HOME AND AWAY: BRITISH WOMEN'S NARRATIVES OF COMMUNITY IN SPAIN

by

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ABSTRACT

Title: Home and Away: British Women's Narratives of Community in Spain

Aim: To examine constructions of community among retired migrants from the UK in the Costa Blanca in Spain.

Background: 'Community' as a concept has enduring theoretical and practical significance. Often discussed in terms of representing something lost yet recoverable, community has further relevance in understanding social change and continuity. Underpinning discourses of community, there is often a recurrent theme of loss and recovery which has utopian and nostalgic overtones and this permeates contemporary understandings of what community represents. This is also reflected by the Labour Government's appropriation of community as a panacea for social problems. Since the 1970s, migration to Spanish coastal resorts – costas - has significantly increased and retired British migrants constitute a large proportion of such movement. The development of theories to facilitate understanding of these new 'transnational' communities through lifestyle migration is a relatively new area of study and I aim to contribute to this. The idea that the absence of community is problematic combined with a romantic discourse relating to 'past ages'- or 'nostalgia' - warrants further exploration.

Methods: Seventeen in-depth interviews were undertaken with a theoretically sampled group of women who had moved to the Costa Blanca from the UK. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using a narrative approach.

Findings: There are multiple forms of belonging to community. Representations of community are multi-dimensional, complex and overlapping in nature. Place continues to be salient, but belonging to places is now more complex as a result of transnationalism through lifestyle migration

and increased global movement. Constructions of belonging to place are inextricably linked to networks and ethnicity.

Conclusion: Nostalgic constructions of community can be understood as an antidote to modernity and nostalgia denotes the mourning of a lost time as well as a lost home or place. In times of rapid social change, when people's intimacy with the world – represented as belonging to places, networks and ethnic group - is compromised, they seek to recreate it through nostalgia. Nostalgic constructions of belonging are key to how people give meaning to their lives. Different types of belonging are linked to community through a sense of nostalgic intimacy with the world. If intimacy with the world is compromised then nostalgia constructs and reflects belonging. In the absence of real intimacy or closeness, nostalgia is ignited through narrative and fills this gap. Nostalgia therefore, is a form of chronotope since it can be used to link time and space.

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

'Community' as a concept has enduring theoretical and practical relevance. Recently, in the UK, it has been re-appropriated by the Government as a solution to the problems of religious extremism, alarm about terror and sustainability and harmony within certain neighbourhoods. Often discussed in terms of representing something lost yet recoverable, community has further relevance in understanding social change and continuity. The development of new 'transnational communities' (Delanty 2003) through 'International Retirement Migration' (King et el 2000 p. 1) which has been a growing phenomenon in a number of European countries, for example, Spain, offers an opportunity to study this concept in new contexts.

Over the last thirty years, and during the last decade in particular, retirement to the Spanish coastal resorts (costas) has become accessible to a larger number of people (Ackers and Dwyer 2002), not least because the cost of living in Spain has been significantly less than in the UK. Migration to Spain has been gathering momentum since the 1970s, although it is difficult to accurately quantify the flow since Spanish authorities have been slow to gather data and not all UK migrants have *'residencia'*[1]. In Spain the largest group of immigrants is Moroccans (500,000) followed by Colombians, Ecuadorians and Romanians. The British number approximately 220,000 followed by Germans numbering 120,000 (Stalker 2008). However, this is probably a huge underestimate as only one in three British people register (O'Reilly 2007b).

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[1] According to the British Embassy in Spain web pages (UK in Spain) – since 28.3.07 all EU citizens residing in Spain for more than three months are now required to officially register with the Oficina de Extranjeros (Foreign Office). However, fieldwork for this research was conducted between 2003-4.

Migration from Britain to Spain is not always seen as permanent and it is often difficult to separate 'residential tourists' (O'Reilly 2003) from tourism, official statistics therefore cannot reflect an accurate picture (O'Reilly 2000). Historically, UK migration to Spain has centred on the Costa del Sol and more recently the Costa Blanca on the southern coast of Spain. This research examines the narratives of women who had moved from the UK to the Costa Blanca. This area is populated by large numbers of migrants over the age of fifty who have retired, often early, and bought 'a place in the sun'[2]. My research explores how people who have moved to Spain from the UK construct and represent community and uses narrative inquiry to elicit, examine, interpret and analyse their accounts.

1.2 The aims of the research

The overarching aim of this research is to analyse representations of community and to develop the uses of community within an interpretative epistemology. I focus on place, networks and ethnic identity as representations of community through my reading of the literature and by analysing the findings generated from my research in Spain. I argue that narrative analysis is the most appropriate methodology to achieve this and present this thesis as a narrative of and about the narratives of others. My role in influencing the research is considered and I acknowledge that the presentation of my thesis is an interpretation of both the literature and of the empirical data. I am particularly interested in how and why people construct community out of their original context and to this end, the research seeks to examine the development of a new 'transnational[3] community' through International Retirement Migration from the UK to Spain. An additional aim is to examine whether the study of community enhances understanding of social change and continuity, both in terms of making links between the micro and

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[2] 'A Place in the Sun' is the name of a Channel Four TV programme about buying properties abroad

[3] 'Transnationalism' is a concept which describes people who live in social worlds in more than one nation state (Chaitin 2009). I discuss the relevance of this concept to my work in the following chapter.

the macro worlds and in relation to community how this changes over time. My final aim is to develop a thematic, structural and performative narrative analytical approach to 'knowing community' and to generate knowledge that will contribute to theory on community, migration and narrative analysis.

1.3   Reviewing the literature on community

In the first two chapters, I address and explore literature that uses community, locating it in sociological thought and establishing its enduring theoretical usefulness. I begin this chapter by discussing the contemporary relevance of studying community and then consider how it can be used to understand social change and continuity and make links between the micro and macro worlds over time. I argue that underpinning discourses of community, there is a recurrent theme of loss and recovery which often has utopian and nostalgic overtones and that this permeates contemporary understandings of what community represents. I then discuss the trend of International Retirement Migration (IRM) from the UK to Spain to contextualise the research. In the final part of this chapter, I outline how the following chapter develops the theoretical debate surrounding community in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity and I explain how the thesis is structured.

1.4   Contemporary relevance of community: key themes and issues

> 'The term 'community' undoubtedly conveys a sense of solidarity built around some common purpose'.
> (Crow 2002b p. 2)

In this and the following chapter, I explore the 'idealization' (Crow 2002b p. 47) of community in spite of the vagueness surrounding the term. Community is an elusive and contested concept, often imbued with declensionist narratives, which refer to rise and decline discourses. This suggests that community is something that has been lost and recovered or that it has risen and declined in importance (Putnam 2000; Cohen 1985; Crow et al 2002).

Often, when discussing community, Hillery's (1955) 94 definitions are mentioned (see Bell and Newby 1971, also see Sherlock 2002). However, in line with an interpretivist epistemology (to be discussed in Chapter Three), I will emphasise the *use* and representation of community, rather than essentialist[4] definitions.

There is a proliferation of literature on community and this too partially *represents* the concept and must be seen, in a particular *context*[5]. Although the idea of community has preoccupied sociologists since the 19th century, its value and use has on many occasions been questioned (Worsely 1992). For example, community fell out of favour in the 1990s (Mullins 1999 and Crow 2002a) - although it has once more returned to the academic and political agendas (see the work of Back et al, 2001; Silk 1999; Bauman 2001; Sherlock, 2002, Crow 2002a, Delanty 2003; Alexander et al 2007; Temple, 2004, Wetherell et al 2007; Flint and Robinson eds 2008).[6] Further, the work of Sherlock (2002) supports the argument that studying community has contemporary resonance in that, although there is a focus on the effects of individualism in the present context and perhaps a movement away from a view of community as relevant, this has not been backed up by empirical evidence. Community studies[7] therefore remain significant.

Further criticisms have been levelled against 'community studies', particularly around the difficulties in defining what 'it' constitutes: inevitably interpretations will be explored throughout my thesis. O'Reilly's (2000 and 2007a) ethnographic studies of UK lifestyle migration to Fuengirola on the Costa del Sol contributes significantly to this literature and to the revival of community

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[4] Essentialism refers to the philosophy that for any given concept or 'thing' there are certain properties that are immutable. This idea and my approach to it are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.
[5] This is developed when I discuss the significance of context at the end of the following chapter and throughout Chapter Three.
[6] See Crow (2002a) for a full discussion of the rise and fall of community theory over the last fifty years. The work of these writers is examined in the following chapter in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity.
[7] There are other types of community, for example it has often been used in a therapy context but this is not my focus here (see Campling and Haigh 1999)

studies and have influenced my research as I discuss in the following chapter and Chapter Four. Although community was traditionally represented as having been lost through modernity (see for Bauman 2001), others argue that it has survived and endures in the global age (Crow 2002a, Delanty 2003), and I hope to contribute to this debate through my research in Spain.

Community can be understood as representations of different kinds of belonging, and these representations are heterogeneous. The endurance of community in sociological thought in part centres on its capacity to explain different forms of belonging in the modern world (Delanty 2003). However, although the concept of belonging is often used, it is rarely defined:

> 'Belonging and identity are words overused and under-theorised in the context of population movements and translocation' (Anthias 2006 p. 19),

with dislocation frequently being used as a corollary (for example Davidson and Khun-Eng 2008), and the concept of boundaries is frequently addressed as I discuss in the final chapter. Many writers do not define belonging, although they use it in their work; for example, Smith's (2005) study of children's sense of belonging in the UK. Jayaweera and Choudry (2008), although highlighting that migrants to the UK say discrimination undermines 'belonging', do not define what belonging is. O'Reilly (2003, 2007a) refers to belonging in relation to experiences of belonging to social contacts and friendships but she also does not define it. Anthias (2006) is one of few writers who articulates what belonging means, defining it as 'the sense of being accepted or being a full member' (2006 p. 19) and states that it:

> 'Involves an important affective dimension relating to social bonds and ties' (2006 p. 21).

Community is therefore a nebulous and context specific concept encapsulating, belonging, similarity or difference, inclusion or exclusion (Clark 2007). Further, it is based on a variety of concerns. For the purposes of my research I focus on place, networks and ethnic identity and I address this in

the following chapter. Community is therefore a contested concept which is constructed and subjective and not static nor objective: its contemporary relevance centres on the significance of deconstructing it (Sherlock 2002). I revisit this and the issue of context at the end of this chapter.

As indicated earlier, the issue of boundaries is also significant (Cohen 1985), in that they symbolically mark the beginning and end of a community and boundaries can be identified in all of the three types of community that I am interested in:

> 'All signifiers of borders and boundaries play central roles in discourses of the politics of belonging (Yuval Davis 2006 p. 3).

In terms of physical location and boundaries, there is a geographical finiteness to the community; for networks, those involved in them mark this boundary by who is included (identifying insiders and outsiders); and for shared ethnic identity, there are characteristics (real or imagined) which demarcate self and other (see Hall 2000) . Although I suggest that historically the study of community has encompassed the above uses (Lee and Newby 1983; Sherlock 2002), often these overlap and are difficult to discuss in isolation from one another. They are not objectively observable or measurable as I will explore, and, I draw each representation together in the final part of Chapter Seven. Additionally, people's belonging to community is often multi-dimensional, particularly if those people are displaced, since:

> 'Immigrants form groups on the basis of common ethnicity and settlement experience, but also according to place of origin, spiritual adherence, cultural and social differentiation and enhanced social capital.' (Lalich 2008, p. 52).

This denotes the multi-dimensional, complex and overlapping nature of different representations of community.

Having begun to introduce the concept of community and established the aims of the research, I now explore how this concept can be used to examine and understand social change and continuity in relation to making links

between one's own world, or micro and the world writ large, or macro. I also consider what it means for community to have been lost through social change over time, and why so many writers are preoccupied with recovering 'it'.

1.5   Understanding social change and continuity: links between the micro and macro

There are broadly three areas to consider regarding the contemporary relevance of studying community. All three aspects can be understood to reflect the wider context of social change and continuity (Crow 2002; Gillies and Edwards 2006). First, studying community is useful in terms of making links between the micro and macro. Second, focusing on community as something which has been lost over time yet is recoverable (Delanty 2003) illuminates processes of social change and continuity. I discuss these aspects below. Third, it is useful to think about community in terms of it being a political construction. In the UK context, current interest and intervention in community is premised on the need to promote cohesion and sustainability and can be understood within the remit of citizenship (or nationality). Currently community is an area of policy concern, often with a focus on representing a bygone age, or something that has been lost but can be regained (Delanty 2003, Young and Lemos 1997) and also as an indicator of social change over time. This aspect will be explored in detail in the following chapter. First I discuss studying community in terms of making links between the micro and macro.

Data generated from community research is represented as a useful testing ground for theories of social change in Crow's (2002a) work on community. He argues that the interconnectedness of continuity and change is a challenge to researching community relations, and,

> 'By grounding the analysis of social relationships in this way, community studies can reveal the local expression of macro-social forces and their impact on ordinary people's everyday activities' (Crow 2002a 1.3).

The appropriateness of what is seen as a local level analysis in an increasingly globalised world has been questioned (Worsley 1992; Meyrowitz 1985). However, the work of Urry (2000) and Giddens (1991) argues against the limits of studying the small scale and suggests that studying the micro and human agency can illuminate macro social change. Focussing on the motives and agency of individual social actors and the meanings they place upon them, (Giddens 1991) can increase understanding of the bigger picture. Crow (2000) and Sherlock (2002) further assert that studying community can illuminate the links between global and local structures, (in other words, the study of one's own world (micro) within the (macro) world). The work of Gillies and Edwards (2006) is also useful to support the case for examining the micro to make sense of the macro to make sense of social change. They argue that often focusing on the macro level distorts 'lives lived', so looking at the micro level gives us an opportunity to examine representations of change at the local level. In my research I seek to achieve this by analysing women's narrative constructions of community in terms of place, networks and ethnic identity using a small sample of women who had migrated to one particular location in Spain.

Examining constructions of community is therefore useful in providing a context for examining representations of social change and for interpretations of human agency (Crow 2002a). Community studies can allow for representations of the active engagement of individuals and groups in the remaking of their social world, or their human agency. In my work I focus on how the women who moved from the UK to Spain constructed community out of context through their narratives.

I now address how community is thought to have been 'lost' over time and why attempts are currently being made to recover it. This theme continues throughout the next chapter.

1.6   Understanding social change and continuity: community as 'lost'

I have already noted that community is often represented as something of a utopian ideal and there is a romantic and nostalgic discourse surrounding it, centring on its loss and recovery (see Delanty 2003).This idea of loss can be broadly interpreted in three ways: first, community as something that has been irretrievably lost; second, community as something that has been lost but can be regained; and third, community as something that has yet to be achieved, or as an ideal to strive for. All of these representations of community are 'ideals', since modern life is conceptualised as both destroying community and making it extinct, or lacking the preconditions for its development. This suggests that modernity[8] is the enemy of community and the past as well as community itself being idealised. It is the second representation of community – as something that is lost but recoverable - that will be explored and applied in this research, both in relation to its perceived loss in the UK and subsequent reconstruction in Spain as a 'transnational community'. This second interpretation is a rather more hopeful one – community as *Gemeinschaft,* as a cure for the malaise of modernity for contemporary society or *Gesellschaft.* This is a key point since the romantic and nostalgic discourse surrounding community, the idea of building community out of context has significant contemporary parallels (Hardhill 2006) and resonates with the Labour Government's agenda in the UK as I will discuss in the following chapter.

Throughout this thesis, the idea of community representing something that has been lost but is recoverable will be considered and highlighted. A general premise appears to be that it is 'better' if community is present as its absence is seen in negative terms. For example, Crow (2002b) asserts that:

> 'The positive associations of the idea of 'solidarity' (and related concepts like 'community'…) make it easy to assume that the phenomena under discussion are more or less generally welcomed

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[8] I use the term modernity here to denote the 'modern (Western) era' encompassing developments such as industrialisation, capitalism, urbanisation and individualism occurring in the late nineteenth century.

and that, conversely it is appropriate to treat their absence as problematic' (Crow 2002b p. 30),

while Elias (1974) argues:

> 'The use of the term community has remained to some extent associated with the hope and the wish of reviving once more the closer, warmer, more harmonious type of bonds between people vaguely attributed to past ages' (1974 p. 23).

This concept of the absence of community being problematic combined with a romantic discourse relating to 'past ages'- or 'nostalgia' - warrants further exploration.

Originating from the seventeenth century, nostalgia was originally a medical term[9] to denote the pain felt by someone who was homesick, *hiemweh.* In the English language it later became known as nostalgia, from the Greek *'nostos'* and *'algia'* which can be understood as (nostos) a return home (Boym 2001, Dickenson and Erben 2006) and (algia) longing (Boym 2001) or pain and sorrow (Dickenson and Erben 2006). Boym (2001) describes nostalgia as both 'a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one's own fantasy' (2001 p. xiii) and 'as a romance with the past' (p. 11), while Dickenson and Erben (2006) suggest that it 'is a culturally derived emotion' (2006 p. 223) which has both positive and negative feelings. It is a relatively modern Western pre-occupation (Boym 2001) and is linked to Western notions of linear rather than cyclical time and secular rather than religious societies. Wright (1985) suggests that:

> 'Western modernity has its nostalgia, a nostalgia which…testifies ..to the destabilisation of everyday life' (1985 p.20).

Like belonging, nostalgia is often represented as an emotion or feeling:

> 'Nostalgia, by contrast with a historical perspective does not seek to be analytic, but is allusive. This quality of allusive vagueness exists

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[9] The term nostalgia was introduced in 1688 by Johannes Hofer (1669-1752) (Boym 2001)

because nostalgia is primarily a feeling and not a cognitive process' (Dickenson and Erben 2006 p. 225).

Nostalgia therefore can be understood to represent the mourning of a loss but also an acceptance of such a loss, that is, recognition that something has irrevocably passed. Thus, nostalgia has pleasurable and painful connotations and is often linked to notions of innocent childhoods and the countryside and the longing for the home country or a bygone era (Dickenson and Erben 2006; Boym 2007). Nostalgia then, can be seen both within the context of and to denote rapid social change, since,

> 'Nostalgia inevitably reappears as a defence mechanism in a time of accelerated rhythms of life and historical upheavals' (Boym 2001 p. xii).

Implicit in nostalgia is that the past represents a 'golden age', since by comparison the present is perceived as lacking in some way. Being nostalgic can be understood in terms of attempts to bring the past into the present through narrative and I will explore the role of nostalgia in women's narratives in terms of constructing community in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity.

As highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, a new representation of community is emerging as a result of international retirement (IRM) and this has been interpreted as the 'transnational community' (Delanty 2003; O'Reilly 2000, 2007a; Cronin 2006). I now turn to discuss International Migration (IRM) to Spain to further contextualise my research.

1.7   International retirement migration to Spain

> 'Displacement has become the most powerful imagery for the modern world'.
> (Anthias 2006 p. 17)

> 'Retirement has recently lengthened through both earlier retirement and reduced mortality'.
> (King et al 2000 pp. 6-7)

In 2002, the UN population division reported that over 175 million people were residing in a country other than the one in which they were born and that between 1975 and 2002 the number of migrants living in the world had doubled (Cronin 2006). Bokert et al (2006) describes migration as an 'ageless human strategy to improve life' (2006 p. 2) and it is estimated that two to three per cent of the world's population are migrants. Also in 2000-2005, in 28 countries in the world (one of which is Spain), net immigration either prevented population decline or doubled the contribution of natural increase (Cronin 2006). The number of British Citizens who chose to live abroad permanently doubled from 53,000 in 2001 to 107,000 in 2005 and it is estimated that one in ten British Citizens live overseas (BBC News 24 11/12/06), leaving the UK at a rate of five hundred a day, many bound for Spain (BBC News 24 8/8/05).

Migration among older people, or International Retirement Migration (IRM), is not new but has increased in scale since 1960 onwards with factors contributing to this including increased life expectancy; early retirement; increased affluence and increased tourism experiences (Casado Diaz 2006). Together these mean that there are more options for people in Western Europe once they reach retirement age, one of which is moving abroad. The group under investigation could be described as 'baby boomers' and the term 'baby boomers' generally refers to people born during the mid 20th century. Baby boomers are usually associated with increased opportunities, growing up in a time of post-war affluence and being in good health. The term is also sometimes associated with the rejection of traditional values. This group is characterised by a mass consumer revolution, increases in affluence, benefits from owner-occupation and the opportunity to retire early, which suggests a more individualistic approach to consumption than previous generations. Phillipson et al 2008 argue that:

> 'The baby boomer generation has the potential to rewrite the political agenda…focusing more directly on 'quality of life' for individuals and communities'. (Phillipson et al 2008 socresonline.org.uk/13/3/5 8.2).

Baby boomers were the first generation to experience the benefits of foreign travel and cheap air fares and arguably, were able to make different choices from their parents:

> 'From a sociological perspective, boomers have been viewed as having distinct experiences that set them apart from previous generations' (Phillipson et al 2008 socresonline.org.uk/13/3/5 3.2).

The 2002 population census (Instituto Nacional de Estadistica 2003) showed that 90,000 foreigners aged over 65 were living in Spain and 70% of these were from the EU (Casado Diaz 2006). A study undertaken by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR 2006) which focused on UK migration to countries within the EU, reiterates that immigration is a subject of much current interest across disciplines but emigration (which has always been bigger) does not get the same attention. Significantly, at present, several million UK nationals live abroad, either permanently or long term and, the IPPR estimate that the number of such emigrants outnumbers the 2.9 million foreign nationals living in the UK, estimating that one in twelve UK nationals live overseas. The political and media focus has always been on the impacts of immigration but the effect of emigration on the UK and particularly on the countries themselves has rarely been looked at. The range of reasons for leaving is limited to retirement migration in my study, either permanent or partial, but there are numerous other reasons for émigrés to leave. The IPPR suggest that British people in Spain do not integrate very well into the host society, and that this carries implications: most notably the image of 'Brits abroad' and the potential impact on the social fabric of the country. This lack of integration is described as an 'ironic parallel' (Hardill 2006) since the focus of the debate in the UK is on the lack of integration of communities coming to the UK. Further, the scale of emigration is likely to increase and the EU declared 2006 the year of mobility with the intention of promoting the movement of citizens between EU member states. In this sense, it is clear that further understanding of emigration is needed, particularly in relation to debates about the nature of diasporas and transnationalism.

An article in the Financial Times by the Associate Director of Migration, Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah for IPPR (7/8/06) emphasises the ironic parallel of a country obsessed with immigrant integration that fails to acknowledge the impact of British emigration. Sriskandarajah predicts that one fifth of British people will move abroad when they retire and argues that between 1966 and 1996, movement out of the UK was greater than movement in. Further, 4.5 million British passport holders live overseas and are moving at a rate of 200,000 per year.

In Europe, IRM has been mainly movement from north to south – usually not for economic reasons - although lower cost of living is an issue, but for leisure opportunities and quality of life issues such as an equitable climate and availability of amenities. Often migrants have spent time in the place and are familiar with the lifestyle (Casado Diaz 2006). Migration can be seen as much as about escape and negotiating family responsibilities as being influenced by rational decision making, and it also embodies micro and macro forces (Ryan 2004). The population of Spain is just over 43 million and the British population in Spain amounts to 761, 000, making the British presence felt. In fact, more Britons live in Spain than any other European country (apart from the UK) and it is expected that this figure could actually be three times higher according to British Embassy staff (O'Reilly 2000).

The work of Hardill (2006) highlights the long tradition of holidaying and travelling to Spain and she draws our attention to the fact that out of the fifteen coastal areas (Costas) in Spain, nine have foreign home owners outnumbering Spanish nationals. The British have been in Spain since the 1950s and it is estimated that about one million Britons own property in Spain. (Hardill 2006). Movement has been made easier since the 1992 Maastricht Treaty which granted freedom of movement for EU members within member states subject to certain conditions (a significant one being that the British Government does not accept duty towards those who live outside the UK, in terms of health). Hardill focuses on international spatial mobility and refers to 'transmigrants', who can be defined as:

'Immigrants whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state' (Glick-Schiller et al 1995 p. 48).

Hardill attempts to plot overall movement trends but maintains that there is still a lack of data on migrants as does O'Reilly (2002). Hardill notes that holiday homes can become retirement homes and retirement migration spans semi-retired, early retirees and those who retire at state pension age. I revisit migratory trends in the context of the development of new transnational communities in the following chapter.

In this chapter I have begun to address and explore the literature on community and have argued that as a concept it has enduring relevance for understanding social change and continuity in terms of making links between the micro and macro worlds. Its presence, absence or loss over time can be understood as a reflection of feelings about different kinds of community as I explore throughout this thesis. I have introduced narrative inquiry as a means of eliciting data and making links between the micro and the macro and this is also developed in Chapter Three and throughout the findings chapters, Chapters Five to Seven.

1.9   Thesis structure

In the following chapter I develop these themes further and examine the myriad representations of 'community' under three broad headings, belonging to places, networks or ethnic group (Crow et al 2002; Sherlock 2002). My focus on these different uses of community was shaped by my engagement with the literature and my immersion in the data generated during my research in Spain. Chapter Two will continue the review of the literature on community and further locate it in a theoretical context. I argue that studying community has contemporary relevance, in terms of understanding social change over time through examining its 'loss' and attempts to recover it. Studying community is also useful to make links between the micro and

macro. Further, examining community in terms of how it is currently used as a political construction in the UK encompasses and illuminates social change over time and links between the micro and macro. I further develop and apply the argument that community is often conceived of something that has been lost but is recoverable and there is a romantic and utopian discourse surrounding it in terms of place, networks and ethnic identity and that there are also real and imagined elements involved. This chapter also focuses on migration and place and new forms of community; that is transnational communities.

In Chapter Three, I address the coherence between my research aim and methodological choices. I discuss my epistemological position, which addresses what it means to know community from an interpretivist perspective. I then go on to discuss my methodological approach and explain why I adopt a narrative approach and how my epistemological and methodological positions are related. I accept that there are limitations with any methodology and I discuss what narrative analysis can and cannot 'do' in this chapter. I briefly summarise the turn to narrative ways of understanding in the social sciences and describe how I interpret what narrative is. Finally, I discuss how I analyse women's narratives of community in Spain in relation to both content and structure.

In Chapter Four I provide a detailed description and rationale of the processes involved in data generation and analysis and to relate this to my epistemological and methodological positions. I address why I chose the Costa Blanca as the context for my study and why I chose to interview women. I introduce the research participants and discuss issues related to gate-keeping and access. I outline my sampling rationale and discuss how I make theoretical generalisations from the data. I also discuss the ethical considerations involved in my research and address my location in the research through reflexivity.

Chapter Five focuses on multiple belonging to community represented as place over time. Using thematic and structural narrative analysis I explore how

women who moved from the UK to Spain in retirement construct belonging to place. I use the plot typologies the quest and voyage and return to examine the structure of these narratives and to analyse how talk about the UK and Spain was utilised to construct belonging to places across time.

Chapter Six focuses on community as networks in both the UK and Spain. It addresses how women construct social networks in and out of their original context – or country of origin – and the value that is placed on these and the purpose that they fulfilled. I argue that people's interaction with others can sometimes be better understood in the context of social rather than physical environments (Clark 2007) and belonging to networks is constructed through being linked to the dynamics of a system of relationships and interaction. When women moved to Spain to fulfil the quest's purpose of a new home in better place, they need to be accompanied by 'quest companions' (Booker 2004) to successfully achieve this end.

In Chapter Seven I address community represented as ethnic identity. I argued that ethnic identity –as a positionality (Anthias 2002) - is pragmatic and produced for and by the audience and narrator. I discuss how there are multiple simultaneous layers in the telling of ethnic identity which are linked to the pragmatic purpose, or the ending embedded in the plot of a narrative as I discuss throughout this chapter. I explore how women construct ethnic identity while in Spain and how this is related to their future intentions, that is, whether they wish to remain in Spain or return to the UK.

I now turn to discuss representations of community as place, networks and ethnic identity in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON COMMUNITY

2.1   Introduction

In the preceding chapter I began to address and explore the literature on community in order to establish its enduring conceptual relevance. I suggested that new kinds of community were being formed as a result of International Retirement Migration and established that the main aim of my research is to examine how representations of community are constructed out of context by people who moved from the UK to Spain. Further aims are to examine what this tells us about social change in the 21st century or macro, and how people experience and made sense of it or micro.

In this chapter I further develop the themes highlighted in Chapter One and explore constructions, interpretations and uses of community under the broad headings of: community as place; community as networks and community as ethnic identity. As I indicated in the previous chapter, I focus on these representations of community through my engagement with the literature and the data generated from my research in Spain. I discuss these representations and how I use them in my research. I also examine how community is presently conceptualised in policy and political terms in the UK and highlight how this encompasses all three kinds of community. I conclude the literature review by considering the issue of context – or - what it means to 'know' community. The changeable use of 'context' in this and the previous chapter warrants some clarification. First, it can be used to provide a description of one's own territory or place. I describe women who have moved from the UK to Spain as being 'out of context'; by this I mean they are no longer residing in the country in which they were born. Community in these circumstances can be understood as representing a physical context. Second, I have referred to studying community as providing a context to understand micro and macro social issues. Here I mean community represents a

theoretical locus. Further, knowledge is generated within a context, that is, there are cultural, geographical and temporal dimensions and influences that shape such knowledge as I discuss further in Chapter Three. I discuss the interconnectedness of belonging to place, networks and ethnic groups in the final part of Chapter Seven.

I turn now to examine representations of community as place.

2.2   Community as place

It is impossible to completely separate each representation of community, since place, networks and ethnicity overlap. However, although attempts to pin down a particular aspect of a social phenomenon may lead to essentialism, which can be defined as 'a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the "whatness" of a given entity' (Fuss 1989 p. xi), it is difficult to write about community without doing this to an extent. In this section I argue that place is an important and enduring representation - although networks and ethnic identity are also significant. For the purposes of my research, place refers to both the UK and Spain and to the environment in which women lived within such spaces.

The first interpretation of community that I focus on can be understood to relate to the confines of a bounded settlement or neighbourhood (McIver and Page 1961; Murray 2002). There is however, some contention surrounding how such a geographically bounded community should be defined and described. Traditionally this has represented a single settlement, although Murray's 2002 study in Colorado, US, applies a broader use of the term, referring to 'several contiguous inner neighbourhoods' (Murray 2002 p. 104) rather than a single location. This representation is useful to the context of my work as I discuss in Chapter Four. Community as place therefore, suggests living in or feeling belonging to a location in a particular geographical area. Often, when community as place is alluded to, it involves studies which take place in a particular geographic location with a focus on specific problems – in this sense data is embedded in the context of community as place (Gillies and

Edwards 2006). This illustrates that different kinds of community can be linked and work together. In simple terms, community of place refers to a group of people who are bound together through where they live, although this can also encompass where they work or spend a continuous portion of their time. This has historically been associated with a neighbourhood, village, town or city. Crow (2002b) drawing on the work of Bulmer (1975) writes that:

> 'Traditional pit villages came closer than any other social arrangement to the ideal type of community in which there is a coincidence of shared place, shared interests and shared identities' (Crow 2002b p. 71).

Different representations of community therefore overlap and place is inseparable from context. Some researchers have questioned the basis upon which communities choose to engage with each other and whether place is their main concern (see Putnam 1993, Forrest and Kearns 1999; Goodhart 2004). Temple et al's (2005) work in developing communities with refugee people seeking asylum also usefully contributes to the literature on place representations of community overlapping with networks and ethnicity. They found that people experience community in myriad ways and they can actually belong to multiple communities simultaneously, all of which can be perceived to be in flux. Although place may indeed be the physical context in which 'community' is played out, place did not feature predominantly in respondents' accounts of what community meant to them. Much more powerful identifications appeared to be associated with non-place based communities; for example, religion, gender, and immigration status. They suggest that place perhaps did not represent an overarching definition since participants in the study seeking asylum in the UK found themselves living in a place which they had not chosen and their concerns were more immediately related to sustaining their threatened social and cultural identities in a new environment. Although the people in my study were able to exercise more choice in terms of where they lived in Spain, their social (networks) and cultural (ethnic) identities remained important and influenced by place and I discuss this in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

Sherlock claims that place is important when studying community. She argues in her (2002) study of Port Douglas in Australia against 'placeless sociology' saying that social interaction is located 'somewhere' and cites other researchers who support this (see Stevenson 1999, Jackson 1999). Sherlock (2002) concludes that a sense of community is constructed through narratives of place and lifestyle, adding that members of a community do not need to have shared values, but are instead 'bounded collectivities' (see also Dempsey 1990), in which a shared identity is constructed through interpretations of place, lifestyle and everyday practices. Sherlock suggests that community is 'A social construct which had real, empirically observable consequences' (2002 1.1). Low's (2003) study of gated middle class communities in the US suggests that these types of community in fact only fulfil the locale definition of community since they are not often characterised by belonging to social networks or to an ethnic group. Silburn et al's (1991) study of disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Nottingham suggested that people feel a sense of belonging to the place they live in irrespective of whether it is negatively labelled a 'poor area'. This means that people are not necessarily influenced by external labelling of places in which they live if they have constructed belonging to them, or that other factors are more important as I discuss later.

Other work in the UK, such as that undertaken by MacLennan (2000), reviewing the work of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) and neighbourhood regeneration programmes, raises some useful points about the continued interconnectedness of people and neighbourhoods, or place based communities. He describes neighbourhoods as localised levels which provide a context for service design, delivery and participative democracy and emphasises the importance of spatial awareness for policy makers with the idea of place representing a 'complex milieu of activities, connections and groups at some location' (2000 p. 2). He argues that it is at the street or neighbourhood level that public policies touch people and places and that as a result, 'people and place interact' (2000 p. 3). MacLennan emphasises putting the neighbourhood and community back at the centre of policy thinking (as it was a century ago in the Garden City Movement) in terms of

regeneration. He claims that during the last half century the UK lost focus in terms of the status of place or geography and commends the SEU for positioning neighbourhood renewal at the core of 'bottom up' change. He adds that the housing system has previously been given insufficient weight to shape neighbourhood outcomes in terms of policy and process and welcomes its restoration to a main feature in reviving local economies and service improvements. Since housing is 'literally grounded' in the neighbourhood there are knock-on effects for communities in terms of health, the economy, crime, benefit dependency and neighbourhoods as a whole. Forrest and Kearns (1999) refer to the tensions between place and people based definitions of community in the UK in relation to social exclusion and suggest along with MacLennan (2000) that a mixture of place and people based polices are needed.

I now examine how community as place provides a context for examining social change, both in terms of making links between the micro and macro worlds and how and why places are constructed, idealised and imbued with particular properties at certain times.

2.2.1 Place as a context for understanding social change

Community research as representing a context to ground ideas is evidenced in the work of Menahem and Spiro (1989) who argue that the sociological study of neighbourhoods is about community - in this sense, studying community provides the context for conducting empirical research and a theoretical arena. I discuss how this research was conducted and further aspects of the physical context in Chapter Four. Crow et al's (2002) study of neighbourliness in 'Steeptown' in the Isle of Wight use a place-based community as the context to understand how families operate in spite of individualisation and globalisation. This study, through examining the micro (the family) was able to identify how such macro (globalised) forces operate. This has influenced and has relevance for my work since I examine how women who migrated to Spain from the UK constructed belonging to place and the factors that underpin this.

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I discuss in Chapter Four how the women in Spain could choose where they lived but that this decision occurred within certain limits. The implication here is that context is important for which definition of community matters to people at any given time as Marsh et al's (2007) work on belonging in the UK suggests. Marsh et al (2007) argue that place is less important than it once was since there are new ways of belonging in the modern world and understanding this can provide an indicator of social change. For example, belonging to family, friendships, lifestyle choice, brand, nationality and professional identity were highlighted as being of more importance than place. I argue throughout this thesis that place is still important, and that in the current context of global movement people still construct belonging to place (Cronin 2006).

Wilmot and Young's (1957) study of kinship and family in East London and the re-study carried out by Dench et al (2006) focused on a geographical area as a context for studying community and social change. In their 2006 work Dench et al examine how Bethnal Green in the East End of London was traditionally the preserve of white working class families but in the 21st century, 'Bangla Green' is perceived to have been taken over by Bangladeshi people (in spite of the fact that they actually only comprise a quarter of the population). This minority ethnic group report high levels of hostility from white people towards Bangladeshis exemplified by an active British National Party since 1992. Such movement of minority ethnic groups into the East End of London was seen by a large number of those who took part in the study as a 'foreign invasion' and the hostility centres on the 'unfair' allocation of housing and schools (although there is profound misunderstanding of how it is actually allocated). In this study, place is depicted as territory to be competed for.[10] Dench et al (2006) report an overwhelming balance of negative opinions towards new ethnic communities, exemplifying fears that the locality is being taken over by foreigners (despite other ethnic groups comprising only a

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[10] The East End of London has seen successive waves of immigration (Huguenots, Jews, Somalis, Bengalis) as such competition for territory or place is historical. However, I do not intend to imply that all white working class people are racist.

quarter of the total population). The biggest complaint about these newcomers centred on their claims on the welfare state.

Throughout this thesis and in Chapter Five and Eight in particular, I explore how women in Spain constructed belonging to place and examine its salience as a representation of community. I examine belonging to multiple places – the UK and Spain – and how this is managed in the context of transnationalism through International Retirement Migration and increased global movement. I analyse how places provide the context for networks to be formed and for identities to be performed. I also problematise the complex issue of home and where 'it' 'is'.

The next section will consider the role of place and the imagery of the 'idyll' as an idealised place to strive for, or in some circumstances, to attempt to recover or recreate. I use the idyll to represent the idealisation of a place and explore the links between nostalgia and place below.

2.2.2 Place imagined: the 'idyll' as a romantic ideal

> 'Presenting as it does the image of a plentiful life without conflict or colliding self-interests, the idea of the golden age or the rural idyll seems always to have spoken to the constrained condition of everyday life'.
> (Wright 1985, p. 20)

I have previously suggested that discourses of community are often utopian and nostalgic (see Delanty 2003; Dickenson and Erben 2006; Boym 2001), and in relation to place, this can apply to romantic notions of an 'idyll', usually represented as moving to the countryside or seaside. My interpretation of an 'idyll' is that it can be understood as representing an idealised place; somewhere beautiful, tranquil and unspoilt by modernity. Rye (2006), drawing on Pahl (1966) and Newby (1980), refers to:

'The idyllic version of the countryside as a place characterised by nature and a dense social structure' (Rye 2006 p. 2).

Existing work on retirement to coastal resorts in the UK includes Karn's (1977) study of retirement to Bexhill and Clacton on the south coast of England which focused on the characteristics of 1,000 people who moved to the seaside in retirement and their reasons for moving. The study found that in both of these resorts, there was a high proportion of early retirees who had planned the move to the seaside before retirement and had moved shortly after retiring and that 'Retirement to resorts such as Bexhill and Clacton is very much a feature of the middle-class married couple in their 60s' (Karn 1977 p. 42). There was a significant link between deciding to move to a resort and previous holiday experiences there and overwhelmingly the moves were considered a success by Karn's research participants, with 84% in Bexhill and 79% in Clacton indicating that they would make the same decision again.

Blaikie (1999) suggests that the idea of moving to the seaside is imbued with myths and propaganda rather than an historical reality - particularly among older people who appear influenced by a range of symbolic meanings which ritualise community - alluding to 'golden times' for example in holiday brochures and a 'golden old age'. Such language confers on later life an honorary status and reflects back to an imagined period in the past where older people represent the link between the present and the past, and in contrast with probable experience, the past is better. However, it is worth noting that women in Spain were a relatively young group of retirees, with the average age being under 62 years as will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four. The people in my study had moved abroad to enjoy a rather hedonistic (usually early) retirement. These migrants were not seeking asylum or better employment opportunities, although they were pursuing a 'better life' in terms of its social quality in retirement. Coastal areas have historically been associated with hedonism and a holiday atmosphere (Bell et al 2004).

Holloway (2007) writes that:

> 'Representations of rurality including the clichéd rolling green hills, patchwork fields, and secluded villages with quaint country cottages are crucial to English national identity' (2007 p. 2).

Therefore, place is also about ethnic identity. However, such idealised images of the countryside where everybody knows their place have been critiqued over the last ten years since they privilege some rural identities over others and mask the experiences of 'rural others' (Holloway 2007 p. 2) for example, women. In this sense, the rural idyll can be seen as a partial, romantic representation of country life. I explore how women who moved from the UK to Spain differently experienced and reconstructed the 'Mediterranean idyll' through their narratives.

The Commission for Rural Communities[11] published a report in 2006 on rural disadvantage suggesting that the rural idyll exists for some but not for all (Burgess 2006), and this fits with romantic and utopian views on community as being imagined, or as Rye concludes:

> 'Rurality' as a subjective and a socially constructed phenomena located in people's minds rather than as a material and objective reality' (2006 p2).

The theme of subjectivity will be developed further throughout my thesis and particularly in Chapter Three in relation to claims about objectivity in research.

An idyll can therefore be understood as representing another place. I also suggest that it can be seen as representing the same place in another time, usually the past and I explore the role that nostalgia has in constructing places over time through narrative in Chapters Three and Five. In the UK, Young and Lemos (1997) explored the benefits of Mutual Aid Compacts which

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[11] The Commission for Rural Communities was established as a division of the Countryside Agency on 1 April 2005, as a result of DEFRA's Rural Strategy, and became a non-departmental public body on 1 October 2006, following the enactment of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

are reciprocal agreements between residents, established by social housing providers in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The basic premise of Mutual Aid Compacts is that they emphasise community creation through reciprocal neighbourliness, suggesting (or hoping) that mutual aid naturally follows on from being located in a particular neighbourhood. The ethos underpinning Mutual Aid Compacts appears to be an evocation and recreation of place based communities from the 1950s, so there is an idealisation of the UK as a place, in the past. The Policy Action Team Reports produced by the Government's Social Exclusion Unit (1999) also championed mutual aid as the solution for poor networks in deprived areas, again suggesting yearning for a bygone era when place-based communities were less fragmented and characterised by reciprocity among their members. Page (2000) also represents community reciprocity as the solution to modern problems of social exclusion, since location and people are inextricably bound through their geographical location. These aspects will be explored later in this chapter in relation to the UK Government's use of community and throughout the findings and analysis chapters.

O'Reilly's work in Spain (2000; 2003; 2007a and 2007b) provides further insight into the romantic role of 'an idyll'. For the British in Spain, migration is about holiday and escape - not work or asylum or refuge – and to this group it represents:

> 'A marginal site signifying holidays, escape, leisure, fun, liminality, fecundity and new beginnings' (O'Reilly 2000 p. 106).

However, I examine how Spain is constructed as a refuge against modernity in Chapter Five. 'Spain' is socially constructed as a place of holiday and escape - a locus of pleasure - and, moving to Spain is often seen as a quest for a better life[12], indeed, 'The motivation to move is linked to the ability to imagine an alternative' (O'Reilly 2007, p. 285).

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[12] I discuss the move to Spain as a quest for a better life in Chapter Three, Four, Five, Six and Seven.

