27UK)

This poverty was not attributed to dubious morals or choices but rather communist and post-communist realities of life in Poland. Still, my respondents thought that people in Poland strive to project higher status and make an effort to hide poverty by tending to their clothes and looks (especially women), so unless it is extreme and appearances are no longer possible to be kept, poverty is almost impossible to recognize (R5UK, R4UK, R8QUK, R27UK).

I've never met a really rich person in Poland (...) People who think they are rich [laugh] have so much debt! They live a rich lifestyle, but they can't really afford it. They show themselves in expensive jackets but it turns out they don't have a flat (...) a jacket worth three thousand złotych, and she had nothing to eat. (Justyna, 33, R8UK)

The differences between the rich and the poor were thought to be larger in Poland than in the UK, with the disparity growing, and people's lifestyles becoming more and more apart. For example, when comparing rich elites from Warsaw to impoverished eastern rural areas; social transformation was thought to play a part in this. This poverty was described as being differently spread than in the UK, for example not confined to certain neighbourhoods. This was a rather materialistic, economic view on poverty, less concerned with such aspects of life as freedom of choice, access to networks, social opportunities, or security guaranteed by the state (Sen, 1999:159). Having many children could be a sign, I was told, or diet, but as 'there is no visible obesity' it was thought not to be an indicator. At the same time, some of my respondents thought that the economic disparities in Poland were growing. They also mentioned how people in Poland are 'obsessed' with acquiring education, whereas in England it is experience, actual skills and networks that matter more (R6UK, R31UK, R27UK). This 'obsession', they thought, devalued higher education, with education pursued not for the skills, but for degree certificates. This, my respondents thought, stems from an

unstable and competitive work market, where even receptionists and people working in a shop need to show high educational credentials (R31UK, R9UK), and people study at multiple faculties to gather as many formal qualifications as possible. This, my respondents noticed, often surprises English people (R6UK, R31UK, R9UK), who do not understand Polish reality:

I know because of my female acquaintances, my cousins. They go to various courses ..., just so they don't lose their jobs. These courses are varied, masters courses, engineer courses, post-graduate, post-post graduate. And they study non-stop, with the apprehension that someone can replace them. (Kamila, 34, R31UK)

This competitive aspect of education (Brighouse & Swift, 2006: 475) contributes to social division, and enforces strict categories of social order:

[We went] to Poland for holidays. And he [an acquaintance] had a car, and he had a chauffeur (...) And we say [to the chauffeur], please sit and eat with us. You know, it is normal for us, this is a human being, why would we be ashamed of him? I'm talking in a Western way (...) [And in Poland? KG] And in Poland, no! He did not want to sit with us at all, but at the end he overcame this and sat and ate with us, and I was pleased [laugh]. [...] Now he died [the acquaintance] ... when he went to eat, the chauffeur had to be somewhere else. (Adela, 84, R28UK)

The Gini co-efficient data measuring income inequality and wealth distribution shows that Poland is marginally more unequal than the UK, and that benefits (including the state pension) in the UK decreases the UK's Gini score, lowering visible inequalities (OECD report 2014). As my respondent remarked, this kind of support is insufficient in Poland. It is also important to note that although the dynamics of social transformation and growing economic division has in recent years somewhat 'solidified' (Polańska, 2010:422), my younger respondents still draw on their experience of instability and change. As, excluding those three respondents who came straight after the war or in the very early 1980s, the

average time my respondents lived in England was around 7 years, we can assume that there was still an unemployment crisis in Poland when they left, and they did not directly experience many changes that had happened in Poland since.

Although the complexities of English society and various simultaneously existing social hierarchies did not let my respondents form their opinions in the same, clear-cut and almost black and white way as my NZ respondents did (the commonly met expression ‘pawn but splurge’ quoted heavily in my NZ data), they admitted that Poles, especially women, make an effort to at least ‘look decent’. As mentioned before, with regard to the UK, this does follow the pattern of people’s behaviour in unequal societies, where there is an ‘increased concern with social hierarchy which leads to status competition’ (Walasek & Brown, 2015:527), and status is judged mainly by visible positional goods, which are purchased more often (Walasek & Brown, 2015:528).

6.1.3 UK: Concluding comments

Being engaged in, and expecting these kind of practices may be a reason for confusion when different, less material status signals are present, and a surprise when no obvious correlation between wealth and appearance is observed. It can also be further muddled by different ‘patterns of consumptions’ amongst different classes in the UK (Hayward & Yar, 2006:14): as one of my respondents noticed, the English working class ‘doesn’t have aspirations to look richer’ (R10UK), whereas in Poland this need and habit exists across all social groups. There is, however, another possibility. We could speculate that the status/goods display amongst the most disadvantaged (and potentially upwardly mobile) English classes, where the inequality is felt the most, follows a similar example to that known to my Polish respondents, and is, therefore, more familiar and recognizable. The status markers of higher/upper classes, manifesting differently, may not be however easy to spot.

Different 'patterns of consumption' are not, however, always seen as equal. Purchasing brand clothing, 'jewellery ('chunky' gold rings and chains)', make-up and 'accessories' was viewed as a part of the 'celebrity chav' culture (Hayward & Yar, 2006:14) of those who 'enjoy a plentitude of economic resources', but engage rather in 'expensive vulgarity' than a 'refined' middle class taste (Fox, 2004; Hayward & Yar, 2006:14-15).

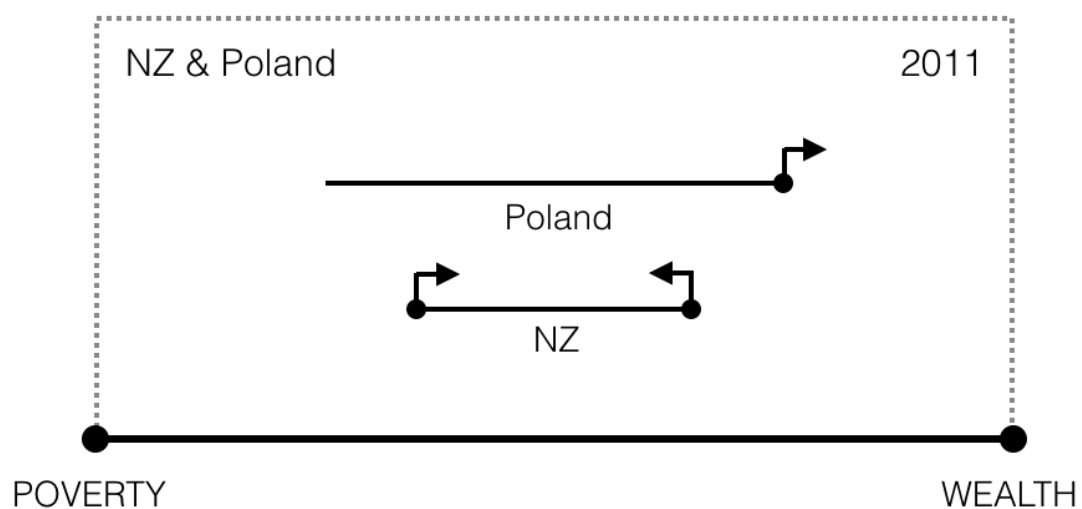
My neighbour is rich (...) he owns four houses which he rents out (...) He is a builder (...) not from the upper class, but (...) money is not an issue for him. But, at the same time, I can recognize by what he wears, by his car, by the way his children look (...) maybe not even him, but his wife. This is a bit a mix of splendour and kitsch. A handbag on a gold chain that is gold, if tracksuits, then brand ones ... (Janka, 27, Oxford graduate, R7UK)

The prejudicial and caricatured way in which the 'chav culture' is portrayed shows a contempt for those social climbers who do not share 'default', middle class 'aesthetic choices' (Hayward & Yar, 2006:14), and may (if realized by migrants) lead to toning down their own practices and behaviour, so as to avoid falling into the same negative discourse. Incidentally, this discourse is often used by media to portray migrants, channelling xenophobia through the more socially acceptable channel of a prejudice against the working classes (demonized as a 'feral underclass') (Jones, 2012:2:7). This was discussed in Chapter 5 (section 5.3.2): women's performance change to avoid appearing 'Russian', 'lower-class', 'tacky', or 'cheap', which was thought to be somewhat synonymous with 'East European'. At the same time Polish women were thought to have an ability to dress well no matter what their financial situation and background. (This was discussed in Chapter 5 when talking about

Polish women’s resourcefulness, also during a time of national crisis.⁴⁵) There were also different ideas of what minimum care for one’s appearance means. (One respondent mentioned her mother did not really care about her appearance despite ‘basic’ things such as going to a hairdresser once a month.) These practices or ideals are not, however, classless. As mentioned before while discussing the case of Ala, Weronika and Izabela, practices of femininity and beauty also fall into class and status related obligations, and act as implicit signifiers of one’s position (Bachórz et al., 2016). Not abiding to these expectations may result in being ‘not respected’, just as in the case of Ala’s Polish female doctor, who was seen as lacking as a doctor, woman and a Pole – and probably incompetent.

6.2 Perceptions of Wealth and Poverty Brackets: NZ and Poland

6.2.1 Wealth: Range and Content in NZ and Poland



A dynamic model of the subjective representation of the poverty/wealth gap in NZ in relation to Poland amongst the Polish women living in NZ. Arrows indicate trends either towards increasing poverty or wealth.

⁴⁵ Barbara Hoff, a famous designer writing for the magazine *Przekrój*, summed this up during Martial Law ‘There are no fashion journals, there is no material, there is no atmosphere, and yet we still go around fashionably dressed. That is all’ (Hoff, 1982, no. 1918:21 in Pelka, 2007:215).

Compared to the rather complex, comparative and nuanced answers from the UK interviews, my NZ respondents were almost unanimous in declaring they were unable to recognize who was rich. They attributed this to two reasons: a small economic disparity when it comes to people's financial status and resources, and different cultural practices when it comes to their display. Many respondents believed that the economic inequality gap in NZ is inconsequential, and restricted by the small size of the country, which limits opportunities for significantly varied lifestyles. Out of necessity, I was told, most people engage in similar practices and activities, buy clothes in charity shops⁴⁶ (R17NZ, R18NZ, R22NZ), or shop in a range of supermarkets, from the more up-market New World to a budget Pak N'Save:

Here, I think, there are no such disparities. (...) I mean, there are those from the margin, there are poor people, and these are usually people from a Pacific regions, often Māori, and many people are here from Samoa. This (...) is simply the margin. But the society is not very diversified. (Daria, early 30s, R14NZ)

[KG. Who shops in Pak N'Save?] I think people go everywhere (...) Because (...) some things are cheaper, but also [inaudible] or there is less choice. (Beata, 39, R12NZ)

There is no such thing that if someone plays golf that he is rich – because everyone plays golf here, everyone windsurfs, skis in the winter. (Paulina, 31, R3NZ)

What was noted throughout all the interviews was the way people 'mix with others' and 'don't draw attention to themselves' (R16NZ), even if they are rich or of high status. The tolerance for the unequal distribution of power is reflected in New Zealand's low PDI score

⁴⁶ Research of (amongst other things) consumption practices amongst various social groups in Poland shows that shopping in second-hand shops (which sell used clothing, but are privately owned businesses) is not popular amongst those of a better financial or educational position, and is seen as an economic necessity rather than a lifestyle choice. As those shopping there are seven times more often those with low income, those visiting these shops are seen as 'poor', and having no other choice (Bachórz et.al, 2016:65). Although Poles living in the UK or NZ may adapt the habit of shopping in charity shops for various reasons, their choices (as seen by their Polish friends and family) may be seen as a sign of a lack of migration success, and 'not making it' abroad.

(22) (Hofstede, 2011), and monitored by the Tall Poppy Syndrome (TPS) (Kirkwood, 2007; Spacey, 2015).

Egalitarianism is very accentuated and if you try to show off it meets often with a very negative reception. So people try to be equal. (Matylda, 32, R1NZ)

There is no showing-off here (...). It is in very bad taste, it is not appreciated. You are successful, that's good, but to show it off, that you are richer or better ... there is no such thing here, there are no classes. (Bożena, 56, R28NZ).

There are lots of people here who have dough but they live this New Zealand lifestyle and wear flip-flops and torn T-shirts. (Łucja, 22, R17NZ)

Striving to be 'just like everyone else', and NZ's egalitarian ideals and aspirations support the 'social rank hypothesis', and people's unwillingness to engage in (and even avoid) acquiring positional, status related goods (Walasek & Brown, 2015:527). This was noted by my respondents, and viewed in a very positive light:

People here don't spend money the same way people in Poland do, for clothes, furniture, they do not decorate houses nicely, they create a different quality of life. (Zuzanna, 28, R29NZ)

People live here, really live (...). Will we decorate the bathroom or go for holiday ? (...) Bathroom: a Pole would do that, because a New Zealander says 'Have you lost your mind, I am going on holiday!' (...) zero materialism, totally zero materialism (...) They travel a lot, they spend everything on living. (...) They don't invest ... a car can be crappy, a house mediocre. (...) That's what a Pole would say 'oh, nothing much'. But they travel, theatre twice a week, they eat out every day for example (...). They use this money to live. (Maria, 38, R4NZ)

And if you look at the most flashy cars, then probably they don't belong to New Zealanders, but they belong to rich Chinese people, or Indians... This is sort of more complicated, because every culture expresses itself differently. You know, I think, you can't recognize that. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

Out of recognizable positional goods only a handful were quoted, albeit still veering on the modest side of a luxury,⁴⁷ such as dry houses with double glazed plastic windows and heating (R5NZ, R28NZ), or bigger houses and nice furniture (R5NZ). Latent positional goods such as private schooling was mentioned. However, sports that would be considered ‘elite’ in Europe such as windsurfing or skiing (R3NZ, R10NZ) were thought to be popular amongst all groups, and not an indicator of wealth or high status.

