

Bounded Transnationals: An Identity and Career

Framework

***A qualitative study and interpretation of identity and career
construction for a sample of self initiated international assignees
residing in the South of France***

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**

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this thesis is entirely her own work
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Dedication

***To my parents, Billy & Gretta, for their love, patience and inspiration,
thank you for everything;***

***To my husband, James, for his support and encouragement from the
beginning of my PhD journey;***

***And to our children, Niamh & Shane, two major and very cherished
interruptions in the research process***

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And finally, everyone else whom I may have unintentionally omitted here that helped me during the course of this expedition

A sincere thank you

Abstract

Bounded Transnationals: An Identity and Career Framework

A qualitative study and interpretation of identity and career construction for a sample of self-initiated international assignees residing in the South of France

Marian Crowley-Henry, BBS & German (1994), MSc Commerce (1996)

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Lancaster University Management School, June 2009

This dissertation presents an exploration of identity and career in an international context. The perspectives of thirty-seven highly educated, non-French origin, Western (first world) individuals, who reside indefinitely in the South of France (host country) while maintaining occupational careers are considered. These ‘bounded transnationals’, as termed by the author, were interviewed in the geographical case study of Sophia Antipolis (South of France) over a three year period.

A critical realist and constructivist ontology, and a hermeneutic and interpretivist epistemology is adopted, using narratives from ethnographically informed interviews to study the career stories (of which identity is an integral element) of the sample. On reviewing existing international human resource management and career literature on international assignees and careers, the identity and career construction of this previously un-explored sample of self-initiated international assignees is interpreted inductively in its complexity. The study follows a pragmatic pluralistic approach,

using different theoretical concepts which allow for a deeper interpretation of the findings.

The findings and interpretation contribute to the existing knowledge on international assignees, international human resource management and international careers. Specifically, the study presents a typology of international assignees, emphasizing the specific characteristics of the bounded transnational sample. Secondly, it shares evidence of lifestyle migration. Thirdly, an unpacking and conceptualization of the complexity of factors (structure, agency, process) impacting (limiters and facilitators) upon identity construction and career direction and preference is demonstrated. The continuous identity and career construction shows the protean, evolving nature of identity and career. It is argued that a deeper understanding of individual contributors' (specifically the bounded transnationals in this study) identity and career construction would aid organisations in developing career management systems which consider the variety of potential interests and concerns.

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Chapter One

Introduction: Research Question & Purpose of the Study

Observing people's lives in terms of 'career' is one of the most remarkable aspects of modern society

Becker & Haunschild, 2003: 3

1.1 Introduction

This dissertation is an exploration of *identity* and *career* in an *international* context. A development of international career literature and research was the initial focus of the study. However, it was established early on in the process that career and identity are inextricably linked, with a focus on career impossible without including identity. Thus, identity is considered in the initial analysis chapter of this study (Chapter Seven), with an examination of career in Chapter Eight. Focusing on a particular category of international assignees that has relocated to a host country for a potentially permanent duration, the study examines the sample's identity and career construction. In acculturating to the host country while removed from familiar fields and habitus (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990a, 1990b, 2000), the sample's construction of identity and career is exposed. The complexity of elements impacting upon identity and career construction is unpacked in the analysis and interpretation of the career narratives of a specific sub-population of self initiated international assignees.

Specifically, the perspective is of a sample of self initiated international assignees (Suutari & Brewster 2000) living/working for an indefinite duration outside their home country in the South of France (Crowley-Henry, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006, 2008a). The particular category under investigation is termed 'bounded transnationals' by the author¹ (Crowley-Henry, 2008b, 2008c, 2009a). It consists of highly educated individuals (to third level), stemming from Western economies, and residing in the South of France while maintaining an occupational career (some in France, some commuting beyond France). In total, thirty-seven 'bounded

¹ A description of 'bounded transnationals' is provided in section 1.2. A more detailed description is given in Chapter Four.

