Messy Multiculturalism

A critical conversation about state multiculturalism and

the lived everyday experiences of cultural diversity

in Aotearoa New Zealand.

By

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To my sons Zeke and Zion

"Recognizing, imagining, Relation. Yet another undertaking, thoroughly disguised, of universalizing generalization? Escape, the problems at our heels? No imagination helps avert destitution in reality, none can oppose oppressions or sustain those who 'withstand' in body or spirit. But imagination changes mentalities, however slowly it may go about this."

— Edouard Glissant

Abstract

This thesis provides an ethnographic study of multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand, which investigates the tensions between government-led stories about social harmony and tolerance and the stories told by members of multicultural communities. Examining multiculturalism from an ethnographic perspective means attempting to understand this concept through the fragmented, multiform, non-systematic, evocative and constantly changing reality of social life and everyday human interactions. Essentially, this means exploring the sometimes 'messy' experiences of multiculturalism.

The thesis is based on a narrative approach to ethnographic fieldwork, which involves the application of auto-ethnography, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis as different avenues for story collection and analysis. I position myself as an academic listener, who makes sense of stories about multiculturalism by placing them alongside other types of stories and organising them through life-story and discourse analysis approaches. Through extensive Wellington-based fieldwork with grassroots organisations, everyday diversity experts, and multicultural activists, as well as discourse analysis of various forms of government publications and materials (i.e. conference speeches, booklets, reports, guidelines and photos), I gather evidence that reveals the complexities of multicultural identities when contrasted with government discourses of multiculturalism. I assemble and analyse two sets of stories – those told by government officials and representatives and those that emerge from the messy landscape of everyday life and grassroots multicultural movements. The key aim of this thesis is to stage a conversation between these different narrative terrains and shine a light on the disjunctive moments between government narratives about cultural diversity and the experiences, needs and aspirations of people who live multicultural lives and who engage in grassroots activism.

In analysing the evidence, this thesis reveals the complex ways in which people that live multicultural lives experience cultural belonging, and documents how they deploy strategic and creative techniques to navigate government-based forms of multiculturalism. My findings suggest that stories told from those who are a part of Aotearoa's culturally diverse communities pose challenges to the official and government led image of New Zealand as a

harmonious, tolerant and welcoming nation. By applying a narrative approach to the exploration of information distributed by the government, I demonstrate how this kind of information is discursively constructed and contributes to a larger storytelling project in which state information works to craft a particular image of the nation.

In the conversation that is staged throughout the thesis, it is argued that the government appears to support a weak version of multiculturalism, which only allows a tokenistic inclusion of ethnic minorities. The kind of multiculturalism which is aspired to from the ground – that is, by the everyday diversity experts and grassroots activists I interviewed during fieldwork – imagines a stronger version of multiculturalism. This version includes more radical forms of inclusion such as ethnic minorities being involved in decision making processes and being fairly represented in governing/public spaces, such as government agencies, local councils, school boards, law enforcement, legal institutions, and so on.

Overall, this thesis contributes site specific and narrative-informed knowledge about the meaning of multiculturalism in New Zealand. It illustrates some of the factors that the government and policy makers need to be mindful of when they approach a multicultural population and matters of governance. It also exemplifies the kind of conversation topics and issues that are important and necessary to address in a multicultural settler society, when reflecting on how we understand and express the histories of cultural diversity and aspirations for a multicultural future.

Acknowledgments

A PhD candidature is a solemn endeavour. It is a scholarly task, which is conducted and completed by one person alone, yet, the research journey and knowledge produced from it reflect a collective outcome of many minds, thoughts, ideas, and stories. Research is relational and there is no way I would have been able to accomplish this project without the input, help, support, encouragement, and knowledge from a community of people.

Foremost, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the interview participants and the various organisations I have engaged with throughout my fieldwork. Thank you, Carina, Marieke, Michelle, Alex, Hayden, Hine, Pinaman, Father Ron, Hollie, and Giselle, for giving me the opportunity to talk to you. Also, thank you to Tahu Kukutai, Paul Callister, and Joris De Bres, for taking the time to speak to me. A big thank you to the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils (Multicultural New Zealand) and Upper Hutt Multicultural Council. Without all your input, stories, and willingness to let me enter your worlds, this research would be missing its richness and empirical depth.

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A note on the use of Māori words

Many Māori words are in common usage in New Zealand English. Where they are not translated in the text, the reader is referred to a footnote to explain the further meaning of a word or a concept. Translations are my own in line with published dictionaries, e.g. the *Māori Dictionary online* and *The Raupo Dictionary of Modern Māori* by P.M. Ryan (2012).

Abbreviations

ASTR – Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga

MAVTW – Men Against Violence Towards Women

MELAA – Middle Eastern, Latin American and African

NGO – Non-Government Organisation

NZFMC – The New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils

OEC – Office of Ethnic Communities

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

SSPG – Strategic Social Policy Group

UHMC – Upper Hutt Multicultural Council

UNESCO – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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Chapter one

Introduction – multiculturalism, stories and disjuncture

This thesis examines the concept of multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand from an ethnographic perspective. In this thesis, multiculturalism is primarily understood as a political project involving individual and collective ethnic identities, who struggle for recognition and social justice within the confines of state-based forms of multiculturalism. As will be elaborated in the following sections, I address the concept of multiculturalism with a focus on what is typically described as the limits of a 'politics of recognition': an exploration of how public institutions of liberal democratic governments make room for, and recognise, ethnic minorities (Mishra 2012; Taylor 1992). I demonstrate that in New Zealand, the term multiculturalism has an ambivalent position in political as well as scholarly debates. New Zealand is demographically a multicultural society, however, multiculturalism as a political idea (manifested through, for example, state implementation of equity policies promoting equal recognition and inclusion of different minority languages, religious beliefs and cultural traditions) is typically seen to clash with the idea of New Zealand as a bicultural nation (i.e. having or combining the cultural attitudes and customs of Māori and Pākehā peoples), and the government's commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and recognition of Māori as the indigenous people (Hill 2010; Spoonley and Peace 2012).

This is revealed in my fieldwork, as the word 'multiculturalism' is never explicitly mentioned in any of the government-related evidence I gathered, even though issues related to state responses to cultural diversity and recognition of minority groups are frequently discussed by government officials and policymakers. The government predominantly uses the phrase 'cultural diversity' and will say 'government responses to cultural diversity', instead of directly using the term 'multiculturalism'. As will be made apparent throughout this thesis, I have often had to choose different wording to describe processes and politics, which in my understanding fall under the term multiculturalism, but cannot be described by this term because officially New Zealand does not recognise them as such. This choice of words reflects the ambivalent position of studying multiculturalism in a settler-nation context,

which is demographically multicultural but is governmentally shaped by the framework for biculturalism.

A diverse range of scholars have written about the conceptualisation of multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand and have contributed to the field rich, nuanced and critical knowledge about the meaning of multiculturalism in the context of a settler nation (see for example Butt 2005; Fleras and Spoonley 1999; Hill 2010; Hill and Bönisch-Brednich 2009; Lowe 2015; May 2004; Rata 2005; Singham 2006; Smith 2007; Smith 2011; Spoonley 2015, 2016; Spoonley and Peace 2012; Spoonley and Tolley 2012). But there is a tendency in the existing literature to discuss multiculturalism in New Zealand at an abstract level and primarily relate it to conversations about how multicultural policies and models of governance fit into or challenge a bicultural framework. In other words, it appears there is a need for research on multiculturalism which examines the topic from 'on the ground' and that seeks to address the conversation about biculturalism and multiculturalism from lived experience. Accordingly, this ethnographic study of multiculturalism approaches the concept from a narrative perspective; exploring the stories people tell about their experiences of multiculturalism in everyday situations and within grassroots movements. It also utilises ethnographic methodology, such as participant observation, interviewing and auto-ethnography to explore state governed narratives of multiculturalism in New Zealand. Exploring multiculturalism ethnographically requires an understanding of the concept through the untidy, multi-layered and constantly moving reality of social life. It means, in other words, to understand a 'messy' form of multiculturalism, which is what I take as a starting point in my thesis title.

Research with this kind of focus is underrepresented in the field of multiculturalism in New Zealand. Similarly, from looking at the literature on multiculturalism internationally, it is clear that this field has been dominated by political and social scientists whose interests lie primarily in the theoretical implications of multicultural forms of governance, citizenship and nationhood (Semi et al 2009; Vertovec 2007a; Wise 2009). Historically, there has been friction between the field of anthropology and multiculturalism due to the way the concept of 'culture' was commonly defined and discussed in debates about multiculturalism (Eriksen 2015; Vered 1995). Considerations about multiculturalism traditionally presupposed cultures as uniform and bounded, and this notion of the concept remains in widespread use

in policy and government settings related to cultural recognition and minority rights (Eriksen 2015; Turner 1993). However, the idea of culture has been heavily critiqued and transformed within the discipline of anthropology (now endorsing a more ambiguous, fluid and intersectional understanding of culture), which is what appears to have caused the friction between the two fields (Eriksen 2015). Moreover, the majority of debates on multiculturalism, academic as well as non-academic, involve explicit normative reflections (and in some instances theorisation) regarding political change and alternative solutions for multicultural governance and citizenship. From an anthropological perspective, which typically privileges methodological principles of cultural relativism and a noncommitted and comparative analytical gaze, such normative reflections can seem problematic (Eriksen 2015; Turner 1993). For these reasons, primarily, anthropologists and ethnographers have been hesitant to engage with the topic of multiculturalism (Fontefrancesco 2012; Turner 1993). While current research on multiculturalism by prominent anthropologists and ethnographers shows things have somewhat changed and that the hesitation towards multiculturalism has perhaps faded (see for example Glick Schiller 1997, 2011; Hage 2000; Povinelli 2002; Vertovec 2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2019; Wali 2001), it still seems that ethnographic and anthropological perspectives are underrepresented in the literature on multiculturalism. Therefore, this thesis seeks to contribute to this gap in the literature and is part of an evolving scholarly trend within the anthropology of multiculturalism, which aims to apply an ethnographic lens to the lived reality and political aspirations of diverse societies.

From an ethnographic perspective, we (scholars) avoid considering culture as something pre-social, fixed and essential, that determines who people are and what they aspire to be. Instead, culture and identity are considered as situated processes - the result of encounters and conflicts taking place in contexts characterised by an asymmetrical distribution of resources and power (Wise and Velayutham 2009). Anthropologists also consider how culture and identity constitute necessary processes in terms of attributing meaning to social reality, explaining collective experiences of belonging and navigating spaces of cultural politics (Wise and Velayutham 2009). Ethnographic perspectives on multiculturalism provide a particular situated and process-based knowledge about multiculturalism; knowledge which shines light upon the mess of multicultural living and the complexities of politics as

they are played out in everyday life in multicultural societies. This kind of knowledge is important, because it sidesteps debates about culture as something uniform and bounded, and favours more nuanced and open debate about the topic, thus avoiding the temptation to reify actions, relations and categories integral to the social world we as humans inhabit. I argue that ethnographic and grounded knowledge about multicultural lives is important when considering government responses to issues of cultural diversity.

The research aim

Rather than a research question, this thesis project is guided by a specific research aim. The aim is to stage a conversation between two sets of stories about multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. One set of stories is attached to government discourses related to cultural diversity and a multicultural society. I gather a wide range of government-related information about cultural diversity and state responses to a multicultural population, circulated through, for example, public speeches, pamphlets, booklets, policy reports and social media posts (the data used is from 2014 to 2016). I elaborate how a particular narrative about cultural diversity appears to take shape across this diverse set of data. The other set of stories are those told by people who live multicultural lives and who are engaged in community activism associated with diversity issues, such as settlement, minority mobilisation and cultural recognition. I explore how these grassroots stories reveal information about the lived experiences of a messy form of multiculturalism, and how these are sometimes at odds with government stories about multiculturalism. This exploration focuses on the political dimension of multiculturalism; thus, it explores mainly processes of multicultural identification, group-based struggle for recognition and government responses to cultural diversity and ethnic minorities.

The goal of staging a conversation between these two narrative terrains is to create an analytical space that allows for an exploration of how situated and everyday accounts of multiculturalism can help to understand how wider discourses, structures of diversity governance, and cultural politics filter through to the realm of everyday practice, exchange and meaning-making (Wise 2009; Wise and Velayutham 2009). Part of this goal is also to be able to explore and illuminate how the knowledge, skills and expertise that are generated at

the community level, can contribute to wider political debates about multicultural governance, citizenship and justice.

At the heart of this thesis, and the conversation it stages, is the aim to critically disrupt the prevailing image of New Zealand as a harmonious and welcoming multicultural country, a story which is promoted by government and used to position New Zealand's approach to cultural diversity as a unique and positive model. This thesis provides ethnographic evidence that challenges this story and tests it against knowledge about the lived experiences of multiculturalism. Bringing government information and stories into contact with stories from the grassroots and exploring the moments of disjuncture between these two narrative terrains, reveals that there are fundamental gaps and problematic blind spots in the government approaches to cultural diversity.

In the sections that follow, I will explain what motivated me to study multiculturalism and how I understand the concept of multiculturalism. I then move on to explain how I came to be interested in stories, and the interface between government and grassroots ways of understanding and describing cultural diversity and multiculturalism. Towards the end of the chapter, I include a section introducing the particular settler nation context in which this research takes place. I then outline the theoretical arguments which guide my approach to fieldwork and analysis. The final section of the chapter provides an overview of each chapter included in the thesis.

Why multiculturalism? How I understand the concept

When talking to people about my research on multiculturalism I found that while most people were eager to talk about this topic, they sometimes had a very different view and understanding of multiculturalism than I did. Some would begin to tell me stories about their family history and experiences of travelling; others would start to talk about immigration and minority communities; and some would initiate abstract conversations about racism, globalisation, national identity, and citizenship. I found that multiculturalism, the noun, was understood by many as a synonym for multicultural, the adjective, and thus associated primarily with a demographic transformation. It is obvious that the topic multiculturalism within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand creates confusion due to the

concept's ambivalent position within a nation that recognises itself as bicultural. In short, conversations about multiculturalism tend to be a bit messy.

I am aware that most overarching 'isms' like multiculturalism have a tendency to be conceptually vague and hard to explain in a simple straightforward manner. As an umbrella term, multiculturalism describes a large and complex field of sub-topics, concepts, and issues. Nevertheless, the diverging understandings of multiculturalism reveal something important about the concept. It signals the messy and multifaceted characteristic of multiculturalism. As I searched through the scholarly literature on multiculturalism, a whole array of different forms of multiculturalism appeared; for instance, everyday multiculturalism, liberal multiculturalism, critical multiculturalism, postcolonial multiculturalism, communitarian multiculturalism, and educational multiculturalism. Scholars also distinguish between different kinds of multiculturalism; e.g. Australian multiculturalism, Canadian multiculturalism, French multiculturalism, and so forth (Eriksen 2015; Mishra 2012). Multiculturalism is a slippery term, which is highly dependent on the context in which it is rooted and the theoretical framework it is defined through. Duncan Ivison (2010), for example, argues multiculturalism cannot be secured in any one meaning as it has no one original theory or field attached to it.

Though no fixed or singular definition of multiculturalism is available, it is, however, possible to explain more concretely how I frame the concept in the context of this thesis. I find Ivison's (2010) description of multiculturalism helpful. He identifies three main fields of inquiry, which are typically associated with multiculturalism. *Firstly*, multiculturalism describes a demographic phenomenon relating to the societal changes caused by increased migration (immigration as well as emigration), cultural diversity and intercultural interaction. *Secondly*, multiculturalism describes the political project and set of practices, which developed in response to the demographic changes of cultural diversity both at the level of state and on the ground in terms of a grassroots movement. And, *thirdly,* multiculturalism describes the philosophical and ethical debates about the theoretical transformation of concepts like citizenship, cultural identity, nation, society and justice in a multicultural world. While recognising that these three fields of inquiry are interdependent and cannot be explained separately, this thesis focuses primarily on the second field of inquiry. I chose this particular focus because of a personal passion and interest in the

political frameworks that guide governing practices and policies in multicultural societies. My choice is also driven by the view that research about how different cultures live together within a single nation-state society, is highly relevant in a time where increased immigration and diversity seems to cause social tensions and cultural marginalisation. I am, as mentioned, also interested in normative questions related to social justice and movement for change in a multicultural context. Thus, much of the thesis involves research associated with the third of Ivison's field (these types of reflections are for example a central part of the conclusion).

To elaborate further on how I approach multiculturalism and why I look at the term first and foremost as a political project, I want to share my personal story. This story also works as an ethnographic anchor of the thesis introduction and helps to illustrate the kind of narratives that have been essential in shaping, not only the particular focus on the political aspects of multiculturalism, but also the particular interest in ethnographic research and a focus on stories and the lived experiences of multiculturalism.

I was born and raised in Denmark. I speak Danish, I am a Danish citizen and although I now live overseas, I think of myself as Danish. I met my ex-husband, the father of my two children, in New Zealand when I travelled there as a tourist in my early twenties. After living in New Zealand together for a year, we decided to move to Denmark. My partner arrived in Denmark on a working holiday visa, which gave him permission to work and live in Denmark for a one-year period. After this year ended, we struggled to get permission for him to continue living in the country, despite the fact that he was married and had children with a Danish citizen. A few years prior to our arrival, the Danish government had passed the twenty-four-year rule, which is a rule enforcing regulations in the area of family reunification. The twenty-four-year rule declared that any Danish citizen marrying a non-European citizen should be over the age of twenty-four if wishing to live with his/her spouse in Denmark. Moreover, it was required that a Danish citizen marrying a non-European citizen must prove stronger ties to Denmark than any other country if wishing to get their non-European partner residency through family reunification.[1] As I was born in Denmark and resided there permanently until the age of twenty, I passed this requirement for

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[1] The quality of a person's ties to Denmark would be measured by the number of years the Danish citizen had lived in and been actively committed to Danish society.

belonging. Yet my husband and I were only twenty-three years of age at the time and thus didn't meet the age requirement. We had to leave Denmark if we wanted to stay together as a family; however, with a newborn baby, study, work commitments and not much money, it was extremely difficult to leave. Nonetheless, we left, and after a year, spending time in New Zealand and England, we moved back to Denmark.

However, we soon found out that just because we had passed the age requirement, this did not mean things would get any easier. We now had to pay a 60,000 Danish kroner deposit (roughly converts to 11,000 New Zealand dollars) to prove our financial independence, which would then be held in guarantee by the government for seven years. In addition, we had to fulfil a list of criteria in relation to marital status, household and living arrangements, employment, financial independence, social status and active engagement in Danish society. During that time we also dealt with an unbearably long and complicated application process and degrading experiences at the immigration office. I spent countless hours on the phone and in the immigration office, attempting to speak with our caseworker to get updates on our application status, only to find out a new caseworker had (once again) been assigned to our application and therefore no one was able to provide any further information. "We just had to wait", they told us time and again. We waited nearly eighteen months to get the final answer on my husband's residency application. During this time my husband was not allowed to work, study or do any other activities (such as enroll at a language school or register with the doctor). He simply had to wait for a verdict on his status. For the time being, we were solely depending on one income. While my husband was finally granted a residency permit, this was only a brief sense of victory and security, as residency permits in Denmark are valid for only two years. In Denmark, permanent residency can only be gained after eight years of legal residency. Thus, every two years you are required to reapply, and your situation and status are re-evaluated in accordance with current immigration rules and regulations. And so, our battle continued.

My partner and my personal experiences with immigration reflected the wider political and public perception towards multiculturalism and cultural diversity in Denmark, which is generally negative. In a pre-election TV interview in 2015, it was publicly stated by both head candidates running for prime minister (one from the centre-left party, called Social Demokraterne, and the other from the centre-right party, called Venstre) that Denmark is

not a multicultural society. It was added by Lars Løkke Rasmussen (the candidate who won and became prime minister up until 2018) in the same interview that, "we are in danger of becoming one [a multicultural society] if we do not pull our act together" (Sinclair 2015). At the 2015 election the right-wing nationalistic party Dansk Folkeparti (Danish Peoples Party/DPP), who campaigned with slogans like 'Give us back Denmark' and 'Our Denmark – there is much we need to protect', became the party with the largest voting increase, winning twenty-one per cent of the total votes, which was an eight per cent increase from the previous election. While Denmark might be internationally known for its advanced approach to social welfare, education and architecture, the Danish approach to immigration and cultural diversity have caused concerns internationally.

Various European and international organisations have frequently complained and made critical remarks about the Danish immigration system (Bowly 2011). For example, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has accused Denmark of violating its long tradition of providing sanctuary to those in need (The Local 2016). It was stated, "The signal Denmark's introduction of restrictions sends to other countries in the world…is worrisome and could fuel fear, xenophobia and similar restrictions that would reduce – rather than expand – the asylum space globally and put refugees in need at life-threatening risks" (The Local 2016). The Danish approach to immigration and cultural diversity reflects clearly the populist and right-wing ideology, which has infiltrated and gained significant traction in Denmark and most European countries (Gilroy 2004; Modood 1997). Such ideology promotes a protective and ethnocentric nationalism, which works to limit immigration and explicitly stand against the idea of multiculturalism and humanitarian responses to migrants and minority cultures.

In Demark, I experienced first-hand the exclusionary forces of right-wing ideology. My family's struggle with immigration rules reveals the challenges of social justice for immigrants and minority members who are trying to become part of society. Immigration significantly limited our ability to live safely and freely because we were a multicultural family. As a migrant in Denmark, you can never feel secure about your residency status. You are forced to live with a basic sense of uncertainty, lack of predictability and with no rights to protect you from varying political agendas. Not only are the immigration laws extremely strict and exclusive, but they are also constantly changing. No matter how close you (as a

migrant) study and try to follow the rules and regulations, you never seem to get ahead. Residency and citizenship regulations have a very clear exclusionary purpose; they manifest the boundaries of the nation-state and let us know very firmly 'what kind' of citizen is welcome and which kind is not. I have witnessed how close friends and relatives from non-European countries, who have lived in Denmark for years and fulfilled all the declared immigration requirements, have *still* been denied permanent residency. Every time the laws and policies change, they seem to tighten, and every time you and your family's livelihood and future prospects are affected. And so, my interest in multiculturalism grew from these personal experiences of having to deal with the precarious system of Danish immigration regulation, and from observing the damaging effects such a system has on people and communities. Seeing a society like Denmark regressively closing in on itself – becoming more and more exclusive, discriminatory and hostile towards outsiders – made me aware of the importance of exploring alternative notions of society and responses to diversity. Multiculturalism was to me a concept that emphasised such exploration.

In its political form, multiculturalism is often associated with the liberal project of state facilitated promotion of equal recognition and tolerance towards cultural diversity (Malik 2013). This project, however, has been heavily critiqued, particularly by post-colonial and indigenous researchers, who have argued that state multiculturalism based on principles of recognition and tolerance is superficial; allowing only a tokenistic inclusion of marginalised cultures and reinforcing the dominant status of the majority culture (see Bhabha 1998; Chari 2004; Coulthard 2007; Gilroy 2005; Gunew 2004; Hage 2000). Nevertheless, multiculturalism understood as a broader political project remains an important conceptual framework for exploring the relationships between majority and minority cultures, the dynamics of cultural politics and state recognition, as well as theorising plural forms of governance, citizenship, and society (see May and Sleeter 2010; Mookherjee 2010; Vertovec 2010; Werbner and Modood 2015). Particularly, ideas of recognition and group identity (cultural identity) are extensively explored within the political dimension of multiculturalism – these two concepts, and the politics surrounding them, seem to be centrepieces of most conversations about state and policy responses to cultural diversity and minority inclusion in western societies. Therefore, making this concept a necessary tool of this research project, as the analysis developed in this thesis is also centred on processes of recognition and

cultural identification (individual and group-based). As discussed earlier, this thesis is specifically speaking about issues related to the politics of recognition, which is understood as the politics that surrounds multicultural lobbying, anti-racist movements, ethnic mobilisation, and state responses to minority claims for recognition, equal rights and protection from racists and discriminatory structures. Ivison (2010, 1) identifies a 'multicultural turn', which he explains in the following manner;

> One thing the 'multicultural turn' in political theory has done is to put cultural and ethnic diversity at the centre of contemporary debates. It broke up the explicit (and often implicit) monoculturalism at the heart of many of the dominant ways of conceiving of modern statehood and citizenship. It brought to the fore various occluded aspects of the way nation-building often presumed a cultural uniformity that legitimated harmful modes of assimilation or was indifferent to the aspirations of minorities.

In this thesis multiculturalism is understood as an idea that involves the kind of "turn" Ivison is describing in the quote above. Multiculturalism is viewed as an idea that rejects earlier models of unitary and culturally homogenous nation-state societies and seeks to address public recognition of a many-cultured notion of society (Kymlicka 2007; Werbner and Modood 1997). It is an idea that brings attention to, for example, assimilating and ethno-centric aspects of nation-building processes and the structures of governance. It is also an idea that promotes a genuine and strong commitment (the opposite of indifference) to the aspirations of minorities. To summarise, this thesis treats multiculturalism as a political and social justice issue to do with how we live together differently in a more just and peaceful manner.

Why stories and a focus on disjuncture?

My interest in stories and a narrative approach to the study of multiculturalism is also linked to personal experiences of cultural diversity and immigration within Aotearoa New Zealand. In 2012, I migrated from Denmark to New Zealand with my family. We were attracted to the image of New Zealand as a friendly and tolerant multicultural society, and having lived in the country before, I knew the immigration rules were less discriminatory than in Denmark. And, at first, New Zealand did feel almost like a multicultural heaven in comparison to Denmark. I was granted residency within the first six months of being in the country through family reunification with my partner as a New Zealand citizen. And my sons were granted

New Zealand citizenship through their father, also within just six months of us arriving in the country. The ability to gain residency and live legally together as a multicultural family made us feel welcomed and accepted as newcomers. It was also positive to hear government officials proudly pronounce New Zealand as one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse societies in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). New Zealand's reputation as a country with harmonious race relations and a friendly attitude towards immigrants and people from other cultures appeared to be a core part of the way the country is represented officially by the government (Fleras and Spoonley 1999).[2] It was exciting to be living in a country which seemed to approach cultural diversity in a much less hostile manner and I was curious to know how and why things seemed better here.

From a personal (as well as scholarly) interest in this question, I got involved with the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Council (NZFMC) and the Upper Hutt Multicultural Council (UHMC) on a volunteer basis. I found these two non-government organisations (NGO) interesting because their advocacy work was guided by the vision of creating a multicultural society where people of different cultures and beliefs live safely and in harmony. Moreover, both organisations were focusing on supporting migrants and minority communities. I was also just eager to talk to people about their experiences of living in New Zealand and their views, thoughts and aspirations in relation to multiculturalism. Whether through my volunteer work or in random everyday situations, I would ask people I met about their life history and views of multiculturalism in New Zealand. I talked to new migrants, refugees, and local residents of different ethnicities, and it was fascinating to listen to all of these stories. They did not give any clear answers to the question I was interested in, but they presented rich insight about the complex and interdependent reality of multicultural living.

Most people I spoke to were like me, attracted to New Zealand and its image as a friendly multicultural nation, and most people also talked about ethnic diversity as a strength to society and as something to be proud of. Most migrants I spoke to also seemed to share the

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[2] We saw this image scrutinised when the Christchurch mosque shootings happened on the fifteenth of March 2019. After this event, it became clear that there are gaps in the positive image of New Zealand as a country doing exceptionally well in terms of responding to cultural diversity. I believe this event demonstrates clearly why it is important to disrupt government narratives about cultural diversity and also why it is important that we engage in normative conversations about how we, in the best way possible, can live together in a just and peaceful manner.

impression that New Zealand was doing better than wherever they had come from. However, the longer I stayed in the country, the more I learnt from the multicultural councils, and the more I spoke to people about their experiences of being different in New Zealand, I began to see and hear things which disrupted the dominant narrative of the country as an immigrant-friendly and tolerant nation with harmonious race relations. Often stories from immigrant and members of minority cultures provided information, which was not so positive and didn't quite match the claim of racial harmony.

Hollie,[3] a friend of mine, for example, said to me: *"I used to think the more diverse we became, the more people would begin to understand and accept difference. But then I was like; is that so? Because as I see it, we have lots of different cultures already, who have been here for a long time, but we are still racists. It is still one culture that is dominant – Pākeha culture"*. Hollie and I studied together, and Hollie is a person who both personally and academically has a deep understanding of issues faced by marginalised communities.[4] She further stated in relation to the issue of racism:

> *I think the worst thing is when people compare New Zealand to America and go; 'we are WAAY better than America and there is no racism in New Zealand'. Then I am like; really! No racism?! Some people think we have nothing going on in New Zealand in terms of race problems. Where I am like; we might not be shooting Māori and brown people every day, you know, but we still got them living in bad houses, under poor conditions and with way fewer life opportunities than the rest of the population*.

Another friend, Hine, who I know through work, said: *"The government might think: 'oh yeah, we are good, we are being multicultural. They ticked the box, you know. But really it's tokenistic…it's bull shit"*. Hine has a degree in education and has worked as a primary school teacher. Her experiences as a teacher are shared in the following observations:

> *You know, I have worked at a couple of schools now and when ERO (Education Review Office) come to visit the schools and review their practices, and then all of a sudden the school cares about Māori. They go; 'let's do Maui and the sun, and let's put the Māori paintings up this week, and we should do a pōwhiri at assembly'. These are all well-intended actions, but that's it! There is no **real** knowledge*

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[3] All participants are introduced in appendix one. Some have chosen to use a pseudonym and others have provided consent to use their real names.
[4] Hollie did her master's degree in cultural anthropology, where she researched identity and cultural belonging. See her thesis: Russell, Hollie F. 2015. "Ngā Whare Rau O Te Tahinga: Rakaipaakatanga and Post-Settlement Futures." MA Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.

incorporated. No Māori principles included and no attempt to really understand the indigenous language and way of life. The kids never understood the concepts; they didn't understand the epistemologies, the narratives, the stories, and the spirituality behind all of this. They didn't get a holistic view. And it is not just because they are Pākehā, it is that they haven't bothered to let go and open up to a wider understanding. To see more than just the small parts…the surface. You can do good things, you can have good intentions, but if you don't try to understand the differences, your actions come across as tokenistic.

In relation to this comment, another friend Michelle, who moved to New Zealand from Israel and now works as a Hebrew interpreter, and who was present for this conversation, added:

The result of what is happening at the moment [in relation to current diversity policies] is so much tokenism. There are SO many little programmes, where resources are being split into miniscule initiatives, fostering all sorts of ineffective outcomes. Like, for example, learn a Māori word a day or a word per week … that's rubbish. Are you kidding me?! How is this an effective way of teaching a language to someone? Why are there no suggestions of an official law of bilingualism or multilingualism? Where is the urgency? Because 'one word a day' is not going to solve anything!

Comments like these illustrate the kind of stories I heard throughout this research project, which painted a different picture to government stories about a multicultural society and the quality of the government's responses to cultural diversity. The people I spoke to (many who later became my interview participants) would typically bring attention to experiences of racism, tokenism, and disingenuous practices of reconciliation and bicultural policies. These types of negative experiences were not mentioned in the official government stories and they made me suspect that there is a disconnect between these stories and the lived experiences of multicultural Aotearoa New Zealand. While no one was talking about experiencing the same overt and protective right-wing nationalism, in the way I had experienced in Denmark, most of the people I spoke to were generally very critical about the positive story the government tells about itself and the country as a multicultural nation. Many felt a degree of hypocrisy surrounding the benevolent image of New Zealand as a tolerant and friendly nation. As, for example, Marieke, a friend of mine, explained so clearly:

I really think if they [the government] want to promote New Zealand as like a multicultural and ethnic diverse society, then they need to take responsibility for actually contributing to that being successful in reality as well. I do feel like discrimination is such a huge thing here still, it has obviously not gone away. We have got a long way to go before it [diversity] is actually accepted.

From these less positive stories, crafted by people from their everyday experiences of living in a multicultural society, I became interested in exploring multiculturalism ethnographically and through a narrative approach. Looking at stories seemed like a productive way to gain access to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of a messy and everyday form of multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. Stories crafted from the ground draw attention to some of the occluded aspects of life in a multicultural society that is pointed out in Ivison's (2010) quote above, and they address the points of disjuncture that are felt when encountering government discourses regarding cultural diversity and responses to a multicultural population. Looking at stories and utilising narrative analysis also seemed like an interesting way to critically engage with the positive reputation of New Zealand as a harmonious and tolerant nation and the implications such an image has on the way it is possible to imagine and talk about multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism in a settler-nation context

To understand the stories told about multiculturalism in New Zealand it is important to provide some overall information about a settler-nation context and the specific ways this context shapes the meaning of multiculturalism. New Zealand society has been impacted and transformed by immigration and cultural diversity for centuries. The colonial migration of British and other European settlers to New Zealand, during the eighteen century, radically transformed the social and demographic structures of the indigenous population. Māori were, as Tahu Kukutai (2017) explains, demographically swamped by intensified migration from the United Kingdom (and experienced increased mortality as a consequence of exposure to introduced disease). In 1840 the ratio of Pākehā to Māori was about one to forty and after 1874 Māori were less than one-tenth of the national population (Kukutai 2017, 29). These early experiences of immigration and colonial encounters meant that

Māori went from being a sovereign majority to a disempowered minority. Kukutai (2017, 28) clearly describes the implications of this transformation;

> …Māori experiences with immigration have been fraught. The deleterious consequences of colonisation were far-reaching, involving the usurpation of Māori tino rangatiratanga (ultimate authority); the replacement of tikanga (Māori laws, customs and values) with a system built on English common law; large-scale alienation of land including outright confiscation; and coercive policies of cultural assimilation.

Up until the mid-1980s, the majority of people who migrated to New Zealand were from Britain or Ireland (Statistics New Zealand 2010b). Only a small per cent were from non-Commonwealth countries (such as small groups of Indians, French, Dalmatians and Chinese, and later a wave of migrants from the Pacific Islands during the 1960s and 1970s) (Chen 2015b).

The system of immigration set in place during the colonial era favoured migrants from the United Kingdom, Ireland and northern Europe. In the 1945 census, Asian and Pacific peoples, who were considered 'race aliens' (the third racialised category beside Māori and Pākehā), counted less than one per cent of the total population (West-Newman 2005). Thus, even though during the twentieth century New Zealand experienced a high influx of immigrants and in 1926 had a foreign-born population of twenty-three per cent (almost equal to the amount counted in the census of 2018), ironically it turned into one of the most ethnically homogenous societies of European settlement (Ward 2008). In 1986, the population was made up of eighty-six per cent of people with British and European descent, and about twelve per cent of people identified as Māori (Labour and Immigration Research Centre 2012; Strategic Social Policy Group 2008).

In 1975 the Assisted Immigration Scheme for British subject's ended (Statistics New Zealand 2010b). The Immigration Act set in place in 1987, removed the regulations of nationality preferences and implemented a visa system based on individual skills and qualifications – a system which in 1990 was changed into a skilled migrant point system. However, 1987 is commonly marked as the year when New Zealand's transformation into a contemporary multicultural society began (Chen 2015b; Liu and Ward 2012; Tan 2015). The changes to the immigration system at the start of the twenty-first century, meant an increase in the overall

inflow of immigrants, as well as an increased intake of immigration from non-traditional source countries (Callister 2011). Between 1996 and 2006 the overall overseas-born population increased by forty per cent (in 1991 the foreign-born population counted 570,000 (approximately sixteen per cent) and in 2006 the foreign-born population counted 880,000 (twenty-three per cent)) (Statistics New Zealand 2010b). In 2006, almost two-thirds of the overseas-born population had arrived in New Zealand within the previous twenty years (OECD 2013; Statistics New Zealand 2013a, 2013c). At present-day, the New Zealand population is made up of more than 230 different ethnicities and census data from 2018 shows that twenty-seven per cent of the population were born overseas (Statistics New Zealand 2018). Asia is now the most common region of birth for the over-seas born. More than eighteen per cent can speak more than one language and Hindi is the fourth most common language spoken in NZ (OECD 2013; Statistics New Zealand 2013a, 2013b). In less than thirty years New Zealand went from being one of the most ethnically homogenous societies of European settlement to becoming one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the OECD (Ward and Singham 2013).

Unlike Australia and Canada, New Zealand has never officially adopted a multicultural act or policy. Instead, it remains officially committed to the bilateral principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Adds et al. 2016; Bromwell 2008; Hill and Bönisch-Brednich 2009). However, it must be added, that the Treaty has never been adopted as an official bicultural constitution or law either. New Zealand is one of only three countries in the world without a written and legally binding constitution and therefore hypothetically one could argue that New Zealand is neither officially bicultural nor multicultural. However, in reality New Zealand's governance and policy practices draw from a number of important acts, judicial decisions (laws), and customary rules (constitutional conventions), which are primarily shaped within a bicultural framework. And in terms of multiculturalism, the government has, despite not officially endorsing the term, made political adjustments in response to increased immigration, cultural diversity and growing minority populations. The Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993 are two important documents, which illustrate a legal and policy-based attempt to implement some form of 'ad hoc' state multiculturalism. Each Act explicitly includes recognition of cultural diversity and the right to be different ethnically, culturally, religiously and racially. Paragraph twenty of the Bill of Rights Act, for example,

states: "A person who belongs to an ethnic, religious, or linguistic minority in New Zealand shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of that minority, to enjoy the culture, to profess and practice the religion, or to use the language, of that minority".

The Office of Ethnic Communities (OEC), which was established in 2000 to handle all government related advice and guidance in relation to cultural diversity, is also an explicit example of a state-orchestrated attempt to recognise and support the needs of a multicultural population. It should also be noted that the government's engagement with biculturalism, involving for example recognition of indigenous rights, culture, and language, has had a significant impact in terms of bringing political attention to cultural diversity, minority rights and plural forms of citizenship and society (Brookes 2014; Callister and Bromell 2011).

The Māori resistance movement instigated a governmental shift away from more assimilationist and ethnocentric responses to diversity and governance (Fleras and Spoonley 1999; Johnson 2003, 2008; O'Sullivan 2007). By appealing to the Treaty's bicultural promises of shared governance and sovereignty, Māori urged an official recognition of a Treaty-based approach to the management of land, resources, and citizenship, which resulted in a wide range of bicultural policies, laws and governing practices being implemented from the 1970s (Seuffert 2005). For example, the Treaty of Waitangi Act was implemented in 1975; the Waitangi Tribunal was launched under the Waitangi Tribunal Act in 1975; the Māori Language Act implemented in 1987; the first Kōhanga Reo started in 1982; and Te Puni Kōkiri was established in 1992 (Belgrave 2014; Hill 2010).