It is worth noting however, that such positive characteristics are bestowed upon Spain, rather than being essentially intrinsic to the geographical place. O'Reilly is careful to differentiate between the different types of residents in Spain, since this is significant in terms of how they represent it as a place. She defines four categories: first, full and returning residents whom she describes as being committed to Spain. The full residents live there permanently and no longer have a residence in the UK, The returning residents often have two homes, one in the UK and one in Spain although they are characterised by the length of time they spend in Spain each year. Both of these groups tended to see Spain as home. Seasonal visitors are a second category which can also be split into two sub-groups. These are the winter visitors who are usually retired and come to Spain for the winter months. The summer visitors come to Spain for employment during the summer months and some of these consider Spain to be home. Third, peripatetic visitors who often own properties in Spain but still work in the UK. The final group are the tourists, who are temporary visitors who go to Spain for holidays. For this last group, Spain is not about home or work, but holidays. I introduce the women I interviewed and their way of life in Spain in Chapter Four.

O'Reilly notes that the more permanent migrants construct negative images of Britain as a place, or an 'unidealised view of home' (2000 p. 98) and she describes the 'bad Britain discourse' (2000 p. 90) as follows:

> 'Routine; dullness; monotony; greyness; cold; no hope for the future; a miserable old age; misery; modern life; rushing around; no time for pleasure; crime; selfishness; lack of caring; loss of community; lack of trust; poor health; poor education and a poor welfare state'(2000 p. 99).

This is contrasted with a 'good Spain' (2000 p. 90) equivalent focusing on all the positive attributes of Spain as a place: my research picks up on these themes later on and explores them further in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

In O'Reilly's (2000) study, those committed to staying in Spain emphatically asserted that they did not want to return to the UK. For all of the groups

identified in her research, Britain, the place, represented security (often in terms of the Welfare State) while Spain represented freedom. However, depending on their circumstances and intentions, there were differences between the groups in terms of how they conceived this and how they represented their attachment to Spain as a place. O'Reilly (2007b) conducted further fieldwork in Malaga between 2002 and 2004, finding that British people wanted to escape a country that they believed was failing them although they were not expected to assimilate by the Spanish Government. In Spain Britons could retain their own culture, and construct (transnational) communities that transcended place. In her more recent work (2007b), O'Reilly refers to migrants as 'elite transmigrants' or 'residential tourists' (2007b p. 277) who have fluid migration trajectories but high levels of social, cultural and political exclusion.

Although this group effectively benefit from being of the 'baby boomer' generation (see Chapter One) in terms of their affluence and ability to move around Europe, once they move to Spain, they find themselves enclosed in ghettos and on the margins. O'Reilly frames this in terms of a 'mobility enclosure dialectic' which denotes the tensions and contradictions involved in the freedom of movement enjoyed within the EU for its members, combined with minority ethnic groups living in areas effectively segregated from the indigenous population in Spain. The mobility enclosure dialectic highlights the contradictions between such freedom of movement and the reassertion of boundaries, resulting in an ambiguous status for migrants from the UK to Spain. This is an important issue which will be revisited in later chapters. I explore this dialectic in relation to women who moved from the UK to the Costa Blanca and develop this to make links between place, networks and ethnic identity construction. I discuss how place, networks and ethnic identity are linked at the end of Chapter Seven. I highlight the significance of O'Reilly's work for my own research in relation to networks and ethnicity below and also under 2.6 later in this chapter.

Having addressed community represented as place, I now go on to discuss the second interpretation of community – as networks.

2.3   Community as networks

'It is the relations of social bonding rather than just propinquity which create a sense of community'.
(Sherlock 2002 7.2).

The second interpretation of community relates to constructions of social networks. In this section I address community represented as networks, the role of social capital and how network communities can be of 'limited liability' (Suttles 1972, p. 59) or, how belonging to networks can be superficial and pragmatic. However, as Menahem and Spiro (1989) assert, attempts to understand community in terms of networks do not make for an easier definition of community since there are complexities involved in using networks as representations of community as I discuss below.

Networks refer to contacts, ties, connections or attachments[13] (Cant 2004) and the significance of networks in the post modern era has received a good deal of attention (Nisbet, 1973, Jamieson 2006; Morgan 2006; Heaphy 2006; Savage et al 2005, Ryan 2004 and Clarke 2007). All of these writers have in common a focus on community as represented by networks. Within this representation of community, people are seen to construct belonging through being linked into the dynamics of a complex social system of relationships and interactions (Gilchrist 2002). With regard to the social context, or networks, an individual's experience of belonging to networks is represented as a construction based on the outcome of interaction and engagement with such formal and informal local networks.

Clark (2007) reviews the literature on social networks in the context of the changing nature of 'community' and highlights three competing approaches to

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[13] I use belonging rather than attachment in my work since attachment tends to be associated with psychological perspectives of understanding human relationships and agency. Attachment theory was formulated by John Bowlby, (Mercer 2006) a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, who focused on the emotional development of children.

understanding networks, or, three different ways of conceptualising how people are connected to one another. First, is the traditional community as locality approach, where social contacts are conceived of as bound to location. Second, is the social networks approach, encapsulating the networked nature of social contact. Third, is within the context of approaches which see individuals as connected through 'small worlds', or attempts to understand the linked nature of different networks.

Drawing on Bott (1957) and Larsen et al (2005), Clark (2007) acknowledges the importance of place as forming the context for social networks, but argues the value of studying community in relation to social networks, since an individual's interaction with others is best understood in the context of social rather than physical environments. However, he does recognise that focusing on networks alone does not provide a solution to understanding the myriad complexities of community. Further, Clark (2007) identifies some difficulties with focusing on networks to illuminate understanding of community. For example, there is no consensus on what a network approach embodies, or indeed what a network is. There are further problems when attempting to use social networks as metaphors for social relations since there are a number of gaps, and disagreement exists about the best methods to employ. There are also issues in determining how networks exist beyond individual ties and there is an over-reliance on the idea of networks facilitating access of groups to resources. Finally, Clark (2007) although not focusing on gender, race or class, acknowledges that there are difficulties in determining the levels of agency among network members. My research suggests that 'network' can be conceived of as both a noun and a verb since it represents the outcome and the processes of human agency and I focus on the network representation of community in Chapter Six.

Ryan's (2004) study of transnational migration among Irish women to Britain in the 1930s also emphasises the role of networks in migration both in terms of support systems in the country of origin and in relation to the new host country. She explores how women who migrated from Ireland to the UK maintain links with their country of origin and manage and negotiate family

responsibilities. Ryan suggests that family could in fact be a source or support or something to escape, describing the 'Many overlaps and tensions between autonomy and loyalty, responsibility and independence' (2004 p. 365). In spite of such tensions however:

> 'Most of the women explained their migration in ways that did not conflict with loyalty and responsibility to their families' (2004, p. 365).

How women managed to thrive away from established social networks in their country of origin is an important theme in my research. I examine how women who moved from the UK to Spain manage, negotiate, construct and reconstruct belonging to social networks – including family - both in the UK and Spain.

O'Reilly's (2000) ethnographic study of Britons in Spain significantly contributes to debates about networks as representations of community. She asserts that although migrants are separate from their host community, it is appropriate to conceive of this separateness in terms of networking and exchange, that is, the creation of symbolic boundaries on the margins of Spanish society rather than in terms of residential segregation (although my sample were also residentially segregated). As discussed above however, her 2007 work on the mobility enclosure dialectic suggests that, although migrants benefit from high levels of mobility, they do in effect become residentially segregated or 'enclosed', and this influences the kinds of networks they have access to as I explore in Chapter Six. O'Reilly refers to these networks as interlinkages between people and argues that this is constructed through membership of British run social clubs which are independent from Spanish structures and also through their engagement with informal exchange and participation in an informal economy which completely bypasses the Spanish system. In this sense, these Britons are constructing a community drawing on shared values embedded in social networks:

> 'Informality, exchange, reciprocation, marginalisation and the building
> of networks are community building work' (O'Reilly 2000 p. 127)

This community building allows them to enjoy Spain rather than simply survive in adverse circumstances. Thus, for O'Reilly, the British community in Spain is characterised by informal activity, networking, exchange, informal work and volunteering and this draws individuals into dense networks, symbolically distinguishing between insiders and outsiders.

In this thesis I explore how networks – or belonging to groups - are linked to place and identity. I examine how belonging to networks is complex and fluid through migration and the creation of new communities out of one's original context and how this reflects the rapidity of social change and movement. I assess how where someone originates from influences the kind of networks they engage in and the role of common language and shared background. The community in my study is a new, isolated diasporic community and my research examines how the women live and who they network with once in Spain. I consider how the role of the imagination is significant regarding networks in terms of imbuing social networks with certain characteristics over time. Again the role of the past and its influence on the present is important here as I discuss in Chapter Six.

2.3.1 Networks as limited liability

Traditional studies of the network representation of community suggest that to belong is predicated on residing in a particular area for a long period of time. The study conducted by Elias and Scotson (1994) of a community near Leicester in the late 1950s and early 1960s which was first published in 1965 showed a sharp distinction between an old established group and newcomers to the area. They found that the established group closed ranks against the newcomers and attributed superior virtues to themselves. It is interesting here that there were no differences in terms of race, ethnicity or class; the only difference was that one group had been in the area for two to three generations whilst the others were newcomers, so only their length of residence differentiated them. Elias and Scotson (1994) found that the more established residents were more cohesive than the new ones who were not only strangers to the established residents but also to each other. Crow et al's

(2001) paper generated from their study of 'Steeptown' in the Isle of Wight examined who was 'in' and who was 'out' of the community, with Islanders seeing themselves as insiders while 'overners' or newcomers were positioned as being 'out'. They found that a person's claims to be an insider could be on the grounds of length of residence but could also relate to participation in local community organisations, and long residence could be construed negatively (parochialism).

Sherlock (2002) argues that examining a community in a different social setting goes some way to challenging the myth that community can only be constructed among long established social networks. There are further parallels between Sherlock's work and my own: Port Douglas is a newly developing, transient town and tourism has increased its popularity. Similarly in the Costa Blanca, where the research for this thesis was undertaken, migration from Britain is to a large extent due to people's previous experiences of holidays in the area but it has only been developed and marketed as 'residential' for northern Europeans in the last ten years or so. For Sherlock, because of this recent development, 'locals' are people who have been there for a relatively short time. Belonging to networks therefore, has not resulted from relationships that have been built up over generations. This will be explored in relation to women who had moved to Spain for whom social networks are recent constructions that had to withstand a relatively transient status. Another similarity identified between Port Douglas and Costa Blanca, is that a large proportion of the population migrated on the basis of lifestyle or choice. Sherlock claims that:

> 'Migrants come to Port Douglas hoping to find an oasis of community'
> (2002 4.1)

and I explore how and why migrants from the UK to Spain constructed such a sense of community.

Crow, et al (2002) argue that in modern society, neighbourliness need not be a reaction to common hardship. Their work on the Isle of Wight centred on

neighbourliness or 'busybodies and nobodies' and examined how privacy and sociability are negotiated in the context of declining community control. Crow et al reject 'the stark opposition between presence or absence of community' (2002, p. 128) and allow for a recognition that several kinds of neighbouring – or networking - are possible so that people do not have to be reduced to being either busybodies or nobodies. They also highlight that neighbouring styles are constructed rather than being a local structural feature, with diversity among relations between neighbours combined with physical closeness and social distance potentially making relations difficult to manage. They argue that relations between neighbours are more positive than theories of globalisation and privatisation might suggest and people manage to keep a 'friendly distance' in the modern age, since:

> 'A good neighbour can be described in general terms as someone who respects others' rights to privacy but who at the same time makes herself or himself available to be called upon if necessary' (p. 129 2002).

However, networks may be of 'limited reciprocity' (2002 p. 137) since construction of networks is a voluntary choice rather than an economic necessity. Crow et al (2002) conclude that relations between neighbours endure and that respect for privacy did not prohibit meaningful ties between neighbours. Neighbourliness can be represented as 'friendly distance'. Contemporary neighbourliness is therefore distinct from compulsory solidarity which can be understood to arise from the shared disadvantage of past communities.

Sherlock's (2002) study of Port Douglas, a resort town in northern Australia, adds to this debate. She argues that networks need not encompass duty or reciprocity describing Port Douglas as a 'community without obligation' (2002 5.10), a hedonistic community with a lack of commitment and social responsibility. Sherlock (2002) asserts that:

> 'Social networks can be created through these lifestyle based gatherings, they lack the commitment to collective good that

accompanies theories of social capital and voluntary organisations'
(2002 5.10).

Here, individualism is a key feature of the experience of community (Black
and Hughs 2001 see also Greer 1987; Paterson and Conney 1997,
MacCannel 1992). This is significant for my research in that the women in
Spain were constructing a community founded on hedonism in older age,
although as I have explained above they were relatively young. In other
words, both communities revolved around a social scene rather than
collective social action, so in this way it is perhaps more appropriate to refer to
'club capital' (Winter 2000) rather than social capital. This former term
denotes the superficiality and pragmatism of such networks.

Throughout my thesis I examine how the women I studied in Spain
constructed and utilised 'club capital' and the value placed on social networks.
I examine how migrants from the UK to Spain negotiated a life on the margins
of Spanish society and how they manage to pursue their interests, and on
what premises belonging to networks was determined.

2.3.2 Social capital and networks

When discussing networks, the concept 'social capital' is often employed to
describe the resources or adhesive binding people together (Putnam 2000).
Social capital is often used in discussions of community - representing links
between individuals (Li et al 2002). As a concept, social capital has its origins
in the 1950s and its development can be traced through to Coleman in the
1980s and 1990s and most recently in the work of Putnam on the decline of
civic engagement in the US (Baron 2004).

 Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as 'the aggregate of the actual or
potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of
more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and

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recognition '(1986 p. 248). Coleman (1990) similarly describes social capital as:

> 'A variety of entities which have two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure' (p. 2 p. 302 cited in Prell 2006).

More recently, Putnam defines social capital as:

> 'Connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them', or, 'civic virtue' (Putnam 2000 p. 19).

Putnam's work is associated with cohesive communities based on face-to-face relations, ethnic homogeneity and generally harmonious relationships (Zontini 2004; Coleman 1990). Simply put, social capital encompasses obligations, expectations and norms and sanctions (Zontini 2004) and refers to the values people have and the resources they can access which amount to and are a result of collective and socially negotiated ties and relationships (Edwards et al 2004). As a concept, social capital has been useful to argue against the presumed effects of postcapitalism and postmodernism, for example, individualisation, globalisation and fragmentation (Edwards et al 2004) and it provides a useful conceptual link between individuals, communities and the global market (Baron 2004). For Putnam, network capital refers to social capital of the group rather than that which exists at the individual level (Prell 2006), although Putnam sees social capital as a structural feature of large aggregates, for example, communities, regions and nations rather than individuals and families (Edwards 2003).

Social capital or 'general reciprocity' (Putnam 2000) as a concept therefore has received a good deal of attention in relation to community (Prell 2006; Bourdieu 1986; Coleman; 1988; Putnam 2000), particularly as noted earlier in the UK under New Labour's renewal agenda (Roberts and Devine 2003; Edwards et al 2003; Baron 2004) and I address the importance and influence of social capital in UK Government thinking later in this chapter.

There are two aspects to social capital: first, bridging social capital which is inclusive - for example, the civil rights movement - and embodies what Putnam (2000) describes as 'WD40', implying it eases relations and facilitates movement; and second, bonding social capital which is exclusive and inward looking, reinforcing exclusive identities of homogenous groups and in this sense can be conceived of as 'superglue', re-establishing the closure of particular groups. This second type of social capital is thought by Putnam to be the stronger, and this raises important questions about how well it can work for those outside a particular network. Woolcock's (2001) work has added to this debate. He introduces a third kind of social capital - linking social capital - and his definitions of bonding and bridging social capital differ from Putnam's. He describes bonding social capital as ties between people in similar situations, such as immediate family, close friends and neighbours. Unlike Putnam, Woolcock sees bridging social capital as embodying more distant ties with *like persons*, for example, acquaintances and work colleagues. Linking social capital refers to ties with people completely outside of the community and is similar to Putnam's use of bridging social capital.

There are, however, difficulties with social capital as a concept since it does not take account of gender (Edwards 2003; Zontini 2004). Also, when ethnicity is mentioned, it seems to only be in relation to the lack of social capital of inner city minority ethnic groups (Putnam et al 1983). In terms of gender divides, women are often given the role of social capitalists and their increased role in the employment market is linked to the demise of social capital within communities (Zontini 2004). Although social capitalists touch on issues that feminism has worked to put on the agenda (Franklin 2005: Brugel 2005), theories of social capital focus on networks and relationships without any reference to power or gender:

> 'Mainstream social capital places women un-problematically at the centre of community life' (Franklin 2005 p. 2).

Ryan (2004) focussed on how networks in migration are gendered and how women who migrated from Ireland to Britain managed 'The seemingly competing narratives of compliance and defiance' (2004 p. 352). She argues that for women, migration and the maintenance of close family bonds, for remittance purposes for example, may reproduce gendered roles. In her study, women did not see themselves as acting alone, but instead needing to fulfil family obligations both in the original home and in the new home by assisting the migration of siblings. This suggests that family networks often operate in gendered ways, effectively reinforcing gendered roles. Ryan concludes by arguing that the concept 'family networks' is a useful analytical tool to understand how migratory processes are gendered.

This gender blindness has led to calls for a feminist approach to understanding social capital (Brugel 2005).There are further problems in the way that social capital has been used as a cure-all for community ills, and structural inequalities within and between communities have been ignored (Edwards et al 2003). Edwards et al (2003) point out that social capital is not value-free and that there are:

> 'Drawbacks in relation to the theoretical methodological and political assumptions that underpin mainstream theories of social capital' (2003 p. 8).

Social capital fits with within the New Labour policy agenda regarding families and communities and tends towards conservatism regarding the role of women. This means that power imbalances between genders are not accounted for and it further creates tensions for women's rights.

Having addressed the place and network representations of community and how I will use these to make sense of multiple senses of belonging, I now turn to examine community represented as ethnic identity.

2.4 Community represented as 'ethnic identity'

'Ethnic categories are forms of social organisation, postulating
boundaries with identity markers'
(Anthias 2002 p. 498)

As previously discussed, a new interpretation of community – based on and
linked to the idea of community as imagined - is emerging as a result of
International Retirement Migration (IRM) and this takes the form of the
'transnational community' (O'Reilly 2000; Delanty 2003). This is represented
as embodying and being underpinned by a sense of 'belonging' with 'a gloss
of commonality' out of one's own context (O'Reilly 2000) and can also be
seen in relation to the concept of 'diaspora' which is a way of thinking about
national identities in a period of 'unprecedented national movement' (Dudrah
2004 2.1).

This definition or representation of community is one that is increasingly seen
as the study of a collective identity or status. Identity can sometimes be
understood to denote belonging (Anthias 2002) and as noted in the previous
chapter, this is important for my work. There are numerous 'identities' which
one could feel and think one is. I focus on 'ethnic identity' over other possible
identities for the purposes of my research with women who have moved from
the UK to Spain, as it was privileged in the women's narratives. Before I go on
to discuss this, I define how I use 'identity' and 'ethnicity'.

Anthias's (2002) work on identity is useful to make sense of the
epistemological and ontological complexities surrounding the concept of
identity[14]. She argues against using identity as a sociological concept, but
maintains that it still is useful as a socially meaningful concept. That is,
although what is considered to be described by identity has analytical value,
labelling it thus detracts from this. In other words, Anthias argues that the term
identity is a fixed way of attempting to understand who one feels and thinks
one is and does not allow for any consideration of the processes which lead to

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[14] This will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

identity formation, or the context in which identities are constructed and performed. However, within my interpretivist epistemological perspective (and in many other narrative uses of identity, (for example Holstein and Gubrium 1998, 2005; Riessman 1990, 2000a and 200b; Temple 1996, 2008a) I do not present 'identity' as fixed or having an essence, although Anthias' work is useful to highlight some of the limitations of some ways of using the label 'identity'. She describes it thus:

> 'The concept of identity…obscures, reintroducing essentialism through the back door, and shifting attention away from context, meaning and practice' (2002 p. 492).

I develop this further in the following chapter in my discussion of narrative and identity and Anthias' concept of 'translocational positionalities' (2002).

Ethnicity, 'as a possessive property' (Anthias 2002 p. 494) is another contested term:

> 'Sometimes denoting a sense of belonging to an ethnic group; sometimes meaning shared cultural ingredients; sometimes being depicted as a social place structured by the existence of ethnic hierarchies and so on' (Anthias 2002 p. 497).

I explore how women who have moved to Spain from the UK located themselves in terms of their perceived ethnicity and I adopt Anthias' definition of ethnicity as described above. I also explore how they experienced ethnicity and what this concept meant to them out of context. I have already mentioned that belonging to groups or places often encompasses a feeling or sense of something, and, similarly, ethnic affiliation can be imagined[15] and is a construction. Milner (1968) refers to the significance of 'community of feeling', so community need not be a territorial concept nor be contingent on networks or relationships.

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[15] I discuss the role of the imagination in narrative in the following chapter.

It is useful at this juncture to introduce both Britishness and Englishness as potential ethnic or national[16] positionalities. Byrne (2007), in her study of white women in inner city London, refers to the contested and racialised nature of Englishness as a national identity and argues that Englishness and Britishness are in crisis, posing the question: 'where does Englishness stop and Britishness begin?' (2007 p. 509).

Byrne (2007) refers to Englishness as romantic and the product of a nostalgic imagination with Britishness representing the opposite of the idyll – urban, lower-class and multi-racial, arguing that:

> 'Englishness is somehow truly what England should be – refined, rural, white and middle class…whilst Britishness is a category which can absorb all that disturbs this nation' (Byrne 2007 p. 518).

However, although the Home Office present ' Britishness' as being inclusive it could be argued that many people do not want to use the label as it brings up images of the past and the Empire which is arguably not very inclusive. Further, the Home Office's version of British citizenship is based on exclusive notions of language that is, speaking English and swearing allegiance to an overarching community (Goldsmith 2008). Yuval Davis (2006) writes that Englishness is about racial origin rather than national identity while Marsh et al (2007) argue that:

> 'Much of the present debate over what constitutes 'Britishness' stems from specific interpretations of who does or does not 'belong' – regardless of their citizenship status in British society' (2007 p. 23).

Byrne (2007) concludes that:

> 'To imagine Englishness seems almost impossible…without also summing up the abject – those excluded from the category who at once threaten Englishness, yet also are crucial to defining what it is' (2007 p. 516).

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[16] I use nationality here to refer to a person's relationship to their country of origin and how they construct affiliation and loyalty.

This suggests that Britishness is inclusive and Englishness is exclusive; in effect these terms can be understood as opposites. I develop a discussion around these issues in Chapter Seven. In my research, I examine how women who had moved from the UK to Spain used ethnic or national categories and how they constructed belonging to each of these. Interestingly, Black British is recognised as a category while Black English is not. The work of Virdee et al (2006) is also useful to highlight the differences between national identity and ethnicity. Drawing on the work of Balibar (1991) and his concept of 'racist community', Virdee at al (2002) conducted a qualitative study of the relationship between race and nationality in Glasgow. Virdee et al (2002) questioned whether Scottishness is synonymous with whiteness or whether whiteness is an indicator of Scottishness. They concluded that it is in fact more complex than this and instead refer to a 'racialised nationalism', meaning that it is possible for two discourses on nation to operate simultaneously. First, there is a racialised code of cultural belonging (drawing on the historical constructions of Scottishness) and second there is a destabilising of this in terms of the development of a hybridised code of cultural belonging in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood.

This also resonates with Byrne's research in London, particularly in relation to her use of Wright's 1985 work. Wright's (1985) study refers to three kinds of 'Englishness' within the context of a broader national identity. First, there is 'deep England' which denotes an idealised attachment to a rural idyll, and:

> 'This nostalgia was inevitably combined with a sense of loss as it failed to be achieved in urban and racially mixed London' (Byrne 2002 p. 515).

Second, there is 'empty Englishness' which is 'a sense of Englishness that is closed, fixed and white' (2007 p.522). Finally, there is 'evading Englishness', which can be understood as a negative regard for what is considered to be English. These ideas are important to my work since not only will I explore what Englishness and Britishness meant to women who had left the UK for

Spain, I also focus on how such representations were constructed and reconstructed to justify decisions made.

The 'community' which is under consideration here - Britons living on the Costa Blanca in Spain - can be described as a 'transnational community' (see O'Reilly 2000, Delanty 2003). For O'Reilly, 'Ethnic identity has been defined in terms of associational involvement, in terms of who does what with whom, while for others it stems from a shared blood and soil, or an imagined community of origin' (2000 p. 86). She describes the British on the Costa del Sol as a 'symbolic community' and one which is 'organised loosely around ethnicity rather than an ethnic group' (p. 118), embodying ideas of us (the British) and them (everybody else).

O'Reilly describes the British in Spain as 'not so much an ethnic group as a symbolic community' (2000 p. 118) and one which is characterised by marginality and informality, and it is through the behaviour of these British migrants (networking and mutual exchange) that this 'symbolic community' is constructed. However, she revises this definition in her 2007 work, arguing that:

> 'It seems the British cannot escape their Britishness; they are an embodiment of the mobility enclosure dialectic' (O'Reilly 2007b p. 288).

It is worth noting that community building in this context is not by a persecuted or disadvantaged community although arguably, they are still struggling to survive in marginalised circumstances. I now turn to examine how belonging to an ethnic group involves the work of the imagination, drawing primarily on Benedict Anderson and his work on 'imagined communities' (1983, 2006) or a sense of national belonging.

2.4.1 Ethnicity and multi-culturalism

Anderson's work has significant links to the debate on ethnic and national identity which I will outline below. Although I refer to nationality above, in this thesis, I am only looking at 'nationalism' in relation to Anderson's work and how women construct belonging to the UK and its relevance to community debates. Mann's (2006) qualitative study of ethnic majority views of national identity in England leads him to surmise that nationalism studies are generally macro analytical but there is also a need to focus on the individual – or micro - level. As I have argued, a focus of my research is to make links between lives lived level and wider social forces, such as migratory trends and the development of transnational communities. The debate between Delanty (1996) and Rex (1996) is useful in this regard and I discuss this below.

Delanty (1996) debated with Rex (1996) on the subject of nationalism and its representation. Delanty refers to 'new nationalism' and what he describes as the crisis of national identity, and he argues that new nationalism embodies a heightened hostility to immigrants rather than towards other nations. Rex and Delanty both agree that an enhanced sense of nationality is increasingly being defined as opposing immigrants. Delanty argues that this is a media and security construction and a response to the crisis in the welfare state which is perceived as unable to provide for all. Delanty makes the distinction between old and new nationalism, where old nationalism was about inclusion and nationalism represented a 'totalising ideology' (Delanty 1996 2.2). New nationalism however, represents a transformation of national identity and embodies exclusion, generally of immigrants. For Delanty, the issue is not cultural superiority but concern and reaction against the implications that multiculturalism has for the welfare state.

This 'new nationalism' then is more about identity than ideology which has resonance with Anderson's third paradox which states that nationalism lacks a philosophical underpinning. I go on to discuss this below. Delanty draws on Billig's (1995) 'banal nationalism', the nationalism which pervades every day life which again is less about cultural superiority and more about preserving

differences between cultures in the context of an overstretched welfare state. In this sense, new nationalism can be interpreted as a feature of education and civic consciousness, or imagined enemies, not enemies in terms of being enemies of the state however, but comprising social groups of immigrants. Delanty argues that new nationalism is directed against the failings of the nation state. For Rex, the central point of disagreement with Delanty is that contemporary nationalism is directed specifically against new immigrants rather than at the failure of the welfare state. Both argue that multiculturalism is likely to be compromised unless a relationship to national citizenship is maintained. Beck et al (2002) also add to this by claiming that the focus on race and multiculturalism under New Labour has involved the reinvigoration of assimilation rather than a celebration of diversity.

2.4.2 Community imagined

> 'Community is often expressed in symbolic forms rather than being exclusively an institutional arrangement'.
> (Delanty 2003 p. 49)

Anderson (2006) begins his revised account of 'Imagined Communities' by asserting that there is no 'grand theorist' on nationalism - although he is now probably widely recognised as being this. He frames his discussion on imaginings of the nation and identity formation within the context of 'three paradoxes': first he claims that, although the idea of 'the nation' is a relatively new construction in 'objective' historical terms, that this does not fit with the subjective belief in its long standing history among those claiming to be 'nationalist'. Although it is a recent construction, being nationalist is often seen as being a traditional or conservative. Second, Anderson refers to 'the formal universality of nationalism' as a concept. Anderson argues that everybody in the modern world 'has' a nationality, but in spite of this universality, the way this is exhibited is peculiar and specific to each individual; and finally, he asserts that there is a perceived apparent paradox in terms of the political power underpinning nationalism but there is a lack of coherence and philosophical basis to support it. Again, although national identity is perceived as being strong, it has limited ideological basis. The final two paradoxes are

related in that underpinning them is the notion that nationalism itself is imagined – as is its historical longevity. Anderson's definition of 'the nation' is 'an imagined political community' (2006 p. 6) and he argues that it is imagined as inherently '<u>limited</u> and <u>sovereign</u>' (my emphasis). It is limited because even the largest nation has finite boundaries beyond which lie other nations. It could also be argued that it is limited because there are factors which determine who is 'in' and who is 'out': in other words, belonging and boundaries. It is sovereign, according to Anderson, because the nation state represents freedom from 'old orders' (emancipated by the Enlightenment and Revolutionary periods of history), but this sovereignty also could also refer to the status of one's own nation vis- a -vis another. This identity is imagined as a community because the nation has 'deep horizontal comradeship' (2006 p.7).

Anderson sees 'imagined communities' located in the minds of 'community members' and this imagined quality of national identity is a relatively new way of expressing community. He argues that all communities larger than primordial villages (and possibly even those) are imagined, since even members of the smallest nation state can never know each other (Anderson 2006) and that there are social consequences to people imagining community in terms of who is in and who is out. This is a theme which will be developed throughout my work.

However, this work is not without critics: Phillips (2002) argues that, although the idea of imagined communities is well established, Anderson's work has oversimplified the complex ways in which people might experience attachment to imagined communities. He refers to this as 'self identification' and asserts that Anderson's work is a distortion because imagined community can refer to identity formation beyond nationality and gender identity can be as important as race or ethnicity (Song and Parker 1995; Marsh et al 2007).

Phillips' criticisms can be summarised under three related headings: first he accuses Anderson of essentialism – the nation need not necessarily be the primary identification - for example, religion, place, gender and politics may be

stronger (see also Marsh et al 2007). Moreover, people could feel an overriding attachment to alternative imagined communities (which could be network or place based). He draws on the work of Thompson (1991) who refers to 'ideological' rather than national community to illustrate this. Second, and related, he argues that Anderson's account is one dimensional in that there is no real recognition that people could belonging to multiple imagined communities; and third, the different layers of identity to which a person feels attachment are presented as being 'non-divisible' in the sense that they do not interlock or stand side by side. Community can be imagined in myriad ways, not just in terms of ethnicity, although for my work ethnicity is a significant factor in identity formation out of context. Anderson, akin to social capital theorists discussed above, can also be criticised for being gender blind.

However, Phillips (2002) believes that Anderson's work has laid the foundations for addressing these problems, although he does not address them himself. Although imagined community is presented as a macro level analysis of the process by which nationalism arose and spread in early modern Europe with a focus on the imagined quality of the nation and the emergence of a new kind of community based on indirect rather than face-to-face relationships, Phillips argues that a dormant aspect of Anderson's work is how individuals develop self attachment to imagined communities. I examine how people construct belonging to multiple representations of community – which can also be understood to be imagined - in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Through his own work - a large scale quantitative study in Australia about geographical identity and willingness to accept outsiders - Phillips (2002) utilised Anderson's work to rethink the less developed themes identified above: essentialism, one-dimensionalism and the non-divisible nature of imagined community. Phillips (2002) crystallises Anderson's argument into two overarching themes: first that self identification with the nation as an imagined community is complex and only one of many forms of imagined community which cohere; and second, that there are social consequences to feeling connected to an imagined community in that some people are 'out' as well as some being 'in' which can lead to racism and fear of the other.

Conway (2003) discusses imagined community in terms of a 'vocabulary of motive' (drawing on Mills 1940). In this sense, motive is represented as individuals drawing from a repertoire of explanations in popular belief rather than something reflecting innate characteristics set apart from the social world and constrained by language. Conway argues that, for Anderson, the difference between nations is exaggerated and within nations is played down. Blaikie (1999) depicts imagined community as the key feature of contemporary society – providing solace against the world and this again has links to the romantic and utopian discourse around community (also see Calhoun 1991) where the past is put forward as representing a better time than the present.

Throughout my thesis I examine how, through narrative, the work of the imagination constructs community and I link this to the role of nostalgia. I now turn to discuss how ethnic groups away from their country of origin can be understood as representing a diaspora.

2.4.3 Diaspora: ethnic identity out of context

> 'The term diaspora refers to any ethnic population that has been forced or induced to leave its homeland and undergo subsequent dispersal and changes in its culture'.
> (Jain 2008 p. 19)

Diaspora can be understood as referring to fluid identity formation and the experiences of migrants and indigenous populations and their relationships with their country of origin and their consciousness or 'identity':

> 'Diaspora usually presupposes connections between multiple communities of a dispersed population who feel, maintain, revive or reinvent a connection with a prior home in various ways' (Ngan 2008 p. 74).

 The condition of 'diasporicity' is being *from* one place and *of* another (Anthias 1998) or 'Home, fashioned from two worlds, similar yet disparate'(Davidson and Khun Eng 2008 p. 1). Dudrah (2004) develops the concept of 'diasporicity' though his study of a Black British presence in Portsmouth and

argues that this is less fixed than ideas of race and nation when constructing identity since it can apply to settled generations as well as new migrants (see also Anthias 1998). For Safrin (1991 cited in O'Reilly 2000), the defining feature of diasporic group is the retention of myths of the homeland. I explore the links between ethnicity, place and networks throughout my thesis and discuss this in detail in Chapter Eight.

However, like community, the use of diaspora is not unproblematic as Anthias (1998) and Temple (1999) argue. Anthias (1998) describes diaspora as an alternative way of thinking about transnational migration and ethnic relations and suggests that the term has been revived to address the problems raised by using terms such as race and ethnicity. She argues that diaspora still implies that ethnic bonds are a central, primary defining element and that, further, the problem of 'deterritorialised ethnicity (1998 p. 557) is not sufficiently addressed since diasporic groups are usually defined descriptively in relation to their homeland. Drawing on the work of Cohen (1993), she outlines five types of diasporic community: victim; labour; trade; imperial and cultural – although she asserts that there is a reliance on the origin and intent of dispersal, so as such, the typology is 'descriptive and inductivist' (1998 p. 563), since the reasons why a group moved from their country of origin, and the country of origin itself, does not necessarily provide an appropriate classification for analytical purpose. She also asserts that issues of 'intersectionality' (1998 p. 557), gender and class, are not fully addressed with accounts of diaspora, and significantly, nor are differences within the diasporic group which may contain differences as great as between the group and the host.

In a similar way Temple, in her study of Polish women (1999), argues that the concept of diaspora can silence particular voices within a group. Drawing on the work of Brah (1996) and her concept of 'diaspora space', she highlights the significance of location in shaping any group and individual identity, since there will inevitably be differences between diasporas in different host countries. She asserts that there are dangers in using a term that encompasses disparate groups. Further, diaspora can be used to exclude as

well as include people on the basis of their behaviour and compliance with 'norms'; as with community, belonging to a diasporic group is predicated on acceptable behaviour (Temple 1995). Women who migrated to Spain from the UK represent a diaspora in the sense that they are away from their country of origin. Although they were not forced to leave their homes, they were influenced still by the push and pull models of migration as discussed in Chapter One. Further, they occupy spaces which are often separate from the host population and tend to network with their compatriots. I discuss this in more detail in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

I now move on to discuss how the UK Government currently uses community since this use of the concept brings together social change over time, loss and recovery, the micro and the macro and encompasses place, networks and ethnicity.

2.5   Community as a political and policy construction: an example of imagined community

> 'The concept of community cohesion has been one of the UK Labour government's most durable frameworks for thinking through issues of ethnic diversity and conflict'.
> (Wetherell 2007 p. 2)

It is useful here to consider the controversy and debate about community in political and policy terms in the current UK context since this inevitably forms part of the knowledge context for this research. The issue of community has been particularly high on the agenda since New Labour came to power in 1997, and its contemporary resonance is palpable in Third Way politics with a focus on citizenship and its associated obligations to national allegiance (Back et al 2002). Whenever the word community is mentioned in policy circles it seems to be prefixed by sustainable[17] or suffixed by cohesion and the current

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[17] On 20/6/08 the Local Government Association issued guidance to Local Authorities on the use of 'non-words', one of which is 'sustainable communities'. This term, along with one hundred other 'non-words' is now not considered useful (The

alarm about terror suggests that that diversity is the enemy of cohesion (Goldsmith 2008). To this end, the emphasis is no longer on pluralism (multiculturalism) but assimilation under the guise of integration (Inside Housing 19.1.07; Back et al 2002; Worley 2005). As McGhee (2005) argues, the Government's strategy to solve problems around localised segregation and religious extremism is to focus on 'collective citizenship' which in effect shifts the policy emphasis from valuing diversity to swearing allegiance to the 'community of communities' (Parekh 2000) or 'the nation' (macro) rather than the traditional (micro) community. This underpins ideas of new forms of patriotism, where allegiance would be to political or national representations rather than to past forms centring on ethnicity and country of origin, as evidenced by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's report (2007) 'Our Shared Future'.

The UK context and the use of community in government and policy exemplify the multi-faceted application of community, drawing on place, networks and identity simultaneously. The Cantle Report (Cantle 2001) refers to a plethora of programmes in relation to community cohesion and in 2002, the then Commission for Racial Equality (2002) issued 'Guidance on Community Cohesion' which describes a cohesive community as: having a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; valuing the diversity between people's backgrounds; offering similar life opportunities for those from different backgrounds; and developing strong and positive relationships between people of different backgrounds in a range of contexts (school, neighbourhood and workplace). However, as Wetherell (2007) argues:

> 'The idea of community cohesion evokes difficult territory and complex negotiations between commonality, diversity, equality and the nation' (2007 p. 6).

Guardian, Saturday. June 21st 2008 'Time to cut out coterminosity'). However, the Government established the Academy for Sustainable Communities, the skills part of the Homes and Communities Agency

This renewed political interest with community and a preoccupation about whether it 'exists' or can be 'created' is mainly in response to civil unrest in the late summer of 2001 in northern towns such as Burnley, Bradford and Oldham and is now part of the government's strategy to promote 'race' equality and citizenship and combat extremism. The problems highlighted in these towns and concerns about the exclusion of some minority groups and their lack of ability to speak English are seen by the Labour Government as evidence of the failure of previous governments to effectively manage immigration and integration and these failures were characterised by segregation in housing, education and employment which have resulted in subsequent low levels of trust and cohesion (Edwards et al 2006; McGhee 2005; Cantle 2004).

The social problems or 'riots' in these northern towns in 2001 were cited by the Community Cohesion Review (2001) as an expression of this problem, and the acquisition of the English language and knowledge of British life were presented as the key to successful integration by new migrants with an implicit focus on future rather than past orientated forms of patriotism (McGhee 2005). This analysis is further evidenced by the then Communities' Secretary Ruth Kelly speaking on 'the Politics Show' in June 2006 (BBC News 24 4/1/08; BBC News 24 10/6/07; 11.6.06 Timesonline; 19/6/07 Education Guardian Weekly), where she asserted that Local Authorities should not translate official materials so often to encourage immigrants to learn English and that free English lessons should be available for those in receipt of benefits. However, it should be acknowledged that many of those who took part in the 2001 riots were born or educated in the UK (Kalra 2002 cited in Hussain and Bagguley 2005) and that generational differences within minority ethnic communities were not taken into account by policymakers. Reports published following these riots generally avoided attempts to explain the causes – they were seen as visible signs of tensions felt by communities in modern Britain- (ODPM Factsheet 15 2003), but Government focussed instead on addressing segregation, cohesion and citizenship as solutions (Hussain and Bagguley 2005).

As indicated above, the language of multiculturalism in the UK has now shifted in emphasis from diversity to assimilation: in effect these are concerns about place, networks /interest and (ethnic) identity and allegiance to the nation and the Government's focus now is on integrating new immigrants and desegregating more established ones (Cantle 2001; McGhee 2005). As Wetherell (2007) writes:

> 'Early public responses to the bombings had opened out into major re-examinations of the principles of multi-culturalism, leading many politicians to revive older, more assimilationist, readings of integration (Wetherell et al 2007 pp. 1-2).

Under New Labour, the language of community is expressed in terms of obligations to consult and collaborate (Scholfield 2002) or 'communitarianism' (see Etzioni 1993 and Phillips 1994).

Communitarianism is concerned with citizenship (participation) and under these circumstances community is conceptualised as shared values, solidarity, attachment and it fits with the (previous) New Labour agenda in that it represents a departure from the individualism of Thatcher years. The UK context and the use of community in Government and policy further exemplify the multi-faceted application of community, drawing on place, interest and identity simultaneously (McGhee 2005). The expectation of government is that allegiance to being 'British' transcends national allegiance to country of origin: in other words,

> 'British national identity as a potential superglue for diverse and divided communities' (Wetherell 2007 p. 3).

This is also underpinned by the hope that minority ethnic groups utilise social capital to bridge out from networks founded primarily on shared ethnicity.

However, as noted above, the focus on social capital as a potential cure for all the ills of society is not without problems; there are social inequalities within and between communities. A further conundrum is that bonding social capital (within communities) is apparently stronger than bridging social capital -

across and between communities. (McGhee 2005; Edwards et al 2006). McGhee (2005) looks at four inter-related areas of public policy associated with community cohesion: asylum and immigration, the strength in diversity consultation strategy and counter terrorism. He frames the Labour Government's solutions to tackle these issues in terms of policy as problematisating weak citizenship in the UK; emphasising the material rather than cultural barriers to integration and focussing on minority ethnic groups in each of these areas. Further, McGhee (2005) cites commentators' and academics' (such as Etzioni 1997 and Alibhai-Brown 2000) focus on bridging rather than bonding social capital, since past orientations and loyalties are seen as obstacles to developing core values for a shared future vision. In this way 'meta' loyalties should supersede 'micro' ones, since this lack of bridging social capital has been seen as contributing to the disturbances in the northern towns in the UK as cited above (Clark 2007). Even Trevor Phillips, the former head of the Commission for Racial Equality, claimed that multiculturalism in Britain is the root cause of separateness between communities (Guardian 27th February, 2004 cited Alexander et al 2007).

The importance of social capital in government thinking is demonstrated in Blair's direct quotes from Putnam -whose central theme is that individuals need to reconnect to one another (Putnam 2000). Putnam's emphasis on the merits of 'generalised reciprocity' has been used by Government to underpin aspirations of civic renewal in the UK. In this context, social capital is seen to have the potential to construct networks of generalised reciprocity between individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Roberts and Devine 2003). New Labour has moved away from the communitarianism of the 1990s to the social capital of the 21st century. Whilst in opposition, New Labour drew from the communitarian movement in the US (See Etzioni 1998) which centred on civic values and execution of responsibilities as well as rights. As Crow (2002b) argues:

> 'The solution of contemporary social ills proffered by communitarianism is the reinvigoration of community' (2002b p. 43).