transnationals' were interviewed in-depth for this study. Their narratives are supplemented with data from a further seventeen respondents (see Section 2.5 regarding Sampling) and with contemporaneous contextual and observational fieldnotes which enabled the researcher to develop a detailed profile of bounded transnationals, and their career and identity development. This category of self initiated international assignees is notably absent from academic literature in the field of international human resource management². The findings of the study suggest that knowledge and recognition of bounded transnationals is relevant to organisations in better understanding and managing an increasingly culturally diverse workforce. The requirement to better understand the needs and motivations of different categories of international assignees is underlined. The research contributes to expanding literature and research on the careers of international assignees, of relevance to the disciplines of IHRM and careers. It responds to the calls to pluralise research on international assignees (Brewster & Suutari, 2005; De Cieri, Wolfram Cox, & Fenwick, 2007; Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Schuler, Budhwar, & Florkowski, 2002; Scullion & Paauwe, 2004) beyond the organisation assigned expatriate which has received so much attention (Adler, 1986/7; Boyacigiller, 1995; Britt, 2002; Dowling, Festing, & Engle, 2008; Feldman & Tompson, 1993; Johnson, 2002; Linehan, 1998; Mendenhall & Oddou, 2000; Yan, Zhu, & Hall, 2002). It contributes to filling the research gap by looking at the international assignment from the bounded transnational's perspective: the individual's identity and career construction facilitated through the media of internal conversations (Archer, 2003) and sensemaking (Weick, 1995).

² The acronym IHRM is used in the remainder of the dissertation

It has been argued that ‘Careers are central to individuals, organisations and society’ (Mayrhofer, Iellatchitch, Meyer, Steyrer, Schiffinger & Strunk, 2004: 870). This study concentrates on the individual career narratives (Bujold, 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Cochran, 1990, 1997; Cohen & Mallon, 2001; Crowley-Henry, 2008c; Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2007; Czarniawska, 1998, 2004; McKenna & Richardson, 2003; Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Riessman, 1993) of bounded transnationals. In so doing, it was found to be impossible to eliminate identity (an integral component of careers) from the discussion. In attempting to decipher the process of identity (and career) construction for the sample, concepts such as the previously mentioned internal conversation (Archer, 2003), sensemaking (Weick, 1995), power (Braverman, 1998 [1974]; Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2009; Foucault, 1977, 1982), habitus, field (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990a, 1990b, 2000), and the protean career (Hall & Harrington, 2004) are considered and discussed (see Chapters Five and Six). An inductive approach was adopted (similar to Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983's approach), where patterns were elicited on analysis of the interview narratives and contextual data. Those patterns were then developed to build theory and formulate concepts considering the linkages between individual careers, organisations and society in general (see Chapters Nine and Ten, Figure 9.1 in particular).

The core sample is based in one specific location, namely on the French Riviera (Côte D’Azur)³. This geographical case study proffers a further contribution to knowledge by adding a new perspective on international assignees/international careers from a European angle, thus supplementing the limited non-American research (Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002) on the subject of international careers. The limitations of a case study

³ The study does not focus specifically on citizens within the European Union (EU). Nonetheless, the vast majority in the sample were from the EU, i.e. it was an intra-EU move, with only five of the thirty-seven core interviewees coming from outside the EU.

approach are noted (see Section 2.4.3), with recognition that had a different geographical location been chosen as the research site, other issues may have been raised.

As the study concentrates on individuals' identity and career construction, the individual component is vital. In depth qualitative interviews were conducted to amass descriptions of career journeys from the bounded transnational sample. The choices and decisions that individuals make in continuing their international career is interpreted holistically. A conceptualisation of the bounded transnational's identity and career construction is framed under a development of the protean career concept, enlarged to encompass the ongoing processual development of identity and career as shaped from structure and agency (see Figure 9.1). The frameworks that are developed from the research and presented in the dissertation could be used in further research to compare *among* bounded transnationals in different host countries. They could also be used to further differentiate *between* categories of international assignees, and as a basis for future research on the career and identity construction of international assignees (organisational or self-initiated international assignees). Further exploratory, complementary and comparable research is recommended in order to continue to develop and progress knowledge and academic literature in IHRM on international careers.

This chapter gives an overview of the study and the structure of the dissertation. First, the sample under investigation is described, the scope of the study is outlined and the research objective (and sub-objectives) identified. Second, the methodological approach is presented. Third, themes in IHRM literature and career theory are

identified, showing the gaps concerning different categories of international assignees and empirical studies interpreting careers from the individual's holistic life perspective. Fourth, the conceptual and theoretical contributions of the research are presented, where a coherent analysis of structural and agential forces is underlined. Finally, the structure and layout of the other chapters in the dissertation is summarised.

