

Narratives of the transnational student: a complicated story of cultural identity, cultural exchange and homecoming

Nolwazi Nadia Ncube/ NCBNOL001

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Social Science in Global Studies

**Faculty of Humanities
University of Cape Town
2014**

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: Nolwazi Nadia Ncube

Date: 30 April 2015

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

PASSPORT



Transnational Student



Narratives of the transnational student: a complicated story of cultural identity, cultural exchange and homecoming

Dedication

To all those who have felt local and stranger; foreigner and national in their place of study.

For Josh, my love that I lost in the process.

Acknowledgements

To my supervisor, Amrita Pande, for guiding me and helping me mould my ideas into concrete shape and form

To my mom, for being my rock, my friend, my financial director, my editor, my everything.

To my dad, for helping many of my dreams come true along the way.

To Ruwa, without your iron sharpening mine, this might not have been quite so be possible.

To Lu, for urging me to pursue my dream.

To Tatenda, for the motivation and assurance that I could get this done on time.

To Chimbwanda, for being my anchor, my strength, and strengthening my faith.

Thank you.

Abstract

This research study gives a glimpse into the ways in which transnational study complicates students' cultural identity, sense of belonging and homecoming; interweaving their experiences into a new transnational identity and a plural sense of belonging. The study examines a sub-group of elite, highly mobile people referred to as "transnational students" – who in a working definition *are students who have travelled to; lived, studied and even sometimes worked in at least two countries during the course of their degree programmes*. It draws on their autobiographical narratives in order to demonstrate the way in which they exist in a suspended state of 'temporary permanence' and with time, develop a 'contaminated' sense of cultural identity, diluted by their 'foreign exchanges'. The study reveals the mercurial fluidity with which abstract and concrete constructions of home are made by transnational students. It also portrays the ways in which these students navigate their multiple identities as a result of their cultural exchanges abroad. Finally, it tells a story of (dis)connects and (dis)connections to bring out the challenges faced by these students abroad and at home.

Keywords/phrases: 'contaminated' cultural identity, cultural exchange, home(coming), multiple selves, multiple identities, third culture kid, transnational student, migration, temporary permanence

Table of Contents

Abbreviations.....	8
Foreword.....	9
1. Introduction.....	10-18
1.1 Significance of study.....	12
1.2 Conceptual framework.....	15
1.3 Rationale.....	16
2. Literature Review.....	19-36
2.1 TSSs, TCKs & Lifestyle Migrants.....	20
2.2 Multiple Identities, Third Spaces and Third Cultures.....	26
2.3 What are students?.....	28
2.4 Where do TSSs belong?.....	31
2.4.1 Temporary permanence.....	31
2.4.2 'Contaminated' cultural identity.....	33
2.5 A complicated homecoming.....	34
3. Methodology.....	37-45
3.1 Research design.....	37
3.1.1 Positionality.....	38
3.2 Sampling design.....	39
3.2.1 Sample characteristics.....	40
3.3 Analytical framework.....	41
3.4 Ethical Considerations.....	42
3.5 Reflexivity.....	42
3.6 Limitations & Framing of study.....	
4. Findings.....	46-74
4.1 The 'seed' and 'spirit' of transnationality.....	46
4.2 Navigating Multiple identities.....	53
4.2.1 Contaminated selves.....	54
4.2.2 Multilingual selves.....	57
4.2.3 Intersectional Culture exchanging selves.....	59
4.3 (Dis)connect(ion).....	63
4.3.1 Homecoming.....	68
5. Discussion.....	75-82
5.1 The 'seed' and 'spirit' of transnationality.....	76
5.2 Navigating Multiple identities.....	78
5.2.1 Contaminated selves.....	78
5.2.2 Multilingual selves.....	79
5.2.3 Intersectional Culture exchanging selves.....	79
5.3 (Dis)connect(ion).....	81
6. Conclusion.....	83-85
Afterword.....	86
Bibliography.....	87-91
Appendix.....	92-152
1: Fig. 3: Key similarities and dissimilarities between TSSs, TCKs & Lifestyle migrants.....	92
2: Participant Profiles.....	93

3: Interview guide.....	96
4: Thematic colour coding scheme.....	97
5: Interview transcripts ¹	98-152

¹ including annotated field notes and analytical notes and comments

Abbreviations

Cross-cultural kid.....	CCK
Do-it-yourself.....	DIY
Jawaharlal Nehru University.....	JNU
International Student Association.....	ISA
International student migration/mobility.....	ISM
Global Studies Programme.....	GSP
Global Studies Programme student.....	GSPian
Lifestyle Migrant.....	LM
No date.....	n.d.
Third Culture Kids.....	TCKs
Transnational student.....	TS
Transnational students	TSs
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Institute for Statistics.....	UIS
University of Cape Town.....	UCT
Year abroad.....	YA

Foreword

As a student of the University of Cape Town's Global Studies Programme (GSP), I found that contrary to the delightful experience I had anticipated, my semester in Freiburg was bittersweet. I often felt that there was an invisible, impermeable barrier² between the society and myself. As a result of the fact that I did not speak any German. But as I look back on my time in Germany, Cape Town and India, I am always glad for the opportunity my studies there gave me to visit countries and famous cities that I might never have otherwise, for example: to Paris and Venice and some charming villages in French Switzerland.³ Unexpectedly, when I returned to Cape Town – where I had expected to find familiarity, comfort and stability;⁴ instead I experienced a feeling of plummeting in vertigo, and feeling out of sorts. My intrigue with this conflicting experience motivated the investigation the topic herein undertaken as both a personal and academic endeavour to grapple with and come to terms with logic underpinning some these ambivalent emotions.

² cf. p. 65

³ cf. second level of significance of 'temporary permanence', p. 51-52

⁴ cf. p. 68-70 for discussion and illustration of reverse culture shock changes and expectations

1: INTRODUCTION

Globalisation is often difficult to define without tending towards reductionism. In developing one such non-reductionist definition, Paul James (2005: 195) cites a popularly noted definition by Held et al. from their dynamic book, entitled *Global Transformations*. In it they define globalisation as:

a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transaction, assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power.

In his critique, James points to the utility of this definition lying in its vagueness. He asserts that this utility is born of, in fact, *not* quantifying the “extensity, intensity, velocity and impact [...]”, and rendering “transcontinental or interregional flows” as a sufficient basis for their definition (James, 2005: 195). Furthermore, he highlights that an essential element of this definition lies in referring to globalisation as a “*process* and not a state of being [own emphasis]”. As a consequence of this processual fact, the study of globalisation has given rise to an examination of various fields which can be categorised in five broad strokes as: global economy, global culture, global governance, global migration and global inequality (Robinson, 2006). There is a tendency that subsequently emerges from these fields in which discourses on globalisation dichotomise global economy and global culture on either side of process the spectrum.

The study herein undertaken interfaces these two aspects (economy and culture), doing so by focusing on the said multidirectional flow of people – specifically transnational students (TSs). A group of highly mobile individuals who indeed give life to what Appadurai (1998: 33) would describe as an ‘ethnoscape’, consisting of:

...the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, exiles, refugees, exiles, guest workers and other moving groups and individuals [who] constitute an

essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree.

As a result of their mobility, transnational students fall within the confines of the field of migration studies. But what makes a student *transnational*? This study will begin foremost by characterising transnational students, thereby distinguishing them from international or ‘study abroad’ students and other migrants. Secondly it shall articulate three primary assumptions underpinning the rationale (see p. 16) about transnational students and refer back to them in an endeavour to answer the central research question of what effects their transnationality has on their cultural identity and sense of belonging.

Migration studies is a well-developed field, which has even progressively undergone what can be tracked as a shift from an examination of push-pull factors to the phenomenon known as the “brain drain” and successively, its inversion: the brain “pool” or brain “bank”. Yet there is a growing consensus that whilst the flow of people is on the increase, international student migration/mobility (ISM) remains a nascent field of study (King & Raghuram, 2013: 134; King & Ruiz-Gelices, 2003: 229). Moreover, the few scholars currently focusing on student migration have centered on the aspect of the initial move; the “push” factor and their return or non-return. It is “only recently [that] researchers have begun investigating the complexities of, for example [...] people who have lived, worked and studied extensively in multiple nations and might be considered global cosmopolitans” (Josselson & Harway, 2012: 6). Hence, in the aftermath of what I’d like to call the ‘globalisation euphoria’, there is no more opportune a moment than now to examine the real life effects and impacts of globalisation and the internationalisation of tertiary education. This study reveals some of the effects of transnationality on student migrants in complicating their cultural identity and sense of belonging. At this juncture, I would like to make a differentiation between transnational students and what I will refer to as ‘study abroad’ students whose one-time transient study implies kind of ‘voyeurism’ that may not have potentially long-term consequences for their sense of belonging.

Across the globe there is a growing demand for education and as such new destinations are continually being explored. Consequently, there is an increase in the competition for students from emerging regional destinations. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO), Institute for Statistics (IS) data on student mobility reveals that there has been an exponential escalation in the number of students studying abroad between 2000 and 2012 from 2 million to 4 million (UIS, 2014). This figure represents 1.8% of tertiary enrolments globally, a ratio of 2 in every 10 students (ibid). The most mobile population of students in the world originates from Central Asia with the demographic rising steadily from 67 300 in 2003 to 156 600 in 2012, with the outbound mobility ratio augmenting by 4% from 3.5% to 7.5% over the same period (UIS, 2014). Students from sub-Saharan Africa are the second most mobile group; however, they often choose to remain closer to their homes. It is worthy to note that there is a distinction made in international education, between what is referred to as "culture-based" and "knowledge-transfer" (Engle, n.d.). Knowledge transfer study applies many to the natural sciences such as biology whereupon the approach is not based on the interculturalist perspective of culture-based study (ibid). This study of transnational students will take as its basis culture-based abroad study.

1.1: Significance of study

As Appadurai (1998: 33) alludes to in his definition of ethnoscaapes, we find that globalisation has brought with it enormous changes; and as scholars, policy-makers and citizens of the nation-state we must open ourselves to the possibility of "multiple identities" (Josselson & Harway, 2012); nationalities and forms of citizenship. Questions around which are raised by the issuance of documentation such as study permits, temporary and permanent residency. These developments are indicative of a shift in the framing of migration studies from bipolar conceptions of singular and dual citizenships, nationalities and identities to more complex, fragmented and flexible constructions (Sharma & Singh, 2013; Nyamnjoh, 2006). It is from such a frame of reference that this study was undertaken. For it complicates the notions of cultural identity giving us an understanding of migration studies that takes us further in a more complex conceptualisation; giving us a frame of reference outside of the sending-receiving dichotomy, the push-pull factor dichotomy and the singular-dual dichotomy.

This study also resonates with a change in the pedagogic model that breaks away from the dichotomously derived notion of a “one-way accommodation by schools to help newcomers successfully transition to their new environment” (Zúñiga and Hamann, 2009: 331). In doing so, the study transcends a more commonly asserted xenophobic rhetoric in which only the accommodation of foreigners is considered. Instead, these narratives paint a picture that also depicts the ways in which students themselves accommodate their hosts in their efforts to integrate themselves in the society whilst at the same time preserving their essence and assurance in their own sense of belonging. In this way the study deviates from frames that archetype transnational students as “the stranger” (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). It is this empirical gap that this study hopes to fill by understanding how student migrants can be ambiguously both stranger and national.

Furthermore, whilst there is an abundance of quantitative data on inter-/transnational students there remains a paucity in qualitative research in this field of interest (Admit, 1999 as cited in Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune (2002: 1) points to a need for “a more appropriate knowledge of their [student travellers’] experience”. This study aims to do precisely that, making it a document that would be useful to scholars and policy-makers alike. For it provides the reader with an insight into their experiences so that the reader may be grasp in their complexities and complications embedded in these experiences, encompassed by both benefits and challenges.

In today’s rapidly globalising world it is not unusual for individuals to be of two or more cultural and/or racial backgrounds; to travel frequently; live in very diverse environments and in more just one country (Benet-Martínez, Lee & Morris, 2002: 493). Indeed, many of us are multicultural rather than monocultural. “Bilingual [and multilingual] speakers characteristically use each of their languages in different social contexts and would not be expected to use either of them in all contexts” (Milroy & Muysken, 1995: 3). The ability to do so is known as *frame-switching*, in which one alternates between the interpretive frames of different cultures based on cues in a social setting (Hong, Morris, Chiu & Benet-Martínez, 2000: 709). An import aspect of breaking away from the aforementioned one-way accommodation model can be understood through the concept frame-switching. Much research has been conducted

to convey frame-switching from a cross-cultural psychological perspective illustrating the linguistic devices employed and iconic primers activated in the minds of biculturals that facilitate this process (Hong et al., 2000). In this study I would like to propose the navigation of multiple identities a type of cultural frame-switching negotiated by transnational students.

Madge et al. (2009 as cited in King and Raghuram, 2013) highlight that in a rather limited and limiting way; thus far, there are three only main approaches to international student mobility (ISM). The first of which is an investigation of ISM through the lens of migration literature. The second, “explores ISM as part of the overall mobility and globalisation of higher education” whilst the third “focuses on the pedagogical questions raised by student mobility” (King & Raghuram, 2013: 128). It would not be possible to answer the question of what effects transnationalism has transnational students’ cultural identity and sense of belonging without engaging with all three of these analytical frames. As shall be presented in the Findings and Discussion (see p. 46-82) chapter of this dissertation, amidst the backdrop of overall migration and globalised tertiary education, this study tells a complicated story. Moreover, the study explores issues raised by student mobility outside of the classroom or lecture theatre. It tells the complicated story of a somewhat fragmented existence, fissured by the balancing act of navigating multiple identities and managing disconnections and invoking connections by breaking down certain barriers. The story told is one that engages with processes that affect students’ sense of identity and belonging, which during these ‘transnational’ intervals is periodically negotiated and renegotiated as they move to new and different locations as well as return back home.

1.2: Conceptual Framework

Given that globalisation is propounded as the explanation for the exponential increase in student mobility across the globe, it is important to turn to Globalisation theory and the debates within it. For I contend that one in particular: the transformational thesis helps us understand the theoretical hook of this study – referred to by Bude and Dürrschmidt (2010) as one's 'way of being in the world'. The key tenets of Globalisation theory are framed by its three main camps. The first of which is the hyperglobalists who contend that the present globalised age is characterised by a 'death' of the nation-state, begetting it a 'borderless' world; one hallmarked by denationalisation (Held et al, 1999). On the other end of the barracks lies the camp known as the sceptics. The sceptical thesis – basing its argument empirically on patterns of trade, investment and labour – contests that the flows of people across the globe at this present point in time is not unprecedented (ibid). The sceptical camp even goes as far as to contend that globalisation is indeed a 'myth' and furthermore chastise the hyperglobalists for their naïvety in overlooking the "enduring power of national governments to regulate international economic activity" (Held, et al., 1999: 5). The sceptics appreciate globalisation as a heightened period of 'regionalisation' as opposed to an overall deterritorialisation (ibid). In opposition to the sceptics are the transformationalists, who believe that globalisation in the social, political and economic spheres is unprecedented. Whilst the transformationalists do not dispute the continuity of state autonomy, they do assert that a reconstitution of power structures is taking place – a transformation. A transformation that I believe seeps right down to a reconstitution of social relations.

Held et al., (1999: 11) observe that hyperglobalists and sceptics alike have a tendency towards conceptualising globalisation as a "singular condition or an end-state" (in a typically Weberian "ideal type" approach). Hence in examining the effects of transnationality on the cultural identity of transnational students, I would tend to encamp myself with the transformationalists in framing these effects as reconstitutive, transformative and ongoing. Furthermore this study is grounded in the two German sociologists – Heinz Bude and Jörg Dürrschmidt's proposition of an "existential turn in the theory of globalisation" (2010). They critique what appears to be Globalisation theory's stagnation as a result of its preoccupation with "flow speak". A flow speak

that “celebrates mobility and deterritorialized forms of social interaction in an overzealous way” (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010: 482). Instead, Bude and Dürrschmidt point us towards an existential turn as a means of navigating our way out of the paradoxically stagnant waters of flow speak. As opposed to framing globalisation primarily in terms of *movements* in this post-globalisation euphoria, the existential turn takes into account people’s ‘way of being in the world’ by exploring “issues of belonging, choice and commitment, and the rhythmicity of social relations” (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010). The purpose of the study is grounded in examining transnational students’ way of being in the world by telling the intricate story of their cultural identity and experiences abroad. Their narratives are themselves a complex tale of what I shall call ‘contaminated’ culture identity; cultural exchange; ‘homemaking’ homecoming and ‘being home’; connections and disconnections and ‘temporary permanence’.

1.3: Rationale

This study will engage with the following three key assumptions about regard to transnational students, which are informed by Zúñiga & Hamann’s (2009: 329-31) work on the taxonomy of transnational students:

- (a) Transnational students anticipate a return to the previous country of study, even if not necessarily on a permanent basis.
- (b) The extended geographic mobility experienced by transnational students complicates identity formation.
- (c) The primary challenge that transnational students must confront during the period of study is integrating themselves in the host country’s society.

In order to build a clear picture of their narratives in terms of their cultural identity, cultural exchanges and homecoming, this study will also build upon these assumptions (as they are reaffirmed or dismissed) during the course of the Findings and Discussion chapters (p. 46-82).

Similar to other immigrants, transnational students experience identity issues, which range from culture shock to problems with integration and assimilation at various levels. One such experience in the narratives of these transnational students is

encompassed by what I refer to in this dissertation as “temporary permanence”⁵. This term is a conceptual tool that conveys the complexity of being in the world in a somewhat suspended state as a consequence of continual travels. It captures the essence of their time spent abroad. The permanence relates to the deep-seeded degree to which they embed themselves in the societies where they study. The temporariness, however, refers to the temporal dimension of their time abroad. This temporariness bears three levels of significance in their lives thus, cultivating their experiences in an especially unique way. The first of which concerns the fact that their permanence is limited to the duration of their studies. Secondly, it emerges that their transnational experience is rarely ever limited strictly to the country, city or state in which they are studying. They often travel outside of these to get a better ‘feel’ of their surroundings. Thereby rendering them a transnational experience *within* the transnational experience; temporariness within their temporariness. Finally, “the[ir] geographic instability [may be] voluntary, a product of economic and/or family concerns” (Zúñiga & Hamann’s, 2009: 331). Furthermore, it is “precipitated by global economic trends [and] immigration enforcement” (ibid). Hence we find that the so-called ‘permanence’ of transnational students is volatile and may dissipate with changing external circumstances. It is my belief that the concept’s usefulness also lies in the fact that it encapsulates an experience that is not unique only to transnational students but indeed most temporary migrants. However, what is distinct about the way in which transnational students experience it is that its prominence is magnified by the multiplicity of their travels.

The issue of migration and mobility cannot be discussed without a debate around the difference and utility of these two terms. “Mobility highlights the *movement* involved in migration, rather than privileging the sending and receiving localities and their perspectives [own emphasis]” (King & Raghuram, 2013: 129). Migration alludes to the act of relocating from one country to another (ibid). To forego this difficulty, the literature often proposes the adoption of the abbreviation ISM for international student mobility/migration in which the two terms are often used interchangeably. I will, however, point to the importance of the referring to “repeat mobility” (King &

⁵ Refer to p. 31-32 for a discussion of the literature engagement that led to the development of the concept of temporary permanence.

Ruiz-Gelices, 2003: 232) in the establishing a definition for transnational students, to be utilised in this study as well as shedding light to some of their experiences.

Before arriving at this definition, I would like to turn to the semantics of differentiating transnational students from international students. Both fall within the same category of student migrants and international students for transnational students, are indeed foreign students. International students on the other hand are based principally in one foreign country even if they do choose to participate in a semester of study abroad whilst in that country. Though transnational students are international students, international students may not necessarily be transnational students. Transnational students have an experience of *repeat* mobility that imbues their transnationalism. Consequently, I will draw on Josselson and Harway's aforementioned (p. 11) characteristics of global cosmopolitans thereby defining transnational students as: students who have travelled to; live, study and may sometimes work in *two countries or more* during the course of their degree programme. I have included these four dimensions (travel, living, studying and work), as they are aspects that are integral to meaningfully embedding oneself in a culture⁶. Particularly in so far as to have an impact of one's cultural identity, for example 'contaminating' it as this dissertation argues; or invoking the sense of being suspended in a state of 'temporary permanence'.

⁶ See point iii. of sample criteria in the "sample design" subsection of the Methodology chapter (p. 39).

2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review addresses the key concepts themes of this Masters dissertation: repeat mobility, transnationalism, identity, belonging, homecoming and being a student. It begins by explaining the transitional demographic in which students lie, a period of which is nevertheless instrumental to identity formation. One aspect of this identity formation is complicated by a rootlessness brought about by transnational students' inhabiting a 'third space' that lies at the intersection of the host culture and the home culture. It poses questions about belonging amidst this complex identity formation, suggesting that the navigation multiple selves in pursuit of a 'culture balance' are the essence of their transnationalism. It also explores some of the processes that complicate transnational students' homecoming and the levels on which they may do so.

Citizenship has been a hallmark of modernity since the nineteenth century, along with nationality (Holston & Appadurai, 1999). The understanding of nationality has until recently been relatively dichotomous, conceived either in terms of singular nationality and dual nationality. Singular nationality attaches one's sense of belonging to one homeland in which an individual has rights and assumes residency. Dual nationality tends to be mentioned in reference to diasporic communities as it engages with issues of roots, routes, cultures, clashes and identities that arise from having a homeland but residing outside of it (Sharma & Singh, 2013). This study aims to dig deeper and unpack issues such as multinationality and transnationality that are in many instances even more complex as they imply a navigation of *multiple* identities (Josselson & Harway, 2012). Social sciences "use the term transnationalism to view the multiple ties and interactions that link people across national borders especially in understanding migrants who move from one country to another" (Josselson & Harway, 2012: 6). Transnational is a label used to refer to those who identify with more than one culture and more than one country as is the case of those who migrate frequently. Numerous scholars engaged with transnationalism but as Jonathan Friedman explains in his article, "From routes and roots", some scholars may not necessarily engage with transnationalism as an analytical approach choosing instead to apply it as a "moral principle" (2002:21). In this study, transnationalism is not applied as a moral principle but rather as a concept with which to frame the existential

turn in Globalisation theory in the investigation of this specific group of migrants. The investigation herein undertaken uses transnationality as a frame that helps us to capture some of the complexities that arise out this postmodern condition in the globalised age (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010: 481).

Indeed, “[o]ne of the most significant new migrant profiles is that of the highly skilled worker, seeking professional added value or moving for study reasons, and [his/her] migration may be only temporary” (Eurostat, 2001 as cited in Murphy-Lejeune, 2002: 2). Transnational students are a unique group not only because of their transnationality but also because of students’ position across the globe. There are indeed two sides of the spectrum in understanding this social position. On one hand they are seen as “desirable”, firstly because of the skills that they import into the countries where they immigrate to and sometimes settle (King & Raghuram, 2013). Secondly, they are seen as financially and academically desirable. On the other hand they are caught in the tension of the securitization of migration as a consequence of incidents such as 9/11 and 7/7. Under this over-arching theme, students are sometimes seen as “unwanted”, presenting a threat to job security, a dilution of the host culture and disregard for local normative codes. King and Raghuram explain that as a result, in extreme circumstances as were witnessed in the decade ensuing after 9/11, there was “an increased racialization of the discourses around their presence [making] them objects of suspicion and targets of racist attacks” (2013: 136). Whilst students are a transitional group on the cusp of youth and adulthood, their phase as students is integral to “the complicated work of [their] identity formation and affiliation” (Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009: 329). Therefore it is especially important to understand how these transnational experiences may affect them in this regard, as this study aims to investigate.

2.1: TSSs, TCKs & Lifestyle migrants

This section of the literature review aims to draw conceptual comparisons and contrasts that are useful to explain the experiences of transnational students in terms of some of the challenges they face and gain a better understand of their sometimes-rootless sense of belonging. With the social position of students elucidated it is logical to explore some of the definitions used in reference to transnational students. The

transnational students in this study and their characteristics resonate with that of other types of TSs. Zúñiga and Hamann define transnational students categorically in a well considered work entitled “Sojourners in Mexico with U.S. School Experience: A new taxonomy for Transnational Students. *Immigrant youth* is one term used to express the circumstances and most importantly the vulnerabilities that transnational students are subject too (ibid). A *returned migrant youth* is one who is born in one country, schooled in another for at least one year and then returns to their country of origin. Zúñiga and Hamann’s also present their own definition of transnational student: one who is born in the immigrant parent’s country of destination but has a different legal citizenship to his/her parents because of his/her birthplace in the receiving country (2009: 332). They also discuss the *sojourner* whose dislocation cannot be captured by considering school adaptation, cultural assimilation and social integration only. The sojourner is continuously negotiating the ‘here’ and the ‘there’ of the host country and his or her origins in all aspects of his/her social life (Zúñiga & Hamann’s, 2009).

Existing between here and there is an integral aspect in this complicated the notion of roots or apparent rootlessness. It is a notion that progresses us past a dichotomous understanding of nationality in singular or dual terms. As such, in deconstructing this complicated notion of roots, I turn to David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken’s book *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds* (2009). The work is a poignant depiction of the rootlessness that children of military and missionary parents, diplomats and multi-national corporation (MNC) employees experience when placed and raised in the country of their parents’ assignment. “Third Culture Kids (TCKs) are raised in neither/nor world. It is neither fully the world of their parents’ culture/s nor [is it] fully the world of the other culture/s in which they were raised,” (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009: 19). In their proposition of a third culture, Pollock and Van Reken (2009) imply that TCKs are neither fully embedded where they live, nor do they truly belong to their homeland. This therefore suggests that there is a pluralism that is inherent in their existence. A similarity that I believe they share with TSs; they both exist in a somewhat rootless condition of “temporary permanence”⁷ – suspended between and amongst worlds.

⁷ I shall refer to the term “temporary permanence” in greater detail on page 31.

The concept of a 'third culture' therefore presents an interesting lens, which we can focus and assess the notion of roots. The term third culture kids (TCKs) refers to "children who [have] spent a significant period of their developmental years in a culture outside their parents' [passport] culture(s)" (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009: 13). Transnational students can be conceived as a type of adult TCK with the slight difference that it is not necessarily their developmental, adolescent or childhood years that have been spent outside their 'home' country but some months or years of their tertiary education. The authors Pollock and Van Reken also urge us to take into account that there is a distinction between a cross-culture kid and a third culture kid. A cross-cultural kid (CCK) is "a person who is living or has lived in – or meaningfully interacted with – two or more cultural environments for a significant period during childhood" (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009: 45). The essential difference being that a CCKs "meaningful interaction" with other cultures may not have implications on their sense of cultural identity and belonging therefore not necessarily complicating what they consider to be their roots. A third culture kid can by default be a transnational student (due to multiple assignments/deployments/missions of their parents) but not all transnational students are third culture kids. This study will engage with transnational students from various backgrounds, including the classic TCK.

A particular parallel can be drawn between the concept of a third culture, and Bhabha's and Jameson's (as cited in Grimshaw & Sears, 2008) characterisations of postmodernity as a fragmented existence. There is a state of 'in-betweenness' in which study abroad students are said to inhabit; an in-betweenness that is neither 'home' nor 'abroad' but in an overcoming of 'the politics of polarity' transforms into a hybrid identity for these students (ibid). This research study speaks to this complexity of this in-between third space and the mercurial fluidity of cultural identity and belonging that accompanies it. On the other hand, however, Kramsch's (1993 as cited in Grimshaw & Sears, 2008) notion of 'third place identities' suggests a positive view of the inter-/transnational student experience. Some students may feel that their acquired idiosyncrasies do not fit with the stereotypical values and customs of their 'home' culture. Instead, they may find that they are more comfortable occupying the 'third place', which lies in between the cultural practices of 'home' and 'abroad'. There, "unencumbered by the associations of particular nationalities,

ethnicities or other groupings, “they are able to forge alternate, self-affirming identities” (Grimshaw & Sears, 2008: 262). It is as a result of this fragmented existence that transnational students inhabit within the host culture, home culture and third culture that the narrative told is sometimes mimetically fragmented and disjointed.

Lastly, Clifford (as cited in Friedman, 2002) in his book, *Routes*, poses an important question for consideration in complicating the notion of roots. He links the two homonyms (roots and routes) and suggests in a rather counterintuitive fashion that roots do not always precede routes. He muses over the potential consequences for culture if travel could release this assumption from its chronological confines; implying that routes are roots in flux (Friedman, 2002). He finally proposes that perhaps in this way travel could be taken to represent “a complex spectrum of human experiences” (Clifford, 1997: 3 as Friedman, 2002, 22), and culture a constituent of them both. This study resonates with this idea in portraying the cultural identity of transnational students in some ways as ‘roots on the move’.

As we begin to think about these so-called ‘roots on the move’, it is important to consider what other ‘roots’ are on the move (besides cultural identity). In order to do so we can turn to another type of migrants that bear some resemblance to transnational students. This group is known as ‘lifestyle’ migrants. Lifestyle migration reveals a palette of hues that colour migration with an aspirational element. An aspirational element that is often echoed in the narratives of transnational students, one infused with finding something “different” during their studies abroad and adapting to it. Similarly, lifestyle migrants believe that their form of migration has something to offer not only in the way of “escape” or “adventure”, but also in terms of providing them with the opportunity to evolve on a personal level into someone “new” and “different”. This sentiment in both the narratives of transnational students and motivations of lifestyle migrants speaks to a kind of “do-it-yourself” (‘DIY’) biography (O’Reilly & Benson, 2009a; King & Ruiz-Gelices, 2003). A DIY biography embedded with agential volunteerism to migrate and choice of where to migrate to.

In lifestyle migration, the core impetus is the search for a “good”, “simple” or “better”

way of life (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009a). Experts on lifestyle migration, Karen O'Reilly and Michaela Benson, in their book *Lifestyle Migration: Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences* highlight that “lifestyle migration is thus a search, a project, which continues long after the initial act of migration” (2009a: 2). This aspect of continual pursuit resounds with the restlessness of transnational students who seasonally travel abroad for their studies in a persistent pursuit of new, different and engaging experiences (2009b: 2)⁸. It is worthy to note too that lifestyle migrants are often of a privileged stratum thereby reproducing the social structure from the societies from which they migrate (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009a: 9). This position of privilege is also a similarity shared by lifestyle migrants and transnational students who are third culture kids (TCKs). As the sons and daughters of often high-powered MNC executives or diplomats, the experiences of lifestyle migrants are also often at odds with the ‘real’ experiences of the community in which they embed themselves. O'Reilly and Benson assert that “Past lives are not left behind in migration, despite claims to the contrary; lifestyle migrants are and continue to be structurally located within a global elite.” Transnational students too are deemed to be of the same privileged mobile class wherein their choice to migrate is their own, often unconfined by the limitations of finance due to support from parents and tertiary institutions. It therefore becomes important to underscore that the migration of transnational students is a *classed* migration, one that can be set apart from many other forms of migrants such as refugees; asylum seekers and certain work migrants.

Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune in her book, *Student Mobility and Narrative in Europe: The New Strangers* sheds light on some interesting contrasts between student migrants, expatriates and/or their TCKs by stating that:

Unlike the expatriate, [the student migrant] does not have access to professional services organising her/his material life, and her/his integration into local society is rather more pressing in terms of linguistic and social participation. As for the expatriate, the student stay is of short to medium duration and professionally motivated. Like the expatriate, the experience abroad may just be an interval in

⁸ cf. p. 46-52 and 76-77 for further illustration of this pursuit in these respective sections on the “The ‘seed’ and ‘spirit’ of Transnationality”.

a life story, while for the immigrant, the interval may not be so incidental and fortuitous. One of the main differences between expatriates and students is the greater flexibility which youth confers. Without family responsibilities or other ties, students are in a state of family and economic 'lightness' (Mauger, 1995) and their affective and mental horizon should be more unobstructed. As a result, their integration into a different environment might prove easier, faster and more comprehensive.

Here we are reminded of the social position of students as we consider the way in which they may not necessarily be tied by tied to family and work responsibilities but are still weighted by the pressure of integrating by themselves without culture-training and facilitating institutions that expatriates may have at their disposal.

One could be cynical, however, about the small proportion of people on the move and “suspect that the globalizing visions are based exclusively on the experience of the academics and other movers who so identify” (Friedman, 2008: 115 as cited in Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010: 485). Some might argue that these groups are no more than an extension of Sklair’s (2002) transnational capitalist class (TCC) whom he classifies as “comprising four fractions: [1]those who own and control the major corporations and their local affiliates, [2] globalizing bureaucrats and politicians, [3] globalizing professionals, and [4] consumerist elites.” I contend nevertheless that whilst minute in proportion to world’s population, it has become evident from a review of the relevant literature that, “The migration of relatively affluent individuals has been largely overlooked in the more general literature on migration.” (O’Reilly and Benson, 2009b: 609). Hence this research study attempts to help fill this gap. By categorising transnational students as an elite, mobile class of migrants with complex identities that are continually undergoing reformation, reformulation through their cultural exchanges abroad, this research study fills yet another gap in the existing migration literature⁹. This study tells a story of a dialectical nature with effects not only on the students themselves but their hosts and their efforts to accommodate one another.

⁹ Refer to **Appendix 1, Fig. 3** (p. 92) for a table depicting the key similarities and dissimilarities between TSS, TCKs & Lifestyle migrants.

2.2: Multiple identities, third spaces and third cultures

In understanding Friedman's (2002) earlier mentioned¹⁰ conception of routes as roots in flux, it is important to consider the idea of multiple identities. For in today's globalised age it is no longer possible to live an entirely singular, compartmentalised existence. Seasonal migrants and transnational students (who are a type of seasonal student migrant) are forced by the continuity of travels that is: their repeated mobility, to become reptilian-like. They must metaphorically shed and regrow new skin like a snake or take on different chameleon colourations to assimilate with the changing environments as they migrate from place to place. As members of the 'global village', we are faced with the challenge of a shared communal existence therefore having to simultaneously negotiate divergent affiliations, loyalties and identities (Josselson & Harway, 2012). We must grapple with not only attaining but also maintaining a stable sense of self amidst profound conflicting perceptions of personal, social and physical dislocation whilst at the same time contributing and constituting the collective whole that is the globe (ibid). This experience is especially immediate for the transnational student, the student of the world who lies not only within borders but across and beyond them too – just as the prefix “trans-” implies.

Josselson and Harway (2012) reveal a fascinating paradox about these present times that we live in. Somewhat contradictorily, in spite of the complex plexus of interactions we have with one another and the multiple faces we don, society remains steadily in a counterintuitive battle to simplify, confine and in some ways restrict the range of sociocultural classifications that can be employed. For example, questions such as: Where are you from? Where do you live? Where do you study? And the brazen, what are you? Answering these questions in a category-specific way is often a transnational student's nightmare, for the plethora of answers, sub-categories and quasi-classifications that fit them best is not always well understood in light introductory banter, let alone widely accepted across the board.

Bhabha (1994: 218 as cited in Grimshaw and Sears, 2008: 263) in his discussion of 'third spaces' highlights in the same vein that:

¹⁰ See p. 23 wherein Friedman (2002) draws on Clifford (1997) to build this idea.

The non-synchronous temporality of global and national cultures opens up a cultural space – a third space – where the negotiation of incommensurable differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existences ... Hybrid hyphenizations emphasize the incommensurable elements as the basis of cultural identities.

This is evinced when people in daily interactions ask if transnational students are foreigners or nationals. Transnational students lie in a transient third space, one of temporary permanence – the grey borderland of ‘foreign-national’ (Sassen, 2007). A foreign national is a person who is not a citizen of the host country in which s/he is residing or temporarily sojourning. However, they may have rights similar to those of citizens even though they are foreign (Holston & Appadurai, 1999). This therefore raises the question of the many ways in which we know what the classification “foreign-national” means, and yet still in many ways we do not understand what the expression means at all – for what does it mean to truly be both foreigner and national at the same time? A task encompassed by complicated work of existing between both “here” and “there” in a third space that is both fragmented and adjoined to the home and the host culture.

However, the theories and concepts above have a tendency towards painting the third space and the third culture that is inherent to third culture kids and transnational kids in a negative light – as ‘incommensurable’ or irreconcilable. However, transnational students are also very “self-motivated, self-aware... [in a state of] self-determined integration of self-richness and self-contradiction”, as they reconcilably navigate multiple identities in search of a ‘culture balance’ (Josselson & Harway, 2012: 4). Therefore culture consequently emerges as the site of multiple identification for them, more so than for others because of the continuity of their travels (Josselson & Harway, 2012). They are testimony to the fact that in the age of globalisation the composition of coherence in people’s lives is no longer concentrated by the consistency of a realised collective identity but rather through a ‘dilution’ of selves. Moreover, along the same lines, Erik Erikson (as cited in Josselson & Harway, 2012) puts forward a concept of identity in which one’s own identity is a ‘configuration’ that lies at the interface of interactions between society and the individual. Like a glass prism our identity is a reflection, not just how we see ourselves but of how

others see us. This study intends to investigate the implications of transnationality in the experiences of transnational students as their identity is reflected onto them by society, whilst they concurrently navigate multiple identities amidst their travels and project their own perceived internal identities outwardly.

2.3: What are students?

In this configuration of multiple identification, to facilitate the process of understanding students as a comprehensive whole, it is necessary to breakdown and grapple with their constitutive parts. Not only do they lie at the cusp of youth and adulthood as earlier mentioned (p. 20), they are also cultural exchange agents, family and community members, partners, and representatives of their countries as much as they are students.

As I advocate for an existential turn in Globalisation theory in this study¹¹, I would like to substantiate my argument with an illustration of the importance of mapping out compass points for the navigation of this existential turn. These compass points can be plotted through the development of vocabulary that helps us grapple with transnational students' 'way of being in the world'. In order to do this, I shall begin by turning to Carla Freeman's (2001). article entitled "Is Local: Global as Feminine: Masculine? Rethinking Gender of Globalisation" in which she ponders over women's continual insertion into the globalisation discourse rather than their incorporation into it. She proposes that global processes can be gendered feminine and not just masculine by looking at the example of what are known as "higgler" in the Caribbean. The term "higgler" was first introduced into the literature by Mintz in 1955 and then by Katzin in 1959 but is nuanced by Freeman in 2001 (1008) as she uses it to refer to a "*transnational higgler, suitcase trader, and informal commercial importer (ICI)*". She does this in order "to distinguish the more recent rendition of this long historical occupation from its original, agriculturally based version, and the subset of this group [she is] particularly describing are...women whose entry into higglering is tied directly to their employment in the offshore informatics sector in Barbados" (Freeman, 2001: 1009). I refer to this article because just as her working

¹¹ See conceptual framework p. 15-16

definition of transnational higgler suggests, I believe – like Freeman – that there is a call for a more complex array of vocabulary that may allow us to effectively grapple with the evolutionary and sometimes completely transformative processes that accompany globalisation. Terms that can be usefully and meaningfully employed in the globalisation rather than inserted in a staccato fashion. The term higgler gives shape to the intersectionality of transnational students as they lie in a vulnerable place where they are part of the osmosis that facilitates an economic and cultural exchange between their country of origin or ‘permanent residence’ and the country in which they are studying.

On the same note, in their article on international student migration, King and Raghuram propose new agendas for future research in the nascent field of student migration, notably, one based on the recognition that:

[...] students are complex subjects who are much more than just students whose only function is life in higher education. They are simultaneously family members, citizens of a particular country, workers, and perhaps also refugees or asylum-seekers. It is at the intersection of these multiple spheres and positionalities that their lives are played out.

Students are not just students – amongst many other intersectional roles – they are sons, daughters, siblings, friends and sometimes partners, parents, cousins, aunts and uncles. It is therefore necessary to portray the ‘diversity of experience’ (King & Raghuram, 2013) in order to fully capture the student migrants’ very own ‘way of being in the world’ (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010). Even at the risk of their lives seeming somewhat disjointed, for herein lies part of the ‘complicated’ aspect of the transnational students narrative. The portrayal of this complicated story in my view paves a way in the direction of an existentialist turn by adjusting the critical lens on Globalisation theory to scrutinise hyperglobalist ‘flow speak’.

With that said, transnational students with their travel, study and work experiences fill even more relational roles and consequently this study aims to engage with this agenda. As such we must grapple for a more specific, more complex and more precise

lexicon to capture the experiences of transnational students. A lexicon that is enriched by the narratives themselves as well as the analysis of them. In drawing on King and Raghuram's reflections and those of Freeman, one could call transnational students a type of "student higgler". I would even go as far as to say that through the cultural exchange that transnational students are exposed to, they transform into *cultural exchange agents*. Similar to "[t]he country higgler [who] was the key bearer not only of produce and other consumer goods between country and town but of news, information, and gossip" the transnational student is the bearer of the same from country to country (Katzin 1959 as cited in Freeman, 2001: 1020). Transnational students transport tales and bring home trinkets as well as their changed selves. In referring to the less material, more tacit aspect of their transnationality, transnational students as cultural exchange agents can dispel myths as well as reinforce stereotypes about the 'foreign lands' they have ventured to.

Transnational students personify the "paradigmatic figure of the 'homecomer' (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010) alongside emerging as a type of pioneer-explorer "breaking ground" in countries that may have never been and may never be visited by others in their family and friend circles (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009a). This is a notion that is also supported by Clifford (1997 as cited in Friedman, 2002: 22.) who stresses travel and movement as the sources of cultural production and people on the move as 'agents of cultural creation' as opposed to the localised populace of a city or town (I do not however want to idealise or romanticise the theorisation of transnational students as cultural 'creators' but rather demonstrate how they negotiate their multiple identities by being 'exchange agents' of various different cultures. It is for these reasons that I believe it is important to develop a vocabulary that texturises the canvass of diverse interactions, exchanges, representations and experiences that transnational students undergo during their studies. For this endeavour goes a long way in filling this lacuna in migration studies literature.

2.4: Where do TSs belong?

This section of the literature review answers this question by identifying transnational students' social position within the conceptual framework of nationality, citizenship and the third space. Citizenship as a realised concept often implies the access to rights and 'freedoms' (Marshall, 2006). The literature on citizenship is wrought with the

conception that the state strips the individual's agency away, often rendering the citizen a cog in the colossal all-imposing nation-state machine. Non-citizens are excluded from society and cities, and women in particular struggle to realise their full citizenship (Holston & Appadurai, 1999; Parreñas, 2001; Nyamu-Musembi, 2007). It is my belief that transnational students, unlike the typical one-time study abroad student who almost 'parachutes' in and out; transnational students do not just study abroad. They *live* abroad and deeply embed themselves in the cultures of the countries they inhabit in such a way as to be 'citizens' much like the locals are, which is a tendency that is cultivated over time. Yet still they exist in that habited but wholly uninhabitable no-man's land of being a 'foreign-national', for they are both foreign and national in many different ways. Whilst they may even hold the same rights as citizens, paying taxes and contributing to the country's economy and culture through the cultural exchange, these rights and documents often have expiration dates (albeit with the possibility of renewal). I have coined two terms to help us understand where transnational students find themselves located and how this affects where they feel there belong, that of temporary permanence and that of 'contaminated' cultural identity as follow in the sub-section below:

2.4.1: Temporary permanence

In order to explain the idea of temporary permanence, I return again to the notion the state as a stripping agent. Such portrayals of the ways in which states can strip foreign-nationals of their agency include that of urban sociologist, Rhacel Parreñas in her study of Filipina domestic migrant workers, which navigates the issue of "partial citizenship" (2001). In this work she explains that Filipina migrants who are desired only for their labour consequently experience only a peripheral inclusion in the countries to which they emigrate (ibid). Parreñas defines partial citizenship broadly as "the stunted integration of migrants in receiving nation-states, which in the case of women is demonstrated by discriminatory measures that deny them their reproductive rights" (Parreñas, 2001: 1130). Another example of a similar and more recent study is by Torres and Wicks-Asbun (2014) in their article, "Undocumented Students' Narratives of Liminal Citizenship: High Aspirations, Exclusion, and 'In-Between' Identities". In it they discuss the way in which undocumented students are relegated into 'spaces of liminal citizenship... [in which] they are trapped between states of

belonging and exclusion' (Torres & Wicks-Asbun 2014: 195). This notion of "liminal citizenship" is built on the basis of Menjivar's (2006, 2008 as cited *ibid*) concept of "liminal legality". Torres and Wicks-Asbun (2014) explain that undocumented immigrant children find themselves occupying an "in-between" space that negatively shapes their ambitions towards upward mobility through education as a result of legal restrictions imposed by the state. They argue moreover that as a result of these restrictions, the immigrant youth find themselves "suspended in a state of 'permanent temporariness'" (Bailey et al. 2002 as cited in Wicks & Asbun, 2014: 196).

It was in drawing upon this idea of permanent temporariness, that I conversely coined the term "temporary permanence". I believe that it captures the condition embodied by transnational students as a result of them fully embedding themselves, seemingly permanently into a society. Sometimes so far as to even pay taxes as citizens of the state do (Holston & Appadurai, 1999). Yet this permanence oftentimes comes to an end when their studies are complete. In so doing, the concept helps theorise their experience. Although I do extrapolate parallels between the above-mentioned undocumented foreign students in the United States (US) and Filipina migrants abroad (Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014; in Parreñas, 2001), these two groups nevertheless represent very different types of classed migration – both economically and culturally divergent from that of transnational students. As mentioned in the rationale (see p. 16) there are three levels of significance that the terms bears that their permanence is contingent on:

- (i) duration of study
- (ii) blitzing (repeat touristic mobility)
- (iii) external, changing socio-economic conditions

2.4.2: 'Contaminated' cultural identity

At this juncture, I would like to propose another expression, one that shall become a kind of extended metaphor representing the cultural exchange that takes place between transnational students and their hosts. It also embodies the struggle to preserve their original 'pure' cultural identity whilst effectively assimilating and integrating themselves into foreign cultures abroad. I have found in this research study that with extended time spent abroad, transnational students may begin to perceive their cultural identity as being somewhat 'contaminated'. It is my view that *contaminated* cultural identity encapsulates a tacit, intersectional feeling that transnational students may come to internalise; a sentiment that becomes more pronounced with continued years travelling from place to place, studying and sometimes working there. Whilst I do realise the negative connotations that the adjective carries, I draw on it because the metaphor of purity has historically arisen in reactionary nationalist rhetoric (Chinweizu, 1975¹²) and cross-cultural studies (Hong, et al., 2000). However, in the narratives of transnational students, these negative connotations are not internalised but rather considered critically and introspectively without any loading of value-judgements (see p. 54-55). They tend to pose these questions or remarks about their cultural identity in a rather 'matter-of-fact' way as opposed to a deprecatory one. Transnational students' continual studies abroad mean that they must sometimes contend with a sense of their belonging being 'diluted' and therefore contaminated by 'concentrations' of foreign culture that change their mindsets and world-views in such a way that as to complicate their process of homecoming. Zúñiga and Hamann find that the same is true of Mexican transnational students, citing that "[t]he most remarkable traits of sojourner students are their susceptibility to dislocation and plural sense of belonging or partial belonging." (Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009: 330). This brings us again to the taxonomy of transnational students (ibid; see p. 21). Zúñiga and Hamann in their study of transnational Mexican students refer to a type of transnational student known as "the sojourner student". Hamann in his earlier work (1999, 2001 as cited in Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009: 330) which they draw on a foundational block, defines sojourner

¹² *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler (1925) is another example of such literature for it was political manifesto that substantiated his extermination of the Jews who he believed were 'contaminating' his strife for the racial and cultural 'purity' of the Aryan race.

students by juxtaposing them to “permanently settled students, that is, natives and immigrants who intend to stay within their national context for a long time.” My own definition of transnational students as *students who have travelled to; live, studied and may sometimes work in two countries or more during the course of their degree programme* resounds with Hamann’s (1999, 2001 as cited in Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009) in alluding to a lack of permanent settlement due to their repeat mobility. For the sojourner student and the transnational student alike are continually on the move and only ever temporarily settled/ing for a limited time frame. Therefore the idea of temporariness is an integral aspect of both these definitions therein complicating cultural identity, cultural exchange and homecoming through the multiplicitous transformation of these processes.

2.5: A complicated homecoming

This literature review has discussed what students are and attempted classify them as well as to draw out the similarities between the transnational students referred to in this study and other types of migrants. It went on to consider where transnational students belong, not in the physical sense relating to their passport cultures, nationality or geographical location but in the more abstract sense of belonging and their identification with a third space and third culture. After having considered all of this, our answer particularly to where they belong indeed brings us ‘home’ as it were, as we examine what renders their homecoming so complicated.

Time and the temporal dimension of their studies is such a significant element of transnational students’ travel, for their studies are punctuated by intervals in which the semester breaks and students may or may not go home. In the case of the former, their return migration becomes an important consideration to take into account in understanding their narratives. George Gmelch (1980: 135) in his article, “Return Migration” cites Ravenstein who in as early as the 19th century wrote of migration in which he highlights that, “Each main current of migration produces a compensating *counter-current* [own emphasis].” In the 21st century, the counter-currents of migration exist at various levels. For example: with the securitisation of migration

post-9/11¹³ (King & Raghuram, 2013), which signifies responses at nation-state level to migration. This study attempts to grapple with the counter-currents that are experienced by transnational students at a more personal level; ‘counter-currents’ whose effects may call their sense of cultural identity to question and leave them feeling like outsiders or strangers even when they return home.

This brings us to an interesting term referred to as “reverse culture shock”. The term was introduced in 1963, three years after the term ‘culture shock’ to capture “the process of readjusting, reacculturating, and reassimilating into one’s own home culture after living in a different culture for a significant period of time” (Gaw, 2000: 83-4). The definition and subsequent implications of what constitute a *significant* period of time are highly subjective and relative to the experiences of migrants themselves. Kevin Gaw (2000) examines the severity of reverse culture shock experienced by senior, high-school-going study abroad students upon reentry and return to their home country. A myriad of negative consequences have been documented in the literature for ‘returnee’ high school students, for example: “academic problems, cultural identity conflict, social withdrawal, depression, anxiety, and interpersonal difficulties, [...] alienation, disorientation, stress, value confusion, anger, hostility, compulsive fears, helplessness, disenchantment, and discrimination” (Gaw, 2000: 84). Gaw notes that a systematic study of the academic and psychosocial problems for college-aged students is yet to be conducted. This particular study is not one such ‘systematic’ study, as it has a wider scope seeking to detail the experiences of transnational students – both good and bad as well as neutral and impartial in order to provide a foundational basis for an evaluation of the benefits and challenges that the internationalisation of tertiary education presents.

Callahan (2010) in his article, “Going Home: Deculturation experiences in Cultural Reentry” sheds light on reverse culture shock, citing two main reasons for its causes. The first of which is an internal, personal change in the sojourner as a result of their contact and shared cultural exchange with the “language, customs, dress and worldview” of the ‘foreign culture (ibid). Secondly, the home culture itself may have undergone its own changes which may range from the physical to the linguistic,

¹³ The bombing of the American twin towers on 11 September 2001 believed to have been executed by Al-Qaeda extremists

social, relational, religious and familial during the [transnational] student's time abroad (Callahan, 2010). These changes can be attributed to a process known as acculturation. Gudykunst and Kim Kim's (1997: 337 as cited in Callahan, 2010) define acculturation as "becom[ing] acquainted with and adopt[ing] some of the norms and values of salient reference groups of the host society. As acculturation takes place, however, some unlearning of cultural patterns occurs as well [...]" (Callahan, 2010). Conversely deculturation involves a relearning of home practices and shedding of the foreign customs after acculturation has taken place. All of the concepts: (reverse) culture shock, acculturation and deculturation are especially pertinent in theorizing the experiences of transnational students and subsequently assess the effects of their transnationality on their sense of cultural identity and sense of belonging.

This literature review has considered the social position of students, comparing them to other seasonal migrants such as expatriates and third culture kids as well as lifestyle migrants. It has presented terms that assists us with understanding the experiences that are a part of their narratives and preliminarily began to conceptualise the changes they that TSs undergo in pursuit of a culture balance – negotiated through multiple identities and a the complications this may pose for homecoming. It highlights the specific empirical gap that this study intends to fill by detailing the qualitative aspect of student migrant experiences within the wider migration literature.

3: METHODOLOGY

3.1: Research Design

A research design ought to answer a question rather than data collection method(s) being super-imposed on the question. Hence in seeking to answer the central research question of “What effects transnationalism has on transnational students’ cultural identity and sense of belonging?” qualitative research was a logical choice. This choice was based on the premise that qualitative research primes the concerns of *practice* and *process* above that of outcomes. Therefore qualitative research serves to help grapple with the intangible life-aspect of experience, which is complexly woven by practice and process in forming the narrative of a transnational student.

Furthermore, in seeking to adequately answer the question, two data collection methods were factored into the research design for this study. The first method consisted of seven ‘face-to-face’ in-depth interviews, and the second method: participant-observation at an International Students Association (ISA) forum. Interviews were selected as a data collection method in order to mine the richness of different roles that students play intersectionally. For example, as highlighted in section 2.3 (p. 29-30) the literature review, it is important to remove students from solitary label of students that fails to recognize their intersectional roles as daughters, sons, siblings, parents, partners, spouses and cultural exchange agents amongst others. Bronisław Malinowski (as cited in Legard, Keegan & Ward), one of the founding fathers of anthropology and also a renowned sociologist and ethnographer emphasises the importance of conversing with people in order to engage with their point of view. Thus the in-depth interviews brought out the three-dimensional nature of the students’ biographical narratives of transnationality through the rich, thick data. In such a way as to provide detailed understanding of the way in which the TSs negotiate and navigate and the effects of transnationalism on their cultural identity and sense of belonging. 7 interviews were conducted altogether and they ranged from approximately 25-50 minutes in length. The interviews were semi-structured with several generic open-ended questions posed (see Appendix 3 for interview guide, p. 96). In following this relatively unstructured interview format, the interviewees themselves were also given the freedom to guide the interview structure. As the

interview took shape with their narrations, the interviewer probed the respondents with subsequent questions based on the information shared. This meant that certain questions posed from one participant to another were sometimes different. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants for the purposes of analysing the data derived from transcriptions of the interviews.

One interview was carried out face-to-face in Freiburg (Germany); two interviews were conducted in Cape Town (South Africa) and three in New Delhi (India). Follow-ups were conducted via social media such as e-mails and Facebook messenger, in the case of students who had not returned home during their travels, upon their return in order to gain an idea of their homecoming experience. Uniquely, one interview took place while the researcher was in Cape Town and the respondent in Thailand completing an internship. This was accomplished via Skype in a process that bespoke Harveyan “time-space compression” (1989); compressing a five-hour time difference and a 10,139km distanciation between the interviewee (Josh) in Bangkok and myself, the researcher, in Cape Town.

The second method of data collection, participant-observation at Jawaharlal Nehru University’s (JNU) International Students Association (ISA) forum entitled “Opportunity or Problem: To be a Foreign National” on 9 April 2014, preempts a discussion on my own positionality within the study. Field notes from the forum were used in the research study, citing the experiences of the three guest speakers at the forum who agreed to be adduced in this dissertation.

3.1.1: Positionality

According to Mark-Anthony Falzon (2009: 2), “[m]ulti-sited ethnography involves a spatially dispersed field through which the ethnographer moves – actually, via sojourns in two or more places, or conceptually, by means of techniques of juxtaposition of data.” As I myself am both a social science researcher and a transnational student (having studied in Germany, South Africa and India during the course of my Master’s degree), my research can be considered a multi-sited

ethnography¹⁴. A multi-sited ethnography allows for the global to be collapsed into the local (ibid) as geographical mobility is given meaning through accounts localized, on the ground experiences.

Ethnographic research was especially well-suited to this particular research study because of what King and Raghuram (2013: 127) point out in their paper on international student migration (ISM), which maps out new research agendas for the field. They ascertain that in spite of the abundant statistical data on student migration, there remains a need for “more in-depth ethnographic research on mobile students who recognise their multiple roles in knowledge diffusion and social reproduction”. Hence in attempting to fill this lacuna the study finds its resonance. “Ethnography is the study of social interactions, behaviours, and perceptions that occur within groups, teams, organisations and communities.” (Reeves, Kuper & Hodges, 2008: 512). Therefore I too was able to embed myself and identify with the experiences of the transnational students in this study by means of participatory interactions as well as observation – the strengths and limitations of which shall be discussed in the Reflexivity (p. 42-44) and Framing (p. 44-45) sections of this methodology chapter.

3.2: Sampling Design

Due to some of the distinct similarities that Clark Callahan’s (2010) study testing the deculturation in return migrants bears with this study, the following sample criteria that he employed in his research have also drawn on in this particular study. The students in the sample had to:

- i. have travelled abroad for study in at least two countries
- ii. show an interest in functioning (i.e.: studying and/or working) in that culture should have been evident in their stay(s)
- iii. have sojourned/be sojourning in the ‘foreign’ culture for long enough to gain meaningful insight and understanding of it
- iv. return home after embedding themselves in at least two different cultural contexts.

¹⁴ A feature of the study that consequently influenced my sampling methods applied in this study (see p. 40).

For the ease of convenience sampling, otherwise referred to as “reliance on [readily] available subjects” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 166), 4 respondents in the sample were ‘GSPians’ for at the time of the study I was enrolled in Master’s degree through the University of Cape Town’s Global Studies Programme (GSP). The other research participants consisted of students who were participating in abroad study on account of the specific nature of their degrees (e.g.: Bachelor degree Global Studies which required a travel and a global perspective and Language Studies, which required the participant to practice the languages in its country of origin such as Japanese in Japan). These participants took part in their transnational studies also other university programmes such as European Commission’s Erasmus Programme. 2 of the sample respondents, each of whom were TCKs, were purposively sampled. These forms of non-probability constitute what is known as maximum variation sampling, which compiles a diverse range of participants in order to paint a picture of the textured perspectives on the perceptions and experiences of this particular type of temporary migrants. In contrast to, for example: random and representative sampling, which can suppress or exclude deviant cases as opposed to “uncover[ing] the full array of multiple perspectives” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited in Rudestam & Newton, 2007: 106). The ratio of these four categories (GSPian: University-coordinated: TCK: self-chosen) in the of study participants was 4:3:2:1, respectively. Please refer to Appendix 3 (p. 96) for an alphabetised profile breakdown of each of the 10 research participants.

3.2.1: Sample characteristics

The total sample frame size was 10 participants; whose ages ranged between 21 and 32 years. All of the participants were at least bilingual with 2 interviewees being polyglots who spoke 4 languages fluently and spoke or understand several others conversantly. Some of the participants had travelled to, worked and studied in as many as 6 different countries, not including their blitzing expeditions.

It is necessary at this juncture to delineate between the interviewees (7) with whom in-depth interviews were carried out and the other research participants (3) who spoke at the ISA talk, as the extent of their contributions to the findings differ. In addition to Callahan’s criteria (p. 39), other than being students, all of the participants had a previous experience of studying abroad at the time of the interview. They differed in

the nationality, age, degree programme, stage of tertiary education (3 were at undergraduate level, 5 were Masters' level and 2 were reading for their doctorates level) and multilingual capacity. Each revealed a tolerance for, acceptance and appreciation of foreign cultures as well as a continued desire to see more of the world. However, they did not always consciously or explicitly self-identify themselves as "transnationals", "cosmopolitans" or "global citizens". The ethnic diversity of the sample also assisted with testing the generalizability of the concepts of 'temporary permanence' and 'contaminated' cultural identity.

3.3: Analytical framework

With "the perspective accounts of [the] research participants [taken] as a starting point" (Ritchie et al., 2013: 3) the next point of extraction from the data is analysis. Given that I as a researcher am also a transnational student it would be an ontological misconstrual to claim that the research process was indeed value free, and as such the findings are 'value-mediated' from my perspective. As the foreword of this dissertation may allude, this study began as a primarily inductive research process but as an extensive review of the literature began to take shape and form, the observations made became "theory laden" (Ritchie et al., 2013). Blaikie (2007 as cited in Ritchie et al., 2013: 6) asserts that neither *pure* induction nor *pure* deduction exist in reality. Moreover Ritchie et al. (2013) insist that even inductive researchers do not collect data with "blank minds" but rather have semi-theories that are influenced by their experiences in the field that are then interpreted through the data. Taking cognizance of the inclination towards subjectivity, "abduction" was adopted as a research strategy. It is expounded upon by Blaikie (2007 as cited in Ritchie et al., 2013) who stipulates that in this logic of inquiry the language and meanings conveyed by participants are first-order concepts that are developed into second order concepts developed by the research in his or her own account 'abducted' from the information presented by the participants. Abduction is a research strategy that translates lay accounts of everyday life into more technical, expert descriptions of social life.

Through this process of abduction I began to develop common overarching themes, identified through the maximum variation sampling, which allows for a phenomenon such as transnationalism to be explored from different perspectives. Thematic codes (see Appendix 4 for thematic colour coding scheme, p. 97) were repetitively abducted

and classified from the interview transcripts. The themes were then triangulated with the accounts from the three ISA forum participants to build the arguments telling the narratives of these transnational students in light of their complicated stories of homecoming, cultural identity and cultural exchanges abroad. The poignance of this study's findings relates closely to the fact that their experience cut across the characteristics of their ages, nationalities and degree programme.

3.4: Ethical Considerations

From the onset of the research, once the initial research proposal was approved, departmental clearance was sought and issued for this research. Suitable pseudonyms were nevertheless given to the participants to ensure their anonymity and in order to respect their right to privacy in the study. In addition some of their more obviously distinguishable characteristics were generalised or omitted in order to ensure their anonymity. Each in-depth interviewee signed a consent form, attesting their willing participation in the study and granting their express permission for the interviews to be recorded on a device. The narratives shared by all the research participants remained confidential confined only to the findings of this study.