My older respondents complained, however, that things had somewhat changed in the last thirty years:

There was no ostentation and it was official. No it has changed. Today it is more ... still much less than in Europe! (Helena, late 70s, R23NZ)

Their opinion is backed up by recent statistics that show that, from the 1980s onwards, the Gini co-efficient indicator measuring income inequality in NZ is growing and the ‘gap between the lower middle class and poor households’ is widening (Statistics NZ, July 2014; OECD report 2014). Although some state that this fast emerging disparity ‘has killed [New Zealand’s] egalitarian paradise’, there is also evidence that these gaps are ‘muted’ because of a ‘still present pressure not to flaunt’ wealth (Rashbrooke, 2014). These values and

⁴⁷ Lorde, a world-wide famous New Zealand musician who won two Grammy Awards at the age of 17, when asked about her newly acquired ‘wealth and fame’ and faced with the question ‘what’s the most luxurious thing you’ve given yourself?’ answered that she bought herself a ‘queen-sized bed’ [Skavlan Feb 21/2014 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Yjw2z2oMks>] Interestingly, her award-winning song ‘Royals’ features lyrics ‘and we’ll never be royals/it don’t run in our blood/that kind of luxe just ain’t for us/we crave a different kind of buzz’ (Royals, Pure Heroine, 2013 Universal Music Group). She was since advised to leave New Zealand as ‘unless you’re very mediocre you need to get out of there, you just have to if you want to keep succeeding because otherwise it will just crush your spirit’

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/news/article.cfm?c_id=1501119&objectid=11194158 Jan 30th 2014

behaviours are not limited to wealth, but also such ‘latent positional goods’ (Brighouse & Swift, 2006:479) as education, high-status job titles, and fame.

I went to a doctor and she asked me where I worked. I said where but I added I was only an administrator. And she retorted: ‘Don’t say that! I could say I am only a doctor!’ (Ewelina, 36, R27 NZ)

The quotation above is also an excellent example of how, in the pursuit of NZ egalitarian values, a certain levelling down – to make sure that ‘all the competitors (get) enough of a chance’ – takes place (Brighouse & Swift, 2006:476). Research conducted amongst the students of the University of Waikato in NZ showed how not wanting to stand out lowered their performance by up to 20% (Spacey, 2015). My respondents were, to a certain extent, aware of these norms, and incorporated them in their performance:

Generally I do not confess (...) that I have a Master’s degree (...) for us it is a standard [in Poland] there is such a rush that everyone has to educate [themselves], practically everyone has a masters level education (...) people are doing post-graduate courses, one, two ... (...) here I don’t even mention this. (Dagmara, 31, R10NZ)

Even my older respondents agreed that New Zealand is still a place where ‘there is respect for an individual, and you are just as important as a private person, as you are when your position is high’ (Helena, late 70s). Halina (59) says that when you are famous ‘people treat you the same, no one points a finger at you, there are no paparazzi’ and when you go to church ‘you turn to pass a sign of peace, and there is a minister of finance behind you: without any security men, with his family like anyone else’:

I was sitting once next to Jonah Lomu⁴⁸, and I only looked (...) because he was a huge Samoan (...) And it was the same when they were making the film *The Last Samurai* with Tom Cruise – it was in New Clermont, near Mount Taranaki (...) no problem, you go to the pub, and no one points at you (...) you

⁴⁸ Jonah Lomu (1975-2015) was a rugby player, a member of New Zealand National Rugby team All Blacks.

feel the same, people treat you at the same level. Of course everyone recognizes that he is this actor (...) but nothing special, not like in America. (Halina, 59, R15NZ)

Once a governor came to our church (...) and no one paid any attention. No-one! He was left in peace, because he came as a private person (...). This is culture for me, high culture. I was so agitated by this, it was wonderful. (...) And this is also respect for an individual, that you are worth the same as a private person, as if you are in your professional high-status role. (...) I will never forget this (...) This is for me a sign of the high culture of the nation. (Helena, late 70s, R23NZ)

Most of my respondents insisted there were no social classes in New Zealand, and there is greater social cohesion:

Of course, people keep in touch in certain groups, and so on, but there is no class thing. [Addressing her husband] when you go for lunch at the hospital (...) can you sit with the rest of personnel, or you have to sit only with doctors? [Husband] Hmm, we keep in our group. (...) But this is more connected with [inaudible] something to talk about, because internal medicine has nothing to talk about with surgeons. Usually you sit with people that know each other (...)' (Karolina, 38, R9NZ)

In Poland (...) my group of friends: lawyer, journalist, actor ... All graduates (...) Here I have a friend who is a waitress, I have a friend who is a cleaner, I have a friend who is a builder, a friend who is a painter (...) And you have friends from different walks of life, and this is great. Here there is no judgement: all are equal, all have similar things at home, or in our bank accounts – of course, people have it differently, but you wouldn't know, there is no way of recognizing this. (Maria, 38, R4NZ)

Those from Christchurch noticed that the South Island is 'more English' and some aspects of class system are still cultivated. However, they felt people coming to New Zealand from England still 'distance themselves from the class system and come here for the lifestyle, space, fresh air' (Aneta, 42). One respondent from Wellington said:

People asked me (...) did you come here to make money, or for a lifestyle? Because if you want to make money and a fortune, that's Australia, but if you want to have a super life, slow, enjoy life, go to the beach, surf, read a book on a beach all day – in the summer of course – that's New Zealand. (...) If you want to make money and a career, dash off to Australia. But if you want to live ... (Maria, 38, R4NZ)

Ethnic differences were also apparent, although the belief in an even playing field, with equal chances and opportunities for everyone who makes an effort was expressed. Interviewees would also attribute lack of success to individual failures, bad choices or ‘different values’:

Many Māori live somehow poorly despite unemployment benefits and other benefits. I completely don't understand why we have poor people, I cannot comprehend this! Maybe their values are different, they care more for the family than for material things and maybe this held them back? (Emilia, 69, R8NZ)

I think that amongst us, in Polonia, this is important. (...) Because I don't know if that's how it was in Poland, but (...) there is no such class system here. And I wasn't raised like this. That we all are ... we have education here, we have the same chances as others, I think so (...) Here, if you want to do something, or buy something – you can. But no, I don't think there is a class system here. (Lusia, 50, born in Wellington, R30NZ)

As the Māori are economically disadvantaged (Leong & Ward, 2011:48-49) this creates a conflict between New Zealand's ideals of ‘undifferentiated egalitarianism’ (Ryan, C., 2002:960) and striving for ‘everyone to be the same’ (Ryan, C., 2002:960, quoting Laidlow, 1999:159) with New Zealand's acknowledgement of ‘two societies within one nation’ (Ryan, C., 2002:960). This may somewhat affect the way people perceive economic differences, and how they talk about them.

Still, the notion of the ‘even playing field’ and succeeding on merit appealed to one of my respondents who came to New Zealand to escape her famous parents. It is, however, impossible to say definitely if this was the effect of New Zealand as such, or distance from her former life (or a combination of both):

We were perceived as more privileged (...) On the one hand this was great [inaudible] and it was not about money, because there was not much money (...). It was more about the fact we spoke foreign languages, travelled, had family everywhere (...) And that mum was a public person – that was a privilege as well! (...) This in a way defines your social position (...) but I didn't like these reasons.

(...) It reached a point when I had no clarity in anything. When I failed, I didn't know was it because I screwed up, or because they didn't like my mum? Or maybe they liked her a lot, and I didn't fail, but they simply think that 'she has it too easy in life' Or when I was succeeding, I could never go home and pat my shoulder (...) 'you did well'. (...) It was horrendous. Horrendous, but on the other hand, thanks to that ... I was always saying that I would not come back (...) until I felt I was someone (...) That if anyone ever says again that 'you achieved this because you are [name withdrawn]', I would be able to say '(...) for sure they read my CV because my name is [withdrawn], I have no doubts. But what was in this CV, it is me alone: I did this in New Zealand, where they even could not pronounce my surname!

I achieved what I wanted to achieve – (...) I am coming back as someone, with something: with works I am proud of (...) with professional experience. (...) I got this – and NO-ONE can accuse me that it was (because) I was [my] mother's daughter. (...) (Klara, 27, R13NZ)

When asked about recognizing wealth and its markers in Poland, my respondents were also of almost one mind: there is not much to 'recognize' as 'they will make sure you notice' (R25NZ).

What I don't like in the Polish mentality is so called 'pawm but splurge'. There are people who drive cars they absolutely should not drive [laugh], because they cannot afford it. (Alicja, 38, R31NZ)

In Poland it is important to have a big rich house, better than you neighbor's [laugh], better car, always a new car. (Dominika, 34, R18NZ)

Unfortunately that's Polish reality, people like to do things for show. I remember, when I was small, I went to a church, and what's there? A fashion show of course! All the ladies hand in hand with their husbands. 'Jasiu, wear your best suit, otherwise people will talk! (Julia, 26, R11NZ)

Other respondents mentioned 'being horrified by the materialism in Poland' (R4NZ) and importance of 'gadgets' (R10NZ), and feeling comfortable in New Zealand's atmosphere of 'people not competing with each other' (R29NZ), and less rigid social categories. Their opinions illustrate well Hofstede's notion of the working culture in low PDI countries, where

‘hierarchy is established for convenience, superiors are always accessible’ (Hofstede, 2011) (see also Chapter 4, section 4.3.3).

One reason for me to leave was that I did not like the relationships within the health service, especially between nurses and doctors. Usually you could not talk to your boss, discuss: just obey orders! [laugh] Since I left I saw it can be different (...) Not without respect, but the boss is to help you do your work, to guide you and to make your job easier. (Dominika, 34, R18NZ)

I remember that in Poland my colleagues and me were scared of our bosses [laugh]. It is incomprehensible to me now. (Alicja, 38, R31NZ)

When we arrived in New Zealand the first impression was great. My husband’s boss collected us from the airport wearing shorts, flip-flops, in an everyday shirt, and he drove us home. It would be unthinkable in Poland that the boss comes to collect you, and does not wear a suit! (Natalia, 34, R19NZ)

A couple of respondents mentioned how they visited Poland in their New Zealand clothes, and were mistreated in the shops and told they could not afford certain things. Eighteen out of thirty-one respondents also noted they were not able to recognize people’s education levels as everyone was dressed casually, and Wellington itself was the ‘city of artists with no apparent dress code’. (The exception is that people in Wellington all wear black; this was noted by many respondents and observed by me as well. It is also discussed by Ferrick & Powell (2012).) This informality was present in language and attitudes: when I approached one of the older respondents and addressed her in a customary formal Polish ‘Pani’ (‘Ms’), she quickly corrected me ‘don’t ‘Pani’ me – ‘panie’ stay in Europe’.

I am laughing at it a bit, because here it is exaggerated in the other direction. I go to the bank, and a young boy says ‘hello Helen, nice to see you again’ [laugh]. (...) But, I prefer this to if he used my title (Helena, late 70s, R23NZ)

I am relaxed, because my life does not depend on this that I have to run for the bus, the train, the tram. (...) Life is much easier for women my age here than in Poland, definitely (Bogumiła, 58, R21NZ)

6.2.2 Poverty: The Range and Content in NZ and Poland

The way my respondents talked about the poverty in NZ fell into a similar equality narrative. Although the existence of poverty and ‘poor people’ was acknowledged, poverty was not presented as dramatic, and the reasons behind it were not attributed to any systemic injustice, but broken down into individual people’s life choices such as alcohol and drug addictions, gambling, or not wanting to work:

There is [poverty]. But, you must believe me, it is not because the money does not come, but because the money is wasted. On alcohol, or gambling (...). Drugs. There should not be poverty at all in New Zealand. There is no family that does not receive [help]. There are so many benefits here (...) that it tears the family apart. A sixteen year old child (...) can go to the help department, say he/she disagrees with the parents, that she/he cannot live at home, and he/she will receive a benefit. (Helena, late 70s, R23NZ)

There is [poverty], for sure, but it is a definite minority (...) I know that there are places where people live who ... but they don’t work, and that’s why they don’t have money. (Zuzanna, 28, R29NZ)

Sure, sometimes I see someone begging outside. But I have an impression that the government ... There are only four million people here. (...) Many people complain about the government (...) but comparing it to Polish, German (...) I think that this government really takes care about people. I really think it would not leave anyone to fend for themselves. (Patrycja, 32, R26NZ)

It was acknowledged that Pacific Islanders and the Māori were ‘poorer’ (this notion is backed up by research, for example Leong & Ward, 2011:48-49), but this difference was either portrayed as not significant, or – again – as a result of individual actions and circumstances:

I know this guy who sits on the street, Blanket Man.⁴⁹ But I also know his story. (...) something happened to him (...) and the guy lost it. And he has two children and I know that the council and people tried to help him (...). (Patrycja, 32, R26NZ)

⁴⁹ ‘Blanket Man’ was a homeless Māori man whose real name was Bernard (Ben) Hana (and whom I remember myself from Wellington’s streets), who was a much admired personality, known for his presence in the city and unusual appearance, and ‘world famous in Wellington’ (Lloyd & McGovern, 2007:137). When he died in January 2012 his death was announced in