1.2 Sample, Scope and Research Question

This dissertation concerns an under-explored category of self initiated international assignees (in contrast to organisation assigned expatriates); specifically it concerns non French, Western (first world), educated (to third or fourth level) individuals who moved to and continue to be resident in the South of France. In comparison with the very wealthy who may have moved to and reside in the same area to enjoy the aesthetic beauty and lifestyle on offer, the sample in question maintain their respective occupational careers. Some work on local contracts of employment (as locally hired foreigners) for host country or international organisations in the host country. Others travel from their home base in the South of France to work on international projects in other countries and/or spend part of their working time working from home on international projects. Others again are self employed and work on host or international projects. The common denominator is that all are well educated, have moved to France during the course of their adult lives, and are resident in France (the host country) for a potentially permanent duration.

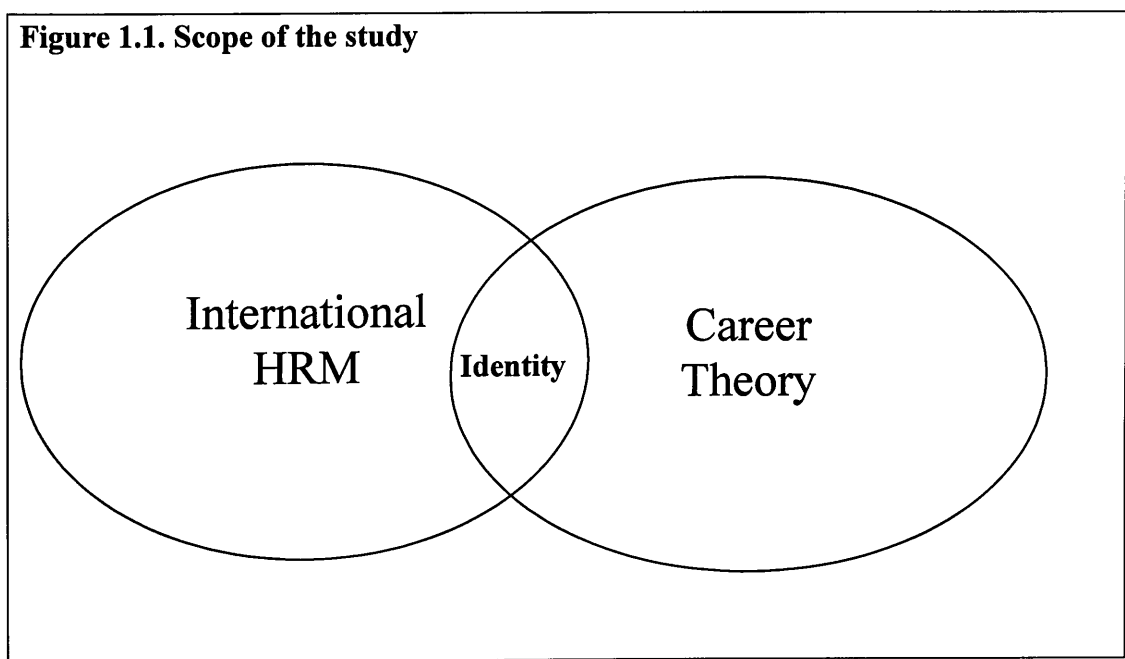
The particular focus of the research is on the career-related experiences of these internationally resident individuals; the aim being to gain a heterogeneous insight into what constitutes the career direction and orientation of a particular sample of self-initiated international assignees of a potentially permanent duration. The bounded transnationals in question have chosen to maintain residency in the South of France for different reasons, but all put weighting on the quality of life and lifestyle they can enjoy in the area, more than on any objective career elements (such as title, salary, hierarchical level) (Crowley-Henry, 2008c). The process of their identity and career construction is considered in the dissertation, which leads to a recommended development of the protean career concept (of which identity is an integral component) to be extended to underline the ever evolving nature of identity and career (see Chapters Nine and Ten).