3.5: Reflexivity

Kvale (1996 as cited in Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 201) states that there are three contexts from which interpretation in qualitative analysis takes place. These are from "self-understanding"; to a "critical common sense understanding" and finally a "theoretical understanding". My own self-understanding evolved as I processed the data at each of these three levels in order to paint a well-informed portrayal of the experiences of transnational students. The study helped me to debunk, deconstruct and reconstruct my own notions and assumptions about 'transnationality' and what it means to be a *transnational* student based on the experience of others.

A range of different types of transnational students constituted the sample for this study. For example students of the Erasmus Programme, UCT GSP and Leipzig's 'New Passages to India' Programme, as all of the other students were. Alex and Julian – the TCKs and Lina who was an outlier. Lina and Alex in particular made me

reconceptualise some of the characteristics to which I had attributed transnationality. I from the data collection as I had in the review of the related literature that even within my own there are multiple types of transnational student; whose narratives and 'seeds' of transnationality had been sown intentionally by their own will as well by the 'pollinating winds' resultant from being a TCK and positive student exchange experiences prior to tertiary education.

As I reflected on my own narrative as a transnational student and the research journey of this study, I came to some important realisations and made some interesting discoveries. I found that as a transnational student myself, some of my 'semi-theories' that I had entered the field with were biased. For example, as I verified my findings for their "intercoder reliability" with co-researchers (Fielding & Lee, 1998), I found that contrary to my initial convictions, many of the experiences of rootlessness and suspension between cultures and 'temporary permanence' are not unique only to transnational students but to any temporary migrant and mobile diaspora. The co-researchers who are themselves temporary or seasonal migrants, pointed out that the experiences of 'temporary permanence' and a sense of 'diluted' cultural identity – one 'contaminated' by extended period outside of one's home culture – were relatable to them too. However, this commonality of lived experience, rather than rendering these concepts banal, enhanced their utility for they could be applied to other contexts and explored in further studies for their 'generalisability' in investigating and understanding the experiences of other types migrants. As such, because of the degree to which I identify with the respondents, and indeed the fact that this is a compilation of narratives – a story of stories – the style of writing is loose and informal. I am of the opinion that this register enables the reader too to meaningfully understand and identify with the interviewee experiences as well as providing a richness of texture in portraying them.

In migration studies there has largely been a leniency towards a Eurocentric approach, even to what is considered to be the study of "internationalism" or "transnationalism". With an asymmetrical proportion of research undertaken to portray the situations and context of European and American students whilst neglecting the African and Asian. The study of Asiatic students (Hong et al., 2000) is emerging and it is my hope that since this study with its heterogeneous participants, including three Asians and one

African, is a step towards the true ‘transnationalising’ of (trans)migration studies. Given the diversity of the sample group and my own positionality as an African researcher, I believe that this study represents a break away from the narratives of student migrants as part of the pan-European identity discourse (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002; King & Ruiz-Gelices, 2003; Baláž and Allan M. Williams, 2004). Instead it is a depiction of the common experiences of transnational students – African, Asian and European – in an Appadurain fashion reflecting many of the disjunctures brought about by globalisation, travel and migration in a student narrative. Disjunctures and disjoints that are stitched together in a narrative that still constitutes an experience-rich, healthy and whole life-story.

A number of subsidiary questions emerged in the process of answering the central research question in a manner that coherently conveys the TS narrative, and they consisted of the following:

- Sub-questions:**
- What is a transnational student?
 - Where do transnational students belong?
 - Where is ‘home’?
 - What challenges do transnational students face?

3.6: Limitations & framing of study

On account of the fact that this study constitutes a ‘thick description’ from a relatively small number of research participants, one of the primary limitations of this study is that of overall generalizability. However, the diverse and very textured perspectives included allow for has facilitated the development of broader concepts that are transferable to other settings, i.e.: temporary permanence and contaminated cultural identity are principles that can be applied to the experiences of almost all temporary migrants. Thereby rendering the study both internally and externally valid in different ways.

Secondly, whilst this study was a multi-sited ethnography in the sense of it being conducted in three countries, it could possibly have been systematized by a quasi-longitudinal comparative study of the same students in two or more countries to

observe their differential navigation of multiple identities in different contexts; their experiences of “temporary permanence” and connecting and disconnecting with hosts in multiple settings. For this would heighten the study’s reliability and replicability.

Lastly, there exists an ongoing debate as to the integrity of phenomena as it is conveyed from the participants’ perspectives to the social scientist’s interpretations. Therefore there lies a degree of subjectivity in the story told as the experiences concerning experience of bi- or multilinguality, contaminated cultural identity, intersectionality and cultural exchange are not identical from one transnational student. Yet the experiences do nevertheless resonate with one another. As an exploratory study aimed at overcoming dichotomies of citizenship and belonging in migration literature; presenting the dialectical relationship of students accommodating their hosts as they assimilate in a new society; and their on encounters of being accommodated, integrated and sometimes feeling excluded, its interpretivist stance is justified.

4: FINDINGS

This findings chapter is divided into three sections entitled: *The 'seed' and the 'spirit' of transnationality*; *Navigating Multiple Identities* and (Dis)connection. Respectively they discuss the first transnational experience, the act of attaining and maintaining a culture balance and finally the complications that this new culture balance may pose for homecoming as well the transnational student's cultural identity and sense of belonging.

4.1: The 'seed' and the 'spirit' of Transnationality

This section is entitled after a metaphor describing what activates the transnational lifestyle. It will explore a number of factors from a diplomatic background as is the case of TCK TSs to the first study exchange experience that sowed the 'seed' of transnationality that then 'germinates'. This seed is seed that grows to take full 'possession' of the student in what I call the 'spirit' of transnationality on account of them having enjoyed the initial migratory experience. This section also illustratively introduces the concept of 'temporary permanence'. The section draws to a close by proposing that the seed and spirit of transnationality invoke a kind of 'transnational identity'. An identity comprised of repeat mobility, a mixed sense of belonging and consequently an openness to settling outside of the transnational student's country of origin.

In order to understand the complex frame of transnationality and furthermore try to locate the moments in which its seed is sown, it is important to consider the way in which the conceptualisation of migration has evolved in the 19th century to the 21st century as a unidirectional transatlantic process to one that is multidirectional. Gmelch even asserts that "if there is a degree of learning-by-experience associated with migration, then persons who have migrated at least once should find it easier to move again" (1980: 142). This assertion seems to hold true in the migratory behavior of transnational students who experience the sowing of a "seed" of transnationality, which sprouts the desire to migrate almost continually from place-to-place.

A 'seed of transnationality' is seemingly sown either as a result of studies undertaken

abroad prior to the student's tertiary education, or as a result of their lifestyle since infancy. That is to say some students may choose to be transnationals, whereas in the case of others it is involuntary. For example: Julian, the son of a diplomat fits symmetrically with the profile of a Third Culture Kid (TCK). Julian is a transnational student according to this study's definition because he has spent his pre-pubescent years in Windhoek, Namibia (**country of origin/passport country**), his adolescent years in Tunbridge Wells, England (**country one**) and travelled to; and studied in Pretoria and Cape Town, South Africa (**country two**). His seed was planted at a very young age as he was uprooted and sown to 'grow' for his teenage years in a foreign country – the United Kingdom. Furthermore he has also spent time working in Angola (**country three**) and Ethiopia (**country four**). His movements are part of a life trajectory, one that continues on long after 'the initial migration' (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009a: 2) to England. For we see that even after he has completed his schooling he works outside of Namibia – his passport country.

At the time of being interviewed, Julian was in New Delhi, India (**country five**). His reasons for this emigration are much like those of "lifestyle migrants" as he seeks to break the monotony of his professional life, having "worked for maybe 5 years straight". He professes that he has "actually gained a lot of knowledge while working" but that he is now "over that." He admits that he wants to "go back to studying and actually gain something like a degree." He believes that this choice is wholly his own and asserts that his reason for choosing India for his studies is because "Asia offered something very different so I decided to come to India to study." In the words of O'Reilly and Benson, like many lifestyle migrants, Julian is looking to "(re)negotiate... [a new] work-life balance, the pursuit of a good quality of life and freedom from prior constraints." (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009a: 2). Strikingly, Julian sees his decision to move to India as an entirely voluntary one; he does not see his transnationality is an inheritance of his father's diplomatic posting. For in the telling of his narrative, there is no allusion to the fact that his *Lebenschance* (life chances), and therefore the opportunity to undertake a degree programme in India has been largely influenced by his father's deployment on a diplomatic mission there. Contrary to what he may consciously believe, this fact re-enforces Zúñiga and Hamann's (2009: 331) assertion that transnationality is "a product of economic and/or family concerns".

Julian lives under the care of his father in India and as such has access to many diplomatic privileges, living a rather affluent lifestyle. In this way, Julian's situation is similar to that of lifestyle migrants. His class stratum is reproduced in India just as it was in Ethiopia and Angola where his father was also posted. Hence we find that with TCKs, transnational students and lifestyle migrants alike their migration and subsequent embedding into a new society is a reproduction of the social structure(s) from the societies from which they originally migrate (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009: 9). Julian is not subject to any downward mobility, in spite of the fact that the standard of living in India is arguably worse in India than Namibia given that they rank 135th and 127th, respectively on the Human Development Index (UNDP, 2014).

Another TCK TS of this study is Alex. His first time studying abroad was when he moved to Nicaragua (**country one**) from Holland (**country of origin/passport country**), when his father was appointed as an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when Alex was 13 years old. A period that he describes as "difficult" because his family was fragmented by the diplomatic assignment with his mother staying behind with his brother in the Netherlands so that he could finish his final year of high school. However, when they reunited it was quite an "exciting" experience. One he believes "worked really well" in spite of the adjustment of relocating from a First World country to the Third World Latin America. His undergraduate study in the UK (**country two**) and internship in Accra, Ghana (**country three**) were a consequence of his father's diplomatic assignments to these regions. The seed of transnationality was sown by the winds of his TCK background, as he was still living under his parents' roof at the time.

The nomadic 'spirit' of transnationality can be traced as having taken full possession of him when he chose to study in Cape Town (**country four**) for his Master's degree; stating that "[he] preferred an English speaking country, mostly so I didn't have to learn another language". Intriguingly, both Julian and Alex do not appear to be actively conscious of the significance that their fathers' diplomatic professions has had on their transnational studies.

A distinct feature of the seed of transnationality is that it blossoms a kind of restlessness and a never-ending desire to migrate from place-to-place. Repeat migration is a central theme of transnationalism. In the case of Katja, the biological

life for her 'seed' of transnationality can also be delineated even though she is not herself a TCK. As a German who at the time of the interview was aged 32, she recalls with fondness and excitement her very first study exchange. At the age of thirteen she travelled to England (**country 1**), and she claims that this exchange trip "started it all." At this point the seed was planted. When Katja studied in America (**country 2**) the seed germinated and grew when she then went to study in Japan (**country three**). It blossomed into a spirit of transnationality when she worked in Syria (**country four**) and Lebanon (**country five**). In the final phase the spirit led her to complete her doctoral research in Japan and consolidate the writing and research in India (**country six**) – where the interview was conducted. Katja admits that she no longer grows nostalgic when she has to leave a place, a feeling that she rationalises by pointing to the fact that she has "gotten so used to going here for a little while, going there for a little while". One gauges from this statement a degree of impartiality or unaffectedness that the nomadic spirit of transnationality imbues transnational students. Ironically this nomadic spirit roots them with a sense of rootlessness – one of mixed belonging. This sense of mixed belonging is said to be typical of what Zúñiga and Hamann (2009) refer to as the sojourner student who is not permanently settled in the place where s/he studies.

It is perhaps because of this mixed sense of belonging that transnational students do not feel themselves being drawn towards their country of origin. Interestingly, some even feel repelled from it. Julian himself specifies that although "home is home", he also describes it as a "repellant", explaining that "...sometimes you just don't want to go back there because you have lived there all your life." Hence contrary to what one might expect – that TSs might long to one day return home to settle in their country of origin – they actually do not. It becomes evident in transnational students' approach to life outside of their countries of origin that TSs are endowed with an intrigue with, an acceptance of and a willingness to immerse themselves in different cultures. This spirit of transnationality manifests itself as a certain mindset.

This transnational mindset is all encompassing and is harvested in a willingness to immigrate and settle permanently outside the students' home country. Miya, a Japanese American, schooled in America (**country of origin/passport country**), was

studying New Delhi, India (**country one**) at the time of the interview and had just arrived from another semester abroad in Japan (**country two**) conveys a similar sentiment. When asked if she sees herself as more of a cosmopolitan or a transnational since her transnational studies, Miya says:

*[...] I think maybe a little, I can see myself living somewhere for a longer period of time? ...I can see myself living in Japan for a couple of years in India or Nepal [**country three**] whereas before it seemed too far off. I can get a job and get in the flow of things; I can see myself starting a life somewhere else.*

Through her travels, and the once “too far off” having been her lived reality, Miya’s mind shifts. Opening her to the possibility of settling outside of America – her passport country or Japan – her country of heritage.

Sara who is Swedish (**country of origin/passport country**) and at the time of her interview was studying in Freiburg, Germany (**country one**)¹⁵ resounds Miya’s willingness to settle permanently elsewhere and as Julian’s sentiments about home being a “repellent”. Sara goes as far as to say that she does not feel “very comfortable” with the idea of returning home to Sweden permanently. The reasons for which shall be expanded in section 4.3.1.

This mental shift is one that implants the ability for a student to completely assume a life and make their home in a place they once considered to be foreign or exotic. Julian himself concludes that in spite of the shock to all his senses that India initially gave him, he now thinks that “India is amazing.” He proclaims that he “can’t get enough of it!” and that he can “see [him]self ending up here one day.” Concluding resolutely that, “I could live here.” Julian not only anticipates a return to his present country of study but is also willing to settle permanently in India – a country that is neither his passport country nor his country of origin.

¹⁵ See p. 65 to observe a full enumeration of the countries she has travelled to, worked and studied in.

The transnational mindset has a second dimension in addition to openness to settling outside of one's passport country/ies. This second dimension is signified by openness to foreign cultures; a more evolved, more complex 'worldview' – one that has mutated and hybridized as a result of multicultural contact and exchange. For example Julian states that his transnationality has “exposed [him] to more cultures and [he] can [therefore] understand people better because [he is] more open-minded, [because] of the fact that [he has] travelled so much and actually lived not just travelled to all these countries.” In this way, Julian sees his open-mindedness as an advantage over say 'mononational' (Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009) Namibians. Similarly, studying abroad is believed to improved linguistic skills, career prospects, personal development and enrich the individual with the “cultural experience of living in another country” (King & Ruiz-Gelices, 2003: 246). It is therefore evident that *living* or embedding oneself in a foreign in the culture is equally as important an aspect of being a TS as studying there is.

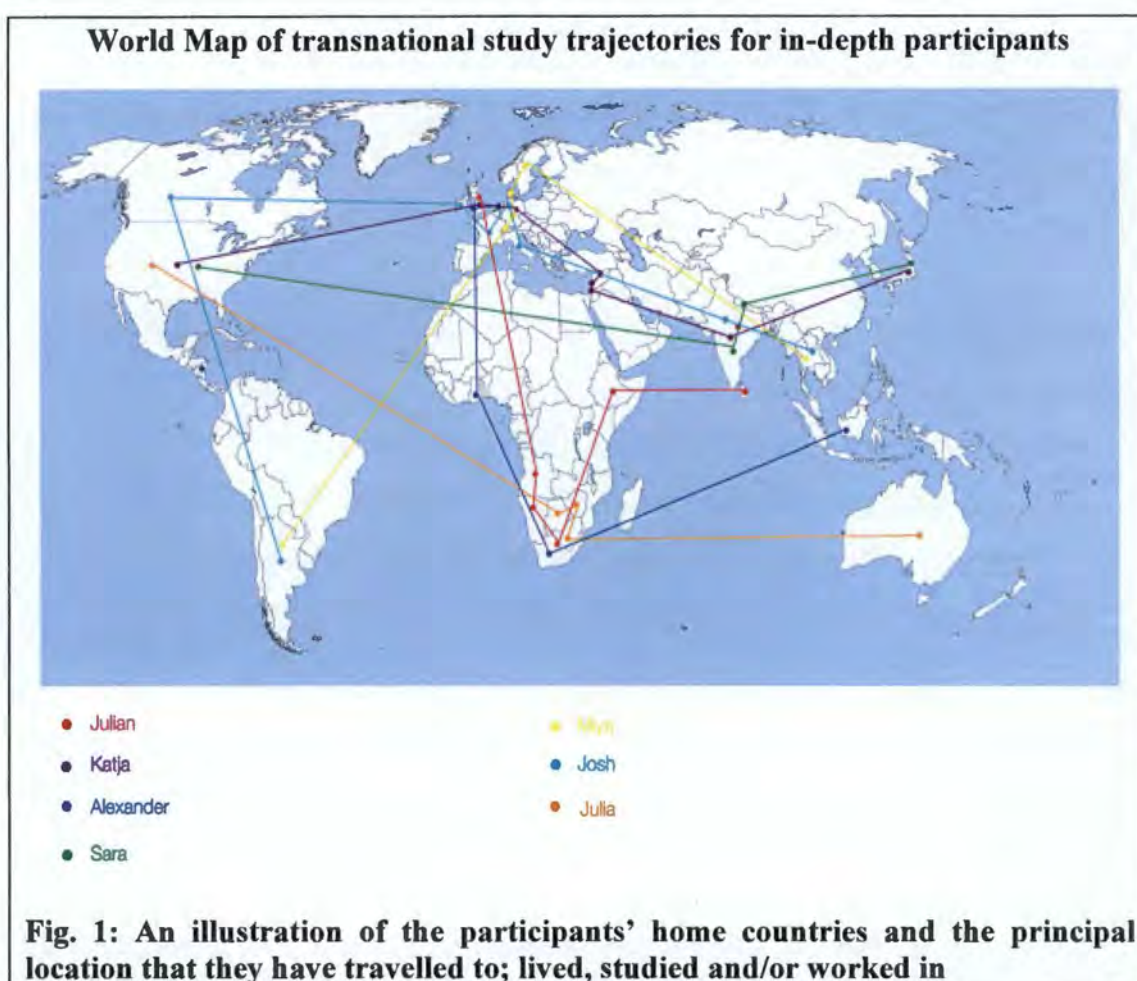
This brings us to the third element of practice in our definition of transnational students: travelling. Jewel remarks interestingly that,

[she] thinks [that with] study abroad everybody has a different mindset than when they're back home [sic]. And the mindset is that you have to take advantage of your time, you're only here for a limited amount of time and because of that you really try to do the things you want to do; anything you want to do; take advantage. Always being active, always exploring. So that was my experience. And I really liked that mindset.

This quote magnificently captures an interesting dimension of the transnational mindset prevalent in some of the research participants. We find that the more affluent of the group who could afford to travel during their studies, for reasons over and above their studies. It also alludes to what I have described as the second level of significance of “temporary permanence” (cf. p. 17). This level of significance brings to life the way in which transnational students are personifications of the pioneer-explorer (as discussed in section 2.3 of the Literature Review, see p. 31). *Fig. 1 (overleaf)* shows of the countries that some of the TSs 'blitzed' in and out of like

‘explorer-tourists’ looking to embed themselves and gain an authentic ‘taste’ of the region by eating the local foods, mingling with the local people and visiting the top tourist attractions, that is:

- Miya, who travelled to Nepal from New Delhi, India;
- Josh, who travelled to India from Bangkok, Thailand;
- Jewel, who travelled to Botswana and Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe from Cape Town, South Africa; and
- Julian, who travelled to Sri Lanka from New Delhi, India.



It is my belief then that this blitzing provides them with a temporariness within their temporariness; a transnational experience within their primary transnational experience, like a seed sprouting another seed.

4.2: Navigating Multiple Identities

Navigating Multiple Identities paints a mosaic of the constituent selves that ultimately make up the whole self-identity of a transnational student. At the core of conceptualizing the transnational identity perceptible in TSs is the capacity to healthily navigate between multiple selves; frame-switching from one interpretive frame to another based on the cultural context that one finds themselves. This section of the Findings chapter proposes that transnational students are not mononational but indeed multinational at heart and it is this diluted essence that makes them transnational. It discusses the ‘contaminated self’, expanding on the extended metaphor of contamination. This self is often counterposed in his/her actions by the patriotic self who strives to preserve her cultural identity. *Navigating Multiple Identities* also presents the bi-/multilingual self whose task it is to communicate effectively in different languages and cultural settings. Whilst this self may not necessarily be proficient in all languages, she is may be conversent, unlike the ‘semi-lingual’ whose mastery of a language is almost entirely dismissed because of their inability to sustain advanced thinking and communication skills in either of the languages that s/he may know or understand (Milroy & Muysken, 1995). This section also concerns itself with the intersectional self who embodies and consolidates the other selves in the process of functioning on roles outside of simply being a student. She is a pioneer-explorer of foreign lands, a cultural exchange agent and representative of family and country, all at once.

In beginning to unpack the idea of navigating multiple identities, it is useful to turn to Hong et al. who astutely discern that in this current globalised age, “it is becoming increasingly rare to hear the word *cultural* without the prefix *multi-*” (Hong, et al., 2000: 709). Multiculturality infers a navigation of multiple identities and multiple meaning systems. Hong et al. in their investigation of bicultural frame switching in Western Chinese students in Hong Kong steer their meaning-making departure from the premise that “individuals can acquire more than one [...] cultural meaning system, even if these systems contain conflicting theories. That is, contradictory or conflicting constructs can be simultaneously possessed by an individual” (2000: 710).

We find that there is cultural exchange between the transnational student and their surroundings, for the transnational student is like a partially permeable membrane – always open to absorb from the environment; with his or her sense of belonging and cultural identity under negotiation. Similar to the osmosis of water, one finds that with transnational students' experiences abroad affect their personal traits as some may be adopted as a means of coping, adapting to and immersing oneself in the culture of the country in which they are studying. This process of cultural osmosis allows for a culture balance to be achieved – an equilibrium in the negotiation of “multiple selves” that is natural, healthy and ordered¹⁶ (Josselson & Harway, 2012: 4).

4.2.1: Contaminated selves

As was earlier mentioned, the representation of multiple selves in a singular individual can sometimes be contradictory (Hong et al., 2000). In this sub-section on the contaminated self, I draw on the binary metaphor and discourse of ‘Purity vs. Contamination’ in order to capture one such conflicting effect that transnationality has on transnational student's sense of cultural identity and belonging. By way of illustration, Julian confesses in his interview, which precedes a trip back home to Namibia that upon his return, he believes that “[he]’d be more of an Indian than... *[pauses]* than anything else.” Though Julian is Namibian, with autochthonous roots, he possesses a strong sense of partial belonging to India.

Suad Joseph attests that citizenship or in this instance, nationality “defines identity – who you are, where you belong, where you come from, and how you understand yourself in the world” (1999: 162 as cited in Parreñas, 2001: 1130). Thus this intermingled sense of belonging gives rise to a cultural identity that is ‘diluted’ as a result of a “plural sense of belonging” (Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009: 330). Furthermore, in his interview, Julian mentions that much like the aspirational, adventurist lifestyle migrant he came to India to find something “different”. And now that he has found it he intends to return home to Namibia for a short period in order to savour and digest the taste of India and all that he has learned in India so that “coming back would just

¹⁶ As opposed to an unnatural, unhealthy, disordered representation of multiple selves such as in the form of Multiple Personality Disorder (cf. p. 57 for further discussion on bi- and multilingualism and its associations with schizophrenia raised in the subsection “Multilingual selves”).

make [him] feel more at home.” Here we see the mercurial fluidity in the construction of sentiments about where home is, a trait shaped by his transnational identity. Multiple and somewhat contradictory constructs of home are a typical characteristic of the transnational mindset. These apparently conflicting notions will be discussed further in section 4.3.1 (p. 68)

Transnationality seems to come at the price of mononationality or a singular national affiliation – ‘contaminating’ a transnational students’ sense of cultural identity and belonging, or at the very least diluting it. This idea resonated at a talk hosted by the Jawaharlal Nehru University’s (JNU) International Students Association (ISA) in New Delhi India entitled “Opportunity or Problem: To be a Foreign National” at which three guest speakers who were students echoed the same sentiment. An American named Kate spent twelve years being what she defined as an ‘international student’. She talked of her time spent in Western Europe, teaching at preparatory school in Germany (**country one**) as well as her studies in Durban, South Africa (**country two**) and India (**country three**). After her Master’s degree, as she struggled to find work in the United States and she began to wonder, “Maybe I’m not American enough now?” The word enough is a determiner qualifying adequacy or sufficiency or the lack thereof.

Kate is also married to a Hindu male and lives in New Delhi, India. From the vantage point of the ethnographer, I was privy to the interaction between Kate as the American wife of an Indian Hindu man and the other Hindu wives in our campus residence in New Delhi as I lived there too. Her mindset seemed to differ from that of the other more traditional, conventional world-views of the other wives. For one, she did not feel obliged to prepare dinner every day for her husband like the other wives. I recall also on one occasion, she recounted an incident whereupon she was chided by the guard upon entering the building when bottles (of wine) clanked in her grocery basket. She was issued a verbal warning for disobeying the residence’s code of conduct but advised that he (the guard) would still let her through without confiscating the alcohol. She was shocked to be chastised as a grown, married women for her choice to drink in the privacy of her own apartment. She was also surprised and annoyed that the guard thought that he was doing her a ‘favour’ by being tolerant of what she internalized as her Western hedonistic indulgences.

The majority of Hindus in India are of a Hindu sect that does not condone everyday alcohol consumption and meat eating outside of religious celebrations. Intriguingly, She narrates the event in such a way as to convey feeling being entrapped in a third space; caught between being an American raised and socialized into the norms in the more liberal values and trying to assimilate into the normative codes to be a good wife to her Hindu husband. Two selves seem to be warring with another as she attempts to do so: her patriotic self, accustomed to college drinking in and even legal public drinking in Germany drinking being ‘diluted’ in order to abide by the rules and not be misunderstood as a wayward spouse. The abovementioned Hindu sect also does not eat meat¹⁷, in particular beef deeming such activities as ‘contaminating’ to religious purity. Hence we find the metaphor of ‘purity vs. contamination’ being brought life in the realm of social life of religion. Kate is also a non-vegetarian and for these reasons it seems her cultural identity is ‘contaminated’ many times over: as a caucasian American married to an Indian Hindu male – a couple who if they should have kids will have children who neither purely Indian nor purely American – and as a meat-eating Christian. Her transnational identity strives to find a culture balance incorporating her American upbringing and her time spent in Western Europe and South Africa. Transnational identity is static and constantly in flux being diluted, contaminated and concentrated as a stable identity blueprint unique to the individual is formed.

It is important to note, that there is a time dimension to this sense of ‘contaminated’ cultural identity. Much like the seed of transnationality it grows and in a sense ‘concentrates’ itself over time. For example, Julian and Kate who raise the issue explicitly in discussion have been transnational students for over a decade each. Paradoxically, however, this concentration dilutes the transnational’s sense of belonging over time, suspending them between cultures rather than making them belong wholly to one or the other and in other instances entirely fragmenting their cultural identity. As I alluded to earlier in the case of Kate amidst the navigation of multiple selves there can be an equal counterposition of the “contaminated” self, there

¹⁷ This commitment to vegetarianism is based on the principle of *ahimsa* (nonviolence) which is observed in relation to animals; the intention to offer only ‘pure’ (vegetarian) food to a Hindu god and then to receive it back, as well as the conviction that non-vegetarian food has a deleterious effect on the mind and for spiritual development.

is the a “patriotic” self just. The patriotic self is one that fights for the preservation of its original cultural identity, doing so by consuming food and entertainment products from the home country in an effort to dilute the contaminating effects of this foreign cultural exchange.¹⁸

4.2.2: Multilingual selves

There is another facet of the multiple identities negotiated by transnational students that arguably magnifies the sense of a contaminated self, and this dimension is that of bi-/multilingualism. Julian is bilingual, speaking both Afrikaans and English fluently. Kate is too, speaking English and German fluently and Hindi conversantly. As stated on p. 40 in the sample characteristics section, two of the research participants spoke as many as four languages fluently with other spoken conversantly as well. It is a fact that “we perform different identities in the same language when changing registers, contexts, interlocutors, or interactional aims. Monolingualism [itself] is a dynamic phenomenon” (Pavlenko, 2006: 1). The dynamism of which is amplified when the languages at an individual’s disposal are multiple. Needless to say – given this tendency towards bi-/multilingualism that transnational students possess – it would be one-sided to dismiss the often controversial debate regarding the healthy navigation of multiple identities. It is a debate that is often juxtaposed and contrasted by the discussion of unhealthy or disordered navigation of multiple identities, that is: multiple personality disorder. There is in fact a discourse around bilingualism that suggests that the ability is significative of a kind of “linguistic schizophrenia” (Pavlenko, 2006: 1). In the 70s, Adler (1977: 44 as cited in Pavlenko, 2006:3) cautioned that “bilingualism can lead to a split personality and, at worst, to schizophrenia”. Similarly, Clarke (1976; Pavlenko, 2006: 3) drew a parallel between foreign students in North America and schizophrenic patients stipulating that their experience of learning English consisted of a continual clash between their old world-views and their current encounter with modernity in the United States. An ideal example of the warring identities is that of the patriotic self as it tries to find a culture balance as the contaminated self via the medium of the bilingual self. As a field, bilingual psychoanalysis adopts schizophrenia as a metaphor to convey the culture

¹⁸ See. p. 56-7 for further illustration of the patriotic self.

shock, cultural, linguistic and cognitive tensions as well as value transmission from (im)migrant parents to their children (Pavlenko, 2006: 3).

Converse to a conception of bilingualism, Hong et al. (2000) propose that bi-/multilingualism in culture is best understood from a “dynamic constructivist approach” one in which an individual is accepted to have multiple cultures that shape his/her meaning construction. They consider this to be a “less monolithic view of culture [that] seems particularly appropriate at this time of increasing cultural interconnection.” (Hong et al., 2000: 718). This is true because bi-/multilingualism is a significant part of transnational students’ navigation and negotiation of multiple identities for it enhances their capacity to meaningfully integrate themselves into a foreign culture and contrary to what might be inferred by the metaphor of the polyglot being like the schizophrenic patient, multilingualism can be maintained, exercised and administered in a healthy doses. TSs are thus an example that multilingualism and multiple identities can indeed be navigated and negotiated in ways that do not translate to a culture imbalance or disordered personalities.

Educational psychologists have a theory of semilingualism, which they describe as “a condition where bilingual children are said to know neither of their two languages well enough to sustain the advanced cognitive processes which enable them to benefit from mainstream education” (Milroy & Muysken, 1995: 3). However in the context of internationalized tertiary education, the ability to speak numerous languages conversantly even if not proficiently is an asset rather than a hindrance. It assists with navigating a society outside of a classroom or lecture theatre for bi-/multilinguals are better equipped to communicate and subsequently connect with the locals; most likely making them feel more at home in a foreign land.¹⁹

An interesting question arises from these considerations of language and identity: how intertwined is our cultural identity and sense of belonging with the language that we speak? The language in which we think and articulate ourselves in is integral to our sense of who we are (Edwards, 1998), where we come from, where we live and where we belonging – all of which are pieces of the puzzles that make up our identity.