People from the Pacific are poorer, Māori are usually poorer, but (...) there is not such a big difference. (...) You have Pak N'Save, you have New World, which is a bit more [inaudible], but I also shop in New World, and I also go to Pak N'Save, (...) there is not something such as 'well, only rich people'. But (...) if you go to Hutt Valley to Porirua or somewhere, one can see immediately this difference. (...) But this is also sort of relative, because this poor person will also go shopping, buy similar things, a richer person will also go to the Sunday market. (Matylda, 32, R1NZ)

This view is consistent with the previously quoted notion of an even playing field of opportunity, and therefore attributing any failure to succeed to some unusual personal circumstances rather than any systematic problems. Whereas the state of NZ was seen as protective and able to support its four million citizens, poverty in Poland was seen as a product of social forces beyond people's control:

In Poland (...) in 1997 and in 2006 it struck me horribly (...) people and children begging on the streets, and I burst into tears. (...) I haven't seen this here. Besides, there are no poor people here! (...) Of course, there is a class that earns less (...) but can afford, listen, cars, they can afford to live in their own houses, they can afford so their children go to school, the state will contribute, pay for a doctor, pay for glasses, pay for a dentist ... What kind of poverty is that? Poverty is when someone has totally nothing, and literally doesn't have anything to give his children to eat. (Bogumiła, 58, R21NZ)

Recognizing poverty in NZ, therefore, would not be easy, and only a few characteristics were mentioned: being overweight, unkempt, having skin destroyed by the harsh NZ sun (R16NZ), buying low quality food, or walking barefoot. All these, however, were ambiguous: as my

the national papers, a tribute song about him was written by Leon Mitchell, and T-shirts with his image printed (The Dominion Post, 15th Jan 2012; <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/6261257/Blanket-Man-meant-a-lot-to-people>). He was also a subject of academic research regarding contemporary notions of celebrity (Lloyd & McGovern, 2007). We may speculate that New Zealanders, while avoiding 'sticking out' and adulating those who do better than the rest are more inclined to channel their need for a hero through an underdog, thus making him or her a 'safe' kind of celebrity, a one that does not threaten NZ's equality values. Making a homeless man into an (anti-)hero may be also seen as an attempt to equalize social differences in an unusual levelling up (rather than down) manoeuvre.

respondents acknowledged, NZ's idea of fashion may be misleading, and many people walk barefoot as a part of lifestyle and/or early independence of New Zealand's youth.

There is a trend of walking barefoot in dirty clothes, and this is sort of a declaration that I don't bother, but I think that ... there is a group of very poor [inaudible] – there is no such thing in Poland. Because here people at the age of sixteen often move out from their parents' house, and they are independent from that moment on. And simply, when you are seventeen and you have to support yourself, a nice coat is the last thing you would buy [laugh]. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

When it comes to poverty in Poland, my respondents did not have a very clear idea, usually due to not visiting Poland very often, and being out of touch with Polish reality. As mentioned before, however, their notion of poverty in Poland was much more structural, with no jobs and opportunities to earn money present, no state support, and high prices. Poor people in Poland were thought to be, comparatively, much poorer than the poor of New Zealand, and also sad, stressed and busy. Some respondents thought that paying attention to clothing and displays of status (even if done by 'pawning') was very important in Poland even amongst the poorest, so someone in dirty or low quality attire would surely be in a desperate financial condition (R3NZ, R18NZ). What is more, they thought, there was no second-hand culture in Poland (and also no charity shops), so buying used cheap clothing was not an option for many, and the stigma was high (R18NZ) (Bachórz et. al., 2016:65). Still, compared to the descriptions of poverty amongst respondents from the UK, NZ answers seemed somewhat hazy, and not very substantial. It is important to note, however, that most Polish women I interviewed came from quite a high social background and big cities themselves, and they may have not encountered much poverty while they were still in Poland. As illustrated by the graph at the beginning of this section, my respondents thought that the gap between 'the rich' and 'the poor' in NZ was smaller than in Poland, with behavioural efforts to minimize and equalize existing differences and other social inequalities. The

poverty in Poland was seen as a result of structural and institutional shortcomings rather than individual choices, and as more dramatic than in NZ, with a much lower threshold. Its content, however, was perceived hazily due to a lack of contact with Poland and its current state of affairs (also maybe their own experience from living in Poland), and they were unable to say whether it was getting worse or better. Wealth in NZ was thought to be more modest than wealth in Poland, with very rich people in Poland richer than those in NZ (and also engaging in different practices of wealth display). As in NZ, they thought, there were efforts to equalize the differences (arrows on the diagram pointing inwards) through various cultural practices, while in Poland there was rather upward mobility and attempts to climb even higher (and manifest this in a visible way).

6.2.3 NZ: Concluding comments

It may be somewhat paradoxical that despite New Zealand's great ethnic diversity (as compared to Poland) my respondents perceived NZ's society as rather uniform, with everybody leading more or less similar lifestyles. As Poland is ethnically homogenous (94% of the population classified as Polish (GUS 2011:18) (Chapter 4, section 4.4.2)), the assumption would be that those Poles who settled in NZ experience a greater diversity they were not accustomed with before. This is only partially true. Although some cultural and religious differences were mentioned, the image pictured echoed Sinclair's remarks from 50 years ago, about New Zealand bearing characteristics of a 'provincial community' (1961:40). This he thought was not a 'product (...) of isolation, but of fairly frequent communications', which made comparisons and trying to 'keep up with the Armstrong-Joneses' possible (Sinclair, 1961:40). In comparison my respondents saw Poland as greatly economically and socially diversified, with many dramatically different lifestyles and living conditions. In a way, they saw NZ as less diverse as Poland, supporting the notion of class or religious

differences often surpassing ethnic similarities. Klara (27), when talking about her two grandmothers who were of different nationalities but similar aristocratic background, commented:

I mean, my parents are related – to the fourth degree, but still. And despite the fact they speak differently, they are the same. And grandmas too. So [laugh] there are no cultural problems despite language ones. But very little (...) And, you know, Catholics for one hundred years and so on (...) (Klara, 27, R13NZ)

6.3 Self-positioning: UK and NZ

In previous sections I showed how my respondents in both the UK and NZ perceive and understand the structure of the societies they live in. This was illustrated by the graphs of how they see the distribution of economic resources and the dynamics of these. Depending on how they see these structures (also in comparison to Poland) informs where they place themselves within, and how they see their own position. This is also tied to my respondents' position in Poland, and the social distance (or lack of it) they thought they travelled to where they are today. In these sections (6.3.1 and 6.3.2) I show how my respondents position themselves in the UK and NZ as Poles, women and migrants, and in what way this affects their performance.

6.3.1 Self-positioning: UK

When talking about their positioning in the English society fourteen out of twenty-seven women thought they were 'in the middle', some specifying if it was 'a lower middle', or 'upper middle'. Although it has to be remembered that this question was broadly enquiring about a 'place in a society' and not mentioning class explicitly, the answers do touch upon the translatability of class and social stratification.

I don't know if I would fit, because they just wouldn't let me in, it is birth, it is ... I mean, I just don't count [inaudible]. I may put myself in the middle class, but as a person from a different ... from a different culture. Middle class, but a different culture. (Lucyna, 33, R2UK)

Every culture, every nationality, every nation that is here, minority, creates their own class system. They really interfuse feebly. (Iwona, 36, R3UK)

The notion that stratification systems are culture specific and do not 'interfuse' put my respondents in a curious position. Some thought about themselves as 'strangers', placing themselves, as foreigners, 'outside of the system'. They usually thought class was untranslatable, and/or acquired/defined by birth. Others thought they belong to more than one system, and this contextuality made them realize the system can be 'played' by the way they choose to present themselves. This accentuates the performative aspect of social identities (and also migrants' multi-group membership):

I am an example that shows how ridiculous this system is. (...) It depends on how I introduce myself. If I say that I studied at Oxford, then I – of course – am classified as middle-class, but then I say, for example, that I worked in the pub – and does that mean that I am working-class? I am also a migrant, does that mean I am in the lowest stratum? Sort of – but on the other hand I am in a better situation than many British people, I am also probably better educated, know the language better, have more opportunities for self-development. I sometimes like to use this, to maybe show a bit the artificiality of these classifications – depends how I talk about myself, and which elements from my experience I choose. (...) Just here, in this Costa [Coffee] work people from Poland – I identify with them, because I also worked behind the bar (...) But at the same time I identify with this, sort of, elite of the English society. And I think it is cool to have this kind of comparison from different groups, and belong to all of them a little. (Danuta, 26, R11UK)

Other women, such as Celina, felt she 'crashed' the system when, after working as a cleaner in student residences, became an Oxbridge student herself (securing her contract with the college by claiming, not entirely truthful, house ownership in Poland):

I was working in a hotel as a house-keeper, [there I saw] beautiful rich students (...) it was spectacular. I would never suspect I would end up at Oxford myself. (...) I met people who from the moment they started their education at the age of seven, they already knew they would go to Oxford. (...) It turned out that someone was preparing for ten years for this level (...), go to international schools, have internationals A-levels. And I just applied. (Celina, 30, R14UK)

Because she was not, however, brought up in England in such a family, her Oxford lifestyle and job interests did not entirely fit with the Oxford crowd:

I don't regret this, how can you regret studying at Oxford, but it was not the best time ... it was very difficult. (...) There was a moment that I did simply have no money (...) I applied for some kind of benefits (...) They treated me very badly in that office. (...) 'How can you afford studying at Oxford, how dare you apply for benefits!' And I literally was like 'people, I have nothing to eat!'

Someone asked me recently (...) if I am a teacher because I couldn't find any better job (...) I've always wanted to be a teacher. (...) People don't believe I graduated from Oxford, because no one who graduated from Oxford would work in an obscure secondary school, not a private one. But they didn't believe when I [joked] I was a cleaner either, as I was dressed too well. (...) I am considered the best dressed at my work. (Celina, 30, R14UK)

Although Oxford and Cambridge have international reputations, the class and cultural lifestyle associations with studying there did not carry the same weight for my respondents as it would for their English peers. Two women claimed to choose Oxford over Cambridge on the basis of difficulty with navigating the Cambridge University website, and one said she went there as her boyfriend was also going. Although their choices were sometimes random (or at least presented as such), they were usually rooted in some kind of financial support from Poland. But although an Oxbridge degree certificate did elevate their position in England and made them, as Hania mentioned, 'a member of the same club' with access to a high-power networks, its currency was not always the same. My respondents thought that this kind of education could be problematic in Poland, as people may 'not believe them', or be

envious. This hints at the untranslatability of resources, and the way these cannot be always exchanged into the same capital in different countries.

After I graduated from this kind of university (...) this changed my position a bit, because those people from the upper class, let's say, perceive me in a more equal way, because we have the same education (Hania, 23, Cambridge graduate, R9UK)

[In Poland] It can maybe help me a bit in some cases, but I think that there will be cases when this will not be an advantage, in a sense that employers will think 'oh, we've never had anyone from this university, and maybe this is not a real degree certificate, how to check this?' I suspect there will be problems⁵⁰. (Danuta, 26, R11UK)

In addition, being a migrant was sometimes crucial in the way my respondents' newly acquired cultural capital was used, and what kind of lifestyle they led. Celina, 30, admitted that she spends money differently than her English co-workers (trying to enjoy herself and make up for the poverty she experienced as a child), and her migrant status and cultural background dictated her career choices more than her education. There was an interesting intersection between profession and migration/ethnic status, especially when it came to those who graduated from Oxbridge. For some, like 23 year old Hania, the Oxbridge degree certificate 'cancelled' their migrant/ethnic standing, making them an insider to a more privileged 'club'. Some thought that, as migrants and Poles, they were automatically allocated to the lower strata, and advantages such as Oxbridge education may only add to confusion in both countries:

⁵⁰ As Danuta hints, even the most prestigious credentials are, to a great extent, localised, and may be difficult to transport back to the country of origin. As Ryan & Mulholland suggest in their study on networking processes of highly skilled French migrants in London, these processes are 'embedded' in concrete locations and structures and the capital accumulated may be not easy to use elsewhere (Ryan & Mulholland, 2014:152).

I am outside the system (...) and many people are stumped. (...) I am a migrant from Poland, sort of, and I should be washing dishes (na zmywaku), but I am at [Oxford] University, so they don't really know how to approach me. (Janka, 27, R7UK)

As Janka did not seem to be a 'prototypic' Pole by not being working class (and not a working class man), and not a 'prototypical' Oxford student for being a migrant, she fell into 'intersectional invisibility' (Chapter 2, section 2.1) (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5) and, as she says herself, left people surprised. This was also mentioned by Danuta and Izabela, both Oxbridge graduates: Danuta said no one thought she was Polish because 'her English was too good and her hair was dark', and Izabela found people at work repeatedly assigning other nationalities to her, despite knowing her name and seeing her CV.