The nomenclature ‘bounded transnationals’ is used to identify the particular sample considered in the study. They are transnationals (Harry & Banai, 2004) since they have experienced living in (and acculturating to) at least one international culture/country, and have made the corresponding association with other international assignees and cultures. They are ‘bounded’ since their international moves have stalled due to the lack of desire to move internationally again. They are also bound or restricted agentially by relational, temporal and structural factors which influence their choice of and preference for continued residency in the host country location (South of France).

They differ from organisation assigned expatriates who have a pre-determined option of repatriation to their home country on completion of the international assignment.

Bounded transnationals do not have an organisational promise of relocation to the country of origin after an agreed period of time. Rather, they have embarked upon making the South of France their home and residency. They do not consider themselves immigrants or migrants, since they associate those terms with economic migration, where people are, to some extent, forced to move internationally in pursuit of employment. They would simply describe themselves by their originating national affiliation living in France; for example as an Irish woman living in France.

The scope of the research study is depicted in Figure 1.1.



While initial reviews of the literature focused on IHRM, the career element took on resonance as the study progressed. It is where both these literatures overlap with regards to the sample in question that provides the scope for the study. In addition, within both IHRM and career theory literature the concept of identity arises which is

also then examined in this dissertation with regards to the identity (and career) construction of the sample.

The objective of the study is to take an in-depth look at an under-explored category of self initiated international assignees, with particular focus on formulating a more holistic career and identity development framework for this very specific sample. The aim is to deepen understanding of the international career and the identity implications of pursuing an international career for a potentially permanent duration. Three research questions were formulated for exploration:

- i. Where does the category of bounded transnationals fit into the existing literature on international assignees (self initiated international assignees)?

This question seeks to describe and categorise the typology of the sample under investigation. The sample is compared and placed within the context of other international assignee categories, particularly within the context of contemporary calls for an extension of this category. In presenting a typology of international assignees (see Table 4.1, developed by the author), international organisations and human resource management practitioners should be better able to identify from the international staffing alternatives which international employee type may best suit a specific organisational task or role. The variety of international assignee types compared in a single table will facilitate practitioners and academics (teachers and researchers) in identifying the particular international assignees employed by organisations. Further research could then undertake investigation into each of these

separate international assignee types in order to build up a more complete picture of the characteristics, advantages and limitations of each.

- ii. What are the experiences of bounded transnationals which inform identity construction and acculturation in the host country?

This question focuses on the effect of following a potentially permanent international career on the sample's identity: on how they define themselves, on who they are, on the competencies they deem they have, on the morphing or evolving identity reconstruction process that the sample goes through. Life stage, significant life occurrences, marital and family status influence the role prioritisation of individuals at varying points in time. Being removed from close family support facilitates closer ties to the community, to a social network with similar experiences. This affects the individual's social and self identity. Living in a new culture, using a new language necessitates a re-examination of competencies that were once accepted without question, forcing individuals to reassess their abilities and limitations, and thereby affecting and changing the self identity concept they previously held of themselves in the home country. The research findings suggest the morphing, complex and processural nature of identification (Bauman, 2001). The protean career as a concept is used to develop a framework to support this.

- iii. What are the primary influences on the careers embarked upon by the bounded transnationals?

This question attempts to isolate the career-influencing factors: subjective and objective, personal and professional/organisational loyalties, that impact on career choices for the particular sample. Contemporary literature associates international assignees with the concept of the boundaryless career (Eby, 2001; Stahl et al, 2002). This dissertation investigates the association and contributes to research on international careers by taking a sociological approach to include several factors as important in the determination and preference of career directions for bounded transnationals. The literature review in Chapter Five includes traditional and contemporary thought on careers. Based on that review and on the inherent part of career that is identity, a return to Hughes' (1937) description of careers as a process, linked to wider structures as well as individual agential desires is recommended. He advocates looking at careers as: 'the moving perspective in which persons orient themselves with reference to the social order, and of the typical sequences and concatenations of office' (Hughes, 1937: 413). The systems theory to understanding career development (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006a, 2006b) is a most useful model which mirrored the inductive development of my own conceptual framework from the research. The protean career concept (Hall & Harrington, 2004) is used as the basis from which I develop a framework which career consultants and academics can use in exploring actual career preferences and decisions (see Chapter Nine). A comprehensive holistic framework of career influencers for bounded transnationals is developed.