In addition, political activism and mobilisation within Pacific Island communities based in New Zealand have had a significant impact in terms of shaping multicultural ways of imagining the nation (Anae, Luli and Burgoyne 2015; Kennedy 2011; Masters 2006).[5] A large number of Pacific Islanders arrived in New Zealand in the 1960s and 70s, due to state

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[5] Towards the mid-1970s, as the unemployment rate increased, and the country no longer needed overseas labourers, the attitude towards migrants from the Pacific radically changed. Pacific Islanders were no longer regarded as welcome and they became the scapegoat of the frustrations and anxieties related to increasing unemployment (Anae, Luli and Burgoyne 2015). As a result of these negative changes in attitude and policy, resistance and activism within Pacific communities gained momentum during the late 1970s, particularly following the time of the dawn raids in 1974 (Anae, Luli and Burgoyne 2015).

encouragement of immigration schemes intended to leverage New Zealand's labour shortage during the post-war industrial boom (Anae, Luli and Burgoyne 2015; Earle 1995; Underhill-Sem 2017). This 'first wave' of non-European immigration were the first non-indigenous minority group to generate a 'third' cultural and linguistic movement outside the bicultural framework (Underhill-Sem 2017). Besides creating a profile for Pacific peoples in New Zealand in policy, reflected for example with the first minister of Pacific Island Affairs appointed in 1984 and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs established in 1990 (Earle 1995), the political activism within Pacific Island communities also pushed a broader awareness and recognition of the 'multi' cultured aspect of society.

Paul Spoonley (2015), argues that it is relevant to talk about contemporary New Zealand society as a super-diverse society. With reference to Steven Vertovec's (2007b) concept of super-diversity,[6] Spoonley (2015) proposes that a particular settler-nation variant of super-diversity can be observed in New Zealand. This particular variant of super-diversity that is observed in New Zealand is, according to Spoonley, characterised by a dynamic and multi-layered situation where indigeneity and majority identities are part of a local politics of diversity *alongside* those that are associated with the presence of ethnic minority, refugee and immigrant communities (Spoonley 2015, 2). Multiculturalism in the settler-nation includes an understanding of the "transformed and increasingly complex ethnoscapes" as well as a commitment to "the anxieties and potentialities in those sites with a history of colonial entanglements, settlement and multicultural drift" (Spoonley 2015, 2).

With a focus on multiculturalism as a political project, it is essential to consider the demographic and social changes caused by colonisation and British imperialism, and to

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[6] The notion of super-diversity is intended to describe a new kind of diversity which has not previously been experienced. It is a diversity that is causing new conjunctions and interactions, and affecting the nature of various 'communities', their composition, trajectories, interactions and public service needs (Vertovec 2007b, 2010). The process of super-diversification involves firstly an increased and more complex cohort of people settling in a country (people who will most likely have complex and multifaceted cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious identities and who come to live in New Zealand for a complex and diverse set of reasons, purposes, and under various visa and residency schemes and circumstances) (Callister and Bromell 2011; Hall 2017; Spoonley and Tolley 2012). And secondly, super diversification also involves an increased 'mix and mingling' between the different cultural and ethnic groups that already exist in the country (Vertovec 2007a, 2007b, 2012). Thus, cultural diversification is not merely caused by an inflow of new people but also created through internal interactions between people from different communities (Carter et al. 2009; Spoonley and Butcher 2009; Vertovec 2007b).

understand how these processes continue to haunt the political structures and cultural milieu of the settler-state (Gunew 2004; Kukutai 2017). Jo Smith (2007) for instance, points to a particularly vexed and "conjunctural" situation pertinent in most contemporary settler states when she argues:

> Contemporary settler states can be characterized as conjunctural formations that attempt to address the demands of the historical legacies of colonization at the same time as dealing with the present-time and future-oriented imperatives of transnational and international global forces. Indigenous collectives' calls for social justice challenge the legitimacy of settler-state law at the same time as global economic and cultural flows erode the sovereignty of the nation-state (Smith 2007, 65).

The dilemma which is generally addressed in relation to the topic of multiculturalism in New Zealand is that biculturalism and the Treaty partnership determine a particular kind of recognition and rights to Māori, which need separate attention in policy and governance in New Zealand (Mishra 2012; O'Sullivan 2007; Rata 2005). Multicultural policies have been criticised for overlooking processes of reconciliation and the special place of indigenous rights within the settler state (Hill 2010; Mishra 2012). Scholars highlight, for instance, that Māori cannot be regarded as a minority group in the typical 'diversity-related' sense of the word because their status as tangata whenua and their affirmation of rights to self-determination and rangatiratanga are not simply a question of gaining state recognition of particular cultural differences (Fleras and Spoonley 1999).[7] It has been pointed out, particularly by many Māori researchers, that the idea of officially endorsing multicultural policies in New Zealand might risk undermining the government's commitment to the project of reconciliation and biculturalism (Smith 2007; Walker 2004). Ranginui Walker (1994), for example, critically states that defining Māori as immigrants and as a minority (lumping them in with other ethnic and migrant minorities) negates their first nation status as people of the land and overrides conversations about the on-going implications of settler-colonialism and Māori self-determination (tino rangatiratanga).

In this thesis, I will address the context of settler-nation multiculturalism as it is revealed through government-based and participant stories. For example, it can be seen in the

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[7] Rangatiratanga is commonly translated and understood as Māori chieftainship, authority or sovereignty.

section above introducing the stories I heard from friends, as some of their comments stress concerns in relation to the government's approach to ethnic minorities as well as Māori communities. Thus, in my analysis of comments such as these, it would be relevant to talk about issues related to biculturalism, colonialism and indigenous struggles for self-determination.

Ethnographic research and a narrative approach

I applied an ethnographic approach to data collection (fieldwork), using auto-ethnography, ethnographic interviews, participant observation and document analysis as methods of collecting stories about multiculturalism and cultural diversity in New Zealand. Ethnographic research focuses on a nuanced, contextual, local, and in many cases slow, exploration of a given research topic or set of issues through fieldwork (Clifford 1986; Mills and Morton 2013; Wax 1985). A detailed overview of my fieldwork and the specific methods I apply is provided in the following chapter. In chapter two, I explain in greater depth the practical steps of applying a narrative approach. However, in this section I will also outline the theoretical thinking that underpins my fieldwork process and informs my analytical approach. My narrative approach to ethnographic research involves crafting and analysing stories from the evidence I gathered through the following ethnographic methods: auto-ethnographic observations, interviewing, participant observation and document analysis (Bönisch-Brednich 2018). It involves treating diary notes, field notes, interview transcripts, and government reports, booklets and photos as diverse narrative materials. Narrative analysis refers to a cluster of analytic methods for interpreting texts or visual data that have a storied form (Allen 2017). In the thesis, I position myself as an academic listener, who makes sense of stories (narrative evidence) by placing them alongside other types of stories and organising them in relation to theoretical knowledge about the field they emerge from.

To understand and analyse the stories about cultural diversity attached to the government, I applied the method of discourse analysis as a form of narrative analysis. I was inspired by Peter Skilling (2012) and his analysis of immigration policy in New Zealand, as well as Anna Boswell's (2013) analysis of the public representation of the Waitangi estate. Both of these scholars focus on the same kind of overarching officialised information and material distributed by the government, which often come to inhere a particular authoritative value.

Skilling (2012, 365) applies a narrative policy analysis and demonstrates how policy and policy narratives are shaped by particular assumptions about who and what is valued within society and how these narratives pre-suppose a certain vision of national identity, which gains legitimation through its function in policy practices. He also demonstrates how policy narratives affect specific silences and exclusions, which serve to limit and distort the political debate about a given social issue (Skilling 2012, 375). Although my focus is not policy analysis, I am inspired by the critical and discourse focused techniques that Skilling applies. Similar to Boswell (2013), I focus on the official stories about, for example, particular public events, dates, and monuments. By unearthing the underlying assumptions and narrative structures that characterise any story, I, like Boswell, discuss how official and government-related stories can be seen to reflect how culture acts upon and gives shape to 'the past' as it can be of use to a particular 'present' (Boswell 2013, 41). Boswell, for example, illustrates how stories about the Waitangi estate, and its meaning in relation to British settlement, work to frame New Zealand's colonial past in a way that silence stories about the imbalances of power that produced the crisis of population decline and cultural devastation for Māori in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Boswell 2013, 46). In line with Skilling and Boswell, I applied discourse analysis to analyse and make sense of the information and stories about cultural diversity distributed by the New Zealand government. I investigated aspects of an overall discourse of state multiculturalism by looking at the way the government describes and frames issues related to multiculturalism, for example, immigration, settlement, minority rights and recognition of a multicultural population. As previously discussed, due to the fact that multiculturalism is not explicitly mentioned within government discourses, I have had to focus on the stories the government tell about cultural diversity and issues related to multiculturalism, such as for example immigration, settlement, and minority rights.

Often government and policy related information about specific societal issues and topics are clothed in neutral language and presented as if it reflects factual and objective knowledge (Kertzer and Arel 2001; Skilling 2012). For example, many of the people I interviewed tended to regard census data as objective and as providing demographic 'truths' or 'facts' about specific social concepts. The standardised ethnic categories, such as Māori, European, Asian, and Pacific Islander, were typically viewed, both by interview

participants and the government officials I spoke to, as naturally relevant in conversations about cultural diversity. By applying a narrative approach to the exploration of government information about cultural diversity, I was able to study this kind of information as discursively (culturally) constructed and as part of a larger storytelling project in which state information (presented as facts about society) work to craft a particular image of the nation (Skilling 2012). Narrative analysis can help to understand how policies are situated and how they work to naturalise specific ideologies and political mind-sets. It can also work as a method to uncover the underlying assumptions and silences embedded in dominant narratives, and as a way to critically discuss how these narratives legitimise particular classifications of people and cultures, as well as shape how a given topic is talked about and imagined (Skilling 2012; Wedel et al. 2005). Likewise, narrative analysis can help us to see that censuses are inextricably embroiled in politics and that the data this kind of surveying produces should be interpreted as a particular kind of politicised social construction of reality, rather than as objective demographic assessments (Kertzer and Arel 2001, 35).

To understand and analyse the stories told by my interview participants about the everyday constraints of diversity and multicultural co-existence, I apply life-story analysis as another method of narrative analysis. I was inspired by Michael Bamberg (2010), who promotes life stories as a privileged arena for identity research. He argues that conducting life-story interviews is an optimal approach to gain knowledge about belonging and identity formation. He understands people's stories about life and who they are as a form of self-representation, which reveals valuable information about the complex and dynamic processes of identification (Bamberg 2010). He invites us to see "life as storied" and to place emphasis on the study of how people as agentive actors position themselves through narrations (Bamberg 2010, 13). He recognises that there is always a gap between life as lived and life as experienced (i.e. narrated). However, he argues that self-narration can be viewed as a process through which the storyteller is positioning him/herself while simultaneously being positioned by the societal and socio-cultural categories he/she is positioning themselves in relation to (Bamberg 2010, 14-15).

On a similar note, Joan W. Scott (1991, 31) explores the discursive charter of experience, arguing that experience is a linguistic event through which identities are constituted (i.e.

that identities cannot be realised outside established meaning). Thus, recounting experience – that is, talking about what happened at a particular event or in a particular situation through personal narration and storytelling – can be read and interpreted as a discursive account that provides knowledge about the contradicting and contested process by which identity is conceptualised (Scott 1991). In other words, personal narratives can tell us how diverse kinds of subject positions were assigned, felt, contested, or embraced (Scott 1991). Inspired by both Bamberg and Scott's arguments around experience and narrative, I explored and interpreted the interviews and auto-ethnographic vignettes as narrative texts that provide discursive knowledge about how people in everyday life situations and within grassroots organisations experience, express and make sense of multiculturalism. I also see the conversations I have had with people within grassroots organisations, like the NZFMC and UHMC, as storied accounts exploring the meaning of a multicultural society and the challenges associated with this.

Chapter overview

Given that the purpose of the thesis is to stage a conversation between two sets of stories and explore the interface between the different narrative terrains, the structuring of the thesis reflects an overall staging exercise, creating opportunities for encounters and dialogue between these two sets of narratives – i.e. government versus grassroot stories. The conversation and narrative encounters that are staged throughout this conversation, could be viewed as an initiative that does not occur in real life. However, by bringing different sets of stories into contact, this is a way to explore multiculturalism in a new and critical manner.

Chapter 2: The practicalities of staging a conversation – an overview of fieldwork

In this chapter, the practical decisions involved in outlining the boundaries of fieldwork are explained. I explain why Wellington was chosen as a location for my fieldwork and how I came to define my participants as 'everyday diversity experts'. I also explain how participation in government facilitated events and being a member of two multicultural councils, became important venues for me to collect stories at the grassroots and government level.

The chapter also introduces the four methods which were applied through fieldwork. Auto-ethnography is the first method and it is used to explain how my own experiences as a migrant to New Zealand and as a personal member in grassroots organisations, have had a significant impact on my choices of field location, sites and participants. Interviewing is the second method that will be discussed. I introduce the style of interviewing I applied and list interview topics and questions. Participant observation is the third method and I explain how I used this method for two purposes. Firstly, I used interviewing as a way for me to access information and stories distributed by the government about cultural diversity and to see how this information is presented and shared with the public. Secondly, I used participant observation as a method to gather evidence about the way grassroots organisations and multicultural activists address multiculturalism. The fourth method is document analysis. This method is used as a way to analyse and organise the collection of textual materials I gathered through government reports, booklets, pamphlets and social media posts. Some of the documents also include photos and I will explain how photos are used as a way to explore the visual representation of cultural diversity and multiculturalism. In the last section of the chapter, I summarise the different types of data that have been gathered through a mixed-methods approach. I explain the narrative approach as one of making sense of the multi-layered set of evidence and further discuss how the organisation of evidence allows for a conversation to be staged.

Chapter 3. The stories told by the government about itself and about cultural diversity

I demonstrate, in this chapter, how a government narrative about cultural diversity takes shape across this diverse set of evidence and I discuss how my understanding of 'government' was formed primarily through information distributed by the OEC and Statistics New Zealand. This specific and powerful government narrative is presented through five narrative sections, which align with typical elements of a story, these are; a beginning, a setting, main characters, main themes and the vision (ending). The chapter is structured according to these five stages and each section has a photo section linked to it, where the visual representation associated with each stage is demonstrated. In relation to each narrative theme, I investigate how the assumptions implied in government narratives emphasise and privilege particular information about cultural diversity while silencing and downplaying other kinds of information. For example, I show how the positive story of New

Zealand as a harmonious and welcoming nation works to exclude stories about ethnic conflict and cultural injustices which are also part of how my participants experience New Zealand as a multicultural society. The chapter includes discussions of some of the effects associated with privileging and silencing particular kinds of information.

Chapter 4. Stories of lived multicultural realities – exploring issues of identity and belonging within state systems of ethnic classification

This chapter is the first chapter to initiate the conversation between a government and a grassroots narrative. The chapter is anchored in a personal vignette, explaining the experiences I had during a visit with my son to a 'Plunket before school check'. Following on from the vignette, I analyse the particular moment of contact when government (state) ideas of culture and cultural belonging come into contact with the lived experiences of multicultural identities and cultural diversity. The chapter is organised into three sections that reflect the three main issues identified through the vignette - these are, 'multiplicity of identity', 'visual appearance and external categorisation', and 'state-imposed power of categorisation'.

In the first section, I elaborate on my understanding of multicultural identities by showcasing stories shared by my interview participants and I discuss the limitations that people experience in encounters with state facilitated practices of ethnic categorisation (for example in the moment of filling in the census ethnicity question). The second section discusses the experiences of being categorised based on visual appearance. Through participants stories, I draw attention to ways in which visual appearance is important to people's sense of identity, as it impacts the spaces, communities and resources some people have access to. In the third section, I expose the imbalance of power which lies implicitly in the encounter with state systems of ethnic categorisation. The government and people who represent the government will automatically have a particular power and authority, in regard to determining the terms of ethnic classification, and thus, the government will also (to an extent) be able to determine how a person or a community is made visible in the public arena. By using my personal vignette, as well as stories shared by participants, I offer a thick description on the effects of state-imposed power to categorise and impact on everyday process of identification in a multicultural society.

Chapter 5. Voices from the grassroots – exploring the lived realities of cultural recognition in Aotearoa New Zealand

The third analytical chapter demonstrates another moment of contact between government and the grassroots, focused on issues of cultural recognition. This chapter is also anchored in a personal vignette, describing my encounter with Christalin, who is a multicultural activist and a member of the multicultural council I engaged with during fieldwork. With this vignette, I describe the contact zone between the government and grassroots organisations dealing with multicultural issues; such as settlement, minority recognition and cultural marginalisation (discrimination). I identify three levels of engagement – personal, community and political – which are demonstrated through the stories Christalin tells about her life, activism and role as an ethnic liaison officer. The chapter is organised according to these three areas.

The first 'personal' section is titled 'I can be who you need me to be' and describes the kind of agency which Christalin practices and her styles of negotiating her identity. Based on conversations with other multicultural activists like Christalin, I shine a light on the creative and strategic ways people (immigrants, minorities) navigate their identities for purposes of recognition. In the second 'community' section titled 'to talk about 'us' we need a 'we', I discuss the dilemma of essentialism in the struggles for recognition (Nigel 2003). Based on comments from interview participants, I demonstrate how essential and fixed notions of identity and culture can have vernacular and positive purposes, for example in terms of creating a sense of community spirit and unity as well as becoming visible in the eyes of the state. The third 'political' section is titled 'working the system with what is available' and addresses the kind of strategies and methods that people and organisations at the grassroots level develop, in order to navigate and deal with the inconsistencies and shortcomings of government responses to cultural diversity. In this section, I draw on observations from an AGM (annual general meeting) meeting with the NZFMC. This meeting connected multicultural council and migrant-service centre representatives from all over New Zealand with government officials and illustrated clearly the points of disconnect between the way the government understands cultural diversity and the experiences of grassroots representatives. Based on observations from the meeting, as well as field notes

from other similar events, I illustrate the coping mechanisms and creative tactics which grassroots organisations apply to bend the system to their own advantage.

Chapter 6. Conclusion – Learnings and contributions from a narrative approach to ethnographic fieldwork

In this chapter, I present the findings and contributions of the thesis. There are three key findings. The first finding is the discovery of 'prevailing narrative content', in which themes are repeated over and over and come to shape a general government narrative about cultural diversity. The second finding demonstrates that there is a core issue regarding disjuncture, which is demonstrated in the encounter between government narratives and stories about the lived experiences of cultural diversity and multicultural activism. Issues of disjuncture are explored through the two moments of contact presented in my Plunket visit vignette and the story about my meeting with Christalin. These stories demonstrate how disjuncture relates to dilemmas associated with processes of identification and recognition in a multicultural context. The third finding describes the agency and expertise that is demonstrated and developed at the grassroots level. The thesis emphasises the importance of showcasing and valorising the knowledge generated on the ground by the people and organisations that deal with the everyday challenges of living in a multicultural society. In outlining the contributions of the thesis, I draw attention to the specific qualities of an ethnographic study of multiculturalism. With reference to other anthropologists who point out the need for ethnographic intervention in the field of multiculturalism, I also draw attention to the specific qualities of an ethnographic and narrative approach, which can, for example, help to disrupt and decentre information and expertise used and distributed by the government. I also explain how an ethnographic study of multiculturalism can help to shine a light on aspects of multicultural experience that are not present in government-based stories and how knowledge about these messy lived aspects can help to imagine alternative ways of understanding multiculturalism.

Chapter two

The practicalities of staging a conversation - an overview of fieldwork

In this chapter I report on the process of the fieldwork that informs this research project. I shall explain where my fieldwork took place, who my participants are, what methods were applied, and what kind of evidence I gathered. I will also describe some of the challenges I faced during fieldwork and discuss specific ethical issues related to these. In the final section of this chapter, I explain how I have organised the data and how the process of analysis was approached. In doing so, I demonstrate how 'staging a conversation' is the central methodological principle that frames the thesis and guides the structure of each analytical chapter.

Location

I chose to base my fieldwork in the Wellington region, specifically in Wellington city, Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt. Wellington is New Zealand's capital and second biggest city. To most contemporary ethnographers, finding a field is a constructive process of narrowing down and limiting the ethnographic focus, in order to be able to decide with whom to engage and in what location to immerse oneself (Gupta and Fergusson 1997b). In some research projects the field might present itself in an obvious manner, for example, if one is researching a particular group of people or a specific topic that is tied to a specific location. However, my interest in multiculturalism and in stories told about cultural diversity and the politics of group identity and recognition, did not tie itself specifically to Wellington. Yet, Wellington presented itself as a prime location to ground an ethnographic exploration of the stories about cultural diversity and multiculturalism attached to both government and grassroots spaces.

From the 2013 census it is known that Wellington's population is made up of 77% European, 13% Māori, 8% Pacifika, 10.5% Asian, 1.5% Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA) and 1.8% other (bearing in mind significant variations in the demographic composition

depending on the major districts and suburbs in the region). As a field site, Wellington is suitable because it presents a dense and urban form of a multicultural environment. Anita Harris (2012, 11), in relation to her own research on young people and their everyday negotiation of multicultural lives and identities within five major Australian cities, observes that cities are places where people "[engage] in the messy work of negotiating diversity through an ongoing contestation of identity, place and national belonging in mundane sites within communities and neighbourhoods". In Wellington I was able to access sites and people, which could provide information about the everyday experiences of living together in multicultural contexts, and so it is an ideal place for exploring processes of multicultural cohabitation and interaction. Moreover, the region is a relevant place for studying the dynamics of multiculturalism since its ethnic statistics are almost identical to the average national per cents of cultural diversity. What also makes Wellington a suitable field site is that the city is the political and parliamentary heart of New Zealand – the government, parliament, Supreme Court, and most of the country's major public service institutions are based in the city, and a wealth of important political activities takes place in the region. As a capital city, the public work of hosting conferences and workshops, as well as distributing pamphlets and booklets, occurs on a regular basis.

Wellington is also home to multiple migrants' service centres and different NGO and community organisations dealing with diversity and settlement issues, which all facilitate and organise various grassroots initiatives and programmes set up to support and accommodate people from minority communities. Apart from the reasons I present above, my choice of field site was also influenced by my Wellingtonian residency and personal status as a migrant and a multicultural activist. I already lived in Wellington prior to starting the PhD and most of the sites and situations which I ended up focusing on in my fieldwork were spaces I was already a part of. I was already immersed in the local communities, I knew about the cultural events and programmes happening in the area and I was also already involved as a volunteer with two local NGO's dealing with issues if multiculturalism. Similarly, I had already built connections before starting the PhD with the people I wanted to interview as participants, and they were all based in the Wellington region.

Mixing methods and a narrative approach

I took an ethnographic approach to data collection (fieldwork), using auto-ethnography, ethnographic interviews, participant observation, document and photo analysis, as methods of collecting stories about multiculturalism and cultural diversity in New Zealand. Ethnographic fieldwork is in principle a mixed-methods approach to data collection and usually involves gathering as much information as possible through a variety of qualitative methods and from a wide range of sources (Madison 2005; McCurdy et al. 2005; Mills and Morton 2013). A mixed method (ethnographic) approach was essential to this thesis, as it allowed me to move in and out of multiple sites and situations; gathering different types of evidence about the stories told by the government, people and grassroots organisations.

I spent about one and a half years doing fieldwork, this started from when I received ethics approval in October 2014 (ethnics number 21268) and continued until the end of 2016. In anthropology, data collection (i.e. fieldwork) and data analysis are entangled in such a way that it is hard to say specifically when one process ends, and another begins. Thus, as will be apparent in this chapter, I have included observations from events and situations, which fall outside my official timeline. For example, I include observations from events which took place before the date of my ethics approval. This kind of preliminary research is common in anthropology. In fact, postgrad students in my department are required to enter the field and engage with participants prior to having their ethics application and proposal approved. Early engagement in the field is seen as a necessary scoping exercise that helps students build connections in the field and gather enough knowledge about the field to be able to form their research questions and write a strong proposal.

Collecting two sets of stories

The overall objective of my fieldwork was to explore the interface between two sets of stories; on one side the stories the government tells about cultural diversity and on the other side the stories told by people who live multicultural lives and who engage in grassroots organisations and community activism. I want to reemphasise that when I refer to 'the government', 'government narratives' and 'government-related materials' throughout this thesis, I am referring to the New Zealand National Party that was in power

at the time of my fieldwork and the narratives and data I collected in relation to 'the government' was distributed by this party and within the period 2014-2016.

Stories from the grassroots

To gather evidence about the ways in which cultural diversity is experienced and expressed in everyday situations and within grassroots settings, I used auto-ethnography, interviews and participant observation. Auto-ethnography is a method that privileges personal narratives as ways to understand and theorise about what we learn relationally, personally and culturally, through subjective experiences (Bönisch-Brednich 2012; Boylorn and Orbe 2014a, 2014b; Ellis and Bochner 2013). By applying this method, I was able to document observations of my own mundane inter-cultural encounters and analyse first-hand experiences about how differences are negotiated and responded to in everyday settings. Auto-ethnography allowed me to explore the complexities, dilemmas, and contradictions of identity which appear when "experience, discourse, and self-understanding collide against larger cultural assumptions concerning race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, class, and age" (Minh-ha 2009, 157).

The ethnographic interviews provided information about how everyday constraints of living multicultural lives are negotiated and expressed within the wider public debates and the framework of government. I conducted thirteen interviews in total: ten in-depth and conversational interviews with participants I describe as 'everyday diversity experts' (this definition will be explained below) and three formal and more structured interviews with ordinary field experts who retain specialist and scholarly knowledge about various issues related to cultural diversity and multiculturalism in New Zealand (see full list of participants in appendix one). Collecting individual stories about belonging, identity and multicultural politics meant I was able to gather more evidence about *how* multiculturalism is lived and experienced on the ground and in everyday situations. The three additional interviews were conducted with two scholars and a former politician. The purpose of these interviews was to access in-depth knowledge about ethnic enumeration, census surveying and statistical representation of Māori and other ethnic minorities, as well as human rights and anti-racist activism in New Zealand.

Through participant observation, I engaged with two NGO's in Wellington. One is the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils (NZFMC), based in Wellington City, and the other is the Upper Hutt Multicultural Council (UHMC). By going along to a wide range of initiatives (see list on pages 57 - 59) supported and facilitated by these two organisations, I observed how grassroots activists make sense of multiculturalism. I also observed how anti-racist work, minority mobilisation, cultural claim-making, multicultural lobbying and funding applications are played out locally and in relation to initiatives, such as multicultural festivals, migrant and settlement workshops, council committee meetings and the everyday operation of migrant service centres and multicultural councils.

Overall, the three methods I used - auto-ethnography, interviews and participant observations – all work as ethnographic windows into different modes of storytelling and narrative evidence of a grounded and everyday representation of multiculturalism. I use a collection of personal vignettes crafted from detailed diary notes and in-depth field notes, and excerpts from over thirty hours of transcribed interview material to define what I describe as an everyday and grassroots form of multiculturalism. My cohort of interview participants is not as large as is typically expected in the social sciences. However, a smaller sample size is justified by the fact that data from the interviews is only one part of a large multi-layered set of evidence. My mixed-methods approach to fieldwork produced several layers of rich data in order to create the kind of thick description which is integral to ethnographic research (Geertz 1973; Hannerz 2003; Sluka and Robben 2012).

Stories from the government

To gather evidence about the second set of stories – that is the stories government tells about itself and its relation to cultural diversity – I used participant observation, document analysis and interviewing. Participant observation was a central method in my quest to collect stories told by government about cultural diversity and multiculturalism. I deliberately sought out public spaces where I was able to observe how government officials, in an organised and performed manner, talk about themselves (i.e. the institution they represent) and issues related to cultural diversity; such as, for example, the demographic changes in society, increased immigration, settlement issues, issues of racism, minority rights and the project of biculturalism in a multicultural context. I attended six government

facilitated events; two diversity forums, three conferences and one workshop (see list on pages 54 - 55). I recorded conference speeches presented by government officials, wrote detailed field notes about what I observed, and collected various booklets and pamphlets, which were distributed at most of the events (see an example of field notes in appendix twelve). I also collected photos from each event I attended. Some photos I took myself and some were taken by professional photographers and were often made publicly available online by event organisers after each event, for example, in a Facebook post or published on a website. Apart from the booklets and pamphlets I gathered at the events, I also collected government reports, policy documents and information from different government websites and social media platforms. In total, I collected and read over fifty documents distributed by the government.

I found that the majority of the stories told by government about cultural diversity, are told by the Office of Ethnic Community (OEC), which is not surprising, since OEC, as I mentioned in the introduction, is considered to be the governments pre-eminent source of information when it comes to the topic of cultural diversity. Thus, logically this institution plays a significant role in shaping what I consider to be government stories about multiculturalism. And so, in order to gain a deeper understanding about this institution and the information about cultural diversity that it delivers, I also conducted an interview with one of the leading managers of OEC. Although I had heard the manager present at many of the government events I attended, I still considered a face-to-face interview was necessary in order for me to ask direct questions about OEC's understanding and approach to multiculturalism.

Once more, to describe the stories told by government about itself and about cultural diversity, I drew on multiple layers of narrative evidence. I used extracts from conference speeches, field notes, government documents and website materials, to describe and explore ways in which cultural diversity and multiculturalism are narrated at the government level. Moreover, I gathered a selection of photos to explore the visual representation of cultural diversity and the stories that are also told from the government perspective with and through these images.

In the following sections, I am going to introduce each method I employed in my fieldwork and explain in depth what these methods involved, how they were applied in practice and what challenges I faced while using them. The final section of this chapter describes my analytical approach and process of writing. In the next section, I return to the two sets of evidence outlined above and explain how I made sense of this evidence and how I organised the data in ways that allowed me to execute the aim of staging a conversation and exploring the interface between the two different narrative terrains.

Auto-ethnography – collecting personal stories

I view myself as an 'insider' researcher. As previously discussed, there is a significant connection between this research project and my personal life. In the introduction, I explained how my personal journey as a migrant to New Zealand has shaped my interest in multiculturalism. And in this chapter, I previously stated that I live in Wellington and had prior personal contact with most of the sites and settings I included in my research. Apart from two participants,[8] all interviewees were either friends or people whom I knew before the research started. This blurring of the line between research*er* and the research*ed* is becoming more and more common in contemporary scholarship, particular in relation to research on topics like migration, multiculturalism and cultural diversity (Gupta and Ferguson 1997b; Kirpitchenko and Voloder 2014).

Originally, I had not intended to use auto-ethnography as a method, simply because it was not a method I was particularly familiar with. However, the 'auto' dimension became relevant, as I was constantly drawing on personal experiences and reflections in order to explain my interest in multiculturalism. Embracing insiderness for me, was not only about pointing out where and when my personal world and life trajectories intersected with fieldwork and the lives of participants, it also became a way for me to embrace an auto-ethnographic approach to fieldwork. I realised, centring myself as an object of knowledge and as a key informant, was a productive methodological choice. It became a way for me to engage with my own experiences of immigration, a multicultural family and activist engagement in multicultural organisations.

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[8] These were Hayden and Alex (see list of participants in appendix one).

Like ethnographers, auto-ethnographers follow a similar research process, focusing on participation and gaining an in-depth understanding of the field through detailed scholarly notes and reports, which describe the social conditions, unequal power arrangements, and the lived experience of real people in their social context (Bönisch-Brednich 2012; Boylorn and Orbe 2014a). I kept a personal diary throughout the research project describing experiences, thoughts and feelings, in relation to different situations where issues of cultural diversity and multiculturalism appeared relevant in various ways. My diary notes included mainly experiences from informal and everyday situations, which happened as I went about my daily life. Included are, for example, notes from a visit to the Plunket nurse with my son, a focus group meeting with students from Naenae College, and notes from attending a Waitangi Day event at Orongomai Marae with my family.[9] These everyday 'field' moments typically happened spontaneously, which meant I had to write my fieldnotes afterwards when I got home and therefore had to rely on memories to recall my experiences and observations. My notes are spread over several notebooks and consist of a mixture of journal writing, descriptive notes of a given situation or experience, memory lists, drawings, photos and a few poems. After fieldwork had ended and as I started organising my data, I used this collection of diary notes to trigger my memory and to craft detailed personal vignettes. Auto-ethnography produces a particular autobiographical kind of evidence, which connects personal stories to a reflection on broader cultural, social and political structures and issues (Berger 2001; Ellis 2004; Spry 2001). I see my vignettes as self-reflexive stories that highlight the situatedness of self in relation to others in a given social context (Madison 2005; Spry 2001).

As a final remark on the challenges of using auto-ethnography as a method, I want to highlight an ethical ambivalence, which I felt in regard to claiming insiderness and including personal stories on the topic of culture in the thesis. In anthropology, insider accounts have traditionally been claimed by those scholars who identify with marginalised and 'othered' groups and communities (Bonner and Tolhurst 2002; Clifford 1986; Zulfikar 2014). Thus, insiderness has commonly been used to refer to shared experiences of, for example, institutionalised racism and of being positioned as an outsider (or a native) within white and

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[9] A full list of situations is provided in appendix two.

Western hegemonic spaces (Kirpitchenko and Voloder 2014). Unsurprisingly, this is not the purpose of evoking insiderness in my case. As a white European scholar of multiculturalism, I feel cautious about claiming insiderness and think it is important to emphasise that the purpose is not to falsely align myself with the marginalised other, nor is it to, in a benevolent manner, claim a multicultural affinity with all migrants, ethnic minorities, and multicultural activists. I am not suggesting my insider position gives me access to knowledge about a *general* experience of multiculturalism in New Zealand.

Arguing that we are all a part of a multicultural society and that I myself am living a multicultural life (i.e. my reasons for claiming insiderness), is not an attempt to shy away from critical reflections about my own specific 'white and European' belongings and privileges (in other words, my cultural and ethnic alignments with the majority group). Quite the opposite, I feel that incorporating insiderness is an effective way to develop an honest mode of research and representation of knowledge. The explicit inclusion of personal stories is a powerful way to invite the reader in and to make them realise the interconnectedness of human experience, as well as inspire them to reflect critically upon their own life experiences (Boylorn and Orbe 2014a; Liu 2006). Moreover, as a social scientist, and particularly as a cultural anthropologist, I think it is important to work openly with the fact that lived experiences cannot be described directly, they are always defined by mediation, and we engage with representations of experiences, not the experience itself (Denzin 1997, 2011).

Interviews – collecting stories from experts

Interviews are an important part of ethnographic fieldwork. They occur as normal and spontaneous conversations between the fieldworker and the different people he/she encounters during participant observation, and also as more formally organised conversations that give the researcher an opportunity to discuss particular issues and questions with key informants (Spradley 1979b; van Maanen 1998). Inspired by the life-story approach to interviewing (Bamberg 2010; Liu 2006),[10] I focused on getting the interviewees to tell stories about themselves and about issues related to multiculturalism.

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[10] The concept of life-story or life-history research (LHR) is used in many different disciplines e.g. anthropology, psychology, sociology, education, biology, medicine, history and political science. LHR became relevant in

I started each interview by introducing myself and the research and explaining the overall purpose of the interviews. I would then ask each interviewee to explain where they are from, where they live, who their families are and what they do for a living – occupation wise or as unpaid activities. I would ask them to elaborate on specific events, people and situations they mentioned that related to questions of diversity, belonging and identity. As is common in ethnographic research, I followed the general practice of using 'open-ended' and semi-structured interview methods (Spradley 1979b), to provide informants with the space to talk freely and take the conversation in directions they found interesting and relevant. As a result of this, each interview ended up being quite different from the others. Some topics and questions would be debated in one interview but not in another, and some participants were eager to share their life stories while others would prefer to discuss issues surrounding multiculturalism.

I also prepared an interview schedule, which was comprised of a list of conversation topics and questions. The interview conversations involved, for example, me asking the participants to share their thoughts on issues such as cultural belonging and identification, census categories of ethnicity and cultural identity, experiences of racism and discrimination, and so on. I would, also ask them questions like, "tell me about yourself, your family, how you grew up and where you are at today in your life". Or, for example, another commonly used question was, "tell me about situations where your specific culture/ethnicity/race mattered". A full list of interview topics and questions are presented below.

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anthropology through a growing interest in the individual, and an attempt to humanise anthropological material and present it to a wider audience (see for example William I Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1996), Paul Radin (1999), and Clifford R. Shaw (1966)). LHR in anthropology is generally about gaining insight into the broader human condition by coming to know and understand the experience of other lives (Plummer 2001). People's stories about their experiences and memories are viewed as a way to gain greater understanding of a particular culture, context, place or issue. LHR can also have a more specific purpose, where the researcher analyses a particular life or lives, for a particular reason (Plummer 2001).

Interview topics:	Interview questions:
• Socio-cultural belonging and identification.	• Tell me about yourself, your family, how you grew up and where you are at today in your life?
• Census categories of ethnicity and cultural identity.	• What box do you tick in the census survey? Can you please explain why?
• Racism and discrimination.	• Tell me about situations where your specific culture/ethnicity/race mattered.
• Immigration and settlement.	• What are your thoughts on multiculturalism? What does this concept mean to you in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand?
• Intercultural encounters.	
• Multiculturalism (minority rights, cultural recognition and equity/affirmative action policies).	• How do you think the New Zealand government is doing in terms of responding to cultural diversity?
	• What do you think is the best way forward in terms of becoming a multicultural society?

These questions and topics reflect my specific political understanding of multiculturalism and the social justice issues that are focused on in this thesis. There is no chronological order to these questions and topics, and I posed them sporadically throughout the interviews, when I found it appropriate in relation to the conversation. I invited informants to share their own experiences as we discussed the different topics and questions, and my goal was to hear the informant's reflections, opinions, and observations on these topics and questions, and to have a conversation about them. In order for participants to understand why and in what way I wanted them to talk about a particular question and topic, I would elaborate on a topic or question by sharing my own personal interest in it, often linking my elaboration to personal experiences. This technique links to my auto-ethnographic approach and illustrates how the interviews were also critical conversations, which helped me think through and understand my own experiences of multiculturalism in New Zealand.

As indicated, I conducted ten interviews with participants who I describe as 'everyday diversity experts'. Everyday diversity experts in this thesis project refers to people who live and navigate spaces of intercultural contact daily, either as a result of who they are (i.e.

their identity and family history), or what they do (i.e. their profession and community/volunteer roles), or in some cases both.

The criteria for the kind of people I wanted to recruit as interview participants was people who had knowledge about cultural diversity through personal experiences, work related experiences and/or from experiences of being involved in community activism and NGO's. I wanted to talk to people who had particular expertise and knowledge of dealing with issues of social justice in a multicultural society, and who were able and willing to share this knowledge and discuss issues of multiculturalism. Apart from these criteria I did not have specific requirements for participants in regard to age, gender, ethnicity, race, class or education. Thus, I developed the term **everyday diversity experts** in order to describe and articulate the exact type of informants I wanted to interview.