For some, this intersection between ethnicity, migrant status and gender seemed to work in their favour. Some women thought that being a woman in England provides more opportunities than in Poland, as England is 'more progressive', and gender discrimination 'illegal' (R13UK). Krystyna, 62, had a history of bad marriage, and when she joined (illegally) her son's family in pre-EU England, her position in both her new country and family was very vulnerable:

When I lost my first job and moved to my children, my son-in-law said they took a millstone round their neck[s] (...) That I am a burden. And then it turned out that I was helping them, not the other way round! (...) And this stone is still helping them [laugh]. (Jadwiga, 62, R22UK)

Although she speaks almost no English and works as a cleaner, Jadwiga is able not only to financially help her children and grandchildren, but also live and travel on her own, experiencing much more agency and freedom than she had – as an older woman, and someone of little education - in Poland. Although she did not think that being Polish was highly regarded, it seems that her position as a woman of a certain age and a cleaner, is higher than it would be in Poland, outweighing any potential negative ethnic positioning. As

an older woman who does menial jobs she also seems invisible and not threatening, which may protect her from any ethnic discrimination (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5).

A younger woman, Justyna, 33, who worked as a midwife, admitted that her job status and salary in England are both higher than in Poland, and being a woman is easier. When I met her, she was single and had discovered that she was pregnant. Her situation and options were somewhat different to those her peers in Poland would face. First of all, she had access to a legal and safe abortion (forbidden in Poland except in special circumstances, none of which were present in her case; or done illegally and expensive) accompanied by assistance from a psychologist. Secondly, had she decided to continue the pregnancy, she was confident she would be able to support herself financially as a single mother without any family in the UK, and her work place would be accommodating, with her job waiting for her after maternity leave and her rights protected. Thirdly, she did not face as much judgement as she probably would in Poland, and – abortion being legal - she felt comfortable to discuss this with me openly.

Another respondent, 57 year old Ala, who worked as a cleaner, counteracted her lower professional status by defining herself almost entirely through a pyramid scheme she was involved in, presenting herself as an ‘independent business woman’ and employing many markers of success in her looks and behaviour. When we met for an interview in her house in Croydon she received me in high heels and full make-up, surrounded by pictures from her exotic travels, telling me about her much younger partner. It was a carefully manufactured self-presentation designed to project her business identity, and possibly counteract the ‘Polish cleaner’ label (and social location). It also showed that although Ala accepted that for English people she was a ‘Polish cleaner’, she had other audiences to relate to as well, that could potentially see her as an attractive woman and a successful entrepreneur. As mentioned before (Chapter 4, section 4.4.1), she was amazed by the distance she crossed **in coming** from

her grandmother's village to London, and although her position there may not be seen as 'high', she was able to lead a lifestyle that could seem cosmopolitan and luxurious for those she left behind. On her cleaner's salary she was, for example, able to travel to Cuba and Thailand, which would be quite unusual for a woman her age and profession from a small Polish town. (She herself commented that women her age in Poland are 'old' – that was not as much a remark on their looks, but the lifestyle they lead.)

A Polish study on travel practices amongst different social groups in Poland confirms that people of Ala's age and social background would rarely engage in travelling to such destinations for both economic and cultural reasons (Bachórz et. al., 2016:74). As Ala came to London to join, after the breakup of her marriage, her two grown up sons, she saw herself as an exemplary Polish mother, superior not only to English, but also the younger generation of Polish mothers. She also thought she was more feminine and attractive than English women, and although she did modify her beauty practices somewhat to counteract the East European label, this notion gave her more confidence.

Belonging to different groups was sometimes acknowledged as difficult, with different audiences not easy to mix:

Poles, who climbed ... very high comparing to where, let's say, they started – they came here by the efforts of their whole family, and I see that they lack confidence. (...) my friends from Poland sort of accuse me that I have these (...) very international friends from Cambridge (...) a girl has a house in Boston, a house in Provence, and a house in Munich, and they just bought a house in South Ken (...) I introduce them to my friends, and they cannot communicate with them (...) they don't feel comfortable.
(Izabela, 25, R10UK)

Those of my respondents who thought that the class position is flexible, and there are opportunities for accessing the English system (and the upward mobility within), mentioned it takes time, education and experience:

At this moment, after a few years in London, I think that I probably jumped into the English middle-class [embarrassed giggle]. (...) I'm catching up with my average peers in England, people who studied here. (Honorata, 27, R27UK)

Some respondents thought, however, that their low starting position was not necessarily due to being a migrant, but because they were students. Iga, 21, who worked in Starbucks, did not see herself as a Polish work migrant, but simply a working student, leading the same life as her friends from the university. She was 'on the way up', she said, and felt she belonged more to the international group of students than any Polish migrant community. She also did not feel she had much in common with Polish students in Poland, saying they usually do not work, their lifestyle and priorities being different. She was happy with her temporary job and able to support herself; something that would not be possible in Poland. That was mentioned also by Ilona, 37:

Here, when one is a nurse, a midwife, you can get a mortgage (...). In Poland a nurse it is a bit different status – here these professions (...) are classified a bit, I think, differently. If we were teachers here, there would be no problem for us to teach and have a normal house – and in Poland (...) two teachers can't afford a mortgage. (Ilona, 37, R16UK)

This was attributed not only to better salaries, but also to 'different classification of professions' and ideas on respected professions in different countries. Others thought that more humble professions are respected, but those from abroad have to climb a higher ladder than local people, learning the language and acquiring local education and credentials (R1UK). Different comparison points were mentioned: Izabela felt wealthy in Poland until she witnessed the lifestyle gap at Oxford, and Lucyna, 33, thought that when she encounters someone who works at her level her class background matters more than nationality. Class criteria, however, were not always clear: some people were unsure what I meant about their 'position', and what criteria other than money could be used. Wanda, 38, although she had a

Master's degree, has been working as a cleaner for many years, at the time of the interview holding a higher position and managing a team of cleaners. She was not like other Polish women who 'are always on their phones gossiping about their friends and husbands' and distanced herself from those Polish women who were living the traditional lives of a Polish mother. Still, she took pride in being more feminine than English women, and - with her dark complexion and dark hair – was not too happy to not be recognised as a Pole.

Once someone said to me 'Happy Divali', and that's why I dyed my hair brown (Wanda, 38, R25UK)

The notion of belonging to two social structures could be, however, seen as distressing and somewhat undermining an 'inherent' ethnic identity. One of my respondents, 37 year old Marzena, found my question about her position in English society a little offensive. She has a 'strong Polish identity', she said, she 'doesn't watch English TV', and 'most of her friends are Polish'. Stasia, 59, had spent twenty-two years in England and owned a house in one of the 'Polish' areas of London: when I met her, she was suffering from terminal ovarian cancer, was unsure about her future, and unable to work full time. She was still, however, reluctant to apply for a British passport⁵¹, even though she was advised by English Job Centre officials to try. On one hand, she felt vulnerable in her illness, worried she would not have access to the same state assistance and protection as a non-citizen, on the other this presented an identity conflict. She has always felt and 'confessed to be a Pole', she said, and 'never pretended to be anyone else'.

I'm one leg here, one leg there, and they [English women] are in their own country (...) I've entered a labyrinth from which it is difficult to exit. (Stasia, 59, R18UK)

⁵¹ Although in post-Brexit Britain not being a citizen is becoming a growing issue, this was not the case during the time of my interviews. A small number of my respondents did indeed hold British citizenship, but this was not – at the time – seen as a very important positioning factor.

This reveals intersectional links between social location and ethnicity, and touches upon the delicate topic of a possible ‘lack of ethnic loyalty’ in admitting having a place in two societies. In Stasia’s case, her belonging to Polish society was largely symbolic, as her whole family was in England, and her links with Poland were weak.

Another interesting issue was how my respondents saw themselves amongst other Poles, and how this reflects on their sense of national belonging. Agata Pyzik perfectly captured this intersection when she wrote ‘queuing with my compatriots, who feed the financial power of all the Wizzairs, Ryanairs and Easyjets of this world every day, I’m not strictly one of them, I’m fake: a middle class overeducated Polish girl, who is there seduced by the cultural lure of the West, rather than led by material necessity’ (Pyzik, 2014:25). I found this mixture of snobbery with guilty class awareness in my interviews as well. Sometimes it was an attempt to justify having a higher position without betraying more working class Poles, sometimes it was distancing oneself from them:

I lived with blondes, chavs (*siary*) ... (...) That’s why it was difficult with the blondes, as I (...) was not interested in wearing fake nails and long blonde hair, right? Sort of, having hair extensions done is, sort of, beyond my circle ...of interest [snorting laugh]. (Iwona, 36, R3UK)

As Iwona distanced herself from her former flat-mates she described the class difference between them through gendered practices, making it clear that she did not share these and found them tacky. Adela mentioned how the post-war climate forced Poles to keep together:

English people, at the beginning, didn’t want to accept us, and thought us to be garbage in relation to them. And that’s why all those Polish organisations were launched, as we wanted to have contact with each other. (Adela, 84, R28UK)

Stasia and Jadwiga add that belonging to many groups created many ever-changing complexities and animosities. The post-war Polonia, they told me, did not want to socialize with the people who arrived in the 1980s, and it was only when they were very old and

needed help (for example to be driven to Church) that they changed their attitude. What also made these two groups unite was the arrival of the post-EU Poles⁵²:

They didn't want to help us. They were referring to us as 'You' – 'what are You doing here? Why did You come here?' (...) now they look at us differently after Poland has entered the EU (Jadwiga, 62 and Stasia, 59, R18UK & R22UK⁵³)

What is also interesting how some women became aware of being white. Lucyna thought her skin colour made her more desired by some men:

I'm often treated as a potential candidate for a wife. But this is discrimination (...) because I have white skin colour – so I am sort of treated like a commodity that can be desired (...). (Lucyna, 33, R2UK)

She also racialised herself as a white European: this was apparent when she talked about her South African partner:

His father is English, but I sometimes forget that he was not born in Europe, but in Africa, and when I (...) speak with the topos of the European cultural heritage, he completely doesn't get this, and I have to explain this to him. You know, this is Greece, this is Rome, this is European culture, and he says 'I've never learnt this'. (...) And I also tell him about my feelings – because he may not understand them, because he never had a Polish girlfriend. (Lucyna, 33, R2UK)

Portraying a white Commonwealth citizen with an English heritage and exoticizing him as an un-cultured savage may seem unusual, but it positions my respondent in a role of an educated European (and bearer of the 'European heritage') rather than East European/Pole (Rzepnikowska, 2015:20). This is, however, probably not how English people racialise her,

⁵² As Galasińska writes, the older Polonia in London did not feel much affiliation with the post EU newcomers. As one of her respondents remarked, they were 'communists' who are only 'learning how to be Poles' since they arrived in England (Galasińska, 2010:946).

⁵³ Although I did interview Stasia and Jadwiga separately and on different occasions, I was invited to tea after Jadwiga's interview when they were both present and they let me record their conversation on the older Polonia.

and quite possibly her South African partner is seen as more culturally similar to them than she is. When I met Lucyna, she spent a lot of time explaining her migration story to me, accentuating her resourcefulness, ambition and achievements. She wanted to communicate that her position at the time of the interview could not be understood in itself, but only compared to where she has started from, establishing herself in the new country, gaining local experience and mastering the language. In her view, a work position lower than she would accept in Poland was still a move up.

For those of my respondents' who married, or were in a relationship with non-Polish men, their husbands'/partners' ethnicity often defined their social location, and to a much greater extent than in NZ. This seems to be connected to the complexity and stratification of English society, with an English/British/local partner being a gateway to various English and/or class related social networks usually unavailable to migrants. Only three women were in a relationship with English men, and they were all white English with no other ethnic background; two of these were relationships of my younger respondents with fellow students. Although in the UK there may be a stigma and various moral panics concerning Polish women's relationships with men who are not-Polish (and especially of African or Arabic origin), these could be also seen as a source of a social capital that could be potentially utilized for upward mobility. Those of my UK respondents who were married to foreigners (Iranian, Chinese-Malaysian and Italian migrants) did not see their husband's different ethnic background as problematic, and rather drew on their shared experience of migration. Kamila (34), married to an Iranian, mentioned it was rather the fact they were Muslim (she converted) and did not eat pork that was causing problems:

This is maybe caused also by [the fact] that I converted, that I am a Muslim. (...) for example (...) Polish grills (...) we don't eat pork, so sausages are a no-no. So I don't want to cause any problems, so I do not engage that much. (...) I think that even my brother turned away from me because of that, that they

decided they wouldn't bother and drive somewhere to buy halal meat (...) So, English people, English people are our acquaintances, but they are more acquaintances through children (...). (Kamila, 34, R31UK)

Marzena, 37, married to an Italian man, mentioned that marrying a non-Pole demands compromises, but similarities such as European background and shared Catholic faith (although often manifested through different, culture-specific celebrations) helps. Klaudia, 35, married to a Chinese-Malaysian man, seemed to concentrate on the similar profession/class background of herself and her husband (both managers). There were a few respondents who married second-generation Poles raised in the UK or Middle East, or men of Polish descent, and it seemed these relationships conveyed enough difference and similarity at the same time to make them successful. There were three other women in an informal relationship with South African, Australian and French men – none of these were, however, raised or educated in the UK.

Interestingly, it also seems that my respondents' parents were more dismayed by the un-regulated relationship status and cohabitation rather than the ethnicity of the partner, and once the couple was legally married (and they had children) their relationship was approved. (This was also mentioned in NZ by a respondent who lived there with her Polish parents – although they did not mind her boyfriend was a New Zealander, they were not impressed she lived with her NZ boyfriend without being married.) What was interesting was the informal relationships of my UK respondents: these were usually amongst younger women, and were considered not very serious, not because of the ethnic background of the partner but the very nature of student relationships, that may not survive the transition to a more adult world.