¹⁹ See p. 65-66 in *Disconnection* for more examples of this.

Hence bi-/multilingualism renders the transnational an even more complex jigsaw puzzle of plural identities with hues of mixed, partial and fragmented belonging.

4.2.3: Intersectional culture-exchanging selves

In the Literature review chapter (section 2.3, see p. 28-30), an argument in favour of the existential turn in Globalisation theory was presented. It proposed that this turn ought to be accompanied by a broadening of the vocabulary used to depict the diversity of experience of transnational students. For transnational students, like all students, they are not just students but assume other social roles and identities as well. For example, during the time Kate taught at a German prep school, she started up an English conversation club. This initiative gives evidence to the bidirectional nature of the relationship between transnational students and their surroundings and their hosts. As an American with English as her native tongue, she felt equipped to impart in a tacit cultural exchange between the country (the US) and Germany. She explained during the JNU ISA talk that during the period that she was in Germany, she was expected to “answer for her country”. For it was the year 2002, a time when the United States had just waged war against Iraq post-9/11. Kate reveals that at this time, she viewed herself as something of a diplomat or a “culture assistant”, in her own words.

A similar instance of cultural exchange to that of Kate and the conversation club is that of Miya during her volunteer work as an English grammar teacher in Nepal. During this time, Miya would spend some of the free periods with the Nepali school children “talking to the[m], they’d tell me about Nepali culture [and she would in turn tell] them about American culture.” In this way, Kate and Miya were cultural exchange agents in a manner mimetic of the Caribbean higgler bringing “news, information, and gossip” from the plantations to the towns (Katzin 1959 as cited in Freeman, 2001: 1020). Kate and Miya’s exchanges were a micro-level of ‘foreign relations’ exchange. It is interesting to note that both Kate and Miya are American. Perhaps this suggests that Americans possess a strong sense of their cultural identity and in spite of ‘dilutions’ from continual foreign exchanges still maintain a very strong sense of belonging to the American nation. Their sense of belonging is not confounded and confined by notions of “bounded citizenship”, it knows a certain

“flexibility” (Nyamnjoh, 2006). Their sense of belonging as Americans is not bounding by them physically living in America.

The diversity of experience and the innumerable opportunities for cultural exchange during transnational migration is also insightfully captured by a remark that Julian makes during the course of his interview. He shares an anecdote that someone passed on to him in India onto him:

At one point someone told me that if you travel thirty kilometers in each direction, you'd find something different about India. Like when you talk to those people in those places 30 kilometers away, you'd find something different. They'd have a different way of talking, a different way of dressing, they'd have a different food. Everything is different about India.

Miya is of the same view, expressing that that she thoroughly enjoys the night culture in India and also enjoyed it in Japan because you can easily walk up to a food stall and get food that has been prepared on the streets. She says that this aspect of the night culture allows you to really “mingle” and ‘do as the Indians do.’ Miya laments the fact there is no such night culture in the United States. From these cultural exchanges, we see that there is a bidirectional process to the impact that transnational students and their environment (with its hosts) have on one another. These dialectical relations may be short-lived, but they often have long-lasting intangible impacts that transnational students ‘carry’ home with them.

This is particularly evident in the case of Katja who says that she gained what she describes as “confrontational behaviours” as a means of getting things done and not being passed over in queues by locals in certain countries, for example in Syria. Katja also learned how to effectively negotiate and bargain for good prices – a skill she found especially useful in market-rich nations such as India and some Arab states. She explains that in Lebanon, she found herself being harsh and abrasive towards men so as to avoid being harassed or them “misinterpreting [her politeness or friendliness]

as signals of interest”, a tendency which she found prevalent in India. She also highlights that she became accustomed to a ‘male gaze’²⁰ (Mulvey, 1975) being continually upon her in Syria; to such an extent that and when she returned to back home she found it peculiar that men in Germany did not stare or disrupt her as she went about her business. This feeling of peculiarity experienced in relation to not being stared at by men in Germany can be equated to reverse culture shock. It emerges therefore that through the process of acculturation, “thinking and behaving like a member of the host culture is seen as a *state*, not a trait [own emphasis]” (Hong et al., 2000: 718). A state activated by way of frame-switching based on the social cue of being noticed based on one’s gender or being passed over on the basis of being a foreigner. In this way, transnational students are faced with the task of continually acculturating and deculturating in a reptilian like fashion, donning on habits, customs, and mannerisms, and speaking a language appropriate to the context as they navigate and negotiate their multiple identities in different contexts.

Having been Katja’s roommate for two months in New Delhi, India I can speak from an ethnographic point-of-view in saying that she was a sensitive, soft-spoken and sometimes shy individual. Her adoption of an assertive demeanour, that she refers to as “confrontational behaviours” (in the Arab states where she studied and interned) were, as she recalls, a complete about turn from her usual demeanor. The demure demeanour of a timid and entirely non-confrontational person – a condition that was further cultivated in the Japanese context. She explains that in Japan, it was imperative at all times to find the most polite way of posing a question or expressing one’s opinion. She elaborates that her sensitivity to others’ feelings was cultured by the Japanese tendency to be significantly more considerate of people’s feelings than most other cultures that she has experienced. Though she believes that “in every culture one thinks of others and tr[ies] to be - not to hurt [others] or their feelings or to be thoughtful”, she adds that “in Japan it goes a bit further than I was used to.” As a result from the time spent in various countries such as England, America, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine she has a basis for a critical comparison. She discerns, however, that outside of Japan she found that being so demure and diplomatic was often

²⁰ The **male gaze** in cinematography is that places the audience into the heterosexual man’s point of view, often signified by a lingering over a woman’s body.

unfitting to the circumstances. For example in the retail stores of Germany where it would be most practical to pose direct question and requests. The concurrent interaction of multiple selves can be discerned from this simple example of the difference in the phrasing of requests in Japanese and Germany. We witness here the intersectionality of multilingual self with the culture-exchanging self who has adopted a new manner of being, and the contaminated self whose lack of directness is now somewhat ‘unGerman’.

It is evident then from these experiences that the cultural exchange that takes place is not always skin-deep but can indeed be deeply personal. Yet these deep personal changes must nevertheless be appropriately and continually negotiated and renegotiated in the navigation of these multiple identities derived from the multiple contexts of the students’ transnational migration.

It is interesting to note the way in which the transnational students’ narrate their experiences and the navigation of these multiple selves (the contaminated, multilingual, intersectional and culture exchanging self) rather seamlessly. In their eyes though they may have multiple identities, which they may navigate concurrently in a short space of time. As is observed when Julian is on the telephone with his father speaking Afrikaans and his Zimbabwean girlfriend is led into the living room by the cook upon her arrival at his house. Shortly after arrival, he ends his call, greets her in English and asks the cook to prepare her a refreshment in Hindi. In a space of less than five minutes he is an Afrikaans-speaking Namibian (**patriotic self**), an English-speaker (**bi-lingual self**), a son, a boyfriend and a host at the same time as he is a student (**intersectional, culture-exchanging self**).

Whilst some of the transnational student’s identities may sometimes be in conflict with one another, many of their identities are perceived by them as “compatible and complementary” (Benet-Martínez, 2002: 493). This perception resounds with Katherine Ewing’s theory of an “illusion of wholeness” (1990 as cited in Josselson & Harway, 2012: 13). In it she asserts that people, in spite of how complex and intersectional they are, manage to tell the stories of their somewhat compartmental lives and behavior in different spheres with a continuity and coherence so as to maintain an illusion of wholeness in their lives and their biographical narratives. For

their own sensibility as well as to be understood in their behavior by others. Hence what this means for transnational students is that whilst some of their selves do in certain instances appear to be at odds with one another – seemingly fragmenting and splintering their cultural identity and sense of belonging – the navigation of multiple identities exhibited by these TSSs does complicate the work of their identity formation. Not only does it complicate their identity formation it makes their identities dynamically mercurial and subject to continual change with the environment. Yet, still there is a cohesion and functionality in their transnational identity. Instead of posing an insurmountable challenge, their mixed belonging makes them adaptive and accommodating to their surroundings and their hosts in a healthy, coherent mindset.

4.3: (Dis)connect(ion)²¹

As the parentheses in the title of this chapter may suggest, transnational students' narratives are characterised by experiences of feeling connected to and disconnected from those with whom they make contact with abroad and those back home. They develop connections, and experience disconnections. These experiences directly influence their adoption of the “transnational mindset”, that is in particular: their willingness to settle permanently outside of their home country. For the abroad experiences may frame the transnational students' experiences either in a positive or negative light and subsequently favour or discourage repeat mobility. This section of the Findings gives a glimpse into these relations between transnational students; their hosts and their loved ones at home. It discusses the third assumption made in the Rationale section of the study (see p. 16), that integrating themselves is their primary challenge that they face by presenting the other challenges TSSs must confront to not only integrate but perform academically as students. It deals with the conundrum of the half-open being with the infinite possibilities opened by the internationalization of their degree programmes but limited lifespan and resources. *(Dis)connection* addresses the effects of transnationality on cultural identity and in particular the TS's sense of belonging by unpacking the concept of construction of 'home'.

²¹ The title of this chapter is a play on the name of the 2012 blockbuster film, *Disconnect*, directed by Henry Alex Rubin. The movie is a poignant depiction of the cyber and social media's implications for affective ties in the. A postmodern condition that it often heightens our feelings of disconnection from one another in spite of the interconnectedness and time-space compression inferred by the present globalised age (Harvey, 1989).

In understanding some of the challenges faced by transnational students, we can turn to the “challenge and support” concept, which refers to the most conducive conditions for student growth and development (McKeown, 2009: 11). It resonates with the title²² of the JNU ISA talk. These two issues of challenge and support are particularly relevant in any discussion of students’ studies abroad because their experiences are closely shaped by proximity, close interaction and conversely by distance; the experiences of connecting with people and making connection as well as feeling disconnected with people, i.e.: friends, family to peers and lecturers. On the issue of challenge and support, McKeown (2009: 11) astutely writes²³ that:

The appropriate amount of challenge can provide potentially growth-producing conditions as a student encounters complexity, ambiguities, diversity and other stressful experiences that require new ways of coping...[Whereas, on the other hand,] [t]he appropriate amount of support can provide a degree of familiarity for the student. Too little support can produce unhealthy feelings of being overwhelmed, overstressed, and dissatisfied, and even illness and exit from the environment.

One of the participants, Miya of Japanese and caucasian American heritage (cf. p. 94 for research participant profile), described her ‘home-stay’ family with whom she spent “two whole months” with as a “new second family.” She explains that her time spent with them brought about the self-realisation that she was not an introvert as she had thought in her previous years of university studies. She expresses that it was “nice having someone to go home to and check in to”. In this way their support brought her comfort. She also discusses how the home-stay routinised her student life because there was time for breakfast, lunch and supper – meals that they ate together and would chat to one another during. This gave her familiarity and nurtured affect in her environment. Consequently she realises that in retrospect her studies in America, to

²² The ISA talk was initially advertised in advance on campus as “Opportunity or Problem: To be a Foreign National”, but was changed to “Opportunity or Challenge” on the evening of the talk.

²³ McKeown writes this in his book, *The First Time Effect: The Impact of Study Abroad on College Student Intellectual Development*.

which she attributed her introversion, falsely fostered this notion “because I was so busy and just...stressed out and...that wasn’t very healthy for me.” As opposed to her introversion being born out of a natural inclination to keep to herself. We find that McKeown’s observations ring true in Miya’s experience.

Proximity does not always nurture positive affect with those whom you are surrounded by, however. Katja explains in contrast to Miya that she found it “stressful” staying with “fisher families” along the Japanese coastline whilst conducting her doctoral research. For she found herself worrying constantly about being an imposition in their homes, as the Japanese custom of being sensitive to other people’s feelings would predicate.

‘Sara the Swede’ living in Basel, Switzerland (**country one**) and commuting on a daily basis between Freiburg and Basel explains that even though German (**country two**) and Swedish are relatively similar she is unable to understand conversations that she may overhear as she walks down the street. She therefore attests to experiencing a “language barrier”²⁴ there due to the fact she only partially understood German based on its etymological similarity to Swedish. She contrasts this experience to her time spent in the Netherlands (**country three**). Whilst she also did not speak Dutch, the fact that her boyfriend lived there helped to smoothen the transition. She confesses that she had ventured on the exchange in order to spend time with him but found that she “got to know the Dutch people well” too. In this way her boyfriend (who was a student and member of the student community as well as the larger community) served as a link, a kind of ‘cultural exchange facilitator’ in helping her embed herself in the community, through her relations developed as his girlfriend. Again we see the importance of recognizing students as more than just students as their other roles frame the support and the challenges they face as well the subsequent connections and disconnects experienced.

Sara also admits that one of the reasons that she experienced less of a disconnect in the Netherlands than she did in Germany was partly because, according to her the

²⁴ cf. Foreword (p. 9) for personal confirmation of this same experience as this was an ethnographic study for I was as much an observer (researching) as a participant during the research process of this study.

Dutch are the “one of the best non-English speaking countries at speaking English. So that was not a problem at all and it’s pretty similar to Swedish as well when you go to the stores.” The capacity and obvious willingness of the Dutch to speak English in order to optimise effective communication emerges as an important point. For a disconnect is defined as “a break in the connection of or between”,²⁵ Language in terms of being able to speak, understand and be understood reveals itself as a significant contributor to one’s sense of belonging in a foreign place. Communication is an important aspect of integrating oneself into a society because it helps a foreigner to fit in even with a outward appearance that could differentiate him/her from the locals.

Sara points to another factor that shaped her enjoyable experience in the Netherlands, which she describes emphatically to as “one of the best ‘half-a-year’ of her life”. This was the large student organization on campus that:

...organised parties and trips of [sic] us [exchange students] and we were in total like two - three hundred of us who came studying for an exchange...So there was always something to do. It was impossible not to meet people, we also got divided into introduction groups so you got to know your group very well and you hung out with them for a week ... so you - got to meet people from everywhere - like other exchange students who were in the same situation.

One issue emerges strikingly from this quote, and it is commonality of lived experience, which as a result builds a connection between people even in the midst of new surroundings. The student organization therefore created a contact surface of shared experiences, providing an outlet for “unhealthy feelings of being overwhelmed, overstressed, dissatisfied, [alone and depressed]” (McKeown, 2009: 11). Implicitly, the converse of which would be a lack of people (support) with whom to identify the experience with would present itself as a major challenge to transnational students, over and above integrating into a new society. This would

²⁵ This definition is from *Oxford Dictionaries* and is available online: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/disconnect?q=disconnection#disconnect> 17 [accessed 27 October 2014].

inevitably take toll a transnational students' studies and academic performance obscuring the ultimate goal of attaining a qualification at the end of their travels.

I have taken care at different junctures of this dissertation to point to the distinction between transnational students and international students and one-time study abroad students. In doing so again, I would like to draw on some related research by James Citron (1996), who presented a paper at an annual meeting of the NAFSA Association of International Educators. The presentation was entitled, "Short-term study abroad: Integration, third culture formation, and re-entry". In it he examined a group of 16 students who were participating in a semester of study abroad in Madrid, Spain (as cited in McKeown, 2009). Citron (cited *ibid*: 41) found that because there was no "full-time faculty director and a structured orientation programme", the students involved only integrated themselves into the Spanish culture on a superficial level. These students are said to have not suffered from "classic culture shock symptoms" because they "did not choose to rely on the authentic host culture for their daily living." (*ibid.*) In this way we see again the possibility for the reproducing of certain elements of the 'old' life as is the case with lifestyle migrants and TCKs (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009a; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). As they are more precisely transplanted from one society to another rather than being disembedded from the home culture and reembedded anew into the host culture.

A connection or a disconnection can be fostered by one's renewed contact with one's home culture. For this contact can make the transnational feel at ease in the new surroundings or serve to make them nostalgic for their home culture and resentful of the host culture. By way of illustration, Sara states that when she is "[in Germany], I feel comfortable knowing I always have Sweden, I always feel more Swedish, I do things that I wouldn't have done, I watch Swedish movies from now... and then to have a piece of the culture". Interestingly, this relates to the navigation of a 'contaminated' self. These acts of watching movies and consuming products from the home culture can be seen as a means of 'diluting' the cultural exchange with the foreign culture in an attempt to preserve one's original cultural identity and patriotic identity. Hong et al. (2000: 718) in their article, "Multicultural Minds" state that for example, one of the current authors, who is Spanish but has lived for some years in the United States, often surrounds herself with Spanish music, food, and paintings to

keep alive her Spanish ways of thinking and feeling.” They consider these habits to be an active process. An active process that helps the said transnational student of ‘multicultural mind’ to effectively navigate and negotiate his/her multicultural identities – in this case a healthy expression of the ‘patriotic self’, one that seeks to continually preserves itself from ‘contamination’ and the ‘dilution’ of cultural exchange.

4.3.1: Homecoming

It is important to note, however, that disconnects and disconnection are not limited to temporary migrants’ experiences abroad in ‘foreign lands’ but may also occur at reentry into the country that the transnational student considers to be home. For example Katja uses the ethnographer analogy when she describes how out of place she sometimes feels when she is at home, saying that “[w]ith my family I feel like they’re a strange tribe and I’m trying to find out their rites of passage.” This brings us to the issue of reverse culture shock and complications with deculturating upon reentry into the home country. Transnational students experience a unique sense of feeling like they are suspended between worlds much like third culture kids do. TS’s sense of suspension is heightened by repeat mobility. In the TS, the cultures of each of the places that they have been to affects their cultural identity and the dilution of cultures to strike a balance within the individual, “a culture balance” in the words of Josselson and Harway (2012: 4). A culture balance that is the right concentration of selves to bring about a healthy dilution; one that can be negotiated and renegotiated with the changing environment.

Katja goes on to reflect on the fact that her extended family finds it peculiar that she has spent so much time travelling rather than setting down roots at her age (32) – starting a job, building a house, getting married. Hence her sense of rootlessness is not just perceived internally but also seen by external parties who may not understand it and therefore disapprove. With that said, she finds that:

...when I talk to them often I find that even though, geographically, they are really close to me and they are my family, I guess our worlds

are very different and I have much more in common in some sense with my friends in Japan or in Palestine.

Grimshaw and Sears (2008) in drawing on Gregory (2002) point to the fact that, “Some global nomads state that they are unable to fully re-integrate into their home culture, sometimes tending to identify more closely with others who have experienced global mobility” (Sears, 1998: 36; Gregory, 2002 as cited in Grimshaw & Sears, 2008). This difficulty reintegrating a salient aspect to their homecoming experience, making for a complicated homecoming as opposed to an easy and smooth one.

Sara too speaks of a complicated homecoming. Whilst admits that it is “really nice to go back and speak your own language and be comfortable and talk a little bit more and you know how everything is going [sic], you know which bus to take and you don’t get lost.” She is nevertheless uncomfortable with the idea of returning home. In trying to unpack the reasons for this unease, she explains that she would feel like “an outsider in [her] own home” because when she left Sweden for Switzerland she had

left [her] life there and came and started a new life [in Switzerland and then Germany.] but always knowing [she] would leave somewhere and go to somewhere else but going back [to Sweden] would be like ...start[ing] a new life again.

As the homecomer, one risks returning home to find that life has carried on without you, and that things have inevitably changed. Josh, a Canadian who has worked in Ireland and studied abroad in Italy (**country one**), France (**country two**), Russia (**country three**), Germany (**country four**), Argentina (**country five**) and Thailand (**country six**) is an extraordinary polyglot. He is proficient in English, French and Russian and conversant in Italian, Spanish and German. He describes how when he returned to Canada after his first exchange semester

people had moved on [when he returned to Canada]²⁶, a lot of the people who I knew from first year had moved on, but I mean I still met them sometimes but I found there to be a big difference.

He attributes this disconnection to having evolved and changed as a person. In his view, “every time you go a way there is a possibility you will change or that you’re not going to be the same person again.” This is indicative of an identity in flux, a characteristic prevalent in transnational students as they are continually reconstituting their cultural identity and their sense of belonging with their repeat mobility. Hence going home (reentry) may unexpectedly entail the process of unlearning the host culture(s) and a relearning the home culture in order to reassimilate. This ‘reverse culture shock’ happens at two levels just as Callahan (2010) describes in his article, “Going Home: Deculturation experiences in Cultural Reentry”. On a personal level due to the exchange(s) with the foreign culture and also on the level of unfamiliarity with surroundings that were once familiar, that were once ‘home’.

Markedly, during the reentry process there are stories that are silenced when the homecomer returns just as there are stories that are attributed greater importance. In illustrating the former I will draw on Miya’s homecoming experience. In her follow-up interview, after her travels to Japan and India, consecutively, the researcher enquired about her reentry. She stated that returning home was interesting because:

[she] realise[d] that people back home don't really understand my experience, and not all of them were that interested in what I had to share. My family wasn't that [sic] curious as I thought they would be. My friends were great, wanting to hear stories and stuff, but the year had really put a lot of distance (and there was tons of drama) between us all. So in the end, I'm still really close with my study abroad friends, and we reminisce a lot together. And as more time passed, I realised how much I miss both Japan and India.

This is a poignant quote. It echoes Katja’s realisation that she finds that after her travels, she find that she has “more in common in some sense with my friends in

²⁶ A return to Canada, which he made after his exchanges in Italy, France and Russia.

Japan or in Palestine.” When the physical distance is closed by proximity upon the transnational student’s reentry, it cannot be taken for granted that the emotional distance will automatically be overcome too. Katja and Miya’s reflections resonate with nostalgia for the past as well as a certain disconnection with the present.

In seeking to understand this experience herein narrated, the authors of the article foregrounding the conceptual framework of this dissertation shed some insight. Bude and Dürschmidt (2010: 493) suggest that we look to

*[...] the social figure of the ‘homecomer’, as initially introduced by Schütz [1970] for the phenomenological analysis of home and belonging in a mobilized modern society. . . [T]he ‘homecomer’ [represents] the insight that ‘home may be open to the globe . . . but the globe is not our home’ (Hedetoft and Hjort, 2002: XX). The ‘homecomer’ is not [just] a figure of backwards nostalgia but of **growing up** [own emphasis]. S/he embodies the realization of the limits of global omnipresence. Homecoming does not need to equate failure and alienation from a global arena, but symbolizes the insight that to play in this global arena, one needs a place to rest and a departure point that cannot be taken for granted. Instead it needs continuous care and maintenance work.*

For transnational students, home is literally as well as proverbially ‘wherever they lay their heads’; as much as it is where their hearts are. Just as we found in the section about the ‘seed’ and ‘spirit’ of transnationality, home is actively *made* in their travels. However this restless rootlessness seeks to ultimately anchor itself. Transnational students have a desire for a place to ultimately call home and return to, in between and after their travels. And with that said, there are many questions left to ponder. For the transnational student: what is home, where is home and what does it mean to be ‘home’? Is home wherever you speak and understand the local language(s)? Or is home simply the country indicated by the cover of their passport? In leading us towards the answers to these questions I turn to “the paradox of the ‘half-opened being’” (Bachelard, 1969: 222 as cited in Metcalfe & Ferguson, 2001: 241). The ‘half-opened being’ is a metaphor that signifies how, as human beings, we are open to the infinite possibilities (such as being a citizen of the globe with a transnational identity) that a globalised world presents and yet at the same time, we are limited (in

our choices and options) by the constrictions of the timeline that constitutes a human life span (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010). We are also limited by the structure of this globalised world and the way in which it is governed and brought to order. No man holds documented citizenship to every nation in the world and it is likely that no man ever will. Winnicott (as cited in Metcalfe & Ferguson, 2001: 241) states that “the ability to *hold* paradoxical positions is required for culture, and thus for the development of children and for ordinary adult life”. But even amidst this paradox of finitude amidst infinitude structured choices must be made. Indeed an essential part of ‘growing up’ (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010: 493) is making a home for oneself. This act marks the transition from being a student on the cusp of adulthood to a fully grown adult with responsibilities, a family and commitments tethering us down to one place.

In this process of ‘homemaking’ the liquid paradox that flows, slips and slides in order to ultimately shape our seemingly solid – even concrete – notions of where and what home is cannot be dismissed. This is because in contrast to Chinweizu’s (1975)²⁷ post-colonial view of nationality as a static identity based on pigmentation, the age of post-globalisation euphoria highlights that identity is more dynamic, more fluid, more complex. Cultural identity and belonging is not only negotiable but ‘flexible’ (Nyamnjoh, 2006: 239-41) through repeat mobility; the acquisition of permanent residency; embedding and disembedding from one society to another. For a time, as transnational students, home is ‘under construction’. Thus cultural identity and belonging along with it are continually being transformed, constituted and reconstituted again and again, from one country to another. As such, sentiments of ‘homeliness’ and being at home are perpetually negotiated and then renegotiated.

Part of this negotiation lies in the aforementioned ‘rhythmicity of social relations’ (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010, see p. 73). ‘Continuous care and maintenance work’ (ibid: 493), or what Pande (2009) refers to as “kin-work” or “kin labor”. This kin labor is what must be invested in the maintenance of affective relationships with family and friends (and naturally, those that are encountered abroad). This particular

²⁷ He presents this argument on the construction of nationality his book, *The West and the rest of us: white predators, Black slavers and the African elite*.

form of kin labor falls outside the confines of “bodily involvement” (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010: 482). Without physical contact, many relationships can find themselves deteriorating or disintegrating. It is a fact that “the embodied relationships of a family do not travel as easily as the remittance cheque sent between distant relatives, the refugee does not cross a state border as easily as a digitally encoded message” (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010: 485). This monetary metaphor goes a long way in explaining the complexity of maintaining affective relationships for in these relations, time and space is not always so easily compressed (Harvey, 1989).

Conscious efforts must be made to avoid disconnects with those ‘back home’ as much they are invested in making a home by learning the space and the place – the language, the culture and the people. Parreñas (2005) refers to these concerted efforts as cultivating what she calls ‘long distance intimacy’. She explains that long-distance intimacy is achieved through “transnational communication” which she defines as “the flow of ideas, information, goods, money and emotions” (Parreñas, 2005: 317). She also highlights that “the compression of time and space in transnational communication is not a uniform condition, but a varied social process shaped by class and gender” (Parreñas, 2005: 318). In this dissertation, I myself attribute an especially significant importance to class in this regard for the transnational migrations herein investigated are classed migrations – the migrations of a rather privileged mobile group who have the resources through financial, social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979) to reproduce their home culture’s societal class structures and lifestyle. Yet even with the ‘capital’ to nurture this long-distance intimacy, the capacity to do so may be still be inhibited by other factors.

Julian brings that to light interestingly when he confides that communication with family and friends is oftentimes be hindered by the fact that, “Sometimes you feel so disconnected because you’re so far away, you don’t feel like that person’s [relative or friend] close enough to you to understand what you’re going through.” Here, Julian is conveying the feeling of being suspended between worlds, unable at times to connect with those physically present whilst at the same time furthermore being unable to relate with one’s loved ones back home. This is a poignant point in the depiction of the disconnection that transnational students sometimes endure. It is one of the many

complicated challenges that they face (McKeown, 2009).

The combined effect of the stories told by the three sections of the findings chapter is to first of all with the 'seed' and 'spirit' of transnationality explain that most transnational students are not born with the desire to migrate from one country to another to lives, work and study. The desire is activated by a first experience or a way of life invoked by the profession of the students' parents. Whilst the seed and the spirit of transnationality bear a semblance of nomadism, it is important not to conflate the two. The spirit of transnationality is not a nomadic spirit with no end, the transnationalism of the students in the sample of this study was transitory, not everlasting. For in the end, transnational students desire to finally settle down in one place. Even if this place is outside of their passport country or categorical cultural identity. The spirit dies or is 'exorcised' in a stagnation of the fast-paced rhythmicity.

5: DISCUSSION

TSSs' *'Way of being in the World'*

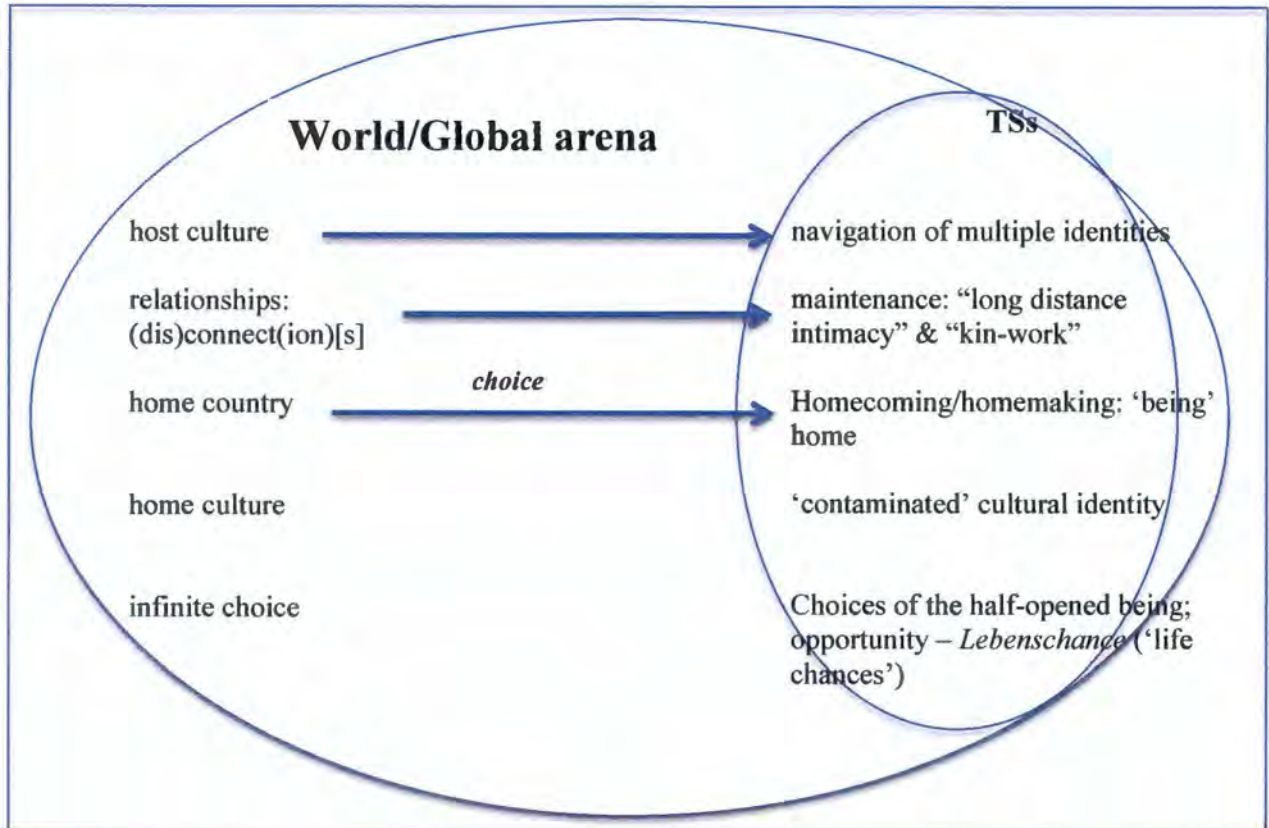
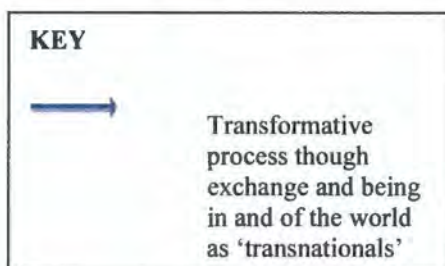


Fig. 2 is a simplified illustration of Transnational Students (TSSs) way of being in the world.