1.3 Research Approach

The methodological paradigms most pertinent in describing the researcher's frame of reference are both critical realism and constructivism. The study originated from the author's interest in this under-researched category of international assignee, due to her own membership of the group and the dearth of academic literature regarding this group in IHRM. This initial interest was supported during the PhD journey with the acceptance of papers on the subject at conferences and for publication (Crowley-Henry, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c; Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2007, 2009) with particular emphasis on the research approach that was adopted and on the findings of the research.

Given the afore-mentioned rationale for this study, and the focus on identity and the subjective career dimension, individual narratives were deemed the best data to collect in order to generate a deeper study of the area. An exploratory, qualitative research approach, praised for the depth and richness of data that it uncovers, was followed. A geographical case study was used to provide context to the findings, the study taking place in the bounded transnational community living/working around the Sophia Antipolis science and technology park in the South of France (see Section 2.4.3). It was felt that the findings from this exploratory qualitative study could provide the meaningful concepts, categories and variables for testing in subsequent larger scale surveys on international assignees in other locational contexts.

In total, fifty-four interviews were conducted over a three year period (mid-2002 – mid-2005); thirty-seven of which were with the primary sample of bounded

transnationals. These primary and secondary interviews, coupled with contemporaneous contextual and observational field-notes and reflections from my time in the location (two years prior to, during, and immediately after conducting all in-depth exploratory interviews) facilitated a comprehensive, ethnographically informed study of the particular sample of self initiated international assignees. The work pioneers a close investigation of bounded transnationals' identity and career construction as narrated and described by themselves, and as interpreted by the researcher.

Becker and Haunschild's (2003: 3) opening citation to this chapter declares that: 'Observing people's lives in terms of 'career' is one of the most remarkable aspects of modern society'. They differentiate between the generally static careers of our forefathers and the boundaryless nature of careers today. The ethnographically informed nature of the study enabled me to observe the sample, to reflect upon my own experiences, and to collect contextual fieldnotes to support the interview transcripts of the narratives. However, since the fieldnotes are not used explicitly in the analysis chapters, I refrain from classifying the study as ethnographic in this dissertation⁴. The ongoing re-assertion and re-construction of an individual's career and the inherent reflection that has on the individual's identity is studied through the career narratives, with patterns among individuals leading to the generation of career and protean frameworks (see Chapter Nine).

The aim of the study is to investigate and explore the international career of the sample. The dissertation does not focus on specific roles or managerial levels of

⁴ A more detailed description of the ethnographic nature of the study can be found in Crowley-Henry (2009b).

office, but rather gives a view of individuals in different employment positions (from self-employed, individual contributor, junior management, middle management, senior management, to currently 'between jobs'). All have enjoyed occupational careers and remain interested in continuing occupational careers.

1.4 Literature Review Overview

The dissertation gathers together literature from IHRM (Adler, 1986-7; Boyacigiller, 1995; Dowling et al, 2008; Feldman & Tompson, 1993; Mendenhall & Oddou, 2000; Yan et al, 2002) and career theory (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989a; Baruch, 2004; Hall, 1976; Hall & Associates, 1996; Hall & Harrington, 2004; Larsen & Ellehave, 2000; Patton & McMahon, 2006a; Rosenbaum & Miller, 1996), specifically concerning international careers. The construct of identity within the context of international careers is examined from the perspective of both literature sources. Within IHRM where the literature has to date primarily focused on organisation assigned expatriates, identity is examined particularly within the adjustment and acculturation process (Berry & Sam, 1997). In career literature, it is increasingly recognised that careers need to be studied within a wider framework of life (Wolfe & Kolb, 1980). In this study of international careers, where national identity differentiates individuals culturally, being content with one's identity in a new environment and with the life one is following has implications on career decisions and preferences. The study's focus is on exploring identity and career issues for bounded transnationals.

The dissertation contributes to the literature on IHRM by developing the existing literature on the organisation assigned expatriate assignment (which is the main focus of IHRM) in its applicability for bounded transnationals. Contemporary research in IHRM has started to investigate other categories of international assignees (see Section 4.3). This study compares and differentiates the international assignees as currently described in the literature, outlining the key differences between them and the sample considered here (see Table 4.1). In so doing, research question (i) (see page 9) is answered.