6.3.2 Self-positioning: NZ

In the NZ context, the way my respondents talked about their position was very much a product of their internalized NZ equality values and everyday experiences. Although, as mentioned before, my respondents' answers were, to a certain extent, affected by the Tall Poppy Syndrome (Kirkwood, 2007; Spacey, 2015), they were also being interviewed by another Pole, and may not have wanted to undermine their migration successes. Despite the fact that there was no reason why that should not be the case also in the UK, and indeed some respondents concentrated on the positive side of their migration experiences, a Polish complaining culture often took precedence (Wojciszke, 2004:38). Only one woman, 34 year old Natalia, whispered to me with embarrassment and anxiety that 'she is different from everyone else' as she 'did not like New Zealand that much': almost all other respondents spoke using the narrative of enthusiastic optimism.

There has to be something really serious for a New Zealander to break down. (...) People here are bothered if there is something really horrific – a health issue, or an earthquake. (...) everyone says 'no worries' [said in English]. (...) When I go to Poland, I say, why are people so nervous, (...) always so stressed out about little things? (...) my friends [say] 'You are simply a Kiwi, you behave in a New Zealand way' So I think that I acquired some distance to life. I worry about things you should worry about, I don't invent troubles (...) if something happens I will worry then, not ahead. (Maria, 38, R4NZ)

The language my respondents used was very much rooted in NZ egalitarian ideals, and their answers tied up with the previous discussion on wealth and poverty: ten of my respondents described their position as 'in the middle' and 'in-between, like everyone else' (for example R6NZ, R14NZ, R16NZ, R19NZ):

I'm New Zealanders' favourite social group – 'mediocre' [said in English]! [laugh] (Aneta, 42, R20NZ)

Being 'middle-class' was not considered an achievement or elevation from a more working class status or position, but simply being average, like the rest of the society:

There is no – and I like that – I think there is no so called rat race here. People are average– and like being average. And no one cares to be better, to show off. When this is, I believe, still a Polish stereotype. (Renia, 32, R25NZ)

Even those of my respondents (five out of thirty-one) who claimed higher than average status, salary or work achievements, made sure not to present them in a boastful way, and talk them down:

I'm pleased with myself, because what I do, I think, it is, even for the Kiwis, a small achievement. (...) I am not exactly a manager, (...) but I am managing an office in Auckland. The main office is in Wellington, and I am sort of a boss of the Auckland branch. And Auckland is the biggest city. So, for a foreigner, to get such a position, I think, that it is a small success. (Daria, early 30s, R14NZ)

Not every New Zealander can buy a flat, a house! (...) so if we have a house we bought – well, not totally bought, we are paying a mortgage, but what I mean is, it is not bad. I can afford it, I can take a plane and fly to Poland (...) and there are people who can't even fly to Australia. So, we do not belong to the cream of the society, but in-between, like everyone else. (Sylwia, 37, R16NZ)

Different standards across countries were also mentioned:

Definitely middle class, of course. For Poles in Poland we are rich, because we have two houses, two cars (...) we just came back from a ten-day cruise of the Pacific islands. But that doesn't mean I'm rich! We buy what is cheaper, we take care not to spend too much money (...) My acquaintances think I am very rich here (...) It is difficult to explain to these people, that this is not ... that that's not what riches is all about. (Bogumiła, 58, R21NZ)

Being a migrant, and also one from Europe, was also something that would not – theoretically - make a person stand out in any negative way, as 'everyone is a migrant' (R28NZ, R5NZ):

Everyone is a migrant here. Even Māori are migrants in a way [laugh]. And there is no old local aristocracy that would look down on me. (...) This is still a new country. You can feel this. Maybe

because New Zealand is so small (...) And I feel a part of this. New Zealand is built from migrants, and I feel I am one of those migrants, I am sort of 'from here' (*swoja*) [laugh]. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

But even if a difference would be noticed, it would be an 'added value':

People are very interested and fascinated when I tell them where I am from, I feel like a tourist attraction, it doesn't matter where I work, or how much I earn, everyone is happy for me. (...) For example, there you go, this situation: I'm sitting with you, and you are interviewing me. (Julia, 26, R11NZ)

[I am] proud to be from Poland, from another country, it is something different, I'm in artistic circles, and they look at me differently. (Łucja, 22, R17NZ)

This was mentioned before in Chapter 5 (section 5.3.5) on attractiveness, where having come from a far-away (and European) country such as Poland was seen as something attractive, unusual and slightly exotic. It bore little to no stigma, and certainly was not associated with any complexes or being 'poor East Europeans':

I have a sort of bigger knowledge about the world. Their knowledge is limited ... I don't want to generalise like this, but it is true a bit. Because many of them have never been anywhere yet, and they only know this reality here (...). So they are very isolated from the world, and they have no idea, these young girls I work with, what it's like in Europe. And they always ask [laugh] 'what's it like in London?' And they dream to get away from here. (Natalia, 34, R19NZ)

As my respondents told me, as migrants they were treated 'no worse or better, just different' (R27NZ), and they did not attribute potential difficulties in getting into local communities to lack of inclusion or good willing on the part of the New Zealanders, but rather the specific nature of tight local social circles:

It is difficult to make friends with New Zealanders, I have this impression at least that everyone is very nice at first, but after a while a certain barrier comes down, they have their own world. Also Wellington is a relatively small city, so everyone has known everyone else since childhood (...) I feel more a migrant

here than, for example, in England. Despite that here there are all migrants, somehow (...) I feel I am a migrant more. (Natalia, 34, R19NZ)

If one meets those Kiwis that never travelled anywhere (...) Generally, they are stuck in their own cliques, their own groups they have since primary school through high school and university ... and they gather round and it is very difficult to break into such group. (Marta, 35, R2NZ)

... or a greater cultural distance:

If there are two people with the same CV (...) and there is someone who was brought up in this culture, there is a bigger chance that he will sort of fit better, and understand these people – not only in terms of language, but in general. (Ewelina, 36, R27NZ)

New Zealanders are more closed and distanced. (...) I have a friend who was always inviting me for supper, or birthdays (...) and every single time, when I was on a way back, I was thinking that we had nothing to talk about (...) and they would never invite me again. (...) At some point I realized that she, with her husband, think of me as their good friend, and they are cultivating our friendship (...) Now I understand this mechanism a bit better, that if someone doesn't confide in me [laugh] it doesn't mean that he doesn't want to be my friend. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

If they were ever called out on their differences, it was not – they thought - because they were foreign, but because being foreign was seen as violating the ideals of not standing out:

This older generation after the war (...) it was not discrimination, but some kind of ... When they were talking in Polish (...) on the bus, they were saying 'Why aren't you talking in English?' (...) For example children could not speak in Māori (...) and that was the attitude, that you are in the country and you had to behave as we do. But it was (...) only so to not stand out, so they were saying 'why aren't you speaking in English? Now no one cares about things like that. (Irena, 68, R7NZ)

Maybe there were suggestions for me to change my name and surname – a name especially, to something easier, but I didn't do this of course. (Maja, 40, R6NZ)

It was not being a migrant, I was told, that was a problem, but rather language difficulties, or individual characteristics such as ‘not being very resourceful’ (R7NZ) or ‘having a quiet voice’ (R22NZ):

There were some questions if my accent would not act against me (...) They gave me a chance and this was never a problem, even the opposite. (...) clients are calling, sometimes (...) resentful and aggressive – and the fact I have a foreign accent sometimes breaks the ice, (...) they get curious (...) and the conversation goes into a different direction. So the fact I am from a different country absolutely did not stop me from anything, and even (...) it opens the door. But one needs to know the language. (Aneta, 42, R20NZ)

Although (as I described in Chapter 5, section 5.3.5) some respondents lamented New Zealand fashion and said a greater gender equality is making them feel somehow ‘less feminine’ (‘one sees a person, not a woman or a man’ R27NZ), the greater equality they experienced as women, migrants and people made them feel more comfortable. Inga (26) who moved to New Zealand with her partner from Poland describes this in such way:

In Poland I was always a ‘miss’ (single) (*panna*) – having a boyfriend, one is still single. (...) here there is no such transgression when you get married. I have a partner, so I am treated as a person in a relationship (...). Secondly, it was always irritating me in Poland that women in administration, or a hospital (...) they always looked at my age (...) I have a childish face [laugh] so I was always approached authoritatively. (...) Here people treat me normally (...) there is such norm in treating a person as a person. Here I feel more as a person (human), than a woman – and this is very pleasant for me. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

She felt that as a young person, and someone in an informal relationship, she was finally treated seriously, and she admitted that the geographical distance and infrequent communications with her family took a great amount a pressure off her. When she talked on Skype with her mother, she said, there were other ‘pleasant things’ to discuss than her living without a church wedding, and the subject was avoided (‘I pretend there is no problem (...)

and sort of using the situation [of being away]’). She also told me how she was disgusted by the sexist jokes in Poland, and the family model she witnessed at home:

I think this is a very dreadful model. (...) you are not earning, so somehow [inaudible] she should not spend this money on herself, you know what I mean. There was never much money in our house. My mother [who was not working] was simply not developing her personality! And after ten, fifteen years, while my father was acquiring new skills, she sort of became a bit stupid for him, boring. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

Inga felt liberated by her move on many levels: as a woman, and a young woman. When we met she laughed that when she met an atheist for the first time she was scared, and did not know what to think about this:

Here there are so many churches, so many options, that it totally does not mean that you have to be a believer or not. And generally, this is a completely private thing what you do. And it would be strange if I, being here, seeing all these different religions, still insist that all of them will go to hell. (Inga, 26, R5NZ)

She described her move as ‘breaking from the cords’ (*‘oderwanie się od sznurków’*), and a fresh breath away from parental control. Maria, 38, mentioned freedom from rigid social norms and judgements, and a more relaxed approach to life:

I went to Poznań. And my neighbour’s first sentence – she hadn’t seen me for three years – ‘did you see Iwona who lives at number 5? Gosh she’s gained weight!’ I was shocked, I haven’t heard anything like this for 11 years in New Zealand!’(...) (Maria, 38, R4NZ)

This was mentioned in Chapter 5 by Julia, 26, who in New Zealand started going to the cinema and cafeterias on her own, something she would never do in Poland for fear of ‘people talking’ (section 5.3.3). Other women felt changed in various ways:

My worldview totally changed, horizons opened (...) just encountering different cultures (...) how the lifestyle is totally different than at home in Poland. In New Zealand this is really extreme. (...) I am not

saying I was a racist, but simply now for us everybody is equal, and I don't see skin colour at all. I told my mum there are Māori here, and mum said 'but how so, are they wearing clothes? We really have no idea, when we live in one country and don't leave it at all. (Natalia, 34, R19NZ)

A feeling of (and striving to be) average often mixed with an inability to communicate their everyday life back to people in Poland. Although my respondents mentioned humble New Zealand living standards and were often shocked by how 'shabby' things were, they were often seen as exotic and privileged:

New Zealand is not a paradise on Earth: one has to work, everyone works, there is no manna from heaven. (...) people think in Poland that (...) we simply do nothing, only lie around and drink pina colada on the beach. And people here work, there are people who work fifty hours per week, I work forty-two, or forty-five. But people in Poland, maybe, have this image of New Zealand as a paradise, 'you live in paradise!' (Maria, 38, R4NZ)

Another aspect of my respondents' social location may be being in a relationship or married to a New Zealander (Māori or Pākehā). As in NZ women did not have to rely on 'insiders' for social inclusion and networks, the ethnicity and/or social background of their husbands/partners did not seem to make much difference to their positioning. (It is true that those legally married to NZ citizens had easier access to permanent visas/residency rights, but as all my respondents were highly educated women with a regulated residency situation this difference was not of much significance). Relationships with non-Poles were also more common: as I was told by Maria, 38, that their access to Polish men was sparse, so a relationship with a New Zealander or another (usually European) migrant was rather an inevitable and practical choice:

My mum always says that there are not enough people in New Zealand, there are only two million men, and in Poland there are twenty [laugh]. So my mum says 'Come back, (...) if you haven't found anyone

for the last five years, you will not find anyone now! (Maria, 38 – initially married to a NZ man, now divorced, R4NZ)

Those married and/or in a relationship with Māori or Samoan men did not usually mention them, and certainly not in the context of positionality. As I had only two respondents in such relationships it is hard to read too much into this: we may speculate that in the NZ context this did not matter that much in terms positioning, or my respondents had other reasons for not wanting to discuss this with me.

6.4 Conclusions

In this Chapter I presented my respondents' views on the distribution and markers of wealth and poverty in the UK, NZ and Poland, and showed where they self-position themselves in the various stratifications of the UK and NZ as Poles, women and migrants. Through examples, I showed intersectional links between my respondents' various identities and discussed how they adjust their performance to accommodate multi-group ethnic and class membership, and manage the different statuses that come with these memberships.

For Polish women in the UK, markers of wealth, class/high status and education were not clear: they did admit they existed, and listed some, but they thought them difficult to spot. The social structure, especially with the various simultaneously existing ethnic, class and educational/financial systems of London (often overlapping and/or internally stratified) was not an easy one to read. Some of my respondents (usually those who had higher social status themselves) saw the distinction between wealth/poverty and class; for others, these were synonymous. Their ideas on wealth and poverty were also very much related to how they saw Poland, and to the wealth/poverty brackets they experienced. However, some respondents from larger cities were only confronted with these after meeting other Polish people from smaller Polish towns: it was only after they found themselves living with other migrants that

they realised regional, educational and lifestyle differences amongst Poles. Generally, my respondents' saw Poland as poorer, with the division between the rich and poor growing, whereas in England they thought everyone's living standards are getting better, and what is considered poverty would not be seen as such in Poland.