In explaining Fig. 2 above I would like us to return to the Held et al. definition for globalisation (p. 10). Held et al. state that globalisation processes herald a "transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations". As we can see clearly from the diagram, the transnational student finds themselves a student in the world and of the world; experiencing transformed affective relationships that may need to be

nurtured through “kin-work” (Pande, 2009) and “long distance intimacy” (Parreñas, 2005). The spatial *re*organisation of social relations invoked by their transnationality necessitates the navigation of multiple identities in order to effectively communicate and culturally exchange with those back home and those abroad. Further to this, their proximity and time spent away from home transforms their expectations of homecoming as well as their experiences of re-entry and “being” at home. TSs may also find that their social relations with their kin when they return are transformed sometimes with disconnects being felt in spite of the geographical spatial propinquity often a result of a cultural identity (and roots) that is subsequently in flux as result of their transnational sojourns. But even with these infinite possibilities of unending travels and transnationality opened up by a globalised and ever-globalising world, we are but half-opened beings limited by our life-spans, the choices we take and the decisions we make.

5.1: The ‘seed’ and ‘spirit’ of transnationality

The definition of transnational students in this study as **students who have travelled to; live, study and may sometimes work in two countries or more during the course of their degree programme** resonated with that of Hamann’s “sojourner student” (as cited in Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009: 330). Hamann defines sojourner students by contrasting them to “*permanently settled* students [own emphasis], that is, natives and immigrants who intend to stay within their national context for a long time”. Naturally by way of definition, the transnational students of this study are not permanently settled. In contrast, however, to Zúñiga and Hamann’s (2009) research on TSs in Mexico who had studied in the United States, transnational students of this study expressed an interest to return to their country of previous study, the TSs of this study do not. I would attribute this to the fact that the multiplicity of their travels dissipates the sentimentality that they may cultivate for the places in which they have travelled to; lived and worked in. Julian did however state that he did see himself settling in his current place of study. His sense of belonging in India is immediate because it is his present place of study. It would be interesting to investigate whether he would feel the same way after migrating to live, work and study elsewhere. Katja too does return to Japan during her doctoral studies, after having visited it after high

school. Perhaps her multilingual self who is now fluent in Japanese calls her back to this place where she feels she her identity and sense of belonging is linked to because she speaks the language.

The seed and the spirit of transnationality seem to almost resemble a nomadic lifestyle choice in that it is seasonal or habitual, and deeply engrained. I was surprised to find, however, that contrary to what the title of this section might suggest (i.e.: an certain ‘immortalisation’ of restlessness and rootlessness) the opposite was found. The transnational students’ spirit of transnationality did not possess them forever. Whilst the spirit may be nomadic, transnational students are not themselves nomads or wanderers. They want to settle down as Julian and Miya expressly state.

What is unique about transnational students is that unlike other types of migrants such are open to settling down anywhere in the world – a place new or old than they are to returning to their country of origin, what many refer to as ‘home’. This underscores the issue of choice. Even as ‘half-opened’ beings, the global arena is still their home as homecoming, homemaking and being at home are choices (Fig. 2, p. 75). Whereas for migrants such as: refugees and exiles, they are forced to migrate due to extenuating circumstances.

This study speaks to a concern raised by Zúñiga and Hamann (2009) for it sheds light on the complexity of their experiences as transnational students as they concurrently negotiate their identity and sense of belonging during their periodical academically influenced migrations. Hence in returning to the central question, how then does transnationality affect transnational students’ cultural identity and sense of belonging with regards to the ‘seed’ and ‘spirit’ of transnationality sown in them? Whilst all of the students in the study do identify with one particular place as ultimately being ‘home’, they do not always experience a sense of belonging there. Their geographic mobility, which translates into their transnationalism, does indeed complicate the work of their identity formation. It fragments their cultural identity and sense of belonging, breaking down their patriotic sentiment towards their country of origin. However in this fragmentation, the seed and spirit of transnationality reconstitute again to form something new. A new cultural identity: a *transnational* identity, which is a mosaic of where they have been but is still open to being reformulated and

reconstituted by the places that they are yet to travel to; live, work and study in. These findings resonate with those of King and Ruiz-Gelices (2003: 246) of European 'year abroad' (YA) students spending a year abroad in a foreign European country. The study found that

YA graduate students have a greater knowledge of, and interest in, European affairs than their non-YA counterparts. Moreover, they are somewhat more favourably inclined towards European integration, and a majority sees themselves as 'belonging to a European cultural space'. This predisposes them to travel more frequently to Europe for a variety of purposes (visit friends, business, holidays, etc.) than the non-YA sample.

In a similar way the transnational mindset of TSs has given them a deeper understanding, tolerance and acceptance of foreign cultures. More than any particular nation or continental cultural space, I would assert that transnational students belong to the global arena, *choosing* to make their home in one country or another for a specified period of time. Their transnational identity as well as the 'seed' and 'spirit' and of transnationality makes them open to travelling to; living, working, studying and one day settling anywhere in the world.

5.2: Navigating Multiple Identities

5.2.1: The contaminated self

The contaminated self is the delicate concentration of the patriotic self and the dilution from cultural exchanges in countries outside of the transnational students' place of origin. This 'contamination' does not hold negative internalisations but is indicative having developed a plural sense of belonging and a diluted cultural identity. For example: a Namibian (Julian) feeling 'more Indian' and an American (Kate) not feeling 'American enough'. As such this self is most mercurial of the selves discussed in this study because its concentration is never indefinitely fixed, and is often in conflict with the 'pure' or 'patriotic' self.

5.2.2: The Multilingual self

The multilingual self is an immensely skilled and adaptable self. This self is equipped with the tool of language so as to impressively chisel new identities specific to the context and culture settings – a process known as frame switching. Though the multilingual self may not necessarily be fluent in each of the languages that he or she understands or speaks, there is nevertheless value in whichever level of skill the transnational student possesses in that language. It may not necessarily serve them aptly in the classroom. However, knowledge of the language may be useful in social interactions and transferable skills inside as well as outside of the formal institution of academia. This competence is especially poignant given the culture-based nature of abroad study of the transnational students in this study.

5.2.3: The intersectional culture exchanging self

The issues of choice (cf. Fig. 2, p. 75) and opportunity dominantly underpin the narratives of transnational students. Unlike, for example: refugees and exiles, transnational students do not seem to be compelled by external factors outside of their ‘manipulatory sphere’ (Schütz, 1970) such as economic instability or political persecution. Transnational students signify a new world order in which there is a drive for the internationalisation of tertiary education. In one instance, the narratives of transnational students are ones of privilege. The privilege of transnationality over mononationality; the privilege of geographical mobility granted by affluence, and the privilege of being a desirable migrant group because of their transferable skills. In the other instance, international and transnational students are undesired by foreign countries.

Not all transnational students who flow ‘seek’ are granted the realization of their choice to study outside their passport country. Kate spoke into this concern at the JNU ISA talk when she highlighted the fact that as an American transnational student, she is indeed aware that in the case of countries with insufficient infrastructure and resources, transnational migration is a necessity. Amidst the backdrop of ‘liberating’ discourses around global migratory flows, a new narrative has been overwritten onto the narratives of many prospective transnational students (and all migrants alike) – the

narrative of the securitisation of migration post-9/11. This narrative is brought to life in a “rhetoric of free flows and dissolving boundaries [which is inevitably] countered by the intensifying reality of borders, divisions and [sometimes] violent strategies of exclusion” (Nyamnjoh, 2006: 1). Appadurai alludes to this new migration narrative in his definition of ‘ethnoscapes’ when he states that migrants “appear to [be] affect[ing] the politics of (and between) nations” (1998: 33)²⁸. We find then that contrary to these oftentimes only theoretical discourses, in practice and on the ground, there is a differential view accorded to certain types and classes of migrants.

At the JNU ISA talk, Kate spoke of the plight of Afghani and Egyptian transnational students, stating that they are placed in the intersectional position of not just being students but representatives and representations of their passport country to other nation-states. They find themselves pleading, “I am not a terrorist, just a student who wants to study outside my country.” Here, Kate is indirectly alluding to the conflation of Islam with Islamophobia and terrorism in the securitisation of migration. We begin to understand therefore that, “[t]ransborder activities are not necessarily liberating, nor is the national always reactionary” (Friedman, 2002: 23). It is more complicated than that. In spite of what globalisation’s “flow speak” might infer, not all people can migrate; indeed some types and classes of migrants are more ‘desirable’ than others (King & Raghuram, 2013: 131). Unlike the hyperglobalists would have it, in such narratives we see quite clearly that nations and nationalities still exist and whilst the possibility of crossing borders exists, it is not always realized by some and the constraints imposed on the experience of a ‘borderless world’ are subject to nation, nationality, class and country.

Hence contrary to the proclamations of flow speak, some (prospective) migrants may find the possibilities for movement limited by this counter-current to the flows; a paradigmatic shift towards what is referred as the securitisation of migration. “Discursive practices...have transformed migrants into agents [who] threaten ‘human security’” (ibid). Through this shift, migration is politically linked with “criminal and terrorist abuses” of receiving nation (Huysmans, 200: 751). In this highly politicised

²⁸ See p. 10-11

process, asylum seekers and other immigrants are painted as challenges to national identity and welfare (ibid.).

The findings illustrated by the theme of *Navigating Multiple Identities* are topical not only in the field of migration but also the fields of educational psychology and linguistics. They represent the value of multilingualism (albeit conversant multilingualism) outside of the classroom. Whilst navigating multiple identities may translate internally and outwardly as a *mélange* of partial belonging and cultural identities. It also represents the healthy navigation of multiple identities that may be complementary or conflicting but remain versatile and equip students with “transferable” skills. Therefore this ordered navigation of multiple selves should be promoted for the job market as well as the civilised inhabitation of the ‘global village’.

The contaminated and the multilingual selves make it especially difficult to say where a transnational student belongs for they most resonate with being citizens of the third space between home culture and host culture. It is these two selves that most require recalibrating whenever the transnational student returns ‘home’ to their country of origin, having to unlearn the practices and linguistics of the host country and relearn or recall those of the home culture. Transnational students are not rootless but rather carry their roots with them on the move.

5.3: (Dis)connect(ion)

(Dis)connect(ion) relates more to the transnational student’s sense of belonging than it does to his/her cultural identity. It paints a poignant picture of the ways in which connections, disconnections, connects and disconnects that are all part of the transnational student’s narrative. Interestingly, just as “the door represents [...] how separating and connecting are only two sides of precisely the same act (Simmel, 1994: 7 as cited in Metcalfe & Ferguson, 2001: 240), in the same way, the cellphone can represent a means of connecting with or disconnecting from someone. Those at home may expect this line of communication to be used to maintain the connection, and the transnational student may feel unable to connect through it. Resulting in a dead

silence both ways and physical as well as emotional disconnection through time-difference and geographical distance.

Disconnects, disconnections, connections and connects are seamlessly all a part of the narratives of the transnational student. They texturise the diverse experiences that shape and temporise the rhythmicity of their social relations. This section in the Findings chapter has attempted to convey some of the ways in which these said relations are perceived, navigated and internalised not only by the transnational students themselves, but also by those around them and tied to them. Thereby leading us towards an answer to the central question. How does the (dis)connection undergone as a result of the TS's transnationalism affect his/her cultural identity and sense of belonging. Firstly, the connects and connections that embody their transnationalism make them feel a sense of attachment and belonging to where they are. Unexpectedly the disconnects and disconnections may do the same too, pushing them away from the home culture and its residents with whom they sometimes feel they can no identify. Conversely, the disconnects and disconnections may also activate a nostalgia for a place in which they may belong and inhabit freely.

This study on the narratives of transnational students gives a glimpse into the challenges and the benefits of the experience. I believe it is special interest to three particular groups: for past and present TSs it makes sense of their experiences, unpacking the complexity of social relations and the multiple layers of identity brought about by transnationalism. For prospective inter-/transnational students it provides them with insights of the experience that they may make an informed decision with choosing to commit to abroad study at this level of internationalization and integration. It also helps them to prepare for the anticipated changes. By depicting a two-way accommodation invoked by student migration, it is pertinent also to migration policy experts. For students are not only accommodated by their hosts, they also accommodate their hosts. With the complicated story told, and some understanding of some of the processes undergone by transnational students in order to accommodate and be accommodated, perhaps certain stratagem can be formulated and put in place to make the transition from home to abroad (and abroad to home), and continual abroad studies less unsettling and as smooth as possible.

6: CONCLUSION

This study was set out to tell the narratives of a group of transnational students by investigating what effects their transnationality had on their cultural identity and their sense of belonging. This topic is relevant for the field of migration studies as it fills the lacuna in ethnographic qualitative data on student migration. By incorporating African, Asian, American, European and mixed-race students into the study it represents a break in narratives of student migrants as part of a Pan-European identity. It sought to make sense of transnational students' experiences of restlessness and rootlessness. Feelings that are amplified by the multiplicity of their geographical mobility. Be it migration to the First, 'Second' or Third World, the experiences of this group of transnational students resound with one another giving resonance and reliability to the findings of this study, particular in reference to contaminated cultural identity; temporary permanence; the 'seed' and 'spirit' of transnationality and the navigation of multiple identities that invoke connections and disconnections at home and abroad.

In the larger frame of globalisation transnational students of this study personify the kind of unique restless, rootless population that has not yet been fully explored in this proposed 'existential turn' in the theory of globalisation. Issues of choice are brought to life against the backdrop of counter forces such as family, the securitization of migration socio-economic structures, for example the advantage of the transferable skills cultivated by multiculturalism and transnationality. The complicated story of cultural identity, cultural exchange and homecoming herein told signifies of a new model of living, working and of course studying. A model in which transversal skills are of the utmost importance in job marketability and professional success. This dissertation has attempted to speak into this notion and provide some foundational knowledge for an evaluation of the real life impacts of the drive to internationalise, and in fact *globalise* tertiary education. For globalisation does not take place without transforming social and spatial relations (Held et al., 1999).

From *Navigating Multiple Selves* we witness the interface of global migration, global culture. *The 'seed' and 'spirit' of transnationality* and in particular the temporary permanence signified transnational students' experience of blitzing through

neighbouring countries during their abroad studies show global culture's interface with global economy. The transnational students of this study do resonate with Sklair's (2002) transnationalist capitalist class with significant cultural and financial capital at their disposal, however, that is not to say that all transnational students are of the capitalist class. Transnational students have their own social hierarchy even amongst themselves. The TCK may be more privileged than other TSs and the American TS may, by virtue of the strength or weakness of the American dollar as a currency, find himself/herself experiencing upward mobility in South Africa and downward class mobility in the United Kingdom or Europe. Therefore a myriad of factors must be understood as we endeavor to paint an intricate picture of the experiences and narratives of the transnational student.

There often tend to be long-term effects of transnationalism on cultural identity and sense of belonging. This is because transnational students unlike transient one-time 'study abroad students' do not just parachute in and out of a country. TSs may or may not and do or do not necessarily opt to duplicate their circumstances from their country of origin, choosing instead to embed themselves authentically in the host society. In the process of integrating and acculturating, certain selves are donned; transnational students go *across* and *beyond* borders, barriers and physical boundaries (as the *trans-* in transnational implies) to immerse themselves in the tacit more intangible aspects of the host culture. This in effect transforms their identity from a pure identity to a transnational one and their solitary sense of belonging into a plural one. They are both foreign and national. Transnational students lead a delicate existence. They tell a complex story of belonging, choice and commitment, and the rhythmicity of social relations" (Bude & Dürrschmidt, 2010).

At the onset of this dissertation it seemed that the questions: Where are you from? Where do you live? Where do you study? What are you? were the bane of the transnational student's existence. Now, at its closing the transnational student can take pride in being a embodied synthesis of all the places that they have been. They need no longer be imprisoned by outmoded expectations that student migrants only study in one country. They belong everywhere and anywhere that they may so choose to embed and disembed themselves from.

The narratives of transnational students reveal that just like a cracked mirror still

reflects an image, fragmentation need not always be conceived as a negative. Just as you see different parts of a whole image in the fragments of cracked mirror transnational students are themselves a reflection of the places that they have been and the cultures into which they have managed to integrate themselves.

Afterword

At the beginning of this study, I had imagined that it would profile an 'ideal type' of transnational student but by the end of the task, it appeared that there were indeed multiple types of transnational students. Both in my own study and others, for example: Hamann's *sojourner* student. In fact some of the most renowned statesmen were transnational students: Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, President Mugabe, Kwame Nkrumah, and most recently, President Barak Obama who is even an adult TCK. Fascinatingly, there is a historical moment in time when many of the imminent leaders are 'international' or 'transnational', and indeed (higher-level education) students.

Given this striking fact, it would be interesting then to consider what transnationality means in the larger consequences of their life narratives and not just their student ones...This would perhaps make for an entry-point of dialogue between sociology and political thought as an investigation into their narratives after they return to their homelands. It is my view that this dissertation presents foundational knowledge that could pave the way as a plotted point in navigation and examination of multiple variant life trajectories post-transnational study for transnational student. By way of comparison, what kind of career paths would Alex, Joshua, Julian, Jewel, Katja, Miya, Sara, Juan, Kate and Lina lead if they returned home and settled there permanently? Would they "redilute" their cultural identity to concentrate it again and solidify the patriotic self? As say Gandhi and Mugabe did. This would make for a thought-provoking juxtaposition as we consider the very 'pure' nationalisms and patriotic selves that they may return to invoke. And I wonder if these "redilutions" and "reconcentrations" would be constituted out of a sense of guilt for the privilege and 'contaminated' cultural identity borne as a consequence of being a transnational student? A myriad of questions lie in the wake of this...

Bibliography

Appadurai, A. 1998. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 27-47.

Babbie, E. R. & Mouton, J. 2001 *The Practice of Social Research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press

Baláž, V. & Williams, A. 2004. 'Been There, Done That': International Student Migration and Human Capital Transfers from the UK to Slovakia. *Population, Space and Place*, 10. 217–237

Benet-Martínez, V. Leu, J., Lee, F. & Morris, M. 2002. Negotiating Biculturalism: Cultural Frame Switching in Biculturals with Oppositional Versus Compatible Cultural Identities. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 33(5): 492-516

Boswell, C. 2007. Migration Control in Europe after 9/11: Explaining the Absence of Securitization. *JCMS*, 45(3): 589-610

Bourdieu, P. 1979. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. New York and London: Harvard University Press.

Bude, H. & Dürrschmidt, J. 2010. What's wrong with globalisation?: Contra 'flow speak' - towards an existential turn in the theory of globalisation. *European Journal of Social Theory* 13(4): 481-500.

Callahan, C. 2010. Going Home: Deculturation experiences in Cultural Reentry. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 22. Available [Online]: <http://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr22/callahan.htm> [21 October 2014]

Chinweizu, 1975. *The West and the rest of us: white predator, black slavers and the African Elite*. Lagos: Random House. pp. 294, 494.

Citron, J. 1996, June. Short-term study abroad: Integration, third culture formation, and re-entry. Paper presented at the NAFSA at the Annual Conference. Phoenix Arizona.

Duguay, P. 2010. The Securitization of Immigration and Refugee Law in the United Kingdom. June 13 *Legal Frontiers: McGill's Blog on International Law* Available [Online]: <http://www.legalfrontiers.ca/2010/06/the-securitization-of-immigration-and-refugee-law-in-the-united-kingdom/> [2 October 2014]

Edwards, J. 1998. *Language and Identity: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

Erasmus Programme Website. *The Erasmus*. Available [Online]: http://www.erasmusprogramme.com/the_erasmus.php [accessed 22 October 2014]

Engle, L. n.d. Study Abroad Levels: Toward a Classification of Programme Types. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*. Available: [Online] http://www.frontiersjournal.com/issues/vol9/vol9-01_engleengle.htm [accessed 27 October 2014]

Erasmus Programme Website. *The Erasmus*. Available [Online]: http://www.erasmusprogramme.com/the_erasmus.php [accessed 22 October 2014]

European Commission. EU Directorate-General for Education and Culture. 2014. *Erasmus Impact Study: Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education institutions*. Available [Online]: http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact_en.pdf [29 September 2014]

Falzon, M. Multi-sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research (Introduction)

Fielding, N. & Lee, R., 1998. Approaches to Qualitative Analysis. In *Computer Analysis and Qualitative Research*, pp. 21-55.

Friedman, J. From roots to routes: Tropes for trippers. *Anthropological Theory* 2(21): 21-36.

Freeman, C. 2001. Is Local: Global as Feminine: Masculine? Rethinking Gender of Globalisation. *Signs*, 26 (4): 1007-37.

Gaw, K. F. 2000. Reverse culture shock in students returning from overseas *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 24: 83-104

Garba, F. 2014. Migration and Inequality: African Diasporas in Germany, South Africa and India. In: A. Lenger & I. Schumacher (eds.) *Understanding the Dynamics and Global Inequality: Social Exclusion, Power Shifts and Structural Changes*. Munich: Springer.

Grimshaw, T. & Sears, C. 2008. 'Where am I from?' 'Where do I belong?': The negotiation and maintenance of identity by international school students. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 7(3): 259-78

Gmelch, G. 1980. Return Migration. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 9. 135-159

Harvey, D. 1989. *The Condition of Postmodernity*.

Held, D., McGrew, A., Goldblatt, D. & Perraton, J. *Global Transformations*. 1999. Politics, Economics and Culture. Stanford University Press.

Holston, J. 1999. *Cities and Citizenship*. Duke University Press.

Hong, Y., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C. & Benet-Martínez, V. 2000. Multicultural Minds: A Dynamic Constructivist Approach to Culture and Cognition. *American Psychologist*, 55 (7): 709-720

- Huysmans, J. 2000. The European Union and the Securitization of Migration. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38(5): 751-77
- James, P. Arguing Globalisations: Propositions towards an Investigation of Global Formation. *Globalisations*, 2(2): 193-209.
- Josselson, R. & Harway, M. 2012. Navigating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, Culture, Nationality, and Roles. Oxford Scholarship Online.
- King, R. & Raghuram, P. 2013. International Student Migration: Mapping the Field and New Research Agendas. *Population, Space and Place*, 19. 127–137
- King, R. & Ruiz-Gelices. 2003. International Student Migration and the European ‘Year Abroad’: Effects on European Identity and Subsequent Migration Behaviour. *International Journal of Population Geography*, 9. 229-232.
- Legard, R., Keegan, J. & Ward, K. 2003. ‘In-depth Interviews’. In: J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (eds.) *Qualitative Research Practice. A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 138-69.
- Marshall, T. H. 2006. Citizenship and Social Class. In: Pierson, C. & Castles F. G. (eds.) *The Welfare State Reader*. Polity Press: Cambridge. 30-40.
- McKeown, J. S. 2009. *The First Time Effect: The Impact of Study Abroad on College Student Intellectual Development*. SUNY Press
- Metcalf, A. & Ferguson, L. 2001. Half-opened being. In: May, J & Thrift, N. (eds.). *Time-space geographies of temporality*.
- Milroy, L. & Muysken, P. (eds.) 1995. Introduction: Code-Switching and Bilingualism Research. In: *One speaker, two languages Cross-disciplinary perspectives on code-switching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mulvey, L. 1975. *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*.
- Murphy-Lejeune, E. 2002. *Student Mobility and Narrative in Europe: the new strangers*. New York: Routledge.
- Nyamnjoh, F. B. 2006. *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa*. New York: Codesria Books. pp. 2
- Nyamu-Musembi, C. 2007. “Addressing Formal and Substantive Citizenship: Gender Justice in Sub-Saharan Africa”. In: Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay and Navsharan Singh, (eds.) *Gender Justice, Citizenship and Development*, Zubaan, New Delhi and International Development Research Centre, Ottawa. Available: [Online] <http://www.idrc.ca/openebooks/339-3/> [accessed 30 October 2014]
- O’Reilly, K. & Benson, M. 2009a. ‘Lifestyle migration: escaping to the good life?’ In: Benson, M. & O’Reilly, K. (eds.) *Lifestyle Migrations: Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences*. Ashgate. 1-13.

O'Reilly, K. & Benson, M. 2009b. Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration. *The Sociological Review*, 57(4): 608-25.

Ormston, R., Spencer, L., Barnard, M., & Snape, D. 2013. The Foundations of Qualitative Research. In: Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. & Ormston, R. *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.

Pande, A. 2009. "It may be her eggs but it's My Blood": Surrogates and Everyday forms of Kinship in India. *Qualitative Sociology*, 37(4): 379-405. Available: [Online] http://www.academia.edu/235241/It_may_be_her_eggs_but_it_s_my_blood_Surrogates_and_Everyday_Forms_of_Kinship_in_India_2009_Qualitative_Sociology_Vol_32_No_4_379-405 [accessed 27 October 2014]

Pavlenko, A. 2006. (Ed) *Bilingual Selves*. In: *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression and Representation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd

Pessar, P. & Mahler, J. 2003. Transnational migration: bringing gender in. *International Migration Review* 37: 812–846.

Parreñas, R. S. 2001. Transgressing the Nation-State: The Partial Citizenship and "Imagined (Global) Community" of Migrant Filipina Domestic Workers. *Signs*, 26(4): 1129-54. Available [Online]: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175> [accessed 13 August 2014]

Parreñas, R. S. 2005. Long distance intimacy: class, gender and intergenerational relations between mothers and children in Filipino transnational families.

Pollock, D. & Van Reken, R. E. 2009. *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds*.

Reeves, S., Kuper, A. & Hodges, B. D. 2008. Qualitative research methodologies: ethnography. *British Medical Journal*. 337: 512-4.

Robinson, W. I. *Theories of Globalisation. Theory and the Rise of Globalisation Studies*. Available: [Online] <http://www.deu.edu.tr/userweb/timucin.yalcinkaya/Theories%20of%20Globalization.pdf> [accessed 31 May 2014]

Rudestam, K. E. & Newton, R. R. 2007. Chapter 5. The Method Chapter: Describing your Research Plan. In: *Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*. Sage Publications

Sassen, S. 2007. *The Global City: recovering place and social practices*. In: *A Sociology of Globalisation*. New York: W.W. Norton. pp. 97-128

Schütz, A. 1970. On multiple realities. In: *Collected Papers vol. In: The Problem of Social Reality*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Sharma, K. L. & Singh, R. 2013. *Dual Identity: Indian Diaspora and other essays*. Andhra Pradesh: Orient Blackswan.

Sklair, S. 2002. Democracy and the Transnational Capitalist Class. *International Political Science Review*, 23 (2): 159-174.

Torres, R. M. & Wicks-Asbun, M. 2014. Undocumented Students' Narratives of Liminal Citizenship: High Aspirations, Exclusion, and "In-Between" Identities. *The Professional Geographer*, 66: of the Global. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22(5): 235–254

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Institute for Statistics ([UIS]). Available [Online]: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/tertiary-education.aspx> [8 October 2014]

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2014. Available [Online]: hdr.undp.org/en/countries [accessed 12 April 2015]

Zúñiga, V. & Hamann, E. T. 2009. Sojourners in Mexico with U.S. School Experience: A New Taxonomy for Transnational Students. *Comparative Education Review*, 53(3): 329-53.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Comparison of choice, culture, experience and bi-/multilingualism in TSs, TCKs and LMs

	TSs	TCKs	Lifestyle Migrants (LMs)
choice	voluntary (personal/familial, economic)	involuntary (parental)	voluntary (aspirational)
culture	Exchange	Third culture	replication of the old
experience	variable	inauthentic	inauthentic
bi- /multilingualism	bi-/multilingual	multilingual	not necessarily

Fig. 3: Key similarities and dissimilarities between TSs, TCKs & Lifestyle migrants

Appendix 2: Participant profiles

The interviews and the talk took place over during the course of 2013 and 2014, and for the purposes of the fact that their nationalities and ethnicity²⁹ are indicative of the diversity of the sample I have specified them below.

1.	
Name	Alexander (Alex)
Age	24
Location of interview	Cape Town, South Africa
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	Dutch
Languages spoken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dutch (native) 2. English (native) 3. Spanish (fluent) 4. Indonesian 5. German 6. Afrikaans (conversant)
Countries of study	The Netherlands, Nicaragua, Indonesia, UK, Ghana, South Africa
Other characteristics	TCK
2.	
Name	Joshua (Josh)
Age	27
Participant location at time of interview	Bangkok, Thailand (conducted via Skype)
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	Canadian
Languages spoken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English (native), 2. French (fluent), 3. Russian (fluent), 4. Italian (conversant)
Countries of study	Canada, Italy, France, Russia, Germany, Argentina, Thailand
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSPian
3.	
Name	Julian
Age	27
Location of interview	New Delhi India
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	Mixed race
Languages spoken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Afrikaans (native) 2. English (fluent)
Countries of study	Namibia, UK
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Namibian, South African, Eastern European and Judaic roots • TCK • Worked in Ethiopia and Angola
4.	

²⁹ These ethnic classifications were in fact self-identifications.

Name	Julia ('Jewel')
Age	21
Location of interview	Cape Town, South Africa
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	Chinese American
Languages spoken	1. English (native) 2. Chinese (understands)
Countries of study	S. Korea, India, USA
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University programme coordinated TS • Environmental Sciences Major • Has travelled to China once in her life

5.	
Name	Katja
Age	32
Location of interview	New Delhi, India
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	White German
Languages spoken	1. German (native) 2. English (fluent) 3. Arabic (fluent) 4. Japanese (fluent) 5. Hindu (conversant)
Countries of study	Germany, UK, USA, Japan, Syria India
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University programme coordinated TS • Language Studies major (Japanese & Arabic) • Interned in Lebanon & Palestine

6.	
Name	Miya
Age	21
Location of interview	New Delhi, India
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	½ Asian, ½ White American
Languages spoken	1. English (native) 2. Japanese (conversant)
Countries of study	USA, Japan, India
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up interview regarding homecoming conducted via social media • Participant location at time of follow up: California, USA • University programme coordinated TS • Volunteered at a school in Nepal for just under 2 months

7.	
Name	Sarah ('Sara')
Age	25
Location of interview	Freiburg, Germany
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	Nordic
Languages spoken	1. Swedish (native)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. English (fluent) 3. German (conversant) 4. Dutch (understands)
Countries of study	Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Argentina, Thailand
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSPian • Lives with boyfriend in Basel Switzerland • Studies in Freiburg Germany 68,2 km from Basel

ISA Talk Guest Speakers:

8.	
Name	Juan
Age	27
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	½ African American, ½ Mexican
Languages spoken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English (native) 2. Spanish (native) 3. Arabic (fluent) 4. German (fluent) 5. Hindi (conversant)
Countries of study	USA, Germany, Argentina, Thailand
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSPian
9.	
Name	Katherine (Kate)
Age	31
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	White American
Languages spoken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English (native) 2. German (fluent) 3. Hindi (conversant)
Countries of study	USA, Germany
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Married to a Hindu male
10.	
Name	Nina
Age	22
Nationality/Race/Ethnicity	S. Korean
Languages spoken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Korean (native) 2. English (fluent)
Countries of study	S. Korea
Other characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to India as a pre-teen • Self-chosen university programmes abroad

Appendix 3: Generic Interview Guide

*Introduction: Hi, my name is Nadia and as I mentioned, I am doing some research on transnational students and their experiences abroad. Can you tell me about these?
[begins asking questions]*

Is it common to study abroad in [insert country of origin]?