The concept of community has been applied most often to poor neighbourhoods and leads to questions regarding whether the same solutions would be identified in richer or less vulnerable localities. Much of the emphasis has been on disadvantaged people helping other disadvantaged households, and my research takes a different approach in its focus on community construction among a relatively prosperous minority ethnic group. There have been a range of initiatives established in relation to community cohesion: under New Labour, the Home Office initially set up a Community Cohesion Unit which developed a set of indicators to measure cohesion[18] with the main one centering on place and the percentage of people who feel that their locale is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on together (Temple et al 2007). More recently, the Communities and Local Government Committee published 'Community Cohesion and Migration' (June 2008) which focuses on the relationship between levels of immigration to the UK and levels of cohesion within it. Although the Commission concluded that the relationship between these variables is not straight forward, the report highlights that among the British population, concern about levels of immigration and its potential effects is currently the issue of greatest public concern.[19]

The focus on citizenship has not waned under Gordon Brown's premiership: he commissioned Lord Goldsmith to produce a report intended to address issues around 'belonging' to the UK the country (place) and in terms of networks and (national) identity. The report, published on 11th March 2008 and entitled 'Citizenship: Our common bond', includes proposals affecting 'every stage in an individual's life' to promote the meaning and significance of citizenship and also suggests that all school leavers take an oath of allegiance to the Queen. However, there is dissent within the Labour Party regarding the proposals and the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Executive rejected them (BBC News 24 11/3/08).

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[18] These indicators focussed on attitudes and perceptions; incidents; representation and engagement; take up of services and facilitation of cross cultural contact.

[19] This was based on a MORI poll 'Attitudes towards immigration' which can be found at www.psos-mori.com

The 'riots' of 2001 were not a new phenomenon: in the early 1980s there were riots in St Paul's in Bristol, Toxteth in Liverpool and Brixton in South West London triggered by the introduction of 'stop and search' laws which primarily targeted young black men. The use of the concept community from the mid-1980s onwards became synonymous with relinquishment of responsibility by the state (Hoggett et al 1997); and, for example, 'care in the community'[20] was evoked when institutions accommodating those with mental health problems closed. Hoggett et al describe community as 'a fundamentally political concept' (1997 p 14) drawing attention to the fact that many professionals working in the public service sector have the term community attached to their job description; they argue that, for New Labour, it has become what class was for Old Labour and that it evokes a lost age when neighbourhood ties were strong.

It is clear then, that in the UK the Government's current use of community cohesion represents:

> 'Both a diagnosis of this state of affairs and a rather vague and shaky solution in an area where it is unclear just what policy and government might achieve' (Wetherell 2007 p. 9).

2.6   Migration and the formation of new communities

> 'Tourism influences IRM in two main ways: by informing individual search spaces and building familiarity with living abroad; and through

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[20] Care in the community was introduced by the Conservative Government in the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. This review is primarily concerned with the New Labour Government's (post 1997) use of 'community' so a full discussion of previous government's uses will not be undertaken here.

the intertwining of tourism, retirement and migration in the development of a resort'.
(King et al 2000 p. 33)

'Migrants develop a taste for a particular way of life while on holiday in an area and subsequently they decide to migrate, encouraged by their imaginings of the place as offering a better lifestyle'.
(Benson and O'Reilly 2009 pp. 613-614)

In Chapter One I discussed International Retirement Migration (King et al 2000) and placed it within the context of the dramatic increase in global movement since 1975 (Cronin 2006). This type of migration was negatively perceived during the 1980s (by the media) because it was premised on tourism which is seen as frivolous (O'Reilly 2003). Migration research in Europe started in the early 1990s, focusing on the push and pulls in moving abroad. Initially IRM was placed within the context of population geography and migration studies (King et al 1998). By the turn of the last decade IRM to the Costa del Sol, the Algarve, Tuscany and Malta was placed at the intersection of three disciplines: migration studies, tourism and social gerontology (King et al 2000). King et al's (2000) study highlighted that British people move to such areas to benefit from a better climate, slower pace of life, lower cost of living and to take advantage of social and practical opportunities, that is the presence of compatriots and the fact that English is widely spoken. Antipathy towards the UK and the existence of work or business links prior to retirement are also factors precipitating migration. O'Reilly (2007a) plots the movement of northern Europeans to Spain and highlights the weather, cost of living, pace of life, affluence, cheap travel (tourism infrastructure) as the reasons facilitating this.

Geoffrey and Sibley (2007) also make the case for studying migration as interdisciplinary and argue that history, geography, sociology, the media, tourism and cultural studies are all significant when attempting to understand this phenomenon. They identify three broad types of migration: the voluntary search for economic improvement; political exile and the choice of a different lifestyle. It is this final type of migration among retired British people and how

this influences the construction of communities that is the focus of my research.

The purpose of this section is twofold: first to explore how migration has led to the development of new 'transnational' communities and its application to my research; and second, to engage further with the debate conceptualising such new forms of migration and to examine and apply the vocabulary developed over the last ten years to make sense of this phenomenon.

Gustafson's (2008) examination of transnationalism among Swedish retirees to Spain has significant implications for research on transnationalism among lifestyle migrants. He argues that although writers on migration have previously discussed transnationalism (Gustafson 2001, O'Reilly 2000), that they have not referred to the literature on it. Gustafson (2008) frames mobility and migration as a continuous process and defines transnationalism as follows:

> 'Transnationalism often implies that migrants do not identify exclusively with the receiving society, but maintain and develop individual and collective identities that refer to both sending and receiving countries'. (Gustafson 2008 p. 458)

Although historically transnational research focused on refugees and migrant workers, he found that among retired Swedish people, 'International migrants often, and seemingly to an increasing extent, retain substantial bonds with their countries of origin' (2008 p. 452). Gustafson argues that transnationalism is now more inclusive and less fixed and questions whether it is a temporary phenomenon or if it will reduce over generations. He identifies the different dimensions of transnationalism: first, degrees of mobility and cross-border practices and relations; the second dimension refers to individual and collective belonging to both sending and host countries; third refers to the social networks among migrants in the sending country; the fourth dimension covers cultural expression in the new country; the fifth element encompasses political activism among migrants and the final dimension is remittance to the sending country.

Through his research in Spain, Gustafson (2008) found that some retirees identify strongly with both the sending and receiving country but that most develop some kind of transnational identity. I examine the relevance of this for my research in Chapters Five, Six and Seven when I analyse the findings in relation to constructions of belonging to the UK and Spain, social networks and the construction of ethnic identity. I address the extent to which the people in my study can be described as transnational at the end of Chapter Seven in my discussion of how place, networks and ethnicity are linked.

O'Reilly began her research in Spain in the mid-1990s and by 2000 had undertaken a large-scale ethnographic longitudinal study in the Costa del Sol (O'Reilly 2000). From 2003 onwards, as well as conducting further fieldwork, the focus of O'Reilly's work has been on developing a vocabulary and way of conceptualising human movement since flexible forms of migration (flux and flow) are undermining the definitions of tourism and migration (O'Reilly 2003):

> 'Analysis of human mobility as both a force and effect of globalization demands increasingly flexible concepts' (O'Reilly 2007a p. 302).

In her 2003 work, O'Reilly identifies three forms of tourism related migration as follows: retired, entrepreneurial and finally consumption-led, economically active migration. All forms are linked to tourism histories, systems and agency. The focus of my research is narrower than O'Reilly's in two respects; first, I only examine the first group identified – retired migrants to Spain - although in a different part of Spain; second, I focus on how they construct belonging to different representations of community.

However, although O'Reilly makes a strong case for the development of new concepts to theorise new forms of migration, she cautions that there is still a need to further understand the empirical context rather than focus on movement as abstracted from social realities (Williams and Hall (2000). I hope to make a contribution to this through my research.

In her early work O'Reilly referred to migration and focussed on integration, ethnicity and identity (O'Reilly 2000). By 2003 her focus shifts to diaspora, nation and transnationalism and she argues that Britain's relationship with Europe can be explored through how displaced people behave and see themselves. She describes British migrants as both hosts and guests and argues that:

> 'They have a peculiar status of more than a tourist but not an immigrant which is neatly captured in the term 'residential tourist' (O'Reilly 2003 p. 309)

She articulates this definition further in her 2007a work as follows:

> 'We propose the term *residential tourism* as a way of distinguishing a key aspect: the affluence that enables them to turn tourism, to some extent into a way of life, and to construct fluid, leisured lifestyles betwixt and between places, and which even when they ostensibly try to settle they still remain in some ways outside or above the community they have moved to' (O'Reilly 2007a p. 147).

The purpose of developing such a vocabulary for O'Reilly is to reconceptualise migrants who move from affluent to non-affluent parts of the world (O'Reilly 2007a). Residential tourism can be understood as being influenced by both structural and material pre-conditions as indicated above and by individual motivations or agency (O'Reilly 2007a). I address this in relation to my work in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

By 2009 the applicability and usefulness of the term 'lifestyle migration' was under debate (Benson and O'Reilly 2009) to describe:

> 'A budding sociological phenomenon: the relocation of people within the developed world searching for a better way of life' (Benson and O'Reilly 2009 p. 608).

This term can also be applied to the people in my study since it describes migration among a relatively affluent group. Further, 'lifestyle' as a concept is becoming more important in sociology (Benson and O'Reilly 2009). Three distinct yet related types of lifestyle migration are identified: residential

tourists; rural idyll seekers and finally bourgeois bohemians. People in my study generally fall into the first category where 'Coastal lifestyle migration emphasises escape, leisure, relaxation, and tourism as a way of life' (Benson and O'Reilly 2009 p. 612). Tourism is clearly a precursor to lifestyle migration and retirement migration is also influenced by previous holiday experiences. Benson and O'Reilly (2009) also question whether lifestyle migration embodies consumption and suggest that 'community' is one of the goods consumed. Throughout my thesis I examine how community is constructed and represented by people out of their original context. However, retirement migration is different from migration among people of working age in two significant ways. First, since retirees are no longer working, their opportunities for participation in the host country are limited. Second, they are financially independent and often do not send remittance to the sending country (Gustafon 2008). I revisit these concepts at the end of Chapter Seven.

Throughout this research I draw heavily on Karen O'Reilly's research in the Costa del Sol (O'Reilly 2000, 2003, 2007a and 2007b) and this has been invaluable. There are many similarities between her work and mine and I discuss these and the differences in more detail below. The most notable similarity is O'Reilly's (2003) conceptualisation of lifestyle migration as comprising counter-urbanisation, or a rejection of modernity through the construction of an idyll almost suspended in time. She discusses the search for rural idyll as the search for heimat (home, belonging, community). I develop this further in relation to my use of nostalgia in constructing communities throughout my thesis and revisit this in the final chapter.

However, it is important for me to establish that there are also significant differences between O'Reilly's work and mine. First, the community under investigation in the Costa Blanca was a much more isolated diasporic community than O'Reilly's in the Costa del Sol, comprising a much higher proportion of retirees. It was also a much newer community since retirement migration to this Costa had a much shorter history. Because of this, arguably, the effects of the mobility enclosure dialectic (O'Reilly 2007b) could be much

stronger in terms of making the community even more inward-looking than that in the Costa del Sol.

Smallwood's (2007) research among levels of integration of British migrants to Aquitaine is useful to explicate the effects of the mobility enclosure dialectic:

> 'By integration is meant the degree of interaction between the British residents and the French population, and of acceptance by the two populations of each other' (Smallwood 2001 p. 119).

In conducting his research he found that there were three typologies of migrant. The first group were well integrated and often comprised mixed British and French couples who interacted socially and professionally with the French. Although they demonstrated some frustration at not being fully integrated, they were happy with their situation. The second – and the largest group – were not integrated, although they had initially expected to be. They altered their original expectations and were generally satisfied. The final group were not integrated but wished to be so; this group were frustrated with their lack of language skills and did not want to network with other Britons. The group in my study largely fall into the second category and demonstrate 'a classic scenario' (Smallwood 2007 p. 129) where they arrive in the receiving country, full of good intentions to learn the language and find that they can live the lifestyle without actually mixing with their hosts. However:

> 'Integration is about so much more than the financial aspects of health, education, welfare and political representation, it is also about feelings of home and belonging and especially about communicating' (O'Reilly 2003 p. 310).

I discuss this in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Women in the Costa Blanca were less integrated into Spanish society, living on the margins as a result of their retired status; they did not have children with them who were in local schools, so this compounded their isolation and segregation. Further, there were significant methodological differences; O'Reilly conducted extensive fieldwork in Malaga province (the Costa del Sol) and adopts a longitudinal ethnographical approach while my study was on a much smaller scale and I use narrative analysis. Both approaches allow for links to be made with the

micro and the macro. A narrative approach is not limited to only textual analysis (Riessman 1993, 2008; Day Sclater 1998a; Gubrium and Holstein 2000, 2009) however, since:

> 'The value of such an approach is that it contextualises accounts as productions rather than reflections of any truths or essences. It involves locating what someone has told you within the context in which they are producing the narrative' (Temple 1999 p. 388).

Examining the context in which narratives are produced and my role in the research as part of the analysis can also be understood as 'narrative ethnography' (Gubrium and Holstein 2000), or a 'Method that takes us outside of stories and their veridical relationship to storytellers and experience (Gubrium and Holstein 2000 p. 10)'. It is useful to understand narratives and their uses therefore as:

> 'Social encounters situated in particular contexts, and the writing up of narratives as an active and creative, rather than a neutral process' (Temple 2008 p. 2).

My analysis also focuses on those people who want to return to the UK, rather than just those who wish to remain in Spain and this tells us as much about belonging to different representations of community as does focussing on those who want to stay. Finally, I analyse women's narratives on community as counter-narratives (Andrews and Bamberg 2004) in relation to the meta-narrative of the UK Government to further explore how the past can potentially solve problems in the present. I also focus on the relationship between time and space, which is not an explicit feature of O'Reilly's work. This is important for my work since a central linking concept is nostalgia as I discuss in Chapter Eight and it works to link the past and the present through narrative. I discuss my methodological approach in much more detail in the following chapter.

2.7   Community and context

I conclude this chapter by considering the issue of context and its significance; this discussion is continued in the following chapter where I outline my interpretivist epistemological position.

The work of Gillies and Edward (2006) on family and social change and context is useful since they question whether everyone who is looking at community is actually looking at the same thing or if perspective and context (temporal, cultural, geographical) matter. It is particularly useful in relation to my work in terms of understanding the significance of context, or the embeddedness of the data and knowledge generated. Their paper focuses on the issues that need to be taken into account when qualitative data from the 1960s are reused and how the changed context is significant and its overall implications. They argue that data are generated by the researcher and interviewer and their interactions shape any subsequent interpretations. Interpretations of data are historically, culturally, spatially specific and are also influenced by the researcher. The use of secondary data (or literature) is also an interpretation – there can be no universal agreement or objective measurable truth concerning the 'things' which are being described. My use of the literature surrounding community is reinterpretation of the interpretations and representations of others.

The study of community has always been within a social, historical and socio-cultural context; and community also represents a geographical context. As Gillies and Edwards (2006) point out, specific geographical locations often generate data that are place specific, that is, only relevant to the area under study. Elias and Scotson (1994) argue that the focusing on a small social unit as an enquiry into issues that can also be encountered in a great variety of settings provides the opportunity to explore such problems in more detail, microscopically. However:

> 'Interpretations of social change are never theoretically or ideologically neutral' (Gillies and Edwards 2006 p. 2).

Therefore, an objective measurement of the existence of community is not possible or achievable (see following chapter on epistemology and narrative) and any findings generated from my work are 'contextually embedded' or a 'socially produced, situated construction' (Gillies and Edwards 2006 p. 9).

The idea of community as something that has been lost but is recoverable also relates to Gillies and Edwards' analysis in that it represents something that is being reworked for current purposes – these are political in the UK and pragmatic in Spain. The question is not whether community has been lost or not, but 'what' it is that we are looking for; who is looking and when. Therefore, definitions of community can be seen as interpretations or constructions or partial representations of 'reality' with reference to specific context (s) as I have argued above. Community therefore must be understood in relation to context, but, it also provides a context in which to generate understanding and knowledge.

An understanding of community involves an understanding of the context in which data were generated and how the study of 'community' generates context specific data. Community is represented in a variety of ways which often overlap and research findings are necessarily context bound, just as contemporary ones are social constructions in terms of their historical, cultural and spatial specificity.

I established at the outset that I treat 'community' as having uses rather than a definition since this reflects my epistemological and methodological position as I will discuss in the following chapter. I do not conceive of community as being unambiguous and simple, rather it is complex and elusive. In the following chapter, I turn to address why I adopt an interpretive epistemology and a narrative approach in my work before discussing the kind of narrative approach I use and the implications for my study of community among women who have moved from the UK to Spain.

CHAPTER THREE: NARRATIVE – AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONTINUUM

3.   Introduction

In the previous two chapters I addressed the contemporary relevance of studying 'community' and began to discuss how representations of this concept can be known within an interpretivist epistemology. I concluded Chapter Two by highlighting the complexity and elusiveness of community and argued that understanding its multiple uses necessarily involves a consideration of the significance of context and perspective (Gillies and Edwards 2006). I questioned whether writers who are examining community are actually investigating the same thing, since temporal, cultural and geographical factors, coupled with the experiences and positionalities of those researched, and of the researcher, inevitably influence the data which are generated. I introduced my position as one that does not fit with notions of universal truth, or the objective measurement of the existence of community and argued that even my engagement with the literature on community is itself inevitably an interpretation.

The focus of this chapter is on my epistemological position, which addresses what it means to know community from an interpretivist perspective. I begin by describing my epistemological position before discussing what narrative is and outline the turn to narrative ways of understanding the social world. I then locate my epistemological approach to narrative in the context of the work of others in the field. Finally, I address my approach to analysing narratives in terms of content and structure, plot, time and as a way of constructing identities.

3.1   My position: interpretivist epistemology

'Meaning is fluid and contextual, not fixed and universal'.
(Riessman 1993 p. 15)

Although my thesis is not a theoretical exploration of epistemology, it is necessary for me to clarify my position in order to achieve three objectives: first, to outline why I have adopted an interpretivist approach to studying community; second, to explore what this means regarding truth claims in relation to what can be known about community; and third, to explain how I have used an interpretivist epistemology to underpin my methodological approach: narrative analysis. I discuss the third element further under 3.4 later in this chapter. One way that epistemology can be described is as 'a theory of what is valid knowledge' (Temple 1997 p. 71), or how knowledge is generated, or what is to count as knowledge of, and in, the world. Although a huge simplification, it is useful to focus discussion on two broad approaches to understanding the social world, or, as Bruner (1986) suggests, there are two modes of 'doing science', split broadly into objective and subjective epistemological approaches. The main difference between these two approaches centres on the nature of truth claims, or how we gain knowledge of the world.

Early sociological inquiry, influenced by the natural sciences, was characterised by positivist epistemologies, which can be understood as embodying approaches which confine knowledge of the social world to that which is directly observable or measurable (Hammersley 1994). I do not wish to set up 'straw positivists' (Hammersley 1997), or dichotomous positions where epistemologies are oversimplified in order to dismiss them. However, it is useful to simplify them to an extent to establish my position on the epistemological continuum. The first reference point, which has been variously named, is associated with early approaches and can be described as attempting to reveal 'the truth' of social relations or to objectively demonstrate the existence (or not) of phenomena. This reference point describes a situation where the social world is directly accessible through our

observations of it. The second reference point also encompasses a range of perspectives, and has been variously labelled as hermeneutic, constructionist and interpretive perspectives[21] . This point of reference views the social world as constructed to various degrees. At the extreme end of the continuum is postmodernism and my view fits somewhere in the middle of this continuum. However, I apply this simplification to clarify my own position within myriad views on narrative research. I argue below that examining community is not neutral and an understanding of it needs to take account of context and subjectivity.

Alongside earlier ways of attempting to understand the social world, an alternative tradition of approaching knowledge has developed which focuses on the significance and influence of context. I have already suggested in Chapter Two that we are influenced by context since what we understand something to 'be' is shaped by when and where it occurs. Knowledge therefore, can be understood to be historically (or temporally), culturally and spatially specific (see Gergen 1999, 2001; Burr 1995; Sarabin and Kitsuse 1994). My position therefore, derives from:

> 'A view that researchers jointly construct accounts and findings with research participants. This does not mean that there is no social reality, just that there are different perspectives' (Temple 2006 p. 2).

It follows then that what is thought to be, or constructed as 'true', is shaped by the cultural and historical context in which it occurs. Some writers, for example Smaje (1997), suggests that social constructionists - which tends towards the position I describe as intepretivism - believe that there is no reality. However, rather than suggesting that the social world is ontologically unreal, my position holds that notions of real and unreal are themselves interpretations, or social constructions. Further, the experiences and positionalities of the social actors involved in generating the data have influenced the kind of knowledge produced. Knowledge is not a direct perception of reality; instead, we (individually and collectively) construct our

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[21] I use the label interpretivism throughout this work.

own versions of reality. Phenomena have different meanings depending on the context in which they occur: this refers to when they take place historically or temporally, where they occur in geographical terms and in which cultural context, or 'All truth claims would be specific to particular traditions – lodged in culture and history' (Gergen 1999 p. 14). Any knowledge then, is given a contextual meaning: phenomena could be interpreted differently depending on the situation and time within which they occur and on who is involved in generating data.

As I have already suggested there is no single neutral or objective explanation for what exists, rather, there are potentially unlimited subjective perspectives and there is then an issue of who should determine which criteria are given authority over others. My position holds that there cannot be an 'objective truth', 'out there' waiting to be discovered: rather, knowledge and agency go together and knowledge is generated and sustained through social processes rather than existing outside of them. I am therefore adopting an anti-essentialist position in so far as I do not believe that any aspect of social life can be reduced to a single essence or truth. However, Fuss (1989) has shown that we are all essentialist to some extent as anti-essentialists themselves argue that in essence there is no essence. However, and inevitably, this is linguistic essentialism of the kind all researchers practice to make their points:

> 'To insist that essentialism is always and everywhere reactionary is, for the constructionist, to buy into essentialism in the very act of making the charge; *it is to act as if essentialism has an essence'.* (Fuss 1989 p. 21).

Further, we are agents influenced by our past experiences and positionalities, for example gender, ethnicity, age and class and multiple other factors that influence our understanding and interpretations of the social world (Anthias 2002).

As I suggested above, in an interpretive view of the social world, the status of language is important and represents an epistemological point of departure

from traditional positivist approaches. In contrast to supposed neutral accounts by unbiased researchers, the significance of language is emphasised, in that language is a means by which human agency constructs and sustains the social world (see Gergen 1991, 1995, 2001; Burr 1995; and Temple 1997b). The role of language in shaping and reporting elements of the material and subjective is crucial to interpretivism (see Lyotard 1984; Burr 1995; Gergen 1991, 1995, 2001; Riessman 1993, 2008; Temple 1997b, 2008a 2008b) since:

> 'Language in this sense, is not a mirror of life, it is the doing of life itself' (Gergen 1999 p. 35).

Thus,

> 'Language is the major cultural resource that participants draw on to jointly create reality' (Riessman 2002 p. 1195).

Rather than seeing language as constituting and representing reality and there being a single truth, my approach assumes that it is what both constitutes and reflects it (Riessman 1993, 2008; Temple 1996, 2008), since 'Narratives are interpretive and, in turn, require interpretation' (Riessman 1993 p. 22). From my perspective, language is not seen as a transparent medium (Riessman 1993, 2008) and 'Narratives don't speak for themselves' (Riessman 2008 p. 3). Further:

> 'Language is not merely mimetic…words do not unproblematically contain meanings, and ...the relations between language and 'reality' is a problematic one' (Day Sclater 1998 p. 85).

My view of language therefore is that it requires interpretation and I discuss how I use this with reference to Czarniawska's (2004) work later in this chapter. Riessman (1993 and 2008) and Temple (1997, 2008) reiterate that sociologists have long argued that language constructs the social world as well as describes it although narrative is sometimes seen as solely content analysis even when different languages are involved. Thus, language is not mimetic, that is, words do not unproblematically contain meaning (Day Sclater

1998b). Instead, language simultaneously reflects and constructs reality but within the limits of social structures (Temple 2008). This is an important point which I will develop more fully below when I discuss narrative and epistemology. Having established my epistemological position, I now turn to discuss how I interpret narrative.

3.2　Narrative '*is*'

> 'The primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful'.
> (Polkinghorne, 1988 p.11)

There is little agreement as to what constitutes a narrative or story (Riessman 2008) and from an interpretivist perspective any definition is also is an interpretation (Riessman 1993; 2000). In her earlier work, Riessman (1993) made the distinction between narrative and story but later (2008) uses both terms to denote the same thing. The term 'narrative' is derived from the Latin *gnarus,* while 'story' is derived from the Greek and Latin *historia.* Both of these terms mean 'knowing'. For the purposes of my research, I use Robert's (2002) definition drawn from Clandinin and Connelly (1994):

> 'Narrative relates to both a phenomenon and a method - the former can be termed a story… the latter narrative' (Roberts 2002 p. 117).

I therefore use the term narrative throughout my thesis, because I analyse the phenomenon using the method. Writers from a wide range of disciplines offer multiple and diverse labels and definitions: for example, narrative has been described as the most basic way humans have of apprehending the world (Plummer 2002); the organising principle for human action (Riessman 1993, Bruner 1986); something people make sense of their experiences through (Bruner, 1990, Gee 1985); replayings of strips of activity (Goffman 1975); how everything started, how things developed, what became (Flick 1998) and a personal story or experiential data (Gubrium and Holstein 1998).

It is impossible therefore, to devise a simple and clear definition of narrative (Riessman 2008). There are many different definitions of what I term

'narrative' which are contested and varied and apply to written, oral and visual accounts as I discuss later in this chapter. For the purposes of this study I explore the lessons that can be drawn out from these approaches and how analysing the narratives of women who have moved to Spain can be used to generate knowledge about constructing community among a diasporic group.

The narrative approach I use can be summarised as 'Talk organised around consequential events' (Riessman 1993 p. 3), since this definition clarifies how I see language as both <u>representing</u> and <u>constructing</u> reality. I discuss this in more detail below. Within this use of narrative, words and events are connected in a sequence, so there is a structure that is consequential for later action and also for the meaning that the speaker wants the listener to take from the story (Riessman 2008). Further, narratives are often moral tales and Riessman (2008), cites Aristotle's Greek Tragedy as an example of this. I discuss this aspect further below when I address narrative and identity.

To add to the confusion around defining what narrative 'is', researchers use different labels for what I am describing, for example the biographical method (Ferrarotti and Kohli 1981), life history (Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame 1981, Karpati, Luchterland and Wieland1981, Elder 1981); life records (Chalasinkski 1981), autobiographies (Stanley 1992, Szczepariski1981) the personal myth (McAdams 1993) and interpretive biography (Denzen 1989). These share the characteristic of all being 'stories' developed through research interviews which in turn allow researchers to (re) construct narratives from the data generated. Therefore, in addition to there being an epistemological continuum of approaches to narrative analysis, there is also a continuum in terms of defining what narrative 'is', ranging from discrete stories, about a particular aspect of a person's life, to whole life stories (Riessman 2008). My use of narrative sits somewhere in the middle of this: for me, narratives are sections of talk (Riessman 2008 drawing on Mishler 1986b) or the replaying of strips of activity (Goffman 1975). Context and the way the whole story is presented is part of narrative. It is important also to acknowledge, as Riessman (1993, 2008) has pointed out, that many narrative analyses are similar to thematic grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) approaches. I address this in the

following chapter. These elements are analysed thematically in relation to the literature highlighted in Chapters One and Two, but also in terms of how they are structured in terms of plot, their language choices and use of metaphors, the configuration of time and locational positionalities within narrative as I discuss below.

There are therefore differences in definition both in terms of how narrative is labelled and in what it constitutes, with a common theme of the consequential linking of events and ideas (Riessman 2008). There are also different approaches to narrative analysis which I explore later in this chapter. Narrative analysis can therefore be seen in terms of ontology or ways of being in the world, and methodology or approach, or ways of analysing the world. Further, narrative analysis also has a meaning making function in that it can give insight into the meaning of the narrator as well as structuring their experiences (Riessman 2008).

To summarise, there are varied definitions of what narrative is but it is generally accepted that these have a storied form (Riessman 2000). I develop this discussion further later in this chapter. I now address the turn to narrative approaches to social enquiry.

3.3   The narrative turn

> 'The importance of the narrative turn is undoubted'.
> (Stanley and Temple 2008 p. 275)

Originally used in literary analysis (Riessman 2008), the study of narratives now crosses a range of disciplines: sociolinguistics, psychology, anthropology and psychiatry and 'Narrative studies presently includes a number of divergent theories, approaches and methodologies' (Stanley and Temple 2008 p. 275). The 'narrative turn' in the social sciences has been construed as a reaction by some against the limits of positivist epistemologies (Riessman 1993, Plummer 2001, Roberts 2002), with writers such as Riessman (1993), Polkinghorne (1988) and Bruner (1986) having brought it

back to the forefront over the last few decades. The 'biographical method' was a feature of sociological enquiry from the 1920s and 1930s –'The Chicago School' symbolic interactionism – which contributed to understanding migration and assimilation experiences in the US using life documents (Roberts 2002). '*Biographical research* is not intended to be associated with a precise definition but to indicate various, often interrelated approaches to the study of individuals' (Roberts 2002 p. 1). I see narrative research therefore, as a representation or feature of biographical research.

From the 1980s, writings from Bertaux (1981), Ricoeur (1981) Plummer (2001), Denzin (1989) and Tonkin (1992) and later Riessman (1993), Day Sclater (1998a), Gubrium and Holstein (1998), Roberts 2002, Temple 1996; 1997b;1999; 2002, 2008; Stanley 1992, 2008), to name but a few, added to the debate. The turn to narrative ways of understanding the social world was also influenced by memory studies in the 1980s and the post-modern movement against positivist social science (Chamberlayne et al 2000). The narrative turn can be described as:

> 'A 'subjective' or 'cultural' turn in which personal and social meanings, as bases of action, gain greater prominence' (Chamberlayne, et al 2000 p. 1).

By the late 1990s, narrative approaches were well established in the social sciences, and I continue this tradition and hope to add to the debate. I now revisit my epistemological position and relate this to my methodological approach, locating this within the context of other writers work.

3.4   Locating my position: narrative and epistemology

I suggested above that the turn to narrative ways of conceptualising human experiences and social action is rooted in interpretivist epistemology. Such subjective narrative approaches to the study of lives have been inspired by Weber's verstehen, Schutze's phenomenology, and Chicago interactionism (Roberts 2002). However, although this approach represents a turn away from

earlier modes of enquiry and master narratives of theory, within the context of this growth in narrative writing, it is possible to make distinctions between different epistemological positions, or as Denzin (1989) puts it, subjective or objective knowing. Further, there is a huge literature debating the status of these accounts, although such different epistemological positions are often not explicitly named. The purpose of this discussion therefore is to outline narrative approaches from two broad epistemological perspectives. I outline an epistemological continuum of approaches to narrative analysis in order to identify the range of approaches available and to set my choice of approach in context.

It is useful to discuss the differences between writers' approaches to narrative analysis in terms of how they view the way that knowledge is generated and the knowledge itself (Temple 2008). On the one hand, some approaches treat narratives as 'objective presentations of experiences' (Temple 2008 p 2), and narrative is limited to content and themes, while alternative approaches perceive narratives:

> 'As social encounters situated in particular contexts, and the writing up of narratives as an active and creative rather than a neutral process' (Temple 2008 p. 2).

As I discussed above, I adopt an approach to narrative analysis which fits with the second reference point and assert that:

> 'Interpretation is inevitable because narratives are representations' (Riessman 1993 p. 2).

Narratives therefore, do not speak for themselves: they need to be analysed and interpreted. Further, they are subjective, rooted in time, place and experience, are perspective ridden and linked to culture and history. As suggested, these positions also differ in terms of the role of language and the nature of how truth claims are made and I discuss these aspects in more detail below.

Some writers associated with the first perspective outlined above have tended to adopt narrative approaches to the study of lives because of some kind of disillusionment with 'traditional methods'. For example, Bertaux (2003) argues that 'Life stories can bring objective information' (Bertaux 2003 p. 41). However, my approach to studying community does not attempt to treat its existence (or not) as 'an objective event, but a phenomenologically different experience' (Riessman 2008 p. 90). The issue of truth and how truth claims are made also has epistemological significance. Interpretivist perspectives do not claim that respondents' accounts are 'untruthful', but argue that truth is multiple and subjective and ultimately an interpretation:

> 'Narratives are not treated as 'true' but rather as subjective versions of truth' (Guy and Montague 2008 p. 389).

The issue of truth seems much more straightforward for those writing from the first perspective: for these writers, a narrative is treated as though it reflects reality and language mirrors life. As I have argued above, my approach is not concerned with universal or absolute truths and I explore how truth claims are made rather than if an account is factually true. There are other ways of approaching 'a truth' and many see narrative truth – as different from logical or scientific truth:

> 'Oral sources are credible but with a different *credibility*…. the importance of oral testimony may not lie in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism and desire emerge' (Portelli 1998 p. 68).

Ricoeur (1984), writing from the second perspective, refers to narrative understanding rather than truth, while Hath and Wismiewski (1995) suggest that truth goes beyond notions of reliability, validity and generalisability and would prefer terms like 'adequacy, aesthetic finality, accessibility, coherence, plausibility, trustworthiness, epistemological validity and verisimilitude. In my research, I analyse the coherence and persuasiveness of accounts of community in relation to place, networks and identity rather than focus on attempting to discuss whether or not what women tell is factually true. I examine whether women tell convincing stories about their experiences of

community in Spain and this relates to how the stories are emplotted and how their multiple and shifting identities are conveyed.

In terms of my research on community among retired British migrants in Spain, I am not merely attempting to excavate or reveal – which would be essentialist - the 'truth' about whether community 'exists', nor is it epistemologically appropriate for me to attempt to objectively measure it. Instead, as I suggested in Chapters One and Two, my aim is to explore my participants' constructions and representations of community using my understandings as a framework. I have outlined my uses of community in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity and suggested that there are multiple representations. My epistemological approach takes into account that the people I interviewed may have different uses of the concept and my interpretation of their understanding is necessarily partial and thus a reinterpretation. I explore the processes that underpin the construction and reconstruction of community and examine this through narratives. I acknowledge therefore that women's narratives of community are subjective accounts, influenced by context, that is, culturally a Western[22] perspective. Temporally, this takes place in the 21st century and finally, spatially, these narratives are influenced by their knowledge of and experiences of living in the UK and Spain. Any knowledge that is generated has to take this and the women's previous experiences into account, although it is not possible to objectively measure this. Further, my attempt to understand constructions of community is necessarily shaped by my subjective positionalities and experiences which are also both multiple and non-measurable: I cannot edit myself out and I have attempted to be as transparent as possible in terms of how I understand, apply and use the literature, analyse the narrative data and also how I claim to gain knowledge from it. I discuss this in detail in the following chapter. Moreover, and to emphasise, I am interested in how and why it is constructed, experienced and reconstructed through narrative.

An alternative perspective is put forward by Roos (2003), who writes:

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[22] I use this to refer to European and North American post-capitalist secular society

> 'I thus propose to treat autobiographies…*as essentially reality- and truth-orientated narratives of practices*, where the truth is seen from a unique, concrete viewpoint: that of the author' (Roos 2003 p. 31).

Further, as I discussed in Chapter Two, the UK Home Office currently present community as the solution to problems in society (Back et al 2000). The Home Office's 'master narrative' on community suggests that is directly observable and measurable through immigrants speaking English, adopting a British ethnic identity through Citizenship Ceremonies and swearing allegiance to the monarchy. Further, whether different ethnic groups share social networks with others is also perceived as an indicator of whether community exists or not. This narrative can be understood to fall into the second perspective.

However, narratives are active constructions and therefore should not be taken to accurately represent individual experience:

> 'Narratives are *emergent*, a joint venture and the outcome of negotiation by interlocutors.' (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2008 p. 381).

Rather, they should be seen as partial representations of that experience (Riessman 2008). Ultimately, within interpretivism, the distinctions between true and false need not be problematic since 'Sincere people may not be telling the truth' (Tonkin 1992 p. 113).

I have argued that there are a range of approaches to conceptualising narratives, broadly ranging from positivist epistemologies which treat narratives as ethnographic testimonials. Moreover, I use 'truth' and the making of truth claims as the main differential between positivist and interpretivist approaches and the use and perception of the role of language. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss how women's narratives will be analysed in terms of content and structure in light of my epistemological position. I now go on to discuss how I analyse women's narratives of community in Spain.

3.6 My approach to narrative analysis

'Narratives are strategic, functional and purposeful'.
(Riessman 2008 p. 8)

'Narrative analysis is concerned with language and identity work as much as themes or topics'.
(Temple 2009 p. 361)

Narratives are rarely clearly bounded. When we apply boundaries to them, decisions about which aspects of talk to analyse are necessarily interpretive and further influenced by epistemological and ontological positions and interests (Riessman 2000). I defined narrative as recorded, transcribed stories, which have become structured units for interpretation, and narrative analysis can be understood as the systematic study (Riessman 1993, 2008), of such replayed strips of activity (Goffman 1975). Analysis of narrative data can be thematic, structural or performative[23] (Riessman 2008; Temple 1996, 2008) although it is difficult to separate the content from the structure since they are inseparable (Ricouer 1984). I discuss in more detail in Chapter Four the practicalities of applying this to my work. My use of narrative analysis is similar to that of Riessman (1993, 2008) and Temple (1996, 2008) in that I explore not just what is told in a narrative but in how and why it is told as I discuss below.

All narrative analysis is concerned to some extent with content but thematic analysis focuses largely on thematic categories –'the told' or 'the what 'is said - emerging from narrative data. Because of this focus on content, thematic narrative analysis is sometimes confused with grounded theory, although it does not take account of language, structure and performance (Riessman 1993, 2008). Roberts (2008) defines performativity in the social sciences as:

'The communicative powers of research and the natural involvement of an audience' (Roberts 2008 p. 2).

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[23] Narrative analysis can also be visual, that is of photographs, pictures etc but this is not the focus here – this is treated as separate by Riessman

My approach to narrative analysis therefore involves focussing on the substantive aspect or content – the story must be about 'something' – and as previously indicated, women's narratives of community are the issue under investigation. As I suggested earlier, these narrative accounts will be analysed both in terms of their content, or, thematically; and in terms of their structure, and the way (and for whom) the stories are told, which will involve considering the use of language as both representing and constructing community in relation to linguistic choice and devices employed.

There are wide differences in what is analysed in terms of structure; for example Gee (1986) draws on oral rather than text based tradition and analyses pitch, pause and other features that punctuate speech. I discuss my focus on language, plot, time and identity later in this chapter and the role of myself as researcher in Chapter Four.

In common with Riessman's approach, Gubrium and Holstein (1998) and Elliott (2005), I argue that story telling should be analysed as much for the ways that stories are told as for what is being told since focussing on the ways in which accounts are produced allows clearer examination of coherence and difference. Gubrium and Holstein (1998) refer to this as 'narrative slippage', or a way of thinking about the self in relation to others and how this changes as expressed through narratives. Day Sclater (1998) refers to such apparent contradictions, when a narrator can revisit old themes and speak of them differently as 'transformation of subjectivity'. (1998 p. 67)

My approach to examining language has been influenced by Derrida (1967) and deconstruction[24] and I draw on Czarniawska's (2004) work to analyse the use of the following linguistic devices which attempt to persuade the audience: apologia, which represents a defence, actual or potential against accusation; eulogy, a speech filled with praise or commendation; hyperbole, the use of exaggerated terms for emphasis; hypothyposis, a visually powerful

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[24] Deconstruction describes an approach to textual analysis whereby the text is dismantled into components through multiple interpretations.

and vivid description; irony or inverted meaning; and mimesis which is the imitation of another's words as I apply in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. I make use of these devices in my analysis.

Structural analysis centres on 'the telling' or how narrative is structured to fulfil the purpose of the narrator; or why the narrator is telling the story, how the narrator persuades and convinces the audience that they see events in a particular way. Here the emphasis is on the narrative itself, rather than what is narrated. There are several differing approaches to this, although these share a concern with how an account is put together or constructed. Although narratives depend on certain structures to hold them together, as with definitions of narrative, there is significant debate and little agreement about the properties that it has or how structure should be analysed. For example, for Tonkin (1992), narratives have: clarity and pace; plot; stages; symbolism; subplots; metaphor and sequence, while McAdams (1993) also uses 'imageos' to denote a central character and argues that narratives, or stories, have tone, image, theme (recurrent pattern of human intention) and ideological setting (systematic body of values and beliefs). For Denzin (1989), narratives have a plot and a story line that exists independently of the life of the storyteller or narration and a reason or set of justifications for its telling. Gubrium and Holstein (1998) maintain that narratives or stories need to have plots, characters, themes and flow, while Riessman's definition of what comprises narrative encompasses sequence and consequence.

Other approaches to structural analysis notably include Labov and Waletsky (1967) who use a 'paradigmatic structural approach' where narratives have formal properties involving the following six elements: first there is the 'abstract' which is a summary of the substance of the narrative; this is followed by 'orientation' which reveals the time, place and characters; the 'complicating action' or sequence of events; the 'evaluation' or the significance and meaning of the actors and the action; the 'resolution' or what happened of the narrative and finally the 'coda', or a return to the present. Labov and Waletsky (1967) make the distinction between narrative clauses which would be past tense, temporally ordered and would have an impact on

the inferred order of events if rearranged, and free clauses which can be rearranged in a narrative sequence without altering the semantic interpretation.

A key feature distinguishing narratives is therefore the implication that one event usually causes another, suggesting persuasiveness or coherence. For Riessman, narratives are episodic, that is, they are stitched together by theme rather than by time and often include entrance and exit talk. In other words, tellers sometimes let listeners know when a story (or narrative) is coming and indicate when it's over (Jefferson 1979, cited in Riessman 1993). By examining structure and content together, the relationship between meaning and action can be explored and a focus on the choice of language used also allows an exploration of how a story is constructed. Structural analysis is also useful to examine how persuasive a story is (Riessman 2004) as I discuss below in relation to plot, time – in terms of how talk about the past influences the present and the future - and narrative identity. Analytical bracketing – analysing a particular aspect of content or structure - allows us to focus on one aspect on narrative practice (auspices under which stories are told) at a time while suspending interest in the others.

Looking at thematic and structural analysis together enables an identification and analysis of common themes across (and within) cases and also, exploration of variation in meaning (Riessman 2008). With regard to the structure of a narrative, the analytical emphasis shifts to the telling, rather than what is told. Instead, the focus is on the way that a narrative is structured and the linguistic devices used. However, the context of the account is also important (that is historical and cultural factors). My use of context refers to the wider historical, political and cultural backdrop to the narrative rather than where the narrative actually takes place.