The one aspect that all my participants had in common, was their expertise and passion for questions and issues related to multiculturalism. I use the word 'expert' to highlight and value the kind of knowledge and skills that are developed at the grassroots level and in everyday situations. Below is a brief introduction to three of my interview participants to help exemplify exactly *who* an everyday diversity expert is.[11]

Participant one. Peter is sixty-seven years old.[12] He is a pastor of a small suburban church. Peter was born in the South Island in a small rural village. He is a middle-class man, a Pākehā New Zealander of Scottish heritage. Over the last thirty years, Peter has experienced the cultural make-up of his churchgoers changing radically, due to a particularly large number of Filipinas joining the church. Thus, as a pastor, Peter is encountering and having to provide religious support and services to people who are culturally different from himself and who often do not have extensive English skills. Peter is also engaging actively in volunteer work with a multicultural council.

Participant two. Maria is twenty-seven years old and a PhD candidate in psychology. Her research looks at refugee resettlement, focusing on volunteers that help and support refugees. She is also herself working with resettling refugees with an NGO. Maria

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[11] A full list of participants is included as appendix one.
[12] Pseudonyms are used where interview participants explicitly chose not to have their real names published.

acknowledges that she looks 'Pākehā' (meaning she looks white and European), but Maria's mother is a dark-skinned Indonesian woman and her father a white Dutchman. Maria was born in New Zealand, but also lived for some years in Holland as a young child. Growing up she always felt different, although she did not look different. She has often been asked if she is adopted when people have seen her in public with her mother. Because of experiences like this, Maria has always thought about concepts like ethnicity, race and identity, and about what it means to belong and be included.

Participant three. Michelle is a Jewish woman, born and raised in Israel. She and her husband, also Israeli and Jewish, came to New Zealand together on a backpacking trip and decided to stay. Michelle has now lived in New Zealand for almost thirty years. She has three children who all were born in New Zealand. Michelle works as a freelance Hebrew interpreter and educator and is part of the Wellington Jewish community. She is a very passionate thinker and debater of multiculturalism, minority rights, and biculturalism.

I also conducted interviews with three professional experts. Different from everyday diversity experts, these interview participants are considered *ordinary* diversity experts. They are people who contain a professional and scholarly kind of knowledge about a specific research area. The three interviewees were:

Professor Tahu Kukutai, who specialises in Māori and Indigenous population research and leads the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA) research programme (*Te Para One E Tū Mai Nei: Māori and indigenous futures*). Kukutai's research spans a broad range of population topics; from iwi/tribal demography and indigenous data sovereignty, to Māori–migrant relations and the impacts of colonisation on indigenous health. Kukutai also leads the 'Ethnicity Counts?' project, which investigates how governments around the world count and classify populations by ethnic-racial criteria and citizenship status. She has published widely on this topic, as well as on census methodologies. I conducted the interview via Skype and discussed with Kukutai her research on the census, enumeration, and ethnicity, as well as her view on the implications of multiculturalism in New Zealand.

Professor Paul Callister, a New Zealand based economist, who has also published widely on the topic of the New Zealand census, national demographics, and ethnic categorisation. He has undertaken research on local, national, and cross-national issues for a wide range of public, private sector and voluntary organisations, and has specialised knowledge in terms of ethnicity and developing and accessing methodological questions on ethnicity's construction and measurement. This interview was conducted over the phone. I asked Callister to elaborate on his knowledge about New Zealand's changing demographics, history of immigration and his view on the implications of multiculturalism.

Joris De Bres, was the former race-relations commissioner (instated as commissioner between 2002 and 2013), and also Honorary Advisor to the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural New Zealand and the Community Languages Association of NZ, as well as Project Director for Multilingual Aotearoa. I conducted a face-to-face interview with De Bres. He spoke about his role as the race-relations commissioner and his time with the Human Rights Commission. He also talked about his involvement in the Multicultural New Zealand and UNESCO Multiculturalism project (undertaken in 2015), where he conducted thirty-four workshops involving 581 participants throughout New Zealand, to investigate people's ideas about multiculturalism and develop a national action plan for multiculturalism and multilingualism in dialogue with government and community organisations.

My interviews with these experts were conducted in a more formal and organised manner. I used the same interview questions and topics, but I didn't ask the professionals to talk about their life history. The primary goal was to access their specialist knowledge and field expertise in order to gain a deeper understanding of multiculturalism in New Zealand and how ordinary experts talks about the topic. I used the information from these interviews to deepen my understanding of multiculturalism in a settler nation context as well as in order for me to relate the voices of everyday diversity experts to wider debates about multiculturalism dominated by those we consider ordinary experts, i.e. scholars and professionals. This helped me define the meaning of everyday diversity experts and articulate the quality of expertise developed and shared at the grassroots level.

Lastly, I conducted an interview with a leading manager at the OEC. This interview was conducted in a formal and structured manner, similar to the interview with ordinary experts. The primary aim of this interview was to gain information about the OEC, in order to ask questions specifically related to the government's approach to cultural diversity.

All interviews were between one–two hours long. They were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim and in full length. I have had to edit the raw transcript to be able to use interview excerpts analytically. The editing was done in order to make the participants stories and arguments as clear as possible. Informed consent was given by all informants prior to the commencement of any discussion or interview and each person was asked if they wished to remain anonymous and, if so, they were asked to pick a pseudonym.[13]

I found that interviewing people (formally and informally), who I had known before starting my research was challenging. On the one hand, it seemed convenient to have a personal connection to interview participants, because a degree of trust and reciprocity was already established naturally and easily. In this way, these interviewees generally felt more relaxed and comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions in the interview, because of the friendly connection we shared. On the other hand, interviewing friends meant that one is again faced with the difficult task of navigating between the roles as a friend and as a researcher (Bonner and Tolhurst 2002, 10). I found my personal relationship with interview participants provided access to a different and more in-depth kind of knowledge, which an outsider may have found harder to gain access to (O'Reilly 2009, 114). But, the relaxed and 'friend-like' style of interviewing also meant the interview conversations went off topic more easily and I sometimes found it hard to affirm my scholarly purpose and to bring the conversation back on track.

In terms of ethics, scholars have pointed to the various issues regarding interviewing friends or having personal relationships with participants. Key concerns in this context, for example, include the potential to misrepresent information, and that the conditions for consent can risk compromising the friendships between the researcher and informants (Bonner and

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[13] see template of the participant's consent form in appendix nine.

Tolhurst 2002; Liu 2006; Simmons 2007). I did consider these risks and did discuss these issues with some of my participants. Nevertheless, I felt that my relationships with the participants I knew personally were strong and trustworthy enough to handle potential ethical concerns. All participants were fully informed about my research and the purpose of the interviews – they too seemed to regard our friendship as trustworthy, and so it was a type of reciprocally gained informed consent. Many had approached me to volunteer to be a part of the research and were eager to share their knowledge on issues of cultural diversity and multiculturalism.

As previously mentioned, all participants provided informed consent via consent forms (see appendix nine). I provided information sheets and openly discussed the participants' rights, for example, withdrawing from the research and choosing how they wished to be identified. I have seen and spoken to most of my participants since our interviews, and our friendships do not seem to have changed. It should also be noted that the people I chose to interview are used to talking about the topic of multiculturalism, and continuously openly voice their opinions on issues related to this topic. Thus, I didn't feel concerned about the aspects of ethics discussed above, in the same way that I would have if my cohort of interview participants had been unknown to me or had been vulnerable people, instead of the vocal, strong and committed everyday experts I did interview.

Participant observation – collecting stories from the field

Participant observation is a crucial technique of ethnographic research (Gupta and Ferguson 1997b; Spradley 1979a). It is a method which involves going into the field to explore and observe a topic or issue close-up (Bates and Prog 1990; Clifford 1986; Sluka and Robben 2012). As an insider researcher, fieldwork was for me a matter of getting *deeper* and more purposefully involved with the multicultural sites and settings I was already a part of. I had established good connections with the people and organisations I was interested in and doing participant observations was basically a matter of continuing what I was already doing in the settings that I was already familiar with. However, the degree of familiarity did vary significantly, depending on which sites and situations I was part of. The government conferences I attended, for instance, were large public events in which I felt mostly unfamiliar in these spaces, despite the fact that I knew some of the other attendees.

Whereas participating in the events and meetings organised by the multicultural councils, I felt more familiar and like an insider, as I was treated as a regular volunteer and member of these organisations.

The following sections explain these two categories of participant observation in more detail. I separate the sections into two parts. In the first part, I focus on my participation in government-related events, and in the second part, I focus on my participation in the two grassroots organisations.

Participation in government events

I offer below a list of all the events I attended in order to observe how information about cultural diversity is presented by the government.

- *New Zealand's 9th Diversity Forum: My Dream for Aotearoa New Zealand* facilitated by the Human Rights Commission. The forum is considered New Zealand's premier diversity event, and is a national convention, which aims to create spaces for dialogue and information sharing on topics of race relations, human rights, and cultural diversity (August 2013).

- A two-day *Ethnic Women's Leadership* training programme facilitated by the OEC. The programme was designed to develop ethnic women's leadership capabilities and empower them to be the 'agents for change' in their own communities and wider society. The general purpose was to encourage 'ethnic' women to be influential and effective decision-makers, who are able to support ethnic communities to integrate and participate in society more effectively. The programme included presentations from various accomplished female leaders with minority backgrounds (primarily working in government), talking about their own experiences and giving advice on how to be a good minority leader. It also included interactive training sessions - for example, one taught us how to speak to news reporters and present ourselves in the media (November 2013).

- *EthnicA* conference in Wellington, facilitated by the OEC. The aim of this conference was to celebrate the contributions, that many people of various different ethnicities are making, to build a more inclusive and economically sustainable New Zealand. Part of the conference programme featured 'ethnic' leaders and professionals who spoke about their experiences of 'walking in two worlds' and living in a multicultural world. Emerging young 'ethnic' leaders also talked about the kind of multicultural society they aspire for and work to create (May 2014).

- *EPIC NZ* conference in Wellington, facilitated by the OEC. The conference title stands for *Ethnic People In Commerce New Zealand* and is an initiative created by the OEC in 2012, aiming to bridge the gap between New Zealand's 'ethnic' and migrant businesses and mainstream businesses. The purpose of the conference was to create a networking platform for New Zealand business owners to connect with 'ethnic' business owners and entrepreneurs. The underlying idea being that such connections can open the doors to a world of potential markets, investment, and expertise – thus creating new economic and trade opportunities for New Zealand (June 2014).

- *Lining Up Languages: Navigating Policy and Programmes* conference. The two-day conference, held at the Te Papa Tongarewa museum, was aimed at fostering discussion about government policy and activity in relation to language use and learning in New Zealand. The conference brought together a range of speakers from government, academia and the private and not-for-profit sectors (March 2015).

- *New Zealand's 12th Diversity Forum: Te Anga Whakamua/Future Focus* facilitated by the Human Rights Commission. The commission's new anti-racism campaign *That's Us* was launched at the forum, supported by the New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy and the New Zealand National Commission for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). It is a campaign which encourages New Zealanders to start sharing their personal stories about racism, intolerance, and hatred via an online platform (September 2016).

All events, except the leadership programme, were public events open to anyone interested. However, the majority of people attending these events were representatives of migrant and minority groups and organisations, multicultural council members, researchers with an interest in cultural diversity, government officials and people who are involved with projects and initiatives related to diversity issues. For each event, I registered online via a conference and forum registration site. I identified myself as a PhD student and researcher from Victoria university and this title was printed on the conference name tag I was provided with at each event. The programme for every event contained a list of key note speakers, panel discussions and networking sessions. I paid particular attention to presentations by government officials and topics concerning cultural diversity and governance. Due to the fact that it is normal and acceptable to be taking notes and record at public conferences, I was conveniently able to walk around with a note pad and a recording device (I used my cell phone as a recorder). I did not need consent as these conferences were public spaces designed for information sharing and most people were there to gather new knowledge and report on the topics and issues discussed. I openly talked to other attendees about my research and my purpose for being at the events. I audio recorded the speeches I found most relevant (that is, speeches by government officials specifically about the topic of cultural diversity) and took detailed notes of what was said by the different speakers, what questions were asked by the audience, and how the speakers responded to these questions. The EthnicA, EPICNZ, and Lining Up Language conferences were facilitated by the government and at these events I also took note of the ways in which information about cultural diversity was showcased by conference organisers and speakers. I took photos as an additional way to capture evidence of the visual representation of cultural diversity.

The two diversity forums were facilitated by the Human Rights Commission, but I found they were still relevant to attend as they presented venues where government officials spoke publicly on the topic of diversity and multiculturalism, and generally covered topics related to governance and cultural diversity. For example, New Zealand's twelfth Diversity Forum in 2016 included a presentation with the title *Diversifying the Public Sector*, which was held by the State Services Commissioner. At both forums I took note of what I saw, heard and the conversations I had, and I also recorded some of the forum presentations.

The Ethnic Women Leadership programme was facilitated by OEC yet it was different from the other events in that it is conceptualised as an exclusive training programme intended only for twenty participants. Participants were selected on the basis of their ethnic and cultural belonging, their community involvement and career achievements. I had to fill out an application, which had to be assessed to see if I met the requirements to take part in the programme. This event took place when I was in the process of applying to start the PhD and my experiences from this programme were important in shaping my initial understandings of the stories told by government about cultural diversity.

My participant observations in the government events also involved online observations of the different websites and social media platforms that were linked to each event. For example, I followed all the posts made on OEC's Facebook page (during 2013 and 2016) in relation to the EthnicA and the EPICNZ conferences. These posts typically included photos taken at the events presenting snapshots of speakers, attendees, the venue, sponsors and the distributed merchandise and booklets. As mentioned, information from OEC dominates the government spaces I participated in, and so naturally I focused mainly on the OEC's website and social media materials. However, I did also look at the websites and social media platforms of other government institutions, such as the Ministry of Social Development, Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. The events were often organised in collaboration between OEC and other institutions, thus it was relevant to see how these other institutions represent and deliver information about cultural diversity.

Participation at grassroots level

As indicated earlier, I was involved with two grassroots organisations: Upper Hutt Multicultural Council and the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. My field notes and observations are primarily from the following events:

- *Men Against Violence Towards Women forum (MAVTW)* organised by the Upper Hutt Multicultural Council in collaboration with the White Ribbon Foundation and E Tū Whānau. The forum focused on heightening awareness around family violence

within ethnic and migrant communities, and different workshop activities and discussion groups were held to provide attendees (community leaders) the tools and knowledge to support and give advice to migrant families that suffer from family violence (October 2014).

- *MAVTW forum* organised for and by the Chinese Community in the Hutt Valley in collaboration with the Upper Hutt Multicultural Council. Mandarin speakers and translators facilitated the forum and the workshop activities were conducted in Mandarin (November 2014).

- A one-day *intercultural training course* organised by the Federation of Multicultural Councils in partnership with the Centre of Applied Cross-Cultural Research (at Victoria University of Wellington). The course was designed to deliver intercultural training to people working in the NGO sector in New Zealand. It was addressed primarily to people who were considering becoming an intercultural trainer for the Federation (December 2014).

- A *women's workshop* organised by the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. The workshop focused on women's leadership and family violence in ethnic and migrant communities. The aim of the workshop was to empower women who are already leaders of their ethnic communities, families, and networks, and to enable them to speak out against and actively deal with issues of family violence in their respective communities (May 2015).

- The *National Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Multicultural New Zealand and various regional councils*. The meeting was hosted by the Upper Hutt Multicultural Council in collaboration with Orongomai Marae in Upper Hutt. The meeting focused on the Federation's strategic plan for 2015–2016 and included workshops around safety in the community for recent migrants and refugees, particularly addressing safety for women and children (June 2015).

- *Inaugural national meeting of Migrant Service Centres* operated by Migrant Services Trusts, Regional Multicultural Councils, and Newcomers Networks. The meeting was held as an opportunity to bring together for the first time managers and coordinators from migrant service centres and multicultural councils nationwide, with the purpose of sharing experiences, learning from each other, and discussing collaborative and strategic ways of working together in the future. The meeting also provided the opportunity for people at the grassroots level of migrant activism to meet and dialogue with people at the level of government. Moreover, the federation's report, 'Our Multicultural Future' (2015), was also launched at the meeting presenting the research and data which promotes the mainstreaming of cultural diversity and develops the foundations for policies with a cultural aspect (August 2015).

- A traditional *Karenni Dee Ku festival* organised by the Karenni community representatives in Cannons Creek in Porirua (September 2015). The Dee Ku festival is a traditional festival, normally celebrated every year by the Karenni people. The festival is named after the leaf-wrapped sticky rice, which is also seen as a symbol of unity for Karenni people. For the representatives of the Karenni community in Porirua, who organised the Dee Ku festival, it was an opportunity for the community to come together and to share traditional practices of dancing and music with the younger generations as well as the wider community.

Informed consent was given by organisation leaders, granting me permission to use my observations for research purposes.[14] At each event I participated as a regular volunteer, however, everyone knew I was doing research to complete my PhD. In fact, I would often be introduced as 'the PhD student'. I engaged in different activities such as conference planning, workshop organisation, funding applications, and more practical tasks such as serving food, setting tables and cleaning. However, I was often employed as the minute taker and report writer, due to my academic skills and background. I documented my

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[14] See organisations information sheet in appendix ten and organisations consent form in appendix eleven.

experiences and observations through field notes, written either during or immediately after an event. My role as a minute taker and report writer meant I was often conveniently put in a position where my main job was to sit and take notes on what was said and done at the meetings and workshops.

My involvement with the two multicultural councils also created a unique opportunity for me to meet and talk to people who had great insights about the processes of institutionalised cultural recognition and minority struggles. I was able to observe how grassroots activists and groups, who in different ways associate themselves with the topic of multiculturalism, navigate and assert claims of cultural recognition, minority rights and self-determination. Through the different events I attended, I had conversations with ethnic community workers, migrant representatives, passionate anti-racists, and multicultural and human rights activists, who all shared stories about the complex dynamics of integration in New Zealand and the real-life struggles of racism and exclusions experienced by marginalised communities. These stories helped me to better understand the ways in which policies and state responses to cultural diversity are received, made sense of and put into practice at the grassroots level. I also collected and read ten reports published by the multicultural councils (see appendix seven). The reports are written in relation to the events and services they organise. These documents helped me gain a deeper understanding of the work that multicultural councils do in New Zealand and provided insights to the modes in which grassroots organisations describe cultural diversity.

I generally felt like I was at an advantage being an insider researcher, particularly in terms of gaining access to field sites and building trustworthy relationships with participants. However, doing research at home and amongst people whom one already knows, can be difficult in terms of navigating the roles and responsibilities of research versus maintaining personal commitments and relationships. I have already touched on some of the challenges I experienced in regard to interviewing friends, but I want to also make a few remarks in relation to being an insider in the grassroots world I was investigating.

Firstly, I found that it was difficult to know when to switch research mode on and off and decide which observations to include and exclude. I had access to so much relevant

information and evidence through the two multicultural councils that it was hard for me to select specific information to focus on. Furthermore, participants would sometimes ask me to include specific information in my thesis or write about an issue that they felt needed urgent attention, and I felt guilty about turning them down if this information or issue seemed outside the scope of my research. Therefore, I eventually chose to only focus on the meetings and workshops listed above. These were interesting spaces, as they brought together people from the wider community, multicultural council members, leaders of minority groups and representatives from other grassroots (NGO) organisations.

Secondly, I also felt it was difficult to explain the purpose of my narrative and ethnographic approach to multiculturalism to people working in the NGO sector. When a person is committed to change and creating better political solutions to approach cultural diversity, then it seems to be a mystery why an ethnographic exploration of the stories told about multiculturalism are important. Some people seemed a bit disappointed when I explained that I was writing my PhD as an advocate for the organisations I was part of. However, most were very supportive of my research and were always eager to better understand how my ethnographic approach was relevant.

A last challenge I experienced while doing participant observation with the multicultural councils relates to ethics and gaining consent. I gained consent from the managers of both organisations; this was not difficult. But, as I went along to events, meetings and workshops where a range of different people showed up, I was not able to gain consent from every person there. Neither was I able to make sure that everyone was fully informed about my role as a researcher, although I made an effort to always introduce myself as a PhD student and to openly talk about my research purposes. This issue was, however, compensated for by the fact that I have been very cautious about how I handle information from my fieldnotes. For instance, I avoided stating people's names unless I had explicit permission to do so, and I made sure not to share any information that could be considered sensitive. I am still in contact with members from both organisations and we still have a positive and friendly relationship, and I have also kept them informed of how I have included field notes and other observations in the thesis.

Document analysis – collecting stories I read

Collection of documents/textual material is typically an integral part of ethnographic fieldwork. It is common to use information from documents and other forms of written materials to provide further evidence and empirical depth to a given argument and analysis (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). I found that the written material, as well as photos, enabled a deeper understanding of the stories told by government officials at the various conferences I attended. Through such intensive and repeated reading of such material, I realised that the conference presentations illustrated how government officials articulate information about cultural diversity. They do not portray any personal opinions but reflect a rehearsed and staged narration of a given topic, which I view and analysed as part of government-led narratives to these topics. The textual material on cultural diversity, which I collected from the different documents, websites and social media platforms, also illustrates how the government articulates information about cultural diversity. However, compared to the conference speeches, this material provided me with carefully crafted and well-polished statements. This is because these statements are distributed as print media, and so they carry with them a form of permanency that underpins oral presentations by government officials. Thus, the text materials are, more so than the speeches, a clearly recorded reflection of the government's voice. Similarly, the photos and images displayed in print media distributed by the government work to emphasise a particular aspect of the text they accompany, or sometimes they function to provide their own side-story. Therefore, I found that it was relevant to include some of these photographs, as they helped to communicate a deeper understanding of how the government aims to portray itself and its approach to cultural diversity.

I used documentary analysis to uncover and organise the textual evidence I assembled from the government documents, booklets, guidelines, web site texts, photos and speech transcripts. As an ethnographic method, documentary analysis (also known as ethnographic content analysis) focuses on describing and tracking discourse through different textual and visual media, which includes identifying key words, meanings, themes, and narrative patterns over time (Altheide 2000). A key part of this process is for the researcher to examine documents in constant comparison with other sources of data and ask questions

about the organisation, production, relationships and social impacts of the content (Altheide et al 2008). I applied this method as a tool to map out the repetitions and reiterations that appeared as I read through the collection of government materials. The process of analysis started as I transcribed the interview with the OEC manager and realised that the manager had basically performed a speech, which was almost identical to the other presentations I had recorded at the other OEC events. The interview appeared very polished and was intended for a wide range of listeners. As I went over the interview transcript and reflected on what the OEC manager had said in relation to the speeches that I had heard from other government officials, I began to notice a consistency in the way cultural diversity was articulated across these different spaces.

The process of transcribing and organising the documents had turned into a process of fieldwork dejà vu. I found that the same narrative content was used over and over again – in the documents, the conferences, speeches and the interview I conducted with the OEC manager – shaping a particular government narrative about cultural diversity across a diverse range of texts. I then carefully went through this diverse collection of government related materials to highlight sentences and passages where the government described itself and its approach to cultural diversity. I used the selected sentences and passages to re-tell the stories of cultural diversity and multiculturalism attached to government and to analyse the kind of overall government narrative I saw emerging from the data.

Making sense of all the stories and staging a conversation

This thesis assembles different types of ethnographic materials: personal vignettes, field notes, interview transcripts, photos and documents. The mixed-methods approach to data collection which I applied, is reflected clearly in the different types of data that I assembled from the fieldwork. As Davies (2008) points out, the kind of heterogeneous evidence gathered through fieldwork lacks organisation, in the sense that it is not suited for rigid coding and categorising systems, such as NVivo and other qualitative data analysis software. Instead, ethnographic research encourages a fluid and flexible process of analysis, which switches between reading through, organising and constructing theoretical arguments based on the assembled data (Davies 2008).

I apply a narrative approach to analysis, treating the data I gather as narrative evidence - evidence of how stories about culture, identity, belonging and a multicultural society are narrated within different settings and spheres of society. Analysing stories requires listening carefully to the stories *emerging* from this material and getting to know these stories in depth (Maggio 2014). Narratives are in constant flux of re-organisation and adjustment, and narrative analysis involves recognising that stories do not come with meaning already attached to them; "what they mean is rather something listeners have to discover for themselves" (Bönisch-Brednich 2016, 211). As I state in the introduction, narrative analysis refers to a cluster of analytic methods for interpreting texts or visual data that have a storied form. The first step of analysis was to me a process of reading through the assembled transcripts, documents, field notes and personal diaries over and over again, and carefully taking note of the narrative themes, content and structure emerging from the different types of evidence. Pulling out particular narrative themes, content and structure, allowed me to interrogate what the stories of cultural diversity are about.

The next step of analysis was different according to each type of evidence that I was analysing. My diary notes and auto-ethnographic observations were organised in the process of crafting personal vignettes. The interview transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis – I categorised comments and stories shared by participants according to broad themes, which roughly resembled the list of conversation topics I had prepared to guide the interviews. The key themes that emerged include: 1) Socio-cultural belonging and identification, 2) Census categories of ethnicity and cultural identity, 3) Racism and discrimination experiences, 4) Immigration and settlement experiences, 5) Intercultural encounters, and 6) Opinions and thoughts on multiculturalism (i.e. minority rights, cultural recognition, biculturalism and equity/affirmative action policies). The evidence I gathered from participation in the two grassroots organisations and from informal conversations with people working in these spaces were also organised into these six categories. I highlighted entries in my field notes, which linked to the stories shared by my interview participants as well as the personal vignettes.

The narrative evidence attached to government was, as explained in the section above, essentially done through detailed documentary analysis. During this process of analysis, the

reoccurring themes and narrative content could be tracked across the diverse range of texts - booklets, reports, policy documents, and website materials – these then also became the analytical themes that I used to dissect and make sense of the presentations by government officials and observations from the public events I attended.

The final step of analysis unfolds in the process of staging a conversation, which brings these two narrative spaces into contact. As I explained in the introduction, the purpose of my thesis is to explore the interface between lived everyday discourses of multiculturalism and government-oriented discourses; or in other words, to stage an imagined conversation that makes it possible to draw attention to the points of disjuncture that appear in the interface. The method of staging a conversation is to me an analytical framework, which works to organise my evidence into two different sets of stories. To describe government narratives of cultural diversity I triangulated evidence gained from the documentary analysis, speech analysis and fieldnotes from participation in government events. To describe stories from grassroots organisations and an everyday messy multiculturalism, I also triangulated evidence from personal vignettes, interviews with everyday diversity experts and field notes from participation in grassroots originations.

Conclusion

The project of collecting stories and staging a conversation between different sets of stories is at the heart of this thesis and so it is essential to have an in-depth understanding of the methodological procedures and considerations which made this project possible. In this chapter I have provided a detailed overview of the practical steps and decisions which were a part of my fieldwork. I introduced the field location, field sites and interview participants. I introduced the methods and have specified how I have applied each method and what kind of data it gave me access to. I also explained how each kind of data I gathered is relevant for the purpose of staging a conversation. Finally, I have discussed and reflected on the different challenges and ethical concerns I have faced during my fieldwork. The next chapter is the first analytical chapter, which presents the government-led narratives about cultural diversity and critically explores the assumptions about harmony, a welcoming indigenous population and social cohesions, which seem to guide these narratives.

Chapter three

The stories told by the government about itself and cultural diversity

In this chapter I explore the ways in which cultural diversity and government responses to diversity are described and explained by government officials and in policy settings. I want to emphasise, however, that my aim is not to conduct a policy analysis. Instead, I am aiming to conduct a narrative analysis of the stories and information about cultural diversity that are attached to government communications and policy. In this chapter, I focus on the topic of cultural diversity instead of multiculturalism, simply because the word multiculturalism is rarely used in policy settings in New Zealand. As discussed in the introduction, this is due to the government's particular commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and a *bicultural* framework that guides the nation's perception of itself. Issues linked to multiculturalism, such as immigration, settlement (integration), minority rights and cultural recognition are typically explained and referred to by the government under the term 'cultural diversity'. Therefore, throughout this chapter although I use the term 'cultural diversity', I still analyse the evidence in relation to multiculturalism, in order to expose how the government frames issues related to multiculturalism.

In the previous methods chapter, I discussed how I drew together a diverse range of ethnographic evidence to explore how the government understands and approaches the concept of cultural diversity. In this chapter, I extract evidence from different types of policy documents, booklets, website materials, social media posts, and photographs, as well as speeches by government officials, field notes from government facilitated events, and a face to face interview with an Office of Ethnic Communities (OEC) manager. I will demonstrate how consistencies and reiterations become traceable when looking across these different forms of evidence and explain how a general government narrative takes shape from these points of repetition. The aim of this chapter is to unfold the consistent features of government narratives about cultural diversity and to unpack the different assumptions that are reinforced by this narrative. I focus specifically on the silences and limitations, which are

implicitly part of the assumptions that the government make in relation to cultural diversity, ethnicity, belonging and a multicultural society.

The chapter is structured according to five key narrative sections that each represents different stages of a story. The first section looks at the beginning narrative and analyses the kind of stories and background information that government agencies provide in relation to New Zealand as a multicultural nation. The second section looks at the settings of government narratives and presents the stories and information that the government uses to describe the demographic and social settings relevant to cultural diversity in New Zealand. The third section looks at the main characters in government stories about cultural diversity and describes how and to whom the government target its responses to cultural diversity. The fourth section analyses the motives and general themes that guide government narratives, and lastly, the fifth section discusses the vision or the preferred ending of the narrative and how the government conceptualises the possibility to achieve such an ending/vision. All of these narrative sections were found to be consistently repeated across the diverse range of government-related materials I analysed, and, as mentioned, they work to shape a particular way of framing cultural diversity and issues related to multiculturalism. This chapter examines the underlying assumptions and meanings relevant to each narrative section and critically discusses the impacts and effects associated with the way government narratives frame cultural diversity (multiculturalism).

The Office of Ethnic Communities (OEC) and Statistics New Zealand

Before I proceed with my analysis of government narratives about cultural diversity, I need to introduce briefly the two government entities, which have been central in terms of shaping my understanding of a 'government' narrative. While I draw on information from several government departments, OEC and Statistics New Zealand are the two main sources.

The OEC was launched in 2001 under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and is considered the government's authoritative advisor, and the pre-eminent source of information in relation to policymaking when it engages with cultural diversity. The OEC manager I interviewed explained that the OEC was established when the nation in the early 2000s was going through a *"storming phase"*. A phase, the manager stated where *"ethnic people [non-*

western migrants] and locals [New Zealanders] were feeling frustrated and threatened by each other, where they were unsure how to get along, and where the locals felt overwhelmed and did not know what to do with all of that diversity".[15] The OEC was established during this period to handle these experiences of ethnic tension between minorities and the majority society. Its purpose was to manage the needs and claims of a growing 'ethnic' population (minorities), as well as responding to a *"frighten[ed] and frustrated"* local population (majority) that was worried about their identity and community (see appendix six: OEC booklet 2010).

Since 2014, OEC has been in charge of the government's *Settling-In* programme, which was introduced in 2003 by the Ministry of Social Development. This programme is the main state facilitated integration and diversity project. It provides support and funding for activities that aim to foster integration, improve well-being, and develop and communicate rights for new migrants, refugees, and ethnic communities. Most of the grassroots organisations I was involved with through fieldwork receive a large part of their funding through this programme. OEC has also developed several integration programmes and events, many of which I have been part of myself, for instance, *the Ethnic Women's Leadership Programme*, the *EthnicA conference* and the *EPIC* conference and workshop.

Information from OEC on the topics of cultural diversity and other related topics, such as immigration, minority rights, refugee settlement, integration, multiculturalism, and citizenship, play a crucial role in terms of shaping how cultural diversity is approached by government in general and also how the topic is represented and understood in public debates and within the grassroots sector. The centrality of OEC in the settings of state multiculturalism is also why I conducted an interview with one of the leading managers at OEC, as I felt it was necessary to gain a more in-depth and direct knowledge about OEC's role and outlook in relation to cultural diversity and governance. As I mentioned in the methods chapter, it was by listening to the OEC manager and reflecting on the interview, in relation to the other government-related data I had gathered, that I realised a clear consistency in the way cultural diversity is explained across these different types of narrative evidence. For example, positive stories about harmony, social cohesion and a

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[15] This explanation of the OEC's establishment and purpose is also repeated in several OEC documents and conference speeches (see appendix six: OEC booklet 2011a; OEC report 2012a).

celebration of cultural diversity were consistently part of the way government narratives communicate information about cultural diversity and a multicultural population. The statistical information generated, primarily through census data, is a key part of how OEC define cultural diversity and a multicultural population. Particularly census information on ethnicity, language and religion (related to minorities) is essential to the way the OEC articulates its responses to diversity.

Therefore, in terms of Statistics New Zealand, I mainly analysed census information. National population census occupies, as Andersen and Kukutai (2016) argue, a central position in the state architecture of official "history telling" and is therefore instrumental in constructing the government narrative. Engaging with the census has been crucial to this project, in order to understand and follow how the state and grassroots communities engage with the census as a process and essential governing tool to describe a multicultural population. Analysing its data generating purpose, in regard to ethnicity and cultural diversity, enabled me to understand how census data is utilised by government when constructing official stories about cultural belonging and diversity, and this provided the background of my narrative analysis of government stories. Moreover, the census and census categories were frequently mentioned by my interview participants when sharing stories about identity, cultural belonging and a multicultural society. Internationally, census data has received increased scholarly attention parallel with the increased focus on multiculturalism and the diversification of society from scholars, experts and community activists (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 2000; Farrell 2016; Fernandez 2014; Kertzer and Arel 2001; Prewitt 2002, 2013; Prewitt and Verba 2017; Simon and Piche 2012; Simon et al. 2015; Thompson 2012).

Governments in most immigrant-receiving countries rely on statistical and quantitative knowledge to develop, organise and communicate responses to a multicultural population. Kertzer and Arel (2001), for example, note that the rise of multiculturalism creates pressure on enumerating bodies to record and display the ethnic and multi-ethnic make-up of the population. At the various government facilitated conferences, workshops, and meetings I attended, I found that government officials would typically begin their public communication about the challenges of a multicultural society by using census ethnicity data and statistics as the starting point for conversations about multiculturalism. This was

not only the case for government officials, but also for ethnic liaison officers, minority representatives, settlement workers and multicultural activists I spoke to.

Through the grassroots organisations I engaged with, I saw how census categories and information about specific ethnic communities plays a significant role, in terms of communicating to the public and to different government departments who "we" are and why "we" need funding for a given community event or service. I realised how important the census and census ethnicity data are in terms of determining which identities are made officially recognisable and legitimate in the eyes of the state. In the context of multiculturalism, the census, as data and a process, has great influential power in the sense that it can regulate who counts, who is visible and who is granted or denied access to society. By informing policies and state practices, census data plays an important part in shaping the struggles for state recognition and resources. Census data also has the ability to impact how social issues are understood and described in public debates, as it has the power to affect what is considered true and/or false about a given social topic and any chosen section of the population (Andersen and Kukutai 2016).

In the beginning

In the foreword to an OEC booklet (2013) titled *Building Bridges*, Minister Judith Collins states, "We [New Zealand] have a proud record of respect and tolerance for diversity in all its forms, and a reputation as a successful model for social harmony". This proclamation of New Zealand as a harmonious and peaceful country, which is and has always been open and friendly towards newcomers and migrants, can be traced across most of the government-related data I assemble. It is typically the 'beginning' story that sets the foundation for any government communication about cultural diversity.

For example, the OEC strategic direction in its intent report from 2016, titled *Flourishing Ethnic Diversity, Thriving New Zealand*, Minister Hon. Peseta Sam Lotu-liga states: "New Zealand has a proud history as a nation that is welcoming of diversity. Māori, our first peoples began this tradition in a formal sense in 1840 by entering into a partnership through Te Tiriti o Waitangi with representatives of the Crown. Since then we have welcomed people from all corners of the world" (2).

As the quote exemplifies, the government is inclined to reference the history of colonial settlement and the encounter between Māori and European settlers as a way to frame current narratives of cultural diversity in a positive manner. The constructed story of a friendly indigenous population welcoming European settlers, and the creation of the Treaty as an 'open invitation' and unquestioned form of partnership, which neglects to acknowledge the Treaty breaches that occurred after 1840, are then used as the background story to present a positive image and 'prove' the New Zealand government is doing so well in responding to cultural diversity. I found that the positive framing of current government responses to cultural diversity is reinforced by statements that assume the government has always (or throughout history) been approaching diversity well.

Another example of this is seen in the report *'Choice Whiriwhiria – The New Zealand Citizenship Story'*, published by Internal Affairs in 2014, where in the section explaining New Zealand's history of citizenship rights and human rights it states:

> New Zealanders are proud that we have often led the way among nations in recognizing and extending the rights of citizens and others…New Zealand has also recognized specific injustices of the past in which the rights of citizens were violated…New Zealand is a strong advocate of human rights at the united nations and in all its dealings with other countries (34).

The OEC manager, during the interview, similarly described how special the New Zealand government is as *"it has always stayed true to its international accountability [i.e. international human rights acts] regardless of who the ruling party is"*. Moreover, the positive framing of current government responses to cultural diversity is typically constructed in relative terms, by comparing New Zealand's cultural history and current multicultural situation to other countries that belong to the OECD, and specifically to other western settler nations like Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The OEC manger, for example, states that *"New Zealand has learnt from the mistakes of other countries in terms of dealing with cultural diversity"*, and in the OEC report *'Flourishing ethnic diversity; thriving New Zealand'* it is likewise stated, "while New Zealand has relatively speaking harmonious relations, we cannot take these for granted. There are many examples from overseas of what can happen when communities do not successfully connect and integrate" (See appendix six: OEC report 2016, 8). By placing New Zealand – both

historically and relatively – in this 'unique' positive position, government narratives portray 'the New Zealand approach to cultural diversity' as a leading example internationally.

In the OEC booklet *Building Bridges* (2013) it is stated "New Zealand is not immune to the effects of events and incidents [referring to the terrorist attacks of 9/11] that occur abroad. In order to maintain social cohesion the aim is to prevent extremist activities from having an impact on the domestic landscape" (see appendix six: OEC booklet 2013, 4). This quote exemplifies, how the proclamation of social harmony also assumes that issues of social *disharmony* (repeatedly referred to as 'ethnic conflict' in government documents) do not exist in New Zealand. Such an assumption is problematic, as it works to completely silence stories of social disharmony and ethnic conflict. As a colonial settler nation, New Zealand has a long and well documented history of conflict and violence related to increased cultural diversity and encounters between different cultures – such as the early encounters between the indigenous population and European settlers, as well as more recent encounters between migrants from the Pacific and Asia and the white settler majority population (Hill 2004, 2009; Mikaere 2013a; Sullivan 2016; Walker 1994). Yet, stories about these moments in New Zealand's history, where diversity evidently was not dealt with in a positive and harmonious manner, are excluded when the government describes the history of cultural diversity. For example, the previously cited comment by Minister Hon. Peseta Sam Lotu-liga (page seventy one), clearly illustrates how presenting New Zealand's 'diversity' history within the positive narrative of harmony and tolerance, works to completely exclude issues such as the impact of British imperialism and colonialism, Treaty injustices and various Māori land wars (Hill 2009, 2012).