Why did you decide to go on an exchange programme? (is this your first time studying away from home?)

Tell me about your experiences. What has it been like (things you are glad you did/regrets)?

Have you been home in between? (what was that like?)

Has anything changed since the your first study abroad experience? What exactly?

Have you changed as a person and as a student as a student?

What is different about being at home versus being abroad?

Would you say that this is a transnational experience or an intra-European one?

Would you do it again? (Would you do anything differently?)

How often do you speak to your family? How do you communicate with them? What is it like when you do?

Are you involved with someone? Where are they? (How do you manage the relationship?)

Has your view of the world changed since your studies abroad?

Do you feel that you are more cosmopolitan and transnational since you've studied abroad?

What have you learned being abroad?

Is there anything, you'd like to talk about that I didn't raise?

Where is home?

Materially what have you gained from your travels?

Appendix 4: Thematic colour coding scheme

Analytical notes

Follow-up questions

Seed/Spirit/Mindset of transnationality/'temporary permanence'

Reasons for travel

Cultural exchange/cultural identity/'contaminated'/'diluted'

(Dis)connect(ion)

Home/coming

Temporary permanence

Appendix 5: Interview Transcripts

Name: Alexander (Alex)

Age: 24

Language: Dutch, English, Spanish, Indonesian, German, Afrikaans

Nationality: Dutch

Myself: Please forgive me, I've forgotten a couple of the details. I think you said you studied or lived in Indonesia. Please feel free to help me clarify some of the details. As you know, Mindset, my name is Nadia and I'm doing my Masters dissertation research on transnational students and I'm just going to ask you a couple of questions about your studies abroad.

Myself: Where are you from?

ALEX: The Netherlands

Myself: Is it common to study abroad in [country of origin]?

ALEX: Fairly common. I think quite a lot of people stay in Europe though and do the Erasmus programme. The government changed the law on financial support for students a few years ago. You used to only get money if you studied in Holland (or maybe EU), but profinow you get the same amount regardless of where you study. It's quite a lot of money, so that would have been a big barrier.

Analytical note: read up on what's been going on

Myself: Where did you grow up?

ALEX: I lived in Holland until I was 13. Then lived in Nicaragua for 4 years ***seed of transnationality planted*** and Indonesia for 2 years with my family. Did my undergrad in the UK, half a year in Ghana, and I've been in South Africa for almost 2 years.

Myself: Why did you decide to go on an exchange programme? (is this your first time studying away from home?)

ALEX: I'm not on an exchange programme. I decided to study "abroad" because I didn't feel like going back to Holland. ***spirit of transnationality* I preferred an English speaking country, mostly so I didn't have to learn another language.

Myself: Tell me about your experiences. What has it been like (things you are glad you did/regrets)?

ALEX: I've really enjoyed living in so many different places.

spirit of transnationality I lived at home for the first part, so I'll focus on my actual studies abroad. What I'm glad I did is that I haven't taken my studies very seriously. I probably could have gotten much better grades, but I kinda treated the last five years like an extremely long holiday with temporary periods of studying. I'm very glad I did. I've been able to see so much of the world already. It's such a cliché but I do very much enjoy travelling.

It's difficult to pinpoint any regrets. I mean, I have no idea what the alternative would have been. I don't think it's very useful to dwell on that.

Lifestyle migration?

Myself: What did you learn whilst studying in Cape Town and... [other study abroad destinations]?

ALEX: Besides the things I learned at university, I think I've mostly learned how I want to spend my time and with whom. When I came here I knew I was only going to be in Cape Town for a few years and I think I've quite quickly made some good friends. I know we're not going to be friends forever, but that's fine. At least I enjoy spending time with them now. Maybe that's not just because I've been abroad, but I think having a limited period of time somewhere has encouraged me to be more efficient when it comes to making friends and how I spend my free time.

Myself: Have you been home in between? (What was that like?)

ALEX: Yeah I've been back in Holland many times. Until I lived in the UK once a year, then about three times a year. Some friends from high school in Indonesia moved to Amsterdam and I visited them very often. It's been normal. I still feel very much at home there. Most of my family is there and I still have plenty of friends I can visit. I have noticed though that my fondness of Holland (and especially Amsterdam) stems from the fact I'm only there for holidays, generally during the summer. In my mind Amsterdam is a place where I have tons of free time and I can spend loads of time enjoying life with friends. It's not a place where I've done any work (except the occasional essay I still had to send in, but nothing major).

Myself: Has anything changed since the your first study abroad experience? What exactly?

ALEX: I'm going to assume in Holland. If so, yes and no. I'm from a tiny village and barely anything has changed there. A lot of the same people still live there. My primary school moved, but it's now a stone's throw away from where it was. In Holland itself I think people have become a lot more right wing and **skeptical of foreigners**. Maybe it's just because I'm getting older and realizing it more now, but I don't find Dutch people particularly welcoming towards foreigners (mostly non-Western / non-white ones). They've also changed laws about drugs and prostitution, making them increasingly less legal and transparent. I think that's a very worrying trend and has to do with Dutch people becoming more conservative / less progressive. **Securitization of migration**

Myself: Have you changed as a person and as a student as a student during the course of your study abroad studies?

ALEX: I've definitely changed, but it's impossible for me to say how as I don't have anything to compare it to. A person who goes on exchange can see the changed he/she has undergone compared to their friends who stayed. I don't have that reference point so I don't think I can properly answer this.

Myself: What is different about being at home versus being abroad?

ALEX: Sorry Nadia but this question is so broad... anything in specific you want to know?

Myself: Would you do it again? (Would you do anything differently?)

ALEX: Well yes, I would have no idea what the alternative is.

Myself: How often do you speak to your family when you are away? How do you communicate with them? (What is it like when you do?)

ALEX: I skype with my parents and brothers maybe once every two weeks. It depends, sometimes once a week and other times once a month. We communicate by email a lot as well, often if we took a trip. We can send pictures with it and explain it to everyone in one go instead of skyping with everyone and having to explain the same thing four times.

Sorry Nadia I don't really know what you mean by "what is it like".

Myself: Are you involved with someone? Where are they? (How do you manage the communication relationship? How often do you speak? What media/ medium of communication do you use?)

ALEX: Yeah but she lives here in Cape Town. The relationships I've had were always in the place I lived. Never did long distance for very long, always ended things quite quickly because it was pretty obvious it wasn't going to work out. Was much more frustrating to try and keep things going than to just call it quits. The longest was after high school. We skyped twice a week or something but after a while it's so hard to share things because you don't understand anything about the other person's life anymore. I didn't know any of her friends or the places she went to. If she wanted to tell me about her day she also had to explain who the people were she spent time with, what kind of places she was at, etc. She was in the US and I was in the UK. Too far for frequent visits. I started uni in October, we ended things in February or so.

Myself: Has your view of the world changed since your studies abroad?

ALEX: I can't really answer this question.

Myself: Do you feel that you are more cosmopolitan and transnational since you've studied abroad?

ALEX: Can't really answer this either.

Myself: Where is home to you?

ALEX: Still the Netherlands. I've come back quite often, I follow the news, I speak Dutch with my family. Whenever I'm back I feel very much at ease. I've made an effort to keep it "home" because I want to be able to go back to something. I don't have a physical "home" (my parents have sold the house I grew up in), but in a few times in Holland I would definitely feel very comfortable.

Care work

Myself: Materially (trinkets and the like) what have you gained from your travels? For who?

ALEX: I have a box in Holland with some old stuff with some ticket stubs and a few items that have sentimental value. It's not in the way and it might be fun going through them again in a few years so I won't throw it away, but honestly it's becoming junk. I find my photos far more important and have those backed up multiple times.

Follow-up

1. You speak Dutch and English, do you speak any other languages (fluently or conversantly)?

I speak pretty much fluent Spanish. I'll make the occasional grammatical mistake but in general it's quite good. I speak a little bit of Indonesian as well, although it's probably gotten a lot worse since I left Jakarta and never use it anymore. I might be able to have a super basic conversation now. If I ever move back to Indonesia I think I'd be able to pick it up again relatively quickly though. And I speak some German. That's from living in Holland though. You get it in school and it's really similar to Dutch. Same with Afrikaans... I can understand it fairly well just because it's so similar. Afrikaans speakers have a hard time understanding Dutch though. And I took some Xhosa classes last year but I've forgotten just about everything.

multilingual self

2. How old are you?

I'm 24 (born 10 May 1990).

3. How come you moved to Nicaragua and Indonesia?

My dad works as a diplomat. He worked at an NGO in Holland for ages but around 2000 moved to the ministry of foreign affairs and got a job in Nicaragua in 2003. He could apply for a number of jobs (I think five), but in the end you get assigned a post. Initially Nicaragua wasn't our first choice I think but it worked out really well. We found out where we were going a few months before leaving. We talked about it in our family to see if everyone (my parents, three brothers and I) was on board. We were all quite excited so we decided to go. The first year was a bit difficult because my mom and my brother Frank stayed in Holland as he was in his last year of high school and wanted to finish. When he finished they joined us. My two oldest brothers did their undergrad in Nicaragua, the third brother and I went to high school.

4. So you've never been awarded a scholarship/participated in the Erasmus programme?

No I just applied directly to the universities I've attended (York and UCT). Here I pay international fees. In the UK I paid local fees (because I'm from the EU) which wasn't too bad at the time. I applied to some funding for foreigners here but I didn't get it. That makes perfect sense though cause I already get money from the Dutch government (not really a scholarship though, everyone gets it) so it wouldn't really be fair to get money from the South African government / UCT as well.

5. What made you choose to spend half a year in Ghana?

After I finished my undergrad I decided to not do a master's straight away. I finished in June and was already thinking about applying to UCT. Since that wouldn't start till January I had a few months to fill. I went on a holiday with some friends first and applied for a few internships (all in Ghana). I ended up interning for UNICEF in Accra. My parents live there so I stayed with them. I got the internship on my own merit but it was extremely convenient and I saved quite some money living with my parents.

****END****

Name: Joshua (Josh)

Age: 27

Language: English, French, Italian, Russia

Nationality: Canadian

Skype Interview while he was interning with a UN agency in Thailand

Josh is Canadian and speaks English, French, Russian and Italian.

Myself: Hi, Josh my name is Nadia and I'm doing a Master's on transnational students. So that's students who've studied in two countries or more. Is it common to study abroad in Canada ?

JOSH: Uh, to do an exchange - one intonation all exchange per semester. If I had to guess I'd say a quarter of the students, so it's not as common as Erasmus in Europe.

Myself: Why did you decide to go on an exchange programme? (is this your first time studying away from home?)

JOSH: I did an in-country Programme and that was when I was about eighteen and that was in-country and a I - Canada is so big. I did a summer in Italy and a year in France. My degree I started off in Italian

****characteristics and traits****

Myself: And do you speak French and Italian? You said you're partly Italian, right?

JOSH: Yeah, my grandmother is Italian. Yeah, I speak but my Italian is not so good anymore because I haven't practised it. I speak Italian and French. I studied half in French, half in English. My university in Canada was bilingual. My degree was in Italian, I was doing political science with a minor in Italian then I switched over to a double major in political science and Russian.

Myself: Wow, that's quite a shift. How did you get into Russian?

Myself: Tell me about your experiences. What has it been like (things you are glad you did/regrets)?

JOSH: Well after I was living in France, I didn't want to go back home and so I looked online and I found an au pair job. So I moved to Italy in the summer instead of going back to Canada. *****spirit of transnationality*****

Note: wants to keep moving and also 'home as a repellent'.

Follow-up question

You mentioned the last time we spoke that after you lived in France your didn't want to go back to Canada and that's what made you look online and find a job as an au pair. Why is it that you didn't want to go back home?

JOSH: So when I was in Italy so my neighbors - they were Russian, we I became

quite good friends and they asked if I would teach their daughter English and I said yeah, yeah, no problem. So I was giving private English lessons.

Note: imparting something of himself as he teaches her English which would naturally be 'Canadian English' and so in that way being something of a culture exchange agent...or is that a stretch?

JOSH: And they asked, "so what can we pay you?" And I said no no you're friends, I'm not going to charge you anything. And they said, "come on, we have to do something." And I said, "well, your sister's coming next week e and she's bring vodka from Ukraine." And they were like, "no, no, that's fine, we're going to drink that anyway". [interview laughs] And I was just like well, I don't want anything like you're friends - come on. Then finally I said give me Russian lessons.

Myself: Oh. Wow, okay. That's fascinating!! [pause] Okay, so what year were you in Italy?

JOSH: Uh, that's a good question! I think 2008.

Myself: 2008.

JOSH: 2011. And I was an au pair and I studied in Italy once.

Note 2: Building the agenda of looking at students as more than just students but as workers (au pair, teachers, tutors..), friends, cultural exchange agents.

Myself: Okay and when were you in France?

JOSH: Give me one second, I'm going to look it up on my resume, sorry about that.

Myself: No problem. It's always so hard to remember.

JOSH: Well, that's thing, you've got to know these things off the top of your head. I'll Okay so in total I studied once in Italy, once in France, twice in Russia, Germany, Argentina and Thailand obviously.

Myself: Okay, so, when was Russia?

JOSH: Russia was in 2011 and 2012.

Italy was a summer programme in 2008. France was between 2008/09. June to August I studied in Italy.

June to July I studied in

July, August, September I was working as an au pair.

Myself: Tell me

JOSH: In terms of living there, social situations?

Myself: What was it like studying in Italy, coming from Canada?

JOSH: When I studied in Italy it was part of my Programme in Canada. So I went a whole bunch of university students from my Programme. So it was very different to when I moved to France.

*** (In)formal (In)

Note 1: cf Sara and hundreds...

JOSH: So basically what I did was I did one year in university in classical studies and then I moved abroad. But then I didn't like what I was studying so I decided to continue with the Italian because I loved it.

Myself: Mm-hm.

JOSH: So I went and I did the summer Programme in Italy with my fellow students who I studied with and they were all from my university.

Myself: Okay. You say France was entirely different, how so?

JOSH: Because when I went to France, I was kinda reassessing everything. And so rather than doing an official exchange and I guess I'm just crazy in that way I just looked online.

Note: something that resounds with the attraction of the 'adventure' aspect that lifestyle migrants have that motivates their migration.

JOSH: I found a Programme online that I liked and I applied directly to the French university. And so it wasn't actually associated with my university at home. So I basically signed up for a Programme to start first-year university in France which was completely different.

Myself: Okay. And you spoke French already, yes?

JOSH: I spoke it to a degree. This was kind of like a pre-university level French so you'd do your French and if you had a background knowledge you would start first year university directly after that.

***profile: multilingualism

Myself: Okay. I see. And what was it like being in Italy with the other students and all of that, how does it compare with Canada?

JOSH: Well the thing is in Italy I was with like all students from my class so it was kind of a safety net. So there wasn't that big of a culture shock as when say I moved to France, I moved on my own and I completely did everything on my own. So that was a much bigger shock because I had to worry about things like housing. I mean doing my taxes and figuring out how social security works. [interviewer laughs] I mean my French was good but I spoke a dialect of French, I spoke a different kind of French.

Myself: Because that's like Canadian French, yeeeeeess.

JOSH: People couldn't understand me. I could understand them but they couldn't understand me. My French wasn't so good in the first place but speaking with a different accent that no one could understand it was a bit of a nightmare. Then I learned to get over it. It had it's hi coughs along the way and I had the landlord from hell and kind of ran screaming from the apartment, when I realised what happened. So that was like the first two weeks I was there and then everything was a night,are then I ended up finding a really good place and I loved it. I almost stayed. I was going to stay and go to school in France.

*****(dis)connect(ion)*****

Myself: Where in France were you?

JOSH: In the South of France it's called Aix-en-Provence.

Myself: And in Italy where were you?

JOSH: I was in a little town called Lerici.

Myself: Okay, wow, when did you got to Russia and where were you in Russia?

JOSH: I was in Moscow both times but they were both completely different experiences. I do a lot of things for myself because the university has a lot of bureacracy in terms of making sure students have amazing grades in order to get into the right exchange programmes and so I've organized a lot of these programmes myself *****DIY-biography*****

*****spirit/Mindset of transnationality*****

JOSH: So the first time I went to Russia for example, I met with a professor who knew a director at the Mebassy and I said, "I want to go to Russia, do you know anyone who wants to take a Canadian student for the summer, I'll teach English; whatever." So my professor out me in touch with the embassy and I ended up teaching English in exchange for Russian lessons at

МГАУ: Moscow State Agroengineering University in Moscow.

Russian opportunity from Josh, Myself, Julian
International and Law, CA, ML, LL.M.

Myself: That is fascinating! [16:50]

JOSH: Yeah, 2011.

Myself: And how kong was this for?

JOSH: That was for the summer, so again, 3 months.

Myself: And what was that like?

JOSH: [pause] Crazy! Absolutely crazy! It was unlike anything I have ever ever expected?

Interviewer: [laughs] In what ways?

culture shock is highly related to expectations*

JOSH: Having travelled extensively and having travelled to lots of places myself, like when I was eighteen I backpacked across Europe...

*****seed of transnationality****

JOSH: And Russia is just something else. Moscow is crazy! It is huge, it was intimidating, it was frustrating - at time scary...

Myself: Why? [interjecting]

JOSH: Like you'd be in a supermarket [...] I would go back to Russia in a heart beat **spirit** [...] I find Russia real and the people there are much more true than you go to a lot of places like Aix-en-Provence for example every one is very aesthetic and you have to have this 'image'.

Follow up question:

And if you are not? What happens?

JOSH: But in Russia, no one smiles on the street. Everyone has this stone-cold face. And I asked someone why that was and they said a smile is something that you don't give away for free, it's something that's not cheap. A smile is something between friends and family or someone that's actually worth it. You don't just give it away in the supermarket to the cashier [...] and when you first arrive; people are very blunt, people are very straightforward. I remember the first time I went to get groceries and I didn't have correct change and I didn't have a very small bill because I had just got there and When you get to a new place at first you only have big bills. So I gave her the money and she started yelling at me and I was like what is going on, I don't understand, what is going on?! But then you chop it up to experience and then you are on your way.

***connect(ion)

Note: Earn a smile cf Katja and the Japanese thinking abt others. Cf Sara and stereotypes abt Germans and Swedes and chatting to people or sitting next to them in the bus/ train

Note 2: But is this relevant?

Note 3: there is something be said about the transnational 'Mindset' in the way of learning the social codes in order to assimilate/integrate/embed *****cultural exchange***

Myself: So she was angry that she had to change this big note?

JOSH: She didn't want to change the big note and get rid of all her change.

.....

JOSH: I changed from a minor to a major and a requirement of my university in Canada is that I spend a semester abroad studying only in that language. Even if there were classes offered in English I wasn't allowed to take them to fulfil the rest of my requirements.

****profile: multilingualism****

Myself: Wow!

JOSH: So when I studied in Russia again the second time I did political science and literature. So I did Russian foreign policy, international security, literature and like eight language courses, so if you're doing a language course you do a minimum of 12 hours a week if you're coming from a foreign university.

Myself: Okay let me get. Y bearings right, so you said you first did an in-country Programme and then you went to Italy, then you went to France and then you went to back to Italy again or did you do Italy and then France?

JOSH: So I did the study abroad in Italy then I went to France for a year then I worked as an au pair [in Italy] then I went back to Canada then worked as an au pair again [in Italy]. Then I went back to Canada. Then I went to Moscow for the summer. Then I went back to Canada. My second semester I went to Moscow to another university.

Myself: So tell me, how was it going back home?

JOSH: Well I didn't really go back home, I moved basically directly to a university, which was eight hours from my home town. I mean it was different but not incredibly different because one of the reasons I wanted to study in France was so that I could do French immersion – study half in French, half in English. So basically when I got back to Canada it wasn't that incredibly different. I was still studying in French when I got back, I wasn't switching between languages. I mean I switched back. I found it a little bit difficult at some point to start writing papers in English again. I basically got back from France and I was doing politics theory in French. [...] It was interesting in a way because a lot of people had moved on, a lot of the people who I knew from first year had moved on, but I mean I still met them sometimes but I found there to be a big difference. [...] I mean being isolated, you will find a lot of people who are the same person as you.

Myself: How would you say that you changed? Would you say that you changed while you were in France?

JOSH: Of course. I mean I couldn't say *how* I changed exactly but I think everyone changes. [...] I mean being isolated for the first little when I was in France for example. You reevaluate thing and you really think like "what the hell am I doing here?!" How do I figure out the bureaucracy of France – it's awful [...] Because I'd already been abroad, when I was eighteen I moved

to Ireland, and I got a job working as a bar tender for five months and then I backpacked across Europe so that I think was a bigger leap. I remember specifically through that there were times whee I was like why am I here? [...]

Analytical note: in building on the idea of 'temporary permanence he travelled to while he was in Argentina, Germany and Thailand?
Thailand: India

Name: Julia ('Jewel')

Language: Swedish, German?, English

Universities:

Nationality: American

Race/ethnicity: Chinese American

Chinese American.

Myself: So, Jewel, my name is Nadia and I'm doing a Masters project on transnational students so students who've spent, um..time studying in two countries. Just having a looking at their various experiences and stuff.
So Is it common to study abroad in America?

Jewel: Um, yes, it's very common.

Myself: and why you decide to go on an exchange programme? (is this your first time studying away from home?)

Jewel: Ever since I was in high school it was always a priority of mine, when I was looking at colleges, as always asked about their abroad programmes. Um,I also went to school near my home town, like half an hour from where I grew up so ***it wasn't really getting way from home for me.*** I really wanted to go abroad and experience and travel. So that's why I decided to go.

Anecdotal note: **Jewel as a repellent of Jewel - seed/spirit of transnationality
ethnology

Myself: Okay. So tell me about your experiences abroad where have you gone, where have you studied abroad?

Jewel: So I'm from California in the United States. So I went to all of my schooling there and then I attend college in California as well. And then exactly a year ago I went to Australia - Brisbane.

Myself: Wow.

Jewel: And that experience was so amazing and I gained so much from it so I decided to go again and I chose Cape Town the second time.

Myself: So tell me about Australia, how was that?

Jewel: I really really a I really enjoyed it. I was in Brisbane. It was a kind of like. A normal city. It wasn't too different about it than cities in America. I guess the whole Australian experience in general the Australian culture is pretty similar to American culture. So it wasn't really culture shock at all. But it was still a new place and somewhere I'd never been and I really enjoyed that and I am an Environmental Science major I love scuba diving. So that was the main reason I chose Australia. It was for nature-based reasons I guess.

Myself: Mm-hmm.

And it totally lived up to it. It was beautiful there. The reef is amazing.

Note: ***academic*** cf Jewel, Miya. Well duh! TSs
But as opposed to it being a whim or

Jewel: Also another advantage to Australia is it's near to a lot of cool places. Like it's surrounded by Fiji, you can go to Fiji. It's kinda near Southeast Asia, New Zealand. So for travelling it's in a really good location.

Myself: Mm-hm
Follow-up question

Did she travel to any of these?
spirit

'Soak in'

Whilst here she has been to ~~Zimbabwe and Botswana~~
~~temporary permanence within temporary permanence~~

Myself: And how long were you there for?

Jewel: I was there for six months.

Myself: For six months. Okay. So after Brisbane do you then go back home?

Jewel: Yes.

Myself: So what was that like? How was it going home aft Brisbane?

Jewel: think every American student who come back, they're very sad obviously. ***I think study abroad everybody has a different mindset than when they're back home. And the mindset is that you have to take advantage of your time, you're only here for a limited amount of time and because of that you really try to do the things you want to do; anything you want to do; take advantage. Always being active, always exploring. So that was my experience. And I really liked that mindset and I So I tried to apply that as much as to my life back home. So taking advantage of opportunities, things like that, So that was my experience. I just lived it so much and I love everything I learned so I decided to go again.

Note: *explorer metaphor comes of alive in TSs.

Myself: And tell me about your experience here in Cape Town.

Jewel: Cape Town is definitely different than America in a lot of ways, I think much more so than Australia. Um, it hasn't been any negatives. It's all been positive to me. ***I've seen things I never imagined I would.*** And it's challenged me in a lot of ways, more than Australia had.

Note: ***chance to learn what you wouldn't in a classroom

Myself: What kind of things have you learned. what new things have you learned?

Jewel: Um, I guess everyone would say that the history of Cape Town - of you know - South Africa is intense and unique. Um, and it's a similar history I guess to America but I think that it's different in the way it's approached here it's different. So like things I used to be very sure about I'm not anymore. Just 'cause the race relations and the unemployment status - it's very blatant here and not so much back home. So there's similar issues but here it's that much more black and white. So it's interesting to think about and I think it's challenged me in a lot of ways.

Myself: And do you think you've changed since your studies abroad?

Jewel: um, I guess in general each semester I've grown more confident in myself. So, um... In Australia, like, I dunno I guess I used to have a lot of confidence issues and in Australia like I said the mindset was just be yourself and like challenge yourself and do things. With each semester abroad it's helped me be a more confident person um, and more sure about my abilities.

Myself: Um, and would you say that you have changed as a student, has anything changed academically?

Jewel: Um, I think it's helped me as a student because I've encountered a lot of learning and teaching styles and I've had to adapt to them. For example similar to Australia and here the final exam counts for a huge amount of your grade um so it's like that was something... It counts a lot in America but I'd say more so here. Having that much weight being put on the final was something to get used to. Also I've been pass/fail both of these semesters but um, I guess that's challenged to motivate myself more.

Myself: By pass/fail it means that it doesn't really matter what grade you get, you're just going to have on your transcript that you passed or failed the course?

Jewel: Exactly.

Myself: Okay.

Jewel: But I think for me I still care about what grade I get it's just that much more self- motivation and time management.

Myself: What would you say is like the key difference of being at home versus being in Australia versus Cape Town?

Jewel: When you're abroad you're always trying to do something so when you have any free time you're trying to fill it with something new and exciting. [...]

Name: Julian

Age: 27

Language: English, Afrikaans

Nationality: Namibian

Julian's interview

J...27...Namibian

Part Jewish, Polish, Otji-Herero

Myself: Okay, so, as you know J, I'm doing my Master thesis on transnational students and yeah...so I suppose we can begin the interview. Um...where do you consider yourself to be from?

JULIAN: [pause] I'm a patriot so I consider myself to be from where I've been born. I'm Namibian. However, I've been exposed to a lot of nationalities. And I'd like to say that I'm a multinational.

Myself: Okay. Where have you lived?

JULIAN: [pause] I started in South Africa from Namibia and...

Myself: Where in South Africa?

JULIAN: Pretoria. Because I've grown up in a diplomatic household, I've lived in places like South Africa where my father was sent as a diplomat. And then I was sent - then I went to England to a small town called Tunbridge Wells. I finished primary and high school there.

Myself: Mokay. How long were you there for?

JULIAN: I did the last year of primary and the rest of high school. And then from there I went to Ethiopia.

Myself: What were you doing in there?

JULIAN: I was supposed to study. I did study but I didn't finish. I stayed there for a couple of months, I didn't stay there for quite long - 9 months. After that I moved to South Africa where I actually finished my studying. My tertiary education.

Myself: And then?

JULIAN: Well after I finished in 2009, I moved to Angola to start working.

Myself: Mm-hm...

JULIAN: And my first job was as a technician at an Internet company in Angola and I stayed there maybe for 9 months.

Myself: Mm-hm...

JULIAN: And from there I moved back home back to Windhoek

Myself: Mm-hm. And now you're here.

JULIAN: What am I doing here? I'm studying again. [asks and answers self]

Myself: So what made you decide on India?

JULIAN: It's far away.

Myself: Why is far away necessary?

JULIAN: Far away is necessary because I know I came here because I wanted something different - something unusual than my daily lifestyle back in Nam. So basically Asia offered that something very different so I decided to come to India to study.

Myself: What was your daily lifestyle?

JULIAN: Nah, just the same old working, waking up every morning going to work and coming back. It's routine and I wanted to break that routine

Note: His dad was posted to India in 2013.

JULIAN: I didn't want to work so I went back to studying

Note: He is in a financial position to do so.

Myself: Why didn't you want to work anymore?

JULIAN: I've worked for maybe 5 years straight. I've actually gained a lot of knowledge while working. So I'm over that. I wanna go back to studying and actually gain something like a degree.

Myself: Okay. And can you tell me about these different places that you've been to. The differences and your experiences: South Africa vs India vs Namibia...

JULIAN: Well Ethiopia was quite interesting coz actually compared to India Ethiopia is very similar and a lot of poor, a lot of poor people. Where the majority are very poor so you find a lot of suffering on the streets and you actually go through the streets and you take it all in and you start realizing that you need to start appreciating what you have in life. So that was Ethiopia but Angola on the other hand, is different from any other country in Africa. They're Portuguese speaking. I can't speak Portuguese. It was very difficult to communicate was very difficult in all areas. Traffic was the worst traffic ever[emphatic]. Traveling maybe 5-6 hours every day to work but infrastructure wise what is also interesting about Angola is that the people are very happy and that they actually have a surplus of money to spend all the time. Literally. They travel a lot, they buy stuff, they do everything, they just enjoy and they party a lot. I couldn't handle it and that's why I only stayed 9 months but.. [fades off]

Myself: What couldn't you handle?

JULIAN: I couldn't handle traveling to work every morning for 6 hours. It's horrible. So...infrastructure was terrible. It's dirty. The whole country is dirty.

Myself: Dirtier than India?

Commented [NN1]: Reflexivity: my own prejudices or re-enforcement of stereotypes

JULIAN: [laughs] A lot worse than India. Trust me, India has nothing. It doesn't come close to Angola. It's horrible. They don't mind dirt. They are getting better because they have money now. So they are starting to clean up but it's getting any better. But it's a country with a lot of money so a lot of people are flocking there. From Namibia, from South Africa to get money.

Note: golden streets... Bright city or shall I say country lights

Myself: And England?