In contemporary times of globalisation and fragmentation, the dissertation explores the sample's morphing identity (or 'identification' (Bauman, 2001)), as the bounded transnationals morph from having identities that they would appear confident and familiar with, to the identity reconstruction undergone and being undergone as they deal with daily life in a host country environment. The term 'morphing' is associated with the protean career concept, which underlines the subjective career elements impacting upon individuals' career choices and directions. Using the protean career concept as an umbrella concept to capture the structural and agential forces influencing identity and career reconstruction over time and circumstance has been critiqued (Arnold & Cohen, 2008: 14). Nonetheless, I argue in this dissertation that a development of the protean career concept is warranted and that the concept has served to be very useful in analysing the career narratives and lived experiences of the sample of bounded transnationals.

The adjustment process that organisation assigned expatriates experience has been documented (Selmer, 2007; Selmer, Chiu, & Shenkar, 2007; Shay & Baack, 2004).

This research analyses the adjustment of bounded transnationals in their host environment, and in particular attempts to interpret the identity reconstruction exercise that individuals undergo when adjusting to a potentially permanent life in a host country. Furthermore, the desire to have a sense of belonging and a 'self identity', which Du Gay (1996) argues has resulted from the demise of social identity / community in today's society, is discussed. Factors such as children integrated into the location, international spouses, and desire for a cosmopolitan life-style are assessed here. Analysis of the adjustment and identity issues for bounded transnationals responds to research question (ii) (see page 10).

While an organisation assigned expatriate would appear to be aligned with the traditional career path of vertical progression within the one organisational context, the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) suggests that unsatisfied organisation assigned expatriates use their international experience as a means of moving inter-organisationally. Some research suggests that more and more expatriate managers undertake international assignment(s) to improve their *internal* careers (Stahl et al, 2002: 216-217; Tung, 1998)', where 'internal' careers consist of the innate value a position provides due to the opportunity for acquiring new skills, career enhancement (beyond the employing organisation), and personal development.

The individuality of chosen career paths is postulated in this dissertation. A number of factors influence the decisions chosen at different points in time, in different circumstances. The protean career concept which considers looking at a more complete 'life' picture including work/life balance and the role of human agency in choosing career paths is discussed given the data/narratives collected from the sample.

For bounded transnationals, the lifestyle anchor (Schein, 1990) emerges as a strong element in the decision to remain tied to the host country environment, either in the intention to keep a residence in the area should the interviewee return to the home country or move elsewhere, or in the intention to retire or remain in the area for as long as possible. The relevance of the sample's preference for the lifestyle anchor needs to be considered in light of the geographical case study and the specific locational context of the research undertaking (South of France).

The dissertation investigates the existing theory on career options and analyses such in the context of the empirical findings. It explores the career influencers of the chosen sample of bounded transnationals in the South of France. It highlights the complexity of career preference and direction, given internal and external elements, voluntary and/or seemingly forced paths that need to be factored into career path choices. This discussion is in response to research question (iii) (see page 11).

1.5 Conceptual and Theoretical Contributions

This research is exploratory. It lays the foundations for subsequent research on this category of international assignee, highlighting commonalities from the respondents. The concepts applied in interpreting the research stem from different perspectives (see particularly Chapters Two, Four, Five and Six), illustrating the pragmatic pluralist (Watson, 1997) approach of the study. Addressing identity and career from novel perspectives enables the development of theoretical ideas, and contributes to the existing knowledge in the area.

Given the inductive, exploratory nature of this research undertaking, priority is placed on analysing the key career and identity influencers and concepts that emerged from the narratives (as shared in Chapters Seven and Eight). The resulting findings enabled the researcher to put forth an exemplary set of variables for potential testing on a wider scale in future research (see Chapter Ten for recommendations on further research).