Drawing on Stephen Turner's (2011) concept of settler dreaming, I interpret the government's fixation on a positive framing of the history of cultural diversity, as reflecting a specific settler desire to remember the history of colonisation and settlement in a non-conflictual manner, in order for the settler subject (in this case the settler government) to imagine a sense of national belonging. By silencing stories of violent conflict and disassociating the history of cultural diversity from the long, complicated and often traumatic history of colonisation, the (settler) government asserts an idea of Pākehā innocence (Mikaere 2013b). This also works to steer the topic of cultural diversity away from, for example, those occluded aspects of nation building that Ivison's quote on page

twenty points to, that is the harmful modes of assimilation and an indifference to the aspiration of minorities.

The only mention of disharmony and conflict, which was occasionally included when the government describes the history of cultural diversity, were stories about the two World Wars and the Springbok tour protests in 1981. For instance, the OEC manager explained in the interview that New Zealand's uniqueness, in terms of social harmony and humanitarian accountability, can be credited to the fact that New Zealand participated in the two World Wars, he stated *"New Zealand lost many people too, we felt the loss, and so, therefore, we stay accountable to governing international acts"*. Also, at various OEC events, speakers would often use the Springbok protests as an event which depicted New Zealanders as people who love diversity and take a stand against racism. Despite the fact that both the two World Wars and the Springbok protests were conflicts that caused significant civil unrest and societal fragmentation (Richards 1999), the government consistently narrates these core historical periods as a unifying phenomenon that brought the nation closer together. Stories about these 'moments' of conflict are carefully crafted paradigms of historic nation building significance, where New Zealanders were united against external enemies and ideologies of racism. Thus, conflict and disharmony are mentioned, but only to serve a very deliberate purpose to stress that the negative issues existed *elsewhere*. Moreover, by pitching New Zealand's history of cultural diversity against OECD standards and creating this image of New Zealand as unique, the use of the OECD framework of comparison (that is privileged in government) also works to emphasise that 'problems' (in terms of responding to cultural diversity) are something that exists elsewhere. In other words, it produces an idea of a New Zealand exceptionalism and undermines, not only stories about domestic issues of social conflict and failed government responses to these issues, but also alternative comparative frameworks for understanding and explaining concepts like immigration, settlement and cultural diversity in a settler-nation context.

Kukutai and Rata (2017), for example, advocate for the right of Māori to be included in immigration decision making and reflect on the concept of indigenising New Zealand's approach to immigration. They situate issues of multiculturalism within an indigenous framework, using stories about colonisation and Māori experiences of immigration, to understand the current situation of New Zealand as a multicultural nation, and in doing so

demonstrate how a different mode of comparison also brings forth a different reading of government responses to cultural diversity (Kukutai and Rata 2017; Kukutai 2015). They state:

> Māori and newer migrants have the opportunity to work together to create constitutional arrangements that are better suited to our diverse citizenry. During our own migration story, our ancestors were able to navigate to these shores due in no small part to their strength of vision. Our navigators were able to see the distant islands of Aotearoa and pull them forth. This same ability to see beyond the horizon will enable us [to] pull forth a new constitution for this nation (Kukutai and Rata 2017, 44).

These kind of reflections about immigration and multicultural policies (or constitutional arrangements) from an indigenous perspective, are important to listen to if we want to understand the complexity of diversity in a settler nation context. If, for example, we want to get a better understanding of how to approach the dynamic and multi-layered reality of settler-nation super-diversity (as explained by Spoonley in the introduction) – where indigeneity and majority identities are part of a local politics of diversity, *alongside* those that are associated with the presence of ethnic minorities, refugee and immigrant communities – then indigenous perspectives should be included and valued as central to the way government articulate policy responses to immigration and cultural diversity (Dale 2017; Kukutai 2015).

Positive imagery

The positive story of harmony, friendliness and a welcoming nation is also clearly communicated through the visual representation of cultural diversity in government settings. For instance, the photo collage seen in *image one*, which was posted on the OEC's Facebook page (2014), illustrates how a positive story is also communicated through the careful placing of visual imagery in government publications. The photos in the collage are from the *EthnicA conference* in 2014 and the people in the photos are the attendees (including myself). The symmetrical arrangement of people within each photo frame conveys a sense of togetherness and invites the viewer to focus on the friendly embrace of diverse peoples.

Image one: this photo collage features three images from the EthnicA conference in Wellington in 2014. The collage was downloaded from the OEC's Facebook page and was part of a social media post published about the EthnicA conference a few days after its appearance. The collage emphasises the image of harmony, inclusivity and positively experienced diversity.

Each photograph in this carefully assembled collage includes a range of ethnicities that, when combined with the positive body postures of the people in the photos (e.g. people smiling and putting their arms around each other), connotes a strong sense of multicultural and racial harmony. Photos such as these, that portray groups of people who are visually different smiling and standing close together in a friendly manner, are a common feature of the public face of the OEC. Below is another example (see *image two*) taken from an OEC report published in 2014. This photo is a generic photo, not taken from any particular event, but used nonetheless to illustrate the same visual symbol of people who are different and who yet are clearly getting along in a friendly and harmonious manner.

Image two: This generic photo is taken from an OEC report titled *"Flourishing ethnic diversity; thriving New Zealand"* (2016). The photo is part of the introduction section where the general manager of the OEC explains the department's plan and strategy in terms of dealing with cultural diversity.

Many of the images distributed by the OEC display a focus on a hug or/and a handshake between people who look different. For example, the three images I present in the collage in *image three* illustrate the way hugs and handshakes are emphasised in photos distributed by the OEC.

Image three: both the image to the left and the image in the middle are from the Eid celebration in parliament in 2016. The third image, to the right, is from the EthnicA conference in Christchurch 2013. The photos were downloaded from the OEC's Facebook page (November 2016).

The image to the left is from an Eid celebration held in parliament in 2016 and shows a man wearing a keffiyeh (a headscarf commonly worn by Saudi Arabian men) hugging another man wearing a kufi (a hat commonly worn by men in Africa and the African diaspora). In the middle image, which is also taken from the same 2016 celebration in parliament 2016, we see a 'brown' man shaking hands with a white man. The photo to the right is from the *EthnicA conference* held in Christchurch in 2013 and shows Minister Judith Collins (a Pākehā woman) hugging a young girl of minority background. The first image illustrates an encounter between different cultural and religious traditions, the second image illustrates an encounter between different racial groupings, and the third image illustrates an encounter between a representative of the government and a member of an ethnic minority. I view these photos as visual representations of social harmony. Hugs and handshakes are generally understood as positive forms of interaction and symbolise friendship and partnership, and the visual representation of these forms of interaction helps to demonstrate and promote the kind of cohesive behaviour that the government desires in a multicultural society.

The setting of cultural diversity

Statistics New Zealand defines ethnicity as a measure of cultural affiliation, which is understood "[as the] social, historical, geographical, linguistic, behavioural, religious, and

self-perceived affinity between a person and an ethnic group" (see appendix three). Furthermore, in *the Classification and Standards for Census Ethnicity Definition* (displayed on Statistics New Zealand's website), it is stated that 'an ethnic group' is defined as "[a] group made up of people who have some or all of the following characteristics: a common proper name, one or more elements of common culture which need not be specified (but may include religion, customs, language, a unique community of interests, feelings and/or actions), a shared sense of common origins or ancestry, and/or a common geographical origin" (see appendix three). Statistics New Zealand recognises that people may understand ethnicity and cultural belonging differently to the official census definition. Some people may, for example, fill out the census question regarding ethnicity and cultural affiliation in accordance with measures of affiliation that are different than the ones considered 'ethnic' in the census; such as nationality, citizenship, ancestry, and race. According to Statistics New Zealand, race is a biological indicator and an ascribed attribute, ancestry is a biological and historical concept that refers to a person's blood descent, and citizenship is a legal status, whereas ethnicity is a self-perceived cultural concept (see appendix three and five). It is also noted that ethnic origin is not to be confused with ethnicity, as this concept describes a person's historical relationship to an ethnic group. The term ethnicity is describing a person's present-day affiliation (see appendix three). On their website in the section describing the census definition of ethnicity, it is specified that:

> Collection of ethnicity presents some difficulties. People report a range of aspects of their identities such as cultural affiliation, ancestry, nationality, and race when asked for ethnic group identification. Ethnicity should not be confused with other related terms. Evidence suggests that people may answer the question easily but *not understand* the ethnicity concept being asked for (emphasis added, see appendix three).

By defining ethnicity as something in contrast to other forms of affiliation, it is implied by Statistics New Zealand that cultural identity and belonging is something which can be distinctively defined and measured separately from other aspects of a person's identity and life experiences. This last observation is important because it leads to the kind of cultural identity that is constructed from census ethnicity data. In its statistical formation, therefore, cultural identity becomes a label. The act of 'counting' ethnicity and 'creating' statistical representations of cultural diversity, insists on drawing clear boundaries between individuals and communities, even when those boundaries are necessarily blurred and

dissolved (Farrell 2016, 11; Kertzer and Arel 2001). The idea of ethnic tick-boxing requires us to possess a pre-social identity and works to divide and isolate identities as quantifiable units. Interdependence is ignored for the purpose of apportionment, which is problematic in a multicultural society, where identities and ideas of belonging seem to be shaped by intercultural connections and heterogeneous feelings of belonging. The definition of ethnicity (cultural identity) that guides census surveys, appears to be ill-equipped to approach multiplicity and a multicultural population. In the following chapter, I will elaborate further on the specific limiting effects this can have.

When looking at OEC's target group, which is defined as 'ethnics' and 'ethnic people', it becomes clear how census data influences the government's approach to ethnicity. The word 'ethnic' is used to identify groups that are different from the majority, although it is recognised that everyone has ethnicity (See appendix six: OEC booklet 2005, 2012b). For example, on the OEC website it is stated that the term 'ethnic' is used to refer to people who are migrants, refugees, long-term settlers, and those who are born in New Zealand and identify their ethnicity as Asian, European, Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (see appendix six: OEC website).

I often heard government officials divide society into three main sectors when talking about the topic of cultural diversity – they would talk about the mainstream society, Māori and ethnic communities. This threefold division was also replicated in most OEC documents, a clear distinction was constantly made between the mainstream sector and the ethnic sector (see appendix six: OEC booklets 2012a, 2012b, 2014). The ethnic sector, as I mentioned, are those who are not the majority (those whose ethnicity is not Anglo-Saxon and Celtic). The mainstream sector is defined as those with Anglo-Saxon and Celtic ethnicity, and Māori are considered separate from these as the indigenous population. Pacific communities are sometimes considered part of the ethnic sector, but most times they are excluded and placed within an extra 'Pacific' sector, which is ambiguously added to or placed alongside the mainstream-Māori-Ethnic triangle. This partitioning way of describing a multicultural society reflects the same image that is created through the census statistics, and it demonstrates how the census ethnicity data works to reproduce a view of culture as enclosed units. Such a view, as I will unpack further in the next chapter, is problematic not only because it appears ill-equipped when approaching a multicultural and super-diverse

society, but also because it risks reproducing racial and biased responses of culture and cultural differences. In the next section I showcase the kind of imagery that is typically used by government to communicate what a multicultural society looks like.

A dividing imagery

There is a tendency to ascribe neutrality and scientific veracity to statistical knowledge generated from the census, but as I have pointed out above census ethnicity data conveys a constructed and particular image of people and society. For example, as the following two infographs taken from the Statistic New Zealand website illustrate (see *image four*), cultural diversity is depicted through clear and tidy lines, boxes and quantifiable units that are separate from each other.
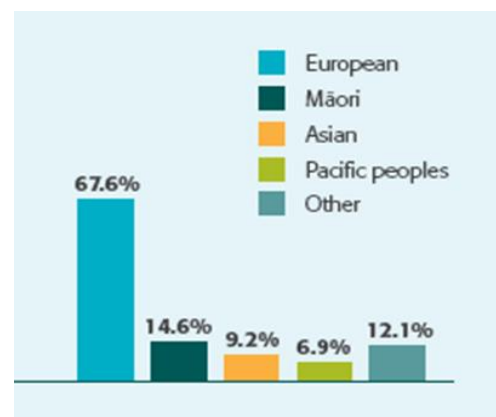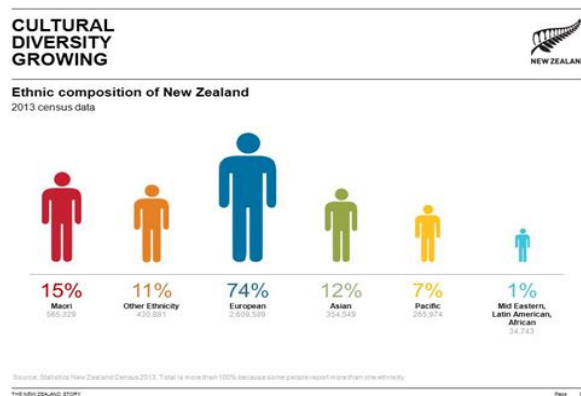
Image four: In this image I have combined two infographs from the census/Statistic New Zealand's website. They both illustrate the common way that census information about cultural diversity is represented statistically to the government and the public.

These statistical representations of cultural diversity are created within the framework of statistical realism, which is a methodology that is based on the assumption that cultural identities can be reduced to an objective core and function as countable categories (Kertzer and Arel 2001). Censuses and census information produces, as Farrell (2016) points out, a particular arborescent knowledge about humans and populations. The fixed 'ethnic' reduction of identity, which is required in census surveys, asserts the idea of real rigid boundaries between people and cultures and reproduces knowledge of enclosed and

isolated cultural units. What is important to point out is that the shape ethnicity takes through the census is not that different from race or a racial construction of identities. Therefore, regardless of how Statistics New Zealand defines the term ethnicity, I argue that it continues to evoke a race-like representation of culture and identity, which ultimately stands in the way of a progressive transformation towards a post-racial and post-colonial future.

Kertzer and Arel (2001) also observe, focusing on a U.S. context, that despite anthropological and ethnographical consensus on the spuriousness of conflating biology and culture, it seems most census categories still muddle race and ethnicity. Ethnicity, they highlight, came in handy with the move from the biological idea of race to that of cultural nationality. It is handy because it provided a new focus on cultural traits and roots while conforming to the dominant perception of identity as something to be objectively determined through ancestry and something having a timeless (primordial) essence (Kertzer and Arel 2001, 11). The project of dividing populations into separable census categories, inevitably intersects with the division of people into racial categories (Kertzer and Arel 2001, 11; Prewitt 2013).

The main characters

When reviewing the OEC's specific focus on 'ethnics' and an 'ethnic sector', alongside its profile as the pre-eminent source of information on cultural diversity, then a natural confluence between cultural diversity and non-majority members becomes evident. This confluence makes it appear as if the government sees cultural diversity primarily, if not exclusively, as a story about minorities – those who are not Anglo-Saxon and do not look like the majority. Moreover, it signifies the idea that members of mainstream society are not 'ethnic' or that they are somehow culturally neutral, and removes majority culture as a character in the story of cultural diversity, which then inevitably becomes only about the minority culture. In turn, the majority culture is indirectly placed as the invisible norm against which a political project of diversity is constructed. As has been pointed out by many scholars, it is through this exact neutralisation and exclusion that majority society (re)affirms its cultural hegemony and totalitarian grip on society (Bell 1995, 2007; Hage 2000; Ho 2007; Ip 2003; Johnson 2008). Majority, or rather cultural dominance, is exercised through its

absence, via its invisibility and silence in debates about cultural politics (bicultural as well as multicultural). Avril Bell (1995) describes this kind of power as the power of being unnamed. She argues that Pākehā culture, marked as a group with no culture – earns a particular powerful position, in that it continues to be the invisible yet omnipresent 'normal' centre of society. A narrow ethnic focus makes it appear as if issues associated with cultural diversity (such as racism, ethnic tension and marginalisation) and political responses to these issues, primarily concerns ethnic minorities, and are therefore 'ethnic' problems.

The look of an ethnic other

This particular 'ethnic' or minority focused description of cultural diversity, promoted in the government narratives, is also evident, and clearly demonstrated, in the photos used by OEC to represent their events and initiatives.

Image five: this image is a screenshot taken of the OEC website 2019. It is the 'home page' for the website.
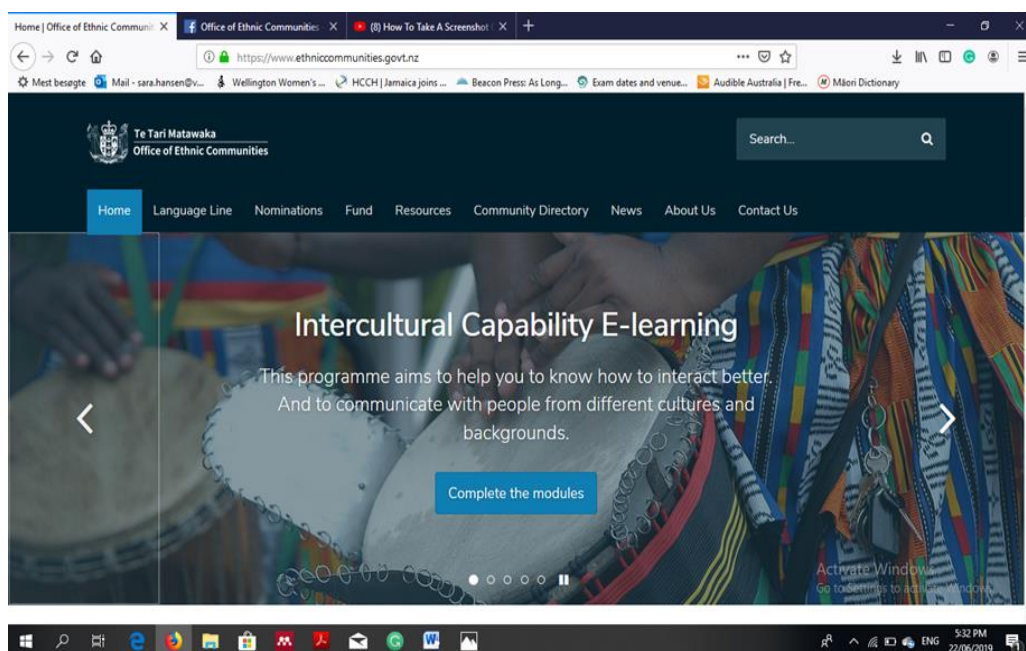
Image six: this image is the poster photo from the EthnicA conference in 2014. It has been downloaded from the OEC's Facebook page.

Images of drums are frequently used to illustrate the various OEC initiatives, for instance, the photo of the two drums in *image six* was used as the main poster image for the *EthnicA conference* in 2014. Let us keep in mind that this event was neither a drumming event, nor a musical event, but an event focused on cultural diversity and "cutting edge debate about ethnic diversity and its challenges in New Zealand" (see appendix six: OEC booklet 2012b, 1). Similarly, *image five* illustrates how a photo of drums is displayed on the OEC's website under the tab 'Intercultural Capability E-learning'. In the photograph, one sees brown-skinned hands playing the drums as well as the colourful garment worn by the drummer. When these African drums are used within a western context, they appear as exotic things and conjure up other stereotypes of African forms of cultural difference, such as notions of the jungle, safari, the wilderness and tribal dancing. Thus, in choosing an image of African drums to visually represent 'EthnicA' (a cultural diversity conference) and the 'home' webpage of the OEC, the organisation evokes an 'othered' image of cultural diversity and minority cultures. The African drums work as a form of exotic appeal that focuses on one form of cultural difference as an umbrella image to encompass all forms of difference and the notion of cultural diversity itself.

Image seven: This image collage is from Chinese New Year in Parliament 2013 taken from OEC's Facebook page. The collage was attached to a timeline post from the event.

The photo collage in *image seven* also exemplifies the government way of representing cultural diversity and ethnic minorities in government settings. In these three carefully selected and assembled photos, taken at the Chinese New Year in parliament in 2013 and posted on the OEC Facebook page, we see a traditional Chinese instrument, a colorful dragon costume, a dragon performer, and the former Prime Minister John Key and Minister Judith Collins smiling while interacting with the performer in the dragon costume. These photos demonstrate how a particular part of Chinese culture is represented in relation to the government. Chinese culture is presented as something traditional and authentic, something colourful and fun, which can be performed and showcased to amuse the government. The OEC Facebook page is filled with photos like these showcasing the happenings at events like the celebration of Chinese New Year in parliament, an Eid Celebration in Parliament, Africa Day in parliament and Diwali in parliament. Common to most of these photos is a focus on a particular traditional piece of clothing, costume or artifact, which symbolises different ethnic minorities. Leading on from an analysis of the main characters associated with cultural diversity in government narrative, I now move on to uncover the dominant theme that shapes the government's approach to diversity.

The dominant theme

Government narratives about cultural diversity are generally shaped and guided by an underlying economic theme, assuming cultural diversity and skilled migrants in particular bring financial and marketable capacities to New Zealand. I asked the OEC manager in our interview why the government should care about doing well in terms of responding to cultural diversity, and she promptly stated *"it is simply a good business case"*.

In 2014 I attended the *EpicNZ conference* in Wellington. The EPIC conference was a free public event held at the TSB Auditorium (Shed 6), located in the centre of Wellington near the waterfront. This initiative was created by the OEC in February 2012, aiming to bridge what they identified as a gap between mainstream and ethnic businesses. EPIC stands for 'Ethnic People in Commerce' and is a networking platform for New Zealand/mainstream businesses and ethnic/migrant businesses to connect. The purpose of the conference was to create connections between the mainstream and the 'ethnic' sections of the population, in order to open the door to new potential markets, investment opportunities, and expertise (OEC report 2014 *'A Year in Review 2013-2014'*). Minister Judith Collins said about the EPIC NZ event, "I encourage all New Zealand businesses to take every opportunity to make connections with our ethnic businesses and tap into the wealth of knowledge and talent that they hold" (as cited in the OEC booklet *'Working with ethnic diversity – Maximising New Zealand's economic potential'* 2014). The speeches I listened to at this conference provide further examples of how cultural diversity in government is associated with assumptions about good business and economic benefits. For example, the conference MC opened the event with the following comment:

> *You will already know that New Zealand has a real advantage in the global market place and that is due to our ethnic diversity. There are more than two hundred different ethnic groups here in New Zealand and that makes us the fifth most ethnically diverse nation in the world. So this is a part of our national culture now, we can't, and we don't want to avoid it. We want to exploit it…We are here today of course because, as you already know, we are leveraging what we have here in New Zealand. We are tapping into networks and connections that we collectively have offshore and by doing that we can create an enormous economic potential for this country.*

In this speech, cultural diversity is promoted as a commodity - treated as a business opportunity which should be "exploited" and "tapped into". In an OEC booklet from 2014, titled *'A year in review 2013-2014'*, in regards to the EPICNZ conference it states, "the conference theme was engaging the untapped potential that ethnic businesses can add to New Zealand's global connections". Here, diversity is again described as an economic case in which "ethnic" businesses have something of economic value - something 'to offer' the New Zealand economy and market place. The government uses the term 'diversity dividend' to describe the kind of 'profit' cultural diversity is assumed to provide. In an OEC report titled *'Flourishing ethnic diversity; thriving New Zealand -Strategic Direction and Intent for the Office of Ethnic Communities 2016-2020'* (2016), it is stated in the section on vision and purpose that "having strong and connected communities is a foundation stone for realising the benefits that can be associated with greater diversity. These include economic benefits (or "the diversity dividend') including greater productivity and innovation". Using the word 'dividend', which is traditionally a business term used to describe a share of the after-tax profit that a company distributes to its shareholders, indicates an explicit connection between economic motives and the government's approach to cultural diversity.

In another speech at the EPIC conference (2014) the OEC manager also speaks to the point of economic motives, stating:

> *Now according to a [UN] report the total number of migrants in the world is 214 million and they are responsible for 338 billion in remittances back to their respective countries of origin. The buying powers of minorities are huge and are projected to increase by more than 20 per cent…Our [OEC] concept here today is to make you start to think about our interactions across cultures in terms of business and what happens when we do that. We break down the fear of the unknown. We start to think of each other as people, neighbours, and communities. We are here to make sure New Zealand grows. Positively!*

This quote exemplifies the way government narratives portrays the benefits of cultural diversity as primarily economics benefits. It also illustrates how government narratives assume that it is possible to "break down the fear of the unknown" by starting to think of business connections and the buying powers of minorities. Similarly, in an OEC booklet titled *Riding the Wave*, it is stated that once New Zealanders see how cultural diversity adds economic value to society, it will become much easier to create an environment of inclusion

for all people, irrespectively of national origin, colour or creed (see appendix six: OEC booklet 2010). What these comments also demonstrate is that government narratives about cultural diversity assume a link between awareness of the profit that migrants bring and openness and tolerance. The comments imply that by convincing people of the economic benefits of diversity (that is the diversity dividend) they will become more open and accepting towards ethnic minorities and a multicultural society and vice versa. Thus, economic optimisation and increased tolerance are seen to go hand in hand, and the main value that the government is placing on multiculturalism is a financial one. In the report '*Flourishing ethnic diversity; thriving New Zealand' (2016)* it is further stated that "our [the governments] aspiration is for diversity to be acknowledged, celebrated and deeply valued across our communities, society and nation". When keeping in mind the economic motives outlined above, it looks as if it is a particular kind of diversity which is to be valued and celebrated – that is the kind that guarantees economic prosperity for the majority culture.

Rachel Simon-Kumar (2015, 2017) argues, in relation to contemporary immigration policies in New Zealand, that there exists a privileging of skilled migrants, who have come to represent the desirable ethnics and the charms of super-diversity. She argues that while immigration policies may no longer discriminate by nationality, they continue to favour a particular type of migrant, while strategically excluding and disregarding other types of migrants (Simon-Kumar 2015, 2017). The current selection criteria for immigration is based on the quality of immigrants; a quality, which is decided by income thresholds, skill level, network opportunities (for example the investment and connection opportunities an immigrant can offer), prior New Zealand work experience, and English language skills. Simon-Kumar (2017) points out that the government, through the current 'quality criteria', deliberately privileges a top-class or elite form of immigration. And, therefore, the government is promoting an immigration system which is based on what looks like class-based preferences. This system creates a new order of things – a new hierarchy of the desirable and the undesirable. At the top-end, one finds the affluent, skilled migrant, with a high income, quality education, vast opportunities, the right (western) experiences, and good English language skills. Whereas at the bottom there is the precarious and unqualified migrant, the refugees and temporary labourers, those who have limited or no English skills,

those with no education, and the lowest potential economic contribution (Simon-Kumar 2015, 2017).

Simon-Kumar's observations are relevant as I have found the same kind of ranking and distinction between the desirable and undesirable, created through the economic and business motivated approach to cultural diversity. The government's focus on diversity dividend implies a division between the profitable and desired kind of diversity, versus the unprofitable and undesirable kind of diversity. Refugees, for example, from war-torn countries, who have little or no education, and who struggle to gain the basic English skills to talk to their neighbour or children's school teacher – these people's stories fall outside the focus on dividends and good business and thus outside an official government narrative. In a business-minded story of cultural diversity, there is very little space for the stories of diversity which have no economic potential.

My investigation of government narratives has been conducted over a particular period of time and the data I base my analysis on was gathered primarily between 2014 and 2016, when the New Zealand National Party was in power under the leadership of John Key and Bill English. Thus, the characteristics of the narratives I present in this chapter will logically be shaped by the ideology of the centre-right coalition governing at the time. However, the economic orientation of the government's responses to immigration and cultural diversity ties in with a broader neoliberal manifestation of diversity management, that has taken hold in many other western societies (Byron 2012, Modood 2015; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). Such orientation prevents the formation and propagation of other government-led narratives. Such narratives could, for example, focus on human rights, on a non-monetary form of hospitality, and on a wider story around diversity that includes the majority ethnicity.

A business look

I took a photo at the EPIC conference (see *image eight*) showing the stage from the point of view where I was sitting.

Image eight: The image was taken by me at the EPIC conference in Wellington in 2014. On the stage is the MC Alison Mau, a well-known Australian-born New Zealand journalist and broadcaster (also known as Ali Mau). Blond, tall and slim, wearing a Leopard patterned scarf, a silver watch, black high heels and a diamond ring.

Image nine: the image to the right is the official poster from the EPIC conference. It illustrates the language and the visual representation attached to this event.

In the photo (*image eight*) we see the TSB auditorium, which is a large and prestigious venue, surrounded by high-end restaurants and an upmarket atmosphere. The conference room was a clean, formal space, with a tall ceiling, white walls, and shiny wooden floors. It smelt of perfume and cleaning detergent. Behind the stage were big light blue curtains and a Bank of New Zealand (BNZ) banner on the right side, to showcase the sponsorship and economic interests in diversity initiatives. This image helps to illustrate the kind of business look the government customises cultural diversity with. This same business look is also emphasised in the conference poster for the event (see *image nine*).

Image ten: the image above is from Chinese New Year in Parliament 2013. It is downloaded from the OEC Facebook page.

Also, the photo above (see *image ten*), which is taken from OEC's Facebook page, clearly depicts the way in which culture is commodified in government settings. In the photo we see Judith Collins, a representative of the government and majority culture, receiving a cap and t-shirt from a man who represents the Chinese community as well as being a migrant and a minority member. Culture is, like the t-shirt and the cap, treated as objects and traits owned by minorities, which the government and the New Zealand market/consumers see value in.

The vision of a happy ending

Social cohesion is seen as the key ingredient to a successful multicultural society. In an OEC report the need for social cohesion is explained in the following way: "A society that is social[ly] cohesive…[is] a society with a shared sense of belonging and a willingness to join together for a common purpose. Given New Zealand's changing demography, it is very important that we (the government) work deliberately to support social cohesion as the basis for a flourishing, connected and prosperous nation" (see appendix six: OEC report 2016). In another OEC booklet, it is stated that the government is committed to building and maintaining strong connections because "it is important for people and communities to be able to meet and interact with others from different ethnicities. Strong connections are vital

to building social cohesion and realising the benefits of migration to New Zealand. This will help us avoid misunderstandings, discrimination, or other concerns" (OEC booklet 'Weaving New Zealand's Future' 2010). Social cohesion is often used synonymously with social harmony and thus supports the proclamation that New Zealand is already a socially harmonious nation – this helps to explain how the government has framed the task of creating social cohesion as a matter of simply maintaining what is already there. As, for example, Minister Judith Collins states in a booklet introducing a government initiated programme called *Building Bridges*,[16] "it [the programme] is a great way to further increase the social harmony that is part of what makes New Zealand a fantastic place to live"(see appendix six: OEC booklet 2013).

When looking closely at the stories and arguments used to describe and justify the government's desire for social cohesion, it is clear that the benevolent vision of everyone joining together and building strong connections also assumes a particular government approach to diversity. The OEC manager, for example, explained to me how the implementation of equity and affirmative action policies provided minorities with *"too much freedom"*, which in turn caused an increased number of cultural claims and meant that minorities *"huddled up together"* without integrating into wider society. The manager further stated: *"We are now seeing the consequences of 'just' empowering people to maintain their culture and heritage. Ethnic young people of diverse backgrounds are some of them a product of inter-racial marriage, are joining the jihadist war. Heads blown up in the street, you know, they are beheading their own people"*.

This story, repeated by several other government officials, echoes more widespread accounts of 'failed multiculturalism', which have been presented by many European politicians in the cultural debates following the 9/11 terrorist attacks (e.g. former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel) (Liu and Ward 2012). The story of failed multiculturalism is a powerful narrative, which opposes policies of affirmative action and equity (commonly associated with the term multiculturalism) by claiming a clear causality between these policies and social

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[16] Building Bridges is a programme facilitated by OEC in 2013, which aimed at promoting more positive mainstream reception of Muslims in New Zealand by increasing awareness of local Islamic communities and their beliefs (see appendix six: OEC booklet 2013).

fragmentation and radicalisation – i.e. if you allow immigrants and ethnic minorities too much freedom to practice their own culture and language, then you end up creating ethnic silos, social fragmentation and eventually terrorism. This line of argument is typically used as justification for a strict approach to integration and minority rights.

The meaning of social cohesion within government settings sits in the context of failed multiculturalism, it is developed from the story that *"too much freedom"* and *"just"* empowering minorities equals social fragmentation, ethnic tension and causes multiculturalism to fail. Therefore, social cohesion and successful multiculturalism also implicitly involves regulation of minority spaces and self-determination. For example, when the OEC manager talks about issues of equity policies, ethnic silos and terrorism, it is clear that the project of multiculturalism is perceived mainly as an 'ethnic thing', not a *societal* project. And this suggests that it is migrants and minorities that bring disruption into society and that it is their cultural claims and their freedom (their differences) that need to be managed, in order to maintain social cohesion and harmony for the rest of society.

Ralph Grillo (2007) argues that it is possible to distinguish between diversity and difference in conversations about multicultural society, as the former is viewed as an epistemological object (i.e. a demographic and social reality), whereas the latter as a political constellation (for example the institutional embodiment of pluralism through multiculturalism). With this argument, Grillo observes a tendency in contemporary policy and public rhetoric in Britain to presuppose "diversity as good" and "difference as bad". He states, "one is exhorted to 'celebrate diversity', but not 'difference'" (Grillo 2007, 987). Grillo (2007) relates this tendency to the emergence of a new transformed mode of racism, what he describes as 'xeno-racism'. This new kind of racism has emerged in England and across most European societies and is recognised as the fear of the cultural, religious and ethnic 'other'. Not the non-white racialised 'other', as would be the case in more traditional forms of racism, but specifically the non-western and non-Christian 'other' (Grillo 2007; Gilroy 2004; Barker 1981).

Xeno-racism is closely linked, Grillo (2007) argues, to the development of a self-conscious and protective nationalism. Control and exclusion of the non-western 'other' are justified through the protection of core nationalised cultural values, and the need to protect an

unbridled social environment and the cohesive qualities of the homogeneous national community. Where older versions of racism legitimised discrimination based on the idea of biological differences and white race superiority, this new form of racism legitimises exclusion and discrimination based on the idea of culturally primordial differences and the superiority of western and secular norms and values (Barker 1981). The idea of failed multiculturalism is essentially developed from a 'xeno-racist' standpoint. Only from such a standpoint does it make sense to argue that 'too much' freedom for and self-determination of ethnic minorities are the root causes of social fragmentation. Based on the evidence gathered in this project, I suggest that the government story about cultural diversity expresses elements of 'xeno-racism', in the way it rationalises the purpose of social cohesion as a virtue of everyone getting along in a controlled and regulated manner. The government story about social cohesion and cultural diversity cements a status quo situation, where majority culture remains the dominant host culture that is in charge of managing possible diversity issues occurring outside the mainstream society. While this might not be intentional, it is nonetheless the function that this particular narrative has.

What 'getting along' looks like

Due to the fact that social cohesion and social harmony are often used interchangeably within government narratives, the photographs that are attached to the topic of social cohesion in documents and other government-related text materials are almost identical to the photographs used to illustrate an inherent positivity and multicultural harmony. However, I return my attention back to the photo I included earlier in the collage (see *image eleven*), which illustrates how the OEC uses photos of hugs and handshakes between people who look visually different, as a way to depict New Zealand-based forms of social harmony and cultural diversity. This photo helps to re-emphasise and draw attention to my earlier point about the kind of benevolent, yet, controlling approach to ethnic minorities and cultural diversity, which is outlined in the section above. In the photo, we see Minister Judith Collins embracing a small girl in a hug, on the stage at the EthnicA conference in Christchurch. The girl is part of a Chinese martial arts group who performed at the conference. This staged hug, between a person representing the government and a person representing a minority culture, symbolises the benign, yet almost smothering, the desire of

the government to embrace and be strongly connected (cohesive) to an exotic and traditional 'ethnic other'.

Image eleven; The photo is taken from EthnicA conference in Christchurch. Posted on the OEC Facebook page.

By zooming in on and carefully selecting images of situations where people, who look visually (racially) different, appear to get along, the government is providing visual examples of social cohesion and demonstrations of how to 'best' get on as a multicultural population. These images show that a 'good' multicultural society is one where people smile, hug, shake hands, and where minorities are happy and content. When further considering that most of the images distributed by the government are posted primarily to a non-majority audience, it seems as if the images are also working as 'instructional' – showing minorities how the government expects them to act. By not showing people in conflict, arguing, minorities appearing dissatisfied, angry or in protest (or any other kind of reality), they are implicitly regarding these types of situations as 'bad' behavior in a multicultural society.

When I arrived in New Zealand in 2012, I subscribed to receive the LINKZ magazine – a magazine produced by Immigration New Zealand for recent migrants.[17] It provides stories from recent migrants about their experiences settling into New Zealand and practical information about living in New Zealand.[18] Going through these magazines it is clear that images of happy migrants and happy minorities, smiling and getting on, are used as a direct way of signalling and communicating to newly arrived immigrants and minority member how the government want them to behave.

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[17] In my analysis, I have included seven LINKZ magazines, from issues 57 (2014) to 63 (2016).
[18] The first example was produced in 2004, the last edition was released in December 2019. https://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/resources/linkz-magazine

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have unfolded the government stories of cultural diversity through a wide range of ethnographic data, with a specific focus on OEC and Census materials. I explored the way cultural diversity is represented in government and policy settings, focusing specifically on the way particular histories, events, processes, and groups of people are described and presented in these stories. I exposed assumptions that condition government stories and discuss how these impact the way in which cultural diversity and the project of multiculturalism is approached. I emphasised the isolated focus on 'ethnics' that is dominant within government narratives. I then demonstrated how this ethnic focus, combined with the oversimplified division of the multicultural society (into three sections Maori-Mainstream-Ethnic), obscures a deeper engagement with stories about the complex fabric of diversity, and conjunctural relations between settlers, migrants and indigenous identities (Adds et al. 2016; Smith 2007).

This focus also works to reproduce one-sided and narrow explanations about the issues and challenges that arise in a multicultural context. The OEC manager, for example, explained in the interview that young third-generation ethnic minority members in Britain join the 'Jihadi war' because of equity policies, or as it is stated by the manager: *"because of too many cultural claims and people **just** being empowered to maintain their own culture"* (emphasis added). This way of viewing and explaining issues of cultural radicalisation and what has been commonly described as 'home-grown' terrorism,[19] completely overlooks and silences other possible causes; such as, for example, permanent socio-economic disadvantage of migrants and minority members, and a failure to tackle equity issues such as structural racism and islamophobia.

An analysis of government narratives is relevant, because it enables us to *see* glimpses of alternative stories and to get a sense of how the notion of cultural diversity and multiculturalism may be approached otherwise. An important aim of this chapter was to

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[19] The term 'home-grown terrorism' is commonly used to refer to the concept of people from ethnic minority groups in western society, who are typically born in and are citizens of the western country they live in, and who join terrorist organisations.

draw attention to the effects of telling the story of cultural diversity as a narrative almost exclusively concerning recent migrants and ethnic minorities – such as articulating multiculturalism as primarily an 'ethnic' (minority) problem and leaving the position of majority culture untouched in conversations about cultural recognition and equity policies. Based on the critical analysis of each narrative section unfolded in this chapter, I argue an alternative story would be much more closely connected to the current reality of a multicultural settler-nation society – one that includes all cultures in society and specifically acknowledges the placing and privilege of the white majority culture.