JULIAN: Well England I was a youngster. I was in high school there most of the time. I basically did my whole childhood there. Well not my whole but a big chunk of it. For a very important time of my life was in England and I met a lot of good friends. A lot of people who showed me a lot of things, taught me a lot of lessons in life. The level of education was amazing. I actually I learned a lot of...if it wasn't for England I wouldn't be that articulate. As I am today.

Note: experiences and narratives are naturally and obviously shaped by age and perceptions at different stages of ones life

Myself: What is your mom again? She is Namibian...?

JULIAN: She is South African. She was born in the Northern Cape. She moved to Namibia as a high schooler - no in college; after college 'cause she did college in Cape Town. After college to do her practicals because she is a nurse. Because she moved to Namibia to do her practicals and since then she met my dad and she just stayed there 'til today.

Note: parents have been divorced over 25 years

JULIAN: She's still in Namibia but a lot of her family is in South Africa. We move up and down. So... [fades out]

Myself: And how's Nam?

JULIAN: Namibia?

Myself: What would you say it's like?

JULIAN: What politically or socially...

Myself: Whatever...

JULIAN: Home is home...

Like I would always love being back home but as everyone would tell you home has that repellent - I don't know what to call it - like sometimes u just don't want to go back there because you have lived there all your life

Note: Illusion of Wholeness

Because technically he has not lived there 'all' his life

JULIAN: One thing I can tell you is Namibia is quite young, it is growing massively. And people socially it's being - what do you call that... It's being developed quite well. A lot of people health wise, socially, politically. It's becoming, it's one of the most economically stable economies in Africa. The people can't really complain. And when they do complain it's about the minor things in life like the government is doing this and that. But I think all in all as a Namibian we are very blessed because we have a very stable lifestyle. We don't have war. We don't have economic problems., we don't have food shortages. We have a lot of things going for us.

Note: implying that it is his choice to move

JULIAN: I think my country is quite blessed. I would like one day to go back [permanently] and do whatever it takes to be a part and to help grow the economy. I think a lot of Namibians feel like that.

Myself: Why can't you grow the country now?

JULIAN: No - uh [hesitates]... A lot of us are very uneducated. I think one thing Namibia lacks is skills. Because when it comes down to it skills is the one thing that we Namibians lack. Because most... We have a giant in the South called South Africa and because Namibia was part of South Africa a lot of Namibians feel like they can just go to South Africa and live there and they study there and they just stay there and they don't come back home. So a lot of the skills are being exported instead of imported. So it's tough to stay in Namibia because okay, the education system is terrible. There's not a lot of quality when it comes to education.

Myself: Does that apply to both private and public schools?

JULIAN: Yes for sure, I went to a public school and it was one of the best ones. Most of the people in class are people who are abroad right now - China, South Africa, in Europe and they're doing quite well actually and I was at a public school so actually Namibia has gone down hill since I went to primary school there [conclusively realizing] in a sense because people are failing more instead of passing so it is tough out- it is tough to judge.

Note: norm to be abroad/overseas...seed planted.

Follow up questions.

What I love about it is that it's not what you think. If you did want a girlfriend

Myself: And India? How do you like living in India?

JULIAN: It's fantastic! Like my father would say, it's a beast that you have to tame. India is something out of this world. It's not something you can expect. None of us Africans would expect India to be this type of...it's got its downhills but more than that, it's got its advantages, it's uphill, it's got so much opportunity, it's unbelievable. There is so much growing here in India, economically, politically. It's such a massive country. There's not one thing you can put it down to. You have to go to each state and just find out what's amazing about that state. Like each state has its own food, has its own attire, has its own fashion, has everything - different to the other states so what I find, especially me because I'm quite an adventurer and I love India for that because it gives me that, the whole adventure feel, wherever I go. At one point someone told me that if you travel thirty kilometers in each direction, you'd find something different about India. Like when you talk to those people in those places 30 kilometers away, you'd find something different. They'd have a different way of talking, a different way of dressing, they'd have a different food. Everything is different about India. It is overwhelming actually. Um, India is amazing. I can't get enough of it. And I can see myself ending up here one day. I could live here.

Myself: Interesting... And, you're returning to Namibia next week. Why are you going back home?

JULIAN: Just for holiday. Um...I came here to India to find something different. I want to study it I've been here I gave myself six months and because India is so different compared to back home I feel like going back home would give me the breathing space and the time to savour everything I have learned here. And when I come back, it will all click again. It will be easier to comprehend, to actually live an easier lifestyle. 'Cause when I first came here I knew nothing about India so coming here, learning everything in six months, going back, giving the breathing space; coming back would just make myself feel more at home.

It helps. It helps moving; going home, seeing your friends again and just breathing...

Note: contaminated sense of citizenship.

Myself: So where is home to you? It's Namibia? It's Windhoek.

JULIAN: I feel like it's Namibia but, then again I could go to Pretoria because I have lived there for so many years. I could go to England and find so any people and I would even call that home. Um, that's quite it. The other places...like Angola, I wouldn't go back to Angola, I would go back because my sister's still there but I didn't live there long enough to actually find my roots, to root myself in the country. Not like I'm tryna do here in India. ***conscious effort to make it home, home can be made 'constructed'**** Here I would say this will be a home for me one day. But I would call England a home because I grew up there. I did most of my growing up as an adolescent. South Africa is definitely one of those as well because I moved back there in 1994 and then again in 2006 and I did my college there. So South Africa is

definitely home. So the longer I stay at a place, the more I find a home there.

Note: 'home' is many places

Myself: How would you say that staying in all these places has affected you?

JULIAN: Well it's brought a lot of dimensions into my life basically: going to different countries, learning their way of life, especially places like India and Angola and Ethiopia. Like you actually take in the culture and the traditions and you learn a lot of their histories so you're exposed to a lot of things in a way in a way that changes you. It changes the way you think. Because you don't just go into a conversation all straightforward/straight-minded, just coming from Namibia but I think it's made me wiser. It's made more exposed to more cultures and I can understand people better because I'm more open-minded, the fact that I've travelled so much and actually lived not just travelled to all these countries.

Note: **the not their [culture]**neutrality**it could become his, looks down on closed-mindedness of one country

Myself: In terms of maintaining relationships, how does staying in so many places affect your relationships?

JULIAN: Maintaining relationships, you mean with family?

Myself: Family friends and partners.

JULIAN: Oh yeah, it's tough, for sure.

Myself: For all of them?

JULIAN: For all of them, whether it's family, whether it's your friends, whether it's romantically. It's tough, definitely. Um... I've found it easier for my friends, I've found it easier keeping in contact with friends because I don't know, maybe they made it easier for me. But with my family it's tough, besides my direct family: my mother, my brother, my father, those are the people that actually reach out and I would reach out to them. But family that don't reach out, it's very easy to lose contact; very very very easy. It's probably one of the downsides or the disadvantages. 'Cause someone will need to be really really close to you if they want to maintain a long life relationship not a long-distance because that's what you're always going to be having, regardless. But it's tough, even for your direct family it's very very tough.

Myself: Why?

JULIAN: Well, chatting to them all the time. Having to update them. Sometimes you can't just update them... Things happen. But like...It's very tough to - to maintain a good level of communication. Because sometimes you want to talk to them every day or sometimes you want to talk to them every week and that's not always possible.

Myself: Why is it not always possible?

JULIAN: Sometimes I dunno, if it's the distance between each other but maybe one party of the other just doesn't find - have the time to make that phone call or to send that text, or to say "Hi, how are you doing?" Sometimes you feel so disconnected because you're so far away, you don't feel like that person's close enough to you to understand what you're going through.

Commented [NN2]: Living among worlds

Note: theme of disconnection

Myself: Would you say that you consider yourself to be a global citizen or a transnational?

JULIAN: I'm not a transnational.

Myself: Mm-hm..

JULIAN: I wouldn't say I'm a global citizen either.

Myself: Why?

JULIAN: What is a global citizen, like...? Someone who lives everywhere?

Myself: Mm-hm... [allowing self-definition for the term].

JULIAN: No... I'd like to consider myself - I come from somewhere. I'd like to know where I come from. I have my roots. I'd like to keep my Namibian ways. I'll always have Namibian tradition close to heart but I'd like to also consider myself as very exposed and I know a lot about how other people do things. I'd like to consider myself as very exposed. I'd like to consider myself knowledgeable about people's feelings and ways of doing things. I wouldn't consider myself a multi-national because I do see myself as Namibian. I do see myself from where I come from. And I feel quite patriotic about that?

Note: label from outside not the people themselves (conclusion)

Myself: And would you say that you're a cosmopolitan

JULIAN: Well traveling a lot to bigger cities makes you cosmopolitan. It actually makes you multiracial. You can mingle with whoever. Yeah, I do consider myself a cosmopolitan.

Note: CCK

Thanks, J.

Temporary permanence

Went to Sri Lanka

****END****

Name: Katja

Age: 32

Langauages: English, German, Japanese, Arabic

Universities:

Nationality:

Race/ethnicity: Mixed race

Internships:

Work:

Myself: Alright, well as you know, S, my name is Nadia and I'm doing a project on transnational students and I'm just going to ask you a couple of questions about studying abroad

KATJA: Go ahead.

Myself: Is it common to study abroad in Germany?

KATJA: I think it depends on the area in which you are studying so...my subject which Arab studies and Japanese studies, it was rather uncommon not to go but some people never left Germany actually. Unless you were studying Japanese or something but I must say it was quite common to go abroad.

Myself: And so where did you go for your exchange programmes?

KATJA: well first off, I went to Kyoto in Japan for one year.

Myself: And tell me about that. How was it?

KATJA: Well, it was actually a really good experience. I had been in Japan once before for about half a year. This time I could communicate with people and I made a lot of Japanese friends in university. I joined a film club.

Myself: Oh, wow. And what would you do at the film?

KATJA: Um, actually some people would get together and make a movie. The club had three cameras and some equipment. So we did that and there was a lot of communal activities which was an interesting experience to me. At first I didn't really understand the importance of that *****cultural exchange***** There were meeting maybe twice and we and we would have movie showings and everybody would have to be there and give their best handing out fliers and we would have meetings and everyone would criticize themselves like "I should have worked harder" ********

Myself: Wow!

KATJA: Yeah, but it was cool we even went once together on a trip to Okinawa.

Myself: Okay.

KATJA: They're still good friends.

Myself: Okay. And what was Okinawa like?

KATJA: It's a nice tropical island, we were just, I don't know, having fun: going swimming and drinking at night; making movies a actually.

Myself: Awesome. And Kyoto itself, what was is Kyoto like?

KATJA: Kyoto is a really traditional city. So, there is even a rule, I think, that in most areas of the city you cannot build houses that are more than five stories...you have this deep history, you have over two thousand temples and shrines and so on. So there's also a lot to see in that respect. Also people might be a bit conservative, I guess that's what other Japanese people say about them. *****stereotypes reinforced***** But generally I liked it a lot. It's in the mountains - like it's - I don't know how you say that, it's not in a valley, it's like a pot, it's surrounded by mountains. So it's gets really hot in summer and really cold in winter. The landscape is pretty.

Myself: Okay...that sounds good. Where else did you study.

KATJA: Then I studied half a year in Damascus, right after Kyoto. I had a week in Germany to get my Syrian visa and then I went to Syria.

Myself: Okay, and what was Syria like.

KATJA: Well it was a big shock - like culture shock at first. And I think even more so after Japan, I was so used to a certain kind of politeness. And in Syria you had kind of speak up in order to get your things done. One thing is I had forgotten all of my Arabic. I would stand in a queue in the bank, for half an hour and people would just over my shoulders get their stuff done and I couldn't push through to get my exchange my money. *****German trait***** So that was a bit tough in the beginning [both laugh]

Myself: Okay.

KATJA: But I really liked it in the end.

Myself: You said you were in Damascus for half a year?

KATJA: Yes.

Myself: And how was it getting the Syrian visa?

KATJA: It was just a little bit of a hassle. Because I was in Japan and then the embassy - the Syrian embassy in Japan said that they could not help me. I would have to go to the German one and the German one also said I should have to the one in Japan. But in the end I went through a consulate in Hamburg and that was really fast and very easy.

Myself: And where in Germany are you from?

Follow up questions

How was it getting a Japanese visa?

Note: where you from? Where do you live? Where is home?

KATJA: I'm from Freiburg. I think you know that town? [laughs]

Myself: Yes, yes. I studied in Freiburg last year.

KATJA: But I live in Leipzig. I've been living there for over ten years.

Myself: Okay and would you say there's a big difference there's a difference between how people live in Freiburg or the culture in Freiburg versus Leipzig.

KATJA: Well I think student life has a lot of similarities. I don't see a lot of cultural difference there. But generally, first of all, of course Leipzig has a different socio-economic background than Freiburg. Freiburg is this nice sunny town where a lot of wealth is and, um... yeah, people are quite relaxed and that. But, yah, I think that that way the political parties are winning - like the Green and the Conservative parties - that shows what Freiburg is like. And in Leipzig there's still a lot of unemployment and so on and also a lot of businesses - well not businesses but factories that have closed down so there's a a there's a lot of space to have alternative. I don't know, art spaces, concerts and son on. There's a lot of freedom in that. It's not done yet.. Freiburg is pretty much developed.

Myself: When you go back to Germany, do you see yourself - are you going to be in Leipzig, where will you be staying?

KATJA: First of all I will be staying in Leipzig but I might move after half a year.

Myself: To where?

KATJA: To somewhere near the Rhine, maybe in Mein, which will be a big difference.

Myself: And why would you be moving there?

KATJA: For a job but it's not decided yet.

Myself: Okay, I see. So what brings you to India?

KATJA: Well I'm here on an exchange programme, yet again, with my graduate school in Leipzig and they have this programme called "New Passages to India" and I am here at JNU as a research affiliate.

Myself: Okay.

KATJA: It's only for for two or three months so we don't do normal courses but we kind of follow our own research and the idea is to exchange ideas and research with other Indian researchers *****internationalisation of tertiary education******

Myself: So in terms of your study abroad or research your experiences you've studied in Damascus, in Kyoto, in India, New Delhi?

KATJA: Yes and there were some internships based in other countries.

Myself: Okay. Tell me about that as well, please.

KATJA: Okay, well first I did a three month internship in Lebanon, in Beirut with a Lebanese-Palestinian NGO which was working in the refugee camps. And afterwards, straight from there I went to Palestine I went to Palestine for three months and I did an internship at the Goethe-Institut in Ramallah.

Myself: What year was this, sorry?

KATJA: Ah... This was in... [trying to remember] I think it was in 2007

Myself: What about Kyoto and Damascus?

KATJA: I went to Kyoto in the beginning - like March 2005, and Then to Damascus February 2006 and then I went to Japan in 2010 for half a year for field research. And yet again to Palestine in 2011, also for research.

Myself: And when you went back to uh, Japan for the research, was it in Kyoto again?

KATJA: For a couple of weeks I stayed in Tokyo because most of the institutions are there and wanted to talk to some Ministries and find out who I should talk to and so on and then I went on to Kyushu, which is the - one of the four main islands in Japan but it's the furthest in the South and stayed in different fishing villages with fisherman and fisher families.

Myself: Okay. And what was that like?

KATJA: I went to I stayed in different extremely interesting and very exhausting for...

Myself: Howcome?

KATJA: Well, because...often I got up at four o'clock or something.

Myself: Wow.

KATJA: ... to go to the harbor with them and help with unloading the fish and so on. And the, generally I was staying at people's houses and... I guess in Japan, people really try to think about other people's feelings and thoughts a lot.

Myself: Uhummm...

KATJA: So I also started, you know, I kept thinking, "Oh, am I bothering them then now? What should I do? How should I behave?"

Myself: Uhummm... Uhummm...

KATJA: So this was a bit stressful but at the same time it was really nice meeting these people that I think I wouldn't normally wouldn't have come into contacts and I really learned lot more than I could have learned from books I think.

Myself: Can you tell me about that in terms of Japanese culture, what are the norms, what is different in terms being polite or making people comfortable, and thinking about them - being sensitive to other people?

KATJA: Right, I think it's um... it's just a question of degrees because I think in every culture think of others and try to be - not to hurt them or their feeling or to be thoughtful but I think in Japan it goes a bit further than I was used to.

Myself: In what ways for example?

KATJA: Yah, I'm trying to think of examples. Um, one example I think is it was amazing to me that how when you change train at is Kinshicho station in Tokyo which is like the busiest train/metro and so on intersection, in the world maybe.

Myself: Wow.

KATJA: There's...during rush hour there is an immense lot of people rushing around and running for trains and so on but people never touch each other.

Myself: Wow.

KATJA: They don't bump into each other, they actually have everyone on their radar and they time it so that they actually don't disturb the others.

Myself: Okay, that's interesting. And is it be considered... It would rude if you bumped into someone or touchthem?

KATJA: Well yes, you would definitely apologize, I think. Of course there are rude people in Japan. [both laugh] That's not a big surprise.

Myself: Naturally, yes. [giggles]

KATJA: But generally it it considered very rude if you enter, um a train with a backpack and you don't take it off and put it between your feet because then without seeing it you might hit someone or like disturb someone.

Myself: Yes.

KATJA: Or to have loud radio on your head - loud music on your headphones so other people can hear it. People get very aggravated about small things like that. It could be really...

Myself: Okay.

KATJA: Life is a bit stressful in Tokyo so people just want to shut themselves...

Myself: out.

KATJA: Yeah, out. In their novel or in their cellphone.

Myself: Okay. And, um, you've been home in between? What was home like after staying Kyoto for a year.

KATJA: Well I didn't really go home.

Myself: Okay, yes, you said you were only there for a week.

KATJA: I went to Damascus afterwards. But I, Well the first time I was in Japan, that was right after high school. I was there for seven or eight month and when I came home from that. I think it was noticeable that I was acting a bit different and I think I still have some of that.

Myself: In what ways?

KATJA: Mm... Sometimes... I think it's certain patterns of behaviour like even though I'm certain of something "I think [timid and shy] it might be like this and that." You know notto be too confrontational with people. Or. Yeah... Being really quiet sometimes. Finding really soft ways of asking for things that actually might not be adequate to the situation. [laughs, both laugh] I found that sometimes, and I would wonder, "Why am I acting like that when I could just say hey, do you have this and that?"

Myself: Mm. Was this more at home or at a shop or in a commercial setting or was it just everywhere you found?

KATJA: Not so much at home. I don't think I changed so much around friends and family. I think. I also haven't gotten any feedback in that direction.

Myself: Okay, okay. No, I see. Would you say there were any changes in Syria or being Lebanon when you came home?

KATJA: I think one thing was that their gender relations were a bit disturbing in Syria so. In Japan it is not, there is no such, um, the relations are not like that. In Syria I started to get very annoyed at men try not to look at them and generally be unfriendly around men that I did not know.

Myself: Why is that?

KATJA: Because otherwise they would start harassing me or like misinterpreting that as signals interest in that direction. A bit similar to India.

Myself: Yes, yes.

KATJA: Actually, I remember coming back from Syria and I was in Freiburg. And it was noticeable how I was even surprised that men didn't look at me in the street, they didn't take any notice. And that was very relaxing but at first I even felt it's, it's a bit strange like "Why don't they look at me?"

Myself: So you almost feel this kind of gaze, this of male gaze on you as you walk around...

KATJA: Yes, you always feel it. That's what I found.

Myself: And what about Lebanon?

KATJA: Lebanon is a bit more free in that respect. While I was there were a couple of bombings. I remember coming home from the Lebanon/Palestine trip and in Palestine I had seen some shootings, some demonstrations and so on. I remember at new year's zi couldn't stand the fireworks and every explosive sound really scared me.

Myself: Wow. [quietly]

KATJA: But generally from Arab countries I gained some um... some, more confrontational behaviors of being able to say no when you don't want something and bargaining of course [both laugh]!

Myself: Which is true of India as well. Tell me about India in comparison.

KATJA: Well, in terms of sexual harassment, India hasn't been as bad as Syria even though it's getting such a bad press. But um, that's of course only one aspect of society. Maybe I should talk about something else. [both laugh] I found India... India is not even something you can describe because has so many aspects and so many different regions and so on and this is one thing that I found in Delhi is that you have so many different areas.. If you're really tired of noise and dirt and so well you got to an expensive restaurant and can kind of relax. And there's all these lively areas, markets and so on, there's a great variety. And it's pretty green. I don't know. You want to hear more about the cultural codes and things like that.

Myself: Anything, actually, yeah...

KATJA: Anything? Hmm... Well, anything is quite large.

Myself: Okay, tell me about some of the different cultural codes in Syria maybe versus India or Palestine.

KATJA: Hmm... Well, codes...hmm... Well one thing I found in the relations between, people - what people are always talking about is that Here, political conflict is not that present as it is was in Palestine and Lebanon. Of course, here also I think people actually do talk a lot about politics. Maybe it's only in JNU but I actually encountered that elsewhere as well. And of course before the elections now a lot of things are going on as well. I guess you can't even compare. This is an entire continent. Palestine and Lebanon are these tiny, tiny, tiny countries where everyone knows everyone and they're watching each other and if someone does something

stupid then that's it. And actually in Palestine whenever I met - I invited people that I knew from different contexts, they always already knew each other, and they always already hated each other. Of course that's not true. But there were a lot of cases like that.

Myself: When you say people from different contexts, people from different countries or from different backgrounds.

KATJA: Oh no, like for example people living in Ramallah. But this one person I met because she is in my class and the other who I met through a friend something like and they already have a problem with each other. [both] I think that was as whole different situation to New Delhi where...

Myself: It's so vast.

KATJA: There's just so many people and yeah...

Myself: would you say anything has changed in you since your travels abroad?

KATJA: Yah, I'm sure it has a great influence, I guess. But, um now I've used to gotten so used to going here for a little while, going there for a little while ****spirit of transnationality**** That sometimes I felt that I didn't... It's not all that new anymore. Which is kind of sad but it's also okay. I used to get very attached when I live, when I spent like a month somewhere. And then I was, I'd be really, really sad if I had to leave. Now I'm "yah, it would be nice to stay longer but I'm also happy to go home", kind of, you know. I'm glad to have met interesting and nice people but I guess I will see them again somewhere. I actually have had that happen. People I met met in Japan 12 years ago, I meet again in Bangkok and it's still the same.

Myself: Okaaaay.... Wow, that's lovely.

KATJA: That has been really nice. I'm really happy that I have friends dispersed across the continents.

Myself: Would you say the nature your friendships is any different? Are there different optics that you would talk to versus your friends in Germany?

KATJA: I guess so, sometimes, yes. But a lot of the topics are the same as well. But I guess that's in human nature. The things that you're interested in. Food [interviewer laughs] food and love and things like that. I think that's pretty common, yes...

Myself: Mm. And as a student, would you say that you have changed? In terms of the different cultures and experience different student cultures.

KATJA: I'm not so sure it changed my way of studying in Germany.

Myself: Because it was always exceptional situations.

Myself: Mm

KATJA: I wasn't in a Programme like you guys where it counts as much as what you do abroad as what you do at home.

Myself: Aaaah.

KATJA: So when I was in Japan I was studying Japanese, and I did some other courses because they sounded interesting but I didn't have to. And in Syria it was the same, I studied Arabic and after two months the semester was already over so I did an internship instead.

Myself: Okay. And what was the internship like? What work were you doin'?

KATJA: There I did an internship - that was very interesting, actually. It was an internship with Japanese aid organization.

Myself: Mm-hm.

KATJA: So...and that's kind of how I got interested in the topic that I wrote my PhD about...

Myself: Which is?

KATJA: Which is Japanese development politics in Palestine.

Myself: Okay. And in terms of trying to find a job or getting a job after all of this, do you think that your transnationality or having studied abroad, has that made it easier?

KATJA: Well actually I'm still at university so I haven't really tried finding a job - maybe in the private sector or in international organizations. For many jobs that would be interesting for me, you have to have this kind of international experience. So that is good, I guess.

Myself: Okay.

KATJA: And in academia also it's always the best moments when you're at an international conference or something, and you exchange ideas with scholars from all over the world.

Myself: Mm.

KATJA: So I think that, yes. And then of course in the the field that I chose to study you have to have international experience because it's Regional Area Studies.

Myself: And have have you studied in any European country other than Germany or it's just been these other -

KATJA: I haven't. [both laugh]

Myself: Ironically.

KATJA: I had some high school exchanges.

Myself: Okay, where'd did you go on the high school exchanges?

KATJA: The first one and maybe that started it all. While ***seed of transnationality/restlessness sown*** It was England for ten days or two weeks. And I loved it! Afterwards, in tenth grade I went to the US for half a year, to study there.

Myself: Aah. Okay. Where in the US were you?

KATJA: I was in Massachusetts.

Myself: Massachusetts, okay.

KATJA: In rural Massachusetts. [both laugh]

Myself: Okay, how was that? What did you think of it?

KATJA: Well it was a really great time, in away.

Myself: was this your first time in the US?

KATJA: Yes.

Myself: Was it anything like you expected or like you had anticipated from watching the media and all of that?

KATJA: In a way, yes. In a way things were as they are depicted in these high school movies - American movies but more extreme. More extreme.

Myself: Aaaah.

KATJA: That's what I found. Okay the quarter back is actually dating the leader of the cheerleading squad. This kind of you know...both laugh]

Myself: Those kind of clichés. [laughs]

KATJA: I was serious. Yeah I had a great time there. I think I was very lucky with the school I was in. It was very open and liberal. I had great teachers. I met a lot of great people there. It was a bit difficult with my host family. Because they didn't have children and they worked in Boston and they had to drive 2 hours to get there so they were hardly ever home.

Myself: Aah. Okay.

KATJA: And they were a bit difficult sometimes and very nice at the same time.

Myself: Okay, what year was England?

KATJA: England. Um... I was, I think I was 13. So maybe '94/'95

Myself: And Massachusetts?

KATJA: Massachusetts was '98/'99. I also had an exchange with Hungary even though that was just a week.

Myself: And what was Hungary like?

KATJA: It was the first time I saw a post-Soviet. No, no, no, not Soviet, Eastern European Country. These, uh, how do you say - mass housing projects and weird cars [interviewer laughs] But actually it was really great.

Myself: So what year was this?

KATJA: 2000

Myself: 2000. How long were you there? Two weeks?

KATJA: Maybe two weeks. Maybe only one week. I'm not sure. Yah.

Myself: Okay. And what do they call these short exchanges in Germany where you just go for ten days, two weeks or one week? Is there a specific name for them?

KATJA: Those are actually genuine exchanges. People from there also come so they are called exchanges.

Follow up question

Why are they done?

Why are they encouraged? (C): Apprehension (fear of numbers)

Myself: Okay.

KATJA: And then....

Myself: And are you set up with a host family.

KATJA: Exactly, yes. Yes and the student of the host family comes to your family as well.

Myself: Aaah, ah. That's cool.

KATJA: Yes. It's nice, it's really nice. I actually, in my primary school - and that was a bit crazy. Because we were third graders. [interviewer laughs]

Myself: Wow, where did you go?

KATJA: So we were nine years old and they had an exchange with La Réunion.

Myself: Did you speak French?

KATJA: We had like a French club. Because Freiburg is close to the French border. But actually we didn't speak French.

Myself: So how was it? Do you remember?

KATJA: I didn't go. Because it was too expensive and also my parents didn't really see the point of sending a child around the world just for that but Martine came to our place.

Myself: Ah.

KATJA: I don't remember that much. I just remember it was really hard to communicate. [both laugh] She was cute. She was.

Myself: Wow, that's so interesting. So what was the rationale of third graders going to La Réunion?

KATJA: I guess the people going to my school was rather rich. I don't know how that came about. I guess someone had a contact there and instead of taking a car and traveling, taking half an hour across the border and finding a French school they thought let's go to La Réunion

Myself: Oh wow.

KATJA: Yah.

Myself: that's interesting. In terms of your travels to Kyoto, Damascus, and Palestine, would you do it again.

KATJA: Yeah, definitely. No regrets there.

Myself: No regrets... Would you do anything differently?

KATJA: The first time I went to Japan. I had just worked for some money and I just took the money and went there. But I wasn't really well prepared.

KATJA: Okay, so let me tell you this. I was either thinking of going to China or Japan

Myself: Okay -

KATJA: Which is a completely different story, right!?

Myself: Yes, yes. Had you been studying Japanese in high school?

KATJA: No

Myself: Oh, wow. Okay.

KATJA: They didn't have any languages like that ***Note: Time has changed***

Myself: Uh-huh. uh-huh.

KATJA: I had a book and I tried to learn by myself. But that... I could say, "Do you speak English?" Or "How do I get to The station?" in Japanese. But then I wouldn't understand the answer. So that was really hard in the beginning and I was very lost in the beginning and it was not fun. Some are scared to talk to foreigners or they're ashamed of their English and so on. So yeah, that was hard in the beginning. And I guess I had no real idea, now when I think back, I'm not sure if I had no idea that Japan is so much more expensive than China. 'Cause back then the Yen was really strong too. I didn't really have a lot of money. I had to be really careful. Just eating rice only. I guess preparation is one thing I would do differently. [interviewer laughs] Definitely.

Myself: So what made you want to do Japanese studies. Did that trip impact you?

KATJA: Yes, definitely. At first I thought let's... I really should not study Japanese. All the characters you have to learn. And who speaks Japanese, just only the Japanese. And there's all these weird people studying Japanese - Hemana freaks.**So I thought no. And I thought no I'm not studying Japanese. So I decided to study Arabic because I thought that was more important. Because there's so much prejudice against Muslims and Arabs in Germany. So I thought that would be important. And then 9/11 happened. So, when I started studying there was twice as many students as normally. Because yeah, it went up because of 9/11.

Myself: Why is that? People wanted to understand...?

KATJA: I guess. Either that or people thought that there would be jobs. [interviewer laughs, S joins] I'm not sure.

Myself: That's fascinating.

KATJA: Or maybe it was just it came to consciousness, and you know like before people didn't really think of it, I'm not sure. **sign of the times** But yeah, I started that. But then I was also like I thought, I know some Japanese and I really enjoy speaking it. It's my favorite language in terms of speaking it.

Myself: Oh, really?

KATJA: Yes, I really like it so I studied it anyways, betraying my first, first...

Myself: ...ideas?

While you're abroad like here in India, how often do you speak to your family?

KATJA: It depends. When I had more internet access, I was talking to my mom every three days via Skype.

Myself: Okay, via Skype. I was about to ask that.

KATJA: But now we just send SMS, maybe every second day.

Myself: And how's it like negotiating or maintaining a relationship with your boyfriend in Germany with you being all way here?

KATJA: [laughs then interviewer laughs] Well we try to talk everyday on Skype but yah, it's it's started to get annoying because the connection is not good and it keeps cutting off the talk. And then he is really stressed, so he doesn't want to wait 'til I come back online again afterward.

Myself: What is he doing at the moment?

KATJA: He's a teacher in training and that's yah, that's a very tough programme.

Myself: Naturally. Would you say your view of the world has changed since your studies abroad?

KATJA: Yah, I'm sure, yah, definitely. I've seen that, I guess, in other areas, the priorities are very different, you know? And it doesn't matter the local politics on Germany - don't interest anyone. But there is larger issues in other areas that are much more prevalent.