As for my respondents in NZ, they had fewer problems with describing the NZ structure than the Polish one. My respondents' thought that – despite its very different ethnic make-up than Poland – NZ was not very diversified, as its small population, geographical isolation and governmental care forces its habitants to live a similar lifestyle and have similar possessions. They also thought that the gap between poverty and wealth in NZ was much smaller than in Poland, with both poverty and wealth in Poland being more dramatic.

What was important, however, were the various social, economic and cultural forces that operate in these three societies. An upward mobility and focus on status markers (be it in positional goods or education/titles) in Poland was mentioned in both NZ and the UK, and was thought to be present amongst all social groups. Women in NZ were very critical towards this, and they mentioned the NZ ideal of egalitarianism and the pressure to equalize financial and educational differences, rather than accentuate them. Women in NZ were adamant that spending patterns in NZ are such that it is simply not possible to establish someone's status or education by the way they dress or their possessions, and talked about efforts made to understate differences and try not to stand out. Women in the UK were less critical, and they observed similar practices in the UK, although only amongst certain groups (Polish people one of them). They thought that they had to use these markers themselves, to dispel stereotypes and deal with the lower status associated with being a Pole and a migrant.

In such different circumstances Polish women saw their positions in the UK and NZ in very different ways. Although in both these countries they felt more included in the public spaces as women (both older and younger), in the UK being a migrant and a Pole was more

problematic. This also often associated with lower status, which some of my respondents tried to obviate by displaying their educational/professional or class status. My respondents mention changing their gender practices to avoid class stereotyping (see also Chapter 5), and used gendered description of lower class, equating this with a lack of taste and over-done femininity. This was not present in New Zealand, where Polish women felt included as women, migrants and Poles, and viewed their Polish background as an advantage. Any possible discrimination was attributed to the NZ value of 'not standing out' and tight local networks instead of ethnicity *per se*. While in the UK Polish women thought that being a Pole and a migrant might act against them, women in NZ believed in an equal playing field - as long as they spoke the language and were willing to contribute to building the 'new country' that NZ still is.

This Chapter therefore added another dimension to the topics discussed in Chapter 5, showing how my respondents' ideas on the distribution of resources in the UK and NZ compare to Poland, and how they inform my respondent's self-positioning in these two societies. It also shows how this affects their performance of gender and ethnicity, and intersects with the way that other identities are manifested.

Chapter 7: Thesis Conclusions and Closing Remarks

In Chapter 1 (section 1.2 and 1.3) I explain why I think my study is important, the contribution I believe my work makes, and why I chose Polish women migrants in the UK and NZ as my subjects. In this Chapter I summarize my findings and the way they relate to my research questions, synthesizing my thesis and gathering conclusions from empirical chapters 5 and 6 in a concise way: while doing this, I also use the notion of social inclusion and exclusion as an organising theme for my findings. I then further discuss the theoretical, practical and political implications and impact of my thesis, describe limitations of my work and the way some of these could be addressed in future research, and outline my dissemination plans.

7.1 Summary of empirical findings

This thesis tackles two major questions. The first asks what constitutes ‘being a Polish woman’ and the way ‘being a Polish woman’ is performed by Polish female migrants of different ages, generations and class. The second asks how different components of this performance (class, ethnicity, gender) manifest in two very different settings of the UK and New Zealand. I further develop responses to these questions to discuss what this tells us about Polish female migrants, and, more generally, about the intersectional nature of identities and contextuality of performance. This focus on ‘doing’ rather than ‘being’ (Butler, 1999), especially in the context of the sub-ordinate nature of some social identities (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008) and localised hierarchies of power (Woodward & Woodward, 2015) is the theoretical premise of this thesis.

My empirical findings were already discussed in detail in Chapter 5 and 6, where they were, by necessity, divided into different themes. There are, however, commonalities that bring them together. The first is the intersectional nature of identities. Second, and stemming

directly from the way in which identities are linked, is the significance of social inclusion/exclusion: this is crucial in understanding the changes in behaviour and narrative in my respondents' migration stories. Third is the contextuality of identity performance, which is dependent on location. Intersectionality, in its more theoretical terms, is discussed in section 7.2: in this section I want to return to my data and show what role intersecting identities play in my respondents' lives. As these identities are interacting with their surroundings and are produced and reproduced by performance (Butler, 1999), answers to my two research questions cannot be treated separately. Despite the stable and fixed notions of identities (for example Zagefka, 2009:229 writing about 'objective' approach to ethnic identity, discussed in Chapter 2 section 2.3.2) they cannot be treated as existing in isolation and impervious to the context. Therefore, as I look at my research questions in succession, there are unavoidable overlaps, as intersecting identities are almost always captured in action, and described through their performance.

7.1.1 Intersecting Identities

As discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.2, one of the strength of this thesis is the way it operationalizes intersectionality through novel data. As Hill-Collins notes, 'it is not the term intersectionality' that 'makes the analysis intersectional' but rather a specific 'way of thinking' (Cho et. al., 2013:795 in Hill-Collins, 2015:11). In my work I used 'intersectionality as an analytical sensibility' (Hill-Collins, 2015:11) to show the complexity and uniqueness of my respondents' everyday experience (Juan, Syed & Azmitia, 2016:227).

And indeed, I find that my respondents' notions on their ethnic identities were very much a product of the historic circumstances in which Polish gender roles, expectations and relations were formed. Although the notion of a woman 'symbolizing national honor' (Banerjee, 2003:168) is not specifically Polish, this affiliation, in the Polish women's case,

was strengthened by Poland's prolonged loss of independence first during the partitions (from 1795 to 1918), two world wars, and the subsequent communist (1945-1989) and post-communist period. In a situation of constant crisis ethnic responsibilities not only conflated with gender ones, but also shaped them. The 'Mother Pole' (or 'the Polish Mother', Matka Polka), became an ideal encapsulating both the actual and the symbolic duties of Polish women, nurturing and passing Polishness on to younger generations. This 'Mother' was confined to the 'private sphere' not only because of her gender, but also because her Polishness itself (for example the language) was passed on privately, with Poland either officially not existing, or being pushed underground.

Although gender ideals may differ across cultures, it is through the 'correct' actions that gender is 'awarded', and then continuously maintained. This performative aspect of gender seems to be universal, 'becoming a woman' a continuous process that is a subject to evaluation (Butler, 1999:179). For Polish women, bearing the citizenship of a non-existent country, being 'a Polish woman' was historically something to aspire to: this sense of aspiration and striving for identity was voiced even by the youngest of my respondents, who did not experience the historical and political unrest themselves. I found that for many of my respondents a 'typical Polish woman' still had a 'Polish Mother' at its core, and their ideas on their own national belonging were often based on fulfilling or not fulfilling gendered responsibilities and femininity ideals. This association between ethnicity and gender was evidenced amongst respondents of all ages, but older women were more aware of the historical links. They had often experienced war, deportation and (in some cases) forced migration, and many carried the responsibilities of passing Polishness on throughout their life. When they found themselves abroad, where – once again – Polishness and Polish language was confined to the private sphere, they followed their mothers and grandmothers' footsteps in keeping traditions alive. This was more visible in the UK: with the larger Polish

community and (as my respondents mentioned) initial ostracism from the local people, this way of life became a necessity, and (in a way) a continuation of their independence struggle. But even today these symbolic ethnic transgressions can make women question their femininity and cause various moral panics and judgements in Poland over their behaviour abroad (Huisman & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2005:47, Urbańska, 2015:290). This was somewhat different for older respondents in NZ. Although actively involved with Polish organisations and raised in a Polish camp, they left Poland as children, and, in most cases, arrived in NZ as children. They often expressed gratitude and feelings of being lucky to live in NZ, and they were truly a part of a NZ life.

Although my older respondents in both countries made comparisons between themselves and the younger generation of Polish women, it was often difficult to clarify if these differences were generational or class related: it was also unclear how they would fare compared to Polish women their age who have lived all their lives in Poland. We can speculate that, in the situation of living abroad, women's attention is drawn to ethnic similarities and it is easy to ignore the simple fact that femininity practices (and fashion) and change with age and times. It also seems that, with heightened focus on ethnicity and assumed life-stages similarities, many class differences in practices and aesthetics can be too easily ascribed to generational differences. The class aspect was not, however, unnoticed. Given the significant inner-group diversity amongst Polish women in the UK, my younger respondents often described class differences amongst Polish women through femininity practices and taste. This was, usually, not the type of 'Polishness' they wanted to be associated with, and they were dismayed by being viewed as similar through their shared ethnic background.

Some women, after being confronted with 'other ways of being a woman' were able to widen their definition of femininity, and in effect re-discover their Polishness as well. Other

respondents, particularly in NZ, found themselves in a situation where the gender division (and interaction between sexes) they had known from Poland was not expected. As a result they felt ‘more human than a woman’: something they enjoyed overall, but that also made them feel ‘less attractive’. In this context their definition of ‘attractiveness’ also expanded to include less physical aspects, such as ‘being educated’ or ‘independent’. Showing how these identities overlap and affect each other in women’s lives operationalizes the concept, and draws attention to the complexity of people’s experiences in identity building.

Although some of the gender and femininity practices were modified to avoid ethnic/class stigmatization (this is discussed in the next section 7.1.2) it is also important to note that this could be a part of an acculturation process, adopting new customs and fashions a common part of integration to the new culture.

7.1.2 Social Inclusion/Exclusion and Performance

Other findings were related to my respondents’ feelings and experiences of social inclusion. This is particularly interesting for women, whose gender makes them a ‘subordinate group’, socially locating them in a position of a minority (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:2). Although there are ‘different degrees of gender inequality across different societies’ this power imbalance exists everywhere (Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006:273). In Chapter 2 (section 2.1.1) I discussed the way sub-ordinate identities interact with each other and, depending on circumstances, cumulate disadvantages in a ‘double jeopardy’, or camouflage each other creating ‘intersectional invisibility’ (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008:5). These ‘intersectional mathematics’ were detected in my respondents’ conscious behaviour management or the way they thought others perceive them. As I mentioned in this Chapter, social inclusion for Polish women was, throughout history, particularly problematic, and tied to the sub-ordinate nature of Polishness itself. This is, to a certain extent, perpetuated in a

situation of migration to a place where being Polish is seen associated with lower status. At the same time, those of my respondents who were of a higher class background felt less excluded by their Polishness. As mentioned in Chapter 5, section 5.1.2, public and private spheres are not only gendered but also classed: those with greater cultural and social capital (for example fluent English, English education, high-status profession, affluence, or even English sounding surname) had definitely more access to many spheres that were unavailable for other, less privileged women. Younger, more attractive women were also more eagerly included (and less threatening) than, for example, prototype young working class Polish man. In Chapter 2, section 2.3, I used Bettie's definition of class as 'a sense of one's place(s) in a cultural economy of meaning' (Bettie, 2003:43). This meaning assigns different values to different identities (also discussed in section 7.2) and informs people's social location.

Many femininity practices cultivated and mentioned by Polish women were a product of this social location, with women used to treating everything outside their door as the 'public sphere' that required a special dress code. Many changes in gender performances I observed were a direct result of different divisions between 'private' and 'public' (or, as Goffman would phrase this 'stage' and 'backstage', Goffman, 1959:104), which was additionally complicated by my respondents' ethnic, class and migration status.

In both the UK and NZ my respondents felt that the public sphere was, unlike in Poland, more inclusive for women and children. This resulted in such changes in behaviour as feeling more relaxed and confident, venturing outside the house in more casual wear (when, as some respondents said, in Poland they would not go to take the rubbish out without wearing make-up) and feeling more comfortable going to public places such as restaurants, cafeterias or cinemas on their own. English and NZ women were also seen as being 'not groomed', badly dressed, swearing, drinking and letting children misbehave in public: and it was the public aspect of it that seemed to be particularly distressing for my respondents.

Although more socially included as women, my respondents from the UK felt their ethnic and migration status was rather excluding, and resorted to various strategies to tackle this through changing their femininity practices. These included avoiding (or toning down) their make-up and high heels, to evade being seen as Eastern European and (through the association between ethnicity and Polish work migration narrative) working/lower class. Other Polish women in the UK accentuated their education and higher class status to dissuade negative ethnically related class stereotyping. In doing so they often discovered, however, that by defying the 'Polish worker' stereotype (by being, for example, an Oxford graduate instead of a menial worker) they were not seen as 'typically Polish', and did not think about themselves as typical 'Polish migrants' (or even Poles) as a result. Some women realised they were white, and treated this as a ticket of inclusion and European kinship: that was often, however, not as they were racialised by English people, with their position being more defined by their Eastern European migrant status rather than actual skin colour.

In NZ, my respondents felt more socially included as women, but also as Poles (with Polishness being unrecognizable and they falling more within a broader Pākehā category) and as migrants. They thought the fact they were from outside was sometimes an advantage, and they attributed any potential discrimination to NZ's cultural value of 'not standing out' (Peeters, 2004), 'trying to be mediocre, like everyone else' and egalitarian ideals.

7.1.3 Contextuality

My second question referred to the performance change brought on by migration, and differences between those women who lived in the UK and those who live in NZ. As I argued in Chapter 1, it might be tempting to ascribe potential changes only to the fact of migrating out of one's country of origin: when people have stable notions about identity, they are most likely to adopt this approach. In reality, however, it seems that the environment of the specific receiving country is also extremely significant in influencing their identity

performance, so that a Polish female migrant in the UK will probably perform her various identities, and experience the intersectionality between them, differently from a Polish migrant in New Zealand.