I want to acknowledge that some might find the tone of this chapter too critical and perhaps too negative. In contrast to the positive and benign essence of the government's story of cultural diversity, my focus on 'the limits' of that mode of storytelling might make some of my arguments seem harsh and pessimistic. While I do appreciate that there are positive elements in the way cultural diversity is presented and approached by government, I believe nonetheless that specific critical attention must be paid to the assumptions that guide government narratives and the limitations these imply. The critical commentary established throughout this chapter is informed by rigorous analysis of a large collection of government-related materials and it is based on this evidence that I argue that there is a tendency to overemphasise the positive and to become complacent with the idea that things are going well.[20] Discussing the limits of the way government narratives are constructed, to me, is an effort to disrupt the authority this narrative is typically afforded and creates openings for talking about the stories and knowledge that exist but are excluded from the topic of cultural diversity. In the chapter that follows, I begin to engage with the messy dimension of multiculturalism and explore what happens in the interface between government stories and stories told from the everyday experiences of multicultural living and grassroots activism.

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[20] I am aware that this might have changed with the fifteenth of March 2019 Christchurch terror attack, which happened while I was doing my last revisions. However, I do still feel that the tendency to focus on the positive and the comparative uniqueness of NZ is so strongly built into the way the government, as well as the media, talk about diversity, that it is worth paying close attention to the limitations and blind spots this focus implies.

Chapter four

Multicultural Identities and Ethnic Classification

This chapter stages a conversation between my participants' and my personal stories about multicultural identities and everyday experiences of belonging and identification in New Zealand, and government and policy-related approaches to ethnic classification and definitions of multicultural forms of belonging. My aim is to explore the contact zone between these two discursive terrains (Pratt 1991). My exploration will start with a personal vignette that will serve as a narrative anchor for my analysis. This story, a visit to the Plunkett clinic, provides a rich and very typical example of an everyday encounter where regular citizens meet and have to deal with institutional practices and structures of ethnic classification. Apart from my own experiences and observations presented through the vignette, I also draw on stories told by my cohort of everyday diversity experts. In my interviews with these people, I asked all participants to tell me about their responses to the ethnicity question on official forms and questionnaires (for example the national census survey), and what they think about this question and the ethnic categories they are presented with. I also asked them to tell stories about their sense of belonging and cultural/ethnic/racial identities as they experience and navigate these modes of affiliation in everyday life. Thus, excerpts from these interviews helped me to elaborate and add further evidence to the reflections and arguments I will address through my personal vignette.

A Plunket visit

I was sitting at an office desk at the Plunket clinic with a couple of forms in my hands. The nurse had taken my son to the play area behind me. She explained that she was going to check his motor skills, eyesight, hearing and other physical and mental abilities. This was all part of the nationwide 'B4 school check' my son was booked in for. Meanwhile, I was going to fill in these forms with information about my son. There was a lot of pages to fill in and as usual one of the forms included a question about what ethnic group my son belonged to.

This question had always confused me. I was never quite sure what was meant by 'ethnic group'. Was the question asking for a person's nationality, cultural belonging, or genetic complexion? Looking at the multiple-choice boxes available, it did not become much clearer what an 'ethnic group' might be. I could choose between New Zealand European, Māori,

Samoan, Cook Island Māori, Tongan, Niuean, Chinese, Indian, and Other. These categories seemed to be related to nationality, as well as cultural and biological heritage.

Anyway, since the nurse had asked me to be thorough, I was determined to give the best answer I could. What ethnic group did my son belong to? There really wasn't a straightforward answer to this question. He was born in Denmark, to a Danish mum and a Jamaican-born dad, who is a New Zealand citizen. He migrated to New Zealand from Denmark at the age of five and was now a citizen of both New Zealand and Denmark. He had relations with many different places and cultures.

So, what box to tick? Since it was obvious that my son did not belong to any of the ethnic groups already stated on the form, I ticked the box 'Other' and wrote Danish in the space available to specify what 'other' ethnic group I was referring to. I thought Danish was the best answer to give, as I felt this was the culture he was most immersed in. Most of his life had been spent in Denmark, his mother tongue was Danish, and I was sure if I had asked him to describe where he was from, he would have said Denmark.

The nurse returned to the desk with my son. I handed her the forms. She smiled, said "thanks", and started looking through them. I assumed she was checking if I had missed anything. She kept nodding approvingly, as she flipped every page, until she reached the 'ethnicity' part. She raised her eyes and looked at me, then looked at my son and said, "I can see you have stated that your son is Danish, but that is obviously not the case". Surprised, and a bit offended by her comment, I replied, "do you not think Danish people look like this?". She laughed, as if I had made a joke, then replied firmly, "No, I don't think so. I have seen how people in Denmark look like and that's not how they look". I laughed awkwardly, not able to say anything. There was silence. The nurse was looking directly at me, waiting for my response. She was eager to clear this 'ethnicity mess' and get the right box ticked. "There must be something else", she said, looking at my son, as if there was something very obvious about him that proved he wasn't Danish. Looking down at my hands, I felt insulted that this lady wanted to question my son's ethnicity, and also by the fact that she did not believe Danish people looked like my son. Danish culture was what I thought my son had the closest relationship to and had been most influenced by. Therefore, I had assumed the ethnic group, the culture, he would belong to would be Danish. But this nurse did not agree. It seemed as if she was most interested in some exact biological make-up of my son. Or maybe, I thought, she simply just wanted to know why he was brown.

I wondered, had my husband, instead of me, taken my son to this before-school check-up, and stated my son's ethnicity was 'Jamaican', would the nurse have cared to disagree? I also wondered had my son's father been a white Jamaican, would the nurse have doubted my son's Danish ethnicity? Probably not, I thought, because she would not have known 'there was something else'. Shy of confrontation and not in the mood to argue, I eventually mumbled something about my son's dad being originally from Jamaica. The nurse smiled, looking almost relieved. "Aahh", she said. She picked up her pen and crossed over

something on the form, then wrote down something else. I couldn't see what she wrote, but it was obvious that the ethnicity mess was cleared. The right box had been ticked.

When analysing this vignette in relation to the stories told by my participants, I found that three key themes or issues stood out as particularly important. These were:

I. Multiplicity of identity
II. External categorisation based on visual appearance
III. State-imposed power of categorisation

The first part of this chapter will, therefore, focus on each of these issues in the attempt to explore the encounter between the lived reality of cultural diversity and the system of official ethnic enumeration. In the second part of the chapter, I take a critical look at the census and the statistical representation of cultural diversity produced from census ethnicity data. I view the census as a potent framework for understanding the challenges of ethnic categorisation in a multicultural society and I believe the census plays a significant role in setting the scene for how concepts like cultural diversity and multiculturalism can be expressed and imagined. My analysis of the census focuses, as explained in the previous chapter, mainly on the definition of ethnicity and cultural belonging as it is presented by Statistics New Zealand, as well as the particular statistical representation of diversity communicated through census statistics and infographs.

The multiplicity of identity

The first main issue which stands out in the Plunket nurse vignette is the issue of multiplicity. At the Plunket visit, I was faced with the task of answering the ethnicity question on behalf of my son. I had always felt a sense of unease about the official ethnicity question in New Zealand and the kind of ethnic categories it involves; however, answering the question on behalf of my son made me particularly confused and frustrated. If answering the question myself, I would generally tick the box 'other' and specify Danish. Although ethnicity and cultural belonging will always be challenging to specify in the fixed and generalised form required by a survey question, picking my ethnic category seems relatively straight forward. There is nothing ambiguous or confusing about my identity. I feel

Danish and describe myself as 'Danish' (whatever that may mean) and no one has ever questioned my assertion of Danish identity.

However, in terms of my son – a person born into a mixed-race and intercultural family, who has lived in several countries, has dual citizenship, speaks two languages and has family connections spread across the globe – the question doesn't seem so straight forward. The complexity, multiplicity and temporality, that characterises his experiences of belonging, make this question confusing. So *"What box to tick?"* I asked myself as I sat with the Plunket form in my hands. Not only was I confused by the meaning of ethnicity in this context, but I was also confused about how to *label* my son within this classifying field of ethnic enumeration. I was frustrated by the static and reductive way in which this survey question was demanding to measure and describe my son's identity and complex multicultural sense of belonging. In a multicultural society like New Zealand, multicultural identities are by no means exceptional. Research has shown that the number of people identifying with more than one ethnic group has increased significantly within the last thirty years and intercultural marriages have become a common occurrence in New Zealand (Callister, Dibham and Potter 2005; Tan 2012a, 2015). In 2013, about eleven per cent of the population reported belonging to more than one ethnic group, and data from official birth registrations shows that twenty-three per cent of children born in 2014 belonged to two ethnic groups (four per cent to three or more groups) (Chen 2015b, 61; Tan 2015).

As I listened to the participants talk about the ethnicity question and their experiences of belonging, I realised just how complex and complicated the notion of ethnic categorisation is when you start interrogating this from a lived and situated perspective. The following story from Carina exemplifies this complexity and provides deeper ethnographic insight into how multicultural forms of belonging and identities are lived in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Carina was born in Manila in the Philippines. Her parents are both Filipino, but they met in Palmerston North in New Zealand. Her mum was in New Zealand to do her PhD and her dad was in the country for work purposes. After falling in love in Palmerston North, the couple returned to the Philippines, where Carina was born. When Carina was one and a half years of age, the family moved back to New Zealand and settled in Lower Hutt. Between the ages of six and nine, Carina (and her parents) travelled and lived overseas frequently, due to her

dad's work commitment as a structural engineer. They lived for longer periods of time in Budapest in Hungary and Long Island in the United States of America. I first met Carina at an ethnic women leadership course that we both attended in 2013. Since then, our paths have crossed several times within the grassroots communities of migrant and multicultural volunteer work. Carina is also involved with various migrant and refugee community groups.

In the ethnicity question on the census form, Carina ticks the box 'Asian' and 'other' and then specifies Filipino. Sometimes, she tells me, she might write 'New Zealander' or 'Kiwi' depending on the mood she is in. She says when someone asks her where she is from or what she identifies as, she normally says New Zealander and Filipino or 'New Zealander-Filipino'. This is the easy answer, she explains, the answer people expect to hear. Amongst Filipino people, Carina has often experienced her claim to a Filipino identity questioned by others. It's as if she is not Filipino enough, she describes. Similarly, amongst New Zealanders, she finds that her claim of a 'kiwi' or 'New Zealander' identity is often challenged. She is not just a New Zealander either; there is always that 'other' part. Carina has also experienced, like my son, that people question her identity because they assumed there is "something else".

In the interview, Carina describes herself and the communities she relates to:

> **Carina:** *…when I was ten, we just stayed in New Zealand permanently and didn't have to go away all the time. But every two years we would go back to the Philippines and spend time with family. But yeah, I don't think we are the typical Filipino family.*
>
> **Interviewer:** What do you mean?
>
> **Carina:** *I don't know how to explain it…*
>
> **Interviewer:** Are you and your family not really connected with the Filipino community here in New Zealand?
>
> **Carina:** *Yeah, yeah we are, mostly with the [community] in Lower Hutt. But our main Filipino group of friends, who are like my parent's circle of friends, come from Palmy [Palmerston North]. Like my parents know them from when they were first here. But they are pretty much the most 'Kiwi' group of people I know.*
>
> **Interviewer:** Oh, so they are immersed in the Kiwi culture?

Carina: *Yeah, yeah, and so all their kids, including myself, went to College here in New Zealand. Some were born here and some came when they were really young. When we were growing up, we all knew each other. The Filipino community was not as big back then as it is now. So, like, there is kind of a generational difference [between] the people who are thirty and older, like my parents, and those younger ones that have come to NZ during the last ten years. For example, in my group of Filipino friends, only one of us has a Filipino partner, and one has an Asian partner, everyone else has a European kiwi partner. Whereas lots of the Filipino that come here today only speak Filipino and hang out mainly with other Filipinos. They play basketball and do things that are from Filipino culture or like they are really Americanised. You know, into that urban kind of stuff. But that is not what we grew up with. So there is a difference between the generations. There is so much more Filipino culture in New Zealand now than there was when I grew up.*

Interviewer: Are the Philippines Americanised?

Carina: *Oh yeah, it was an American colony. It is the most American place outside America, it is like second America. It is like Mexico but more Filipino.*

Interviewer: Oh, that is interesting…

Carina: *Yeah so there is only English as the main language.*

Interviewer: There you go, I learned something new.

Carina: *Yeah, that is like a huge part of the culture. Like my mum grew up in this compound and there were a lot of Americans there, so she grew up with Halloween and roast chestnuts for Christmas. Like, this is not normal [everywhere in the Filipinas] but growing up she just thought that everyone had a big Halloween and everyone would have Christmas the American way. Also, Filipinos who have a really strong accent, you will hear they sound quite American but with a certain Filipino twang to it. My parents don't have that, they more have a Kiwi accent. And the kinds of things we [her family] are interested in, other Filipinos are often not interested in. Actually, I often look at my mum as a middle-class white lady, like she fits that box more [than a Filipino box I assume she means]. And Filipinos eat meat a lot.*

Interviewer: Meat?

Carina: *Yeah, they are like huge pork and meat eaters. You just don't get vegetarians in the Philippines that much. Whereas, for example, the group that I am a part of most of us are vegetarians. You know you won't find that in most Filipino groups, in like the typical Filipino migrant family. I feel that our group of Filipino friends and family is different.*

> **Interviewer**: It is interesting with all of these differences within a perceived homogenous group of people.
>
> **Carina:** *Oh yeah, yeah, totally. Largely because of this outsider position I have, I can see things from an observer kind of perspective. A lot of Filipinos, especially the ones who are from the Philippians and have lived there most of their life, they are very quick to say 'I am Filipino'. Like, there is this strong sense of nationalism, like cultural pride or whatever, which is a big part of Filipino culture. Like our flag, for example, is on everything, it is on shoes and stuff. It relates to the American way of life. I like all of this too, but it is different for me.*

The kind of 'multicultural' story that Carina narrates illustrates a diverse process of identification. The comments above show how different cultural identities intersect in complex ways and how they conflate with other modes of affiliations such as class, age, education, lifestyle and ideology. A multicultural life, as Carina lets us know, is a life that connects multiple places and countries around the world. It is a life that creates links between Manila in the Philippines, Wellington in New Zealand, Long Island and New York in the U.S., and Budapest in Hungary. Her story also shows how cultural encounters of the past (e.g. through colonisation and imperial conquest) impact in complex ways on our multicultural experiences in the present.

Growing up and living most of her life in New Zealand means Carina identifies with being a New Zealander and the values she relates to belong to the Kiwi culture. Yet her connection and heritage to the Philippines means she also identifies as Filipino. The Philippines is her place of birth and is where she goes regularly to visit family. She feels she belongs there too, but she does not feel like a 'typical' Filipino either. Her story describes the social and cultural differences of the Filipino community in New Zealand and places herself into another socio-economic group. As a member of an earlier immigrant family, she has come through a highly educated, mobile, academic immigration scheme, whereas more recent immigrants from the Philippines are less educated, work in lower-skilled jobs, and appear as more of a stereotypical Filipino and more difficult to integrate.

When she says that these newer immigrants from the Philippines do not speak English and only hang out amongst themselves, she demarcates herself as belonging to another sphere. She sees herself as part of a group who she associates with values that are more kiwi or

more western; for example, being a vegetarian, having a European kiwi partner, not being patriotic about the Philippines, and not only socialising with other Filipinos and/or Asians. Thus, she expresses the inability to feel fully at home with what she considers typical or authentic Filipino culture. The difference Carina is identifying between herself and more recent migrants from the Philippines can also be seen as a manifestation of the different social-economic conditions that characterise these two waves of migrants. Her life story and sense of self makes clearer that belonging, and even feelings of citizenship, are much more stratified, historically determined and also – when it comes to New Zealand – have a strong class dimension.

Carina tells me that she feels a very strong connection with Indonesian culture, language, and the Indonesian community in New Zealand. This connection is not related to her ethnic heritage but through an interest in music and gamelan orchestra. When studying ethnomusicology at Victoria University of Wellington and learning to play gamelan music, Carina became involved with Indonesian cultural music groups. She explains her relationship with Indonesian culture in the following way:

> **Carina:** *…Indonesian culture is a really strong part of my everyday life.*
>
> **Interviewer:** Through the music, right?
>
> **Carina:** *I am involved in two Indonesian music groups: Balinese gamelan and Javanese Gamelan. We play every week. I went on a field trip to Indonesia a few years ago with one of these music groups and I got to learn the language. Because I liked the language so much, I am able to speak it almost fluently. So I somehow became the co-founder, president, and runner of an Indonesian language group here in New Zealand…I have tried to contact the Filipino embassy because I want to start a musical group. I have sent them a proposal and everything but I haven't heard back from them. So it is kind of like…I actually do take the time to make the connection [to the Filipino community] myself, but then nothing has happened. It is just frustrating. I am always doing stuff at the Indonesian embassy, but I rather want to do Filipino stuff. It is difficult.*

Her relationship to Indonesian culture and language is special, because it illustrates how a person can also actively choose and foster a relationship with a particular culture, and develop a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic community which is unrelated to the person's heritage. It should also be mentioned that Carina, due to her appearance (she tells

me that she and her family look more 'Indian' and are darker skinned than 'typical' Filipino people), has experienced that people in New Zealand often assume she is either from Indonesia or is Malaysian. Thus, it is not merely her musical interest in Indonesian culture, which has generated a close relationship with this culture, but also her appearance that plays an important part in her ability to develop a relationship to the Indonesian community in New Zealand.

Like my son, Carina's experiences of belonging are multifaceted and dynamic. Her identity changes according to where she is and the different roles she assumes in different communities in Wellington. Carina describes herself almost as a cultural broker; weaving herself in and out of different social categories; at once included in (positioning herself as an insider) and excluded from each of these (positioning herself as an outsider). Her life story describes a dynamic state of 'being in relation' – being in relation to and in-between different cultures that are all internally and externally diverse. Multicultural identification, I argue, in line with Glissant (1997), is a messy and fluid process – a process of blurring the boundaries as they are drawn – constantly navigating, negotiating and narrating the boundaries of our 'selves'. Carina displays a noticeable degree of enjoyment in relation to this hybrid identity, as it allows her to explore and develop different personality traits, connect with multiple communities, and learn from occupying an 'outsider' perspective. Yet, she also points to important issues in terms of ethnic categorisation and multiplicity.

My interview conversations taught me that I was not alone with my frustrations about the ethnicity question and ethnic categorisation. Regardless of the different ways each participant answered the ethnicity question and regardless of their different life stories, all seemed to recognise a sense of frustration and confusion when trying to 'fit' their complex experiences of self into a list of fixed ethnic categories. This was particularly significant to those participants who experienced multiple senses of belonging. However, even those participants who identified with just one ethnic group, were expressing frustration in relation to the reductive and narrow method of measuring ethnicity in the census. In trying to understand the issue of multiplicity beyond the scope of my participant's thoughts and opinions, I gathered information from an online discussion group facilitated by Statistics

New Zealand in relation to the 2018 census survey.[21] Leading up the 2018 census, Statistics New Zealand generated online public forums with the purpose of discussing each census question and the way they were going to be articulated and presented. I focused on the forum linked to the ethnicity question, and I found that the concerns of multiplicity and ethnic categorisation pointed out by my participants were repeated in this forum.

For example, one discussion group participant commented: *"I think the "Asian" category is not very useful as "Asian" can mean Indian, Chinese, Filipino etc. Indian and Chinese I think we have got to the point where they can have their separate category in the 2018/2023 census. So it should be Indian, Chinese and Other Asian"*. While another participant stated:

> *Adding another layer to this question of identity is genetic testing. I have just got my results back from the National Geographic project. So I am 43% Northern European, 38% Mediterranean and 18% Southwest Asian (and add in 1.7% Neanderthal) Do I put all those responses in the next census form? But culturally I am a New Zealander, not particularly relating to Europe (I haven't been there for over fifteen years. Do I put European and New Zealander? Does this tell much about my skin colour or my susceptibility to particular diseases? Or would a genetic test looking for particular health risk factors be better than relying on broad cultural groups?*

The comments and points of discussion that were included in the online forum, provide further evidence on the issue of multiplicity in relation to official forms of ethnic categorisation. It also shows that the concerns I draw attention to in my own and participants' stories are relevant beyond this cohort of people.

Ultimately, ethnic enumeration requires fixation and reduction of identities. It requires countable identities, which means that the nuances and complexities are unaccounted for, and therefore, I argue, it cannot represent an authentic, 'truthful', comprehensive, or even accurate account of people's identities. Participant Hine, explains this point similarly, stating:

> **Hine:** *I mean whenever there is a box to tick, there is always some extra part, always a maybe, or a grey area. You want to say 'well actually I am also this and that', and 'let me explain' but whenever something is categorised you can't do that. You can't explain and add that extra 'well actually' or 'maybe' part. There is no room for that.*

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[21] I visted the online conversation in June 2016. Please see https://www.loomio.org/d/cNUhrpJE/ethnicity

Like Hine, I am aware that generalisation, categorisation and classification are inevitable parts of statistical data collection. Quantitative surveying has, like any other method, specific operational boundaries and methodological restrictions. Thus, statistics will evidently constrain identity in order to make it quantifiable and generalisable. As Arjun Appadurai (1996, 334) clearly pinpoints: "statistics are to bodies and social types what maps are to territories; they flatten and enclose". However, with multicultural identities in mind, I question; what if complexity - the 'maybe' and 'well actually' parts – is the essence of these identities? If the multicultural landscape in New Zealand is as dense, versatile and tangled as the native bush, what happens if we flatten and enclose such landscape in order to count and quantify it? Is what we measure or study then relevant to the lived reality of multiculturalism? I don't have the answers to these questions, but I argue that there is a need to critically question whether the current way of measuring multiple forms of belonging is intelligible and relevant in terms of understanding the lived reality of multicultural ways of being and belonging. Multicultural identities unsettle fixed ethnic categories and rigid systems of group-based classification. Can multiplicity be measured and understood meaningfully through a system of ethnic classification? If there is no room for nuances and multiplicity, do we risk losing and/or masking valuable information? What information are we getting and what information are we not getting?

One participant, Pinaman, highlights the concern of losing information. She states:

> **Pinaman:** *…so I was born in Accra, which is the capital of Ghana. My mum comes from the second or the third biggest region of Ghana, which is the Brong Ahafo region, and my dad is from the Ashanti region, which is the Ashanti kingdom. Yeah so, I grew up in Accra, the capital of Ghana, but left to study in New Zealand and Australia in my late teens. I travelled a lot when I was younger, but later on, I came to settle in New Zealand more permanently.*

> **Interviewer:** On the census form in the ethnic section, what box do you tick?

> **Pinaman:** *This is always a tricky task for me. There is the group MELAA, which stands for 'Middle Eastern, Latin American and African' group. I tick that or I tick 'other' and then write 'Ghana'. So I do my own version. Being a policy analyst myself, I really struggle with the issue of the precision of this type of data. These numbers once counted, what do they really tell us? I think grouping us [Africans] with Middle Eastern and Latin American is misinforming. It's simply wrong, and it is masking a lot of useful information about Africans and our presence in New Zealand. Hopefully, something could be done about it. I don't know what, but I think they are really losing useful information about people. I am not Middle Eastern and neither am I Latin*

American. You know?! I am of African descent, yes. But in a few years, I will have spent more time out of Ghana, than I have spent in Ghana. For example, I have spent more time in New Zealand than I have ever spent in Ghana. I feel like that odd outside kid, you know, when I go to Ghana I don't belong, I just look like them. Yet I feel like a Ghanaian in New Zealand and sometimes when I go to Ghana I think 'oh God, I am more kiwi than I thought'. And in the next few years, I might leave New Zealand and live somewhere else. Who knows? I feel so sad for New Zealand, they struggle to classify someone like me.

Pinaman's comments draw attention to specific issues in relation to the MELAA category. Yet, her specific concerns about 'lost' or 'masking' of important information were shared by most participants. It was these concerns that seemed to make people frustrated about answering the ethnicity question. Like Carina, many felt that the answer they give in the census is the 'easy' answer, the one people want to hear, although there is so much more to tell. Thus, Pinaman's concerns help to pinpoint *why* it's important to address the issues of multiplicity in relation to current methods of ethnic enumeration. Complex stories of identity and belonging, like for example my son's, Carina's and Pinaman's, describe a state of 'being in relation' – being in relation to and in-between different cultures. Their stories are dynamic and temporary. Since the Plunket nurse visit, my son has spent six years living permanently in New Zealand and if I asked him now where he is from I don't think he would say Denmark anymore. Similarly, Pinaman points out that *"in the next few years, I might leave New Zealand and live somewhere else. Who knows?"*, with this sentence, she recognises a temporality in her sense of being and that the way she identifies might change over time, depending on her status of residence. Multicultural living and belonging are, as Pinaman's story exemplifies, being many things in different ways at different points in time.

Aotearoa New Zealand is one of a small number of countries in the world that explicitly allows individuals to pick more than one ethnic group in the national census and other official surveying of ethnicity (Kukutai 2008). This has been allowed since 1991 when the ethnicity question was introduced in the census, and since then people have been able to pick up to six different ethnic categories in the ethnicity section. On Statistics New Zealand's website, it is stated that the installation of picking multiple responses in the ethnicity question was included as an attempt to recognise and gain information about the dual and multiple forms of identification and group affiliation that were seen to develop in society. In

a report from Statistics New Zealand, the inclusion of dual and multi-ethnic identification in the system of ethnic enumeration is explained:

> The globalisation of migration flows, shifting ideas about ethnicity and race, and intimate relations across ethnic boundaries have led to an increasingly complex array of ethnic identities…Among researchers and analysis of ethnic data in New Zealand, there is broad consensus that allowing people to choose more than one group is desirable to best reflect the nation's ethnic milieu (Kukutai 2008, 1).

Essentially, the method of ticking multiple boxes to capture multicultural identities requires the idea of hyphenated identity. Looking over the data I gathered from OEC and Statistics New Zealand, I found a general tendency to interpret census data about multiple identities (i.e. people identifying with more than one ethnic group) simply as an indication of hyphenated and combination identities (see appendix five: Statistics New Zealand 2005a, 2005b). While allowing more boxes to be ticked is a novel attempt to recognise multicultural identities, which provide useful information in terms of the number of people who identify with more than one ethnic group, I doubt that ticking more 'ethnic' boxes solves the issue of multiplicity.

Based on the stories I have heard from my participants, it seems that the kind of information that is gathered through the concept of ticking multiple 'ethnic' boxes obscures a deeper empirical understanding of the complex multicultural forms of identity and belonging. A hyphen is only meaningful in a dualistic framework and is based on the idea of two assumingly concealed and pre-distinct entities, which are linked by the hyphen. Such a notion does not encourage an understanding and investigation of the multiplicity and interdependence that is evidently part of a multicultural way of life. The problem is that presenting the idea of multiple, mixed and multicultural identities through a dualistic concept like a hyphen, cannot in my view grasp or explain the dynamics of intercultural entanglement and confluence. Multicultural complexity and multiple belongings are not simply a matter of adding various ethnic categories together and putting a hyphen between them. Like Glissant (1997) I argue that identity and culture are always in relation, extended through a relationship with the other, and always in the middle and between things (Dash et al. 2006, 11-22). Therefore, what counts are not the separate units or elements added, but what is created in-between. And so, this chapter provides evidence of multicultural

identification as a messy and fluid process – a process of blurring the boundaries as they are drawn – constantly navigating, negotiating and narrating the boundaries of our 'selves' (Glissant 1989; 1997). Thus, multiplicity and multicultural identities should *not* be understood as an issue of multiplication, but rather as a form of relational in-betweenness.

External categorisation based on visual appearance

The next issue that arises from my collection of life and identity stories, is the discrepancy between a personal sense of belonging (how a person feels and thinks they belong) and external identification (how a person is categorised in society and by other people). I orient this discussion around the issue of appearance and visual or phenotypical ideas about ethnic belonging.

At the Plunket visit, the nurse questioned my son's Danish identity because of his appearance. She stated while looking at my son: *"I have seen Danish people and they don't look like that"*. There are two points revealed in this comment. Firstly, the comment reveals that the nurse has a preconceived idea of what Danish people look like – i.e. they don't have brown skin and an afro. I am assuming she believes they look like me – white skinned, blonde and blue-eyed. Secondly, the comment illustrates how a difference exists between a person's self-identification and an other's view of someone's identity. I realised that regardless of how my son experiences cultural belonging, and regardless of how he chooses to identify culturally and ethnically, he is also always being identified and labelled by external ideas and assumptions about 'who he is' and what ethnic category he belongs to.

The Plunket visit was not the first time I had experienced my sons 'Danishness' being questioned. There have been numerous encounters - with school teachers, hospital staff, and random people at the supermarket (both in New Zealand and in Denmark) - where my son's claim to a Danish identity has been challenged. If I introduce my son as Danish, without saying that he is Jamaican as well, I can almost guarantee that people will either look at me in disbelief, think that I am joking, or ask more questions to find out what the 'other' might be. It is always really clear that it is purely my son's appearance that causes people to question his claim to Danish identity. As I stated in the vignette, I am almost certain that the nurse would not have cared to question 'if there was something else' had my son's father been a white Jamaican. She would not have known that there was

'something else' to know. His claim to a Danish identity is only questioned because he is brown. The association between 'being Danish' and 'being white' seems to be so rigid, narrow and indisputable, that people refuse to believe that a person with brown skin and an afro can also be Danish. Remarkably, my son's identity has never been questioned if he is out in public with his dad, who introduces him as just 'Jamaican'. I also doubt that anyone would question me if I introduced my son as, for example, Danish-Zimbabwean or Danish-Fijian. It seems that as long as another 'brown' ethnic group is identified then people have no objections to his identity claim.

These observations on appearance and external categorisation, have made me think about the importance of visual phenotypes, and how particular ideas and images associated with people from particular ethnic groups influence a person's sense of self and belonging. In my interviews, participants also mentioned the importance of their appearance in explaining their identity and sense of belonging. I want to share comments from two participants, which help to understand in greater depth how appearance and assumptions about 'ethnic' phenotypes impact processes of ethnic categorisation and identification.

I have already mentioned how Carina also experienced her personal claims of ethnicity being challenged due to her appearance. She elaborates on some of these experiences further in the following comments:

> **Carina:** *It is really weird or bizarre, every time I introduce myself and say "I am Filipino" people get really surprised.*
>
> **Interviewer:** Why do you think that is? Because people have an assumption about who you are?
>
> **Carina:** *I think they get surprised because apparently, I don't look Filipino. Like, no one ever knows that I am, and it is really bad (laughing off this fact she says). It always surprises people. For example, this one lady at a Filipino event kept talking to me in English.*
>
> **Interviewer:** Oh, because she thought you didn't speak the language?
>
> **Carina:** *Yeah, I don't speak it actually, but I understand. It is just not normal for someone to speak to you in English when at a Filipino, as a Filipino, and to join a Filipino music group. I knew a lot of the people in the group already. The lady asked me: "do you have an instrument?" I was like: "yes, I already have one". Then she was like: "oh, you have one. Where did you get it from?" I replied: "from my family when I was in the Philippines myself." Then she kind of started*

to get it [that Carina might be from the Philippines] but still she was like: "oh, okay, so are you like half Pilipino?" I was like "no full Filipino". She just kept going and I kept saying "I am full Filipino!" Yet again later at that same event, she came up to me and was like "is it your mum or your dad?" I just went "it's both".

Interviewer: Do your parents get that too?

Carina: *Yeah, because my mum looks quite Indian. Her whole family looks quite Indian. I think maybe my great, great, grandfather was not Filipino or something. The men in my mum's family, they got beards and a lot of hair, so they look Arabic sometimes. Like my uncle, he gets stopped at the airport sometimes because they think he is Arabic and my aunty who lives in the States, people thinks she is Latino. My dad looks, I guess, more East Asian. Once I was with my dad at that Friday night market and we went to this food stall to get food. The people working there was talking to him in Filipino as he was buying the food and then all of a sudden the lady asks him, while I was standing right there, "is she like Malaysian?". I was just chocked, like "HE IS MY DAD" (laughs). Yeah, I get it a lot.*

Another participant, Marieke, also talks about her appearance in relation to her sense of identity. She explains:

Marieke: *In terms of my racial profile or like my ethnicity and identity, I have a New Zealand and a Dutch passport. So, I have dual nationality. My father is full Dutch. My mum is full Indonesian. However, I look very much like my father. I have very Dutch and European features. I am light skinned, have green eyes and blonde hair. I think that has had a great impact on my experiences here in New Zealand and in terms of my identity. I've spent quite a lot of time reflecting on this. I think in a lot of instances I have had an easier time, because I look white and European. Also, because I came to New Zealand when I was so young, I have had the opportunity to lose my Dutch accent completely. I sound Kiwi and I look very European, so people assume that I am just another New Zealander. I have never really had any experiences of discrimination, because I can blend in with the majority culture. The only thing I have experienced is the frustrations as a kid when I would be out shopping with my mum for example. Then people would be so surprised when they found out that she was my mother and they would make comments about adoption. Because my mum has dark hair, is short, has dark skin and brown eyes, she just looks very different to me. There was always this, kind of, disbelief when I say she is my mum and then there were the jokes about adoption. When people met my father, it was a relief and they would be like: "well at least you look like one of your parents". I am sure it wasn't meant negatively or whatever, but it did leave an imprint. Growing up, I always felt people did a 'double take' whenever I declared my ethnicity if I said I was Indonesian. They would be like: "oh, no. Really!?" Or ask, "Is it like your great, great grandpa?", to which I would answer: "well no actually it is my mum". We would go to Indonesia a lot for family holiday's*

growing up. A lot of our family still live there and I really do feel legitimately that this culture is part who I am. My family history is quite significant to me.

Together, Carina and Marieke's comments describe how appearance in different contexts and situations determines a person's ability to be and belong in certain ethnic groups. Despite the different communities Carina and Marieke belong to, they both have similar experiences in terms of their appearance, in different ways, restricting their access to these communities, as well as impacting their treatment by other ingroup members. Carina's observations about the reactions to her uncles' appearance in the airport, and the perceived ethnicity of her aunty who lives in America, provide insight about the ways in which assumptions about the appearance (of the same person) change depending on the particular cultural context. Marieke's comments display how external assumptions about a person's ethnicity based on appearance, can be beneficial sometimes. For example, if looking white and European, which in New Zealand is how the majority looks like, one will inherently have access to privileges of the majority and be able to avoid the discrimination and marginalisation experienced by some minority members. Moreover, their comments help to understand how someone's identity can both be questioned from inside *and* outside a particular ethnic group. It seems that both members of a particular minority group and members of the majority have specific ideas about how people from particular ethnic groups look like.

The ethnographic insight above, works to remind us that although intercultural and mixed-race families are becoming more and more common in New Zealand, and although an increased number of people are identifying with more than one ethnicity, this might not mean that people who identify with multiple identities are able to feel fully connected to the different cultures they relate to. In other words, some people, due to their visual appearance, might not have access to multiple sets of cultures and ethnic communities. In fact, the treatment and reactions some people experience, due to external processes of categorisation, may cause some to live a mono-cultural life or a life where they are only 'able' to be part of one culture (e.g. Marieke who due to her 'white and European' appearance is only able to be part of the white majority culture).

In addressing experiences of external categorisation based on appearance, I am critically interrogating the preconceived ideas and assumptions about different ethnic groups, which

in unspoken and invisible ways circulate in society and evidently influence how a person is categorised. It is worth noting that these ideas and assumptions are often reproducing a narrow, simplified and racialised understanding of culture and ethnicity. For example, when the Plunket nurse refused to accept my son's ethnicity as Danish, it was clear that her interpretation of ethnicity is related to a racial and biological interpretation of belonging. Although she did not mention race directly, her assumption that Danish people are and should be white people, indirectly invokes a racialised outlook on identity. I realised through fieldwork conversations and interviewing participants, that it is commonplace for people to assume that ethnicity simply works as a euphemism for race. It seems that people regard diacritics, like bloodline, visual phenotypes (like skin-colour) and genetic heritage, as easily fitting the categorical and generalising question in the census. And, that the question of culture and cultural affiliation to many appears to be too fussy and too complex to explain in the survey 'tick-box' style, and thus racial belonging almost automatically becomes the easier and more convenient framework to answer the question of ethnicity.

The question of ethnicity has only recently been incorporated in the New Zealand census and other forms of state-facilitated population counting. It was included for the first time in the 1991 census and was brought in as a replacement of the question of race and racial belonging. Although race is no longer officially measured, I argue, in line with Patrick Simon and Victor Piche (2012), that a racial system of classification – which involves grouping people in accordance to particular traits (i.e. assumed physical and genetic differences) – continues to influence the way ethnicities are operationalised and classified in contemporary New Zealand censuses. Moreover, the confusion people express in terms of race and ethnicity, as well as the common tendency to group people according to visual appearance, is an indication of the legacy of colonial and racist modes of thinking. In the following section, I will unpack and explore this point further.

State-imposed power of categorisation

The third issue arising from my collection of stories is the role of state power in the context of ethnic categorisation. At the Plunket visit, it is clear that the nurse, as a representative of the state, exercised a particular power when challenging my answer to the ethnicity question. External categorisation takes place in any public setting. Yet, depending on the

context and *who* is doing the categorisation, the external act of categorisation will impact the person being categorised differently. As I discussed earlier, the nurse was not the first person to question my son's identity, yet I felt a particular sense of humiliation and anger after the visit to the Plunket clinic. In contrast to a random person at the supermarket, the nurse had the authority, legitimacy, and power to make her decision about my son count officially. Other's opinions of who a person is really only matter if the external assumption about someone has an impact on that person's life. It depends on the power relationship between the categorised and the person doing the categorising. The nurse had the power to determine how my son is made visible in the eyes of the state. Whatever she might have written on the form is beside the point, it is her choice and the fact that she had the ability to alter the information I had provided that is important. In her mission to survey and measure my son, she demanded order and clear boundaries, and she used her authority to categorise my son in a manner that consolidated *her* perception of who he *should* be. I felt powerless at that moment. The nurse had taken away my freedom, or rather my son's freedom, to identify in his own way. While a state authoritative figure (like the Plunket nurse) is not always present, nor able to interfere when a person is answering the ethnicity question, this nurse's actions nonetheless made me think about the power and control that state institutions have in relation to official ethnic categorisation.

Though my participants didn't directly talk about issues of state power and control, I found, however, that the feelings of frustration that most participants expressed when talking about the ethnicity question, were related to feelings of being disempowered and objectified by generalising categories (set by the State) they felt little (if any) connection to. For example, thinking back to Pinaman's comments about the MELAA category, it is clear that she certainly did not feel that this category describes her and her sense of belonging in a meaningful way. The frustrations participants expressed about the ethnicity question were similar to my own observations and pointed indirectly to a struggle of power at play when encountering the system of official ethnic enumeration.