Myself: Okay, and um, do you see yourself as more cosmopolitan or transnational since your studies abroad?

KATJA: [laughs] Well that's always a question of definition, I guess. Cosmopolitan is a bit of an idealistic idea. Although it would be nice to be a cosmopolitan.

Myself: What do you see a cosmopolitan as?

KATJA: I guess someone who does not see themselves a national of one state but is more a citizen of earth. And I guess I do consider myself as a citizen of earth but, well, my passport says Germany.

Myself: And so what are the most important or most poignant things that you've learned abroad?

KATJA: Mm... I think I've learned to listen to people and accept their - their kinds ways of living and I think I - I've really learned how to communicate better with various people. Also the most interesting thing to me to find other people are living and what is important to them.

Myself: And is there anything that you'd like to tell me about, or talk about that I haven't brought up with a my of my question or anything that strikes you that you'd want to mention?

KATJA: Well I guess. I sometimes find that my extended family is that they, you know my cousins and so on. They have no understanding of what I do. They think it's really weird.

Myself: Weird in what way? Why do they find it strange?

KATJA: ***** think they find it strange that I haven't um, you know... found a proper job, built a house, married. And when I talk to them often I find that even though, geographically, they are really close to me and they are my family, I guess our worlds are very different and I have much more in common in some sense with my friends in Japan or in Palestine. *****important quote**** So... sometimes it's a bit sad but that's the way it is [laughs]- it's also okay. I also like them. [both laugh]

Commented [NN3]: time-space compression... living among worlds

Myself: Okay. That's awesome.

KATJA: **** Sometimes I get lonely and I feel like an alien on an alien planet. ****

Note: theme of disconnection

Myself: Okay [laughs] and is this with your family?

KATJA: Yeah, um, yeah, I feel like that's a strange one and I'm trying to find... *****

Myself: Okay, wow. That's interesting.

Do you feel that your travel abroad or your studies abroad have affected your sense of being German or your 'German-ness' according to other people or yourself?

KATJA: Oh, I dunno. I always had a problem being German as a kid. I always wanted to be something different [both laugh]. So, yah, I dunno. I really dislike nationalism so that hasn't changed but of course, um, ah, sometimes I also when I'm abroad I find myself longing for fitting in and just, not being stared at and not being given a higher price [in India or Syria and Lebanon?] not being the weird one out and just going to the - knowing your way around and just knowing exactly how it works.

Myself: Mm-hm. And not having to ask questions and...

KATJA: Yeah, I guess.

Myself: Well thank you do much, S. This has been awesome.

KATJA: Hope it's helpful.

Myself: I definitely think it is.

****END****

Name: Miya

Age: 21?

Langauages: Japanese

Universities: JNU...?

Nationality: American

Race/ethnicity: Half Japanese, half white American

Myself: Hi, M. My name is Nadia and I'm doing a research project for my Masters on transnationality and transnationalism and narratives of the transnational student. So I have a couple of questions for you. Is it common to study abroad in America or in the US.

MIYA: Yes, it's very common.

Myself: And why did you decide you wanted to go on an exchange Programme.

MIYA: Mmmmm... let's see. Um, I think since I was very young I've always been interested in traveling and I like wanted the opportunity to study, to be in other places and see places and so like my first day of undergrad. Oh my god, Seriously I was a freshman. I went to the study abroad office and they were like, "we're glad you're excited but come back in two more years ." [bursts out laughing]I'm not kidding. I was so set on studying abroad like since like my first year.

Myself: Wow.

MIYA: Super nerdy. Yeah, I've always been interested in travelling abroad. It's really simple. Especially the UC system. University of California. They have so many programmes that are really well structured. And it's super simple: like your tuition transfers, your credit transfers. So it's just a very seamless process. And my major, basically since I'm global studies, my supervisor since she like tells us we need to study abroad. She'll always drop that line, like "Oh, when are you studying abroad?" So I think that became part of my Mindset. So like you end up doing it and you go.

Myself: Mm.

MIYA: And a lot of my friends, well not all, but a pretty significant amount of my friends have gone to study abroad, at least for one semester.

Myself: Okay. And tell me about your experiences. Where - tell me about your experiences, like where you've studied?

MIYA: Um, So the places I studied was in Japan, so Yokohama, Japan and then here in New Delhi, uh-

Myself: When was Yokohama? Sorry.

MIYA: Yeah, yeah, no problem. No it's okay. I was in Yokohama from September 2013 until, well school ended mid-December, and then I left Japan early January. So a four month Programme there and then four month Programme here in New Delhi. And it, oh my god, it was amazing! They're both very different programmes. I think I

liked the Japan one better because it was better structured 'cause um, we were at - instead of how I'm doing now, like I have the American institution and JNU. We were just at a university. So we hung out a ton- we were just in the school. Like I mean English isn't commonly spoken in Japan but like the university I went to has an English language Global Studies Programme. So there's tonnes of like English speakers who wanted to speak with us to practice their English. So we made lots of friends. And we had this huge lounge that we all hung out in and our dorm wasn't that far away, so we'd all walk together and have food. Um, so it was just amazing in terms of getting to meet people and classes. Um, I like the India Programme, I just think it would have been easier if I was just at JNU and lived in the dorms and like got to meet people and been more integrated. Whereas righ now it's fun. But *** Um in such a like US bubble right now, *** cf TCK *** like literally everyone I hang out with is from the United States. Oh my god. It's like the United States - and Nadia. I like okay, but zero Indian people I'm hanging out with. Like f**k, oh my god. [both laugh]

Myself: And, um, Do you have any regrets about either of these places.

MIYA: Regrets... I think...Japan, no. I mean to me it's hard because I just love Japan so much and India is very hard. I think my regrets are with how the programmes are structured. I don't like how the Programme is structured in India because, I feel like it's very, in a way it's super Orientalist. We don't have very many critical classes like how this class is engaging and we're analyzing how we know what we know. And like how we're like we're tryna reconstruct and deconstruct narratives and histories. So it's like very very interesting but with the others ones it's like here's Humayun's Tomb, like here's Shahdara Hanabad: like look at all the poor people [interviewer laughs] so it's like [laughs] I'm not kidding. It falls on just a lot of simplistic notions of India. It would be so cool if we could have a poli-sci [political science] class, because elections are happening right now and we literally have no clue what's going on. To step outside the the very simplistic notions of India being exotic, and India being poor, India being ancient, like what's actually going on in India. I think that would have been a lot nicer for the Programme to have dealt with and taught with. And I think that would have encouraged I think a diversity of people. Whereas most people there whereas there are like into art history and stuff and that's fine. But in terms of like really engaging in India the Programme structure isn't like that. Whereas the Japan one. It was set up very differently because it didn't have a Japanese language requirement. So it didn't have all the like white people that were all interested in like Manga and Anime. Literally there were like two white people in my Programme. I was so surprised, everyone else was Asian. I was like "heeeey" [waves excitedly]

Myself: Wassup?

MIYA: I think it was very different. the people who were going on my Japan Programme weren't going because they had this idea of what Japan would be like, but they were going because like a lot of the people were Japanese so it was to embrace their culture or to get an experience of like being in the mother land. Or to like - just I dunno like cool people who knew what Asia was like and were going to experience a different place.

Which is the problem with the Indian

Programme...[reflects] which I have to tell them about. [both laugh].

Myself: Okay. Cool. Is there something you're particularly glad you did during these two exchange semesters?

MIYA: I think my first one I was glad I did a home-stay. Um, yeah, 'cause I lived with a family. And that completely I think changed like how I thought especially. Japanese families are. Um, because it did - like there was the mom who'd mostly stay at home and work part-time. Her two daughters and husband who worked in Tokyo all the time. But they were just like soooooo like loving and welcoming and like they let me in their house for like two whole months. You know this strange girl but we became very close. So I think that - I really enjoyed having a very deeper connection with people and especially having like this new second family.

Note: theme of disconnection is coming out and the importance of connecting in order

MIYA: I think for India what I really like doing hmmm... [pauses to think] what I really like doing, well 'cause like I'm like part of - I volunteer at this centre. Um, but I like it because I'm not like teaching. I'm not like working in - it's like a - they do crèches. My job is specifically doing research. It's super cool like reading all these reports and like learning about India that I'm not getting in my classes and so I really really enjoy that because there's a whole 'nother side and I mean it - they talk about the things that Indian people are doing to address poverty, they're talk about the different governmental institutions and there's lot of conversations about race and class and caste and religion and so it's super fascinating and I feel I'm getting a lot out of it so I like that aspect.

Myself: Um, that's interesting. So they build the volunteering into - it's part of tthe Programme into part of the that you're doing - so you get like credits for that?

MIYA: Yeah, I dunno if it's a practicum class...? It's called it service learning. And so all of us were able to choose an organization we wanna volunteer with. And so we have to spend between fifty to seventy hours there.

Myself: Wow

MIYA: Holy f*ck! That's a lot of f*cking hours. That's why I'm so busy. Like one it's hella far away so so much time is spent on the metro getting around everywhere. Um, so yeah, that's one of the classes and it's specifically on like. So the class is divided in two parts. So one lecture a week we like call it we call it processing. Which is a total f*cking waste of time. I hate it. We talk about what we experience and we feel - our feelings and stuff [scornful] and it's so boring. And we also have to write about what we do during the week. So we're literally just kind of reading what we already wrote online. So it's so terrible. And the other half if like a lecture on like different we haven't really talked about anything yet. The first... The past week we like talked about What is a NGO and what are the different types of NGO.[laughs]

Myself: Oh my word.

MIYA: Oh my god. We just recently started talking about caste but like he only like devoted one lecture to it. One lecture on caste?! It's terrible. So this one, there's... So with the IS Programme. They have a lot of practicum class. They have the service learning. They have this yoga class. You do yoga once - so you have one lecture just doing yoga and learning different moves and stuff and one class doing lecture. Then we have a performing arts class. There's one well, there was a lecture until our teacher decided she didn't have anything to teach anymore.

Myself: What? [both laugh]

MIYA: I'm telling you. What a sh*t show. She like e-mailed us, she's like "Well um. I think that's about it for my lectures - like no more class from here on out." And I'm like wait, like what? We haven't talked about anything! She literally talked about nothing and we have to write a five thousand word paper. [interviewer laughs] Ten sources and five of them have Who are you? I hate you. Ten sources, five of them have to be, I have fucking dancers to interview! So there's that class. We have three hours of structured lecture time class and then five hours of independent practice a week.

Myself: Okay. Wow. [both laugh]
And have you been home in between?

MIYA: Um, no not at all...Hell. no.

****follow up question****

Myself: I'd be interested to hear about your experience when you got home at first, like what and different at first and stuff but I guess we'll be in touch, maybe we can Skype about it?

MIYA: Yeah. definitely.

Myself: Has anything changed in you since your study abroad?

MIYA: I think a lot has changed. I think, um, just - oh my god, I'm really glad I went abroad. It was difficult doing it my senior year and not being able to like experience my last year at UCSB but I think it was good for me because the past three years I have been so involved in student orgs and stuff on campus that like just my like mental and physical health and physical health like went down the drain. Like I wasn't sleeping, I was telling the someone that sometimes I'd be too lazy, like I'd just be on my couch like I'm hungry but I just don't wanna get up. Like I'm gonna go to sleep. I

was a sh*t show. I think what's changed is it's nice having some structure in my lifers like having both the host families like there's time for breakfast, lunch, dinner, there's family time where we can talk and check in to each other. I think that's been good. Like living with people. For two years I lived alone because of my job and such. It's just been nice having someone to go home to and check in to. I always thought I was more introverted and I realise I do like people's company in that meanwhile I was just being introverted because I was so busy and just like stressed out and like that wasn't very healthy for me. So I think that's what's changed in me how I view relationships has become a lot more important. And also how I take care of myself now too. But now I'm not doing three million things. I can go to sleep at night instead of being a hot mess.

Myself: So you said you were involved in social organizations or student organizations?

MIYA: Um. student organizations, yeah.

Myself: In terms of what for example?

MIYA: Dear god - I was in all of them. ! I was a mess. I was involved in student government. So I was like on our Senate or whatever.

Myself: Oh, wow.

MIYA: And our school is really dramatic. Like right now is elections and I like have just not been on Facebook because I don't wanna deal with it - super dramatic. So yeah, I was involved a lot in student government and with student government there's all these responsibilities they have to do. Um, and then I was also involved in a couple of Asian Pacific Island organizations so trying to start one that's political and then one - 'cause um like none of the organizations are political on campus. So they never wanna discuss issues of like affirmative action or like sexual violence. Like API people don't do anything ever. So trying start a political API organization and also one that does counseling for API student that come in. Because ere's none for the API students.

Myself: What's API?

MIYA: Oh, sorry - Asian Pacific Islander.

Myself: Okay.

MIYA: Yeah, sorry - acronyms. I was involved with those two. Student government... And then, did I do anything else? [asks self] And I was tryna do research stuff but that

just went down the drain 'cause I was too tired. Oh, then I was also working too but my work was in the dorm so it was kinda like a student org but in the dorms. It was weird job that I had.

Myself: So you've talked about how you've changed as a person, how do you think you've changed as a student - do you think you've changed as a student?

MIYA: I think... Well I still don't do my readings [laughs] I think... Hmm... How have I changed as a student? [asks self] I think I've learned a lot abroad that I wouldn't have ever learned at my school. So I think in terms of the knowledge I've gained has been more expansive and analytical in terms of critiquing the education that I've had, comparing the differences.

Myself: Hmm.. Okay.

MIYA: I think going abroad and seeing how sh*t my Programme is here. And there was this problematic Professor - he and I were not friends at all. [interviewer laughs] He f*cked up one time and I never forgot that.

Myself: What did he do? [curiously]

MIYA: Hibakusha in Japanese means a person who survived the atomic bomb. They have a lot of social stigma to them because people thought they were contaminated so they didn't wanna be around them. These people needed extra and so they had a special card and so they were easily identifiable. The Professor, he does a lot on like Japanese and East-West poli-sci and stuff like that. So we went to Hiroshima and we met with this Hibakusha survivor and she spoke to us. I'm forgetting if he asked or someone else asked but someone asked how did she view the Japanese Imperial army? And the lady said that she does know that like Japanese Imperial Army did terrible things during World War II but she personally couldn't - had no resentment towards them like she did towards the American forces because in her like mind, the American forced that dropped the bomb on her and like killed saw many people and she saw the carnage of that whereas when she was about to die, it was Japanese Imperial Army soldiers that like pulled her out the ditch and carried her home and she says despite - and said she doesn't know much but this lady had been through so much in terms of the atomic poisoning so she was like I don't know much about history but I could just never hate the Imperial Army because they saved my life and he was like she "I felt like...!" [shouting] - One this woman woman has had tonnes of surgery, she can't hear in one ear, like her eye is gone, she f*cked up. I was like different time period, different lifestyle, it's okay that you don't hate the Japanese imperial Army because they f*cking saved your life. And he was like I completely disagree with that because there is no way that you can hate the Americans and not the Imperial Army and I was like you're kidding me, you literally told this lady that her beliefs are

wrong?, And we had to do a response about the topic of conversation and I said that I feel it's wrong for outside observers to criticize people's lived experience just because they are academics and they think they're right because academics will not always live through the repercussions or the circumstances. He flipped out! He wrote a long no at the back of my essay talking about what if it was an Iraqi war veteran who like had a grenade launched at him and I was like one you're taking my grading personally now 'cause he like dropped me five points. And this is Iraqi warfare, you're conflating these completely different things and you're making it dramatic. So afterwards, I was not down for him so every time we had a lecture so I would call him out for being sexist, racist or academia thinking it knows more than real people. And he was not down for that so we had some problems! That and IS, we hold teachers as if they know everything like these foreign teachers coming into international spaces and aft like they know everything; like you don't know shit you're a white man from Massachusetts, sure you have all these books on Japan but you're not fu*king Japanese

Myself: So would you do it all again?

MIYA: Yes, oh my god, yes - hell yes!

Myself: Would you do anything differently?

MIYA: I'd want to keep Japan the same. Like the first two weeks in my home stays was kinda like awkward because my communication skill were awkward and I was just nan awkward person. And if I had to do India again I would try to be in a dorm here and not the home-stay because Aunty G's nine o'clock curfew is not the business. [interviewer laughs] I dunno but then I love - like Aunty G is weird but her live-in staff are so fun like I don't speak Hindi, they don't speak English but we just crack jokes at each other all time, it's terrible. But no one knows like what the other is saying. I was very angry with India because it started off like "this is so exotic, let's put sarees on our face" and I'm just like I'm gonna throw up on you. I hate all of you." Maybe... I dunno - something... something - so I wish that had been different but the past two months have gotten better not that everyone's gotten adjusted, but the first few months were 'hectic' to use your terminology. [interviewer laughs]

****essentialisation, stereotypes****

Myself: How often do you speak to your family?

MIYA: Oh my god! Not very often actually, um...talk to my friends just because they're on Facebook. My brother is terrible at talking to me on Facebook. Like I'll message him and he won't say anything ever. I obviously don't say anything but I'm like you a*shole. I try to talk to my mom but my mom is a rambler [interviewer

laughs]so I limit it to text messaging 'cause she rambles so damn - she'll talk about everything and I'm like okay mom. I try to call my grandma. But not that often, I'm a terrible child.

communication

Myself: Like how often?

MIYA: It's probably spaced out with my mom like once a week. I'll facebook her when I need money. Like, "Hi, mommy." Or she'll facebook me about family drama. I know I call my grandma more but she's terrible to talk to on the phone. Well firstly she can't - well she can hear well so I don't know. It's also hard to Skype in my room because it's such a small room and if I wanna Skype, my roommate is there so if I need to talk sh*t I can't.

Myself: Okay, yeah.

MIYA: I can't do it at the Center because it's too small so there's limited space for me to Skype.

Myself: Has your view of the world changed since your studies abroad?

MIYA: Yes. I think... [pauses] It's amazing - one going from the US - Japan - India and seeing how there's so many ways of doing things and you think, "Like US what are you doing, you should things like India or Japan". So it's cool seeing just - differences.

Myself: Can you give examples?

MIYA: Public vacs in Japan are the business!

Myself: Oh, yeah?

transnationality Mindset to fit profile seeing things broadly and appreciating other cultures.

MIYA: [pauses] Okay in Japan I really like uh, Japan customer service is amazing. Everyone is really respectful. They are all about helping you and they go above and beyond the help and it makes things go by so much quicker. So as soon as they see you they ask like "what do you need?" And "sorry for making you wait" - especially for someone like me who doesn't speak Japanese it's comforting because it's like, "okay, okay, we got this". So what I like about India too [pauses] Now I'm getting confused because I just went to Nepal and I think Nepal do a lot of things better.

MIYA: What I like about Nepal is that it's a lot more community oriented. Like my

neighbors, their like kitchen was on the first flood and the door was also open so people just come in and have chai and talk. So if people have ten minutes and they're walking they'll stop by and catch up and find out how you're doing. So I really like that and we had this large lawn at the back and it's so that nice kids from all different houses are playing together like hide and seek and tag versus the United States where you stay in your backyard and you don't talk to your neighbors kind of thing

Myself: And why is that though?

MIYA: I feel like there is no inclination. You feel like you're trespassing if you go over... I mean people in Nepal would just sit on my bed like how do you put your nasty self on your bed..? All the teacher came over because the house I was staying at they run a school and the teachers would be sprawled out like eating chips and talking like I would - so many would people would freak out if strangers were sitting eating on their bed. There's a very controlled personal space in The United States, it's feels more lonely and isolated.
****individualism of America****

MIYA: I like the night culture both in Japan and India like I love food stalls where you can go up and get food. I don't know ant in - they're trying to start it in the United States but there aren't really any unless you go out clubdrinking. So I love food stalls and walking around and the mingling culture is very nice.

Myself: Do you feel like you're more of a cosmopolitan or a transnational since you studied abroad?

MIYA: Hmm...Do I feel I think maybe a little I can see myself living somewhere for a longer period of time. I can see myself living in Japan for a couple of years it India or Nepal whereas before it seemed too far off. I can get a job and get in the flow of things, I can see myself starting a life somewhere else.

*****seed of transnationality has been sown***
*time-space-opportunity compression** cf. Dürschmidt**

Myself: Oh, okay.

Would you say they it's difficult to maintain relationships through this experience of being a transnational or studying abroad?

MIYA: Difficult..? I'd say yes and no like in this time it's easier at this point that we're studying now like I have this friend that I talk to every day on Facebook and it's not

start a soccer team but she was totally fake though, she didn't bring sh*t! I hate her guts. It was a disaster. But since that project was just going to be three weeks I was like I'm not going to spend all this money for just three weeks so I'm gonna try and stay longer and my friend told me about this other organization where you could trade your services for free room and board, your. This is how I met this family that I went to visit this weekend. They had this small private school. I was able to have my own class and get to know the students really well. I also got to know the community really well too.

Myself: Was there a particular subject you were supposed to be teaching?

MIYA: I was supposed to be teaching a English grammar but like that school had a lot of problems that like there was aren't regulated times so so a lot of the time I'd be hanging out and talking to the kids the kids they'd tell m bout Nepali culture I'd be telling them about American culture. And they'd be like there's no teacher in class five so go in there and entertain them [both laugh] but mostly it was class eight so they were like fourteen year olds so like helping them with conversational skills so that they could improve their English.

Myself: How were they in term of their English?

MIYA: it was pretty hard because all their book are in but not the English level that they were at so it was super hard because there were like a lot of words and phrasing that they just didn't understand. And their English of how there's Hindi English - 'Hinglish', their's is Nepali Enlhsi so it was hard what's it - code-switching between the to between this academic British English and local, pigeon English. But they were really sweet student and we managed to get through it.

Myself: That's lovely Miyal You mentioned in terms of maintaining relationships being on different plains. What do you mean by "different plains", do you mean geographically or in trm of in your life?

MIYA: Maybe it's a little of both. So I mentioned to you that Iwas invoked I student politics so there's a lot a lot a lot of drama right nw and having a step back.. I mean two of my really good friends hate each other now...One thing... Going abroad I got away from this drama that I had got sucked into, and you see that it's kind of like irrelevant and there's so many fun things you could be doing. And two , with some people you had a lot to talk about because you were in the same location and like you were seeing each other. One of my friends, I still feel like we're still very good friends but we're just not the level that we need to talk to each other all the time.

"dislocation"

MIYA: And my other I can randomly message and we can catch up and he's also a part of this drama but like we wish our friends would be friends again but we but Being removed from the petty concerns and also realizing that you don't have to have constnt. constant physical contact and that Constant friendship that has to be constantly nurtured and always checked in on. Because they know that when a I come back we'll have this party, we'll go to lunch. rouge it'll be hi dorm I dunno. Oh my gosh!

Thank you, M. This has been very informative. We must have a follow-up Skype.

[41mins 17 secs]

END

Analytical note: In building the argument about 'temporary permanence' mention all the places she visited while she was there. Nepal, and the places in India

Follow up interview, question posed via Facebook messenger

Myself: What was it like coming back home after Japan and India? (Friends, family, expectations, any and all details)

MIYA: It was interesting coming back. I realise that people back home don't really understand my experience, and not all of them were that interested in what I had to share. My family wasn't that curious as I thought they would be. My friends were great I, wanting to hear stories and stuff, but the year had really put a lot of distance (and there was tons of drama) between us all. So in the end, I'm still really close with my study abroad friends, and we reminisce a lot together. And as more time passed, I realised how much I miss both Japan and India. So many little things.

Myself: Please could you lost all of the place that you visited whilst in India?

MIYA: Agra, Jaipur, Amritsar, Kochi, Mumbai, Varnasi/Sarnath. Nepal

Temporary permanence

Myself: Did you travel anywhere whilst studying in Japan? Where to?

I didn't go to many places in Japan! I mostly stayed in my host town of Yokohama and Tokyo. I did visit two other prefectures Iwate and Okinawa

****END****

Name: Sarah ('Sara')

Language: Swedish, English, German, Dutch

Nationality: Swedish

Myself: Um, so is it common to study abroad in Sweden?

SARA: Um, yeah, I guess so especially if you're in university it's pretty common to do an exchange for half a year at least, it's not as common to do your whole studies abroad **compare with the necessity for students from the Global South** But it's also common to do high school a year abroad in the US or Australia. But if you're in one of the big universities it's pretty common?

Myself: You live in- you're from Stockholm?

SARA: Yes, I'm from Stockholm but I studied in Uppsala (sp?) which is sort of like Freiburg, a bit bigger I guess.

Myself: And why did you decide to go on exchange or to do your whole university abroad?

SARA: Well, my exchange I only did basically because I - I met my boyfriends at the time and he was studying there and he was living there in Kronie (sp?) and I thought that was an opportunity and that so it was really easy to go, after that I really really liked it so I wanted to do it again. And I went on exchange for half a year because they give the opportunity at the university I was studying. And now when I was living in Basel for half a year without doing anything - without studying, then I thought maybe I should start studying again. It was just like opportunities, I guess.

Myself: So tell me about your experiences, like what was it like studying in the Netherlands?

SARA: Um, well that was pretty different to studying in Uppsala because they had a - they really had a big organization that organised parties and trips of us and we were in total like two - three hundred of us who came to study for an exchange.

Myself: Oh, wow.

SARA: So there was always something to do. It was impossible not to meet people, we also got divided into introduction groups so you got to know your group very well and you hung out with them for a week and in that sense it was completely different from Uppsala so you - got to meet people from everywhere - like other exchange students who were in the ***same situation.***Note: Disconnection::: or rather connection.*** And I also had my boyfriend there so I got to know the Dutch people well. But the studying was a bit different. It was a lot more busy. I think it was one of my best half-a-year actually [emphatic]. There was always things to do I'm still in touch with a lot of the people that I met, it was basically tough to be bored. You could really always do something and everything is so nearby and easy. I really like the people, they're 'chilled'.

Analytical note::

Myself: And what about language, do you speak Dutch?

SARA: No, not at all. Then I didn't but now I understand some but then I didn't speak at all. But they are really really good at English. They are one of the best non-English speaking countries at speaking English. So that was not a problem at all and it's pretty similar to Swedish as well when you go to the stores.

Myself: And tell me about here in Freiburg?

SARA: Why I do the studying here in Freiburg or how it's different

Myself: How it's different or both even?

SARA: Mm... Well I wanted to study here in Freiburg because I still wanted to live in Basel. And if you're in Switzerland you need to lead a certain level of German and so I though Freiburg is pretty nice and it's nearby. And it's also I mean a university city has that 'university feeling'. In that sense it's not tht different from Oupsala because it's a university city but our Programme is different - only being in a a small class compared with two- three hundred people.

Follow up question:

What is a "university feeling"?

SARA: Everyone says this is a slacker's because there isn't that much but compared to what I'm used to it's so much. [interviewer laughs]

Myself: Is there anything you would say I quite different language or culture wise-

SARA: Germany compared to Sweden?

Myself: Mm-hmm

SARA: So I mean language wise even though it is quite similar it I quite different. So you cannot walk around and understand everything. It's pretty annoying actually

Myself: And my German is far from good enough.

SARA: There is a bit of a language barrier. Culture wise it's hard to say or to quite put a finger on what it is. Even though we are pretty close and we share a history. Like compared to Italians they're closed-minded, but compare to Sweden they are closed.

****stereotypes*****

SARA: They're pretty talkative and polite.

Myself: Oh, yeah?

SARA: You have that sort of politeness but it's very rare to say hi or good bye when you sit on the train or when you're sad and someone comes to sit next to you. Basically. Otherwise...

I don't even know because I haven't been in Germany that long so I haven't really gotten to know the people

Myself: Tell me about Switzerland and Basel? When did you move to Basel?

SARA: More than a year ago.

I had just graduated from my Bachelor and then I really had no clue what I wanted to do with my life

Then I thought I could always move to Basel because my boyfriend is living there because then I can find some study or try to find. Job.

three years is enough living in that city

Myself: And what is it like

SARA: It feels like - twenty years in evolution or development because it is pretty conservative both when it comes to Gender Equality - just two years ago woman got the vote.

Myself: Oh, wow.

SARA: I thought there's no crime but that's obviously false. Everything is basically different. I think they're more nationalistic maybe because they get quite p*ssed of if they have to speak English as well because it seems like I'm not doing anything. So, yeah. I've had quite a few of those grumpy comments.

Myself: Have you been home since this time when you left and went abroad.

SARA: I've been back over Christmas. When I was working I went back in total five - four times in a year just for visiting and also 'cause I had to go back for moving out

Myself: What was it like? Was it different in comparison.

SARA: Uh, yes, pretty... like at home it's not a difference like if I visit my family. But when I visit my friends, in Oosala and that really moved on and I came as and outsider again 'cause envy thing changed and new people came in and they are like who the f*ck is this... ***outsider. But it's really nice to go back and speak your own language and be comfortable and talk a little bit more and you know how everything is going, you know which bus to take and you don't get lost.

*** (Dis)connection - feeling like a stranger

Myself: Yeah.... [pause] And would you say that you've changed as a person and as a student since the time that you left?

SARA: Yeah, definitely. Um, yeah because I got to think, um, afterwards.. I dunno - but like how I would react if I had to live there and started a life here. for a long time or for my whole life um, and I didn't feel very comfortable with it.

***Spirit/seed of transnationality.

Myself: Howcome?

SARA: Um, that's what I'm - I'm not sure. Like I thought about I'm not sure because I think it is because I sort left my life there and came and started a new life here but always knowing I would leave somewhere and go to somewhere else but going back it would be like I would have to start a new life again. 'Cause after all, my friends are like spread out in different places and everyone's moved on. I would feel like an outsider in my own home so to say. When I am here, I feel comfortable knowing I always have Sweden, I always feel more Swedish, [REDACTED] I do things that I wouldn't have done, I watch Swedish movies from now - from then and then to have a piece of the culture.

Myself: Yeah, yeah.

SARA: But then if I had to go back there - I don't know how I would react if I had to go back for a long time. But still I guess that's my aim for the future.

Myself: You ultimately want to go back to Sweden?

SARA: I think so but it's a little bit scary... But I guess after some timeout get used to it.

Myself: What does your boyfriend do in Basel?

SARA: He's working...We're working at the same company. But it's pretty big so we're working at completely different locations.

Myself: How have you changed as a student?

SARA: How I have changed... After some time being a student - or being a student abroad.

Myself: After being a student abroad.

SARA: Um, I dunno. I mean like I've definitely changed going from working to studying, um, because it was where I worked - I never used my knowledge, I was only doing these simple things that anyone could do basically did stuff that anyone could do. After a few months of studying it already feels really comfortable. I get to challenge myself. It's really difficult I don't know how I changed as a person. Maybe it's easier to answer after a few more months. I'm not sure.

Myself: Mm. [pause] Would you say if you were to look at your time abroad

SARA: Definitely not intra- European because we are going to Buenos Aires

It comes from being so tired of being in Sweden that I want to do something and I'm doing this because I can now. And aft this I wouldn't mind living in either maybe not N. Korea. For a short while[...]