With regard to changes in performance, it is possible to distinguish between behaviour and narrative. Very often my respondents described similar practices or ideals, but evaluated them differently, their opinions seemingly shaped by their current location. For example, what was seen as 'Eastern European', 'lower class' and 'tacky' in the UK was seen as a sign of 'European elegance' in NZ. Another interesting finding was the way they changed the meanings they assign to certain practices. Although no external change in behaviour was observed, the same practices started to be seen as a manifestation of a different identity (for example, femininity practices became a performance of ethnic identity). This 'meaning making' is often present where discrimination occurs and threatens the congruence of the sense of self (Juan, Syed & Azmitia, 2016:227). This would be true for many of my UK respondents who realised their ethnicity or migration status might be stigmatised. But, as in the case of NZ, it can also be a sign of searching one's identity in the [Polishness] 'discourse void', and experimenting with it. Another interesting difference was a different discourse and narrative of migration my respondents adopted in relating their migration story. As I discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.2.1, the discourse of the migration 'from Poland' is a dramatic one, shaped by the historical realities of forced deportations, difficult political choices and economic crisis. This discourse is still present amongst many contemporary migrants to the UK, who often use it to justify their migration decision. This is especially prevalent amongst women, whose migration to the UK causes many moral panics and suspicions (Urbańska, 2015). Polish women in NZ, as I found in my study, communicate their stories using not the discourse of moving out of Poland, but of moving to New Zealand: this is rooted in New Zealand's enthusiastic colonial advertising (Dew, 1999). Although all

but one of my respondents proclaimed being happy in the NZ, some admitted that it is sometimes hard for them to communicate their everyday worries to their Polish friends who have an idealised vision of New Zealand and envy them 'living in paradise'.

There was also a difference in perceiving mothering practices: what was seen as 'neglect' in the UK was seen as 'giving children freedom' in the NZ, and praised: Polish mothers were seen as either 'protective' or 'controlling' and 'nagging', depending on the country. Polish women in NZ were more eager to adopt NZ ways, and used a more positive narrative to relay these habits than those in the UK. In NZ Polish femininity practices were also included in a wider 'European' set of practices, with my respondents' seeing their own performance not necessarily always as Polish, but rather as European.

In many cases the importance of the UK or NZ environment was very marked, with my respondents' geographical location profoundly affecting the way they performed their multiple identities. There were also many ways in which not just individual identities, but also the intersectional nature of various identities was manifested, responding to specific demands and the cultural, economic, political and geographical aspects of a particular place. I discussed the specific geographical, socio-economic, cultural and political environments of the UK and NZ in Chapter 4 (section 4.3.3 and 4.4.3). Some of these differences turned out to be very important in shaping my respondents' experience and performance. In NZ, geographical and small population factors proved to be crucial. Far away from Europe, in a small, sparsely populated country that has historically (and, to certain extent to this day) suffered from the complex of provinces (Sinclair, 1961:40), being a Pole brought very different connotations than in the UK. First of all, Poles were not equated with work migration and Polish migration (specifically) to NZ is not politicised in either NZ or Poland. This makes my respondents able to freely explore and manifest their identity without having to resort to any 'resistance practices' (Edwards, 1995:284) to hide or counter-act it. Second,

NZ's egalitarian ideals and low tolerance for the unequal distribution of power (Hofstede, 2011) shape the way in which wealth manifests itself, curbing more ostentatious displays of positional, status related goods (Walasek & Brown, 2015:527). The Polish community in New Zealand is very homogenous in terms of class background and education (mainly due to strict immigration procedures and logistic difficulties of moving so far), and very small. All of these factors, combined together, make Polish women's behaviour less scrutinised (including by their families, who are too far away to be a disciplinary force in a case of any transgressions), but also unburdened by any negative ethnic and class stigmatisation. This was not the case in the UK: as Polish women faced two (or even three) audiences, they had to navigate avoiding ethnic/class stigma stereotyping and fulfilling Polish gender expectations at the same time. I believe that showing Polish women in these two different environments contributes to an understanding of the interactive nature of integration, and also questions the assumption of migrants displaying their culture in the same way - wherever they are.

7.2 Theoretical implications and impact

The theoretical contribution of this thesis is closely tied to its intersectional nature, and the operationalisation of intersectionality within the 'lived experience' of Polish women (McCall, 2005:1774). This perspective is often missing from migration and diaspora studies, which frequently focus more on ethnicity than gender and class, and under-research complexities and dynamic interrelations between these (Brah & Phoenix, 2004:75, Lünenborg & Fürsich, 2014). My thesis contributes to both by showing, through examples, how Polish women perform their identities in various contexts, and how they, more or less consciously, manage the way they manifest their identities in response to changing external factors. As my thesis is comparative, it is possible to more easily identify these factors, and understand the constant balance between environment and agency.

In Chapter 2, section 2.1.1, I stressed how inseparable identities are, using the metaphor of ‘different ingredients of a cake blended together’ (Bowleg, 2013). Although complex, my respondents’ lives are also not divided into separate compartments, but ultimately lived as one (although changing and flexible) experience. As I mentioned in section 7.1, it is impossible to discuss identities in isolation: they are being dynamically constructed and re-constructed through interaction and performance, ‘in response to developmental and contextual factors’ (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001:496). This is well captured and shown through comparative research, where subjects with similar identity ‘ingredients’ blend them in different proportions, and adjust them to varying surroundings.

By showing how intersecting identities are relevant to my respondents’ lives I tackle the ‘lived experience’, which is not only contextual and interactive, but also actively managed. As culture and circumstances are ever changing, these identities are also in a constant motion: in my research I attempted to capture them as a process. In this sense, the most important implication of my study is not describing concrete (and therefore temporary) examples of identity manifestations, but showing their dynamic, interactive and evolving nature. This is very different from the habitual assumptions of the stability and stagnant nature of identities, and also points to ‘intersectional subjects’ as not simply carriers of identities that were prescribed to them on birth, but active agents. This can be shown by looking at how women were negotiating conflicting expectations, for example changing their dress practices to avoid class/ethnic stigmatisation and getting criticised by their mothers who see this as not upholding the proper gender standards. This was especially obvious amongst Polish women in the UK, who faced two (or even more) audiences with different codes of practices, and had to adjust their performance accordingly to the standards of many groups they simultaneously belonged to. These changes, although being a response to outside forces, did not rob them of agency: my respondents were usually aware of the way their modified

their behaviour, even if they could not easily explain why (and, for example, associate them with class issues). As I signalled in Chapter 2, section 2.2.1, there are various theoretical approaches to this agency: these are outlined by Butler in her theory of performativity (Butler, 1993:2) and Goffman's ideas on performance (Goffman, 1959). What is, however, similar, is the focus on dynamic identity creation and re-creation, which is a never-ending process. Being in a situation where identity performance requires re-creation or management may, actually, heighten people's agency by their realising its contextual nature. As I discovered in my study, some of my respondents were surprised by encountering different manifestations of gender roles or social status, and that made them re-define (or at least question) the ones they knew from Poland and treated as universal.

As my thesis demonstrates how the structural inequalities and disadvantages of belonging to 'sub-ordinate' groups (such as women, migrants, Poles, or those of a lower social status) (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008) affect women's behaviour and the way they present themselves, I tie identity performance to the distribution of power and power balance, which is also dynamic and temporal. It is important to note, however, that no identity is an advantage or disadvantage in itself. As my comparison with Polish women in NZ showed, being a woman, a Pole or a migrant does not have to automatically send a person to society's lower strata. The way identities are rated and how much currency they hold in the society's distribution of power is very much shaped by country's own stratification system, cultural values, and the contemporaneous political climate: and these can be subject to very rapid changes. As gender studies are increasingly concerned with 'geographically located' and 'global gendered inequalities' (Woodward & Woodward, 2015), comparative research such as mine contributes to the understanding of women's mobility between different geographic and symbolic hierarchies of power. Using 'gender as a means of making sense of social divisions and lived experience' (Woodward & Woodward, 2015) adds not only to women's

studies, but also, potentially, to more applied sciences such as clinical psychology (Rosenthal, 2016:477). I believe, however, that these dynamics relate to many social groups, not just women, Poles or migrants, and the theoretical premises of my thesis can be used to understand and research many other social or ethnic groups (see also Chapter 1, section 1.3).

My work is also a contribution to Polish diaspora studies, which are dominated by the labour migration narrative and often discuss Polish migrants in an asymmetrical way, casting them as beneficiaries of their new countries. Including New Zealand into Polish migration research provides a novel and very different perspective, showing Polish migrants in a situation of individualised lifestyle migration (Ahmed, 2013) in a country which is geographically distant and where there are few Poles. As Poles in New Zealand were not, to the best of my knowledge, previously subject to academic research, my thesis provides a valuable and original comparison point for other studies involving Polish migrants.

In the past few years we witnessed a refugee crisis brought on by the war in Syria, and the rise of nationalism in many European countries. We also saw pre-Brexit anti-migrant propaganda, and the post-Brexit anti-Polish fallout. Although these events have many political, economic and legal aspects, what seems to stand out is the fixed and limited definition of ethnicity dominating public discourse. This discourse, used widely by the media, gives fuel to anti-migrant sentiments by ‘othering’ migrants and portraying them as immutably and intrinsically different. In that way it has become a political tool for creating social division. As I showed in this thesis, ethnicity (as any other identity) is not only dynamic, but also inexplicably linked to other identities that could be, in everyday life, much more important for integration and social inclusion. If we look at people only through their ethnicity (treating this as their intrinsic, unchangeable trait), we fail to acknowledge many other ‘points of contact’ (Botterill, 2015) and similarities we may share. Even if ethnicity was stable, the assumption of similarity is not always correct: this was something many of my UK

respondents discovered while in London, where they suddenly encountered Poles from other societal strata and regions of Poland they have not encountered before. As mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.4, as we all belong to many groups at the same time ‘all people in fact are multicultural’ (Cohen, A., 2009:199). I believe this understanding and intersectionality’s ‘social justice core’ (Rosenthal, 2016:475) is, potentially, very important in discussing migration and refugee situations in life outside academia, allowing for a shift from an ethnic and (for example) religious bias to gender, class and other similarities that may surpass ethnic or religious differences. It is also important to point to the performative aspect of these identities, and the way they are a product of a place rather than inherent attributes of a person, being pliable to change and re-construction in new circumstances. This also helps us not to over-estimate in-group similarities, but to focus on people’s multi-group membership and belonging in the way in which we interact.

7.3 Limitations and Future Research

There are several possible limitations to this thesis, and ways in which my work could be expanded in future research. Considering the ‘relational identity’ (Titkow, 2007:11) of Polish women (and gender in general), a male perspective on femininity, gender relations and roles would contribute additional insights into the ideals and performance of masculinity in Poland, and interactions between the sexes. The perspective of New Zealand and English men and women would also provide an outlook on how Polish women and their gender and class practices and position are perceived from ‘the outside’. Interviewing New Zealand (Māori and Pākehā) and English women from various ethnic and class backgrounds on their own ideas on femininity, ethnic identity, class and social inclusion could further complement my study, and show which ideals and practices, seen by my respondents as country/culture-

specific are, in fact, universal and shared by women worldwide⁵⁴. Including another comparison country (such as Japan) might also shift the perspective, and show ideals and practices of femininity, Polishness and class in yet another, dramatically different light⁵⁵.

There are also limitations brought about by my choice of methodology. Although (as outlined in Chapter 2 and 3) use of a qualitative approach provides the in-depth perspective needed for capturing the complexity of intersectional identities, it restricts sample size, making it difficult to generalize the findings. Comparing two cities such as London and Wellington also has its limitations, as larger cities (especially London) often have a specific dynamic not entirely representative of the rest of the country (as was discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.1). It is also important to account for the temporal aspect of my data: while they reflect Polish women's a reality at a specific time (2011 and 2013) they may also have been subject to the change brought on by various political events, such as Brexit. These changing circumstances could potentially be the topic of another, comparative project, as to how Polish women's ethnic, class and gender practices were affected by post-Brexit racial and anti-migrants tensions, and how their social and formal status as Poles and migrants was affected.

⁵⁴ An interesting article on 'The Post-Trump Haircut' published recently by Heidi Mitchell suggests that women undertake (often radical) changes in their femininity practices and aesthetics when confronted with what they see as a 'value threat' resulting from being a disempowered group. Mitchell attributes this 'rebellion by challenging traditional notions of beauty' to women wanting to feel in 'control', and a coping mechanism in a situation of having to be 'ready for a battle' by gathering all possible capital (Mitchell, 2016). Although purely anecdotal, this story suggests another interesting avenue for identity and performance research.

⁵⁵ Although I interviewed only four Polish women in Japan, and do not include this material in my thesis, my preliminary observations from these interviews and two months of fieldwork gave me a sense that, confronted with Japanese gender roles and practices, Polish women feel *less* feminine and groomed, but at the same time also less conservative and more independent. Further, their positioning as 'white Westerners' and women in an Asian context is very different than in the UK and NZ, inspiring more dramatic behavioural changes. This accentuates the importance of social location on performance, and opens up possibilities for future research.