Further, the focus on performance in social science is increasing, particularly in relation to the study and representation of lives (see Roberts 2008). Analysing the performative or dialogic Riessman (2008), drawing on Bakhtin (1984), argues that other elements of narrative add a further dimension –

looking at 'who' the narrative is for and how it is a joint production between the narrator and the audience[25]. This aspect of narrative analysis examines interaction between speaker and listener, the context in which the story is told and the performance of 'identity' through narrating. However, I only examine interaction in terms of how the women as narrators position themselves and me - as the researcher.

Having outlined a number of different approaches to narrative analysis and established which themes I will be focusing on, along with how I will examine language and linguistic devices in my research, I now turn to discuss in more detail how I analyse the structure of women's narratives of community in Spain. As indicated above, there is no consensus about how narratives should be structurally analysed and there are a range of approaches to this. For the purposes of my research, I analytically bracket (Gubrium and Holstein 1998) to focus on discrete elements: I focus on plot and view this as being constructed by women through the narrative act, rather than being inherent in their stories and also subsequently, as imposed on the narratives by me as the researcher. I view the plot of a narrative as holding it together and providing an underlying structure for analysis and since it is part of my definition of a narrative approach. I also address the issue of time, in regard to how talk of the past influences the present and the future since, as I discussed in Chapters One and Two, there is a nostalgic discourse surrounding community and it is often treated as something that is located in the past, that is lost, yet there is a desire to recover it in the present (Delanty 2003). Finally, I have already highlighted my focus on ethnic identity in the previous chapter, and, I also examine identity or locational positionalities in narrative as I discuss below.

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[25] This is sometimes included with the general term 'structure' of a narrative rather than separate from structure

3.6   Narrative and plot

I argued above that narratives have certain structures to hold them together, although there is no consensus about what these are. Some researchers argue that narratives can be typified by a particular genre (Tonkin 1992, Riessman 2000) or plot, or way of persuading the listener that events happened in a certain way. Czarniawska (1998) suggests that a narrative has three elements: an original state of affairs, an action or event and a consequent state of affairs, but that these only become a narrative when they have a plot. In this way, the plot of a narrative can be understood as the means by which particular phenomena are brought into a meaningful whole (Czarniawska 2004), or created from disordered experience (Riessman 2008). Plots therefore, are created from fragmented events, but the plot itself creates an ordered 'whole' (Riessman 2000). The plot of a narrative can then be described as how people impose order on their experiences (Riessman 1993) and as how narrative analysts impose structure.

Most narratives have a plot, although these can vary in type and often the narrator indicates how they wish to be understood within their narrative (Labov and Waletsky 1967, Gubrium and Holstein 1998). Plot can also be understood in terms of 'patterned expectancy' (Tonkin 1992 p. 51), that is, agreement between speaker and listener on what sort of interpretation is to be made:

> 'Genres depend on shared rules of interpretation: they are not explicable by form alone' (Tonkin 1992 p. 50).

Plots are taken from an available repertoire that is culturally and temporally specific; they are linked to the social and cultural context of their production since all narratives are socially and culturally located and reflect and reproduce these locations. It is useful to analyse plot in this way since this approach can:

> 'Weave into the story the historical and social context…and thoughts and feelings reported by people' (Czarniawska 1998 p 125).

I have highlighted throughout the preceding chapters my concern with context and with the motives of women who moved from the UK to Spain and I use plot to highlight how women in Spain experience and construct this through their narratives of community.

Czarniawska (2004) refers to 'ending embedded plot', which is where the logical connections between various episodes only become visible in the end. For my work this means I apply the plot typologies of the quest and the voyage and return to make sense of women's experiences and intentions. I discuss this in more detail below. The work of Ricouer 1984, 1985 and 1988) is also particularly useful in relation to understanding plot and narrative. He describes narrative in terms of a 'production' drawing from the work of Aristotle (in Poetics) who regarded narrative as the memesis – or imitation - of lived experience. Plot (or 'muthos' for Aristotle) is not seen as a static structure but the work of composition, giving dramatic identity to the story recounted. Ricouer (1984) uses the term 'emplotment' to denote this 'poetic act', and again, emplotment can be understood as bringing together disparate elements of a story to create a coherent whole. Narrating lived experiences imposes a structure upon them, so emplotment can be seen as the organisation of events in narrative. Plot therefore makes one story out of multiple incidents and transforms the many incidents to one whole story.

Gubrium and Holstein (2009) describe narrative linkage as 'a meaning making process' (2009 p. 55) and argue that:

> 'No item of experience is meaningful in its own right. It is made meaningful through the particular ways it is linked to other items. Linkage creates a context for understanding' (2009 p. 55).

Further there are two aspects to narrative linkage. First, linkage occurs inside the text, and this is how the storyteller assembles the details or disparate events into a meaningful account. I interpret this as relating to the plot of a narrative and I discuss this in relation to the quest and the voyage and return throughout chapters five, six and seven. For the purpose of my analysis, the

different groups of women in my research link their stories differently depending on the ending embedded in the plot (Czarniawska 2004) of their narratives. Second, linkage also happens outside of the text. Gubrium and Holstein (2009) suggest that in this second aspect, background information- or ethnographic understanding - is provided by the narrator to contextualise their narrative and provide alternative meanings. Narrators provide contextual information by removing themselves from their narrative. Gubrium and Holstein (2009) describe it thus:

> 'The lived and circumstantial dimensions of linkage are likely to be missing –unless the storyteller…steps outside the account to contextualise it for us; (2009 p. 59).

Throughout my analysis I draw upon both aspects of narrative linkage. I do this in relation to plot as indicated above and I also in relation to when women step outside of their stories to provide contextual information. Further, through the process of analysis, I also use ethnographic understanding to illuminate meaning. In Chapter Seven I assess how place, networks and ethnic identity are linked and in Chapter Eight I discuss how narrative linkage is useful to draw together these different representations of community. Importantly, I do not treat plot as inherent to a narrative: instead, women emplot their narratives and subsequently I impose structure upon them for analytical purposes.

I use Booker's (2004) classification of plots to identify key plot types in women's narratives of community in Spain. Booker's (2004) work is based on an interest in why people tell stories and the kinds of stories that are told. He synthesises a wide range of examples from literature, film, the Bible, ancient myths and folk tales. He concludes that all of these can be reduced to seven basic plot typologies as follows: overcoming the monster; rags to riches, the quest, voyage and return; comedy; tragedy; and rebirth. In common to all of these, according to Booker (2004) there is likely to be a central figure on whose fate the story hinges, and this is often the teller with whom we identify. The plot-lines I use for analysing women's narratives of community in Spain are the 'quest', denoting to seek or search (from the Latin 'quaere'), and

'voyage and return'. I adopt these plot typologies in the first instance because women talked of migrating to Spain in retirement as a journey, both physically and emotionally. Both the quest and voyage and return centre on a journey taking place, although the endings embedded within each diverge, as well as converge, as I discuss throughout Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

Although ostensibly, stories based on the quest plot appear to be very different, they are all underpinned by the central character seeking a goal of some kind. This can be treasure or, appositely for my research in Spain, the goal is often a new home, embodying 'a great renewal of life' (Booker 2004 p83). For the women I interviewed in Spain, the quest was for a new life and the recovery of something that had been lost (Delanty 2003), and I argue in Chapters Five, Six and Seven that what has been lost is community. Significantly, a 'call' - 'A note of the most urgent compulsion' (Booker 2004 p. 70) – precipitates the quest which has resonance for my research participants in terms of their being disillusioned with Britain and feeling that it had failed them in some way. This is discussed in Chapter Five. Examples of the call in quest stories include Fiver in *Watership Down* having a premonition that something bad is about to happen and Christian in *Pilgrims Progress* having a nightmare vision of the future (Booker 2004).

The quest begins with the central character feeling an intense compulsion to leave. I examine the reasons why women chose to leave the UK for Spain in terms of what they said and also their use of language and linguistic devices in Chapter Five. The call is something that all the women's narratives shared, although there is divergence regarding other elements. For example, a feature of the quest includes the central character's companions who accompany her on the 'journey'. In Chapter Six I discuss how women talk differently about networks in their narratives depending whether or not they wished to remain in Spain. Further, in order to fulfil the life renewing goal, the central character must first overcome certain difficulties or obstacles and again these are presented differently in women's narratives depending on their future intentions.

I apply the quest plot typology to those women who wished to remain in Spain. For those that wanted to return to the UK, the plot voyage and return is useful; like the quest, this plot is also based on a journey and examples of this include *Alice in Wonderland*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and *The Wizard of Oz* (Booker 2004). In voyage and return, the central character travels away from of their surroundings to a world which is remote and far away from their home. At first, this strangeness is interesting and distracting, but eventually the protagonist wants to return to what is familiar, that is, home:

> 'The essence of this plot is its central figure's confrontation with the unknown, that which seems abnormal precisely because it is in such contrast to and so cut off from the familiar world he or she inhabits' (Booker 2004 p. 92).

Both typologies are useful for my work as I am interested in how 'home' is constructed through women's narratives of community. Although Booker (2004) suggests that the circumstances at the start of the quest and voyage and return differ in that the latter involves a less purposeful start to the journey, I apply the quest to all of the women's narratives and discuss the voyage and return typology in relation to a shift in plot as indicated above. The main difference between the quest and voyage and return plots therefore, is where the central character ultimately wants to be, in the original home or the new one.

Following Ginsburg's (1989a) analytical tradition, and by using the plots of the 'quest' and 'voyage and return' I look at how the women living in Spain construct different positions from their experiences of community in Spain. I apply a comparison of plot lines across narrative accounts and I focus on the similarities and differences in the discursive strategies employed by the women. I analyse the narratives in terms of plot in the findings chapters and discuss the practicalities of doing this in the following chapter.

To summarise, I examine plot in women's narratives because emplotment (Ricouer 1984) creates some order within the narrative and focussing on different plot types and plot shifts allows meaning to both be imposed on the

narratives and illuminated through them. Analysing plot enables generalisations to be made within and across narratives of community and it is particularly useful to examine typologies of the quest and voyage and return in relation to constructing community and migration to Spain as I discuss below. As previously highlighted, I also examine some of the linguistic devices and choices in addition to the substantive elements of women's narratives. The plot can be understood as the structure imposed on the narrative by the women and by the analyst. I consider next how narrative and time can be used to understand women's narratives of community in Spain.

3.7   Narrative and time

'Language is a central means by which we carry our lives together –
carrying the past into the present to create the future'.
(Riessman 2008 p. 62)

I argued above that plot is a significant feature of narrative, although there are other elements that I focus on in my research into women's constructions of community in Spain. Time is also one of these important features and there is a significant literature on narrative and time, the most notable being Ricouer's work, *Time and Narrative* (1984, 1985, 1988). According to Ricouer, within narrative, experiences are given meaning through the 'temporal dialectic' (Ricouer 1984, 1985, 1988) or the relating of time tenses, for example past, present and future which make life (and narrative) ordered, since:

' We imbue our experiences with meaning through relating time tenses,
such as the past to the present, and attempt to render 'life'
comprehensible, ordered and continuous' (Roberts 2002 p. 119) .

Ricouer (1984) builds on the work of Aristotle and Augustine, arguing that narrative puts temporal experiences in order and that human beings tend to comprehend time in terms of stories. Emplotment, the creative centre of the narrative, or the poetic act, is again significant since it is a synthesis of the heterogeneous as there are two aspects of time in every story told. First, there is a discrete succession or a series of incidents, and second, the configuration

of the story as a whole (Ricouer 1984). The narrated story then is a temporal totality and the temporal identity of a story is something that endures and remains across that which passes and flows away. Time as passage and duration, exemplified by past, present and future, characterises narratives. In this sense, we can see human experience as storied because we understand human actions as being organised in time (McAdams1993, Roberts 2002). Composing a narrative therefore involves a configuration and succession and plot is linked to the time elements of the story which are selected, ordered and made meaningful within the account according to time.

Tonkin (1992) describes time in terms of 'contingency' because every narration is prompted by the intersection in real time of a narrator and listener and the narration itself occupies a phase of irreversible time. She refers to the present as a continually disappearing moment facilitated by language which allows speakers to refer back:

> 'Tellers are constructing retrospective accounts for audiences with different time scales, and they may adjust their own narrations to the memories and understanding of their listeners' (Tonkin 1992 p. 66).

Further, a teller may recount in a few words lengthy experiences and vice versa, which means that a narrator could emphasise or play down certain parts. Portelli (1998) emphasises that:

> 'There is a relationship between the velocity of the narrative and the meaning of the narrator' (Portelli 1998 p. 66).

In this way, dwelling on an episode may be a way of stressing its importance and the practice of focussing on past events to explain the present is explored in my analysis of women's narratives of place, networks and ethnic identity.

I focus on time as linear temporality, although research often involves dealing with the past, present and future of participants and researchers themselves because temporal and spatial contexts are epistemologically significant since:

'The narrator is located in time and space and the personal narrative emerges from a particular vantage point – the present; the stories we tell about the past always reflect our present concerns' (Day Sclater 1998 p. 75).

Talk of the past in narrative accounts is often used to explain or justify present actions and future intentions. However, as well as analytically bracketing aspects of structural analysis, within the remit of time and narrative I bracket further to examine a particular element of time, that is, the bringing of the past into the present in narrative through nostalgia:

'The space of experience allows one to account for the assimilation of the past into the present' (Boym 2001 p. 10).

I analyse my narrative accounts of community in terms of how talk of the past influences perceptions of the present and the future and in particular how nostalgia features in these accounts. Being nostalgic brings the past into the present through narrative:

'A nostalgic contemplation is almost by definition a memory[26] placed in linear time' (Dickenson and Erben 2006 p. 227).

This fits with my conceptual use of time that is linear time, since:

'Nostalgia is connected with a linear concept of time and with an industrial, secular or secularizing society' (Dickenson and Erben 2006 p. 224).

My research offered an opportunity to consider time in terms of how talking of the past influences the present and the future and particularly how nostalgia – the past in the present - imbues the accounts. Nostalgia (like community) can be something real and imagined. The women I interviewed tended to tell a chronological story of their life in Spain in relation to community: often they would go back in time and provide an account of time passing up to the present and I explore this in detail throughout Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

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[26] My research does not focus on memory, see Hinchman and Hinchman 2001 and Misztal 2003. Also see Brockmeier 2000 and Roberts 1999, 2004.

The work of Bakhtin (1984) and Skultans (1997) is also useful for my research in Spain. Bakhtin (1984) introduces the concept 'chronotope' which links time and space together:

> 'We will give the name *chronotope* (literally, "time space") to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature…What counts for us is the fact that it expresses the inseparability of space and time' (Bakhtin 1984 p. 84).

However, although Bakhtin's concern is with the novel, idyllic and adventure chronotopes can apply to narratives as well (Skultans 1997). Skultans examines the narratives of Latvian 'forest brothers', those men and women who took refuge in forests during the post-war decade.

> 'The specificity of place and the cyclical rhythm of time are important in Latvian narratives. Beyond these, however, two other defining characteristics of the pastoral tradition appear: these are nostalgia for the past and a polarization of the moral universe. Focus on the past is particularly important as a structuring device' (Skultans 1997 p. 85).

According to Bakhtin (1984) , many narratives about major biographical disruption are set in what he would describe as 'adventure time', however, as Skultans (1997) argues, he is referring to 'random temporal contingencies' (Skultans 1997 p86) and few narrators can remain within the adventure mode without returning to the pastoral mode. My use of the adventure and idyllic chronotopes centres on how nostalgic recollections of the past are linked to space and time in both the UK and Spain. Just as Skultans describes Latvian forests as physical and moral refuges or 'the pastoral idyll', I examine women's narratives of community in relation to Spain as a refuge or Mediterranean idyll, and also how the UK is reconfigured if the quest was not successful. I use these ideas in relation to how women superimpose their desires and wants onto place and how nostalgic recollections across time about spaces/places are constructed through their narratives. I examine the quest's goal for a new home or a place of safety (adventure and idyll) and how nostalgic recollections are linked to both space and time. I particularly focus on how plot (quest and voyage and return) are linked to notions of the

idyll. I explore the inter-relatedness of adventure and idyllic time in women's narratives. Places when imbued with idyllic properties can be seen as being is suspended in time but brought into the present through nostalgia in narrative.

In summary therefore:

> 'In a dynamic way then, narrative constitutes past experience at the same time as it provides ways for individuals to make sense of the past' (Riessman 2008 p. 8).

Although the past is recalled to reconcile our identities in the present (Riessman 2008), narratives must also take account of the context in which they take place. My use of time in analysing narratives centres on how the past is brought into the present through nostalgia and how this reflects and constructs belonging to places, networks and ethnic group(s). I also examine the structure of those narratives which focus at length on these particular elements and explore women's narratives in relation to their use of adventure and idyllic time (Bakhtin 198, Skultans 1997). I now turn to discuss the final element of my structural analysis of narrative, that is, identity or translocational positionality.

3.8   Narrative and identity

> 'When we narrate we both describe and construct who we are: we produce and present identities' (Temple 2008 p. 3).

> 'A position can be defined as a temporarily occupied coherent identity with its own 'vantage point' or perspective'. (Taylor 2005 p. 253)

Narrative is described as constructing identities and opening up a plurality of stories (Wood 1981) and I suggested in Chapter Two, that in line with my epistemological position, identity is strategic and positional, rather than essentialist (Hall 2000). Discussions of identity have become even more important because of an increased focus on social and political concerns with the modern world, and within academic discourse, 'identity' has gained

conceptual importance in offering explanations of social and cultural changes (Woodward 2002, du Gay 2000). Temple (2008) argues that:

> 'In constructing who we are, we also construct who is 'other' to us' (2008 p. 3).

Women's narrative identity therefore, is their construction and presentation of their experiences and themselves through their narratives. Narrative analysis is suited to looking at the presentation of identity and identity can be fragmented and sometimes contradictory in nature (Riessman 1990, May 2005)

Both participants and researchers portray themselves as located within their accounts in particular ways. Any narrative identity is inscribed with social characteristics since:

> 'People present themselves differently in different settings and the 'same act' can have different meanings' (Temple 2001 p. 71).

Narratives do not reveal who we are although there are links between narrative and identity but this does not mean that we are determined solely within language, and, if identity work is practice, it is practice within limits (Temple 2008). Temple (2008), drawing on Ricouer (1988), describes narrative identity as continuous over time and changing according to context, and further narrative identity illuminates the context in which people are located. In my research I examine how women construct ethnic identity through nostalgia in relation to the past and the present and how this is linked to place and networks. Such shifts in positionality will be examined in Chapter Seven, both in relation to the narrators and the researcher as their audience.

In Chapter Two, I argued that Anthias's work on identity is useful to make sense of the epistemological and ontological complexities surrounding the concept of identity. Anthias (2002) argues that identity is a socially meaningful concept, in other words, what it describes has use, but labelling this 'identity', is not she feels useful, since it is a fixed way of attempting to understand who

one feels and thinks one is and does not allow for any consideration of the processes which lead to identity formation, or the context in which identities are constructed and performed. However, narrative identity is not fixed and allows for such processes. Holstein and Gubrium (2000) use identity as process in a way that counters Anthias who says that this is not possible and refer to 'the when, where and how' rather than 'the who' in narratives.

Narratives of location then, are accounts of such processes and the context in which these processes operate, or how we locate ourselves in terms of the many categories that are socially available to us, for example ethnicity. Therefore, using translocational positionality has epistemological value in the context of my work since I do not see identity as being fixed or essentialist and it also opens up scope to explore how ethnic identities are constructed while away from country of origin. I use the term 'identity' but as noted in Chapter Two I do not believe that identity is fixed or has an essence since narrative identity is concerned with performance and process. Narrative identity can be understood to be about similarity and difference and it can be multiple and is also relational. Somers (1994) refers to 'positioning' to describe how the narrator establishes her identity or self through narrative practice in relation to the listener and how this also defines the identity of the researcher. Gubrium and Holstein (1998) refer to this process of shifting positionalities as 'narrative footing', so the focus is on the identity that the narrator 'performs' through the narrative act (Riessman 1993, 2000; Goffman 1969, 1975, 1981). Another way of looking at this is in terms of how participants negotiate how they want to be known by the stories they develop with their audience (Riessman 2000) and how they in turn choose to cast the audience or how narrators set up subject positions (Day Sclater 1998a) and this impacts on the research process and how the story is told as I discuss throughout Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

I also analyse women's narratives as counter narratives (Andrews and Bamberg 2004) to the Government's master-narrative of community. I explore this in relation to the presentation of their preferred ethnic identity and again this is useful to examine the links between the micro and the macro since,

'Narratives are produced in relation to socially available and hegemonic discourses and practices' (Anthias 2002 p. 511).

Micro-level analysis is a useful point of investigation of macro structures and processes in social change (Stanley and Dampier 2009). I introduced the macro process or 'big structure' (Tarim 2009 1.1) of lifestyle migration and community formation in Chapters One and Two and throughout this chapter have discussed the value of narrative analysis in making links between the micro and macro worlds.

Further, I consider how the women's presentation of ethnic identity is used to persuade me of the 'rightness' of their actions or choices. Considering the identities that women want to present allows for an examination of constructions of belonging to places, periods in history and the social networks that they belong to. I also focus on how women position other characters and me in and through their narratives. To summarise, in my research I explore how women who have moved to Spain from the UK locate themselves in terms of their perceived ethnicity: I also examine how they experience ethnicity and what this concept means to them away from their country of origin. As I indicated above, I only focus on interaction in so far as examining how women position me, themselves and other characters and take account of my own position in relation to the research. I examine identity in narrative in a way that focuses on context, meaning and practice, and how identity is constructed in and through narrative.

Having discussed my epistemological position, located my approach to narrative analysis within the context of the work of others in the field and described how I will use it, I now turn to address the practicalities involved in conducting my research in Spain.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODS: HOW THE RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED

4.   Introduction

In the previous chapter I defined epistemology as a concern with the ways that knowledge is generated and what counts as knowledge of and in the world (Bruner 1986, Temple 1997). Methodology can be defined as theories underpinning data generation, whilst method can then be understood as data collection techniques employed by the researcher or the way in which knowledge is generated. Although epistemology, methodology and method are actually more fluid then these definitions suggest they provide a useful starting point for discussion. Having addressed the coherence between my research aim and methodological choices in Chapter Three, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed description and rationale of the processes involved in data generation and analysis and to relate this to my epistemological and methodological positions.

This chapter is structured as follows: first I establish the context of my study by explaining why I chose the Costa Blanca in Spain and provide an introduction to the women in my study. I then reflexively locate myself in the research and go on to discuss why I interviewed retired women migrants from the UK. I address issues of gate-keeping and access and present a rationale for my sampling strategy. I then address relevant ethical considerations for the research. I discuss how I conducted the interviews and finally, how I analysed the data.

4.1 The study context: why I chose Costa Blanca

In Chapters One and Two I described the growing presence of UK retirees in the Costa Blanca in Spain[27] and discussed the reasons for this increase within the context of lifestyle migration. To contextualise my research and to provide a description of how it was conducted, it is necessary to explain how I came to have knowledge of the study area and how I subsequently accessed and selected my research participants. I first went to this part of Spain in August 2001 shortly after two people I knew had retired there. I returned in January 2002 and again in August 2002 and on each visit became increasingly aware of the growing numbers of retired British migrants living in the area. Through informal conversations with my friends and their contacts, I became interested in why they had left the UK and particularly in how they talked about their new lives in Spain. It was on this third visit that I decided to focus my research on an area of the Costa Blanca. In this sense the research was in part inspired by my personal experience as a visitor to the area. However, it was also timely since it resonated with wider social trends and themes as migration to Spain has reached unprecedented levels as I suggested in Chapter One. Further, there is currently a focus on immigration to the UK and migration out has never been given the same degree of attention (Hardill 2006). Moreover, the research offered an opportunity to contribute to the resurgence of interest in community and migration and to utilise a narrative analytical approach to make such links between the micro, or lives lived, and macro, that is social change through global movement. The fieldwork for this study was undertaken during 2003 and early 2004.

4.2 Introducing the sample: retired women from the UK in Spain

Throughout this thesis I use pseudonyms for my research participants and provide some background information in the table below:

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[27] See appendices 3 and 4 for maps

Research participant	Lives in Spain full time (FT) or part time (PT)	Intends to remain in Spain?	Marital status	Age[28]
Celia	FT	Yes	Married	58
Cynthia	FT	Yes	Married	54
Vera	FT	No – wants to return to the UK	In a couple with Deidre	59
Deidre	FT	No – wants to return to the UK	In a couple With Vera	62
Phyllis	FT	Yes	Married	77
Mabel	FT	Yes	Widowed	83
Agnes	FT	No – wants to return to the UK	Married	69
Agatha	FT	Yes	Married	60
Olive	FT	Yes	Divorced	57
Myra	FT	Yes	Divorced	60
Margot	FT	Yes	Divorced	60
Lillian	FT	Yes	Married	61
Joy	FT	Yes	Married	54
Jenny	FT	No – wants to return to the UK	Married	56
Viv	PT	Intends to retain home in Spain	Married	54
Bernice	PT	Intends to retain home in Spain	Married	62
Enid	PT	No – wants to buy a second home elsewhere	Married	57

Thirteen of the interviews took place in the women's own homes while another was undertaken jointly with another woman in her home (Myra and Margot). The remaining three took place in private at Vera and Deidre's house (Olive, Celia and Cynthia). In Chapter Two I discussed O'Reilly's (2000) study in the Costa del Sol and her categorisation of the residential status of migrants from

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[28] This denotes the women's ages on the date of interview.

the UK in Spain: the first group comprised full and returning residents who no longer had a residence in the UK; the second were seasonal visitors; the third group included peripatetic visitors who often owned properties in Spain but still worked in the UK and finally there were the tourists or holiday makers who visited for short periods of time. For the purposes of my research, women can be classified as falling into four related but different residential categories: those living in Spain permanently, that is without a home in the UK, who wished to remain there (Celia, Cynthia, Mable, Agatha, Joy, Myra, Margot, Olive, Lillian and Phyllis); those living in Spain permanently who wished to return to the UK (Jenny, Agnes, Vera and Deirdre); those who lived in Spain for part of the year and were happy with this arrangement (Bernice and Viv) and finally, those who live in Spain for part of the year but did not wish to retain their home there (Enid). Seven of the women were from the North of England, nine from the South and another was from Northern Ireland.

Although all of the women were retired, their ages ranged from between 53 and 83 with the average being just under 62 years. Some women moved to Spain alone with Mabel, Olive, Myra and Margot falling into this category; whilst the majority - Celia, Cynthia, Joy, Agnes, Agatha, Jenny, Lillian and Phyllis - moved with their husbands. Two of the women, Vera and Deidre (the women who I knew prior to the research and who allowed me access to most of the women I interviewed), were a couple. All of the women (apart from Deidre who had parented step-children) had adult children and grandchildren residing in the UK. With regard to education, three women had gone on to higher education (Mabel, Enid and Vera), while a further two had been in further education (Deidre and Olive); the remainder, (apart from Viv) finished secondary school. Mabel, Enid, Vera, Olive, Agnes and Deidre were employed in roles traditionally considered to be 'professional', whilst Celia, Phyllis, Lillian, Margot, Myra had worked in the retail industry. Jenny and Agatha both previously worked in service industries. Neither Joy nor Viv had ever been in paid employment but had worked as homemakers. I consider the significance of these categories when I discuss how I analyse the women's narratives below and I select one woman from each category - Vera, Celia, Bernice and Enid – to focus on in my structural analysis. Having introduced

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the context for my study and the women who participated in the research, it is now appropriate for me to effectively introduce myself in terms of how I see my own location in the research.

4.3   Reflexivity: locating myself in the research

'Researchers' understandings are necessarily temporally, intellectually, politically and emotionally grounded and are thus as contextually specific as those of 'the researched''.
(Stanley and Wise 1990 p. 23)

I include a detailed discussion of my location in the research for two related reasons; first, to be transparent in order to maximise validity by documenting the data generation process (Riessman 2008), and second, to locate myself in terms of Anthias' 'translocational positionalities', that is, the processes and outcomes of my position in the social order and my views on where I belong (Anthias 2002; Anthias and Cederberg 2006). The term 'self reflexive personal' (Grace et al 2006) can also be understood as a range of identity positions which are not necessarily chosen by the researcher and can change throughout the course of the interview (Ladino 2002). However, although it is important for me to examine and highlight my multiple identities, I acknowledge that it is impossible to measure how it impacted on my practice as a researcher and how I influenced the data generated.

Just as knowledge is contextually specific, the researcher's assumed and assigned subjectivity – or identity- is also significant in terms of the knowledge produced. The interview is a collaboration and the 'position' of the researcher and subjective and intersubjective elements need to be taken into account in order that researchers can claim integrity and trustworthiness (Finlay 2002). In examining my position, the concept 'reflexivity' is useful in acknowledging the role that the researcher plays in shaping knowledge generated since the interview is not just a 'reality report' – in line with my epistemology - but rather presents an opportunity for constructing identities through narrative for both participants and researcher (Harding 2003 2.4). The development and application of reflexivity in social inquiry has gathered momentum as a result

of the emergence of the linguistic or interpretive turn and feminist research. Further, a narrative approach is useful in addressing the relationship between the researcher and their reflexive role (Colombo 2003).

It is also worth acknowledging that attempts to locate myself within the research were problematic. Further, it should not be assumed that because I shared 'characteristics' with the women in Spain and this sometimes appeared relevant, that this guaranteed insiderness or indeed privileged access to knowledge. Moreover, although there were aspects of my 'identity' and experience that I shared with women in Spain, there were some which could have been seen as 'other'. Another issue to take into account was that any common ground and divergence was to a large extent perceived and it was an interpretive choice in terms of how it is seen to impact on the data produced.

The insider / outsider debate is largely attributed to Merton (1972) (Alzbouebi 1999; Twine 2000) and is often understood in relation to gaining access to participants. Merton's argument centres on insider researchers possessing exclusive knowledge of the community under question and access to hidden knowledge about that community with the implication being that it would be difficult or impossible for an outsider (or stranger) to gain access. Insider research refers to interviews conducted by researchers who share a similar cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national and religious heritage with their respondents (Ganga and Scott 2006). However, as Twine (2000) argues being an 'insider' or sharing a 'social signifier' (2000 p. 9) with research participants does not over-ride differences and create 'insiderness'. Further, being an 'insider' can generate different kinds of barriers.

Narrative practice (Gubrium and Holstein 1998) creates a relationship between the teller and listener. One way of examining this is to focus on how the women positioned me as the audience through their narrative performance in terms of 'translocational positionalities' (Anthias 2002) or, my being simultaneously an 'insider' and 'outsider'. Schick's (2002) study of the bi-cultural framework in New Zealand schools highlighted that category

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matching of interviewers reflected (erroneous) positivistic assumptions regarding privileged access to knowledge:

> 'Even in qualitative research, using social categories as a tool to redress social exclusion runs the risk of reifying precisely these categories by oversimplifying the factors that shape identity '(Schick 2002 p. 645).

Further, assumptions about the status of insiderness and outsiderness are foundationalist and essentialist (Rhodes 1994 cited in Twine 2000) since people have multiple identifications (Essed cited in Twine 2000). Moreover, there are dilemmas in both being an insider (a friend) while being an obvious outsider (a stranger) (Perez 2006). I noted above that I knew two of the women, Deidre and Vera prior to undertaking the research and I discuss this further below in terms of ethical considerations. Being an insider can create barriers to knowledge production in that there could be an over-conformity to cultural norms and being an outsider can allow for further insights to be gained as it would not be assumed that researchers have predetermined knowledge (Twine 2000). I examine the possible effects of this in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Therefore, through the multiple and shifting positionalities of the researcher and participants, it is possible to move across positions and be an insider and outsider simultaneously. It is also possible to be neither an insider or outside or for this to be irrelevant. Below I outline my multiple subjectivities but do not claim that these guaranteed insiderness or precluded outsiderness, although I reflexively address how it was possible for me to be positioned by these women.

When my interest in community among retired migrants from the UK to Spain developed, I was aware of an 'ironic parallel' in that the primary focus on movement in and out of the UK has historically focused on immigration rather than migration. Being the daughter of an immigrant – my father moved to the UK in 1954 from Somalia - one might have expected that I would continue the tradition of examining such movement but the very fact that emigration has historically received so little attention in itself interested me. In terms of socialisation and cultural acquisition, I consider myself to be 'British' having

been born in and lived in the UK for all of my life. This also contributed to an interest in the behaviour and experiences of people from the UK out of their country of origin, particularly in light of the Government's focus on community cohesion for immigrant minority ethnic communities. It was important to reflect on my motivation in undertaking research of this nature (Perez 2006) and the appropriate place for a discussion around this is in relation to my position vis a vis my participants. In this sense therefore, I am doing 'autobiographical sociology' (Duster 2000) since my focus is still on issues regarding a facet of my own 'race', although I was not always seen this way by my participants (see Chapter Seven).

In terms of ethnicity, I could have been simultaneously positioned as both an insider and an outsider. I am also the daughter of a white woman who was born and lived her whole life in the UK. I share the same cultural norms as my participants, and demonstrate some degree of national belonging due to the accumulated national capital that I have; but, in terms of bodily inscription (Skeggs 2004), I could be perceived as an outsider because I am brown, so may not always be perceived as wholly belonging. The work of Alzbouebi (1999) is useful here: as an Arab woman researching other Arab women she was positioned both an insider and an outsider since she shared cultural norms with her research participants, but she was of a privileged class position, causing her to be an 'outsider within' – that is an insider and an outsider simultaneously. Similarly Schick (2002), in her study of the New Zealand race relations school project found that, because in New Zealand the bicultural framework sees only two groups - Maori and non –Maori - her position as a US Jewish woman was problematic. In this sense she was an outsider but she was identified as being Pakeha (non- Maori) which meant her contributions and perceived understanding of the race issue were limited as a 'white person' could not fully understand and was not credible. Twine (2000), in her research in Brazil as a brown woman, expected her respondents to relate to her as a racial insider, but instead because of the 'valorization' of white people she felt compromised, not treated as an authentic American and even experienced racism. Perez (2006), a Spanish citizen researching foreign immigrants in Spain, felt both an insider and an outsider in that he befriended

his participants, was part of a system that they aspired to join (Spanish citizenship) but he was an outsider in that he was middle class.

Other factors that could have been significant included the fact that I did not live in Spain, so at once I could have been simultaneously both an insider and outsider to the world which they inhabited. Added to this, I was a 'friend of their friends' which again could have included me (as someone known) and excluded me (as someone strange). Significantly, if the researcher and participants are from the same imagined national community, then awareness of social differences can be enhanced rather than minimised (Ganga and Scott 2006) and it is important to acknowledge this. It is also important to recognise though that 'race' is not the only determining factor and it may not always be the most important. Further, although I also shared a gender with the women in my study, and my role in shaping the data generated was significant, it is impossible to say with any certainty exactly what this was since:

> 'We cannot know everything that influences our knowledge construction processes' (Doucet and Mauthner 2008 p. 405).

Having located myself in the research I now turn to discuss my decision to focus on retired women migrants from the UK in Spain.

4.4   Interviewing women

Once I had decided on the geographical context for my research I chose to interview women who had moved to the Costa Blanca from the UK. I carried out research with women partly because I had access to a group of women through my contacts in Spain; therefore this was a convenience sample. However, for the purposes of my research I focussed on their lives and experiences of migration and community as recounted through narrative rather than looking specifically at their gender. The quote below from Stanley and Wise (1990) is useful to explicate my position:

'A defining assumption of feminism is that 'woman' is a necessary and valid category because all women share, by virtue of being women, a set of common experiences. These shared experiences derive, not causally from supposed 'biological facts' but women's common experience of oppression. That is, 'woman' is a socially and politically constructed category, the ontological basis of which lies in a set of experiences rooted in the material world. However, to say that women share 'experiences of oppression' is not to say we share the same experiences' (Stanley and Wise 1990 p. 21.).

Through my research I examined the experiences of a range of women in relation to community formation through migration. They did not focus on power relations or experiences of oppression, nor did they privilege gender in their narratives. However, when I began my research in Spain I engaged with literature on gender and migration as I anticipated that this would be a significant feature of my research with women who moved from the UK. There is a large body of literature on the topic of gender and migration (see Bokert et al 2006, Zlotnick 2003, Anthias and Cederberg 2006, Ryan and Webster 2008). Since the 1960s, feminists have criticised the limited perspectives of quantitative and positivist accounts of migration for being gender blind and drawn attention to:

'The invisibility of women on the map of migration' (Anthias and Cederberg 2006 p. 15).

It is now argued that gender, along with other social divisions can shape the migration experiences and produce 'multiple realities of migration' (Bokert et al 2006 p. 3). I examine women's multiple realities of migration as constructed in narrative but not in terms of their shared experience of being oppressed by patriarchy. Although gender specific migration experiences are important since migration is not gender neutral (Boyd and Grieco 2003), this is not the focus of my research. Women do not constitute a homogeneous group: there are divisions within gender and gender itself also intersects with other social divisions, for example ethnicity (Anthias and Cederberg 2006) as I discuss below. Although being a woman was part of what my participants discussed, my research clearly shows that different aspects were privileged in their narratives:

'Sex/gender is only one factor that influences research relationships' (Manderson et al 2008 p. 1317).

This could have been because being a woman was taken for granted by those interviewed. Further, because the focus of the interviews was on moving from one country to another, then the women in my study could have assumed that ethnicity and nationality were what interested me. Their focus on ethnicity throughout their narratives could also have been influenced by my embodied reality of being 'not white' (Nunkoosing 2005). My focus is on women's narratives of community in and through migration and there are few of these in relation to migration from the UK rather than to it. Although I interviewed women, I do not provide a comparative – that is a focus on the psychological, social and representational differences between men and women - account of migration. However, in Chapter Six I do look at my research participants as women in terms of how they discuss their lives as mothers and grandmothers. Overall my analytical focus is on the narratives of women who moved from the UK to Spain, rather than directly on the gender of those who took part in the study. I now address the issues surrounding gate-keeping and access to the women who participated in my study.

4.5   Gate-keeping and access

Access and gate-keeping can be understood to represent both the processes of gaining and allowing or denying access to someone or something (Holloway and Wheeler 2001). During my research there were no organisational or professional gatekeepers to negotiate, although as I highlighted above, access to most of the women in my study was through the two people I knew beforehand. I already knew Vera and Deidre prior to their moving to Spain and this might have affected the interviews undertaken with them; for example they could have told me more or less than other women who participated in the study. However, as I discussed above in relation to being an insider and outside in research, it is impossible to be certain about

how the interviews might have been influenced. All interviews are shaped by the perceptions of research participants but we cannot know this objectively.

Access to samples in qualitative work is usually premised on the selection of particular cases, or by advertising, so in the latter scenario, participants activate themselves. (Morse 2004). Another way of understanding accessibility is respondents' willingness to be reached. There is some controversy about whether women researching other women relate to them as friends (Oakley 1979, 1981; Reinharz 1992) and this could possibly lead to a blurring of the boundaries between the researcher being perceived as a researcher or a friend by those participating. The premise is that in some circumstances, the research relationship alters from:

> 'An instrumental one dictated by the research tasks to a reciprocal and supportive relationship, influencing the quality of interviews and ongoing interactions between interviewer and interviewee' (Manderson et al 2008 p. 1317).

Since my interviews with the women in Spain were one-off narrative encounters, there was little opportunity for ongoing interactions to take place. I had met several of the women I interviewed in social situations before engaging them in the research. This was I felt in some ways an advantage since they were generally very eager to talk to me about their experiences. However, there could have been the potential for exploitation, if women felt unable to refuse to participate. Of those women that I had not met previously, all were made aware of the research by others who had already participated and I was approached by a number of women who wanted to participate. Only one woman who was approached to be interviewed (by Deidre on my behalf) refused to participate in the research, but she did not give a reason for her refusal so any comments here would be purely speculative. I realise however that, in spite of my emphasising the confidential nature of the interviews and my assuring the women that they would remain anonymous, there could have been some concern that I would 'tell' the others what had been discussed. This may have influenced what they said and how they said it and I revisit this in my discussion of informed consent and ethics in research below.

4.6   Theoretical Sampling

Since this work is qualitative, representative sampling or sampling as 'synecdoche' (Becker 1998) was not necessary. Instead, my sampling strategy was governed by selecting respondents who would maximise theoretical development (Gilbert 1997). Theoretical sampling (Glaser and Straus 1967) or purposive sampling (Mason 2002) is concerned with constructing a sample which is meaningful theoretically and empirically because it builds in certain characteristics (criteria) which help the development of an argument. It can be understood as selecting cases to study on the basis of their relevance to research questions, theoretical positions, analytical framework, practice, and importantly the argument or explanation being developed. Although I cannot confirm whether my sample demographically reflected the wider population of UK retirees to Spain, my sampling strategy allowed for theoretical generalisations on women, community and migration. Moreover, within qualitative research judgements made on the basis of demographic variables are not deemed appropriate (Morse 1999). However, being able to compare the demographic variables of research participants in qualitative research can be very useful in providing information on the extent to which theoretical generalisations can be made. Such information can be useful, particularly when discussing the differences between my work and that of others as I discuss further in the following section.

In my research among retired female migrants from the UK in Spain, my focus is on the depth, nuance, complexity and understanding of the narrative accounts of each of these cases rather than on a demographically representative profile. My sample is not therefore representative of all retired migrants from the UK in Spain; indeed, to attempt this would have been futile since no sampling frame exists. Not all migrants who move to Spain apply for residencia, and even if they do, gaining access to this information would have been problematic. Rather, my purpose was to capture those aspects of the wider universe that related to my research question, namely a range of experiences of moving to Spain, a range of characteristics – women who had

retired and moved to Spain, both permanently and part time, with partners and alone – all of whom had bought properties in the Costa Blanca, which signified the intention of long-term or permanent settlement. My approach was by necessity partially ad hoc and opportunistic but there was a rationale for this: key characteristics were selected within the identified context and my decisions were guided by a combination of theoretical and empirical logic rather than claims of direct representation of the wider population. My target group were women who had moved from the UK to Spain once they (or their partners) had retired. The women to be included in the study needed to meet certain criteria: to have moved to the study area from the UK and have retired (that is no longer in paid employment).

4.6.1 Sample Saturation

Researchers have suggested that interviewing can cease when theoretical saturation is reached, that is when no additional data is being found or nothing new emerges (Flick 2004). Sampling stops when no new analytical insights are forthcoming from a given situation, or when the data generated stops telling us anything new about the issue under consideration. I stopped interviewing when accounts became repetitive despite differences in the biographies of participants (Sherlock 2002) and the analytical categories became clear as I discussed above. In total, I interviewed seventeen women who had moved from the UK to Spain, either on a full time basis (fourteen of the whole sample) or part-time (three of the women). I have outlined above the diversity of categories which were used for analysis and allowed me to address my key research questions. When I embarked on the research I aimed to interview between fifteen and twenty women. I stopped at seventeen as I felt that I had sufficient data for meaningful analysis, since it was clear that women's narratives were shaped by whether or not they wished to remain in Spain and whether they lived there permanently.