To gain a critical comprehension of how state-imposed power of categorisation operate, I think it is necessary to understand the history and purpose of population statistics, counting and classification. Official counting and categorisation of people within a particular territory are, in principle, tools of statecraft, which makes it possible to imagine 'a population' and 'a

society', and these tools became vital instruments through which the modern nation-state came to make a national society legible (Kertzer and Arel 2001). They were also a central part of the imperial project. As Benedict Anderson has commented, the census, together with the map and the museum, were among the three most significant institutions of power in shaping the way colonial states came to know and imagine their dominion (that is, the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its [European] ancestry). He elaborates:

> Interlinked with one another, then, the census, the map, and the museum illuminate the colonial state's style of thinking about its domain. The 'warp' of this thinking was a totalizing classifying grid, which could be applied with endless flexibility to anything under the state's real or contemplated control…] The effect of the grid was always to be able to say of anything that it was this not that; it belonged here, not there. It was bounded, determinate and therefore in principle countable (Anderson 2006, 184).

Molly Farrell (2016, 9), likewise, claims that the slave trade instituted a system, which normalised the counting of human bodies, and, to her, enumeration during slavery and the colonial era was a classification tactic that served the political and economic strategy of imperialism. She elaborates this point further, stating: "distinguishing communities by attempting to count them was a way for colonial subjects and imperial policymakers to impose an imaginative order over the conflicted and constantly changing sphere of colonial encounter" (Farrell 2016, 10).

It is clear that the main purpose behind early forms of official population surveying was one of 'counting to dominate' and counting to construct a fixed and tidy image of what was to be dominated. The imperial project demanded order and clear boundaries to exercise its power and control, and enumeration and classification worked to aid this demand (Simon and Piche 2012, Simon et al. 2015). In colonial forms of official enumeration, methods of data collection and representation were determined unilaterally (from the top down) and in accordance purely with a colonial mindset. Identity labels, for example, were created in a racial repertoire and reflected the racist assumptions of the European rulers (Kertzer and Arel 2001).

Through censuses, the colonised were forced to adopt and accept the racialised categories attached to particular groupings in society, although most did not recognise themselves in

relation to such categories (Kertzer and Arel 2001). The classifying grid of colonial censuses colonised minds and bodies by crafting powerful stories, told from the vantage point of the coloniser about society, the groups of people living in it, and the boundaries and hierarchies between these groups (Farrell 2006). Specific to the context of colonial settler states, like Australia, New Zealand and Canada, population statistics have also long been used as a way to dominate, exclude and discriminate against indigenous peoples and other ethnic minorities (Kukutai and Walter 2015; Kukutai and Thompson 2015). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), for example, explains how western research methods (including national censuses) draw on a particular cultural orientation and archive of knowledge, values, and rules, which due to colonialism have gained both dominant and universal status. As a result, these methods have contributed to the suppression of other forms of knowing and seeing the world (e.g. indigenous epistemologies and knowledge) and has meant that indigenous people have been coded into a Western system of knowledge and alienated from their own stories (Andersen and Kukutai 2016; Kukutai 2004; Smith 1999).

The necessity of bringing attention to the colonial legacy of population counting and classification, is not to assert the argument that the form of state power I see exercised within current practices of ethnic counting is the same as that in the colonial era. Instead, I aim to draw attention to the historical inequities and biases of demographic enumeration as a way to contextualise contemporary practices of enumeration and statistical representation. This is essential to understand the mechanisms of power and subjugation, which continues to be relevant in present-day conversations about ethnic categorisation at government level. Also, it makes us aware of the underlying motivations and inequalities which shape the quantitative space of demographic surveying and statistics.

Significant and progressive changes, of course, have occurred over the years in terms of the way the state conducts population surveys and manages the data. I am aware, for example, that contemporary census categories and ethnic labels are not determined in isolation by the state (e.g. Statistics New Zealand) or from a top-down perspective; they have also been negotiated from below, in relation to contestations from various social groups and community and grassroots organisations (Callister 2004; Kukutai 2004; Kukutai and Callister 2009). Also, I am aware, that Statistics New Zealand states on their website that census responses should reflect a person's self-perceived ethnicity, and that people need to be able

to state their specific ethnic groups without being forced to identify themselves in a more general category. Contemporary methods of enumeration have (to an extent) been shifted away from their original colonial purpose and towards more collaborative and community grounded approaches.

However, when encountering the official system of ethnic categorisation, in moments like the Plunket visit or when filling in the national census form, it is evident that we as ordinary citizens must comply with the requirements and logic of this system. Ethnic categories and practices of categorisation imposed by the state are not merely objective resources to make their environment legible; they are as Kertzer and Arel (2001, 33) appropriately describe, "authoritative tunes to which most of the population must dance". A good example of this is when I made an attempt to push back against the Plunket nurse's classification of my son. I knew the response the nurse was looking for as soon as she questioned my answer on the Plunket form. I knew she wanted to know the ethnicity of my son's dad, and if I had immediately responded 'Jamaican' she would have been satisfied and the interrogation would have stopped immediately. But, her presumptuous attitude and comment about my son *"obviously"* not being a Dane, really upset me. I didn't feel like complying to her mode of classification. So, by withholding the information I knew she wanted and by questioning her preconceived ideas about Danish people, I tried to resist her intervention. I also thought about giving her a wrong answer – for example, telling her that my son's dad was Zimbabwean or African American - just to get the satisfaction of having fooled her and wrecked her mission of getting the 'correct' answer. I thought about being firm and persistent as well, by saying something like, "there is nothing else, my son is Danish, full stop." But I didn't follow through with any of these thoughts. I eventually just gave her the information she wanted. She was relieved and the mess was cleared. I felt defeated, yet I had avoided conflict and awkward silence.

The kind of frustrations that are expressed in both my own and my participants' stories, about the ethnicity question and the forms of categorisation it implies, signals feelings of disempowerment in terms of being constrained to a label that feels irrelevant and, in some cases, degrading to one's personal perception of self. With the knowledge that official categories and categorisation in Aotearoa New Zealand emerge from and are given meaning through the dominant framework of a settler state society, I argue that the ethnic labels,

which are currently available, are still predominantly relevant to a majority culture worldview. Thus, the issue of state power I detect relates to the larger issue of the continued dominance of Eurocentric interpretations of cultural belonging and diversity in the quantitative space of official ethnic categorisation.

In relation to Māori and the statistical coverage of indigenous peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, Andersen and Kukutai (2016) also emphasise the prevailing dominance of western knowledge in the production of official statistics. In their view, quantitative methods are part and parcel of the positivism that characterises western knowledge. They argue that "positivism, with its reliance on external evidence, testing and universal laws of generalisability contradicts a more integrated, holistic and contextualised Indigenous approach to knowledge. Hence the devaluation and dismissal of indigenous way of knowing" (Andersen and Kukutai 2016, 43). While acknowledging the positive and progressive changes that have occurred in the space of official counting and statistics, Andersen and Kukutai (2016) nonetheless claim that indigenous agency and voices are still lacking within this space. There is a need, they argue, for reclaiming and transforming statistical approaches to knowing and telling histories of indigenous peoples, so that they come into closer proximity with indigenous ways of knowing and being (Andersen and Kukutai 2016). This need, I argue, is relevant to other marginalised minorities as well as in relation to people who identify with multiple identities.

In the context of agency and transformation, I want to point out that there is an opportunity for negotiation and resignation in the encounter with the state power exercised through the system of ethnic enumeration. I found that when participants talked about their particular ways of answering the ethnicity question and how they felt about this, each person had their own specific reasoning and often strategic thinking about how they answered the question. Answering the ethnicity question seemed to be approached by many almost as a cultural 'box-ticking' exercise, or an ethnicity puzzle, which they played with for different reasons. Some participants would pick several categories, and some would change their responses over time, or according to the mood they were in. Others chose to pick the box 'other' and then in their own words specified the ethnic group(s) they felt they belonged to. Some also chose not to answer the question at all, or to purposely provide an incorrect answer. Although these kinds of creative negotiations might not have a significant impact in

terms of altering the prevailing structure of state categorisation, I see them as important glimpses of the resistance and agency that is exercised at the grassroots level. If we think of the 'shambles' following the 2018 national census, which involved an exceptionally low response rate and a delay in releasing the data (unfolding as I am revising my chapters),[22] there is evidence to suggest that the influence ordinary citizens have in terms of disrupting the system of enumeration might be more powerful than expected. For example, the fact that the census has had the worst response rate in over fifty years – which could either be caused by people choosing not to respond or the census not reaching enough people – have made Statistics New Zealand evaluate partnerships with communities and the ways they usually approach these.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I critically explored the encounter between the lived experiences of multicultural forms of belonging and the state system of ethnic categorisation. The Plunket visit directed my attention towards this encounter and worked as an anchor when discussing the themes of multiplicity, visual appearance and state power. Sharing the personal vignette enabled me to exemplify and ground an analysis of each of these themes. In conversation with the stories told by my participants, I was able to shine a light on what the process of identity and ethnic belonging can look like in a multicultural context. The stories from my interviews are not representative of all ethnic and/or minority groups, but they are possible narratives that exist and belong to people who are experiencing and are able to articulate issues related to their (multi)cultural identities in the encounter with government discourses of multiculturalism. These narratives allowed me to explore the complexities, confusions and contradictions that are a part of how people – everyday diversity experts – experience and articulate their sense of belonging in a multicultural society.

In this chapter, I facilitated a conversation between the stories told on the ground about multicultural identities and the information the government provides about such multicultural ways of belonging. By listening to the stories of everyday processes of

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[22] 460,000 people did not complete the census and about ten per cent of people who did respond only partially completed their census forms (Walls 2019, Geddis 2019).

identification and the way these processes are constituted and restructured within multicultural spaces, I challenge the taken-for-granted census-based image of cultural diversity and ethnic classification. Making reference back to Carina's story, for example, it is clear how conventional state categories of ethnicity obscure understandings of the interplay between the various identifiers and categories which influence her sense of self, belonging and positioning. For example, in the description of her relationship to the Philippines and people from the Philippines living in New Zealand, it is obvious how complex and multi-layered her cultural identity is. Her sense of belonging is generated from associations with multiple communities and markers of difference, many of which have nothing to do with ethnicity (e.g. age and generational differences, visa requirements, dietary choices, time of arrival in New Zealand, occupation, education, and language skills). Therefore, it is essential to recognise these varying markers of belonging, which in various ways impact processes of group formation and self-identification.

The purpose of this chapter was to engage with the messy lived realities of multicultural identities, in order to expand the discourse of how multicultural ways of being and belonging are commonly perceived and approached. The analysis in this chapter opened up a space where identity could be expressed in different ways and where participants and I were able to converse about some of the issues we had experienced in the encounter with state-imposed practices of categorisation. Moreover, I illustrated how the state system of ethnic classification in different ways constrains the way multiplicity is understood and in turn risks misleading our understanding of cultural diversity and a multicultural society. In relation to the census, I emphasised the importance of understanding that the census is not a neutral and objective source of ethnicity data, but rather a state-regulated machinery driven by particular political interests.

In the next chapter, I continue to explore the concept of identity and processes of identification in a multicultural context. However, I transition my focus from government approaches to ethnic classification, to government approaches to cultural recognition. By drawing on my experiences and observations from being involved with the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils and Upper Hutt Multicultural Council, I explore in the following chapter the interface between grassroots activism and government's narratives about their responses to minorities and a multicultural population.

Chapter five

Voices from the grassroots - exploring the lived realities of cultural recognition in Aotearoa New Zealand

The aim of this chapter is to explore the interface between grassroots organisations (involved in processes of minority mobilisation, anti-racist activism, migrant settlement, and political lobbyism) and government-based responses to cultural diversity. In the previous chapter, I explored multicultural identities and ways of belonging, in relation to fixed census categories and government-led representations of cultural diversity and minority cultures. I demonstrated how an essentialist mode of defining culture and ethnicity are out of sync with the lived experiences of multicultural being and belonging in New Zealand and how it has damaging effects in terms of reinforcing racialised ways of describing, organising and approaching cultures and communities. In this chapter, I further explore issues of identity and cultural belonging as it relates to government responses and narratives about cultural diversity. Yet, my focus is on how fixed essentialised identities can be necessary, even positive, in some instances, and exploring why this is sometimes the case.

Povinelli (2002) argues there is a *cunningness* of cultural recognition under the conditions of late liberalism. In studying liberal multiculturalism from the perspective of the social life of Australian indigenous groups, she explores the predicament that indigenous peoples find themselves in when they navigate between their experiences of a modern liberal society and the 'traditional' authenticity that their struggles for recognition require (Povinelli 2002). This predicament, she argues, reflects how recognition granted by the state is cunning in the sense that it is at once enabling (providing a space for minorities to assert their claims of equal rights) and disabling (constraining marginalised people and communities to enact a particular version of themselves and their culture, which is recognisable primarily to the state or the government) (Povinelli 2002).

Povinelli's research resonates closely with my own, and her description of recognition as cunning, helps to point out the kind of dilemma or 'catch-twenty-two' I explore in this chapter in relation to cultural identities and government responses to cultural diversity. The focal point of this chapter is recognition and the kind of 'cunningness' associated with state-based recognition of minority cultures, as outlined by Povinelli. I focus on recognition and its implications in relation to cultural identity and governance in a multicultural society, as this was a key area of concern to my participants and it was also something I often reflected on myself in relation to personal experiences of being a migrant and taking part in different minority events. In my interviews, for example, participants would often describe these experiences and opinions about government responses to cultural diversity, and their strategies for dealing with them, by drawing attention to the tactics they use to navigate the system to gain recognition, create change and better their situation and the situation of the communities they advocate for. It was clear from the interviews, as well as observations from grassroot events, that fixed identities and generalising 'ethnic' labels also hold a strategic and vernacular purpose and can work as a resource for change. Furthermore, I found that the area of cultural recognition was an area, like the census and ethnic classification, where a significant disjuncture appeared to be evident in the encounter between government responses to cultural diversity and the needs and aspirations addressed by multicultural grassroots organisations.

My exploration of recognition and identity is anchored in a personal vignette, describing my meeting with Christalin, a multicultural activist. Christalin invited me into her world and let me get a sense of the skills and expertise she needed to acquire, in order to navigate the landscape of cultural recognition in New Zealand. The vignette provides insight into the struggles of recognition and being different in New Zealand. Listening to stories like these has been essential for me, in terms of understanding the processes of identification and recognition experienced by multicultural activists, like Christalin, who as migrants, minority members and community leaders engage in grassroots organisations, working to lobby and advocate for greater recognition of people from minority and marginalised communities.

Meeting Christalin

I first met Christalin in 2013, when both of us attended the Ethnic Women's Leadership programme organised by the Office of Ethnic Communities. At the time, both Christalin and I were newly arrived immigrants to New Zealand. However, she stood out amongst the group of women who were part of the programme. Sharing her story of settlement, as we all did for our introductions, she explained how she had come on her own from Myanmar as a refugee and how she had struggled to set up a new life in New Zealand, finding a place to live, learning English, working and studying to become a nurse. She told us how she had been supporting other refugees from Myanmar on a volunteer basis, opening her home (a tiny flat in Porirua) to anyone who needed help or advice. I vividly remember how she cried as she told us her story, and how the programme facilitators and a few government officials who were present that day, had applauded her for her resilience, independence and active leadership role in the community. I kept in contact with Christalin and as I was doing my PhD fieldwork, we often bumped into each other at different migrant and multicultural events in Wellington.

In 2015, Christalin invited me to a festival in Porirua, held at the Cannons Creek school hall and organised by the Karenni community. The festival was held in celebration of the Karenni Dee Ku festival, which is a traditional celebratory event throughout the Kayan region in Myanmar. I had previously offered Christalin my academic skills in any way she might find useful, and on this occasion she asked me to come to the festival to interview members of the Karenni community and to write an article about the Dee Ku festival to the local newspaper. As the chairperson of the New Zealand Myanmar Ethnics Council, Christalin was supporting the Karenni community by organising this festival, in terms of funding applications, advertisement, and communication with the wider community. While the primary purpose of the event was to celebrate the Dee Ku festival and to create the opportunity for the Karenni community to get-together, it was also an event held with a clear purpose of cultural promotion and awareness.

Prior to the event, Christalin had explained that this festival was a way for the Karenni community and the wider Myanmar community to make themselves visible – a way for them to 'officially' and in a more organised manner create a name for themselves. In other words, creating cultural gatherings like these would help build an organisational foundation, which could be used for future claims of funds, resources, and recognition. At the festival, Christalin had arranged for a group of elder Karenni men to be interviewed at the end of the festival and I was meant to conduct the interview with Christalin acting as translator, as none of the men spoke English. She instructed me that I should ask them about how the festival had been, what it meant to them and how they experienced their lives in New Zealand. We were all seated at one end of the school hall – the men sitting in a row, me beside them, and Christalin in front of and facing us all. I started off by asking them to talk a

bit about the festival, Christalin then translated the question and each man would answer. Christalin then roughly translated to me what all of them had said and I would record and take notes. This quickly became an arduous process and it didn't really make sense to me why she wanted me to do the interview. Eventually, Christalin just took over the interview completely, which was much more efficient, and I just acted as a note-taker. It felt as if I was mainly there to represent a white person or someone from the majority culture who could communicate information about the festival to mainstream society. It also seemed, from the way the interview was set up, that she was seeking to extract information from the interviews to help the Keranni community become visible to the wider community and to the government. She claimed she was merely translating and I didn't understand exactly what she was telling the men, however, it felt to me like she was serving as a kind of cultural spin doctor for these men, teaching them the art of cultural promotion.

A couple of weeks after the festival, Christalin and I met in her office, which is located in the same building as the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils (NZFMC). I had been in this building many times before but was happy to see that an office space had been granted to the Burmese ethnic community and to Christalin as their liaison officer/chairperson. I knew this was a tremendous achievement for Christalin, particularly knowing her background story of coming to New Zealand as a refugee and having to build a life for herself, on her own, whilst also trying to support people in her community. We had arranged to meet so we could discuss the interview conducted at the festival and go over the article I was meant to write. As we sat and talked in the office, I noticed a large map of Myanmar hanging on the wall behind her. I asked her about the geographical space of Myanmar and the many different ethnic groups I knew lived in the country. I was curious to know more about this place and the violent conflict that had caused millions of people to flee and for some to come to New Zealand as refugees.

Christalin explained that she is part of the Ngalaeng Matu Tribe living in the Southern Chin State and she told me about the many different ethnic groups that exists within Myanmar and explained how each had their own distinct language, customs and belief systems. She also talked about the Portuguese and British occupation in the country, about the multiple internal conflicts that have occurred since independence, and about the colonial relationship between Myanmar, China, and Thailand. I was astounded by the diversity and complexity within such a small nation, and I asked her if she ever got frustrated by the naive and generalising categorisation of people from Myanmar living in New Zealand, as they are often all lumped together under the label 'Burmese' or sometimes even just as 'Asian'. She laughed and said she found it mostly funny, as she knew people in New Zealand do not know much about Myanmar: "How can you expect them to think differently?" she said.

Despite working as a Burmese ethnic liaison officer, Christalin acknowledged the difficulties of collectively targeting and supporting migrants and refugees from Myanmar under the

general category 'Burmese'. She explained to me that most refugees and immigrants from Myanmar do not consider themselves Burmese and often do not feel connected to a Burmese identity – such an overarching identity, she argued, is unfamiliar to most. People from the different provinces and kingdoms in Myanmar do not share the same language or culture and they primarily only identify with their particular geographical ethnic group identity. However, Christalin stated, no one in New Zealand knows about this complexity and the various ethnic groups in Myanmar, and therefore it makes no sense to try and claim something based on one of these particular ethnicities, because most New Zealanders lack cultural insight and education about people from Myanmar. Also, it would be too time consuming and emotionally draining to have to explain the history every time. She is fully aware that 'to be Burmese' is the only way she and other migrants from Myanmar can gain recognition in New Zealand.

Towards the end of our meeting, Christalin started to talk about her achievements since arriving in New Zealand five years ago under the refugee quota. I could tell she felt so proud. Coming to New Zealand with no family, no education, no English skills and no financial funds, and today she has finished a nursing degree, has achieved the position as ethnic liaison officer and created an official platform to support other people from Myanmar struggling to settle in New Zealand.

In this vignette, we can trace how Christalin's activism and projects for gaining recognition are taking place at personal, community and political levels. On a personal level, she struggles to create a life for herself as a migrant in New Zealand and to understand what this means. On a community level, she is part of various collectives (e.g. the Burmese community, the Karenni community, the Ethnic women's leadership group, the NZFMC and UHMC), which engage in group-based struggles for recognition and provide spaces for their community and self-determination. And finally, on the political level, Christalin also (in her role as an ethnic liaison officer) links to government and funding policies, via striving for cultural recognition in her community work. At each level, we can detect elements of identity negotiation, political creativity, and a sense of intercultural worldliness. And so, I have structured the chapter in accordance with the three levels outlined above. I will also draw on the insights gained from my involvement with the Upper Hutt Multicultural Council (UHMC) and the NZFMC, and from conversations with 'everyday diversity experts' and other multicultural activists I encountered throughout fieldwork.

The purpose of this chapter is to emphasise the voices of the people who navigate the world of recognition and community activism on a daily basis. People who I describe as multicultural activists and everyday diversity experts, who provide firsthand insight into the expertise and knowledge needed to work the system of state responses to cultural diversity. By foregrounding these voices and the expertise that develops from the ground, I want to contribute to wider conversations about cultural recognition and multiculturalism from an ethnographic perspective. I hope this can contribute to a more nuanced and complex understanding of the meaning of multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand.

I can be who you need me to be

When reflecting on the personal dimension exposed in the vignette – that is Christalin's own subjective (personal) maneuvering of identity and recognition, it is evident that she negotiates and manages her identity relative to the different social spaces she encounters and that she is skilled at this kind of identity work. Christalin is very knowledgeable about the complex cultural history of Myanmar, as well as the nation's diverse demographics, and she is critically attuned to the narrow and constraining ways in which people like her are typically forced to identify when they come to live in New Zealand. She manages her identity, it seems, in the tension between essentialist and anti-essentialist understandings of culture and ethnicity. On the one hand, she recognises the problems attached to fixed and generalising labels of ethnicity and culture. Yet, on the other hand, she also seems to accept such labels and expresses a kind of 'so what' attitude towards concerns of multiplicity and diversity.

For example, when I asked her how she feels about the way migrants and refugees from Myanmar are perceived in New Zealand, she just laughed, shrugged her shoulders, and said, *"how can you expect them to think differently?"*. She appeared to not mind being categorised under the narrow and generalising identity of 'Burmese', as long as asserting such identity is the way through which she can become visible and gain recognition in the eyes of the state and mainstream society. From interactions with several other multicultural activists who, like Christalin, have shared their stories and let me tag along to observe the kind of volunteer work they engage in, I found that this kind of pragmatic attitude was common. In the organisations and at grassroots events I engaged with, it appears normal

that awareness and experiences of complex identities and forms of belonging are put aside in pursuit of visibility and access to state resources and recognition. Multicultural activists, like Christalin, work with the system with whatever identity labels are available to them, even if they feel some of these labels might not accurately represent them, because in some situations these labels give access to resources and recognition, which is essential to marginalised communities do they wish to better their position.

This identity work, that Christalin displays, can be explained according to two main motivations to perform and negotiate one's identity in a way that makes it official and publicly recognisable. The first relates to the fact that an officially recognised identity is a political necessity in contemporary liberal democracies. As many scholars have pointed out, recognition within the liberal state always requires something and someone to recognise and valorise, in order to distribute state resources and equal rights (Benhabib 2002; Ivison 2010; Hage 2000, 2005). Consequently, marginalised individuals and groups, as well as anyone actively engaged in the struggles against social exclusion and discrimination, depend on essentialism and fixed countable identities as crucial political tools or weapons for self-determination (Dash et al. 2006; Grillo 1995). Regardless of how individuals, who are part of a marginalised minority, may think of themselves – however complex they experience cultural belonging and however fluid they imagine their identity to be – they will not be able to embrace and claim such multicultural identities because of their marginalised position. They cannot afford to, and do not have privilege to be flexible or complex, as they depend on a fixed singular version of identity to be visible in the eyes of the state and to formulate claims of recognition. Without playing according to the rules of the system of state recognition and government's ideas of belonging and identity, people (non-majority members of society) will remain invisible and unrecognisable in the struggles for state resources, equity, and cultural inclusion. Therefore, to survive and thrive, they must work with and within these state systems, no matter how unjust and inaccurate they may be.

The second driver relates to the creative and skillful self, who (either consciously or unconsciously) uses identity negotiation as a strategic way of bettering his/her position in society, as well as to achieve future goals and aspirations. When thinking about Christalin, it is clear that she has developed a particular set of skills and expertise to allow her to act as a

community leader and an ethnic liaison officer. Not only has her experience as a migrant and a refugee, provided her with refined intercultural awareness and good settlement skills, her active engagement in the Burmese community, NZFMC and UHMC, has also provided her with a solid understanding of how to maneuver successfully within New Zealand's multicultural context. I see Christalin as a true everyday diversity expert – she is, like many other of my interview participants, someone who performs a particular worldliness and has firsthand expertise of working the system. As a multicultural activist, Christalin uses her expertise to skillfully work the system of cultural recognition, for the purpose of her own progress and that of others. My observations from the Dee Ku festival illustrate how she, in very strategic and proactive ways, is able to spin (or stage) a community event in a way that makes it recognisable for funding and recognition purposes. Her personal achievements whilst being in New Zealand can also be seen as a testimony to the success of refined settlement skills. From my conversations with Christalin, I know that much of the social services, funds and support networks she has utilised to better her position in New Zealand, came from government funding streams. Streams which were accessible and available to her only because she accepted and made use of the officially recognisable identities attached to 'people like her' in New Zealand (that is, for example, Burmese or Asian). It is also important to acknowledge that Christalin carries a lot of responsibilities in her role as a community leader and a Burmese liaison officer. Not only is she dealing with requests from people in her community and providing support, advice and mentoring, she is also in charge of communication with government, institutions, media and the wider public (speaking and lobbying on behalf her community).

Another interview participant, Pinaman, who I quote in the previous chapter in relation to her experiences and thoughts about multicultural identities and fixed ethnic labels (page 108-109) also told me about how she has strategically used mainstream society's view of her cultural identity to her advantage. Being from Ghana, and being a person of colour, Pinaman is typically labelled 'African' in New Zealand. She has an ambivalent relationship with this label and generally finds it to be discriminating, as it is used in an uninformed and ignorant manner to combine a section of the world's population which is extremely demographically diverse. However, claiming an African identity in New Zealand (as well as some of the stereotypes mainstream society attaches to it; such as exotic, colourful and

mystical) has also proven in some contexts to be useful and has opened doors for Pinaman, which she wouldn't otherwise have had access to. She has, for example, utilised her Africanness in marketing of her business, finding funding and investors, and gaining public attention for cultural and business events she has facilitated. Therefore, she occupies a similar attitude to Christalin in regards to the labels attached to her – frustrated at the cultural insensitivity, but also being able to use the label to work in her favor.

To talk about 'us' we need a 'we'

Christalin's vignette also describes the community, or group-based dimension, of her struggle for recognition. When witnessing Christalin's involvement with a wide range of 'Burmese' communities, and listening to the way she represents herself in relation to these, it becomes clear how her own personal project of identification and recognition also links to a broader group-based negotiation of a collective self and a community negotiating state practices of cultural recognition. At the community level, I found, that an essentialist reading of culture and identity is also used as a way to articulate and define a 'we' and to explain particular political, social and cultural differences and group-based rights based on this 'we'. The Karenni community, for instance, represented by Christalin and other community leaders, were strategically using the label 'Burmese' to gain visibility and present themselves to wider society. Similarly, within activist spaces dealing with issues of social justice, minority marginalisation (discrimination) and cultural recognition, it appears that the essentialist mode of thinking about culture and ethnicity is vital to minorities, because it is the only way for them protect themselves, their rights and aspirations, against the oppressive and marginalising forces of the dominant society. As Pinaman's comment demonstrates, articulating an essential singular identity and creating 'cultural' initiatives based on such an identity are an important way for minorities to nurture spaces of comfort and positive self-understanding.

My interview participants also spoke of the need for a 'we', or an essentialist notion of culture, in order to articulate their experiences and aspirations as non-majority members of society. I have picked out three comments below, which I find helpful when describing the group-based negotiation of identity I saw performed by multicultural activists and everyday diversity experts. The first comment is from Hine, who I have introduced in the introduction.

When Hine was telling me about her studies in Pacific studies and multicultural activism in academia, she stated:

She [her supervisor] calls me Tongan-Māori. She always emphasises my ethnicity when she introduces me. She will say 'here is our Tongan-Māori student!'. I know her intentions though, what she wants to do. She is doing this whole cultural strategy of re-thinking Pacific education. But yeah, I quite like it though. They [her supervisors] are talking about creating leaders within our own people. It is for us. It is us doing it. Re-thinking education for Pacific people, by Pacific people, that whole thing, and it is not an initiative, it is not a strategy, it is not a programme, it is a continuous [movement] of change. It is a new way of doing things.

The Pacific leadership programme that Hine is a part of, is a good example of a space which is created with the intent of protecting and nurturing values, ethics and meanings considered particular to people emerged in Pacific island cultures. The second comment is from my interview with Carina, who I also introduced in chapter three. Carina she talked about her work as a university outreach officer and in relation to this position she described that by explicitly specifying generalised categories of culture, ethnicity, and race, this functions as an important way to relate to students of minority background:

When we [outreach officers] go out to schools with a huge like Pacifika and Māori population and the students see us, they are like: 'Oh yeah it is cool it is a brown person'. For example, at Tawa school, some kids were saying: 'oh yeah it is not as fun when it is a white person because they don't get it'. Like, you know, they [white people] don't get where we [brown people] are. So, you can tell, I can tell, it is really clear that the reason why they [the students] keep coming [to the outreach programme] is because my boss, myself and my colleagues, we are from the same cultures as them. We understand the same type of humour and stuff. We get 'it' [I assume she is talking about what it means to be brown] and you can tell the kids feel more comfortable. That is part of that whole 'ethnic' thing that Victoria outreach have a Pacifica liaison officer, a Māori liaison officer and like, an Asian liaison officer. It is part of the [outreach] plan that the kids will have someone to relate to and go 'oh well I know someone', and I can just go see them. Like it is cool that they have a support system [at university], this is the biggest thing.

The third comment is from Pinaman, who I introduced earlier in this chapter. I asked Pinaman to tell me about her relationship with other people from Ghana and/or Africa living in New Zealand, that she feels a sense of solidarity with, and she said:

> *It is funny, yeah, especially with the younger people [of African descent], the African youth, I have this kind of older sister relationship with them. They are constantly sending me messages, and encouraging me, and telling me how they are proud of me. I am very honoured with what they are seeing in me. If they can see someone like me, similar colouring, [someone] similar to them, doing something which is really amazing, then hopefully that will build in some kind of resilience and encouragement in them to aim higher.*

Like the insight from Christalin's story, all three of these comments demonstrate how cultural, ethnic and racial labels, which in another context might have been considered constraining and discriminatory (for example Asian, Pacific, African, and brown person), are used consciously and strategically as a way to draw attention to particular 'group-based' differences, issues, experiences, hopes and aspirations of self-empowerment. The three interview excerpts make it clear that articulating a 'we' or a fixed notion of identity, is not only used as a method to achieve recognition and visibility, it also becomes a method for opening up and guarding spaces where alternative ways of being are allowed and protected from the norms and structures of mainstream western society.

Many other scholars have argued this same point, declaring that the (re)construction of alternative (fixed) identities and ways of doing things is necessary for people struggling to unhook and break free from the dominant culture/society that is marginalising and oppressing them (Cooper 1996; Daley 2014; Grillo 1995). Gayatri C. Spivak (1996), for example, develops the term 'strategic essentialism', as a way to describe the political and self-transformative necessity of essentialism. Subjects located at the margins of society cannot *not* be an essentialist, as Spivak (1996) argues, as a fixed identity is the only means through which the marginalised can assert claims for group-based recognition and equal rights (Danius et al. 1993; Ray 2009).

While fluid and multicultural ways of being and belonging have become a common experience within contemporary New Zealand society, essentialist and fixed ideas of ethnicity and cultural identity still prevail. They prevail and are reproduced, as I described in chapter three, through the stories the government tells about cultural diversity and a multicultural population. And they prevail, as this chapter makes clear, in the ways migrants and minorities need these ideas to describe and make sense of their experiences of

belonging, difference and difference-based disparities. Therefore, arguing for a greater recognition of multiplicity and relational identities, as I do in the previous chapters, should not be misunderstood as an attempt to argue that conversations about culture as fixed and singular are irrelevant. What this chapter makes clear is that there is a need to recognise the functions that essentialist's ideas of culture and ethnicity have in a multicultural context, in order to understand the political stakes associated with multiculturalism and the politics of recognition. Without such recognition, we risk abandoning people at the margins, if we don't recognise the need for fixed exclusive identities *as well as* the entire project of self-determination and 'the right to be different' (Grillo 1995; Stephen 1999).

The important thing to be aware of when, in the previous chapter, I presented critical arguments about the limitations of the essentialist notion of ethnicity and cultural identity informing the census (and government narratives about cultural diversity), is that these arguments are directed towards external and state-based forms of identification and classification. Such forms, it appears from the evidence presented in chapter three, tend to essentialise groups of people on the basis of preconceived stereotypes, with little resonance to the lived reality of these people. When I argue that there is a need for essentialist notions of identity, I do so specifically in relation to people at the margins who continue to be negatively affected by racism and other forms of difference-based discrimination and biases. As has already been pointed out, people at the margins, although they might experience belonging in multicultural and fluid ways, cannot afford to embrace such experiences. A comment from interview participant, Giselle, adds insight to this argument. Giselle works for the Ministry of Social development and identifies herself as Māori and Pākehā. She is a social justice activist and is passionate about helping Māori thrive and be empowered. I asked Giselle if she thinks Māori identity in a multicultural setting could be extended beyond its focus on whakapapa and ethnic heritage, and she responded:

> *I think it is difficult, in the sense that Māori culture has been shunned to the bottom of society, and so Māori have to be exclusive, they cannot be flexible. Otherwise, you know, you could argue that their culture will dissolve even further. And so some people may think of this as quite exclusive [idea of identity], you know, that we are in this cool club, and we are not going to let others in, but at the same time, it [whakapapa] is the core of Māori culture and we are not going to compromise or change that because it makes people feel uncomfortable.*

Husband and Alam (2014) also speak to the dilemma marginalised communities encounter in terms of embracing experiences of multiculturalism, they point out: "the everyday experience of minority ethnic persons reveals the extensive subtleties, and gross nastiness, of racist behaviour that robs them of the possibility of celebrating the vision of post-racial cosmopolitanism" (219). This quote highlights the discrepancy that is also pointed out by my participants, between the lived experiences of multiculturalism and a benevolent vision of a multicultural future (for example characterised as a post-racial cosmopolitanism). Like Giselle's quote above exemplifies, people from marginalised communities need to be exclusive and hold onto a fixed and enclosed sense of self, to stand strong in the struggle against racism and other harmful modes of assimilation.

Furthermore, based on my participants comments and the observations I made within grassroots organisations, it appears that a need for fixed and essentialised notions of identity also spring from feelings of 'oneness' and solidarity grounded in shared experiences and aspirations. As described by my participants, embracing distinct group identities can help to foster feelings of self-empowerment and build a sense of solidarity, which indicates that these labels can have liberating and transformative qualities. In line with these participant observations and Spivak's (1996) perspective, I argue, that essentialism in some instances therefore can have a positive purpose. However, I argue that it serves not merely as a political and strategic weapon in the struggles for recognition. It also serves, as the comments above remind us, as a tool to help foster a feeling of community solidarity, conviviality and belonging (Daley 2014; Grillo 1995; Wise and Velaytham 2013). In other words, an essentialist and fixed notion of identity also has a vernacular purpose, in the sense that it's an idea that brings people together around particular 'group-based' issues and has the potential to create safe spaces for minorities to feel surrounded by people who share similar experiences (or as Carina explains people who 'get it'). Another illustration of this perspective can be seen in the comments from Giselle, who expressed her view on cultural recognition in the following way:

> *I don't think of it [cultural recognition] as ideal, because ideally you would be focusing on the structural imbalances that make society unequal and unjust. But, structures take a long time to change and I have yet to hear of any alternatives to*

*affirmative action. So unless they [referring to the state or government] are prepared to sit down and say "hey I got these other ideas of how we can lift Māori up" and a plan as to how we can actually help them to thrive, my ears are closed! Because actually, cultural recognition is **the only** way right now that we can try boost progress for certain groups and solve certain issues.*

Giselle is someone who is astutely aware of the limitations and constraints associated with fixed ethnic categories and recognition based on such categories. She is even aware of what an 'ideal' solution to issues of inequality and marginalisation would be; that is, according to her to focus on the structural imbalances that cause social inequality. Yet, as the quote above demonstrates, she emphasises the necessity of cultural recognition as a temporary solution, which should not be disregarded, despite its flaws and constraints, as this option is *"the only"* one available to minority and marginalised communities to get support from the government to better their position in society. Giselle's approach to cultural recognition and its cunning characteristics is one that involves temporary comprises and a strategic attitude of 'making do with what is available'. This approach, I found was common amongst everyday diversity experts and people involved in grassroots organisations. In the section that follows, I will elaborate further on my findings in relation to the compromising and resilient attitude of working the system with what is available.

Working the system with what is available

The political dimension exposed in the vignette can be explained through Christalin's link to the NZFMC and her role as a Burmese liaison officer. As I have already mentioned, an important part of my fieldwork was engaging with NZFMC as well as the UHMC. I have participated in several meetings, workshops and community events hosted and facilitated by the Federation. Although Christalin and I had met before we both got involved with the federation, it was primarily through this organisation that we got to know each other better and interacted on a regular basis.

The Federation is an NGO, which was established in July 1989. It acts as a national umbrella organisation, representing over twenty regional multicultural councils spread throughout New Zealand. The purpose of NZFMC is to work as an advocate for the rights and well-being of ethnic minorities and to promote a multicultural framework in government. The primary

tasks of the federation is to provide guidance and information to the different multicultural councils in relation to, for example, facilitation of cultural festivals, cultural training programmes, service delivery to migrant and ethnic communities, building leadership capabilities, networking, consultation, project management, advertisement, media communication and funding applications.

It was by observing how the federation (as well as UHMC) supports and collaborates with different ethnic and migrant groups, typically enabled through ethnic liaison officers or community leaders like Christalin, that I came to understand the significant role the federation plays in terms of shaping how these groups are made politically visible (that is visible in the realm of government and policy). Listening to Christalin's story, for instance, I understood the impact that the federation has in terms of shaping her journey as an activist in a particular direction, by granting her an official title as Burmese liaison officer and providing an official platform for her to address her own concerns and those of her community. With the support of the federation, Christalin went from being a proactive philanthropist, who was helping people in her community informally and with her own funds, to becoming an official change-maker and community leader, who is able to officially and in an organised manner carry out her community work with the possibility of applying for government funding. In this sense, the federation acts as an important mediating link between communities and the government. It manages, in other words, the spaces where communities and community leaders come into contact with the government.