Findings from the study and contributions to knowledge in the disciplines of IHRM and careers, include the presentation of a typology of international assignees; classification of the sample as embracing both the separation and integration quadrants of the Berry and Sam (1997) acculturation matrix; evidence of the protean, process, evolving nature of both identity and career construction, showing the many factors from both a structural and agential dimension which impact upon career direction and preference; and 'lifestyle' as the common career anchor across the sample. Other sub-findings which emerged from analysis of the collected data include the relevance of micro factors such as family status, life cycle and gender, and macro factors such as social policies, culture and structural conditions (for instance being faced with the proposition of (un)employment). The protean nature of identity and career as evolving processes is very visible in the international context of the study. It is evident that when cultural familiarity is stripped away exposing vulnerability to acculturation, the complexity of structural and agential factors impacting upon career direction and preference is emphasised.

1.6 Structure: Overview of Chapters' Content

This initial chapter introduces the research question and reason for the study. The Research Philosophy and Methodology which underpins the study is presented in Chapter Two. Next, Chapter Three details the specific context of the research undertaking and the author's self reflections on the process she herself has undergone.

Chapters Four and Five consider literature in IHRM and Career Theory respectively, with Identity featuring in both chapters. The literature review frames and strengthens the requirement for the research. Chapter Six presents the theoretical concepts used by the author in interpreting the inductive and emergent patterns in the data. The pragmatic pluralistic approach (Watson 1997) undertaken is shown here. Chapters Seven and Eight discuss and analyse the Findings which emerged from the inductive study in the context of the literature review. These unite the pre-ambling chapters by analysing, interpreting and discussing the empirical findings in the context of IHRM, career and identity. The role career and nationality play in shaping and re-shaping identity in an international context is discussed and interpreted.

Chapter Nine presents the conceptual contribution of the research. It returns to the three core research questions (see section 1.2, pages 9-11) and presents frameworks to facilitate understanding in these areas based on the research findings. Finally, Chapter Ten concludes the dissertation and provides suggestions and recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two

Research Philosophy and Methodology

The aim of methodology, then, is to describe and analyse ... methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their presuppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge.

Kaplan, 1964: 23

2.1 Introduction

The ‘bricolage’ description of qualitative research given by Denzin and Lincoln (1994) is apt for this work which truly emerged as I moved through the non-linear and reflexive stages of participant observation, researcher, interpreter and author. The ‘emergent construction’ which is this dissertation comes from ‘an interactive process shaped by [the bricoleur’s] ... personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008a/b: 8).

This chapter positions the research undertaken for this dissertation. First, an overview of the philosophy of research design in Management is presented. Here, my particular research paradigm encompassing my epistemology, ontology and methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a: 185) is highlighted. Then this study’s strategy of inquiry is considered (*geographical case study*). Next I present the research method of depth interviews, detail the sampling process and introduce the specific sample of respondents. This is followed by a section discussing the method used for interpretation of the data. Finally considerations regarding research ethics pertinent to the study are stated.

A qualitative, inductive, exploratory undertaking, a specific contribution of this study is its contextual richness (see Chapter Three). The researcher lived among the bounded transnational community prior to, during, and immediately after the qualitative exploratory in-depth semi-structured interview process (Crowley-Henry, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c).

2.2 The Philosophy of Research Design

Easterby Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1991: 21) describe research design as the total arrangement of a research study, including the type of evidence gathered, how and from where; and the interpretation of such evidence in order to answer the fundamental research question. There are several methodological paths from which a researcher can choose when deciding on the particular direction to follow in pursuing her research. It is therefore of utmost importance to consider the philosophical assumptions which explicitly and/or implicitly underwrite any research approach (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a; Easterby-Smith et al, 1991; Flick, 2002; Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Mason, 2002; Smith & Dainty, 1991).

Knowledge of research methodology enables one to understand the *process* of scientific enquiry (Kaplan, 1964: 23; see also this chapter's opening citation) and helps the researcher to determine the appropriateness of her choice of research design (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 21). Positivist methodology or 'working as natural scientists' (Bell & Newby, 1977: 21) has dominated Management research in methodological thought and practice (Gummesson, 1991: 15; Podsakoff & Dalton, 1991). However, while '[t]here is ... a view that the natural sciences are more exact and objective than the social and behavioural sciences', it is argued that positivism does 'not lead to clear, objective, and undisputed knowledge' (Gummesson, 1991: 141), since all research involves an element of subjectivity. Qualitative approaches or research that is 'inferred subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition' (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 22) is more flexible in catering for human subjectivity in Management and social science research. Emic analyses 'in which explanations of

human actions derive from the meanings and interpretations of those conscious actors who are being studied' rather than 'etic analyses embraced by deduction, in which an external frame of reference is imposed upon the behaviour of phenomena' are considered more appropriate 'where the phenomena in question have subjective capabilities' (Gill & Johnson, 1991: 34).