4.7   Ethical considerations

The adoption of the 'utilitarian theory of ethics' (Miles and Huberman 1994) most closely fits my work in terms of ethical behaviour in: recruitment (informed consent); fieldwork (avoidance of harm – which could be interpreted for my purposes as maintaining anonymity); and reporting (confidentiality) and the ability of participants to withdraw at any time. I briefed all respondents prior to undertaking the research and gave them a full explanation of the purposes of the study. Following the interview I gave them the opportunity to raise any concerns. Research participants were also given the opportunity to read the transcripts to their interviews but nobody wanted to do so. I did not feel concerned that the topic under discussion, experiences of community in the UK and Spain would be problematic in terms of its sensitivity, although it was impossible for me to know what might have been potentially sensitive. I did not feel therefore that there were any issues regarding the rights and welfare of my participants. As discussed above in relation to being known to research participants prior to undertaking interviews, there are ethical issues in relation to researching with friends. This also relates to their potential unwillingness to refuse to participate in the research and could lead to exploitation. However, it is impossible to know this. I was also mindful of and applied the British Sociological Association's guidelines (2002).

4.7.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity (that is a lack of identifiers or information that would indicate which individuals provided which data) were to an extent safeguarded by not recording any respondents' names on the transcripts and giving them pseudonyms. All research participants were made aware of this. Other issues to consider regarding this were: privacy – in what ways did the study intrude or come closer to people than they wanted? How identifiable are the individuals studied? Here privacy refers to the control over others' access to oneself and associated information and the preservation of boundaries between known and unknown and insider and outsider. I did not link women's

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place of origin to their pseudonym or occupation and I have not identified the urbanisations on which the women lived. Further, although I have indicated that this research took place in the Costa Blanca in Spain, I have not identified the location. Confidentiality refers to agreements with a person about what will be done with their data (Mathison et al1994). Throughout the thesis pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of the individuals interviewed, although only one of the women (Jenny) expressed the desire to maintain anonymity. In fact, some of the women seemed disappointed that their real names would not be used in the final thesis. However, I felt that it may have been possible to identify Jenny if hers was the only pseudonym used. Once I had transcribed each interview, I destroyed the tape and the transcripts were anonymised. The issue of conducting research with friends was also an ethical consideration as I mentioned above in relation to Deidre and Vera. I did not discuss any of the interviews with them (including the ones with each of them). In producing my thesis, being known to Deidre and Vera could have been problematic since in spite of my attempts to anonymise research participants it could have been possible for them to identify those involved. However, due to circumstances beyond the remit of this work I have not been in contact with them since the fieldwork was completed. I also obtained ethical approval to undertake the research from the University of Salford's Research Ethics Committee.

4.7.2 Gaining informed consent

Prior to undertaking the interviews, respondents were given verbal information regarding the purposes of the research and were also required to read the information sheet and give 'informed consent'. They were given the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they had before agreeing to take part. All interviewees were asked to sign the consent form as evidence that they gave their consent for me to use the information they gave me for my research. They understood that they had the opportunity to withdraw consent at any time and I did not consider my research participants to be vulnerable.

(See Appendix 1 for a copy of the information sheet given out to research participants and the consent form which they were required to sign). I ensured that sufficient time was taken to explain the purposes of the research and made sure that participants understood.

Since these were one off narrative interviews, there was no necessary ongoing need to ask for consent rather it was a one off (Roth 2003). However, even if the women who participated in the research were given full information about what the research involved and consent appeared to have been given freely, true informed consent in any research is not possible since what happens throughout the course of the work cannot be fully anticipated and many participants have no idea what researchers do with their work. This means that full informed consent cannot be given by research participants since the researcher cannot fully inform them of this

Data protection issues involved maintaining anonymity (in terms of people's names, where they were from and any identifiable details) and keeping the taped interviews and transcripts in a safe place. It is worth noting however, that complete informed consent is not possible (Mason 2002). Although for ethical reasons we seek consent prior to interviews, we cannot know the details of what will be discussed beforehand (Nunkoosing 2005): 'The person is only consenting to take part in the interview' (Nunkoosing p. 703 2005). Also people exercise choice about what they reveal (Charmaz 1995) although if participants are friends then information could have been revealed prior to the interview taking place.

4.8   Conducting the interviews

I anticipated that un-structured or semi-structured interviews were more likely to generate narratives and encourage storytelling (Riessman 1990). However, I was mindful that even the most unstructured interviews still have structure, not least because the researcher has a role in choosing the topics, deciding

how to ask questions and analyse data. The researcher also initiates the exchange and there is a degree of self interest in so doing (Collins 1998). I encouraged my research participants to tell their own stories about moving to Spain and their experiences of community. When I piloted the interview with Vera, it became clear to me that to impose the structure that I had initially devised would limit the scope for narration and participation.

As indicated previously, I use the term 'data generation' rather than collection (Mason 2002) since I was not a neutral collector of information, rather my role in constructing the knowledge produced needs to be taken into account in line with my epistemological position. However, my approach is not entirely inductive since I engaged with research methods literature and the body of literature on community prior to embarking on the research in Spain (Stanley and Wise 1990). It was important that I gained a contextual understanding of community and migration to Spain and this became refined as the literature review developed.

I formulated a set of predetermined questions (see Appendix 5), which were designed to generate data to answer my intellectual puzzle (Mason 2002). However, I did not rigidly stick to these questions: each interview had a momentum of its own and although the identified issues were covered they were not addressed in a particular order. I began each interview with a 'grand tour' question (Spradley 1979), asking each participant, 'can you tell me something about yourself and how you came to be in Spain?' All interviews began with this question but from here onwards each interview was different. For some women this was enough; they then went on to talk about why they had moved to Spain and what were the events leading to this particular move, how they felt about it and what they expected.

The issues I wanted to cover included the women's length of time in Spain and origins within the UK and I also explored whether they had lived outside the UK before. I wanted to know what the women and their partners did in terms of employment before moving to Spain and whether they had children. I

was interested in where their children lived and whether they saw them regularly as I wondered whether looser kinship ties made movement away from the country of origin any easier, or if it had any other impact. I asked about social contacts, beginning with life in Spain. I examined who people saw, how often and under what circumstances, the kind of people and the kind of social activities they engaged in and how this compared to the UK. As mentioned earlier, the conversations I had with people prior to beginning this work seemed to suggest that life in Spain was socially much richer than in the UK and I wanted to examine this further. I was keen to discover whether women felt that their new social life in Spain satisfactorily replaced that in the UK or were there friends (as well as family) from the UK whom they missed. I wanted to find out whether this was differently experienced and narrated by those who wished to stay and those who wanted to return.

I asked whether or not people were learning or intended to learn Spanish. Again, this relates back to some of the early conversations that I had with migrants from the UK who did not appear to have any intention of learning Spanish. I was keen to find out the reasons for not doing so if this proved to be the case. Related to this was the issue of whether migrants from the UK mixed with local Spanish people. I have already noted that the urbanisations were mainly populated by Northern European migrants with practically no Spanish people living there apart from a very small number who had bought holiday homes, but I was keen to discover how they felt about this and whether moving to the area had lived up to expectations.

My first allusion to community entailed raising the issue of whether women were involved in any 'community activities'. All the urbanisations were subjected to committee rule, supposedly democratically elected, to make decisions about the running of each area. This was not exclusively what I wanted to find out though and I let people use their own interpretation as to what was meant. Similarly, I was also interested in whether women would have been involved in any such activities in the UK to draw comparisons later on. I was mindful of the fact that the women that I interviewed had all retired, often relatively recently, and that they could possibly be experiencing the first

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flush of 'retirement bliss'. I was also aware that it could be difficult for them to compare their (working) life in the UK to their life in retirement in Spain, since for some, this would possibly have meant that they would still be working, for others, it would have meant having a different kind of retirement. Here, I also wanted to explore women's expectations of retirement in Spain and how it measured up to such expectations.

I wanted to discover what women liked and disliked about living in Spain – my interest here was in more than the climate and the food – rather the experiences that people were having in terms of being integrated into some 'whole' (and finding out what indeed this whole was) and any experiences regarding segregation from Spanish people. I was interested in how they felt about Spain itself, its culture, its people and find out how much they actually knew about the place they were living in. Of particular interest was where women felt home was and by association where then became 'away'. I wanted to address this issue by getting people to talk about their feelings about community in the UK and Spain. I also wanted to focus on more practical issues and revisit the issues surrounding 'community help' or general reciprocity or where people would go for help if they needed it. I asked about women's knowledge of organisations in Spain that would provide this help and also the links and networks that would provide it if necessary. I hoped here to discover whether any reciprocity existed among the Britons and wanted the women themselves to make a direct comparison with what they would do in Britain if they needed any help in the UK. I was keen to elicit their feelings about community and whether being part of one was wholly positive or whether there were in fact any negative aspects or constraints to this. Finally I revisited the issue of whether living in Spain lived up to initial expectations.

The above outline of intended topics was not applied in the same way in each interview. Although I asked each interviewee the grand tour question, there the conformity ended. No interview exactly followed the format that I prepared; instead, each one was different. Some women were more forthcoming than others and clearly had issues which they wanted to raise and often, this addressed those aspects which I wished to explore. I used direct questions

when the issues were not covered by women's narratives. Since the order and structure of each interview differed so widely, interaction between research participants and myself as the researcher also differed. The length of time of the interviews ranged from one to two and half hours, with the average interview taking one hour and 30 minutes. The interviews conducted with Vera and Deirdre, the two women I knew prior to undertaking the research were not significantly different in length to the average. I offered all women the opportunity to read the transcribed interview but nobody wanted to do so.

4.9   Making theoretical generalisations

As I have argued above, in qualitative research the relationship between the sample and the wider population is not always based on demographic representation (Mason 2002). Assumptions about demographic comparability of a sample to a population perhaps erroneously suggest homogeneity among the group in question (Morse 1999) or can be used to show the opposite. There is however an issue concerning how I can make claims from the sample I have chosen. The data generated from my interviews with the women in Spain has wider application or 'generalisability', the findings from my research can be applied to settings other than Costa Blanca or Spain. The underlying goal of both qualitative and quantitative research is to develop and modify theory and transfer knowledge, although the means of determining this is different for each approach (Morse 1999). While in qualitative inquiry the samples are usually small as indicated above, they are selected purposively for the contribution that they can make to emerging theory. Although there will be statements I cannot make since I do not have the profile in my sample, any knowledge generated is relevant beyond the sample regardless of its demographic profile because:

> 'The knowledge gained is not limited to demographic variables…it is
> the knowledge that is generalized' (Morse 1999 p. 5).

By focusing on the small scale or micro it is possible therefore to illuminate the broader picture or macro (O'Neill 2004). Further, theory emerging from my study in Spain may be used to illuminate other transnational retirement situations (Morse 1999). Moreover, theory can contribute to knowledge development when it is recontextualised in numerous different settings, amounting to theory based generalisation (Morse 1994). Therefore, if emerging knowledge about narrative constructions of belonging to different representations of community accurately describes and explains phenomena in other situations, then these ideas could be theoretically generalisable and applicable to theories of migration and community by relating them to pre-existing theories.

4.10   Analysing narratives

In the previous chapter, I described narrative as 'talk organised around consequential events' (Riessman 1993 p. 8), or sections of talk (Riessman 2008). I indicated that I would analytically bracket (Gubrium and Holstein 1998) or focus on particular elements of women's narratives for the purposes of my research while suspending interest in others. Those aspects which I chose to focus on – after engaging with the literature and becoming immersed in the generated data - included an analysis of the themes in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity, and an examination of some of the linguistic choices and devices employed in narrative practice (Gubrium and Holstein 1998). Further, I analysed the structure of women's narratives in relation to plot, the bringing of the past into the present and the construction of ethnic identity through narrative.

Above, I described the processes involved in generating the data. It is also necessary for me to be transparent in terms of the practicalities of transcribing and analysing the narratives (Riessman 2008) and I discuss this below. Transcribing narratives can be understood to be an act of translation since converting talk into written text involves interpretive decisions about what to retain and omit and this is inevitably incomplete, partial and selective (Riessman 1993).

I discussed my theoretical approach to narrative analysis in the previous chapter. In practical terms, I analysed women's narratives of community in Spain in three related ways (Riessman 2008). First I looked at the thematic content, in other words what women said about community and these tended to be in relation to place, networks and identity in Spain. This involved examining the themes arising from the data (and interpretive decisions shaped the focus here) which allowed for categorical exploration within as well as across cases referring to prior theory (see Chapter Five for more detail). The data reflected the thematic categories in the literature on community, although as I mentioned earlier, ethnic identity was privileged over others in the women's narratives. Second, I looked at how women told their stories, in other words how the narratives were constructed to persuade me (the researcher) of their plausibility. I highlighted in Chapter Two that my focus here was on plot; coherence and the use of time within the narratives (see Chapter Six). Finally, I addressed the 'who' of the narratives or how talk was shaped and performed by the teller's shifting positionalities (Anthias 2002) or identity.

I adopted a theory construction approach from the data in conjunction with interaction with the literature discussed in Chapter Two. There are some similarities with the 'Grounded Theory Method' (Glaser and Strauss 1967) though I did not fully utilise this. This approach was useful for me since I share with its proponents (Charmaz, 1983, 1995; Glaser 1978, 1992; Glaser and Straus 1967; Straus 1987) a view of qualitative research being more than intuitive and superficial and a precursor to 'real' quantitative data generation. The analytical categories were shaped by engaging with the literature and the data itself. Further, such categories were also produced by my research participants and me as the researcher with a mix of induction and deduction (Stanley and Wise 1990). These emerging categories reflected my interpretation of the data and the literature (Charmaz 1995). Additional common ground between the Grounded Theory Method and my narrative approach is that account is taken of the context in which data is generated and the reflexive role of the researcher in terms of interaction with

respondents and its influence on the emerging data. Further, there is simultaneous involvement in the data collection and analysis phase of research.

I used open ended questions to generate data and taped the interviews and transcribed them shortly after they took place. I began with a rough transcription initially and then re-transcribed the narratives in a methodical manner. I have given words their 'proper' spelling even if mis-pronounced or abbreviated to facilitate understanding for the reader. In terms of analysis, I drew from the work of Doucet and Mauthner (2008) and Brown (1998) on 'the listening guide', which involves several (re) readings of a narrative. For the purposes of my research, I applied a staged reading of the narratives. After engaging with the literature on community and identifying the categories indicated above, I then I employed a reading of the interview transcripts which took account of the themes, linguistic choices and devices related to place, networks and identity in order to develop a categorical analysis across cases. I then applied a reading of the narratives which examined their structure in relation to plot, or what brought the disparate elements into a meaningful whole (Czarniawska 1998). I indicated in Chapter Three that I apply the plot typologies the quest and voyage and return (Booker 2004) to the women who wished to remain in Spain and those that wanted to return, and that these are both ending embedded plots (Czarniawska 1998). Using these plot typologies allowed me to examine the purpose of the narratives, that is, how women justified their decisions and actions, motives and agency and how persuasive they were (Riessman 2008) regardless of the ending embedded, that is, whether they wanted to remain in Spain or return to the UK. I described the elements involved in each plot typology in the previous chapter and my analysis centres on how they converge and diverge. In both plot typologies, the central character embarks upon a journey away from their original home, precipitated by a call (Booker 2004) to find a new one. For the purpose of my analysis, these plots diverge in relation to how the central character or narrator relates to monsters and obstacles, companions and where home is located.

A further reading of the narratives focused on how talk of the past influences perceptions of the present and the future and the role of nostalgia in constructing belonging to places, networks and ethnic group. I examined how quest and voyage and return plots are linked to time and space (Bakhtin 1984; Skultans 1997) through the construction of an idyll. Decisions about plot were made following my immersion in the data, rather than pre-specified before I began my analysis.

As indicated, I examined themes in terms of place, networks and ethnic identity within narrative. I coded the transcripts in terms of place, networks and ethnic identity and then identified a number of themes within these broader headings. Finally my thematic and structural analysis was grouped under the following headings:

Place: why women chose to leave the UK and migrate to Spain. I framed this in terms of 'the call' which precipitated the quest for a new home. I then identified how constructions of Spain and the UK were presented in women's narratives and how this converged and diverged between the categories identified above.

Networks: how social networks were constructed and social contact with different groups (Spanish people, migrants from the UK, holiday makers) and how these were superficial. Again I highlighted how social networks were constructed similarly and differently between my analytical categories.

Ethnicity: how women presented their own ethnicity and how they positioned immigrants to the UK, the Spanish and expatriates from elsewhere.

In my research, thematic analysis was useful for theorising across all cases to construct theory in relation to community formation through migration. Examining the narratives in terms of plot enabled me to analyse how the different categories differently constructed structured their accounts and where these converged and diverged. In reporting my findings, I use an example from each category (women who live in Spain permanently and wish

to remain; women who live full time in Spain but want to return to the UK; women who live part time in Spain and are happy with the arrangement; and finally, women who have a second home in Spain but do not want to retain it). The excerpts from each category are presented in boxes in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

This chapter has provided a description of and a rationale for the methods used in generating data about community from a sample of retired British women migrants in Spain. The following three chapters will focus on the findings from my research in Spain and provide thematic and structural analysis of the narratives as discussed above.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE QUEST FOR A BETTER PLACE

5.1   Introduction

In the final part of Chapter Three and throughout the previous chapter, I described how the findings from my research in Spain would be analysed and presented. In this and the following two chapters I discuss and analyse findings in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity, generated from narrative interviews with women who moved from the UK to Spain in retirement. Although the over-riding importance of place has been questioned, since there are other aspects of community which people highlight as being significant important (Temple et al 2005), community is often described as a group of people bound together by where they live and constructed through narratives of place and lifestyle (Sherlock 2002). I established that a focus of my research is to examine how places and belonging to them are constructed through narrative and how they can be idealised and elevated to the status of an idyll (Blaikie 1999, O'Reilly 2000, Rye 2006). I have described place as the context for examining social change and continuity through linking the micro empirical and macro theoretical arenas.

I have suggested that the plot of a narrative denotes how it is configured into a meaningful whole (Ricouer 1984) and how focussing on plot allows for an examination of the push and pulls operating in migration. Examining plot in terms of the quest and voyage and return weaves the contemporary social and historical context into the narratives and also allows for an examination of women's thoughts and feelings about how they experience community through migration and being out of their original context or place. Both the quest and voyage and return involve a journey: the central character or narrator seeks a goal, which is often a new home and the recovery of something intangible which has been lost, which has resonance with the

utopian and nostalgic loss and recovery discourse surrounding community (Delanty 2004) as I discuss further below.

Also, since human actions are organised in time (McAdams 1993, Roberts 2002), I focus on how talk of the past and present illuminates micro and macro links and social change and what this tells us about the cultural context in which the research takes place. I do this in relation to nostalgia, or the bringing of the past in the present (Boym 2001, Dickenson and Erben 2006) and examine how talk of the past is an important structuring device in women's narratives and how such nostalgic recollections are linked to place and time. Nostalgia brings up two elements of time; the present and the past which is longed for (Skultans 1998) and in this way nostalgic recollections are linked to time and space. Drawing on Skultans (1998 and Bakhtin 1984) and her research on Latvian forests as places of moral and physical refuge, I explore how Spain is idealised through narrative and constructed as an idyll and how time and space are linked to plot. The quest is for a new place and voyage and return is about reconceptualising or reconfiguring the old one, in this case, the sending country. Further, women transpose their desires and wants onto particular places at certain times for pragmatic purpose. I also examine how women position themselves in relation to time and space in idyllic and adventure chronotopes (Bakhtin 1984).

Representations of community as place suggest that living in a particular geographical area can foster a sense of belonging to the place among inhabitants and this is both reflected and constructed through narrative (Riessman 1993, 2008). Both the UK and Spain - (as physical places - figured highly in women's narratives. However, it should be noted that generally those wishing to stay in Spain were more positive about it as a place and their belonging to it was emphasised. In this way the quest for a better life had, for them, been achieved in Spain. Women who wished to return to the UK suggested that Spain had disappointed them and for a variety of reasons the UK was re-conceptualised as being better. This is discussed in terms of a shift in plot from the quest to voyage and return, where belonging to the UK was reconfigured and reignited.

This chapter is structured under the following headings: 'the call' – the UK demonised and Spain idealised: the pushes and pulls in migration; overcoming monsters and obstacles: the Mediterranean Idyll or the Mediterranean Hell; plot shift: voyage and return - the UK idealised; belonging to place: social change and continuity; and finally, place and narrative. As outlined in Chapter Four, I discuss thematic findings from the seventeen research participants and I also focus on one woman from each category as follows to analyse the structure of women's narratives in terms of plot, time and the construction of ethnic identity as follows: those who live in Spain permanently and want to remain there (Celia); those who live in Spain permanently and want to return to the UK (Vera); those who have homes in the UK and Spain and are happy with arrangement (Bernice); and finally, those who have homes in both the UK and Spain and do not want to retain a home in Spain (Enid). The excerpts from those women's narratives that represent each category are presented in boxed text.

5.2 'The call' – the UK demonised and Spain idealised: the pushes and pulls in migration

In Chapter Three I described a 'call' or 'a note of the most urgent compulsion' (Booker 2004 p. 70) as precipitating the quest for a better life or new place. Retirement and a desire to retire early presented new opportunities for women in my study and it is within this context that the 'call' to action can be understood. For most women, early retirement simply would not have been possible if they had remained in the UK. The high cost of living in the UK was mentioned by practically all of the participants as being a 'push factor' in moving to Spain: in 2003-2004, when the field-work was conducted, the cost of living in Spain was approximately two-thirds of what it was in the UK and the exchange rate favoured sterling as one euro was equivalent to 60 pence[29]. Women also felt that their retirement in the UK would not be as

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[29] This is based on my own experience during the fieldwork

pleasant nor would they enjoy the same quality of life that they were able to enjoy in Spain and they also idealised it, imbuing it with pull factors.

For the women in my study, living in the UK had become intolerable for a number of reasons and here they positioned themselves as victims of structural forces, for example government policy, and the presence of others. O'Reilly (2000) refers to this as the Bad Britain discourse and the women I interviewed present themselves as making rational choices to leave this situation. A number of factors therefore, coupled with the opportunity to retire early, embodied the call to change their lives and to embark upon the quest. Women cast themselves as fortunate, but not through happenstance; rather they were agents who brought this about for themselves and further, they also presented themselves as morally deserving this opportunity as I discuss below. The quest then was for a better life and examining the call in relation to the quest's beginning, sheds light on how these women morally justified their reasons for leaving the UK and gives insight into how they experienced it. Their narratives were as much about the UK as Spain since attention was drawn to how they experienced the UK's political and cultural context in the 21st century. The call can also be understood in terms of the second type of narrative linkage (Gubrium and Holstein 2009): women provide contextual information to their narratives and their lives as I discuss below.

Below, I discuss the call in relation to Celia, Vera, Bernice and Enid. The call can be understood in terms of biographical disruption and therefore takes place in adventure time (Bakhtin 1984) which is characterised by random contingency or sudden connecting events. The call represents a disruption since it marks the beginning of a series of events precipitating a move away from what is familiar, the UK, to a new place, Spain. For example, Celia told a chronological story about how she and her husband came to be in Spain, using narrative footing to establish her status as a long-married woman who had worked hard throughout her life, with the implication that she deserved some freedom and a good quality of life in her retirement. The call for her was precipitated by looming retirement and her previous experience of foreign holidays. This excerpt from her narrative is set in adventure time since a

series of random contingent events; the retirement lunch, the brochure, the exhibition all combined to encourage a visit to Spain to assess whether they could move there. Celia positioned herself as having agency and the deciding factor, or 'the crunch' was being able to retire early if they made the move:

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Celia: excerpt 1

Right, well first of all, my thoughts, I'll go back to the beginning of when we first decided, most of our married life we've been married for nearly 40 years me and my husband, have gone abroad on holidays to different countries and every time we've come back from a holiday I always say 'I could have lived there', so we always came to this agreement when we retired. Then one day I went to work, I worked for Marks and Spencer's, I'd worked there for 32 years when I retired, I went to work and one of my friends said we were at a retirement lunch and she said oh we've always fancied going to live near X [in Spain] so we sat chatting and I said we'd always fancied going to live abroad so she said well actually we've been to one of these exhibitions for properties and I've got a brochure. I said well I'd be really interested and she said well I'm not lending it to everybody 'cos everybody'll want to have a look at it here at Marks and Spencer's but I know you're interested so I'll lend it to you and that's how it came about really. So she lent me the brochure and she said there's a property exhibition where I lived in X and we went to this one and from there we looked saw a property, come out. We didn't come on an inspection cos we said no we're not going on an inspection they may force us into buying if it was possible we would take a week's holiday and talk to people who had made this move to Spain. So that's what we did, we booked a week's holiday and came and everywhere we went we stopped, chatted to people we said do you live here, what's it like, how do you feel about it? And that's really our start into coming to live in Spain. We decided - the crunch was - that my husband's only 60 this year if we stayed in England he would have to work until he was 65 and the standard of living that we had you know the two cars, blah blah , this and that , if we came here we could live cheaper, and we thought life's too short we actually came, well he's 60 in December, we came when he was 58 so that was one of the things that we thought, he doesn't have to work, we can manage.

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Like Celia, Vera established her credentials in terms of employment history which served to demonstrate a sense of entitlement to an improved quality of life in retirement. However, unlike Celia, Vera casts herself as a victim of structural forces. Again, this aspect of her narrative is set in adventure time as random contingent events, the change in employment, poor health and dissatisfaction with work combined with the opportunity to retire early to a country with a lower cost of living made this possible. Vera's account differs from Celia's however, since she focused more on the pushes in migration

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rather than the pulls. Her opening talk suggests that the call for her is about escape:

Vera: excerpt 1

I'm nearly 60 years of age. I've had quite a varied life in terms of employment, worked mainly in offices, had my own business for 10 years, then went to university, was a very mature student worked in X which I enjoyed but then took a sideways move into X and then stayed in X until my physical health broke down and I had to stop working. How I came to be in Spain, well I, that was to do really with the kind of job I was doing and the kind of circumstances that we found ourselves in. We though that, we thought it was going to be a lot cheaper to move to Spain, and we just thought it would be a change really, sort of more of a varied lifestyle, and also it meant that I could get away from the company that I was working for. My plan originally was to come over here and work, but then I had the heart attack and operation so that scuppered that really. But primarily I suppose it was for a better sort of life, and better weather that we moved over to Spain.

Both Bernice and Enid had homes in the UK and Spain. For Bernice, like Celia and Vera, the call was set in adventure time and she established her working history, again positioning herself as morally deserving of her current circumstances due to her endeavours in the past. The random events for Bernice included that on that Sunday in the UK the weather was very poor, which she expressed as 'rolling really fast/it was a horrible day in the UK which precipitated her and her husband's visit to the exhibition. The subtext here is that if the weather had not been so bad then they would have found something else to do on that particular day:

Bernice: excerpt 1

I'm 63 this month I worked 'til I was nearly 61 and worked most of me life. How I came to be here, it were really rolling really fast in England and we'd been out to our local for our Sunday lunch and we said 'what can we do now?' And I said 'there's an exhibition on at a hotel not so far away from where we live' 'Oh well we'll just go and have a look'. So we went and had a look and the people there were really nice, there weren't pressure or anything. We got these brochures and had a good look, a good exhibition it was. We came home, saw and read everything looked at everything and thought umm that'd be alright shall we go on one of them inspections and go and have a look. It was a horrible day in England and we thought we'll go out and have a look and then decided to come on a two day inspection and bought from

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there.

The call for Enid though was different. Very early on in her narrative she established that the UK for her was home and that she and her husband had bought a property in Spain only to escape the poor British weather. She was rather damning of people who moved to Spain permanently, suggesting that they were escaping something that had possibly gone wrong 'at home', in the UK. She wanted to make a distinction between herself and these escapees:

Enid – excerpt 1

I think it's maybe people that are, there's something wrong with home for them. Do you know what I mean? And in what way I don't know, but something at home hasn't been quite right and they've thought make a new start or something. But obviously permanent residents, well you see, that doesn't really apply to us. My one motivation coming out here was to get away from the British winters. My one reason and I mean if we had the weather at home I wouldn't be here.

Other women focussed on retirement as precipitating the call and also framed this in terms of the pushes and pulls in migration. Cynthia for example, talked about the prospect of an unpleasant retirement in the UK by using the phrase 'doom and gloom'. These repetitive vowel sounds - or assonance - evoked a sombre and depressing feel. She used the term 'couch potato' to denote the sedentary, inactive life in front of the television that she would have had in the UK, this suggested a passive and un- stimulating retirement and feeling trapped and miserable. Her use of the phrase 'looking at the rain pattering' evoked strong visual imagery and she painted a picture of a restricted and poverty-ridden retirement in the UK. This image of misery was described as compounded by forced inactivity and over consumption of television while being aware of the elements outside in an almost prison-like state:

> **Cynthia**
>
> If I was in England actually, my vision of retirement in England is just doom and gloom because all I could see in England was becoming a couch potato, watching tv, looking at the rain pattering down outside the window and sitting in front of the fire.

That's all I could think of with retirement and wondering whether I could afford to have the fire on.

A further example is Mabel who also talked of the weather in the UK and how it restricted the opportunities to enjoy a pleasant retirement; rain always seemed to be associated with gloom in women's accounts. Mabel was a comedian, she referred to 'a little lace cap and shawl' to characterise an older person from a bygone age and to emphasise even further the prematurely ageing effects of the miserable weather in the UK. In this sense, the UK was synonymous with restrictions and indeed contributing to ageing older people, whereas the climate in Spain had rejuvenating properties, making her feel 'ten years younger'. Mabel was excited and presented herself as a lucky escapee, which added coherence to her positive story about living in Spain whilst I was cast as someone who would corroborate her story by the use of 'look at me here'. Here she attributes Spain with transformation and her use of irony regarding 'all the delights' referring to poor weather and poor health in the UK:

Mabel

I mean, I could've sat at home with a little lace cap and a shawl around my shoulders in the rain and listening to the rain, that endless rain, expecting at this time of the year winter to come, and, with it flu and all the other delights and look at me here! I'm ten years younger.

Both of these accounts, by the use of hypothyposis and hyperbole, paint a strong visual image of retirement in the UK as a prison in the rain and in this way the UK was demonised by positive talk of Spain. However, the climate was only one aspect of the 'pushes' from the UK.

5.2.1 Government policy and the political situation in the UK

Remaining in 'bad' Britain (O'Reilly 2000) represented a threat to women's values and way of life. At 83, Mabel felt very strongly that UK society did not value older people. For someone like Mabel, a highly educated woman who had a successful career, getting older and being marginalised appeared to be

very difficult. Her feelings towards age prejudice came across here in her use of the word 'hate':

Mabel

Another thing that I hate in England: age prejudice.

The UK had come to represent something that was a threat to her and she felt undervalued and marginalised in the country of her birth. Both Mabel and Cynthia seemed angry about being 'forced' to leave the UK. Mabel in particular talked about the political situation and the treatment of older people as factors that encouraged her to move. She suggested that if she continued to reside in the UK she would feel depressed by the political situation and overt ageism, and that she would also feel obliged to engage with this. Moving to Spain had afforded her the opportunity to eschew this burden of responsibility. Her comments about herself as a 'political animal' embodied her credentials and intellect and her use of the word 'spin' also shaped how she wished to be seen. Both were quite 'knowing' terms and Mabel positioned herself as media savvy and politically aware and her account showed a level of agency in moving to Spain. Ostensibly, this appeared to be about values associated with and linked to a particular place. Mabel put herself in control as someone who had made a discerning choice and had acted upon it:

Mabel

Now to come on to the reasons why I decided to emigrate. Well, I'm a political animal and I didn't like the spin and the way things were going in England.

In the excerpt above, there is a chronological build up of dramatic tension. Mabel's use of the word spin is also significant: 'spin' often implies disingenuous and deceptive tactics. Politicians are often accused of spin when they claim to be honest and seek the truth while using tactics to manipulate public opinion. Mabel did not elaborate further on the 'political atmosphere'. However, in line with her earlier comments about being a 'political animal', she demonstrated both agency and sentience and that she was engaged but disillusioned and for her, in pragmatic terms, Spain

embodied an escape from the restrictions imposed by continuing to live in the UK. Women's talk contained key images of the UK as restrictive and Spain was eulogised as offering freedom. In the excerpt below, being on the margins in Spain was experienced as freedom:

Mabel

It's not my country, but that's just a bonus because I can't give a monkey's what's happening politically. I have freedom.

Cynthia blamed immigration and the Government's policy towards it in Britain for making life untenable there for her, using the phrase 'gone to the dogs' to demonstrate her disgust at her perceived deterioration of standards: if something has gone to the dogs, it has gone badly wrong and lost all the good things it had:

Cynthia

I think England has gone to the dogs. I think, we've allowed too many immigrants which is one of the big problems.

The UK Government currently uses the concept of community for pragmatic and policy purposes and as an instrument of social control and civic obligation (Goldsmith 2008). Women who chose to leave the UK for Spain can be perceived as having rejected the Government's vision of community since for them it had been lost in the UK and a sense of belonging could not be recreated by the will of the Government. For these women, Spain represented an opportunity to recapture a sense of belonging in an alternative context, so in this way place is significant. Belonging to place is also multi-layered and it is possible to simultaneously feel belonging and non-belonging to one or more places as I explore later in this chapter. Moreover, place or geographical locus provides the context where networks occur and where identities are constructed, reconstructed and performed as I discuss in the two chapters that follow.

5.3 Overcoming monsters and obstacles: the Mediterranean Idyll or the Mediterranean Hell?

> 'The discourse of community, in part, rests on an idealized attachment to the local natural environment'.
> (Sherlock 2002 4.3)

As I discussed in Chapters Three and Four, in the quest plot typology the central character must overcome certain difficulties or monsters and obstacles to achieve the quest's goal of a new life in a better place. For the purposes of my research, these monsters and obstacles can be understood as being out of context or away from the original home in the first place which involves the construction of Spain both as a Mediterranean Idyll or Hell[30]. Whether or not the central character successfully overcomes such monsters and obstacles in part determines the ending embedded in the plot (Czarniawska 2004) and that is whether the quest is achieved or whether women voyage and return to the UK. Further, Gubrium and Holstein (1998) refer to 'narrative linkage' which also describes the incorporation of different threads into an account which give overall meaning. This concept is relevant to my research since through their narratives on community as place, women linked the different threads of past and present and how this influenced future intentions. Moreover, the material and structural circumstances of their lives were linked to their motivations and agency to construct a coherent and persuasive account.

As I have suggested above, the overarching goal of the quest is the search for a new home, embodying 'a great renewal of life' (Booker 2004 p83). For women who moved from the UK to Spain, the goal was the potential for a better life in retirement in a different place. Having decided that the UK no longer represented a place where a 'good life' could be achieved led these women to set out on a quest for a better place, Spain, which was constructed as a place where this was possible. The construction of Spain as an idyll (Blaikie, 1999; O'Reilly 2000) embodies notions of escape and making a bid for freedom and I described above how women represented the UK as a

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[30] Overcoming monsters and obstacles also relates to quest companions or social networks and ethnic identity as I discuss in later chapters.

place to which they no longer felt that they belonged. These women presented themselves as being pushed away from the UK and pulled towards Spain, as agents but also as victims of structural forces and escaping the prospect of a bleak retirement.

The Mediterranean Idyll was a powerful factor in attracting those women who were disillusioned with the UK and it represented an opportunity for a better life. Talk of the idyll and the use of the imagination to construct it acted as pull factors as I discuss below and in the following two chapters. The idyll can be understood as being suspended in time and narratives in the idyllic chronotope allow for a moral critique of what has been left behind (Skultans 1998):

> 'Narratives develop a moral critique along three principal thematic dimensions. The beauty and moral order of the past is described. The goodness, beauty and strength of childhood and youth are emphasised. The innate goodness of earth, trees and animals …is described' (Skultans (1998 pp. 86-7).

Initially, all the women were positive about moving to Spain, the negative associations of the idyll were absent and instead the focus was on ease, well being and rest. However, narratives diverged on how it was experienced later.

In addition to Spain's Mediterranean climate, there were associated benefits from living by the sea and the Spanish physical environment which had positive impacts on well-being and mood and behaviour. The subtext here was that living in Spain was potentially transformative. Mabel used dramatic language to demonstrate her feelings about the physical aspects of Spain. The use of 'savage beauty' and 'excitement' also evoked a sense of joy in the unknown in relation to Spain and reflects Skultans' (1998) second moral dimension which focuses on natural beauty. Mabel's use of hypothyposis presents herself as almost childlike in her enthusiasm, demonstrated by her use of 'love' three times in relation to Spain:

Mabel

It has a kind of savage beauty that I like. I love the flora and fauna. I love the excitement of finding a preying mantis in my garden. I love Spain.

For others, although the Mediterranean climate influenced their move to Spain, the benefits went far beyond simply enjoying more sunshine. The positive impacts of a warmer climate on people's physical and mental health were mentioned, both in terms of relief from age-related physical ailments (like arthritis and rheumatism) and the beneficial effects of a sunnier environment on mental health. It also appeared that living in Spain's warmer environment had other benefits: several women felt that it improved people's behaviour, metaphorically equating a sunnier climate with a sunnier disposition. The parallel to this was that a colder and wetter climate in the UK adversely affected people's physical health, particularly in terms of ailments associated with older age in addition to affecting mental health, moods, subsequent behaviour and the kind of interaction they had with others.

Joy, for example, eulogised about the 'sunshine and blue sky'. This evoked strong visual imagery and demonstrated the impact of this on the eye and mood and subsequent behaviour. The weather was presented as a metaphor of behaviour. People were 'more cheerful' as a result of feeling better. This was contrasted with people being 'screwed up with cold and misery' in the UK; here, the cold weather was seen as responsible for making people physically ill. The cold weather was also detrimental to mental health; the use of the phrase 'screwed up' has a double meaning suggesting an individual's defensive physical stance against the cold but also denoting mental distress or illness or dysfunction and she talked as though her feelings were universal, common sense and natural by her use of 'of course':

Joy

You just automatically of course feel better from seeing the sunshine and the blue sky and everybody's more cheerful. That's really the most positive thing about being here. You feel better because you're not screwed up with cold and misery.

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Myra too talked about the weather and its impact on people's mood, well-being and behaviour, saying that the UK weather made people 'repressed'. On first reading I thought this was a malapropism and she actually meant 'depressed' but the parallel was that in Spain people were much more outgoing, overtly cheerful and more willing to engage with one another than they would have been in England. Here she idealises the idyll:

Myra

The warmth and everybody is much happier. Everybody you meet is more outgoing than they are in England. I think the weather makes them repressed where here; no, everybody smiles at you, everybody talks to you.

The physical aspects of Spain were talked of in relation to their influence on people's behaviour. Often the women talked generally - that is, in terms of other people - rather than in relation to themselves and they also externalised these effects. It was the impact that the weather had on other people and how they benefited as a result of being surrounded by happier people that was emphasised. So place was held responsible for behaviour, well-being and mood and importantly, it was represented as being significant in predisposing people to commune with others or not. This was a rather environmentally deterministic way of understanding belonging to place: not only had the UK failed these women, they also blamed the place itself in terms of the physical environment in part for their departure.

For some women, living out of their country of origin was exciting and an adventure. Even though Vera did not plan to stay in Spain, she used the words 'exciting' and 'thrill' about living there. Here, the unknown and unfamiliarity of living in a foreign country were significant and there was a sense of adventure. However, unlike those who wished to remain in Spain Vera did not present it as an idyll and this excerpt of her narrative was also set in adventure time as certain random events occurred:

> **Vera- excerpt 2**
>
> What do I like about living here? I do like the fact that within 20 minutes
> I can be down by the Mediterranean. There is, there is something
> about living in a country that has a different language, there's
> something quite exciting about it. There's something quite
> challenging about trying to understand what people are saying to
> you in a different language. There's something about being resident here that's
> quite thrilling you know. It's like I know my own way, I know my way
> round in England; here if I go somewhere, like last week I went to
> X on my own and I just walked, parked the car and trying to find
> one specific type of shop um and I had to ask people certain
> questions and I had to try and speak Spanish to them because
> nobody spoke English, and um there were some parts of the day I
> hadn't a clue where I was at one time I realised I'd walked round in a
> complete circle, whereas in [the UK] I'd know exactly where I was and
> that there's something quite exciting about that. It doesn't frighten me, it's quite
> challenging.

Depending on whether women wished to stay in Spain or not, the weather was presented as either an attraction or something that was difficult to tolerate. How women talked of Spain was as significant as what they actually said about it. Although the weather, as described above, was one of the main reasons why people chose to move to Spain, for some it proved to be a challenge as it was both hotter and colder than they had anticipated. This meant that their lives were curtailed in the summer when it was too hot to do very much and several people reported finding difficulty heating their homes in the winter when it was cold and they found this restrictive. Vera wanted to return to the UK (so she wanted to justify leaving Spain) and described the weather as originally one of the 'pulls' or something that drew her towards Spain but this had proved to be a disappointment. The strength of her feeling was expressed by her strong use of language: she said she found the heat 'almost intolerable' during the summer:

> **Vera: excerpt 3**
>
> I expected in terms of the weather - which was one of the pulls - I expected a more equitable

climate in the sense that I knew that obviously it went cooler in the winter, but we were told it would be round about 65 in the winter, which isn't true, sometimes it drops below that. I didn't expect it to be as cold as it gets here, particularly at night. I also expected, didn't realise, should have thought about it, but I didn't realise it would be so difficult and so expensive to keep warm in the winter, which it is for people on sort of low fixed incomes. It is quite difficult you know and we talk to other people about this, so I did expect a more equitable temperature. I also knew it can be hot in the summer, but I certainly didn't think it was going to be as hot as it is. I didn't think it would be almost intolerable. So from that, from the weather point of view, it's not been what I expected. I don't know about in other terms really, I think, I think I thought I would lead a more Spanish life. I think what I do is lead an English life in Spain and that's not really what we should do.

Vera's apparently contradictory talk can be understood in terms of narrative slippage (Gubrium and Holstein 1998) or the transformation of subjectivities (Day Sclater 1998a). On the one hand, Vera talks positively about being out of context in Spain and on the other she expresses disappointment in the reality of her life there. This reflects how she felt and talked differently about her experiences in relation to place at different times in her narrative; she reflects on how she has experienced the positive aspects of living in Spain, but revisits this in light of her wish to return to the UK. Vera's narrative can be compared with Celia's who minimises any negative aspects of living in Spain since she has chosen to remain there:

Celia: excerpt 2

That's something I've certainly been thinking, you know I need a little job when I've been bored with the heat, yes I felt, I think the boredom is mainly through thinking where do you go? You don't sit in the sun when you live here, you don't lie round the pool, you sit indoors and what do you do when you sit indoors. Like Vera said 'put the television on' and then you think to yourself, is this the life I came out for? About, for ten months of the year it is the life I came out for, so you've got to learn to chill out which is difficult if you've not that sort of person really. So in odd times I've said 'oh we should've gone back to England' but what would we have been doing in England really? So having said that how many times would you go to the shops I said point taken but now we're coming out of it we're into September it's cooling off a little bit. I think the evenings have been a little bit cooler the roads are definitely better. I went out before and they were horrendous I don't know if you know the (motorway), right well it's been chocca. I went down to a friend of mine at (place) and the roundabout at (place) was dreadful. I came on it straight away, there was no hold up around it and I can't believe the difference from last week to this week.