I learnt through fieldwork and my involvement with NZFMC and UHMC, that government funding and official recognition are vital to these organisations, as they determine access to resources, such as office spaces, paid employment, event venues and training facilities. Although these grassroots organisations are not solely dependent on government funding, the Ethnic Communities Development Fund (earlier known as the Settling In fund) of $520.000, distributed yearly by the OEC, is nonetheless the main pool of funding that most multicultural councils and other community groups I encountered depend on. While NZFMC and UHMC are both categorised as NGO's, there is a clear and strong connection between these organisations and the government. Because their relationship is based primarily on funding and the government is also able to indirectly regulate the work of the organisations through their funding criteria.

In 2016, OEC released information about the Ethnic Community Development Fund, stating that $520,000 was available to community groups wanting to increase awareness and understanding of their ethnic group, and that priority funding was given to celebration events, leadership development projects and social cohesion projects. When looking at government funding available to ethnic minority groups and cultural diversity initiatives, it becomes particularly clear how the government has the ability to control how ethnic minority groups assert their identities, hopes and aspirations in public and policy settings. Funding criteria demonstrates the concrete ways in which the government can implement and uphold a particular framework for how cultural diversity 'should be' approached and envisioned. Community groups are not forced per se to conform to such a framework, however, they typically will do so in order to gain access to the funding and resources available.

In 2015, I attended the first national meeting for migrant service centres, hosted by the NZFMC in Wellington. It is important that I share some observations from this meeting, as these provide further insight about the contact zone between grassroots and government stories, as well as the relations of power played out in this space in regards to recognition and funding. The meeting took place over two days and included the launch of the Multicultural New Zealand's report, *Our Multicultural Future*, which delivered evidence to support the need for official multicultural policies. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together managers and coordinators from various migrant service centres nationwide and create a space for these different representatives to share experiences, learn from one another, and discuss collaborative and strategic ways of working together in the future. The meeting also presented an opportunity for people working at the level of grassroots activism to meet and dialogue with people at the level of government. Christalin was also part of the meeting.

On the first day of the meeting an introduction session was planned, where each manager and coordinator would introduce themselves and their organisation, and briefly talk about the main challenges and opportunities their organisations face. There were representatives from thirteen different migrant centres, from Wellington, Whāngārei, Christchurch, Aoraki, Nelson, Canterbury, Auckland, Tauranga, Marlborough, Ōamaru, Rotorua, Invercargill, and

Manawatū. As I listened to each of these introductions, I was astounded by the wide range of issues and challenges these migrant service centres are dealing with. To give an idea of the variety of issues voiced, I have included a list based on the field notes I took:

- Isolation of women, children and other family members accompanying migrant partners who came to New Zealand for work purposes,
- Lack of inclusion and recognition of diversity in schools and day-care centres,
- Providing settlement support to migrant workers in Christchurch after the earthquake (for example in relation to work visa),
- Problems associated with basic grocery shopping needs for migrants who live in remote rural areas,
- Working with facilitation of culturally appropriate rehabilitation services to prison inmates that are of non-Christian backgrounds and have poor English language skills.
- Trying to combat the distrust migrant workers have of migrant organisations and encourage them to access support services,
- Teaching migrants and refugees how to apply for stallholder permits for festivals and markets,
- Assisting with job searches, writing CVs and accompanying people to job interviews,
- Trying to foster a community feeling and sense of belonging among groups of migrant people who are 'scattered' across rural areas,
- Lack of English language skills,
- Refugee mentoring,
- Refugee women's lack of mobility (some women never leave the house and lack social interactions and access to English language education),
- Addressing domestic abuse in migrant and ethnic minority families,
- Fear of police and authority,
- Missing information about how to cope in emergency situations,
- Lack of IT skills,
- Poor working conditions for migrant seasonal workers,
- Lack of social inclusion and experiences of racism and hostility from the mainstream population,
- Lack of knowledge about democratic rights and participation in local politics, council, and school boards.

This list of issues reflects how deeply intersectional and complex the work of multicultural grassroots organisations are. Moreover, it illustrates how the contemporary process of becoming a multicultural society is affecting the population at many different levels; socially, politically, culturally, economically and personally. The majority of the representatives also pointed to a significant lack of funding and resources. They all shared stories about how they struggle to keep their organisations going and to set up long-term and sustainable support services for refugees and immigrants. Many of these issues stem

from the fact that their work is controlled by one-off and periodic funding opportunities, which means they struggle to keep their organisations and services running on a permanent basis (particularly in regards to rent payments for offices space and salary payments). Many also stressed that they felt migrants, refugees, and ethnic minorities are going above and beyond, in terms of their efforts to fit in, and are putting their heart and soul into contributing to society, while the government remains reluctant to listen to the issues and needs of the grassroots sector.

Later, during the first day, four government officials were invited to speak at the meeting to address any questions the NGO representatives might have, in relation to the government and the way it handles issues related to immigration, settlement and minority recognition. One official was representing the New Zealand Police, another was a representative of the Ministry of Social Development, a third manager attended to address queries regarding the Settling-In programme while also representing Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), and a fourth was representing the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of Ethnic Communities. Each speaker focused on different aspects of the relationship between cultural diversity and government.

The manager of the *Settling-In* programme (I will name her 'the manager of SIP') focused specifically on government funding to migrants and settlement services and her style of speech and language stood out in the context of the meeting. She spoke very firmly and directly about the government's priorities in relation to immigration, settlement, and diversity, pointing to economic growth as the top priority, followed by social cohesion and successful integration of migrants and ethnic minorities. In line with the government story of cultural diversity, that I discussed in the previous chapter, she explained that a nation that relies on the contribution of skilled migrants, must also work to make migrants feel at home and ensure they participate within and integrate into all aspects of society – she added that this would in turn guarantee continued economic growth (her comments were clearly in line with the primary purpose of Immigration New Zealand, which at the time was to optimise the benefits and potential of skilled immigration).

Turning to address the NGO representatives, the manager of SIP specified that to work with the government one must 'as a migrant' figure out how one can contribute to and fit within the government's needs and priorities. Looking sternly out over the audience, she explained that while some may think these priorities are irrelevant to their organisation's needs and purpose, it is important to remember who is doing the work and providing the funding – thus, indicating that grassroots organisations must follow the priorities and requirement of government. The manager further specified that people working at the grassroots level have to ask themselves how their goals relate to those of the government, because after all, as she metaphorically exclaimed at the end of her speech, *"if you are singing your own song, you can sing it, but there will not be anyone listening"*. With this final comment, the manager of SIP very clearly highlighted the kind of power the government have in terms of setting the standards for how grassroots organisations structure and facilitate their work.

The manager of SIP's speech and in particular her last comment created disturbance and clear dissatisfaction amongst the audience. I had noticed, as she spoke, that most people in the audience were either shaking their heads, rolling their eyes or mumbling to each other with a look of frustration on their faces. In the Q&A session that followed, it became clear that many of the NGO representatives felt the statements made by the manager of SIP were patronising and completely out of touch with the reality of their work and activism. Keeping in mind the list of issues I presented above, as well as the fact that most migrant service centres are extremely under-funded and depend heavily on volunteer work, it is clear that the SIP manager's understanding of what it means to be a multicultural society, is very out of sync with the experiences of people who deal with the issues and challenges of cultural diversity on a daily basis.

The NGO representatives expressed their frustrations and posed direct questions to the manager of SIP and the other government officials about the disjuncture they sensed. However, their push back did not seem to have much effect. This encounter between grassroots actors and government representatives clearly exposes an uneven balance of power, in terms of determining the requirements for recognition and distribution of resources. The manager of SIP's speech stood out because it was the speech that most directly and explicitly indicated the upper-hand that the government generally has over

grassroots organisations, due to their financial dependency of state funding and resources. I have witnessed this type of state power exercised many times before, and evidence from my data suggests that most people working within grassroots organisations understand this issue to be an unavoidable part of grassroots and volunteer work. They know that if grassroots organisations want access to the resources and funding provided by government, then they must adhere to the requirements set by the government. In general, I found that people at the grassroots level, at the front line of multicultural politics, have a deep and nuanced understanding of the contradictions related to the work they do. Like Christalin, most multicultural activists I met through NZFMC and UHMC were aware of the 'catch-twenty-two', in terms of state recognition and collective identities, and also recognised the lack of power they have in having to rely on funding from government and other agencies. Yet, at the same time, they also expressed a very resilient and proactive attitude to these restrictions. The resilience and creative ways of coping with a system of government responses, which only partly and sometimes scarcely fits the needs and aspirations relevant at the grassroots level, really stood out to me, and an important part of this chapter is exposing the kind of expertise and knowledge related to this.

From interviews with everyday diversity experts and observations at grassroots events, I learnt that the common practice is to work the system with what is available, when maneuvering the limitations of a rigid and one-dimensional system of state categorisation and recognition. In terms of funding, for example, I saw how the councils and other migrant and ethnic minority organisations creatively found ways to organise their work around the government priorities, despite being aware that these priorities did not match the realities they face. One migrant service manager, for instance, presented in her introduction speech at the AGM meeting that the main goal of her organisation was to celebrate everything and to make a celebration out of everything. She showed photos from different celebration events that her organisation had facilitated and explained how she saw these events as fun community events, which mainly focused on people from different cultural backgrounds socialising and getting to know each other, rather than celebrating a particular occasion or event. The context of the government's funding criteria as being a cultural celebration, I saw this migrant service manager's approach to celebration as one way of making the most of

what is available – i.e. she tailored her language and focus to align with that of the government's, in order to 'pass' that criteria.

I also noticed when attending events and conferences organised by the UHMC and NZFMC, that their initiatives would be promoted in accordance with specific government priorities – typically celebration and leadership building – however, the actual event would often also involve other more informal matters. For instance, networking and relationship building between different multicultural councils and migrant community groups, sharing the latest funding application tips and information, discussing urgent issues and challenges experienced in migrant and ethnic communities, addressing hurdles in the NGO sector, and supporting and encouraging each other's activist work. In stating this, I do not mean to suggest that these organisations are falsifying what they do just to get funding. What I experienced was rather a creative and strategic approach to a system of funding and recognition that only meets the needs and aspirations of these organisations and the communities they are supporting in very limited ways. While observing from within grassroots organisations, I found that although these people may not always be explaining their actions and practices in strategic terminology and may not be fully aware of the creative ways they are working the system, their actions, nonetheless, always seem to transcend and overcome the limiting requirements of government funding and state recognition.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed the personal, communal and political dimensions of identity negotiation, in relation to the project of gaining state recognition in a multicultural society. When analysing Christalin's story, I was able to demonstrate the connections between each level, and illustrate how struggles for recognition are played out at each level. I have also drawn on supporting evidence from my interviews with everyday diversity experts and observations from field notes from various events facilitated by the NZFMC.

Overall, this chapter's main contribution is an ethnographic and narrative grounded analysis of the politics of recognition and multiculturalism. By centring the voices of multicultural activists and everyday diversity experts, I have emphasised the political agency and

vernacular values generated from drawing attention to a fixed sense of cultural unity or 'oneness'. The evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates the skills and knowledge multicultural activists and organisations are utilising to deal with the system of state responses to cultural diversity and work it to their own advantage.

I focused on issues of essentialism and fixed identities, and the main finding explains the existence of an ambivalent necessity for maintaining ideas of cultural oneness, while simultaneously wanting to break with such one-dimensional and exclusive ideas of difference and belonging. In line with Spivak (1996), I have argued that liberation and recognition in contemporary liberal societies comes to represent a 'violating enablement', in the sense that it creates injuries whilst also presenting a path through which the injured must attempt a limited recovery. In other words, my argument, in relation to the disconnect between government responses to cultural diversity and the aspirations and needs at the grassroots level, is that while evidence suggests that government responses in many ways are out of sync with the reality of grassroots activism, there is also evidence that indicates that grassroots organisations create progress despite the inadequacies of these responses.

The challenge in multicultural societies is to find ways to respond to cultural diversity that embrace its complexities and fluid character, without compromising the platform for influence and participation that is currently available to minorities and people at the margins (Grillo 1995). It is necessary to have ongoing conversations about the problems of doing politics anchored in essentialist identity 'bits', which, as the previous chapter discusses, is at risk of reproducing a one-sided and race-based understanding of cultural belonging, as well as reaffirming negative stereotypes about specific cultures and minority communities. However, it is also necessary to have conversations about the vernacular aspects of essentialism, and how people strategically use fixed identities to gain recognition, visibility and access to resources and funding. This chapter provides insight into the shape, nature and themes of such conversations.

Chapter six

Conclusion – Learnings and contributions from a narrative approach to ethnographic fieldwork

In this thesis I presented and analysed two sets of stories. Firstly, I looked at the stories and information communicated by the government about cultural diversity and state responses to a multicultural population. I explored the different narrative elements of the government's proclamation of New Zealand as a harmonious and welcoming nation, namely: the census guided definition of cultural belonging and diversity and 'ethnics' as the focus of government responses to cultural diversity, and the dominant economic theme and vision of social cohesion presented in government language. Secondly, I explored the stories people and grassroots organisations use to explain and make sense of their experiences and aspirations of multiculturalism; this includes stories about supporting refugee resettlement, applying for government funds to organise community events and lobbying for multicultural policies and specific minority rights. The key aim of this thesis was to stage a conversation between these two narrative terrains and explore the messy interface between them.

In order to achieve this goal, I applied a narrative approach to ethnographic fieldwork, which involved using multiple methods to collect and analyse stories and different types of narrative materials – such as personal vignettes, field notes, interview transcripts, textual materials and photos. Triangulating the data I gathered from these different methods, enabled me to make connections across a broad range of narrative evidence. I brought together evidence from auto-ethnography, participant observations, interviewing, and document analysis, to create a discursive space where government narratives about cultural diversity come into contact with stories told by everyday diversity experts.

Overall, the thesis shines light on the moments of disjuncture; this exposure allowed me to explore spaces where evidence suggests that official stories about multiculturalism are out of sync with how people live their lives in a multicultural society, and how they perceive and articulate their experiences. In conducting this type of analysis, the complex intersection between dynamics of identity, recognition and governance, that are apparent in these

moments, were made visible. Furthermore, I drew attention to the resilience, creative strategies, and coping mechanisms that people and grassroots organisations develop and apply in order to navigate the inconsistencies of government responses to cultural diversity, integration and minority recognition. I was also able to demonstrate how government stories are constructed from a particular cultural and political standpoint which imply specific assumptions about society, people and cultures. I also illustrated how personal stories from everyday diversity experts can be used as a means to understand the everyday experiences of living in a multicultural society, as well as a means to inspire new ways of thinking and talking about cultural diversity and multiculturalism.

In this concluding chapter, I will present the key findings of the thesis and discuss how these contribute to the field of anthropological and ethnographic research on multiculturalism. I present three main findings. The first concerns government narratives and the assumptions and silences associated with these stories. The second finding concerns the points of disconnect I discovered between government narratives and stories from participants and grassroots organisations, and the third finding is about the grassroots expertise of diversity experts and multicultural activists who deploy strategic and creative ways of working the system.

Government narratives

Firstly, as chapter three demonstrated, I found a clear consistency in the way cultural diversity is communicated and illustrated, both visually and textually, in the different materials I discussed from OEC reports and booklets, as well as in public speeches by government officials. The same narrative content and materials were repeated and performed over and over again, and were used across a diverse range of government-related sites and situations. By listening to government officials speak, interviewing an OEC manager, and conducting a critical reading of government documents, reports, booklets, website texts, social media posts and images, I was able to use such evidence to deliver an ethnographic analysis of a general government narrative of cultural diversity. The use of triangulation was particularly useful in this context, as it allowed me to explore and document the reiterations and consistencies that appeared over this diverse range of narrative material. I chose to focus on re-telling and exploring government narratives

primarily through information attached to OEC and Statistics New Zealand (more specifically census data on diversity), as these two government entities stand out as the major official platforms for articulation and distribution of 'government' related information about cultural diversity.

The narrative about cultural diversity attached to government, tells a story that privileges experiences of social harmony, tolerance, a welcoming indigenous population, celebration of cultural diversity and of skilled migrants who have great economic potential. It is a story that requires fixed ethnic categories and it is a story that normalises majority culture as the unmarked centre of society. By not naming majority culture as a 'culture' that is part of the multicultural society like any other culture, government narratives create the idea that issues of diversity and multiculturalism are something concerning primarily 'the ethnic' population (i.e. minority members of society). Thus, government narratives also work to maintain the idea of the majority as the 'normal' and 'culturally neutral' centre of society, into which 'diverse' and 'multicultural' minorities should be integrated. Consequently, these ideas silence stories about the many ways in which Pākehā culture dominates society and how this impacts the project of multiculturalism. I found that government narratives construct an overwhelmingly positive image of New Zealand as a unique and 'special' society, which is coping exceptionally well in terms of responding to cultural diversity. However, I discovered that silenced in the government's story of cultural diversity are, for example, stories about colonisation, majority dominance, minority and indigenous resistance and settlement of refugees and unskilled migrants. The long list of tasks (presented on page 138), which showcase the range of issues dealt with by migrant organisations and multicultural councils, provides clear examples of the kinds of everyday issues that are left unattended and ignored in such a positive story of cultural diversity.

Approaching government information and official stories from a narrative perspective, helps to remind us that this kind of information and these stories are constructed in a specific time and place, and are shaped by particular assumptions and political interests. Stories told by the government are often strategically normalised and are granted a powerful status, due to their link to policy and political decision making. The purpose of exposing and picking apart government narratives, has been to disrupt and critically reflect on the 'common-sense' stories about cultural diversity and multiculturalism which circulate in New Zealand

society. A critical reflection on the assumptions and motives that underpin government narratives also opens up the opportunity to have different and deeper conversations, and to develop alternative narratives about cultural diversity.

Issues of disjuncture

In chapter four, my personal Plunket nurse vignette highlighted how issues of fixed identities and essentialising notions of culture guide enumerating systems of categorisation and census-driven representation of cultural diversity. My reflections on the Plunket visit provided me with rich insights about the moments of disjuncture that appear when government processes come into contact with a multicultural citizen whose identity is shaped by multiple forms of belonging. The gap between my son's feelings of belonging and the nurse's strict and rigid approach to getting the 'right' box ticked, illustrated a moment of disjuncture that allowed for an overall analysis of state power and limited individual agency. I then introduced my participants' family histories and stories of belonging, and was able to explain how multicultural identities and multiplicity, in terms of belonging, is not a matter of multiplication of different cultures, but rather a form of being in-between and in relation. From this argument, I critically discussed how census ethnicity data and its generalising approach to measuring cultural belonging limits the government's understanding of group dynamics and identification processes in contemporary multicultural societies. This analysis enabled me to challenge and disrupt the dominant and commonly accepted image of cultural diversity, which is based on census statistics and the reproduction of fixed ethnic categories and the notion of a multicultural society that is made up of separate cultural units.

The experiences of multicultural identities that are described through my participants' stories reject the idea that cultural belonging and identification are fixed and separate from other processes of affiliation. For example, Pinaman's comments, displayed in chapter three, presented her concerns about the data and knowledge gained about multicultural citizens like herself, when attempting to 'measure' such citizens through the use of generalising ethnic categories. The emphasis on multiplicity and interdependence, which is displayed in the stories about multicultural lives, disrupts generalising ethnic categories and the rigid system of ethnic classification which is an integral part of census surveying. The

stories of multicultural lives also challenge the partition of a multicultural population into three sectors – mainstream, Māori and ethnics - which I found were commonly presented in OEC materials.

Exploring such disjunctures, allowed me to engage in a critical discussion about the skewed relations of power that form the scaffolding of official systems of categorisation (like the census). It also enabled me to illustrate how the state, and those who associate with the state, possess a particular powerful position, in that they control the terms of recognition and decide which aspects of a group or person's identity are worthy of recognition. From these explorations, I brought attention to the issue of Pākehā dominance, exercised through an absence and invisibility of the majority culture in debates about multiculturalism, social justice and the politics of recognition. This kind of power is what Bell (1995) describes as the power of being unnamed. Bell (1995) uses Roland Barthes' (1972) concept of ex-nomination, arguing that Pākehā culture, marked as a group with no culture or as the neutral mainstream, earns a particularly powerful position. This is because, as I also noted above, being marked as 'culturally neutral' means that the disproportionate ways in which mainstream culture dominates society go unchallenged. Removing majority and Pākehā culture from the conversations about cultural diversity and multiculturalism consequently means this culture continues to be the omnipresent, yet invisible, centre of society.

From listening to the voices of everyday diversity experts, it was clear that the biggest issue, in regards to the way the government responds to cultural diversity, was not about whether or not a particular programme or policy is appropriate or not; it is rather that the government supports only a weak and minimal implementation of multiculturalism. In other words, everyday diversity experts saw that there was no real political will to genuinely intentionally invest in multiculturalism. Participants emphasised the frustrations they felt when the contributions of the state and majority society to the project of multiculturalism is reduced to merely promoting tolerance and kindness towards diversity and different ethnicities, cultures, races, and nationalities. Without a focus on structural change and a real transformation away from monoculturalism and towards a situation where many cultures are represented within the governing bodies of society, principles of tolerance and friendliness towards diversity appears to many as a weak version of multiculturalism, which

also carries undertones of racism, in the sense that these principles indirectly reproduce structures of Anglo-centric (white) dominance.

Many participants stressed that asking the dominant majority to be nice and kind towards minorities and people who are different is not enough. Participants would repeatedly use phrases like 'it's a two-way street' and 'it goes both ways', when talking about multiculturalism and strategies for how to successfully approach cultural diversity and dynamics between minorities and the majority society. The emphasis on a 'two-way street' was generally made in relation to participants arguing that migrant and minority communities are fully committed to trying to make a multicultural society work well for everyone, whereas they feel the government is not willing to commit in the same way. Most participants were concerned about the prevailing dominance of white Anglo-Saxon culture, and felt that this culture's inability to share and take equal part in the multicultural project constituted one of the main obstacles for successful multiculturalism. A participant, Hine, stated confidently: *"It's simple! When there is a dominant society, an overpowering majority, and we are trying to make a change, we never are going to make a difference, if they [the majority] can't share their resources and power with us [minorities]. If you don't have that [sharing], then the rest [progress] won't go anywhere"*.

By reading the ethnographic landscape of everyday multiculturalism – listening to the stories of people who deal with multicultural issues in their everyday lives, people who live in the midst of messy multicultural spaces – it becomes clear that there exists quite an uncomplicated desire for a government commitment to a strong version of multiculturalism. And by strong, I mean to implement a multicultural model that is genuinely committed to a structural transformation of society, away from principles of monoculturalism and towards a framework that embraces multiplicity.

Vertovec (2010) argues that in debates about multiculturalism there is a tendency to focus excessively on 'culturalism', involving an authentic view on ethnic self-definition and external-labelling, which is meant to create consensus around a particular cultural identity and group recognition. Vertovec (2010) explains that because of this preoccupation, the many-cultured and relational aspects of governance and redistribution embedded in the

multicultural project are given the lowest (if any) priority. I suggest, the difference between a strong and weak version of multiculturalism can be understood through Vertovec's distinction between a focus on multiplicity and a focus on 'culturalism'. The weak version of multiculturalism, which I argue is articulated through government narratives, is weak because it only focuses on promoting a celebration and recognition of an 'ethnic' and cultural section of the population. Whereas, the strong version of multiculturalism, that is envisaged by everyday diversity experts and grassroots organisations, involves a focus on much more radical forms of plural approaches to governance, citizenship and power sharing. I argue that an engagement with stories about messy multicultural identities is relevant to policy and government, as it helps to illustrate what policymakers must be mindful of when they seek to tidy up, classify and restrict diversity for the purpose of state recognition.

Agency and expertise at the grassroots

In chapter five, I explored the dynamics of (multi)cultural politics in Aotearoa New Zealand through the vignette about Christalin and her role as a Burmese liaison officer. Following on from the critical discussion of disjuncture in chapter three, I look at issues of fixed identity, ethnic categorisation and state recognition, and the disjuncture between government responses to cultural diversity and the needs and aspirations of people involved in grassroots activism. I found that people at the grassroots level in dealing with the system of government responses to cultural diversity, a system which is sometimes out of sync with the reality they face, develop tactics to navigate such discrepancies.

Whilst doing fieldwork, I observed the creative and strategic ways in which people navigate the system of state recognition and manage to work it to their own advantage, despite facing all kinds of constraints and obstacles. For example, as Christalin's story demonstrates, members of minority groups sometimes use essentialised notions of identity and culture to describe themselves individually and collectively. They do so for a variety of reasons, such as for a political purpose, or to mark a sense of group solidarity, or simply because there is no other option. Learning to use essentialised notions of identity is part of learning to function as an immigrant minority existing within a majority society. In other words, I found that the

minority group learns how to work with, manipulate, and utilise the inappropriate responses facilitated by government for their own advantage.

From Christalin's story and my experiences doing research with the UHMC and the NZFMC, I learnt how important it is not to underestimate the political and communal need for a representation of fixed singular and recognisable identities. I found that one-sided arguments about a messy form of multiculturalism risks obscuring the political stakes of recognition, as well as the reality of governance practices. Thus, I introduced the notion of vernacular essentialism to describe the paradox of essentialism and fixed identities. Vernacular essentialism is related to notion of strategic essentialism, which as Spivak explains, describes the way minorities and marginalised communities essentialise themselves to formulate and gain specific political goals (such as ethnic mobilisation and assert claims of equal rights) (Danius, Jonsson, and Spivak 1993). However, with the word 'vernacular' I aim to specifically describe and draw attention to the situated, creative and communal use of fixed identities and the way these were used to support the community-based agency and modes of resilience and survival that I observed in spaces of grassroots activism.

The interviews I conducted with everyday diversity experts were completed in Wellington during 2015 and an important part of these interviews was discussing change and progress, in relation to government responses to cultural diversity. Some of my interview questions were, for example, intended to encourage participants to talk about how well they thought the National party (in power at the time) was doing, in terms of responding to cultural diversity. I aimed to find out what they thought the best way forward would be, in terms of becoming a multicultural society. In most cases, however, participants just naturally started to talk about change and what they saw as 'better' ways of doing things in terms of multiculturalism. Normative reflections appeared to be an integral part of describing their experiences of living in a multicultural society and also indicated that finding 'better' ways forward is a core priority and integral part of their activism. I don't suggest that my participants' words should be read as the only or final solutions, but inspired by Elizabeth Povinelli's (2012) understanding of critique, I view critique also as an ethical practice, involving a reflexive process of imagining 'otherwise' – i.e. of how things could be different and what alternatives would be like (Bohman 2002, 2007; Horkheimer 1972). The normative

ideas and thoughts shared by my participants (everyday diversity experts) about change and a 'good' multicultural society, has grown from their lived experiences and advanced cultural awareness skills. Drawing on Povinelli's understanding of critique, I view the stories I heard from interview participants and other multicultural activists' critique of government responses to cultural diversity, as providing thought-provoking insight about alternative ways of doing and thinking multiculturalism. In other words, I understand the critical reflections of my participants, as ethnographically grounded accounts of an 'otherwise'. Such reflections, I argue, have value and should be fore-fronted in debates about the challenges of cultural diversity and multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. For example, in one of my interviews two participants discussed the dilemma of identity and recognition in the context of being a multicultural society. Their comments shine light on some important issues in relation to the silencing of majority. The discussion goes like this:

> **Hollie:** *I think it is concerning if we focus too much on 'being multicultural' then suddenly people aren't Pākehā anymore. They will just claim 'I am a quarter Dutch, quarter German and something else'.*
>
> **Giselle:** *Yeah I know what you mean. People seem to think that becoming multicultural means separating your identity from culture. So you hear people say 'oh, yeah I am quarter Dutch, and I am quarter this or that', as if that should say something about them. When actually I feel like your cultural identity is what defines you.*
>
> **Interviewer:** So you mean regardless of all the 'ethnic' origins you might have, you are mainly shaped by the culture or community you are a part of or live in?
>
> **Giselle:** *Yeah some people will say 'I am an extrovert' or 'I am a Taurus'. This is so funny. You get people using these kinds of 'individual' things, like their horoscope or their personality traits, and pretend that that is what defines them. It is really funny what people will do almost to avoid having to dig deeper than that.*
>
> **Interviewer:** Into their cultural history?
>
> **Giselle and Hollie:** *[Both nodding] yeah, yeah.*
>
> **Hollie:** *Yeah, so some people may name four different European countries to say that's where they are from, but they know nothing about their heritage, their history, and their culture. I think this is maybe confronting for Pākehā – for someone to ask them: 'we actually want to know who you are culturally,*

> *like your cultural identity, and not just as like what shoes you are into or other personal preferences'.*

Hollie and Giselle, like most participants, clearly articulated the need for specifically talking about majority culture (referred to as Pākehā culture) in a singular and concrete manner. The two participants highlight that there is a tendency amongst majority members (Pākehā people) to articulate an individualised multi-ethnic persona or self-story rather than describing oneself as part of a cultural collective. This tendency works to avoid *"having to dig deeper"* – that is avoiding reflections on the meaning of majority culture and the way members are socialised by this culture.

Not recognising and naming majority culture as 'a culture' included in the multicultural equation as any other minority cultures, means that majority culture can remain invisible. This is the issue Hollie points to when she states: *"if we focus too much on 'being multicultural' then suddenly people aren't Pākehā anymore"*. Thus, an embrace of multicultural identities by majority subjects appears to work in similar ways as when Pākehā people claim to have no culture (Bell 2007, 2009). To appear culturally invisible, as has already been explained, becomes a convenient way for majority subjects to detach themselves from the difficult and often uncomfortable concerns of structural change and power sharing. Through its invisibility, the majority culture is granted the privilege and power to comfortably and unquestionably exist as the all-encompassing neutral mainstream culture, which continues to be the dominant force directing how things are done. In the excerpt, Giselle and Hollie also argue that majority subjects need to know more about their cultural heritage and to be able to recognise it as an important part of who they are. This argument points again to the need for looking at culture and identity in a fixed and essentialised manner. For in order to turn the 'ethnic gaze' on the majority culture and bring this culture into conversations about cultural recognition and the redistribution of power, one needs to be able to talk about and *recognise* Pākehā culture.

Hollie's and Giselle's argument reflects in-depth knowledge about the dynamics of identity and recognition, and the changes they suggest relate to the aspiration of 'power sharing' that most participants also viewed as the necessary process to implementing a stronger version of multiculturalism. Making visible the majority culture (i.e. Pākehā culture) and

exploring the ways this culture relates to other cultures, is also a way to make visible majority privileges and Pākehā dominance. This has the potential to direct the government focus onto conversations about the 'many-cultured' aspects of multiculturalism, for example, redistribution of power, structural inclusion and equity policies (Powell 2013, Vertovec 1999).

Despite evidence of great capabilities in the grassroots, it should be mentioned that I found that this sector also has its limits. I often heard government officials advising grassroots organisations that they should not rely on government for help and support. I saw a tendency of government to put too many responsibilities in the hands of grassroots organisations and volunteers. Major tasks such as refugee and migrant settlement, as well as programmes for diversity awareness and cultural recognition, are currently dealt with by small-scale migrant and multicultural organisations, which struggle to get funding and appropriate support for their work. Movement and resistance at grassroots level are important, yet this cannot stand alone. It needs the support and dedicated investment of government and appropriate policy.

Discussing messy-ness, staging a conversation, and why this thesis is important

Reginald Byron (2012) argues that there is a need for anthropological engagement in contemporary debates about multiculturalism, because he claims anthropological research can bring attention to the voices and processes that we must listen to if we are to learn the lessons of history (Byron 2012). As anthropologists, he explains, "it is our duty to ensure that multiculturalism is, and remains, a topic of open and critical debate about the means and ends of tolerance, in which the policing of cultural boundaries – by anyone, insider or outsider, teacher, priest, or politician – has no place" (Byron 2012, 65). Ethnographic fieldwork that involves in-depth insider and auto-ethnographic accounts of multiculturalism has a special potential, as these accounts provide evidence about the way experiences, discourses and self-understanding collide against lager cultural assumptions concerning race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, class and age (as highlighted by Minh-ha (2009) in chapter two). From such evidence, it is difficult to overlook the many nuances and contradictions which are associated with the topic of multiculturalism. As is also pointed out

by Wise and Velayutham (2009), studying multiculturalism from an ethnographic perspective forces the researcher to confront the fragmented, multiform, non-systematic, evocative and constantly changing landscape of messy multiculturalism, which in turn enables us to resist the temptation to reify actions, relations and categories integral to the social world we as humans navigate within.

This thesis aimed to deliver the kind of anthropological engagement as noted by Byron above. The knowledge about the everyday dynamics of multicultural co-existence, which is presented throughout this thesis, through my vignettes and interview excerpts, helps to build empathy about other people's lives and the struggles faced by citizens who are not part of majority society (therefore also helps to ensure an open and critical debate about multiculturalism as Byron requests). Moreover, a critical investigation of the narratives attached to the stories of governance and policy responses is relevant, because it enables us to showcase the limits and constraints of recognition and state responses to cultural diversity built on notions of tolerance. Nurturing feelings of empathy seems essential to counter-balance the often hostile and closed-minded perspectives that dominate conversations about immigration, cultural recognition and multicultural policies.

As an anthropological thesis, this research project also demonstrates the most basic ethnographic statement: that all humans are cultural agents and learners (Cohen 1978; Bates and Prog 1990). While cultural and ethnic belonging are not the only forms of affiliation that shape our identities and positions in society, we are nonetheless all positioned culturally and ethnically, and the particular positions we hold influence our life circumstances and opportunities (Goodenough 1976). To some, this may seem like an obvious fact to highlight. Yet, as I recognised that there is a tendency in government to associate stories about cultural diversity with ethnic people and communities (i.e. people who are non-white, non-western and not Christian), I believe it is important to highlight that the thesis also supports the argument that all residents in Aotearoa New Zealand, regardless of their specific heritage, citizenship, language, and religion are cultural and ethnic beings. No one is more 'ethnic' or cultural than anyone else. Hence, it is important to also include the majority culture in stories about government responses to cultural diversity and multiculturalism, because this can, as I mentioned earlier, help to address equity issues in

terms of the power and privileges this culture has accumulated over time. Furthermore, a recognition of all groups in society as 'cultural' can help to shift stories about multiculturalism away from an exclusively 'ethnic' focus.

Vertovec (2007b, 2019) claims that there is a need to reshape and extend existing frameworks dealing with questions of multiculturalism, he argues that:

> ethnicity-focused approaches to understanding and engaging with various minority 'communities' in Britain, as taken in many models and policies within conventional multiculturalism, is inadequate and often inappropriate for dealing with individual immigrants' needs and understanding their dynamics of inclusion and exclusion (Vertovec 2007b, 1039).

In line with Vertovec, I argue that there is a need to find new ways of approaching and telling stories about the topic of multiculturalism. Through my engagement with the NZFMC and UHMC, I learnt that a new line of questioning and language around cultural diversity, settlement, and social justice grows from looking at the paradoxical nature of minority struggles within the liberal state, and the strategic methods marginalised people are using to put forward claims and visions for social progress (Brandwein and Donoghue 2011; Husband and Alam 2014). For example, I have learnt that it is much more appropriate to focus on the ways migrants and minority groups apply identities as social and political resources to negotiate and assert various claims of liberation and self-determination, than it is to focus on recognition of their pre-conceived 'ethnic' differences (Husband and Alam 2014; Mookherjee 2010). A deeper understanding of these 'ways' provides a much more nuanced picture of the experiences of these groups. I have also learnt that instead of assuming the normative objectives of minority struggles, one should rather seek to recognise the arguments that groups consider relevant to their lived experiences and work together to understand the identity work that might support their claims (Mookherjee 2010). This could help to bridge some of the gaps between the system of government responses and the needs at grassroots level.

Mai Chen (2015b), in her recent book *Super Diversity Stocktake,* claims the there is an urgency for multicultural policies in Aotearoa New Zealand. She argues that it is essential for

the government to be well informed about the population in order to be capable of appropriately approaching the issues and needs of different communities in society. She also advocates (2015b) for government to urgently implement multicultural models or, in Chen's own words, a 'super-diversity' framework. However, I would rather like to stress the importance of stopping and pausing before government decides to adopt and implement any official multicultural model or framework. In a super-diverse settler nation like New Zealand, which has entrenched inequalities and social hierarchies that replicate and are an ongoing legacy from its colonial past, it is indeed necessary to take the time to *critically* refine the focus. This can help to ensure we develop new government approaches to cultural diversity that better reflect the complexity of a multicultural population governed within a bicultural framework and in relation to processes of decolonisation and indigenous struggles for self-determination. This thesis reminds us of the continuation of a colonial mindset that has shaped contemporary modes of representing and promoting discourses of multiculturalism, and has also shaped the ways in which government understands and defines concepts like culture, ethnicity, diversity and a multicultural society. Therefore, to mitigate the risk of reinforcing such a mindset – and indirectly restating inequalities and exclusive structures that stand in the way of realising a post-colonial future – I recommend that government and policy makers take their time to review the very foundation through which conversations about cultural diversity and multiculturalism has 'normally' been understood and approached in policy. This thesis supports a dethroning of big data and statistical forms of representation, and requests a greater reliance on situated and ethnographic data in conversations about cultural diversity and governance.

The aspirations and suggestions for change that are presented in the stories from my participants offer opportunities for thinking differently about multiculturalism, and to understand how messy forms of multiculturalism, which relate the concept of multiculturalism to everyday processes of settlement, anti-racist work and struggles for recognition, inspires ideals of a stronger version of multiculturalism. Focusing on the messy and ethnographic aspects of multiculturalism also makes it possible to recognise and document connections between indigenous people and ethnic minorities – connections which link these groups together on the margins of mainstream society. Realising such connections has the potential to foster a progressive and collaborative relationship between

grassroots organisations and government actors. Biculturalism and multiculturalism may differ in some aspects, for instance in relation to claims and aspirations, yet they seem to merge in the resistance against Pākehā hegemony and a tokenistic response to difference. Ironically, the same tokenistic limitations which have been highlighted in relation to biculturalism can also be identified in relation to the current approach to diversity and multiculturalism. The same reluctance that the settler state has shown in terms of recognising tino rangatiratanga and an actual bilateral model of governance and citizenship, has been replicated in the governmental commitment to the project of multiculturalism. Where O'Sullivan (2007) and other scholars (Johnson 2008; Smith 2007; Walker 1994) argue that official biculturalism is a tokenistic model for developing actual partnership with Māori, I argue that New Zealand's official approach to diversity similarly manifests itself as a 'boutique' kind of multiculturalism that is only supportive of diversity in its most superficial sense (Fleras and Spoonley 1999). It is apparent that many of the barriers and obstacles Māori have faced (and are still facing), in encountering the settler state in their battle for self-determination, are similar to those faced by other marginalised ethnic minorities. Also, it appears that the requirements and qualities of inclusion and partnership, which have been demanded by tangata whenua, are almost identical to those demanded by migrant and ethnic minority communities (Cameron 2016; Moura-Kocoglu 2011a, 2011b). Multicultural grassroots organisations are struggling against very similar obstacles, in their relationship to government and state institutions, as Māori activists have done for decades. Increased diversity and immigration might be acknowledged and somewhat accepted by the state, as an inevitable demographic circumstance and a necessary economic requirement, as it is evident in government narratives. However, conversations about, for example, structural change and a redistribution of power, were never mentioned or even considered in the approach to cultural diversity described by OEC, which indicates that the government at the time did not consider these issues relevant to their project of a 'successful' multicultural society.