It would also be interesting to expand on the NZ angle, for example comparing mothering practices and femininity ideals of Māori, Pākehā and Polish women, and conduct comparative ethnographic work with NZ women living in the UK. As I follow New Zealand's national and local press and keep in touch with women I met during my fieldwork, I have observed, over the years, many economic, political and cultural changes that could be potentially addressed in a new study, which focuses on attitudes to non-British migration and (changing) egalitarian values and their display. Furthermore, following recent earthquakes that affected Wellington (November 2016) it would be interesting to see how participating in such events affects identity building and belonging through sharing a dramatic experience (Unluer, 2012).

7.4 Dissemination Plans

While working on this thesis I presented my work at several conferences, seminars and events for academic and non-academic audiences, and published one chapter in a book on immigration ('Immigration: Policies, Challenges and Impact', Tartakovsky, 2013). I also shared my work outside Academia, contributing to debates on the refugee crisis in Poland and Polish migration in the UK, in both Polish and British media (both before and after the Brexit referendum). This interest in my work convinces me of the potential practical implications of my research and its possible political contribution in the context of current debates on women's and migrants' rights in both Poland and the UK. I plan to continue to disseminate my data within cross-psychology, (Polish) migration and diaspora studies, but also in New Zealand, adding to wider debates about bi-/multi-culturalism.

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APPENDIX

1. Respondents UK

In the UK 31 respondents were interviewed. 24 were post-EU migrants, 5 came before EU in the 1980s and early 1990s, and 2 came to the UK after the IIWW. The average age of all respondents was 37 (without post-war respondents 34), and the average age for the EU respondent was 31. The youngest was 21, and the oldest 84; median age was 33. 10 were married (7 to Poles: 2 raised abroad, one half-Polish; 1 to Iranian, 1 to Chinese-Malaysian, 1 to Italian), 2 engaged (1 to a Polish man, 1 to Australian), 9 in a relationship (3 with a Polish man, although 1 was half-Polish; 2 with English men, 1 with white South African, and one with a French), 6 single, 4 divorced (3 single, 1 in a relationship), and 2 separated/widowed. 13 women were mothers, and one was pregnant at the time of the interview: 17 had other family members in England (usually cousins or siblings). 25 came to the UK straight from Poland, 2 came from Germany, 2 from India (through the camps in Siberia), 1 from Italy, and 1 from US. On average, they spent 11 years in the UK (without post-war respondents, who came to the UK as children: 7.6). 1 had PhD (from Oxford), 17 had MA (management & marketing (3); Polish & Roman philology (3), tourism, pedagogy, 1 actress (PWST) and 1 diplomacy), 2 had BA, 3 were students (studying in the UK for both MA and BA), 2 had post-secondary school education, and 6 had matura/technikum education. All but one interviewees lived in London, and all interviews were conducted there. As for the reason for coming, 9 quoted 'looking for a job', 6 joined someone who was already in the UK (boyfriend, sibling, children), 5 entered English high-school and/or university education (all 5 at Oxbridge), 2 came because of the job transfer/apprenticeship, 2 post-war Poles could not go back to Poland after the war, and 7 named various reasons for coming as curiosity, wanting to learn the language, a need for a change, wanting to study (which did not work out), or coming to the UK for holiday, enjoying it and deciding to stay. At the time of the

interview, 2 were retired (one used to teach in Polish Saturday schools), 5 were full-time mothers (one of them was working in the evenings in her husband's company/accounting), 3 were students (one of them worked part-time in Starbucks), 3 were cleaners, 2 teachers, 6 in professional position (university lecturer, manager in the City), 3 worked in the office, 1 dhoula, 1 midwife, 3 in the coffee shop/shop/catering, and two were unemployed: one was involved in spiritual healing courses, and another one left her job at Discovery Chanel to learn yoga in Thailand. 3 respondents came from small villages (1 from the post-PGR village near the Ukrainian border), 2 from the Eastern Borderlands (now Lithuania and Belarus), 8 from the towns of the population <50,000, 4 from towns of the population >100,000, 4 from the towns of the population >200,000, 3 from the towns of the population >400,000, and 7 from the town with more than 400,000 inhabitants (Gdańsk, Poznań, Kraków, Wrocław and Warsaw).



Fig. 1 Spatial representation of the UK respondents across the London Boroughs.

2. Respondents NZ

I conducted in-depth interviews with 31 Polish women living in New Zealand. 30 were Polish-born and one was born in Wellington to Polish migrants from the Pahiatua camp. 28 were from Wellington, 2 from Christchurch and 1 from Auckland. Out of 31 women interviewed 16 were in their thirties, with an average age of 34. The average age for the overall sample was 37, with ages ranging from 22 to 77. Seventeen were married (6 to New Zealand men (5 Pākehā (including NZ born Pole, son of Pahiatua children) and 1 Samoan), 8 to Poles, 2 to English men, 1 to American), 8 were in a relationship (4 with Pākehā New Zealanders, and 1 Māori), 2 with Poles, 2 with other Europeans: a German and Lithuanian), 5 were divorced and/or separated (in two cases ex-husbands were Pākehā New Zealanders, 3 were Polish – one of them a Pahiatua child), two were single, and one was widowed. One had four children, 3 three, 8 had two children, 6 had one child, two were pregnant at the time of the interview. Interestingly, despite the popular (amongst Poles) stereotype of a Polish woman going to New Zealand with the New Zealand husband she had met in the UK, only two of my respondents moved to New Zealand for that reason (in one case the marriage did not survive, but the woman stayed in New Zealand and built a life there). One woman met her New Zealand husband (son of Polish immigrants to the NZ) in Poland, and they decided to move to New Zealand after he experienced difficulties in finding a job in Poland. Out of eleven women who were married or in a relationship with New Zealand men, 8 started their relationship while already in New Zealand. Only 9 of my respondents came to New Zealand straight from Poland (two of them declaring ‘travelling a lot’ beforehand). Eleven of my respondents came to New Zealand from the UK after living there for up to ten years beforehand, and eight⁵⁶ reported living in different countries (US, Mexico, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sweden) prior to their move to New Zealand. One interviewee came after the war

⁵⁶ Different counting so numbers vary slightly in two cases from the publication

from Germany as a former prisoner of Dachau; one on the boat from Isfahan (a Pahiataua child); one from an Austrian refugee camp in the 1980s; one was born in New Zealand. Excluding those who arrived in the early migration, participants had spent an average of eight years in New Zealand. Seven of my respondents moved to New Zealand because of their New Zealand husband/partner, four because of their husbands' job, and six moved for personal reasons (e.g. a job offer, 'proving herself', or a 'need for adventure'). Fifteen of my respondents were brought up in big cities (mainly Warsaw, Wrocław, Poznań or Gdańsk). Seven were born in smaller towns but studied in Warsaw, Kraków or Poznań. Two of my respondents were born in Kresy, today's Ukraine. Participants were from a variety of social backgrounds, ranging from farming households to the daughter of an aristocrat and famous politician. Twenty-three women interviewed had an MA or higher degree. My respondents included two film critics, a medical doctor, three lawyers, business and IT experts, architects, economists and two doctoral students. The sample also included an opera singer and a qualified nurse. Three respondents left school with 'matura' (A levels), with two of these later working in tourism. Twenty-two women held full or part-time jobs in a variety of professions (including an academic, an employee of the Ministry of the Education, and a singing teacher), three were retired, three were not working.

3. Interview Questions

Original [Polish] Version

1. Jak myślisz, czy istnieje coś takiego jak ‘typowa polska kobieta’? (Jeśli tak, jaka ona jest? Co robi?). Czy myślisz, że Ty jesteś ‘typową polską kobietą’?
2. Czy jesteś w stanie rozpoznać [poza Polską], że kobieta jest Polką? Co takiego mogłoby zwrócić Twoją uwagę? [W NZ; Czy jesteś w stanie rozpoznać Europejkę?]. A czy Ty jesteś rozpoznawalna jako Polka – jak myślisz? [dla Nowozelandczyków, Anglików, innych Polaków]
3. Czy Twój sposób ubierania się zmienił się, odkąd tu jesteś?
4. Co zakładasz na siebie, gdy wychodzisz gdzieś z przyjaciółmi? Albo kiedy idziesz na zakupy (np. do sklepiku na rogu, do centrum handlowego)? [na imprezę, do teatru]
5. Czy sądzisz, że zmieniłaś się, odkąd wyjechałaś z Polski? Jakie to zmiany? Co robisz takiego, czego nie robiłaś wcześniej?
6. Jak sądzisz, jak postrzegają Ciebie Nowozelandczycy/Anglicy kiedy widzą Ciebie po raz pierwszy?
7. Czy zawarłaś bliskie przyjaźnie z Nowozelandczykami/Anglikami? [Kim są Twoi znajomi?]
8. Gdybyś miała porównać siebie do swoich rówieśniczek Nowozelandek/Angielek – to jak byś wyglądała? Jakie widziałabyś między Wami podobieństwa, a jakie różnice? A gdybyś miała porównać siebie do swoich rówieśniczek w Polsce? [Jakbyś miała porównać Wasz styl życia, jest podobny czy różny?]
9. Jaka jest/była Twoja matka? Jak byś ją opisała? [Jak się ubiera/ubierała, zachowuje/zachowywała? Jakie są/były Twoje babcie?]
10. Kiedy byłaś dzieckiem, kto w Twojej rodzinie gotował/zarabiał pieniądze/zajmował się wychowywaniem dzieci/miał decydujące zdanie/był ‘głową rodziny’?

11. Jak wygląda to w Twojej obecnej rodzinie/związku? (jeśli osoba wolna: Jak myślisz, jak będzie to wyglądało w Twojej rodzinie/związku? Jak chciałabyś, żeby było?)
12. Czy istnieje coś takiego jak 'typowa polska matka'? Jeśli myślisz, że tak, jak byś ją opisała? Jaka ona jest? Co robi? Czy myślisz, że różni się od nowozelandzkiej/ angielskiej matki? [w jaki sposób?]
13. Czy jesteś w stanie poznać [W Nowej Zelandii/w Anglii] kto jest osobą bogatą? Jak taka osoba wygląda/co robi/jak się zachowuje? Czy jesteś w stanie rozpoznać w Polsce, kto jest osobą bogatą? Jak taka osoba wygląda/co robi/jak się zachowuje?
14. Czy jesteś w stanie rozpoznać [W Nowej Zelandii/w Anglii] kto jest osobą biedną? Jak taka osoba wygląda/co robi/jak się zachowuje? Czy jesteś w stanie rozpoznać w Polsce, kto jest osobą biedną? Jak taka osoba wygląda/co robi/jak się zachowuje?
15. Jak widzisz swoją pozycję tutaj? [Gdybyś miała wyobrazić sobie społeczną drabinę, gdzie byś się na niej postawiła?]
16. Czy jesteś w stanie [w Nowej Zelandii/w Anglii] rozpoznać, tak na pierwszy rzut oka, jakie kto ma wykształcenie? A w Polsce?
17. Czy jesteś w stanie [w Nowej Zelandii/w Anglii] rozpoznać, tak na pierwszy rzut oka, jaką kto wykonuje pracę? A w Polsce?
18. Jak myślisz, na jakiej pozycji tutaj stawia Cię praca jaką wykonujesz?
19. Czy czujesz się atrakcyjną kobietą? [tutaj i w Polsce]

English Translation

1. Do you think there is such a thing as ‘a typical Polish woman? (If so, what is she like? What does she do?). Do you think that you are ‘a typical Polish woman’?
2. Can you recognize (are you able to recognize) [outside of Poland] that a woman is Polish? What would catch your attention? [In New Zealand: Can you recognize a European woman?]. Do you think that you are recognizable as Polish – what do you think? [To New Zealanders, English, and to other Poles]
3. Has your way of dress changed since you are here?
4. What do you wear when you are going out with you friends? What about when you go shopping (to the corner shop, to the shopping centre)? [To the party, to the theatre]
5. Do you think you have changed since you left Poland? Do you do something you were not doing before?
6. How do you think New Zealanders/English perceive you when they see you for the first time?
7. Have you formed closed friendships with New Zealanders/English? [Who are your friends?]
8. If you were to compare yourself to a New Zealand/English woman your age, what kind of similarities and differences would you see? [In your lifestyle]? If you were to compare yourself to women your age in Poland? [If you were to compare your lifestyle]
9. What is/was you mother like? How would you describe her? [What is/was she wearing, how does/did she behave?]. What are/were your grandmothers like?

10. When you were a child who in your family was cooking/earning money/taking care of the children/had the last word/was 'head of the family'?
11. What is it like in your family/relationship? (If single: What do you think it will be like in your family/relationship? How would you like it to be?)
12. Do you think there is such a thing as a 'typical Polish mother'? If so, how would you describe her? What is she like? What does she do? Do you think she differs from a New Zealand/English mother? [How?]
13. Can you (are you able to) recognise in New Zealand/England who is rich? What does this kind of person look like/do? Can you (are you able to) recognize who is rich in Poland? What does this kind of person look like/do?
14. Can you (are you able to) recognise in New Zealand/England who is poor? What does this kind of person look like/do? Can you (are you able to) recognize who is poor person in Poland? What does this kind of person look like/do?
15. How do you see your position here? [If you were to imagine a social ladder where would you place yourself on it?]
16. Can you (are you able to) recognise [in New Zealand/England] – just by looking at someone – the level of someone's education? What about in Poland?
17. Can you (are you able to) recognise [in New Zealand/England] – just by looking at someone – what kind of job a person does? What about in Poland?
18. What do you think, at what social position does your current job place you in your current society?
19. Do you feel (do you think) you are an attractive woman? [here and in Poland]