Those women who wanted to stay in Spain were very positive about the weather and described themselves as being fortunate – and sensible to have made such a choice - to live there due to the pleasantness of the warm weather and the associated benefits in terms of their physical and mental health. Even those who wanted to return to the UK acknowledged that this was a motivating factor for moving in the first place. All the people I interviewed had visited Spain previously – usually on holiday - and mentioned the climate as being a major precipitating factor for moving there. Often, this reason alone was cited as sufficient justification for making the move.

5.3.1 Living on an urbanisation

As discussed in Chapter Four, none of the women I interviewed lived in small Spanish villages with Spanish neighbours as they had envisaged, prior to moving to Spain. Instead, they lived on purpose built urbanisations and I have discussed this in relation to the mobility enclosure dialectic (O'Reilly 2007b) which denotes the opportunities for freedom of movement within the EU and the concentration of particular groups of migrants within certain boundaries in the new country of origin. I return to this theme in Chapter Eight. A number of the women expressed dissatisfaction with having to live in an area that was controlled and regulated, representing a lack of freedom in contrast to those who wished to stay who talked of Spain in relation to enhanced freedom. Others mentioned the high levels of bureaucracy, corruption and conflict which ensued. For some, it was the design and layout of the urbanisation that was problematic. Agnes, for example, found living in this type of physical environment extremely difficult:

> **Agnes**
> Well I've felt much more constrained …living on an urbanisation which I don't like. I really feel that I'm living in a box.

Here community is experienced as restriction and Agnes was saying in three different ways that she felt restricted and lacking in freedom – 'constrained'

and 'living in a box' referred to the physical monolithic character of the urbanisations and the design of the 'quad' or back to back houses therein. She positioned herself as someone who was trapped and the freedom she anticipated had not materialised; if anything, her freedom was curtailed by moving to Spain.

In the excerpt below, Enid presented herself as having being duped. However, it should be acknowledged that, depending on whether the women wanted to stay in Spain or not, the way that these issues were discussed differed. All women were disappointed to find that they were not living in a small Spanish village among Spanish people as they initially expected, but instead were housed on urbanisations which were often incomplete:

Enid – excerpt 2

Well I didn't understand that that there was an urbanisation, never heard of it and certainly the agent never told us and well, what I was expecting was to sit here and look at the sea. I mean I knew I had had bought a quad house, but it has a garden, a wee place. We thought it was perfect because there is a place for your car. It has a wee garden, it has a roof terrace, it has a porch and it's a good size. We thought it was wonderful and we thought we'd be coming out here sitting in the sun, going out for meals at night, but instead it's been two years of bickering.

For those women who wanted to stay however, their disappointment was minimised. Lillian suggested that things could be much worse, she was being optimistic in her talk about the building that was taking place opposite her house:

> **Lillian**
> Well you see, that could have been a high rise, or a supermarket, or one of those shamrock clubs.

If women wanted to stay they did not dwell on the negative aspects, instead they under-emphasised any problems. For those that planned to leave, all the negatives were emphasised to justify the decision to return to the UK. For this latter group, Spain the place had disappointed them and the UK represented

the place where life for them could be better. In this way, negative experiences loomed larger if women wanted to leave Spain.

In addition to being perceived as unnecessarily bureaucratic, Spain was represented as being relatively corrupt by some of the women compared to the UK and there was a reported sense of powerless in relation to this, again due to being unfamiliar with how systems worked and lack of language skills. Vera talked about corruption in Spain and seems to be indignant on behalf of Spanish people who were homogenised as 'really nice'. However, it was her own experience and that of other British people that she was unhappy with. Her lack of contact with Spanish people meant that she would be largely unaware of whether they experienced the same kind of difficulties or whether these were peculiar to migrants. Vera was painting a bleak picture of Spain and a rosy one of the UK as she was set on returning and wanted to rationalise and justify her decision through her narrative. There could also be corruption among developers in the UK, but to focus on this would not be consistent with romanticising it. There are parallels with Vera's comments and Mabel's earlier talk about being disillusioned with the system in a country where they no longer wished to be:

Vera – excerpt 4

What do I not like I don't like the corruption. I think, I think the Spanish have a very, very raw deal. The Spanish are really nice people, I think they're um they're a kind people. I've always said that the Spanish are like the English used to be 40 years ago before we got Margaret Thatcher. Um and I think they're severely let down by um any kind of protection in law. I think the Spanish deserve better.

For example, Cynthia wanted to stay in Spain and therefore drew a positive picture overall. She acknowledged the excessive bureaucracy and that it was difficult to navigate unfamiliar systems in Spain was a nuisance, but presented this as something forgivable since Spain had only had a 25 year history as a democracy. Although Cynthia was saying that she did not like the red tape, she implied that it was allowable:

Cynthia

The paperwork, bureaucracy. When you think, you've got to imagine this country is only twenty-five years old as a democracy,- so they're still on a learning curve, so they're like Britain was years ago where everything is in triplicate and everybody does, you know, the work is done ten times over, so nothing is simple.

Cynthia wanted to stay in Spain and was generous about any shortcomings it may have had. Bureaucracy did not for her detract from the positives, she minimised it as a problem. She positioned herself as being able to deal with this quite easily and glossed over any difficulties. For others however, this was not so and there were differences in the telling. Women talked about the same thing but in very different ways.

5.4   Plot shift: voyage and return - the UK idealised

I have discussed the quest in relation to the pursuit of a better life. For many women this was thought to be possible in Spain but for some of them, moving back to the UK represented the chance of a better life as they became disillusioned by Spain in the sense that it did not live up to their expectations and women identified certain compelling factors which precipitated plans to move back to the UK. I have framed this in terms of a plot shift, from the quest to 'Voyage and Return' (Booker 2004). This is the second plot based on a journey but it differs from the quest. In this plotline, the central character travels out of their familiar surroundings into 'another world' (or in this case country) cut off from that with which they are familiar. In the early stages of Voyage and Return, perceived differences between the 'two worlds' are unproblematic. However, eventually the central character feels compelled to return 'home' or to familiarity after experiencing 'the unknown' and the plot's happy ending is that the central character is able to return to what is familiar. This is linked to the idea of where home is as I discuss below.

5.4.1 Where home is

The issue of 'where home is' is complex and multi-layered (Ryan 2004). It can be multiple, shifting, pragmatic and contingent. For women who had moved to Spain in retirement, the place to which they constructed belonging through their narratives was where they felt that 'home' was. This was directly linked to how they felt about living in Spain and whether or not they intended to stay. Like community, 'home' embodied notions of belonging which encompassed identity, place and networks and could have multiple, simultaneous meanings and I discuss this throughout the following chapters. For example, it was possible to be of one place and from another and refer to both places as home while feeling belonging to one or both in varying degrees and in different ways (Cronin 2006). Depending on whether or not women wished to stay in Spain, certain aspects were emphasised or minimised in order to justify present actions and future intentions. For example, Deidre positioned herself as an older, potentially vulnerable woman who welcomed familiarity and safety. This operates on a number of levels, particularly in terms of health care and she put forward a list of reasons why she wanted to return:

> **Deidre**
> Basically I suppose family, also familiarity, getting old, knowing the system back in England the ways and means of getting health care and so forth.

Vera also positioned herself as pragmatic in her actions, but she wished to return to the UK; Spain was her home for the moment because that was where she had chosen to live but she was very clear that it was the UK which was truly home for her, for this was where she felt she belonged to. This denotes that belonging to places is complex and multiple. Here she positioned herself as liking the idea of Spain (the exotic) but ultimately though, for Vera, home was in the UK. However, belonging was complex and multi-layered and it was possible to be 'of' one place and 'from' another:

Therefore, the idea that for some, home was either in Spain or in the UK was not entirely straight-forward, with some suggesting that the idea of home could be less fixed and possibly in multiple places.

Celia demonstrated an acceptance that she had made the choice to live in Spain permanently and showed perhaps a typically British 'stiff upper lip' approach to accepting this in her narrative. For Celia, the UK only represented home when things in Spain were not going well. She was pragmatic too; home was where she lived. Here she portrayed herself as happy in Spain and having made the right decision, emphasising that when she was unhappy it was a temporary 'moment' or 'day', so in this sense she minimised the problems. For her, Spain was home and where life was lived. When she said 'but no I think yes' she was concertedly minimising any residual doubt she might have had; in this sense she narratively edited her account (Gubrium and Holstein 1998). She positively reinforced her comments by using the word 'yes' as a prefix to her statements to provide a convincing account (for herself as well as for me) of her life in Spain:

Celia – excerpt 4

We came out, thought sell our home go to Spain live here end of story. Alright in a bad moment you say 'I'm going back, I've had enough today' but quite honestly this is our home. This is our life now. I think, yes, I want to remain here; yes I want to carry on doing what I'm doing.

For those women who lived in Spain for part of the year, irrespective of whether they were happy with the arrangement or not, the UK was presented as home. Bernice talked about the UK as 'home' and Spain as 'away', and this appeared to be straightforward for her:

> **Bernice – excerpt 2**
>
> We've been home quite a bit because, for different occasions, you know but we, I can't tell you exactly how much time we've been here, 3 months and other times about 6 weeks or something like that. If we stayed permanent I'd want to move again and it'd mean selling at home and I don't want to sell well he don't want to sell at home.

Therefore, belonging to place is complex and could work on several levels; being of and from different places raised questions of where home was for these women. 'Home' denoted the place to where the women felt the strongest attachment and in this way can be seen as being linked to representations of community. Some women had no intentions of ever returning to the UK to live. Mabel, being older than the other participants at 83, had even planned ahead for her burial in Spain and had no intention of ever going back to the UK. Here she positioned herself as an older person coming towards the end of her life:

> **Mabel**
>
> I've even arranged my funeral. I shall be buried on a shelf, just as in Italy. I pass it on the motorway; on the N332 (laughs) and I think that's going to be my future home, all done and paid for.

5.5   Belonging to place: social change and the loss of community

In Chapter Two I discussed the romantic and nostalgic discourse surrounding community (Delanty 2004); which is seen as something which has been lost but is yet recoverable and many women found this to be so in Spain. This is a key point since the romantic discourse surrounding community, the idea of a Mediterranean idyll and building community out of context has significant contemporary parallels – some of which are ironic (Hardhill 2006) and resonate with the Labour Government's agenda in the UK. The idyll is idealised and the place representation of community is 'idyll-ised'.

There was a sense that community represents the security of a less troubled bygone era which can lead to it being endowed with romantic and almost mythical properties but for pragmatic reasons, as the following excerpt

illustrates. Vera idealises the UK in the past and draws parallels with Spain in the present so time and space are chronotopically linked here:

Vera – excerpt 5

I suppose for me the concept of community means more to me in Spain than it did in England. I think it's idealised and romanticised because we all need a feeling of safety and security. In England when I was growing up there was a bit of a sense of community it felt and when I was growing up after the war when people were all in the same boat and things were quite bad and people had sort of pulled together through the war and there was still a bit of community spirit. I think that disappeared in England because of re-housing and all sorts of things like that um also that when I was growing up it was still the thing to do to go to church so there was a community around the church but over the years I think that sense of community has died. It's a difficult concept to get a handle on is community. I suppose community to me it's not a geographical thing it's having kind of, I don't know, a safety net if you like, a kind of back up and I think that disappeared in England. The sense of belonging, that safety net aspect of it, the feeling of being part of something, or the feeling that maybe there's something there, even if you don't need to use it all the time. The statutory services took over from what used to be a community thing at one time. You were poor and you couldn't afford to go into maternity homes, there'd be somebody in the street who could deliver your baby. There'd be somebody that you could call on but obviously that disappeared when national health came in and when social services came in, so I think that need for that sort of community to some extent died, whereas coming to Spain, I actually feel that that community to some extent has come back but again it's through, if you want to use the word adversity, in the sense that you're living somewhere where you don't know where to go for help, you don't know, you don't know the language, this that and the other. You rely on each other, so from that point of view I do feel a sense of community here, I do feel I can actually turn to neighbours whereas in England I wouldn't have.

Vera used the first person singular and then plural to signify the perceived inclusiveness that 'community' engenders. Vera talked of 'everyone being in the same boat' in Spain and not speaking the host's language heightened this and created a sense of isolation from wider society.

I argued in Chapter Two that overarchingly, community embodied 'belonging', and that a sense of belonging could engender a feeling of safety, and, although both belonging and safety were both intangible and elusive – or imagined - they were also simultaneously experienced as 'real' and used pragmatically when necessary. Vera drew parallels between Spain in the

present and the UK in the past by referring to everybody being 'in the same boat' denoting imposed common hardship. Although community for Vera means more in Spain than the UK, her earlier comments about 'where her heart is' suggest that the UK is the place to which she feels belonging. Vera's narrative illustrates that place is still the context where belonging is experienced.

Some women specifically addressed what they felt community to be: in this way it was tangible and 'real'. For example, community was thought to 'exist' as Deidre's quote illustrates:

> **Deidre**
> Well purely and simply because someone has had to come up with a word, the word community, there has to be such a thing.

Here the use of language as both representing and constructing reality is important and significant as discussed in Chapter Three. In this sense, the concept of community *describes* something and simultaneously *constructs* it (Riessman 1993). For others, community was rooted to a place where there was a long standing familiarity with those living there, so, community could not therefore exist in Spain. Community in this context was predicated by place which acted as a context for social interaction:

> **Joy**
> Well community to me I suppose, must mean somewhere that you have lived for a long time.

Nostalgia was most apparent in the women's accounts when they talked about the sense of 'community' experienced in Spain being reminiscent of past times in the UK. Women talked about community in the UK having disappeared but felt that they had found it again in Spain. These women represented community as something that had been lost through modern life in the UK but as having been recovered – by them – in Spain. A strong sense of community was sometimes associated with the period following the Second World War. Lamenting the loss of community in the UK could be understood

as an indictment of current UK society in that alienation, crime, immigration (ironically) and individualism were identified as negative features of the present situation in the UK. Here, women were positioning themselves in terms of their age and me as a younger person who could not know this from my own lived experience, so in effect I was being informed and educated.

A sense of community in the UK during the period following the Second World War was also compared to contemporary Spain in terms of there being something to mobilise against. Both periods were synonymous with hardship, although the nature of such hardship differed. Women in Spain conveyed a sense of ostracism, by *being diasporic,* likening their situation to perceptions of minority ethnic groups in the UK. Community was therefore a reaction to hostility and threats and constructing it and perpetuating a belief in it emerged as a defensive strategy. Community was also seen to be arrived at through adversity and hardship in that migrants had to work hard to thrive in their new environment.

For example, Mabel drew direct comparisons between the community minded atmosphere during and following the Second World War in England and their life in contemporary Spain:

> **Mabel**
> It reminds me of the London blitzkrieg in the Second World War. I hoped that the atmosphere that was there during the war would remain. It didn't. Within eighteen months it had gone. Yes, just gone. Why did that die? Everybody was friendly, everybody thought that tomorrow they might be dead - not that we think that in Spain - but it was a kind of camaraderie, which is quite prominent here in Spain.
> I found it again in Spain.

In Mabel's talk there is a time and space dimension; during the war in the UK the atmosphere 'was there' and then it 'was gone'. In the later quote it 'came back' decades later, in Spain:

The UK was seen to have 'moved on' and community was consigned to the past – for these women, there was no contemporary use of community in the

UK, it was something that denoted a bygone era. For them it was easier to recreate it elsewhere than to revive it in the UK. The subtext here was that idealising and romanticising community constructed and created something; a feeling of safety in a place through a shared sense of belonging and attachment to it. Both Vera and Mabel were rather wistful and nostalgic about the loss of community in the UK. They discussed it in terms of 'community spirit' and 'atmosphere' (see above) almost as if it were ephemeral, although it did seem 'real' in that its presence was 'felt' - it was 'there', then it had 'gone'. Both women felt that community for them had been recovered in Spain, for Vera it had 'come back' and was 'here', and Mabel again talked about the atmosphere which evoked that which was present during the Second World War. Although they used opposing adjectives – 'adversity' and 'camaraderie' - they were talking about the same thing but from different angles. Vera felt that a sense of community in Spain was brought about as a cohering force stemming from (perceived) adversity since migrants were not part of mainstream society. Mabel focused on the effects of such cohesion – 'a kind of camaraderie' in the excerpt above.

Celia talked nostalgically about recreating a bygone era that would actually have been outside of her experience:

Celia- excerpt 5

We're doing sort of a bit like old time music hall really in December. We've been sorting the song-sheets out for this old time singing and I'm hoping that people'll come dressed the part. I've got a feather boa and an old fashioned outfit.

Community for these women 'existed' and it was also imagined and this recurrent theme will be further explored throughout the following chapters. It could be used as a counter to danger and threat and also provide an indicator of the quality of one's life. Moreover, it was experienced both in the past and the present so there was a time as well as space dimension. Community could be seen as being born out of adversity and as a product of these women's position on the margins of Spanish society where they were forced to commune with one another. I revisit this both in relation to social networks

and identity in the following two chapters and discuss the inter-relatedness of place, social networks and ethnic group in Chapter Eight.

5.7   Narrative constructions of place

'In each case the story ends on a great renewal of life, centred on a new secure base, guaranteed into the future'
(Booker 2004 p. 83).

Focussing on the place representation of community through narrative analysis raises issues about where home 'is' and illuminates the multiple and complex belonging that people have to different places at different times. Place can be idealised and imagined on two different levels; first there was an idealised attachment to Spain's physical natural environment (Sherlock 2002) linking to a romantic and utopian attachment to the Mediterranean idyll; and Spain, the place, also represented a better quality of life which entailed escape and freedom from responsibility. There can be belonging to place even if it is negatively labelled (Silburn et al 1991), but if people have chosen to be where they live they can idealise (imagine) the place as the women did in Spain. Since these women had chosen to be in Spain, a sense of belonging to it as a place was emphasised – and was both real and imagined. Further, talk about how the imagined aspects of community act to bolster and justify a major life decision which involves losses. For some, the losses outweighed the gains and they planned to return to the UK.

Once in Spain, some women found that they had indeed achieved 'the life renewing goal' (Booker 2004): a new home. However, for others, Spain did not live up to their expectations and having 'voyaged' they wanted to 'return' to the UK which was reconfigured as the place where a better life was possible. Irrespective of where they wished to be, all of the women wanted to tell a positive story about themselves and the choice they had made and this was evidenced through their narratives. Using the plots of the quest and voyage and return were useful here since the motives and emotions underpinning decisions and the pushes and pulls in migration could be examined through the women's narratives, as it was through these that

women made sense of their choices and indeed their lives. The overarching theme in both the quest and voyage and return is the pursuit of a better life and talk of belonging to a place denoted, represented and constructed this. For other women, Spain was imbued with and represented the potential for belonging in the way that the UK did in the past, and time and space dimensions or chronotopes were significant here. For some women a better life was only possible in the UK and for others belonging was more complex, they belonged to different places in different ways at different times (Cronin 2006). I discussed the importance of narrative linkage (Gubrium and Holstein 1998) in Chapter Three and earlier in this chapter. Narrative linkage is also a useful concept to understand how the different groups of women constructed transnational identities in relation to place. This can be understood both in terms of individual and collective belonging to the sending and host countries.

Using the plot typologies of the quest and voyage and return to analyse the pushes and pulls operating in migration tells us that those who want to remain in Spain have fulfilled the quest's goal and successfully overcome monsters and obstacles to achieve this. Further, people construct belonging to places to provide a physical context for their lives. What was said and how it was said highlights women's perceived differences between the UK and Spain: Spain, in the present was certainly idealised and imagined by all women before they moved to Spain, rather like the UK in the past. Some women changed their view of Spain once there, since the gap between the real and the imagined was too great and this represents a plot shift. Those women who wished to return to the UK were unable to overcome such difficulties which embody being out of one's familiar context, or place. In this way, home is pragmatic and contingent on experiences and intention and the ending embedded in both plot typologies is the place to which women construct belonging. A narrative approach is useful in analysing *how* such belonging is constructed and how women position themselves in relation to places.
Having addressed the findings in relation to place, I now focus on networks.

CHAPTER SIX

QUEST COMPANIONS: NETWORKS IN SPAIN AND THE UK

6.1   Introduction

'The notion of community depends on shared interpretations of place, lifestyle and everyday practices'.
(Sherlock 2002 1.2).

In the previous chapter I established that constructions of belonging to place provide a physical context for studying community. In my research, networks also emerged as being central to women's experiences of belonging in Spain. Individuals' interaction with others can sometimes be better understood in the context of social, rather than physical environments (Clark 2007). Further, belonging to networks was constructed through being linked to the dynamics of a system of relationships and interaction (Gilchrist 2002). However, as I have emphasised throughout my thesis, networks cannot be completely separated from place and identity. Women shared a sense of belonging with other people from the same ethnic group and in this way social capital for them was used to bond rather than bridge or link outside their ethnic group (Putnam 2000).

Networks are connected with identity and place since location is significant in shaping group and individual identity. This in turn influences those groups and individuals with whom a sense of belonging is shared (Brah 1996; Temple 1995). The real and imagined qualities of belonging also apply to social networks and in this chapter I address the different ways that women in Spain made sense of their social relationships through their narratives. Belonging to social networks operates in multiple ways *out of one's context.* Women in Spain lived in an isolated diasporic community and ethnicity and language were all significant in structuring access to and engagement with networks. Again, there is also a time and place dimension to their accounts; the women

presented the Spanish and those British people who had migrated to Spain as being like people used to be in the UK.

The focus of this chapter is on belonging to social networks or 'quest companions' (Booker 2004) in Spain and the UK. As noted in Chapter Three, for the quest to be a success, the central character needed to be accompanied by others sharing the same goal: to achieve a new home in better circumstances. For the women in my study, quest companions were those people with whom they shared a sense of 'community', for them this was other British people. Quest companions were positioned and talked about differently according to the overall point of the story, that is whether the women wished to stay in Spain or not and accounts were structured differently in relation to quest companions as I discuss below. If women wished to stay, they told a positive story about their involvement and interaction with other British people; however, if they wished to return to the UK then talk about other Britons tended to be less positive. For those who had voyaged and wanted to return, their companions were discovered to be in the UK all along. As highlighted in the previous chapter, 'narrative linkage' (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) is a useful concept which describes the incorporation of different threads into an account, giving it overall meaning. The second type of narrative linkage allows for a contextualisation of the narrative and how the material and structural circumstances of their lives were linked to their motivations and agency. I discuss this throughout this chapter. As in the previous chapter, I use four selected cases from the different categories to analyse the narrative structure, while also drawing on the accounts of other research participants.

In this chapter I begin by examining how social networks are constructed by women's agency. I then focus on how networks are forged from necessity. I address the forms of social contact that the women in my study engaged in with Spanish people. I then discuss the kind of social contact women have with their compatriots, that is migrants from the UK and holidaymakers. Finally, I examine how networks can be superficial and conclude by discussion how networks are reflected and constructed through narrative.

6.2   Social networks as agency

Retired migrants from the UK were a diasporic group in Spain and lived separately to their hosts. The women in my research were also affected by the 'mobility enclosure dialectic' (O'Reilly 2007b) since they were effectively enclosed within purpose built urbanisations, occupied by other (usually British) migrants in spite of the fluidity of movement within the EU which allowed them to migrate to Spain. Arguably, the impetus to belong to networks could be heightened as a result of such circumstances. For example, Cynthia cast herself as active in creating social networks since this required effort. Along with Celia, she was instrumental in establishing the 'ladies club' for women from the UK. She emphasised the communal ('communus') element of belonging to social networks three times and demonstrated her agency through her engagement with other people:

Cynthia

I think it was really just that I needed something to do, something to fill time and it was bringing people together. A community is a joint effort to get along with each other. Community is the mix of people, the joining together of people.

When Cynthia referred to 'the mix of people' she was not referring to ethnic diversity. Rather, she was talking about 'mix' – as a verb - in terms of people's agency. Cynthia emphasised the network aspect of community unlike Joy's definition quoted in the previous chapter which centred on place. Cynthia emphasised that community networks were something brought about by people's will, actions and interaction. This view of community as social networks was also echoed by Vera, for whom community did not need to be tied to place and who, like Cynthia, saw it as an active form of belonging:

Vera : excerpt 6
I suppose community to me; it's not a geographical thing. It's having kind of - I don't know - a safety net if you like, a kind of back up and I think that disappeared in England.

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Vera's metaphorical use of 'safety net' represents the support and security that belonging to a network can provide and also the symbolic nature of networks. Although she wanted to return to the UK she was regretful about the extent and rapidity of change in her country of origin.

6.3   Social networks as necessity

As I have suggested, in diasporic circumstances, it is pragmatic to seek out and create social networks. Since women in Spain were away from family and networks in the UK, quest companions assisted in achieving the life renewing goal. There was a shared experience of being out of context for these women in Spain since they were away from established support and social networks. For example, Celia articulated this view, again alluding to British people in Spain being 'in the same boat' and portrayed herself as active rather than passive:

Celia: excerpt 6

We're all here with no family and the people we meet are either like, gonna be friends and I think then, and feel that we're in the same boat being here. And you get to meet people and you might need people and you have to get on with it. You don't know when you're gonna need any help and as I say they're very kind here, it's different again, but then we've got the time haven't we here, to do all this. In England if you saw your neighbour in a week or twice that would be something. Here you pop out and the way you get on with, you're in a community aren't you? That's the difference.

Celia's metaphorical use of 'the same boat' referred to migrants to Spain sharing the same circumstances and having a need to develop social networks. This resonates with Mabel's use of the 'same boat' imagery in the previous chapter. Celia positioned herself as resourceful, optimistic and having agency. To a degree then, social contact in Spain can be understood to be directed by necessity rather than choice as there were limited options available to migrants from the UK since they tended only to speak English. Further, because everybody was in the same situation, that is, they were

without family and long standing friends migrants were newcomers and therefore 'outsiders' of sorts. However, they were also 'insiders' due to their shared migrant status. It is likely that in the UK there would have been a bigger pool of people to make friends with, and people would have been able to exercise more choice about who they had social contact with.

Some women clearly did not feel empathy with their compatriots and were keen to make this point. I discuss this in more detail later in this chapter. Vera presented herself as discerning and possibly slightly superior to the average Briton in Spain. She was very clear about wanting to return to the UK. Her talk about the social contact she had with her compatriots was rather negative, indicating that those people she had contact with were not those whom she would choose, if choice was something she could exercise. By using the word 'your' in relation to social contacts she prefigured herself as being removed from such interaction but she was in fact talking about her own experiences:

Vera: excerpt 7

In Spain your social contacts tend to be really on the basis of necessity rather than choice. Some of the people you meet in Spain, you wouldn't necessarily be friends with in England.

Other women took a different view, suggesting that the British in Spain had an air of desperation about them in that they demonstrated an acute need to bond with other people. This is illustrated by Enid's use of 'running around'. The subtext was that this was perhaps frantic, and people exercised impaired judgement to satisfy their innate need for social networks. In this sense, it was panic and isolation as well as pragmatism that were seen to motivate the behaviour of migrants:

Enid: excerpt 3

They're running around really, trying to make friends and therefore I would say you possibly might make friends with people you wouldn't otherwise do. I mean, I don't think I'd ever have made friends with X and Y, never, but we were friends with them the whole first year.

Enid, although living in Spain part-time, was disenchanted with the whole experience and wanted to sell her house and buy a holiday home elsewhere. She did not feel much affinity with other migrants from the UK and cast herself as being distanced from them in her talk.

Others, like Myra took a 'no nonsense' approach to belonging to networks, suggesting that people sensibly gravitated towards one another to help each other if needed. For Myra, there was nothing ephemeral or elusive about belonging as the quote below illustrates:

Myra

I just think it's practical. I haven't got any of that pie in the sky attitude. I just, just got a practical attitude and it is, it is more, it's different, it is different. The community spirit is better, much better.

Myra portrayed herself here as sensible and pragmatic, with the converse subtext that I was perhaps rather naïve. She presented herself as someone who had concertedly made a decision to move to Spain and because of her will and determination would enjoy a better life there.

6.4   Social contact with Spanish people

In Chapter Two I discussed the concept of social capital (Putnam 2000) and how this can be used to understand connections between individuals. I differentiated between three types of social capital: bonding, which involves ties between people in similar situations; bridging social capital which involves making links outside of the immediate group and linking social capital (Woolcock 2001) which relates to much more distant ties. Women in Spain could be said to primarily use bonding social capital since they were limited by their language skills. Social contact was with other migrants from the UK, who were effectively the only 'quest companions' that these women could have. All women in the study alluded to their limited contact with Spanish people and appeared to be disappointed that they had not made any Spanish friends. For

some, the location and design of the urbanisation were seen as the main cause. Migrants from the UK lived on the margins and were not part of Spanish society. Others acknowledged that their lack of language skills made meaningful communication with other nationalities difficult.

All the women interviewed had no significant contact with Spanish people, although most expressed surprise and regret about this along with the desire to have Spanish friends. The most contact they appeared to have amounted to conversing with those few Spaniards who owned a holiday home on their urbanisations. Very few Spanish people lived in the urbanisations and only a very small number used them as holiday homes and this was a disappointment for practically all the women. This tended to be on a very superficial level due to language issues. The fact that none of the women apart from Cynthia could speak Spanish enough to converse was a significant factor here, and even for Cynthia, contact with Spanish people was very limited.

Again it should be understood that the intention to stay in Spain or not influenced the content of the women's narratives, that is what they said, and how they related to and constructed their interaction with quest companions. Those that wanted to stay minimised the disappointment that they did not mix with Spanish people and instead focussed on the positive aspects. Some women were disappointed not to have the 'authentic' experience they expected, due to limited contact with Spanish people and the 'ghetto like' nature of the urbanisations in which they were effectively 'enclosed' (O'Reilly 2007b). However, these women still told a persuasive story about their lives there.

Joy, Lillian and Agatha homogenised Spanish people as 'friendly' but again had very little contact with them. These accounts contained a good deal of supposition and conjecture about the 'other' which reflected perceived ethnic differences which were reinforced by language difficulties, difference and distance as I discuss further in Chapter Seven.

Agatha

I think the Spanish are very friendly. We don't have many on ours I don't think, only them that's come on holiday.

For others, like Cynthia, who could speak Spanish to a degree, a potential solution was to move to a 'more Spanish' place but this would still not overcome the language barrier facing the majority of other migrants from the UK. Although Cynthia conceded that not speaking Spanish posed problems for migrants from the UK, she still presented speaking English as the norm. In this way, social networks could be seen as determined by location and ethnicity:

Cynthia

The only thing that you can do is to move further out to the smaller villages. However, you've only got to go two miles up the road and they don't speak any English.

6.5   Social contact with migrants from the UK

'Many British seek their own wherever they go, but perhaps with more enthusiasm than other nationalities'.
(King et al 2000 p. 148)

For women who wished to stay in Spain, it was constructed as a place whose indigenous people were 'nicer' than in the UK. It was also presented as being somewhere that led to better opportunities for social networks, as simply being in Spain was thought to make people behave better. This applied to both Spanish people - who were described as being 'nicer' in comparison to people in the UK - and also to migrants from the UK when they were in Spain. As highlighted in the previous chapter, Spain embodied escape from pressures in the UK and was synonymous with freedom which could have a positive influence on people's behaviour.

All the women in Spain talked about social contact with other people from the UK. Being unable to speak Spanish and sharing a language, cultural norms and country of origin with other migrants from the UK influenced the kind of

networks they were able to form. This also links to ethnic identity as I discuss in the next chapter. Many women felt that their social life in Spain was far superior to that in the UK, and that they had more inclination and time to socialise, plus a greater pool of people to socialise with. As noted above though, migrants from the UK had social contact almost exclusively with 'their own kind', that is, other Britons and a very small number of other Northern Europeans. Again, whether or not the women planned to stay, influenced how they discussed this aspect of their experience.

For example, Myra thought that just being in Spain made British people behave better towards one another in terms of friendliness and sociability; she suggested that people were a product of their environment:

> **Myra**
> Here everybody smiles at you, everybody talks to you. You go in the supermarket and somebody'll come and chat or sit in a restaurant and they will come and laugh and joke with you.

Women who wished to remain in Spain described themselves as fortunate to have escaped 'Bad Britain' and in finding themselves at the hub of social networks. Those who wanted to tell a positive story of their lives in Spain were effusive about the opportunities for increased social contact. There was however, some evidence of slippage in discussions of the depth of these relationships. For example, Mabel was among those women who were enthusiastic about life in Spain and she was happy about her widened social circle, although realistic about the numerous contacts at her disposal. Earlier in her account, she talked about making lots of new friends within the year that she had been in Spain. However, in the following excerpt she said that contact was casual and unstructured, implying that it was superficial:

> **Mabel**
> 'Well only café contact. Social contact it's something you, you stop somebody and speak.

Those women who wanted to return to the UK told a very different story regarding social contact in Spain. Increased social contact was not always perceived to be positive with several women expressing feelings of intrusiveness and invasions of their privacy. It appeared that these women had social contact with other migrants from the UK by default. There was an assumption that they were friends due to shared language and culture. Deidre's narrative in particular contrasted starkly with that of Myra and Mabel. She felt rather oppressed by the high levels of social contact with the implication that it was difficult to exercise choice and that contact was an imposition. She found this intrusive, but recognised that it derived from a shared sense of 'belonging' which related to being from the UK, speaking English and living in an isolated diasporic community. Deidre portrayed herself as discerning, although unable to have agency; she did not want social contact forced upon her. The subtext was that she did not perceive her compatriots as being socially similar to her. In spite of their shared circumstances she felt that she had little in common with them:

Deidre

Here you can't get away from people. You bump into people you've never met before and they'll just stop and talk to you as though you've known them all their lives, because they feel that they can. They're able to do that because you're both in …the same situation.

For some women, the disappointment with limited social contact with Spanish people and increased contact with other migrants from the UK was an important theme in their narratives. Again, whether or not they intended to stay and had a positive story to tell about Spain influenced the way that they spoke of other migrants from the UK. Although the 'ladies club' was popular, and all but two of the women I spoke to regularly attended the weekly meetings, it was seen by some as embodying something low about British culture and to be avoided, so class was significant here. Joy in particular was dismissive of the 'ladies' club' and elevated herself both above the club and those who belonged to it. In this way, although it was pragmatic and sensible to seek out social contact, she established that she maintained certain standards:

Joy

In truth if I put myself out and go to things like the [ladies' club] on Xday and talk about silly things like frilly underwear, thongs, make-up and the things that do not interest me then I could meet a lot more people. But as I say, I'm fairly discriminating about the company I keep.

Vera talked about feeling part of a community and again emphasised that this was on the premise of a shared 'background'. Belonging to social networks was again by default and related to social and cultural familiarity and language rather than a shared outlook or value system:

Vera: excerpt 8

You are part of a community because of your background, not because you've got shared values.

Those women who were married talked about marriage as embodying some kind of social norm, with the implication that not being married was somehow deviant or unusual. Talk of women without husbands generally positioned them as 'other'. Lillian for example, was less keen than the others to socialise on a large scale and she and her husband resisted en masse socialising with other British migrants, instead preferring to spend time with other married people:

Lillian

Our friends seem to be couples, with different interests, just for one reason or another that we like them, we do different things with them.

Margot found it valuable to meet other women who were living alone either through widowhood or divorce, so as with the married women, there was also a sense of shared identification among single women in Spain:

Margot

We go to the [ladies' club] once a week. If it's not running one week we'll go to erm a friend of ours, Mabel's. We've all met up, there's about six of us, half dozen that live here on our own.

This type of community building through networks allowed women to enjoy Spain rather than simply survive in adverse circumstances. Often this was achieved through membership of British run social clubs which are independent from Spanish structures (O'Reilly 2000).

6.6   Social contact with holidaymakers

As noted in Chapter Five, most people had chosen to live in the study area because of previous tourism experiences and some of their comments about living stress-free echoed feelings associated with holidays. However, the women interviewed were very keen to distance themselves from 'holiday people'. They appeared hostile to holidaymakers, particularly those from the UK. This hostility did not apply to those who owned holiday homes and visited for part of the year, but were directed towards those who rented houses for short periods and behaved like holidaymakers, that is, in a more boisterous manner than was felt to be acceptable. Women who had moved to Spain, either permanently or part-time, preferred to be surrounded by others like them who were seen to behave in a more appropriate manner, and to have an investment in the area:

> **Olive**
> July and August, so many holiday people, so noisy and breaking things, throwing stones in the garden. They're very destructive.

Mabel told the same story but in a different way. She too was disgruntled by holidaymakers 'letting their hair down' and not being sufficiently reserved but she was much less concerned and more tolerant. Mabel loved Spain and planned to stay there and she de-emphasised any problems:

> **Mabel**
> They're even less reserved and I'm sure you know that. They really let their hair down when they come for a holiday. I mean it's just, it's sunshine and sangria and bonhomie.

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Here, holidaymakers were positioned as 'other', with those that had made their home in Spain having a higher status. O'Reilly (2003) found similar distinctions were made in her research and noted that migrants from the UK:

> 'Put a lot of effort into identifying not as tourists by sharing jokes about and constructing stereotypes of tourists that symbolize the boundaries between them' (O'Reilly 2003 p. 307).

Although the women shared an ethnic background with British holidaymakers, they were seen as 'outsiders' and therefore not as quest companions. I discuss the issue of insider and outsider further below in relation to the superficial nature of networks.

6.7   Networks as superficial

> 'A sense of community is able to exist alongside evidence of disharmony and division'.
> (Sherlock 2002 2.7).

Quest companions therefore, needed to be 'people like us'. Although this appeared to be predicated on migrant status, shared country of origin and language, being from the UK and speaking English were not enough to guarantee belonging to social networks. Belonging to networks was also premised on acceptable behaviour. Further, being part of a diaspora could be used to exclude as well as include people on the basis of their behaviour and compliance with certain 'norms' (Temple 1995) as I discuss below. If people were perceived to behave in an inappropriate manner, they were not 'insider', therefore not a quest companion as Celia's account of a neighbour, another migrant from the UK illustrates. This is a good example of how belonging to social networks excluded as well as included members and how not everybody benefited from the help and support assumed to be associated with being part of a group. This anonymous neighbour, a woman, was found seriously ill alone in her home by another resident of the urbanisation. This resident was alerted to the woman's situation by her dog barking over a period of several days. The woman was taken to hospital but still nobody

knew who she was, nor did anybody particularly want to become involved in helping her. This story ostensibly could be seen as contradicting Celia's earlier talk of reciprocity and for mutual assistance among migrants from the UK in Spain. It appeared that Celia felt that the woman in question was to blame for her situation. The woman was known to be an alcoholic and this had caused her health to break down, and this seemed to excuse Celia from feeling obliged to assist her. Celia had not seen this woman for six months although she lived close by, which might suggest that she had avoided any contact and that this woman was considered to be an outsider. Insider status to this community therefore, appeared to be contingent on 'good' or acceptable behaviour:

Celia: excerpt 8

We've never seen the lady; I've heard she's alcoholic. We had to call the police and an ambulance and in six months it's the first time I'd seen her. Basically her liver had gone, but now we had a problem, because he has gone, the husband. We don't know where he's gone. She's going to hospital and nobody knows her second name which is really sad.

After previously talking about how much she enjoyed being in Spain and how much friendlier people were there, Celia positioned herself in a passive role by outlining the reasons why she was unable to help, primarily focusing on the Spanish legal system and her own sensitivity, as obstacles to intervention:

Celia: excerpt 9

I couldn't have gone in personally because I couldn't deal with that. But to think that to go in, if it needed doing, that we could go in and do it, but no, it's got to, they've got to, before they can go [in], a court order. She's got to get in touch with the police in the locale that dealt with it. She's got to get a report from them.

There was acknowledgement that this woman needed help and Celia expressed regret that she did not receive it, but when she referred to 'somebody' could have helped - a 'neighbour' - she was actually saying, albeit implicitly, that although she was a neighbour that she was disassociating herself:

This story in many ways contradicted Celia's early portrayal of herself as a civic minded person. She was uncomfortable with this and self-conscious in her narrative, illustrated by her use of 'I'm sure', 'I don't think', 'I'm not sure' and she cast me as someone who would understand her predicament asking me to collude. She referred to 'somebody', distancing herself and removing a sense of responsibility. She then talked about the practical reasons why she could not help and blamed the Spanish authorities for preventing her intervention. Again, she cast herself as a victim of Spanish law and was passive here:

Celia portrayed herself as well meaning but deterred by a number of obstacles preventing her enacting community orientated behaviour. She saw me as someone who might be either (or both) sympathetic to her situation or critical of her behaviour. This dissonance in this account can be understood to be an acknowledgement of what should happen and the recognition that the reality was often different. Celia talked at length about this incident, it had clearly bothered her, but in order to convey an identity that she was comfortable with she did not want to acknowledge that she could have done more for this neighbour. Instead she focused again on the legal obstacles and assumed a passive obedient role in which she could not flout the law. She

prefigured me as someone who would give reassurance and also as someone who was being educated about the ways of Spain, since in this sense I was an 'outsider' as I did not live in Spain.

Celia conveyed a sense that this neighbour had been failed by the other residents and felt that this was a partial reflection on her, but still she was unwilling to act. When she said she felt 'totally bad' about her lack of help, she suggested a consciousness that her inaction contradicted her earlier words and 'that's awful' was a more general criticism of the inaction of others and her. She mentioned that people were saying they did not want to get involved and was critical of this, but it also reflected her position and behaviour because she was also saying that she did not want to become involved. Again this could be seen as at odds with her earlier comments regarding the need for people to 'be there' for each other in Spain. Celia seemed to want me to reassure her that she was not a 'bad person'. She distanced herself from the situation again by referring to other (anonymous) people who did not want to become involved, like her. She could have been asking me, or herself the question at the end of this part of the story or it could have been rhetorical:

Celia: excerpt 12

I feel totally bad that I've lived there six months and never seen this lady and I think that's awful that she went to hospital with nobody and people were saying I don't want to get involved, but and I wondered if we could ring the Help charity and say there's a lady in hospital, but at this stage we didn't even know her name, it isn't how you anticipate you come to live this life is it?

Celia then repositioned herself as civic minded in spite of her lack of agency regarding the neighbour. She was much more comfortable talking about the 'ladies' club' since this was the type of 'community' involvement she preferred. She needed to re-establish her social conscience in order to feel at ease with the situation and herself again and this was achieved through her talk about encouraging Lou to attend:

Celia: excerpt 13

I knew when I come out here I've not to sit back. It's not going to come to me here. I've got to come out here and do something about it, which I suppose starting [the Ladies' Club] was my way of trying to make a start and get into it, and that's it. It's wonderful really. In fact I met a lady yesterday, Lou, she came the first week and the when she was leaving she said 'I won't be coming again because my friend's going back to England'. I said 'you must come Lou, it's for people to come on their own to meet other people, so's that they can have different conversation' and Lou came. I believe she's got a sick husband and she comes, she's never missed one meeting. From we were quite unsure about her coming and yesterday I saw her at and she said 'when does it start?' I said 'next Wednesday', she said 'I can't wait', she said 'it's my two hours that I give to myself' she said 'I've really missed it'.