I argue that there is still much work to be done in terms of transforming the monocultural structures of society in Aotearoa New Zealand. I have not provided a new operational model or doctrine, rather I attempted to disrupt and challenge government narratives of cultural diversity, in order to point out the disjunctures that work against a transformation away

from structures of monoculturalism. The critical conversation that is staged throughout the thesis provides no final answers or policy guidelines, rather it is pointing out and exploring the openings and potentials for change that are made visible through a critical ethnographic exploration of multiculturalism.

In her recent book, *Why I'm no Longer Talking to White People About Race*, Reni Eddo-Lodge (2015, 213) states, "There is no end point in sight. You can't skip to the resolution without having the difficult, messy conversation first. We're still in the hard bit". This statement is made with reference to issues of structural racism, white supremacy and colonial legacies in England. This comment resonates with my own research and thinking about the project of multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. In line with Eddo-Lodge, my research demonstrates that the positive story of harmony and friendliness needs to be reevaluated. The government cannot expect to find sustainable responses to increased cultural diversity and a multicultural population (e.g. cultural belonging, minority recognition, racism and indigenous self-determination) without first having a difficult conversation about the 'hard bit(s)' of what diversity is and means in Aotearoa New Zealand. The thesis has revealed some of the 'hard bits' one should be wary of, when discussing the meaning of multiculturalism in New Zealand. This thesis also tested an analytical framework – by the staging of a conversation – that might help to illuminate the types of difficult conversations that need to occur, if we (as policy makers, government officials, activists, and researchers) want to engage in a progressive and inclusive strategy for responding to increased cultural diversity.

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Appendices

Appendix one: Full list of everyday diversity experts

Participant 1. Peter is sixty-seven years old.[23] He is a pastor of a small suburban church. Peter was born in the South Island in a small rural village. He identifies as a Pākehā New Zealander of Scottish heritage. Over the last thirty years, Peter has experienced the cultural make-up of his churchgoers changing radically, due to a particularly large number of Filipinas joining the church. Thus, as a pastor, Peter is having to provide religious support and services to people who are culturally different to himself and who have limited English skills. Peter is also engaging actively in volunteer work concerning multiculturalism.

Participant 2. Maria is twenty-seven years old and a PhD candidate in Psychology. Her research looks at refugee resettlement, focusing on volunteers that help and support refugees. She is also working with resettling refugees on a volunteer basis. Maria acknowledges that she looks 'Pākehā' (meaning as she describes that she looks white and European), but Maria's mother is a dark-skinned Indonesian woman and her father a white Dutchman. Maria was born in New Zealand, but also lived for some years in Holland as a young child. Growing up she always felt different, although she did not look different. She has often been asked if she is adopted when people have seen her in public with her mother. Because of experiences like this, Maria has always thought about concepts like ethnicity, race and identity, and about what it means to belong and be included.

Participant 3. Michelle is in her mid-fifties – a Jewish woman, born and raised in Israel. She and her husband, also Israeli and Jewish, came to New Zealand together on a backpacking trip and decided to stay. Michelle has now lived in New Zealand for almost thirty years. She has three children who were all born in New Zealand. Michelle works as a freelance Hebrew interpreter and educator and is part of the Wellington Jewish community. She is a very passionate thinker and debater of multiculturalism, minority rights, and biculturalism.

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[23] Pseudonyms are used where interview participants explicitly chose not to have their real names published.

Participant 4. Pinaman is in her mid-thirties. She identifies as a citizen of the world, but was born in Ghana and has lived in New Zealand for most of her life. Pinaman is well travelled, speaks eight languages and has also lived for long periods of time in Australia, England and North America. Pinaman studied political science and public health. She works as a policy analyst and is also building her own fashion enterprise. The aim of starting her own company is to promote contemporary African art and design in Australasia. She is deeply engaged in the African community in Wellington and devotes a lot of her time to support and mentor young people of African descent. She is passionate about anti-racist work and is dedicated to creating greater awareness of the experiences of racism and stereotyping that affects people of colour.

Participant 5. Carina is in her mid-twenties. She was born in the Philippines but has lived most of her life in New Zealand. She uses the label Filipino-New Zealander, but says she feels like neither and more like somewhere in-between. She works as an ethnic liaison officer, facilitating an outreach programme for the university. At the community level, Carina is involved with both Filipino and Indonesian community groups in New Zealand. She organises and leads a gamelan music group (which makes her feel attached to Indonesian culture) and engages in various initiatives within the Filipino community in Wellington. Carina is passionate about supporting and helping migrants and refugees. She has volunteered with organisations such as Red Cross refugee services, the multicultural council and a leadership programme for migrant and refugee youth.

Participant 6. Alex is in his mid-twenties. He thinks of himself as a world citizen and does not like to be identified with a particular ethnic group. He was born and raised in Argentina but came to New Zealand as a backpacker, and is now a permanent resident. He is well travelled and speaks several languages. Alex works as a librarian and through his work he has to communicate with people of all ages, different cultures and languages, and different social status. Alex is very passionate about the library as a public space that accommodates people from all walks of life and he goes out of his way to help people, regardless of where they are from, what culture they are a part of and what language they speak. He finds it

particularly interesting to find the commonalities between people, despite language barriers, cultural differences and socio-economic status.

Participants 7. Hayden is in his mid-twenties. He identifies as a Pākehā New Zealander. Hayden has lived in Korea for several years teaching English and has also travelled extensively throughout Europe, North America and South East Asia. Because he has lived outside of New Zealand for a long time, Hayden often feels like he is not really a New Zealander anymore. He studied ethno-musicology and currently works with intellectually disabled children. He has also volunteered with English Language Partners and is passionate about meeting people from different cultures and different walks of life. Hayden likes to reflect on and share his experiences of cultural miss-understandings and intercultural encounters.

Participant 8. Hollie is in her mid-twenties. She identifies as Māori and Pākehā. She is very knowledgeable about her family history (whakapapa) and likes to tell stories about her mixed-belongings. She studied cultural anthropology and in her master's thesis explored ideas of belonging and post-settlement futures. Hollie is committed to social justice work and is a passionate debater, public and online, on topics such as racism, white supremacy, indigenous identities, rights and struggles.

Participant 10. Giselle is in her mid-twenties. She identifies as Māori and Pākehā and is very aware and reflexive about the different advantages/disadvantages each identity brings. She studied political science and is currently working within government. Giselle is committed to social justice work and is passionate about supporting Māori health and well-being. At the community level, Giselle is deeply engaged with her iwi. She is also an active debater of issues related to racism, whiteness, indigenous rights and affirmative politics.

Participants 11. Hine is in her mid-twenties. She identifies as Māori-Tongan, but has mainly been raised in a Māori world and has Te Reo as her second language. Hine is educated as a primary school teacher and is currently doing her PhD in Pacific education. She has also worked as a Māori liaison officer for the university outreach programme. She is passionate about supporting and uplifting people is socio-economic deprived neighbourhoods. In her

master's thesis she wrote about Māori and Pacifika young people's hopes and fears about the future. Hine is an active speaker, writer and debater of issues related to racism, whiteness, indigenous rights and struggles, resilience and change making.

Appendix two: List of situations where I have gathered auto-ethnographic information

My auto-ethnographic approach included exploration of informal and everyday situations which happened spontaneously as I went about daily activities. From my diary notes I have created a list presenting the kind of events and situations which make up the auto-ethnographic experiences I draw on in this thesis.

- Helping to set up a community-based networking group for migrants and newcomers to socialise with locals in the Hutt Valley region (March – December 2013).

- A visit to the Plunket nurse in Lower Hutt with my son (October 2013).

- Being part of the Excel programme at Victoria University of Wellington (May 2014).

- Volunteering with Red Cross Refugee services and helping to settle and integrate a refugee family (2014/2015).

- A Christmas party in Newtown organised by the Danish community group in Wellington (December 2014).

- Grandparent's day at my son's school Lower Hutt (2015).

- I attended the Ngā Kākano Puāwai meeting at the local school in Maungaraki (2015).

- A visit to Naenae College talking to a group of fifteen students (2015).

- I attended a Waitangi day service at Orongomai Marae (2015).

- Between 2014 and 2016, I attended different workshops organised by Job Mentoring Services, Newcomers Network, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, and Multicultural Service Centre Wellington. For example, a "How to rent in New Zealand" workshop, a "How to be earthquake prepared" workshop, a "How to write a Kiwi CV" workshop and a "networking in New Zealand" workshop. These workshops were specifically designed to support migrants and refugees.

Appendix three: Classification and Standards for Census Ethnicity Definition[24]

Definition

Ethnicity is the ethnic group or groups that people identify with or feel they belong to. Ethnicity is a measure of cultural affiliation, as opposed to race, ancestry, nationality or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group. An ethnic group is made up of people who have some or all of the following characteristics: a common proper name, one or more elements of common culture which need not be specified, but may include religion, customs, or language, unique community of interests, feelings and actions, a shared sense of common origins or ancestry, and a common geographic origin. This definition is based on the work of Smith (1986).

Collection

Collection of ethnicity presents some difficulties. People report a range of aspects of their identities, such as cultural affiliation, ancestry, nationality and race when asked for ethnic group identification. Evidence suggests that people may answer the question easily, but might not understand the ethnicity concept which is specifically being asked for. Another difficulty is that some people may report one ethnic group but identify with more than one, or report more but in fact identify with fewer groups. Finally, a number of people object to answering an ethnicity question and may refuse to answer or may answer facetiously. When collecting ethnicity information, people need to be able to state their specific ethnic groups without being forced to identify themselves in a more general category. Detailed ethnic group information is to be collected in order to allow categorisation at the most detailed level of the ethnicity classification, level four. Data can be aggregated into a smaller number of categories as users require.

Where it is not possible to collect data at level four of the classification, for instance in administrative data collections where written responses are not able to be coded, ethnic group information should be collected at level two of the classification, which is less detailed. All collections of official statistics measuring ethnicity should have the capacity to capture six ethnicity responses per person. Where this cannot be implemented immediately, it is recommended that a minimum of three ethnicity responses be collected.

Ethnic group changing over time (ethnic mobility)

The ethnic group or groups that someone identifies with may change over time. It is necessary to allow for ethnic mobility in longitudinal surveys and administrative databases. Ethnic mobility also affects the integration of different data sets, as the same person may have given different ethnic group answers in different collections. Rather than using both data sets' responses, the decision on what is appropriate to use needs to be decided on a case by case basis.

Ethnic group changing with context

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[24] Retrieved from Statistics New Zealand website March 2016.

A difficulty that is not easily overcome when collecting ethnic group information is the possibility that a person may give a different response depending on the context. For example, when filling in a self-administered form a person may respond differently from when asked his/her ethnic group by an interviewer. Also, the social or cultural setting may affect the ethnicity response reported. A decision on what is appropriate to use for integrated data sets needs to be decided on a case by case basis.

Legal age
Ethnicity is self-defined. While no legal or recommended age has been set at which a child can respond on their own behalf, the expectation is that teenagers will self–identify their ethnicity.

Ethnicity collection by proxy
Statistics New Zealand collects a self–identified concept of ethnicity. In some circumstances a person may be unable to answer this question and the next–of–kin, parent, spouse or partner needs to respond on their behalf, for example, in the case of birth or death, or incapacity because of disability, injury or sickness. Also parents, caregivers, or guardians of a child may complete an ethnicity question on behalf of their child.

Multiple ethnicity
People may identify with more than one ethnic group, so when collecting ethnicity data, there needs to be provisions to collect multiple ethnic groups for each individual. It is recommended that six ethnic group responses per person be collected where possible. The ability to collect three responses is the minimum requirement to meet the standard. See *coding process* for more detail.

Explanatory notes
Race/ancestry/citizenship/ethnic origin:
- Ethnicity should not be confused with other related terms, such as race, which is a biological indicator and an ascribed attribute.
- Ancestry is a biological and historical concept, and refers to a person's blood descent.
- Citizenship is a legal status.

These terms contrast with ethnicity, which is a self–perceived and cultural concept. Ethnic origin is a person's historical relationship to an ethnic group, or a person's ancestors' affiliation to an ethnic group, whereas ethnicity describes a historical relationship to an ethnic group, or a person's ancestors' affiliation to an ethnic group, whereas ethnicity is a person's present–day affiliation.

Business, family and household:
- Ethnicity is a personal attribute and therefore it is not valid to attribute an ethnicity to a business, family or household, based on the ethnicity of an individual within that business, family or household.

New Zealander responses

Prior to the introduction of this statistical standard, a New Zealand response was included in the New Zealand European category. In the standard classification of ethnicity, 'New Zealander', and similar responses like 'Kiwi', are classified into a separate ethnic group category at the most detailed level, level four. This category is called 'New Zealander'. For time series purposes, the counts of the New Zealander category can be added to the counts of the New Zealand European category, to recreate a count for the New Zealand European category which will be comparable to those from previous data collections.

Appendix four: Index of census questions timeline (1851-2013)[25]

Index of questions: European census (1851–1945)

Legend: Based on surviving census forms / Indicated in census reports or other secondary sources

Note: From 1916–45 South Island Māori counted in the European census

Topic	Question	1851	1858	1861	1864	1867	1871	1874	1878	1881	1886	1891	1896	1901	1906	1911	1916	1921	1926	1936	1945	Notes
Personal details																						
Name	Name and surname																					
Sex	Sex																					
Age	Age																					
Birthplace	Place / country where born																					
	Country where father born																					
Address	Address of dwelling																					
	Address on census night																					Personal schedule only
	Name and place of hotel, boarding house, club, ship, train, etc on census night																					Personal schedule (1916–21); householder's dwelling schedule (1926); householder's covering schedule (1936)
	Usual residential address																					Personal schedule
Residence in NZ	Date of entering the Colony																					
	Length of residence / number of years lived in NZ																					
Cultural, personal, or ethnic characteristics																						
Ethnicity	Race																					
	Half caste																					
Nationality	Whether British or foreign subject																					
	Subject of which nation																					
	How nationality acquired																					British subjects only (pre-1921); all Europeans (1921)
Religion	Religion, religious sect, religious denomination																					Object to answer included in 1871
	If teacher / scholar at Sunday school																					

Index of questions: Māori census (1858–1945)

Legend: Based on surviving census forms / Indicated in census reports or other secondary sources

Note: From 1916–45 South Island Māori counted in the European census

Topic	Question	1857–58	1874	1878	1881	1886	1891	1896	1901	1906	1911	1916	1921	1926	1936	1945	Notes
Personal details																	Notes
Name	Name																
Sex	Sex																
Age	Age																
Geography	Residence																
	Usual residence																
	Present residence																
Cultural, personal, or ethnic characteristics																	
Race	Māori "half-caste", "three-quarter-caste" etc living as Māori																Although it did not appear on the form until 1906, those identified by the enumerator as "half-caste" Māori living as Europeans and Māori women married to European men were counted in the European census
Iwi	Tribe or principal tribe																
	Subtribe or hapū																
Religion	Religion																

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[25] Retrieved from Statistics New Zealand website November 2016. See website: http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/info-about-the-census/intro-to-nz-census/history/questions-index.aspx

Appendix five: Census Guidelines for Classification and Coding process[26]

Classification criteria

The criterion for classification of ethnic groups is self–identification with one or more ethnicities. Detailed ethnic group information is collected so that responses can be classified to specific ethnic group categories at the most detailed level of the classification, level four. Where this is not possible, information may be classified to less detailed levels, level two or level three. Level one is used solely for output. Individual ethnic groups are aggregated into progressively broader ethnic groups from level three up to level one, according to geographical location or origin, or cultural similarities. The classification reflects responses received and is made up of geographic, nationality and ethnic group terms.

The standard classification of ethnicity has been developed from the recommendations in the Report of the Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity released in June 2004.

Classification

The standard classification of ethnicity is a hierarchical classification of four levels. Level one of the classification has six categories and is used solely for output. Level two has twenty-one categories, level three has thirty-six categories and level four has 233 categories – excluding residual categories. The 'not further defined' (nfd) categories of level two, three and four and the residual categories are not used for collection but are used for coding and output purposes. The residual categories are defined in Glossary and References. The full classification is available in the 'Available files' section on the main page.

Coding process

The ethnicity question allows for multiple responses from each individual, as described by the definition in this standard. Ethnicity is self-perceived and some people identify with more than one ethnicity.

In the Census of Population and Dwellings, large surveys up to six responses per person are recorded for the ethnicity question. For administrative collections and other surveys, three is the maximum number of responses recorded per person. When more responses are given than can be recorded, a random method for reducing the number of responses selects the ethnicities to be retained.

Codefile

Statistics NZ maintains a codefile, which is updated with responses that occur in the Census of Population and Dwellings. A codefile is used to classify ethnic group responses. It is a list of probable survey responses and the classification categories to which they are coded. For example, the codefile for ethnicity contains the names of countries, similar terms used by ethnic groups to describe themselves, such as 'Slav' and 'Slavic', abbreviations, and some common misspellings. Collectors of ethnicity information who wish to use the codefile, may obtain it from Classifications and Standards, Statistics New Zealand.

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[26] Retrived from Statistics New Zealand website November 2016.

Coding multiple worded responses

These coding guidelines are given to ensure consistency between collections. There are a number of ethnic groups that are multiple worded responses but are one ethnic group. Some common examples are given here.

- Fijian Indian
- Turkish Cypriot
- Cook Island Māori
- French Canadian
- Malaysian Chinese
- American European
- South African European.

There are responses that may be hyphenated or linked in some way, or written without linkage, that need to be classified as two responses. For example, Polish-Hungarian, Tongan-Māori, French/Austrian, Australian/Lebanese, Chinese New Zealander, and Serbo-Croatian.

Coding responses Iwi

An iwi response to an ethnicity question is coded to Māori.

Country

A country response is coded to an appropriate ethnic group term, for example, Korea is coded to Korean.

Religion

Religious responses to the ethnicity question indicate an ethnic group is coded to the specific category in the classification. For example, Jewish and Sikh have separate categories at the most detailed level of religious classification. Religious responses which are not connected to an ethnic group, for example, Muslim, are not coded to an ethnic group, but to 'response outside scope'.

New Zealander

A New Zealander response and related responses such as 'Kiwi' or 'NZer' are coded to a separate category, 'New Zealander', at level four in the 'Other Ethnicity group'.

Appendix six: List of OEC booklets and reports

OEC booklet 2005, title: *Portraits: Youth*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2007, title: *Portraits 2: Cultural Diversity*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2010, title: *Weaving – New Zealand's Future*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC report 2010, title: *Riding the Wave – Moving from the 'Right Thing to do', to 'the Bright Thing to do', when maximizing the benefits that ethnic diversity bring to our workplace*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2011a, title: *A Foot in the Door – Opening the door to ethnic diversity*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2011b, *Trailblazers – Inspirational journeys of migrant women entrepreneurs in New Zealand.* Published by the Office of Ethnic Affairs. The Department of Internal Affairs.

OEC report 2012a, title: *Ethnicity Matters*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2012b, title: *Reflection – from our multicultural workplace*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2012c, title: *Ethnic People in Commerce – EPIC NZ*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2012d, title: *Interpreting in New Zealand – Let's keep talking. Guidelines for agencies using interpreters*. Published by The New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua.

OEC booklet 2013, title: *Building Bridges*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC booklet 2014, title: *Working with ethnic diversity – Maximising New Zealand's economic potential*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC report 2014, title: *A year in review 2013-2014 – Leading the way*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

DIA report 2014, title: *Choice Whiriwhiria – The New Zealand Citizenship Story/ Te Korero Raraunga o Aotearoa*. Published by the Department of Internal Affairs. New Zealand Government.

OEC report 2016, title: *Flourishing Ethnic Diversity, Thriving New Zealand – Strategic Direction and intent for the Office of Ethnic Communities 2016-2020*. Published by New Zealand Government, Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, Wellington.

OEC website; www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/

Reports from other government agencies

The New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. 2014. *Multicultural New Zealand: A 25-Year Journey*, edited by Jumoke Giwa. Wellington: Steele Roberts.

Statistics New Zealand. 2015. *2018 Census Content: Summary of Feedback from Engagement and Consultation*. Retrieved from http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2018-census/feedback-content-consultation.aspx.

Statistics New Zealand. 2013. *Statistics Act 1975*. http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1975/0001/latest/DLM430799.html.

Strategic Social Policy Group (SSPG). 2008. *Diverse Communities - Exploring the Migrant and Refugee Experience in New Zealand*. A report. Wellington, New Zealand.

OECD. 2013. New Zealand. *International Migration Outlook 2013*. OECD publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2013-en.

Krupp, Jason and Rachel Hodder. 2017. *The New New Zealanders: Why Migrants Make Good Kiwis*. Research report The New Zealand Initiative. Wellington, New Zealand. doi:978-0-9941365-9-6.

Sample of OEC booklets and reports:

Working with ethnic diversity
Maximising New Zealand's economic potential

THE OFFICE OF
ethnic affairs
Te Tari Matawaka

Foreword

The government economic orientation

Building a more competitive and productive economy that will deliver greater prosperity, security, and opportunities to all New Zealanders is a major focus for the Government.

To make this vision a reality New Zealand needs to tap into the potential within our ethnic and migrant business communities. The diversity of our population is one of our biggest strengths when it comes to marketing New Zealand businesses in international markets. We have people with established networks and business connections in almost every country in the world. It is vital that we tap into those networks.

Initiatives such as Connecting the Regions, the Intercultural Awareness and Communication programme, and the EPIC NZ conferences and website help New Zealand businesses make connections and build networks that can open the doors to expansion and international markets.

I encourage all New Zealand businesses to take every opportunity to make connections with our ethnic business communities and tap into the wealth of knowledge and talent that they hold.

Hon Judith Collins
Minister for Ethnic Affairs

2012

Ethnic People in Commerce

EPIC NZ

THE OFFICE OF
ethnic affairs
Te Tari Matawaka

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF ETHNIC AFFAIRS

The OEA is focused on people whose culture and traditions distinguish them from the majority in New Zealand. Our purpose is to contribute to a strong, self-directed ethnic sector and to promote the advantages of ethnic diversity in New Zealand. Since one of these advantages includes the economic growth potential of our multicultural population, OEA is committed to creating opportunities in which such benefits can be unlocked. Since 2004, OEA has worked on a number of projects around trade and the economy.

To find out more, visit our website: www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz

WL13823

Welcome

The Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) actively promotes information on the benefits of diversity to the New Zealand public in order to promote acceptance and respect for diversity. When New Zealanders see how ethnic diversity adds value to our country, it becomes much easier to create an environment of inclusion for all people, irrespective of national origin, colour, or creed.

One of the ways OEA promotes this is to create development opportunities in intercultural competence. Greater understanding and skills in this area allow for more effective and meaningful communication across cultural boundaries, and can lift organisational performance through increased productivity and innovation. Furthermore, this level of effective workplace integration leads to stronger connections for individuals within their community as a whole.

When employers recognise these benefits and have the tools to work effectively within a diverse workforce, they will be more likely to employ people from diverse backgrounds. This will lead to a wider range of employment opportunities for a range of ethnic communities in New Zealand.

OEA also aims to help maximise and strengthen ethnic people's networks and skills for domestic economic gain. It involves working with many organisations to build connections between business communities, economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and mainstream business services and support networks. This empowers ethnic communities through increased government responsiveness, and maintains New Zealand's reputation as a harmonious country.

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p. 191

Appendix seven: References of reports published by grassroots organisations.

- Multicultural New Zealand (the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils). 2017. *Impact Stories and Performance Report*. A report prepared by the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. https://multiculturalnz.org.nz/publications?src=nav (retrieved from website in November 2017).

- Multicultural New Zealand (the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils). 2017. *Huarahi Hou Pathway to Treaty-based Multicultural Communities*. A report prepared by the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils on the Hui 13th May. https://multiculturalnz.org.nz/publications?src=nav (retrieved from website in November 2017).

- Multicultural New Zealand (the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils). 2015. *26th Annual report 2015.* An annual report prepared by the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. https://multiculturalnz.org.nz/publications?src=nav (retrieved from the website in January 2016).

- Multicultural New Zealand (the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils). 2015. *Multicultural New Zealand – Highlights 2014-2015.* A status report prepared by the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. https://multiculturalnz.org.nz/publications?src=nav (retrieved from the website in January 2016).

- Multicultural New Zealand (the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils). 2015. *Our multicultural future - New Zealanders talk about multiculturalism.* A report commissioned by Multicultural New Zealand assisted by a grant from the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO.

- The New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. 2014. *Multicultural New Zealand: A 25-Year Journey*, edited by Jumoke Giwa. Wellington: Steele Roberts.

- New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils Incorporated. 2012. *Te Tiriti/The Treaty Partnership Project.* A Pilot evaluation report prepared for the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils and the Community Sector Taskforce.

- New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils. 2010. *Proposal for a Multicultural New Zealand – Discussion document.* A report prepared by the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils.

- New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils Incorporated. 2007. *When do I Become A Kiwi? – A qualitative Account of New Migrants Experiences In New Zealand.* Report prepared by Sally Robertson under the supervision of Dr James Liu (Victoria University of Wellington).

- New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils. 2007. *Nau mai haere mai ki Aotearoa: Information seeking behaviour of New Zealand immigrants.* A research report prepared by the Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research, Victoria University of Wellington.

Sample of grassroots reports.
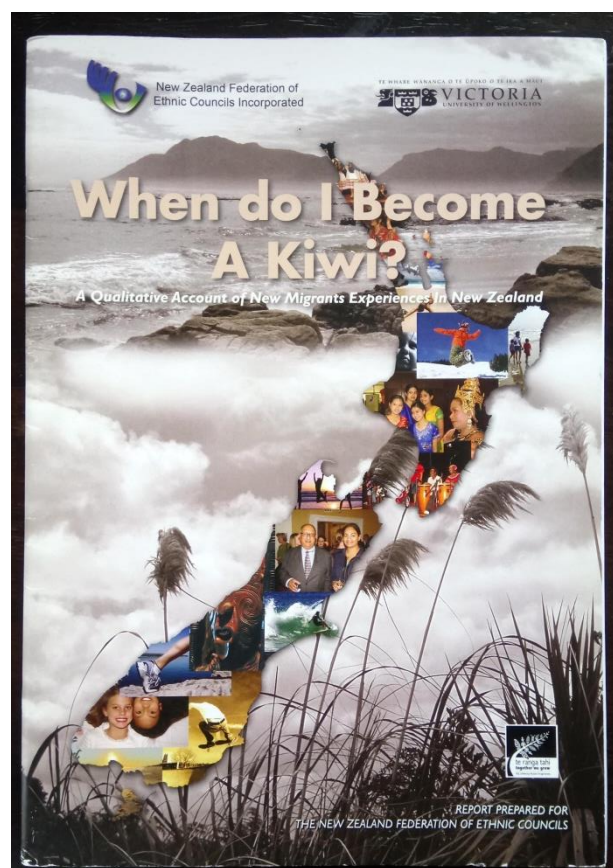
Appendix eight: Participant Information sheet.

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Research Project Information Sheet

Governing a Diverse Society – Ethnic diversity, Citizenship and National identity in New Zealand.

Researcher: Sara L Hansen Cultural Anthropology Programme, School of Social and Cultural Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.

What is the study about?

I am a PhD student in the Cultural Anthropology Programme at Victoria University of Wellington. As part of my PhD, I am undertaking a research project leading to my dissertation and journal articles. I am investigating how ethnic and cultural diversity are promoted, understood, responded to and accommodated, politically and socially, within New Zealand society. The project involves inquiry into the following areas:

The history of diversity politics in New Zealand, with particular focus on biculturalism and the relationship between biculturalism and multiculturalism.

The principles, values and objectives underlying current cultural and diversity policies.

The methods and initiatives applied by different agencies, institutions and organisations to accommodate and respond to ethnic and cultural diversity.

The perceptions and assumptions about culture, ethnicity and diversity embedded within and promoted by those agencies, institutions and organisations working with diversity.

The overall aim of this research is to discuss and reflect upon what may be the implications and challenges, politically and socially, in New Zealand in terms of handling an increasingly diverse population.

Your involvement?

During my research I would like to do participant observations and conduct a number of interviews. Participant observation is the main method in Anthropology. It involves the researcher actively participating in the activities being studied, to gain an in-depth viewpoint. I want to reflect on my own experiences from participating in different projects and initiatives dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity. Furthermore, I want to interview people who organise and coordinate such projects and initiatives, as well as people who participate in them, to learn about their different experiences and thoughts.

I am inviting people who have been participating in any programme, event or project dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity. I am interested in finding out how these "diversity" programmes and projects are experienced and what impact they have on their participant and/or target groups. Therefore, I invite you to share your stories, thoughts and experiences.

Who else will participate in this study?

Other participants who have been taking part in different programmes, events or projects dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity. Also, staff members working for the agencies, organisations and institutions included in my research are invited to be part of this project.

How will the information be used?

Data collected during this research project is to be used in my larger PhD thesis and published in a number of journal articles. Interviews will be transcribed and quotes and other information provided during the interviews may be used for writing a thesis, journal articles and conference papers.

You will not be identified in my thesis and will be asked to choose a pseudonym for me to use. All material collected will be kept confidential and no other person besides me and my supervisor Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, will have access to it.

Ethics approval for this research project has been obtained from Victoria University's Human Ethics Committee.

If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

decline to answer any particular question;

withdraw from the study up until January the 1st 2016;

ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;

provide information on the understanding that, if you so choose, a pseudonym will be used rather than your real name;

you also have the right to ask for the audio recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign the consent form on the last page of this document. You will be given a copy of both the participant information sheet and the consent form to keep.

For further information?

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about this project, please contact me at:

Email: sara.hansen@vuw.ac.nz

Cell: 0223192365 or (04) 4635134

You are also welcome to contact my supervisor Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, by email at brigitte.bonisch-brednich@vuw.ac.nz or by phoning 04 463 6528.

Appendix nine: Participant consent form

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

PhD Research project

Governing a Diverse Society – Ethnic diversity, Citizenship and National Identity in New Zealand.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Researcher: Sara L Hansen, PhD student in Cultural Anthropology, School of Social and Cultural Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.

Supervisor: Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, Cultural Anthropology Programme, Victoria University of Wellington.

I have read the information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I may withdraw from the research project, without providing reasons, up until the 1st of January 2016. I do this by contacting Sara Hansen on email: sara.hansen@vuw.ac.nz or by phoning: 0223192365.

I understand that if I withdraw from the research, any data provided will be destroyed and will not be used.

I understand that I have the option to choose a pseudonym if I do not wish to be identified in the research. If you would like to use a pseudonym, please choose what pseudonym should be used.

Please write what pseudonym should be used
……………………………………………………………………..

I understand that all information I provide will be kept confidential to Sara Hansen and her supervisors.

I understand what participant observation involves and I agree that Sara Hansen can observe me in my workplace

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A☐

I agree to take part in an interview that will be audio recorded

Yes ☐ No ☐

I wish to receive a copy of the transcribed interview

Yes ☐ No ☐

I agree to take part in this research

Yes ☐ No ☐

Signature: .... Date: ....

Full Name - printed ....

Appendix ten: Information sheet to organisations.

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

PhD Research Project

Title: Governing a Diverse Society – Ethnic diversity, Citizenship and National identity in New Zealand.

Invitation

I am a PhD student in the Cultural Anthropology Programme at Victoria University of Wellington. My research project is focusing on ethnic and cultural diversity within New Zealand society and how it is promoted, understood, responded to and accommodated politically and socially. As part of my research I would like to investigate how different projects and initiatives dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity are organised and facilitated. Therefore I am eager to find out more about [x] organisation and the work they do.

As part of my research I would like to participate in different initiatives (such as meetings, events, conferences, workshops etc.) within your organisation and observe what happens. I would also like to approach your staff to request individual interviews with them.

I am contacting you to ask if there might be an opportunity for me to get involved with your organisation and if I could be granted permission to undertake my research. I realise that my presence in the organisation is likely to have an effect on other people and the daily routine. I am happy to discuss with you how I can ensure that this does not have a major impact. It is essential that my research does not cause your organisation and staff any stress or discomfort. I want to stress that your involvement in this research is entirely voluntary.

Ethics approval for this research project has been obtained from Victoria University's Human Ethics Committee.

The name of your organisation will only be identifiable with your permission.

All participants will be asked to sign an individual consent form.

They will not be identifiable in the thesis and will be asked to choose a pseudonym. They might however be recognisable by virtue of their position within the organisation and I will discuss this possibility with individual participants.

Potentially I hope this research and the knowledge it generates may be useful and of interest to your organisation.

Thank you for reading this invitation and I hope you will consider my request. If you have any questions or would like to receive further information don't hesitate to contact me.

Please do let me know if you would be interested in meeting me to talk about your organisation's involvement in this research project. I will be available at your convenience.

Contact information:

Email: sara.hansen@vuw.ac.nz

Cell: 0223192365 or (04) 4635134

You are also welcome to contact my supervisor Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, by email at brigitte.bonisch-brednich@vuw.ac.nz or by phoning (04) 463 6528.

Appendix eleven: Organisations consent form.

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

PhD research project.

Governing A Diverse Society – Ethnic diversity, Citizenship and National Identity in New Zealand.

CONSENT FORM

Researcher: Sara L Hansen, PhD Candidate in Cultural Anthropology, School of Social and Cultural Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.

Supervisor: Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, Cultural Anthropology Programme, Victoria University of Wellington

Organisation: _____

Representative: _____

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that pseudonyms will be used for all participants and that all information provided will be kept confidential.

I give permission for Sara Hansen to undertake participant observation

within [x organization] and for her to conduct interviews   Yes ☐ No ☐

with people working in this workplace.

I wish to receive a summary of your findings.　　　　　　Yes ☐　No ☐

On behalf of the above organisation, I give permission for this research to proceed.
　　　　　Yes ☐　No ☐

Signature:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Date:

....　　　　...

Full Name - printed

....

Appendix twelve: Example of Fieldnotes

Fieldnote diary Date: 26.6.2014

Note: this is an example of one of the templates from my many fieldwork notes. As these notes are extensive, a summarised example is provided below.

What did I do? Epic NZ Conference

<u>Site/place:</u> Shed 6, Queens Warf Wellington

<u>Length:</u> 5 hours (from 1-5pm)

<u>Participants:</u> approx. 150-200 people. An equal mix of women and men. Age late twenties and up (ethnicities note sure, visually most Pakeha/European people, a few Asians (10), a couple of Maori (3-4), and a few Africans (3-4)).

<u>My position:</u> a regular participant. Registered online and a Vic. Student.

<u>Describe activity:</u> Conference and networking event.

<u>Background info:</u>

Qt. from the Facebook page - EPIC NZ is a networking platform for NZ businesses and ethnic businesses to connect.

<u>Recordings:</u> All key note presentations have been recorded.

<u>Observations:</u>
"whether you think you can or you think you can't, you are right!"
<u>Place/Space:</u> Big conference room. Tall ceiling. Wide space, open almost like an indoor football gym. Wooden shiny floors that make your heel go "click clock" and you can hear chairs move. White walls and black ceiling with lots of spotlights hanging in a line. Clean, sterile and

formal space.

People:

MC Alison Mau: Leopard scarf, silver watch, fine feminine voice with a kiwi "ss" to all words which start or end with an s. blond hair, beautiful, tall and slim. Black high heels with silver patterns on it. Diamond ring. Confident, brave and charming. Late 40's.

Feelings, impressions and emotions:

Professionalism – elite – hotel - business like – diamonds – shiny – corporate – plastic – global - urban – technology – Synthetic – fake – superficial – pretentious – show – "window dressing" – uncomfortable – out of place – money – gold digger – capitalism – job – salary – dry – tight dress – full bladder – clean toilets – jacket on hanger – the smell of paper – pamphlets – free key ring and drink bottles – finger food – servants in black - wine – blue light – space – innovation – progress – passion – hard work – beauty - celebrity – material – unnatural – non-organic – linear – straight – no curves – management – managed – untapped market – untapped potential – manipulation – illusive harmony – surface – sterile - clean

Reflections and Questions

A triangle of 'Maori – Ethnic – Mainstream' society is repeatedly referred to.

Why is Maori seen as a "diversity issue" that needs to be incorporated?

Where does the Somali 56-year-old mother of 5, with no education and severe post-traumatic stress fit into this 'celebration of diversity'? What about the repugnant other?

What about the side of diversity that have no "untapped" potential, are not innovative and do contribute financially to society?

What about those people who come from places (and speak languages) where there are no potential markets or money to be earned?

Neo-liberalism has a cosmopolitan element in it, as it does not care what colour, sex or age you are, as long as you can work the system and make money.

There are no rules or regulation holding companies responsible for embracing/accommodating diversity. They are bond to do so of their own free will. They are made to realize the benefit and potential.

Who goes to these types of diversity events? Who is the audience? Mainly migrants and minority members.

Theory/literature

Governance of the other (Hage).

Diversity management theory.

State intervention – managing diversity.

Staging (performing) multiculturalism – "window dressing".

Other stuff [pictures, web links, drawings, audio files etc.]

Quote from Epic.co.nz website:

"Diversity is a cornerstone of New Zealand's present and future economy - a taonga (treasure) to be nurtured, celebrated and leveraged. The EPIC NZ Wellington conference for 2014 will bring together the capital's dynamic ethnic, Maori and wider business community to network, connect and share knowledge. The conference will highlight the potential of increased collaboration between this community and its inherent diversity. Success stories will be featured with a special focus on Grow Wellington priority sectors, including high-value manufacturing and services, ICT and digital."

Quote from Epic NZ Facebook page:

"New Zealand's diaspora communities enable us to develop cultural knowledge and people to people connections, and discover new and innovative ways of doing things which in turns yield commercial value." Belinda Chin, Director, Office of Ethnic Affairs #epicwgtn.

Qt. form Epic NZ blender event:

On 4 June the Office of Ethnic Affairs held an EPIC NZ Blender business networking event in Wellington. This event brought together members of the Ethnic People in Commerce (EPIC) NZ network and individuals from the Maori and wider Wellington business community for the first time. Focusing on increasing collaboration between ethnic and Māori small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the Blender featured guest speakers Butch Bradley, Manager Operations and Regions, NZ Māori Tourism, and Steven Renata, Director of Business Development, Kiwa Digital. #epicwgtn