Celia was instrumental in establishing the 'ladies' club' and encouraging Lou to attend represented the kind of civic engagement she preferred to use. For some women therefore, talk about the nature of their social contact and the extent of their mutual reciprocity was at odds with their claims of being part of a community which suggested that it operated on a number of levels. For women in Spain, belonging to networks was exclusive in that it did not encompass everybody – some were in and some were out- and this could be contingent upon behaviour rather than just being part of a group (Suttles, 1972; Sherlock 2002; Crow et al 2001). Belonging to networks could be pragmatic, to achieve the life renewing goal (Booker 2004); it could be superficial and limited and often a 'feeling' or a 'sense of' belonging was sufficient.

Vera pragmatically made the distinction between kinds of friends, that is, people with whom there was a shared deep sense of community, or acquaintances (Morgan 2006; Heaphy 2006). In these circumstances, community as networks represented something to satisfy basic safety and security needs and 'a sense' mentioned twice or 'a feeling' appeared to suffice. Members of a community did not need to embrace one another's views or share the same values; they just needed to pull together if necessary to foster the sentiment which brought the imagined into the realm of the real. For some though, the superficial nature of community was not problematic since cohesion tended to be with one's own ethnic grouping:

Vera – excerpt 9

I'm not quite certain that it needs to be anything other than superficial. We're not necessarily talking about deep friendships. You're talking about a sense of community and a sense of belonging that just gives you that feeling of safety.

Of the whole therefore, for the women in Spain a feeling of belonging seemed to suffice and this could also apparently be switched on and off at will for pragmatic purposes. In this sense, belonging to networks could be described as being superficial. As I have indicated, in Spain, belonging to social networks was more about lifestyle rather than duty and obligation and in this way could be seen as a bond with limited liability. Neighbourliness or community building – through networks - does not need to be related to common hardship (Crow et al 2002); instead, there can be limited reciprocity among and towards community members. This community in the Costa Blanca therefore, was one without obligation (Sherlock 2002). Instead it was lifestyle based, pursued through social clubs and shared cultural based gatherings (O'Reilly 2000). It was also hedonistic and it is more appropriate to talk of 'club capital' in terms of the 'ladies' club' (Winter 2002) rather than social capital. 'Club capital' (Winter 2002) denotes a more superficial kind of engagement with social networks and this characterised women's networks in Spain. In Chapter Two I noted that women's migration to Spain was shaped by previous experiences of tourism (O'Reilly 2000, 2003, 2007b) and this influenced the kinds of networks they joined and how they related to their fellow migrants.

In this transnational community (Cronin 2006; Ryan 2004) or one out of context, an individual could become a 'local' very quickly, unlike in longer-established communities (Elias and Scotson 1974; Crow et al 2001), provided English was spoken and their behaviour was acceptable. Being an 'insider' therefore, was not premised on long established social networks (Sherlock 2002) and people could be insiders and outsiders simultaneously (Wilmott 1986). Behaviour that complied with a group 'norm' or acceptable forms of behaviour could also determine whether people were 'in' or 'out' as Celia's story illustrates.

6.8   Networks in the UK

Women who wished to remain in Spain told a positive story about their life there and minimised any potential problems. I indicated in Chapter Four that a feature of the quest is the extent to which the central character can overcome 'monsters and obstacles' (Booker 2004). Missing family and overcoming this in order to have a successful and happy life in Spain, can be understood in the light of this and also in terms of having successfully negotiated family responsibilities (Finch and Mason 1993). When women talked of missing their families, this was told as something that was painful, needed negotiation but was bearable overall. These women positioned themselves as being good mothers and grandmothers in spite of not being with their children and grandchildren. This was particularly evident in Celia's and Cynthia's accounts:

Celia excerpt 14

Maybe that wasn't as hard because my daughter went away to university at eighteen, moved down south, and I didn't see a lot of her, so the pull with her wasn't there. Maybe sons and daughters, if they've lived near them, they're used to seeing them day in day out, but I wasn't.

Celia talked about the distance between them prior to her moving to Spain and suggested that this was a direct result of infrequent contact since her daughter left home to go to university. This was told in such a way as to minimise missing her daughter while Celia was living in Spain. She talked at length about her daughter and there appeared to be a number of troubling issues for Celia; there was physical and emotional distance between them, apparently going back to when her daughter went to university. She referred to 'the pull'- representing emotional attachment - three times in her talk and in this way suggested that moving to Spain was relatively easy since she already felt separated from her daughter. Celia appeared to slightly resent her daughter for moving such a distance away and for not seeing her very often. However, this had also given her the freedom to move to Spain.

In contrast, those women who wished to return to the UK, presented family and being a mother as overriding reasons to return. As indicated earlier, this can be understood as a shift in plot, from the quest to the voyage and return.

For these women, the life renewing goal had not been achieved in Spain since they could not overcome the obstacle of missing family. For Vera, being a mother was the primary reason she gave for wanting to return to England since she was unable to manage being separated from her:

Vera excerpt 10

I miss my daughter. I miss my family, my sister in law, she's very ill. My niece could do with some assistance really. It's very hard for [niece]. Of the three daughters my brother had, there's only one left in this country. One died and one's in Australia, so it's very hard for [niece] really 'cos she's working full time and she has to see her mother every morning, every night, and at weekend. Deidre's sister as well, so there's quite a lot of pull, and friends, we've friends who can't come over here. We know a couple who've got two young children and they can't afford to come so there are all sorts of reasons for going back. Plus we want to see the English countryside as much as anything we miss theatres and concerts and the things that we used to do before we came here but my daughter is the main person.

Those who fit into the voyage and return plot typology talked about their social contacts in the UK as being deeper than the friendships they had made in Spain. If women had fulfilled the quest's goal, that of a new home in Spain, their narratives de-emphasised the missing social networks in the UK and instead focussed on being able to have family and friends over to visit in their new home. It was clear that the place that was constructed as being home, either the UK or Spain, was also represented as the place where social networks were better or more meaningful.

Vera: excerpt 11

The social contacts that we had in England tended to be people we'd known a very long time that went way back, so the people that we knew in England were really tended to be family and long term friends whereas over here these are all obviously people that we'd met within the last couple of years .

For Enid, who lived in Spain for part of the year, her construction of the UK as home was evidenced through her talk of social contacts there:

For some women living in Spain on a part time basis, having the opportunity to be away for some of the time represented the chance to escape, albeit temporarily from the pressures and responsibilities associated with being part of a family:

> **Viv**
>
> I've a big family and there's always something going on, divorce and what not.

Others had escaped on a more permanent basis. For example Myra, sold her house in the UK and moved to live in Spain full time. She used metaphorical language, 'getting bogged down' in relation to her life in England, denoting being trapped and unable to move or being restricted and limited by the weight of the pressure from her family since she was expected to care for her mother. When she said 'so I sort of upped sticks', again this was a metaphor for making a hasty exit or departure from a situation: 'and run away to the warm' – she literally described her move to Spain as running away with the sub-text being an escape from the obligations of her family. She portrayed herself as a woman who been left no choice but to make a bid for her own freedom:

> **Myra**
>
> I was getting bogged down and all my family thought I should be nursing my mother, and no, I don't want to nurse my mother, so I sort of upped sticks and run away to the warm.

Myra presented herself as active, transgressing the gendered role of carer assigned to her and not bending to the will of her family. She talked about her mother becoming 'a bit of a drag' with the implication that she would have been overwhelmed by obligations and duty towards her and that it would have made her life 'a real misery'. Instead though, because she had escaped, she had acquired a life in Spain:

Myra

My mother's eighty-five so she, she was beginning to be a bit of a drag. My life was gonna be a real misery; so in actual fact I run away really. Now I've got a life. If I'd've been in England, no, I wouldn't have.

Women who migrate manage and negotiate family responsibilities in their country of origin (Ryan 2004). This suggests that family could in fact be a potential source of support or something to escape. For those women who wanted to remain in Spain they told a story of successfully negotiating such responsibilities in order to fulfil the quest's goal. For those who wanted to return to the UK, there was an additional element in that missing family meant that the quest could not be achieved.

Although all women acknowledged that, when in Spain, they missed their family, especially their grandchildren; several said that they were happy to relinquish responsibility towards them. In this sense, these women did not conform to the stereotype of doting grandmothers who lived their life through their family in their older age. However, it is important to acknowledge that this depended on whether their narrative was typified as the quest or the voyage and return as I have discussed. For those who wished to stay in Spain, missing family was minimised and rationalised as an obstacle that had been overcome to achieve the quest's purpose, a better life, synonymous with a new home. However, for those who wished to return to the UK, family was cited as one of the main reasons for wanting to go back to Britain and this can be understood in relation to plot shift to the voyage and return.

6.9   Narrative constructions of networks

Focussing on the network representation of community through narrative analysis raises further issues about where home 'is' and illuminates the multiple and complex belonging that people have to social networks in different places at different times. As with place, networks can be idealised and imagined and this is constructed through narrative.

Having made the move to Spain, some women found that they had indeed achieved 'the life renewing goal' (Booker 2004) of a new home. However, for others, Spain did not live up to their expectations and having 'voyaged', they wanted to 'return' to the UK which was constructed as the place where social networks were more meaningful. Irrespective of where they wished to be, all women wanted to tell a positive story about themselves and the choice they had made and this was evidenced through their narratives. Using the plots of the quest and the voyage and return were again useful since women's experiences, motives and agency regarding networks could be examined through their narratives, since it was through these that women made sense of their actions and their lives. Since the main theme in both the quest and voyage and return is the pursuit of a better life, talk of belonging to social networks in the UK and Spain denoted, represented and constructed this. For some women, social networks in Spain were constructed as being 'better', while for others, since a better life was only possible in the UK, networks there were reconfigured as being more meaningful. For those women who lived in Spain part-time, although the UK was presented as home, they were still able to enjoy the more relaxed opportunities to engage with networks in Spain. Again narrative linkage (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) is a useful concept to understand how the different groups of women constructed transnational identities in relation to social networks among migrants in the sending country (Gustafon 2007).

Further, people construct belonging to networks to provide a social context to their lives. What was said and how it was said highlighted the perceived differences between networks in the UK and Spain. Women who wished to return to the UK were unable to overcome those difficulties related to being out of one's familiar context, or place. In this way, home is pragmatic and contingent on experiences and intention and the ended embedded in both plot typologies is the place to where women construct belonging networks. A narrative approach is useful in analysing *how* such belonging is constructed and how women position themselves in relation to places.

Although people living in the same place do not have to have the same values (Sherlock 2002), community can be constructed as a survival strategy, so in this way it was common sense and pragmatic to be a part of a community. For the women I interviewed in Spain, community was also about networks and again these networks were talked of differently by those women who wished to remain in Spain and those who wanted to return to the UK. Social contact or belonging in terms of networks was told as meaning more to the women in the place that they wanted to be; networks in Spain were talked of as being multiple, spontaneous, relaxed and informal for those that wished to remain there, whereas social networks in the UK –for those women who wished to return – were talked of as being more established and longstanding, closer and more meaningful. Women who wanted to return to the UK talked of missing their families as an obstacle which could not be overcome and this links with the quest either being fulfilled or not. Those women who wanted to stay told a story of being able to deal with this and being apart from family not posing a compromise to their being 'good' mothers.

The way that the women talked about the UK and Spain was influenced by whether or not they wanted to remain in Spain and this was particularly significant when they talked about social contact evidenced by the content and structure of their narratives. Those who planned to remain in Spain tended to focus on the opportunities for making new friends and how much more sociable British people were in Spain. For those who wished to return to the UK, this was told differently, some of the women found such increased social contact rather intrusive and they resented the lack of control they had in their social relationships. It is interesting that those women who wanted to stay in Spain did not dwell on contacts they had left behind in the UK but rather emphasised increased social opportunities in Spain. For those who wanted to return to the UK and also for those who were unsure about staying in Spain, the focus was on the networks they had left behind with the consensus being that friendships in Spain were not as deep nor did they mean so much as those established in the UK. A narrative approach is useful in analysing *how* such belonging is constructed and how women position

themselves in relation to social networks. In the following chapter I go on to discuss belonging to ethnic group.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY

7.1   Introduction

'The British are seen by many on the continent…as reluctant Europeans, stubbornly monolingual, still tied to the dreams of Empire'.
(Cohen 1994 p. 29)

'Britain's changing and ambivalent relationship with Europe can be explored through the identities and actions of the British in Spain who fail to integrate into Spanish society yet talk of Spain as home'.
(O'Reilly 2003 p. 308)

In the previous two chapters I explored representations of community as belonging to place and networks. I now turn to focus on ethnicity and belonging to ethnic group and the influence of diaspora on the performing of identities. Ethnic identity is pragmatic and produced for and by the audience and narrator. Narrative both constructs and describes ethnic identity. There are also multiple simultaneous layers in the telling of ethnic identity which are linked to the pragmatic purpose, or the ending embedded in the plot of a narrative as I discuss throughout this chapter. At some points in the women's accounts I could have been positioned as an insider, and at others an outsider in terms of my ethnic identity, or it may not have featured at all. However, it is impossible to know this.

As noted in Chapter Two, there are multiple and complex ways of being British and English, although it is not my intention to set up these categories as binaries. There were many different ways of representing Englishness in the women's narratives, ranging from feeling superior to others or having an 'empire mentality'; positioning Englishness as the norm, and all other nationalities and ethnicities as 'other'. Further, in spite of the UK Government's focus on British citizenship, women generally described

themselves as English (Baucom 1999). Ethnic identity was therefore a feature of all of the accounts which suggested that belonging to an ethnic group was a powerful factor, particularly when 'out of context'. Women in my study described themselves as English rather than British although 'ambiguity often characterises the boundaries between an English and a British identity' (Cohen 1994 p. 7). Again narrative linkage (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) is a useful concept to understand how the different groups of women constructed ethnic identities in relation to the material and structural circumstances of their lives. I discuss this throughout this chapter.

This chapter begins by exploring the impact of the imperial legacy on the construction of British women's ethnic identity in Spain. I also examine how women positioned others in their narratives, for example, immigrants in the UK, the Spanish, other expatriates, and me, as a 'brown' person of dual heritage. I focus on how they lived on the margins of Spanish society and examine the role of language in creating and sustaining such exclusion. As I have suggested throughout the previous chapters, the boundaries between belonging to place, networks and ethnic groups are blurred and overlap. I discuss belonging to ethnic group under the remit of ethnic identity rather than networks primarily because women felt little identification with or belonging to 'others' outside their own group. Therefore, 'others' could not be 'quest companions' (Booker 2004).

As in the previous two chapters, I use four selected cases from the different categories studies to analyse the narrative structure, while also drawing on the accounts of other research participants.

7.2   The imperial legacy: a sense of superiority

When women talked about their ethnic identity in terms of national identity, all apart from Enid and Olive (who described themselves as Irish and Korean), referred to themselves as English rather than British. However, they used the British Empire to explain the innate sense of superiority that their compatriots

felt in relation to other nations, in spite of the Empire historically being 'an upper and middle-class quest' (Cohen 1994 p. 13).

Cynthia, for example, talked about national identity in relation to Britain's imperial legacy and current relationship with Europe. She spoke with authority, using the collective pronoun 'we' and 'our'. This conveyed a social, or collective ethnic identity (Tonkin 1992), and emphasised that ethnic identity was a 'basic' and 'fundamental' issue. She positioned herself as patriotic and nationalistic. There was also a time and space dimension in that Britain's imperial legacy clearly had resonance with the present and the current experiences of UK migrants to Spain. This can be understood as the weaving of historical and contemporary social and political contexts into women's narratives – or as narrative linkage (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) - and in terms of how the past has influenced the construction and representation of ethnic identity in the present:

> **Cynthia**
>
> I think it goes back a long, long time ago back to the British Empire. I think the basic thing in Britain is we don't want to be European; it's a fundamental issue. We want to retain our British identity.

Vera on the other hand, suggested an awareness of the contradictory nature of the label foreign, but clearly saw English people as 'the norm', which could be seen as another example of a collective past influencing the individual and collective present. All other ethnic groups or nationalities were therefore 'foreign':

Vera excerpt 12

What I call foreigners - the non English - but that's the wrong word to use is foreign, 'cos we're all foreigners here.

Vera's presentation of the English being a norm also reflects how white English people have been de-racialised in discussions of ethnicity, while visible minority ethnic groups have been over-racialised (Nayak 2003). This is also reflected in the language used by the Spanish Government and estate

agents when marketing properties in Spain since Europeans are often described as residential tourists, while non-Europeans are described as immigrants (O'Reilly 2003). This reflects and constructs the status of these different groups in relation to one another. I develop this discussion further below in relation to how women in Spain positioned immigrants to the UK through their narratives.

7.3   Positioning others: Immigrants to the UK

Immigrants to the UK were described as both different and similar to migrants to Spain. Some women depicted their situation as superior to that of immigrants in the UK. Rather than drawing parallels with them, they, talked about differences between them. As discussed in Chapter Five, some women suggested that immigration to the UK had been one of the factors which had encouraged their move to Spain. Further, the 'influx' of foreigners to the UK was seen to symbolise what was currently wrong there in terms of crime, safety and treatment of the indigenous populations.

Very soon into her narrative, Cynthia raised immigration to the UK as an issue. She claimed not to be racist on the grounds that she was friends with people of 'ethnic origin' and did not present ethnicity as something that applied to white people from the UK. Instead, she talked about ethnicity as being the preserve of 'others'. She reemphasised that *she* was not racist, blaming the UK Government for people's racism by allowing too many immigrants into the country. Cynthia did not initially draw any parallels with herself and other migrants from the UK moving to Spain and taking over certain areas. It was possible that she was conscious of how she might have been heard by me as a 'brown person', although she presented herself as pragmatic and sensible in her attitude towards immigrants to the UK and not influenced or affected by racist beliefs. I was unsure whether Cynthia was conscious of my 'otherness' at this point since she could have been relating to me as an 'English person', or when she explicitly claimed not to be racist she

could be relating to me as someone who might potentially judge her to be a racist. Cynthia's narrative reflects wider popular discourses on immigration (see Dench et al 2006):

Cynthia

Where I come from it's mainly Pakistanis and they've created their own towns if you like and tried to instil their culture on everybody which is wrong, nobody disagrees. I'm not saying that people shouldn't be allowed to follow their own religion etcetera or their own culture, fine, but when you're in somebody else's country, you should follow the rules of that country. Not that I'm racist because I'm not, I've got friends who are of ethnic origin and that doesn't bother me one iota, but, I think successive governments are making people racist in as far as giving preferential treatment to um ethnic communities and not looking after their own people. I've seen so many things happen in that field and I think it's so unfair.

When she continued, Cynthia blamed immigrants to the UK for her feeling pushed out and apparently spoke on behalf of a majority by her use of 'nobody disagrees'. When she said, 'when you're in somebody else's country you should follow the rules of that country', she did not convey awareness that migrants from the UK behaved in a similar manner in Spain to those immigrants to the UK who she criticised. Further, Cynthia herself had been instrumental in perpetuating cultural traditions from the country of origin by setting up the Ladies Club for women from the UK.

Dench et al's (2006) work in Bethnal Green, where the East End is presented as territory which is competed for by different ethnic groups is useful in relation to Mabel. When she talked about immigrants in the UK, she said that 'we' (the state) 'do too much' and 'baby' them with the implication that they received preferential treatment to the indigenous population and as a result 'get the wrong idea' about what can reasonably be expected from their hosts. Her use of the military language 'retreat and advance' conveyed the need to defend territory. Mabel was euphemistic, but suggested that there was a battle or competition between different ethnic groups for territory, or indeed survival. She was aware of how she could be heard and did not want to be

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interpreted as being racist or xenophobic so she edited her talk, positioning herself as a reasonable, measured and fair minded woman:

Mabel

I mean in England we perhaps do rather too much and we baby a lot of immigrants and they get the wrong idea. There is a school of thought that can quite easily say 'the more you retreat, the more others advance'. I wouldn't like to be xenophobic like the French, but don't quote me on that.

At other junctures in their talk, women described immigrants to the UK as sharing certain characteristics with themselves and so blurred the boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. Cynthia acknowledged that the way that migrants from the UK lived in Spain was not dissimilar to how immigrants to the UK had settled - in their own communities –without integrating with their hosts. She used 'we' to acknowledge that she had 'complained' earlier in her talk and made a distinction between the English – and her identification was English - and British when she talked about migrants forming their own communities in order to disassociate herself from this view and diffuse responsibility:

Cynthia

I feel it, the very thing we complain about in England is happening here where the British people we said British, not English, are forming their own communities and not integrating as they should because of the language. Language is the key.

Although in the main being and speaking English was presented as the norm, some women did recognise that while not in the UK they were themselves 'foreign'. It appeared that previous education was an issue here; as I indicated in Chapter Four, Mabel was the most educated of my research participants. She seemed clear about her status as a foreigner in Spain and she was not claiming Spain as her country. This fits with her earlier comments regarding not wanting the responsibility of engaging with her host country. She drew parallels between herself and immigrants in the UK while most of the other women made distinctions between themselves and immigrants to the UK (particularly in terms of their presence not being detrimental to their host).

Mabel saw the similarities; but unlike immigrants to the UK, she was not having 'a hard time' but instead she had 'freedom':

Mabel

We're immigrants, we're foreigners. I mean I read now in the Costa Blanca news about immigrants in England having a hard time one way or another er, and I'm an immigrant I'm a foreigner.

Women drew parallels and differences between their migrant status in Spain and that of immigrants to the UK. They also represented their own foreignness in multiple ways, alternatively perceiving being 'English' as a norm and recognising that when out of context the label 'foreign' applied to them. I have already noted that these women described themselves as English rather than British and I discuss this further below.

7.4   Positioning others: The Spanish

In Chapter Six, I explained why I chose to examine the Spanish as an ethnic group rather than a potential network. To recapitulate, UK migrants in Spain had minimal contact with Spanish people and tended to homogenise them as a foreign and 'other' in the main due to language barriers. This was also discussed in Chapter Two in terms of the 'mobility enclosure dialectic' (O'Reilly 2007b) which denotes fluid movement within the EU but the subsequent concentration of migrant groups in particular areas of Spain. Often such settlement areas are remote from the host population; in the case of the women I interviewed this related to purpose built urbanisations which were remote from the host population. Prior to moving to Spain, most women expected to have regular contact with Spanish people and to be integrated into Spanish society.

Several women expressed regret that their contact with Spanish people was so limited. Vera positioned herself as peripheral to mainstream society (in Spain) and she was conscious of her outsider status vis a vis the Spanish.

The following excerpt from Vera's narrative demonstrates her disappointment with life in Spain and illustrates how migrants become enclosed (O'Reilly 2007b) in the areas where they live:

Vera excerpt 13

I think, I thought, I would lead a more Spanish life. I think what I do is lead an English life in Spain and that's not really what we should do, but I think there are two reasons for that. One is that all the people from the rest of Europe or wherever who buy in Spain do tend to be pushed into certain areas. We do live in ghettos there's no doubt about it. From the point of view of wanting to live in a different country from the one you were born in or brought up in, that's not the ideal. I wanted to be more integrated if you like with the Spanish and I think this ghettoisation is not really for me an ideal thing. But then that's the way these people are, that's from my point of view anyway. That's the way that people live, it's like with like, tend to be happier with your own culture. Anyway, I'm not quite certain how much the Spanish would welcome dozens of people moving into their small villages and maybe altering the culture of their villages. Statistics that universities produce [show] that they aren't happy with this massive influx.

Vera's comments illustrate how structural forces influence where migrants to Spain live and in turn how this perpetuates cultural and ethnic separation. As previously noted, Vera wanted to return to the UK and through her narrative she distanced herself from other migrants who were satisfied with living an English life in Spain and emphasised that she was different to them. Vera also expressed the view that mass British movement to Spain might not have been entirely welcomed by the Spanish, quoting a recent article in the Costa Blanca news. Since she planned to return to the UK she framed this very differently to Cynthia's account above. Her use of the phrase 'massive influx' is usually used in relation to immigrants to the UK.

Celia wanted to remain in Spain and although she also talked about being disappointed by the lack of integration with her host community, she minimised its significance because for her, the quest had been fulfilled in Spain. When she said 'the sad thing' and 'another thing' it suggested that there was actually more than one singular aspect of living in Spain that had

proved to be a disappointment to her. However, she deemphasised this to tell a positive story of living in Spain:

Celia excerpt 15

Well that's the sad thing. It, I really did [nt] think - that's another thing - when I came to live here, that I thought I would be living in such an English community. Yes I really hoped that [on] my residencia there would be Spanish people.

As I indicated earlier, Cynthia in particular had strong negative views towards immigrants to the UK but talked about British immigration to Spain in terms of it being unproblematic to the Spanish. Again, she appeared to be speaking for all people in the same situation, using the collective pronoun 'we'. She had no contact with Spanish people. The assertion that they were not taking anything from the Spanish had parallels with her earlier comments about how immigrants to the UK took from the system. Cynthia's positive take on migration to Spain was shaped by the fact that she was staying in Spain and wanted to tell a positive story about living there. She positioned herself and others who moved to Spain as independent, and not a drain on the state (unlike immigrants to the UK). Here too, she homogenised the Spanish; she had no evidence that Spanish people did not resent northern European migrants to Spain - in fact evidence in local newspapers suggested that they did - and presented the Spanish as appreciating the economic contribution that British migrants made:

> **Cynthia**
> We haven't come to Spain to take off the Spanish and this is why they don't resent us.

Mabel too, although having had very limited contact with Spanish people, made sweeping generalisations about them. This was in relation to Spanish people being innately more family orientated than those in the UK and that Spanish society was also more 'laid back':

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Mabel

It's a kind of love the Spaniards have, the los linios, the children and for old people. It's an innate thing.

Vera presented Spanish people as innocent, uncorrupted and less sophisticated in comparison to English people, again making generalisations and homogenising them based on extremely limited contact with them. Here she draws on time and space dimensions; Spanish people were seen to embody traits of English people in a previous era, before individualism became a feature of society:

Vera excerpt 14

The Spanish are really nice people I think they're um they're a kind people I've always said that the Spanish are like the English used to be forty years ago before we got Margaret Thatcher.

Vera was initially attracted to Spain in part because she saw an opportunity to network with such 'really nice people'. However, living in a ghetto, remote from the host did not appeal to her and she was disappointed in the social networks in Spain and this meant that the ending embedded in this narrative plot was voyage and return. Although women often talked about being disappointed that their social interaction tended to be with English speaking UK migrants, this too was tackled in such a way as to render the story as a whole coherent, depending on their future intentions. The stories differed for those who wished to return to the UK.

7.5   Positioning others: expatriates from elsewhere

Belonging to social networks was clearly predicated by ethnicity and shared language in Spain, rather than merely migrant or diaspora status. For example, when Vera referred to 'old bitternesses' she was again evoking sentiments from the time of the Second World War, this time referring to historical animosity between the English and the Germans:

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> **Vera excerpt 15**
>
> Even though I've said that there is a sense of community here um there are odd times I think it could factionalise things can get quite um quite fractured particularly between Germans and English. Old bitternesses die hard. The German president said that we will build showers, so of course somebody then said 'yes well we knew what happened when you bloody lot built showers last time'. And the whole thing sort of then fractured down the middle between the Germans and the English.

Vera told the story of an argument between the committee and the president of an urbanisation. The committee itself was comprised of English and German members while the president was German. The argument centred on heating the outdoor pool and the necessity of installing hot showers. There was disagreement from some of the English members of the committee regarding the need for and cost of these showers, while the president was insistent on their being installed. The ensuing argument moved away from the issue of the showers to something altogether more serious.

In the excerpt above, Vera's use of the word 'fractured' suggests that the illusion of community was shattered and that divisions became apparent as a result of underlying tensions which were deep rooted and real. In this sense, community was superficial, lacking in depth and solidity or certainty. She suggested that it was something rather fragile, so, although she believed it was important and 'existed' in Spain, there was precariousness to it. Her use of 'so of course somebody then said' conveyed sympathy with the circumstances and perspective of the English members of the committee; after all, Vera was herself English and she presented herself as loyal and patriotic through her talk. She related to me as someone who would not really know the detail of these divisions, it was a generational thing – I needed to be educated but I was also cast as someone (a fellow 'English person') who was an insider, who might collude. Here, the past influenced the present and Vera talked from the general to the particular as if this example proved her point:

Enid raised the issue of feeling antipathy towards the English. As indicated earlier, she was from Northern Ireland and identified herself as Irish rather than English. Her dislike was partly as a result of her experience on the committee of her urbanisation and her negative experiences with her English neighbours. Although told with humour, Enid expressed some very strong views about how she felt. In so doing, she homogenised English people, like many migrants from the UK did to the Spanish:

Enid was keen to establish her 'otherness' from the English. Her previous talk about the (English) president of the urbanisation centred on his incompetence, but she freely admitted that she did not like the English, preferring the Germans which to her was 'saying something' about how 'horrendous' she found the English to be. When she said she 'wouldn't like to cross any of them' the subtext here is that she is afraid of or intimidated, although she did concede that it was only 'some of the English' who were living on her urbanisation. When Enid continued she asserted that the Irish and the English were very different -with the implication that the Irish were 'nicer' - but she made several concessions. In her narrative, she framed this as her opinion rather than fact, saying 'I think' five times, and also implied that those people to whom she referred were not representative of all English people. She related to me as someone who was not English like her, talking of the English as though they were something that we were both not:

For women in Spain, belonging to an ethnic group had a very narrow application. It can be understood to operate on localised, small scale and narrow definition, illustrated by demarcations being apparent among delineations of Britishness. For example, women from the geographical 'England' described themselves as English and Enid, from Northern Ireland described herself as Irish. This can be understood to represent a rejection of the Government's vision of multi-cultural 'Britain' and the adoption of

> 'A sense of Englishness that is closed, fixed and white' (Wright 1985 p. 522).

7.6   Positioning others: me

As discussed in Chapter Four, my role in the research was significant, although it is impossible to be certain of how this impacted. At certain junctures in the women's narratives, I was cast variously and simultaneously as an insider and an outsider and at other times this did not appear to be relevant. In the excerpt below, although she was unaware of my ethnic background, Mabel talked to me in a manner which suggested 'insiderness' since in one respect we were both 'others' to the British in Spain. On the basis of my bodily inscription, that is, my being 'brown', she (correctly) assumed that I was from a 'mixed' background. On the basis of this assumption, she (incorrectly) expected that I had also experienced a situation similar to one which had arisen within her own family when two cultures clashed. Her Orthodox Jewish mother had married outside of her faith and was subsequently cut off from the rest of her family and treated as though she had died:

Mabel

My mother was Jewish and they said 'Shiva' because she married out of Orthodox Judaism. It's quite definite. I mean there's no going back; I bet you know about that. They said Shiva which is what they do for someone that dies.

7.7   Living on the margins: parallel lives

Belonging to a network could therefore also be determined by belonging to an ethnic group. Migrants from the UK were a minority, and not part of the mainstream and lived parallel lives to their hosts in ghetto like urbanisations, which again refers to notions of mobility and enclosure (O'Reilly 2007b). Belonging to networks reinforced ethnic identity and ethnic background and speaking English shaped the kinds of networks people were part of. Being away from their country of origin meant that migrants from the UK tended to gravitate towards their own ethnic group. This in turn reinforced their ethnic identity and cultural practices. Joy's comment about the kind of community she felt a part of in Spain betrayed the fact that social contact was limited to 'her own kind' that is, other migrants from the UK with whom she socialised and whom she related to due to shared language and background. In some ways this was at odds with her earlier comments discussed in Chapter Five, since she suggested that community was linked to long association with a place. This illustrated the multiple and overlapping meanings of community:

Joy

I feel part of a small expat community, but that's it.

Parallels can also be drawn between minority ethnic groups arriving in the UK and gravitating towards others of the same group; in Spain too the migrants from Britain saw themselves as a minority that needed to bond so intensifying the sense of community:

Deidre

I think perhaps here - because we do live in ghettos, there's no doubt about it - there is more of a community.

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When Deirdre talked about ghettos there were some parallels to the UK situation in which minority ethnic groups are located in areas which are often separate from the indigenous population as discussed in Chapter Two. Under these circumstances, the sense of community was enhanced because of this outsider status and the fact that migrants were mainly mixing or using 'bonding social capital' (Putnam 2000) with people from their country of origin and of the same ethnicity while in a foreign place. It should be noted however (and as I have indicated previously), although there were parallels with immigration to the UK there were also significant differences in terms of relative wealth and status, which often made British migrants defensive about their position in Spain vis a vis their hosts.

Myra, on the other hand, celebrated the fact that she was among compatriots, and felt safer and more at home because of the familiarity that this brought. She did not see anything wrong with this and when she says below 'I don't mind' in relation to mixing with Spanish people she was conceding that it was their country. However, the fact that the area she lived in is so heavily populated with Britons allowed her to almost disregard this. She referred to English culture being imported by the English – in this part of Spain the British were the dominant group, this was apparent in terms of cuisine, provisions, culture and language. Myra talked about this as a positive thing whereas some of the others (like Vera previously) did not. Her use of 'England in Spain' below suggests that Britons had 'claimed' this part of Spain:

Myra

Out here it's an English environment. I chose where I live because I thought there was English people around which would be more, well, you feel you're a bit safer. Not that I don't wanna mix with the Spanish, I don't mind, it's their country, but it is England in Spain here really it is.

Others, like Enid and Vera, expressed their disappointment at not living a more Spanish life suggesting (in Enid's case) that it would have been easier to learn Spanish and integrate into Spanish society. Vera acknowledged that there were barriers to 'inter cultural integration' but seemed to be saying that ultimately people gravitated to 'one's own kind'. It is probably worth noting

here that in these areas fish and chips were more available in restaurants than tapas. For women such as Enid and Vera, not living an 'authentic' Spanish existence was further evidence of moving to Spain not having lived up to their expectations. Again it is useful to separate the categories here: those women who wished to stay minimised their negative feelings but, for those who planned to leave, living an English life in Spain figured as a strong motive for returning home. The educational background of the women was also significant; those who were better educated wanted a more 'authentic' experience. Enid's disappointment centred on the reality not living up to her expectations of Spain – she hoped that she would gradually be integrating into Spanish society. When she mentioned 'a caricature of Majorca', a stereotypical British holiday place which she saw as a parody of British life, she made it clear that that was not what she was looking for. Her use of 'you need' suggested it was in fact what the majority of migrants from the UK actually wanted:

Enid excerpt 8

I do like the Spanish and I did sort of think to myself you know we'd be living in a wee Spanish village going to little Spanish restaurants. It's like it's like a caricature of Majorca where you know you need your fish and chip shop and you need your sports pub.

As previously discussed, the term 'ghetto' has historically been used to describe disadvantaged neighbourhoods with high levels of minority ethnic groups. It is also associated with persecution and racial segregation; ghettos were imposed on minority ethnic groups. Some women applied this term to their urbanisations. Vera, for example, expressed her disappointment at not living a Spanish life, and referred to the areas where UK migrants lived in Spain as 'ghettos' since they were segregated along ethnic lines for the reasons I have outlined above. When she said, 'that's the way that people live', she was critical of the 'Brits abroad' stereotype and disassociated herself from them. But, in using the phrase, 'like with like tend to be happier with your own culture', she is less disapproving, more accepting and understanding.

> **Vera excerpt 17**
>
> I think what I do is lead an English life in Spain. We do live in ghettos, there's no doubt about it. That's not the ideal. I wanted to be more integrated if you like with the Spanish. That's the way that people live, it's like with like tend to be happier with your own culture. We do tend to mix with English people, just because a lot of English people tend to have retired over here as yet.

Although for Celia, the quest was fulfilled, she was clearly disappointed that she did not live a more Spanish life or interact with Spanish people. However, she did not conceptualise the problem as being one of language. She did not give the impression that this was an obstacle that she would overcome and positioned herself as passive, yet accepting that this was what her life was to be like:

> **Celia excerpt 16**
>
> Well that's the sad thing, it I really did think, that's another thing, when I came to live here, that I thought I would be living in such an English community. Yes I really hoped that, my residencia there would be Spanish people. I would've liked to've lived with a few more Spanish in our community, cos we're not getting, we could, I suppose, we could be back in the UK.

Enid who like Vera was disillusioned with Spain and planned to sell her holiday home there, reflected on why people seemed to gravitate towards those with similar cultural values. She used her experiences in Northern Ireland to illustrate her point. The extract below was prefixed by her saying that although she was not happy about not living a Spanish life, she conceded that people were probably more comfortable and at home with their own kind. This was particularly interesting for her in that she was not English and actually did not like the English very much, she claimed as a result of her experiences in Spain. She suggested here that place of birth was probably the overriding factor for people's gravitational pull:

> **Enid excerpt 9**
>
> I think it's also because people who were born and brought up in the same area have more in common. Do you know what? I think I'll always have more in common with people from

Northern Ireland than anybody else. I think I will. I mean they say they say there's a religious divide over there, but I've always said I'm a Protestant, but even Catholic people from Northern Ireland will, well people we know anyway, will say they have more in common with Protestant people in Northern Ireland, than with people in the south, even though they are the same religion, because it's the way they've been brought up and your values. You know how your whole life is formed is similar, so you come out here and get people from all sorts of backgrounds and all sorts of nationalities, so we're not gonna have as much in common.

From the comments above, it would seem that some Britons were only able to engage with people from other countries if those other people spoke English or demonstrated an ability to learn. While for others who wished to stay and did not particularly relate to the holidaymaking stereotype, the difficulties posed by this were treated in a pragmatic manner and minimised:

Mabel
There's so many Brits, that's good and bad, it should be more Spanish but it isn't.

Unlike the negative feelings expressed about immigrants to the UK, a number of the women seemed to think that their presence in Spain was not a problem in any way for the Spanish or that in some circumstances it was actually beneficial to the Spanish economy. There was limited acknowledgement of the feelings of the host community vis a vis immigrants to the UK and some women talked both about their misgivings and resentment of immigrants to the UK and their own privileged status in Spain in relation to the Spanish without apparently finding this contradictory.

Most migrants from the UK therefore continued to live a 'British' life in Spain and there were a number of reasons for this. First, the location of the urbanisations, away from established areas populated by the Spanish was significant. Second, the way that the properties were marketed and sold to Northern European migrants perpetuated such segregation; and third, the inability of the women to speak Spanish compounded this. In fact, many could be described as having brought England (as only Enid and Olive were not 'English') to Spain. It was significant too that the women in my study generally

referred to England and being English, rather than Britain and being British. This suggests that they rejected Britain and what 'Britishness' represented. For some, however, the recreation of England in Spain was something to be celebrated rather than representing a problem. Being able to engage with culturally familiar customs, habits and those of the same ethnic grouping was presented as a positive aspect of life in Spain.

Belonging in terms of ethnic identity was a strong theme throughout the women's narratives. However, they did not describe themselves as having an ethnicity or being foreign in the main; rather being English (or in Enid's case Irish) and speaking English were positioned as the norm and other nationalities were constructed as other. This was achieved in a variety of ways through their narratives; the previous existence of the British Empire was put forward as one of the reasons why these migrants were reluctant to learn Spanish and there was a sense of cultural or ethnic superiority apparent through some of their talk. These women socialised with and lived among other English speaking UK migrants, in part due to the development and sale of the properties in the urbanisations although some of these women disassociated themselves from the typical 'Brits abroad' through their talk. The women themselves identified parallels with immigration and settlement patterns in the UK. The British Government is presently concerned with cohesion and integration of minority ethnic groups with the wider population under the auspices of citizenship but the women in Spain as represented in their talk live ghettoised lives apart from their hosts. As such, the experiences of these women can be used to further understand migrant communities to the UK.

7.8 The role of language

As I discussed in Chapter Three, in an interpretive view of the social world the status of language is important. Language as human agency constructs and sustains the social world (Gergen, 2001, Riessman 1993, 2008 and Temple 1997) and for women in Spain, speaking the English language reinforced

similarity with the ethnic we-group and difference from other groups, since, 'language is the major cultural resource that participants draw on to jointly create reality' (Riessman 2002 p. 1195).

Speaking the indigenous language was an important factor raised in all of the accounts and parallels were drawn by some women concerning the expectations placed on immigrants moving to the UK in terms of learning to speak English as I discuss below. Since being 'English' was generally positioned as the norm, there was a perceptible reluctance to engage with learning to speak Spanish, although to claim that a colonial mentality accounts for the lack of Spanish language skills among the British women did not tell the whole story. Rather, there were other, complex factors which also contributed to such reticence. Some of the women lacked confidence and perhaps the aptitude to learn the language since the majority had not been educated beyond secondary school. Some were unwilling, apathetic or thwarted by obstacles; while others appeared relieved that they did not have to learn Spanish since it was possible to speak only English in the areas in which they lived.   Further, women's reluctance to change language could also be related to maintaining their ethnic identity since:

> 'Which language people speak and the act of changing language can …be important in how people see themselves' (Temple 2008 p. 5).

Of the seventeen women, only one (Cynthia) could speak Spanish enough to converse with Spanish people. Of the others, Vera, Enid, Margot and Myra had accessed lessons, but could not speak enough to 'get by' in Spain. Mabel had made some attempts and was enthusiastic about learning, while two of the others, Bernice and Joy, had tried other means, for example, CDRoms. All conceded that they should be able to speak the language of the country in which they lived. This could perhaps be seen in relation to expectations that the UK Government has made of immigrants to the UK, that is, it was deemed unacceptable not to learn and speak English whilst living in the UK. It is worth noting however that the majority of these women had lived in Spain for over

two years and it seemed unlikely at this stage that they would actually learn to speak Spanish.

Being English was strongly linked to speaking the English language and most women were reluctant to learn how to speak Spanish. Those women who wanted to stay in Spain presented this as unfortunate but ultimately not detracting from their enjoyment of Spain. However, those who planned to return to the UK structured their accounts differently and this was presented as yet another monster or obstacle that they could not overcome and meant the quest for them had failed. In parts of their narratives, women who wanted to stay in Spain positioned themselves as passive rather than active, or as victims of extraneous circumstances and outside forces. The primary area where they presented themselves as passive was not learning to speak Spanish and the obstacles that prevented this. A further issue, in certain circumstances related to lack of language was not being or feeling in control. I argued in Chapter Three that language both constructs and reflects the world and in this way speaking English can be understood to represent and construct identity and this could explain why these women saw themselves as English.

Failure to speak Spanish could also operate as a limiting factor, perpetuating the Britons confinement to the English speaking areas as Bernice illustrated. 'Getting by' was predicated on Spanish people being able to speak English rather than English people speaking Spanish. Here the 'they' were the Spanish and 'most people' and 'you' were the English:

Bernice excerpt 3

Most people round this area, you can get by they understand a bit of English but if you go out, stopping off in different places, you know it's really really Spanish and nobody could speak any English, and you do need it then.

The imperial legacy was seen by some as an obstacle to learning Spanish and the main reasons for people from the UK currently having poor language skills and being resistant to change. Here, the importance of language in terms of identity for defining us and others is apparent. When Cynthia said

'we' she was speaking on behalf of all 'English' people. She added that it was unfair to expect the Spanish to accommodate the British in this way, positioning herself as reasonable and not like the 'typical Britons' who expected everybody else to speak their own language:

> **Cynthia**
> We think because we had the empire everybody should speak English which is very nice, but it doesn't work like that.

Some, like Vera, acknowledged the British legacy of only speaking English but also expressed surprise and disappointment that British people had not made more effort to speak Spanish when living in Spain. Here she emphasised her discomfort that British people did not speak other languages (three times) and was less forgiving than Cynthia who blamed the education system in the UK:

Vera excerpt 18

The English are notoriously lazy at learning languages. We, we're absolutely shocking, the worst on the planet, but by virtue of the fact that we're actually living in another country, I thought actually, people might make an effort here.

It seems clear then that being able to speak Spanish was regarded as important and there were pragmatic and moral reasons for this, but there was what can be described as an accompanying lethargy in addressing this. The majority of Britons in Spain did not learn the language and made little attempt to use even basic conversational phrases. Arguably, they had limited contact with Spanish people, therefore few opportunities to practise Spanish but there was also a reticence here as I mentioned earlier. In their narratives, women put forward a number of reasons to explain this encompassing the following: difficulty in accessing lessons; age as a prohibiting factor; limited opportunities to practise; the heat as an obstacle to learning; Spanish being a difficult language to learn and the education system in the UK not preparing people to learn other languages. A significant majority of the participants were at pains to explain why they had not learnt Spanish, and, often they positioned themselves as being overcome by these obstacles. As with the anticipated

osmotic benefits to health from living in Spain, it was clear that many of these women expected to pick up Spanish by virtue of simply living there, with very little effort expended on their part, not least because they expected to live in a less British environment. To some degree, these women seem embarrassed about their lack of language.

It is worth noting that the Spanish supermarkets and restaurants servicing the areas where these people lived usually had English speaking staff in them, and that there were a number of British owned shops, restaurants and bars. However, the fact that the Spaniards did often speak English was seen by some as one of the main reasons why it was difficult for British people to pick up the language. These women told a story of being amenable to learning Spanish but of being thwarted at every turn. Bernice talked of her attempts to speak Spanish; 'when you try' implied that people were generally not very proficient. In common with other women who had not learned Spanish, she turned her narrative around to blame the 'other'. Practically all of the women did this:

Bernice excerpt 4

When you try and speak Spanish here they answer you back in English.

The women I interviewed seemed unwilling to learn Spanish for a variety of reasons although they did not want to be explicit about this. They did not want to say outright that they were unwilling to attend classes and may have felt embarrassed – or even defensive - in explaining this to me.

Celia seemed to accept that she probably would not learn Spanish at this point, given the length of time she had already been in Spain, and although she said that learning by attending Spanish lessons was more difficult than by association with Spanish people, she had not been to any lessons. Celia cast herself as being ultimately passive with regard to learning Spanish. When she talked about this, it was clear that she struggled with her identity in this respect. On the one hand, she was active, having made the move to Spain and embraced a new life in retirement, but on the other, she did not speak the language of her hosts and this made her feel uncomfortable. So, for Celia, it

was a difficult task reconciling this issue with maintaining a positive version of herself since the subtext was that she felt guilty about not learning Spanish having lived in Spain for two years and considering it to be home. Celia did this through creating obstacles to learning the language and casting herself as passive effected this throughout her talk which in some ways was at odds with the active being she prefigured throughout the account. Here, she assumed a much more passive role; one of a person being thwarted by a system that she was unable to properly navigate. She also presented other characters in the story as putting obstacles in her way; Cynthia, someone who was presented as an authority throughout Celia's story, was described as deterring her on the grounds of age, since she was not yet sixty years old, and also the teachers since they only spoke in Spanish during the lessons. She used supposition or hearsay eight times in the extract below, positioning me as empathic, suggesting that I (as a fellow English speaker) would struggle in a similar way through her use of rhetorical questions:

Celia excerpt 17

I do believe that they have at the Town Hall on certain days but I think you've to be over 60 now, because there's a great demand for them, these Spanish lessons. Now I've heard a lot of people have been to that, but the problem is, I don't know, I'm just thinking, Cynthia said there was a great demand and you've go to be over sixty. I think the college in X does Spanish lessons and you pay for those but I believe that the teacher there doesn't speak English. Most people who go to these lessons - there might be twenty-three the first week in the class - then you hear the last few that are going and they're down to four or five but you do need it. I need to sort it, you do pick it up there's no two ways but I really, I've got to, I've been here two years now and I haven't done anything about it. I should.

The concept of English identity embodying some norm was most apparent around the issue of language where there was an expectation, although acknowledged to be unrealistic, that other nationalities would (or should) speak English. Deidre expected others to speak English and cast speaking English as the norm as in her talk when asked whether she had any contact with Spanish people she replied:

Deirdre

No, no not really because there are only three families that live nearby; one next door and these two over here and basically they speak no English whatsoever.

Here the subtext was that rather than feeling that she should learn how to speak Spanish, the expectation was that 'others' should speak English and if they did not they would not be part of things.

7.9   Ethnic identity and narrative

Focussing on ethnicity as a representation of community through narrative analysis raises issues about where home 'is' and illuminates the multiple and complex belonging that people have to ethnic groups in different places at different times. As with place and networks, belonging to an ethnic group can be idealised and imagined and this is constructed through narrative.

The women in Spain were unable to assimilate with their hosts. They lived on the margins of Spanish society which maintained boundaries, and there are parallels here to immigrants in the UK. Migrants from the UK to Spain homogenised the Spanish and their banal nationalism (Billig 1995) was imbued with a sense of superiority. This links to Anderson's (1983/2006) first paradox of the imagined political community that although the nation is a new construction there is a subjective belief in its long history. English cultural superiority in this context was fuelled by the previous experience of the empire. This had an impact on migrants to Spain and was used pragmatically in their construction of themselves as patriots of the past. Community represented as ethnic identity is both imagined and in the minds of members and it is also made real through their agency and narratives.

One of the reasons women cited for leaving the UK was immigration, although they generally did not perceive themselves as being foreign or as immigrants, but rather as the 'norm' and other nationalities and languages as 'other'. Although for women in Spain there was a large degree of choice rather than

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mere necessity in moving, often the story was told as though they were obliged to leave or were pushed out of the UK as a result of external forces.

Other nationalities or ethnic groups seemed to fall into two categories; those 'others' who were acceptable and knowable because they spoke English or demonstrated cultural similarities to them and the other kind of 'others' who were seen as culturally inferior. Most women were unable to acknowledge that the presence of the Britons in Spain could pose a problem to their hosts, in spite of their own often very negative feelings towards immigrants to the UK. Such negative feelings centred on the women feeling encroached upon or swamped by these 'others' and some talked of immigration to the UK as a significant factor influencing their move to Spain, compounding the moral justification of their stories. A further complexity here was how the women talked of their status as 'foreign'. Many of the women talked of the Spanish as being the foreigners, even though they were the host population and in this sense being from the UK and speaking English was often positioned as an overarching norm, sometimes used to minimise the issues associated with not speaking Spanish. The women generally talked of immigrants to the UK as being unlike them; although a small number acknowledged that there were similarities and both constructions were apparent in the same accounts. To conclude this chapter, I now discuss how place, networks and ethnic identity are linked.

7.11   Place, networks and ethnic identity

All of the women in my study shared disillusionment with the UK in the present and an idealisation of its past. This can be understood both in terms of their potential quality of life which was characterised by negative associations of routine, misery and being on the margins through retirement and the lost Imperial legacy. I interpret this as a yearning for the past and this relates to all three aspects of community. The UK of the past was constructed as representing a place which had a better quality of life, which in turn provided a context for the development of the kinds of social networks women

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wanted. In the past, there was also an absence of 'others', that is, people from different ethnic groups. All my research participants shared previous tourism experiences to Spain and this acted as a precursor to their migratory decisions (O'Reilly 2003). Past knowledge of Spain facilitated its construction as a 'Mediterranean idyll' which can be understood as place imagined. The quest was therefore for a better place and a better time, which represented holidays, escape, hedonism, and freedom. A fractured sense of belonging to the UK in the present, characterised by a narrative construction of 'bad Britain' (O'Reilly 2000) and the presence of 'others' – minority ethnic groups – caused women to long for the past when people were 'better'. Women felt that there had been a decline in traditional values among British people and that they were negatively influenced by living in the UK. The call began the quest for a new home for all of the women in my study: this was constructed as belonging to a physical place (Spain in the present, England in the past) and embodied a rejection of Britain as I discuss further below in relation to the UK Government's use of community. The women's common call also impacts on the social context (Ryan 2004, Clark 2007), or belonging to groups, since place was constructed as negatively influencing networks in the UK and positively impacting on how people behaved towards one another in Spain. I focussed on ethnicity as a translocational positionality (Anthias 2002), as imagined (Anderson 2006) and constructed through narrative since it was privileged by the women in their accounts. Analysis of the women's narratives illuminated a further facet of the quest: the goal of retrieving a 'better' ethnic identity which again looked to the past: that is to be English and not British as I develop below.

Women can be understood to have moved from the UK to Spain to escape Britain and to return to England. There is a time and space dimension here since moving across space in this context is synonymous with going back in time. Moreover, community and belonging to place, networks and ethnic we-group (Rosenthal 2009) were constructed as a barometer of their quality of life or intimacy with the world (Anthias 2006) through nostalgic narratives. The links between place, networks and ethnic identity are clear here: in this new community, members were very quickly assigned insider status

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predicated on country of origin (place) which is also linked to ethnicity and language and to some extent, behaviour.

O'Reilly's (2007b) mobility enclosure dialectic is a useful way of linking all three representations of community. Women who moved to Spain benefited from fluid movement across national borders in the EU since 1992; that is mobility. However, once they settled in Spain, they found that they were effectively living in bounded settlements, almost exclusively with people from their own ethnic group. This 'enclosure' was compounded for these women by the fact that they lived in urbanisations which were marketed for specific nationalities. Women's ethnic identity was effectively reinforced by their dislocation from their hosts, their inability to speak Spanish, and their diasporic status (Temple 1999, Anthias 2002), which was reflected and constructed by their narratives. This 'transnational community' therefore, was influenced by both place and networks and ethnicity. Further, as noted previously, these women used bonding social capital which compounded this (Putnam 2000). They did not 'bridge' to people outside of their ethnic group, unless they spoke English. For those women who wished to remain in Spain, superficial social networks with or quest companions sufficed. Those who wished to return to the UK on the other hand, constructed the UK as a place to where they wanted to return, and where social networks were longer standing and more meaningful. O'Reilly's (2003) conceptualises lifestyle migration as comprising counterurbanisation, or a rejection of modernity. She discusses the search for rural idyll as the search for heimat (home, belonging, community). This can also be understood as an evocation of gemeinschaft and a rejection of gesellschaft through the construction of an idyll. I develop this further in my work in relation to my use of nostalgia and the relationship between time and space.

A further way that place and networks and ethnic identity are linked is again through the concept of 'diaspora space' (Brah 1996) which highlights the significance of location in shaping group and individual identity. Since this group in the main bonded with their own ethnic group, it was difficult for them to escape their ethnicity (O'Reilly 2007), again as a result of the mobility

enclosure dialectic. Ultimately, women who wished to stay in Spain constructed it as 'home' while those who wanted to leave presented the UK as 'home'.

CHAPTER EIGHT: HOME AND AWAY

8.1 Introduction

'Nostalgics from all over the world would find it difficult to say what exactly they yearn for – St Elsewhere, another time, a better life'. (Boym 2001 p. xiv)

I began my thesis by suggesting that community as a concept remains relevant in the 21st century. I have argued this point throughout, using my findings from research with women who moved from the UK to Spain in retirement as supporting empirical evidence. Studying community enhances understanding of social change and continuity, both in terms of making links between the micro and the macro worlds and in terms of understanding change over time. In exploring and interpreting my findings, community has contemporary relevance in part because of nostalgia, which was reflected by and constructed through the women's narratives as well as by the meta-narrative of the UK Government. Further, women's narratives of community in Spain can be understood as 'counter narratives' (Andrews and Bamberg 2008) to the 'master-narrative' propounded by the UK Government as I discuss below. Although I have addressed place, networks and ethnic identity discretely as different representations of community, they are in fact inseparable as I explained in Chapter Seven. Moreover, belonging to place, networks and ethnicity is also fluid and multifaceted and this chapter considers the relationship between nostalgia, belonging and community in more depth.

This research has identified multiple forms of belonging to community. While place continues to be salient, belonging to places is now more complex as a result of transnationalism through lifestyle migration and increased global movement. People still associate community with place, but in this study it was not always the most important aspect. Examining constructions of belonging also illuminated thoughts, feelings and agency in relation to networks and ethnic identity. Women's accounts suggested that rather than places embodying particular characteristics, they were pragmatically

constructed and imbued with certain properties for particular reasons at specific times. Belonging to different representations of community was also morally justified. The move to Spain was presented as not just a move across space but a movement back in time, to where the past was better, for a number of reasons – mainly since it was represented as being like 'England' used to be. There was an idealised attachment to an idyll which represented both time and space, and the role of the nostalgia through narrative was significant in constructing this as I discuss below.

Women who moved to Spain constructed complex and shifting belonging to both the UK and Spain as places. The role of the imagination and in particular the use of nostalgia in constructing an idyll was important, across space, or where one was 'placed'. Further, the issue of home was also multi-faceted; it generally denoted the place where the women felt an overriding sense of belonging. Also, significantly, home was constructed as the place where people wanted to be and it was possible to feel that more than one place was home; however this did not have to be consistent or mean the same thing for everybody. Moreover, in the modern world of rapid movement and fluid boundaries, such belonging was not straightforward or necessarily singular for migrants. Belonging to place therefore was manifested through the construction of where home was.

The women in my study also constructed and belonged to social networks in both the UK and Spain. As noted in Chapter Five, women who left the UK for Spain in retirement, felt that they were not part of UK society and that the erosion of 'traditional values' among their own ethnic group, coupled with, for some, the influx of 'others' made living in the UK untenable. When women moved to Spain, they found that there too, they were living on the margins, among other retired expatriates - who were usually their compatriots – with minimal contact with Spanish people. Under these circumstances, social contact was presented as a necessity – to thrive and to survive - although they were not experiencing hardship as a persecuted minority group.

When women moved to Spain to fulfil the quest's purpose of a new home in better place, they needed to be accompanied by 'quest companions' to successfully achieve this end (Booker 2004). Belonging to networks was fluid and multiple, through lifestyle migration (O'Reilly 2007a) and the creation of new communities away from one's country of origin, reflecting the rapidity of social change and global movement. Where someone originated from influenced the kind of networks they engaged in, primarily due to common language and shared background. In her 2007 work, lifestyle migration or residential tourism (O'Reilly 2007a) can also be understood in terms of nostalgia since previous experiences of tourism precipitated a move to Spain in retirement. In 2009 Benson and O'Reilly write that 'There has yet to be an adequate explanation of why people want to turn their experiences from tourism into a way of life' (Benson and O'Reilly 2009 p. 614). I propose that nostalgia is helpful in attempting to answer this question. Counterurbanisation and the search for an idyll (O'Reilly 2000, 2003, 2007a) can also be understood in terms of nostalgia, since it reflects a rejection of the present and seeking solace in the past.

Therefore nostalgia can operate on many different levels and across different times as I discuss later in this chapter. O'Reilly (2000) refers to the push and pull factors in migration as 'post hoc justifications' (2000 p. 25) which focus on both the negative aspects of the UK and the positive elements of Spain. Nostalgia can also be understood to operate as both a push and a pull in terms of how life in the UK used to be (when it was 'England') and previous experiences of tourism in Spain. This relates to how women constructed the England of the past in Spain and how past holidays were imbued with nostalgia through their narratives.

With few exceptions, networks were with others who had constructed shared ethnicities. Significantly, this was an isolated diasporic community and women were able to exercise mobility – through increased freedom of movement in the EU since 1992 - across national borders but once in Spain, they were enclosed in urbanisations separate from the host community. As a result, women in Spain used bonding rather than bridging social capital (Putnam

1993), since they lacked the resources to 'bridge' to other networks. Further, in this diasporic community, behaviour and adhering to certain accepted social norms also predicated belonging to networks.

I argued that ethnic identity is pragmatic, multiple, shifting, positional and constructed. In their narratives, women described and presented how they wanted to be known in terms of belonging to an ethnic group and this changed according to their strategic purpose. These positionalities were constructed in and out of context in retirement and had links to place and networks. I have focussed on how women constructed - through their narrative accounts, heterogeneous positions in relation to ethnicity. Women living in Spain were part of an isolated expatriate community which bonded due to outside forces, and not speaking the language of their hosts compounded their isolation in a similar manner to immigrant communities in the UK. The fact that the women in my study were retired reinforced their segregation, since there was little opportunity, and indeed reason, to integrate with Spanish people, which further highlights the links between place, networks and ethnic identity. People who had migrated from a shared place tended to live among and form networks with their compatriots who spoke the same language.

The role of nostalgia and the imagination were also significant in relation to the construction of ethnic identity and the transnational community as I discussed in Chapter Seven. The women in my study can be described as 'transmigrants' (Cronin 2006; O'Reilly 2000. 2003, 2007a) since they were from one place and of another. They reconstructed their English ethnic identity in Spain, in part through networks with other migrants from the UK. Being transmigrant or, transnational (Gustafson 2008) can be conceived of as constructed through nostalgia since time and space through the past and the present and the UK and Spain are linked as I discuss later in this chapter. Like community, transnationalism can be utilitarian or pragmatic and imagined or symbolic.

Along with belonging to an imagined ethnic (national) community, speaking English re-constructed ethnic identity. This highlights the dual role of language, both in terms of constructing belonging to an ethnic group, and also how shared language is part of belonging and ethnicity. Women saw themselves as English, rather than British, and Englishness in Spain was constructed differently to how it was in the UK. A new form of patriotism existed away from the UK but it was patriotism from a distance so this group's diasporic identity was also significant. I previously described women in Spain as patriots of the past; they can also be understood to be nostalgic patriots since their movement across space also represents a movement back in time and a rejection of modern Britain.

Having summarised my analysis, I now outline the contribution that my research makes to knowledge in the field of narrative, community and lifestyle migration. This will be discussed under the following headings: community as lost; belonging and community; the UK Government's nostalgic use of community and finally, the value of nostalgia in understanding belonging and community.

8.2   Community as lost

I have argued throughout this thesis that the prevailing discourse on community is a romantic and utopian one (Delanty 2003). This discourse idealises and evokes a bygone age and constructs community as something that has been lost, yet is recoverable. In my study, women reconstituted community in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity – bringing the past into the present - through their narratives. Community 'existed' through these narrative reconstructions: sometimes it was a feeling and ephemeral, at others tangible and pragmatic and it was often imagined. I discuss community as something ephemeral and intangible in terms of reflective nostalgia, and community as pragmatic and tangible as restorative nostalgia (Boym 2001) later in this chapter. Further, community was represented as being predicated on lifestyle, rather than premised on duty and obligation. Individuals

constructed belonging and boundaries based on being of and from a place; through social networks and shared ethnic identity, or being part of a group. Community could also be superficial and tenuous and at times seen as 'a moral reward', or to denote a better quality of life. Isolated diasporic communities like this one - formed through migration - look back to the past to create a sense of belonging among members. As a result of such marginalisation, women emphasised tradition and values as a survival strategy that drew heavily on nostalgia.

Community is often represented as something that has been lost in the UK as a result of social mobility and the creation of the welfare state leading to privatised families together with the restructuring of old industry causing unemployment and subsequently social polarization (see Crow et al 2002; Delanty 2003 and Young and Lemos 1997). The UK Government presents community as the solution to current social problems: if the present was more like the past then such issues could be resolved. This use of community as a 'cure all' for society's ills encapsulates all three representations that I have focussed on throughout this thesis and also looks to the past to solve problems in the present, so here representing a rejection of modernity. However, women who moved to Spain orchestrated their own solution: they chose to leave the UK, a country that they perceived had failed them and to which their belonging was compromised. As a result, they needed to forge and construct new forms of belonging and review and revisit old ones, which they did through their narratives. Some women succeeded in their quest for a new home whilst others did not, and these women, having voyaged, chose to return to the UK. Other women in my study were able to retain homes in both the UK and Spain and their experiences of community in relation to place, networks and ethnic identity differed.

8.3   Belonging and community

'The ability of people to move within the EU has caused new social and economic circumstances that can either test traditional notions of belonging or revitalise a sense of group identity in the face of a new and unfamiliar 'other''.
(Marsh et al 2007 p. 21)

I have referred to the concept of belonging throughout my thesis and in Chapter Two I argued that it is difficult to talk about community without reference to it. However, belonging remains an ambiguous term (Yuval-David 2006). Many writers use the concept of belonging, but do not define it, although sometimes dislocation is used as a contrasting concept (Davidson and Khun-Eng 2008). Marsh et al (2007) refer to 'a sense of belonging' (2007 p. 7) and argue that:

'The idea of belonging is central to our understanding of how people give meaning to their lives' and describe it as 'social identity' (2007, p. 4).

Marsh et al (2007) assert that 'social identity' is important since it provides an indicator of social change, that is, of different permutations of belonging. What people feel to be a sense of belonging at a particular time says something about how they see themselves in relation to the immediate - or micro - and wider – macro - contexts in which they are placed in the world. Belonging therefore, is key to how people give meaning to their lives and I have focussed on place, networks and ethnic group to illustrate multiple relationships with the social world. I revisit this point later. Yuval Davis (2006) defines belonging as being 'about feeling 'at home' and …about feeling 'safe'' (2006, p. 2) and a:

'Longing for stable *emotional attachments* as they are articulated in national, ethnic, cultural and religious affiliations' (2006 p. 4).

In this research, emotion or attachment were studied in so far as they were constructed through narrative or emotions that are narratively constructed since narratives reflect and construct belonging.

As I argued in Chapter Three, examining the content and structure of narrative accounts can illuminate the relationship between meaning and action (Riessman 2004). This is useful for social researchers who focus on how people make sense of their lived experiences, particularly in relation to belonging (Anthias 2002 and Riessman 2008). Further, narratives can be understood to simultaneously both represent and construct belonging. Moreover, how people construct belonging through narrative illuminates how they see themselves in relation to place, networks and ethnicity. This can also be understood as the linking of the private and public realms (Mills 1959) or the micro and the macro. When women rejected the UK, or space, they also rejected the present, or time. Further, how they saw themselves in relation to places, networks and ethnicity constructed and reflected the degree to which they felt they belonged to them.

Another way of understanding belonging is to conceive of it as 'a sense of intimacy with the world' (Boym 2001 p 251). Such intimacy with the world - that is belonging, is often represented as community and is considered to have been lost through modernity (Young and Lemos 1997; Crow, Allen and Summers 2002; Delanty 2003). Nostalgia is the medium by which belonging to different representations of community can be recovered through narrative, however:

> 'Longing might be what we share as human beings, but that doesn't prevent us from telling very different stories of belonging and non-belonging' (Boym 2001 p. 41).

I discuss the differences between those who wanted to stay in Spain and those who wished to return to the UK in the final section of this chapter.

I define belonging as being, or *feeling a part of rather than apart from* which reflects both intimacy and distance and have suggested that community encompasses constructions of belonging to places, networks and ethnic group. Belonging is an important concept when attempting to understand community formation through migration since:

'A sense of or concern with, belonging becomes activated most strongly when there is a sense of exclusion' (Anthias 2006 p. 21).

Therefore, people become aware that they need to belong precisely when they become aware of the lack of it (Anthias 2006) and in this way belonging to places, networks and ethnic group can be understood as a means of achieving intimacy with the world often in the absence of that intimacy. This was reflected by and constructed through narrative.

When belonging felt fractured or compromised in the present, women looked to the past. To emphasise, the women in my study felt 'apart from' or dislocated in the UK. This exclusion and antipathy related to the UK as a place, the social networks they had and a British ethnic identity. They constructed belonging to a different place, Spain. Significantly though, moving to Spain was reconfigured as returning to England. Nostalgia is therefore central to an understanding of constructions of community, particularly communities which are formed through migration. I discuss this further later in this chapter. I now turn to discuss the UK Government's nostalgic use of community.

8.4   The UK Government's nostalgic use of community

The discourse of loss and recovery of community has been appropriated by the UK Government both historically and currently and community has been presented as a panacea for society's ills. The assumption is that what has been lost can be regained (Young and Lemos 1997; Delanty 2003) and if 'community' can be restored, then modern society will be both safer and better.

The UK Government's emphasis is on assimilation rather than segregation among plural minority ethnic groups in the hope of creating 'patriots of the future' (McGhee 2005). There is also a focus on networks through bridging (WD40) rather than bonding (superglue) social capital (Putnam 1993, 2006; Clark 2007; Alibhai-Brown 2007) and this has implications for ethnic identity.

All aspects embody both real and imagined elements: for example, the outward demonstration of ethnic and national identity is exemplified by Lord Goldsmith's (2008) vision of a shared future which is that to be British is to have or at least to demonstrate belonging to the country as a place through citizenship ceremonies premised on old traditions.

Being British also involves speaking English and overtly adopting a British way of life. Speaking English and adopting a British way of life is both symbolic and utilitarian (Alexander et al 2007) or both imagined and real. Women who migrated to Spain were patriots of the past; they rejected the 'new order' and instead chose to recreate – or regain- community elsewhere. Women's narratives of community in Spain can be understood as counter narratives to the Government's meta-narrative of fostering belonging to the UK (place) by different groups bridging across social networks and by restoring Britishness. As discussed in Chapter Three, counter narratives are

> 'The stories which people tell and live and which offer resistance, either implicitly or explicitly, to dominant cultural narratives' (Andrews 2004 p. 1).

These in turn illuminate how people frame their stories in relation to 'master narratives' and this process provides insight into how women saw themselves and their decision to leave the UK.

For those women who chose to leave the UK and move to Spain, the idyll was a Mediterranean one and community could not be regained in Britain. They had chosen to exclude themselves from UK society and regaining community was the reward for this. Community had been lost for them in the UK but was recoverable in Spain, while for the UK Government, community needs to be recoverable in the UK. For the women in my study, community was a strategy to both thrive and survive: they were living on the margins (of Spain and of the UK by choice) and were living parallel lives to their hosts. People who migrated to Spain (and who wished to remain there) still belonged to the UK – they were 'from' there - although they had become 'of' Spain. In Spain, they were able to reconstruct an English, rather than British ethnic identity.

The Home Office conceptualises 'community' in positivistic, essentialist terms with directly measurable elements, for example, speaking English, swearing allegiance to the monarchy and bridging to other ethnic groups. Further, the Home Office is not interested in communities that are transnational and instead there is a tendency to homogenise minority ethnic groups.

There are parallels between the women's lives in Spain and minority ethnic groups in the UK: both groups represent a diaspora, although there are differences in the circumstances of their moving, but not perhaps, for the key reason to move: the quest or search for a better life. Both groups are not part of mainstream society: they continue to speak the language of their country of origin and live in physically separate environments – or ghettos - to the indigenous population. Although the women in Spain were not engaged with the Spanish economy, their previous relative affluence and the benefits of owner occupation afforded them an advantaged position in relation to their hosts, therefore there are obvious differences. In many ways, in both circumstances, community can be understood in terms of being a survival strategy: being away from their country of origin, family and familiarity means bonding with 'one's own kind' rather than bridging to 'others' and creates a sense of safety. For both groups, community can also be seen as being as a result of having something to mobilise against. This can enhance our understanding of those migrant communities in the UK which maintain cultural practices in their new homes. However, often such practices are sometimes no longer sustained in the countries of origin (Temple 2001).

I now conclude by revisiting the concept of nostalgia and its value for my research.

8.5 Conclusion: the value of nostalgia in understanding belonging and community

> 'Nostalgia…does not only or necessarily refer to a place, but also to a time, feelings, people and ways of living'.
> (Chaitin p. 2009)

In Chapter One I introduced the concept of nostalgia and its origins. Nostalgia is an elusive concept and is often represented as an emotion or a feeling (Boym 2001) that can be examined at will (Dickenson and Erben 2006). This is reflected and constructed through narrative. Originally a medical term to denote the pain felt by someone who was homesick – *hiemweh* - in the English language, it later became known as nostalgia, from the Greek *'nostos'* and *'algia'. Nostos* refers to a return home (Boym 2001, Dickenson and Erben 2006) while *algia* describes the longing (Boym 2001) or pain and sorrow (Dickenson and Erben 2006) that is associated with homesickness. I suggested that nostalgia could be seen both within the context of and as an outcome of rapid social change, since 'Nostalgic manifestations are side effects of the teleology of progress' (Boym 2001 p.10). Implicit in nostalgic constructions is the image of the past as a 'golden age' since, by comparison, the present is perceived as lacking:

> 'A nostalgic contemplation is almost by definition a memory placed in linear time'
> (Dickenson and Erben 2006 p. 227).

As I discussed in Chapter Three, linear time is a Western concept (Boym 2001, Dickenson and Erben 2006) and nostalgic recollections are not actual memories, rather they are attempts to recreate the lost past through narrative. Further, nostalgia and the imagination construct belonging across time and space:

> 'Narrative accounts by actors are often the most accessible for social researchers who are interested in the ways individuals understand and interpret their place in the world and are of particular interest to scholars of collective imaginings around belonging' (Anthias 2002 p. 498).

Narrative analysis is not the only way of gaining insight into people's lived experiences, and human subjects focus on the nadirs and zeniths of their lives when they narrate (Anthias 2002). As I explained in Chapter Three, I do not treat narratives as some kind of special representation of reality (Atkinson 1997), or as an 'empathetic appreciation of personal accounts' (Atkinson 2009 4.4), rather as subjective and an interpretation. Throughout this thesis, I have argued that using a narrative approach to study community formation through migration enables links to be made between the micro, or lives lived and social change particularly within the macro context of migration in retirement. Women who moved from the UK to Spain examined their lives through recounting nostalgic narratives of belonging to place, networks and ethnic group and of community formation through migration (Ricouer 1984). This subsequently enabled me to meaningfully relate these private and public realms (Mills 1959), and to evaluate the links between women's individual experiences and society (Riessman 2000; Temple 2001), or their constructions of intimacy with the world (Anthias 2006).

Analysing women's narratives facilitated insight into their experiences and provided a point of analysis in relation to social and political practices, and the settings and material circumstances of their lives (Somers 1994). A narrative approach also proved useful when examining change and movement over time and space, since– narrating allows the relationships between past, present and future and 'here' and 'there' to emerge (Bamberg 2004), or to be constructed. Nostalgia is also a form of chronotope: 'Nostalgia, like progress, is dependent on the modern conception of unrepeatable and irreversible time'. (Boym 2001 p. 13) since it can be used to link time and space (Bakhtin 1981). Further, time and space are linked through nostalgia as are the past and the present. Moreover, nostalgia can be perceived as both practical and ephemeral – or utilitarian and symbolic - and as linking time and space.

Throughout the preceding chapters I discussed my concern with context and with the motives of women who moved from the UK to Spain. Analysing narratives illuminated the context in which the women's lives were lived. Using the plot typologies of 'the quest' and 'voyage and return' highlighted how

women in Spain experienced and reconstructed belonging and relationships to the social world through nostalgic narratives of community. Both the quest and voyage and return plot typologies share certain features: for example, the original state of affairs – the pushes and pulls in migration - which precipitated the call to leave the UK and both centre on a journey taking place. However, there were also differences regarding the consequent state of affairs, or the endings embedded in the plot (Czarniawska 2004), that is whether women chose to remain in Spain; the quest fulfilled, or return to the UK; the voyage and return. There was a further category identified by my research; those women who had two homes, one in the UK and in Spain. The women in my study retained strong links with the UK, spending more than half of their time there each year and still regarded it as 'home'. However, their primary relationship was to the UK and to British people in Spain, rather than their hosts. As I indicated above, the need for community increases in times of rapid social change. Community can therefore be understood as representing the antidote to modernity (the present) and it is constructed through nostalgic narratives.

A recurring theme throughout this work has been that community represents a bygone imagined 'golden age' which has been lost through modernity. The ideal - or 'idyllisation' of community is often imbued with almost mystical properties, elevating representations of it to the status of folklore. Again, this is achieved by the work of nostalgia through narrative. However, nostalgia does not only denote the mourning of a lost home, or place. It can also relate to the yearning for a lost time: in this way, the quest for another place also represents the quest for another epoch. Although time is linear, moving to Spain for the women in my study represented a movement back in time as well as across space:

> 'At first glance, nostalgia is a longing for a place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time'
> (Boym 2001 p. xv).

When people's sense of belonging to the social world is compromised, they seek to recreate it through nostalgia. Such intimacy with the world –

represented as belonging to places, networks and ethnic group - can be reconstructed in a different place or another time. In this way, temporality is as important as spatiality. Narrative both constructs past experience and allows people to make sense of the past (Riessman 2008). Intimacy with the world is achieved through belonging and nostalgia, and nostalgia reflects and constructs intimacy with the world through narrative by linking time and space. Nostalgic constructions of belonging therefore are key to how people give meaning to their lives and I have focussed on place, networks and ethnic group to illustrate such multiple relationships with the social world. How people construct belonging to place, networks and ethnic group reflects how they give meaning to their lives and denotes their perceived degree of intimacy with the world.

Different types of belonging are therefore linked to community through a sense of nostalgic intimacy with the world. If intimacy is compromised then nostalgia constructs and reflects belonging; in other words, nostalgia bridges this gap. In the absence of real intimacy or closeness, nostalgia is ignited through narrative and fills the gap. Dislocation can also be understood as representing fractured intimacy with the world as a result of modernity. Non-belonging (to place networks and ethnic group) precipitates the quest for another time/space. Rejection of modernity therefore, is a rejection of the present. Women's position as retired migrants in Spain offered them both freedom and led to their marginalisation and dislocation which further idealised the past. As a result of such marginalisation women emphasised tradition and values as a survival strategy achieved through nostalgia. Travelling back in time and across space enabled the women in my study to gain the moral rewards of belonging and community.

The strength of using narrative analysis and its relevance to this study therefore lies in its ability to generate knowledge of women's perceptions and experiences of movement and change across times and place: I framed the women's move to Spain in terms of a moral quest for a better life. A narrative approach facilitated the examination of movement across time and place since the relationship between meaning and social action could be explored

by examining language choices: what was said and how and for whom it was said. In Chapter Three I discussed the concept of narrative linkage (Gubrium and Holstein 1998) and its usefulness for my work. To recapitulate, narrative linkage is concerned with how meaning is constructed, for example by the use of plot. I have already highlighted the role of narrative as facilitating links being made with the micro and macro worlds or the public and private realms (Mills 1959). The concept of narrative linkage has further application in my work in relation to my use of the nostalgia chronotope (Bakhtin 1984). I have argued that the nostalgia chronotope links time and space, or the 'when and where' in narrative. It is also possible to perceive narrative as a means of making other linkages in relation to 'the how' and 'the who'. For the purposes of my research, 'the how' refers to social networks and 'the who' to ethnic identity. Narrative linkage can be understood as how people link events through time and place, networks and the construction of ethnic identity.

Examining women's narratives of nostalgia therefore, afforded an opportunity for the relationships between the past, present and future across spaces to emerge. Importantly, it also enabled an examination of how the past influences the present. In this way, a narrative approach was useful in exploring the women's experiences of migration. Using a narrative approach illuminated the cultural and political images – the Empire, for example - that shaped ethnic identity construction and reconstruction in both the past and the present and individual and collective pasts and presents were reconstructed through the women's narratives. Narrative analysis therefore, enhances understanding of migration and community. It is also useful for unravelling the complexities of time and space in terms of how the past influences the present and how the present shapes recollections of the past in relation to ethnic identities. A narrative approach enabled me to examine the complexity of women's lives and how they made sense of them as well as to understand how communities form, and particularly how this influences people's belonging to places, networks and the impact these have on shaping ethnic identity.

The concept of nostalgia therefore is invaluable in understanding community. As I have already suggested, nostalgia can be understood as both an

idealisation of the past and as bringing the past into the present (Dickenson and Erben 2006). This is achieved through narrative, both by women who retired to Spain and by the UK Government's focus on recovering community. The nostalgic meta-narrative of the UK Government constructs community as a vehicle to cure society. The counter-narratives of women who moved to Spain also implicitly used nostalgia to explain their actions in leaving the UK. Nostalgia is not about memory, rather it relates to an imagined, idealised past not actually remembered or experienced by the women or policy makers in the UK. However, the use of nostalgia in constructing this ideal is important since both meta and counter narratives can be understood as conveying the work of the imagination.

Throughout this work, I have made a distinction between those women who chose to remain in Spain and those who wanted to return to the UK. Although both groups set out on the quest, the endings embedded in the plots (Czarniawska 2004) diverged as I have previously discussed. There was another significant distinction between these groups which centres on their use of nostalgia, since:

> 'Algia – longing is what [they] share but nostos – the return home is what divides [them]
> (Boym 2001 p. xvi).

It is useful therefore to identify two distinct but related kinds of nostalgia: restorative and reflective (Boym 2001). Those women who stayed in Spain emphasised and used restorative nostalgia, which:

> 'Stresses *nostos* and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home' (Boym 2001 p. xviii).

The women who moved to Spain and chose to stay there fulfilled the quest and regained what for them had been lost: community. This was constructed through their narratives as belonging to Spain (it was like England was in the past), the networks there (people and social interaction were like they used to be) and an ethnic identity which was more English than British. They rejected the UK in the present and the Government's vision of a multi-cultural society.

The UK Government's use of restorative nostalgia is evidenced in their promotion of community as the cure for society's ills by attempting to recover what has been lost. However it is useful to acknowledge that:

> 'Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition'.
> (Boym 2001 p. xviii).

This applied to women who stayed in Spain, they had recovered what for them was lost in the UK and community was presented as a reward for their pragmatic agency. I suggested above that the UK Home Office has a rather positivistic approach to community and has introduced a number of indicators to measure the extent to which it 'exists' and this too can be understood as restorative nostalgia. Reflective nostalgia on the other hand, 'thrives in *algia, the longing itself'* (Boym 2001 p. xviii). Those women who voyaged to Spain and planned to return to the UK were in an ambivalent position. They felt the need to set out on the quest but found that certain monsters and obstacles could not be overcome (see Chapters Five to Seven). Voyage and return had a less tidy ending embedded in the plot since it was effectively a failed quest. The reasons for leaving the UK did not disappear, but living in Spain did not live up to their expectations. Like community, reflective and restorative nostalgia are both symbolic and utilitarian. Community can be understood as being ephemeral and intangible in terms of reflective nostalgia, and as pragmatic and tangible as restorative nostalgia.

The use made of nostalgia and community by both groups of women and the UK Government illustrates the ongoing complexity of what is 'home' and what constitutes 'away'. 'Home' can be unfamiliar or uncanny as it was the experience that initially precipitated the quest for the women in Spain. 'Away' can embody home, belonging and community and be familiar for some, while simultaneously being unfamiliar for others. It can also be constructed as embodying both. I conclude by reiterating that community has significant enduring relevance because of nostalgia. Home is constructed as the place where people want to be rather than a place that embodies certain properties. Studying this small new community created through migration illuminates that

home is pragmatic, flexible and mutable and raises questions about how home should be interpreted in the UK context. Further, transnationalism also relates to home and away (Gustafon 2007) in relation to constructions of belonging to place, to relationships or networks and ethnic identities that refer to both sending and receiving countries.

This use of community as a panacea for society's ills encapsulates all three representations that I have focussed on throughout this thesis and also looks to the past to solve problems in the present, so here representing a rejection of modernity. In this way, restorative nostalgia could be understood as community regained. My small study in Spain or 'away', has the capacity to contribute to understanding the context at 'home'. The nostalgic meta-narrative of the UK Government constructs community as a vehicle to cure society whose malaise is modernity. Women who moved to Spain rejected the Government's vision since their belonging to the UK, their views and experiences of social networks and Britishness was experienced as compromised. Further, Government policy in the UK is focussed on the UK as 'home' and does not take into account 'away' for immigrant groups.

Homesickness – the yearning of a lost home or a lost past - is the pain felt by someone 'away' from 'home' or what is familiar. Home can therefore be a place, a time or both and nostalgia links these. Nostos, the return home can be understood as a return back in time to another time. Nostos can be achieved in a different place or a different time. In this way return denotes going back in time as well as travelling across space. Algia is the longing the pain, for another past (time) as well as a lost place. Nostalgia is a manifestation, reflection and symptom of modernity or the teleology of progress (Boym 2001). This was particularly important for women in my study since they were on the margins, and felt acutely marginalised in the UK. It is ironic however, that this marginalisation in Spain allowed nostalgic reconstructions of belonging to place, networks and ethnic group. Nostalgia provides familiarity and safety in an unfamiliar social world which is changing rapidly. It represents an antidote to modernity and social change. We cannot halt modernity but we can preserve or halt our position and relationship to the

social world through nostalgia. The past is idealised and brought into the present through narrative which both reflects and constructs it. Nostalgia therefore represents a significant part of how community is constructed and presented. Narrative constructions of belonging therefore can be understood to represent the degree of intimacy with the world. However, in spite of nostalgia's centrality to my analysis, like community, it remains an elusive, ephemeral and contested concept since:

> 'Nostalgia is akin to unrequited love, only we are not sure about the identity of our lost beloved'
> (Boym 2001 p. 274).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – information for research participants

I am a PhD student from the University of Salford carrying out research in Costa Blanca.

As you are probably aware, over the last few years there have been large numbers of British people retiring to the Spanish coasts and the area where you live is a very good example of this. The purpose of my research is to examine the reasons why people choose to live in Spain and find out how they feel about their new home.

I'm interested in finding out people's reasons for moving and what social contacts have been left behind as well as those that have been developed in Spain. I'd also like to know what prompted the move here and what the consequences of moving away from England are.

I plan to carry out between 15 and 20 interviews with women who have moved from the UK and who are currently living in Spain. I expect that each interview should last approximately one and a half hours and that you won't be exposed to any risks through your participation in the research. We can do the interviews where you choose by prior arrangement. Each interview will be recorded and subsequently transcribed but your identity will not be revealed, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research

Anya Ahmed

Consent Form

I confirm that I have read the information sheet and agree to be interviewed as part of Anya Ahmed's research.

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any stage of the work and that Anya Ahmed (the researcher) will protect my confidentiality. On completion / publication of the research my identity will be protected and my anonymity guaranteed.

Signed…………………………………………….

Date…………………………………………….

Appendix 3 – map of Spain

Appendix 4 – map of Southern Spain (Costa Blanca)

Appendix 5: Topics for discussion with research participants

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself and how you came to live in Spain
2. What did you / your partner do in England
3. what about children
4. where were you born / did you live before moving to Spain
5. what social contacts do you have in Spain
6. what was it like in England? Any different
7. what important social contacts have you left behind in England
8. do you speak Spanish / intend to learn
9. do you mix with locals
10. are you involved in any community activities
11. were you in England
12. what did you think your retirement would be like in England? How does it differ here
13. what do you like / dislike about living in Spain
14. where do you see your sense of place / belonging
15. what made you decide to move here? What was it like when you first got here
16. where would you go if you needed help
17. where would you go in England
18. what do you think about community
19. do you feel part of one? Did you in England
20. are there any constraints involved in being part of a community
21. is living in Spain what you expected?