Qualitative research methods have been praised for their 'complexity-capturing ability' (McCracken, 1988: 16), their rich (Patton, 2002: 127), deep and holistic content (Marshall & Rossman, 1989: 19), their 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973: 5), and their flexibility (Patton, 1987: 9-11). This alternative paradigm, characterised by 'qualitative', 'ethnographic', "'direct" research' (Podsakoff & Dalton, 1991: 112) seeks to develop 'a new rigour of softness' in research (Bennett, 1991: 76). The aim of qualitative research is 'to describe, translate, and otherwise come to terms with *the meaning, not the frequency* of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world' (Van Maanen, 1983: 9, italics added). Filstead (1970: 4) argues that 'the qualitative perspective in no way suggests that the researcher lacks the ability to be scientific while collecting the data. On the contrary, it merely specifies that it is crucial for validity — and, consequently, for reliability — to try to picture the empirical social world as it actually exists to those under investigation, rather than as the researcher imagines it to be'. Qualitative approaches are allied with theory generation and induction from a specific case or cases to the wider population (Bryman, 1988: 13; Smith, 1991: 149); the aim being to understand and interpret phenomena, rather than to explain, describe or generalise (Gummesson, 1991: 153).

The choice of approach to adopt in a research study is not simply researcher-biased. Morgan (1983: 19) highlights that it is part of a more extensive process ‘that constitutes and renders a subject amenable to study in a distinctive way’. While, as a researcher, the use of my own judgement (Buchanan, 1980: 46) plays a key role in the research design decision, Morgan and Smircich (1980: 491) note that the suitability of a particular research approach ‘derives from the nature of the social phenomena to be explored’. ‘The distinction between positivistic and hermeneutic methodology is rather that the former is believed to have a more general application while the latter has to be designed on a case to case basis. The crucial question ... is whether or not a particular method contributes to a greater understanding than any alternative method would have done within a given level of resources’ (Gummeson, 1991: 156). The value of qualitative research methods in Human Resource Management was raised at the Irish Academy of Management conference (Galway GMIT, 7-9 September 2005), where I presented a paper (Crowley-Henry, 2005). The need for more qualitative research to aid HR practitioners and academics alike to make sense of and see real lived experiences from the field, from the participants’ own perceptions, rather than quantitative data requiring much interpretation was suggested as being a necessary way forward in interpreting and developing the HRM discipline. Similarly, Wright (2004) and Kohonen (2005) call for more qualitative research in international management, with Kohonen (2005) emphasising the need for more research of a qualitative individual nature examining the effects on identity of an international experience.

The following section continues this discussion on the philosophy of research design, but focuses particularly on this PhD dissertation and on my specific research paradigm.

2.3 The Qualitative Research Paradigm

2.3.1 Researcher's Background & Perspective

This research undertaking was an inductive, emergent process. In keeping with Denzin & Lincoln's (1994, 1998a, 1998b, 2008a, 2008b) 'bricolage' description of qualitative research as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this dissertation was 'crafted' from the research data, and moulded to its current shape by relevant literature and research in the field and by ongoing interpretation of the data. My personal role as researcher cannot be removed from the study.

Because qualitative work recognizes early on in the study the perspective of the researcher as it evolves through the study, the description of the role of the researcher is a critical component in the writing of the report of the study (Janesick, 1998: 46).

Social scientists research their subject matter based on explicit or implicit assumptions about the nature of the world and the best way to enquire about it (De Burca, 1995). This research undertaking evolved from my own personal experience as a non-national, having embarked on an international experience which had been extended over and over again of my own accord. Having been part of the international community, I found there to be a gap in the existing IHRM literature pertaining to different categories of international assignees. I believed my and others' experiences would be of interest to organisations, policy makers and society in this era of

globalisation, ease of international travel, and individualism, where no-one is irreplaceable in the organisational context and company loyalty is questionable. I felt that the potential job insecurity that has been experienced globally in recent years would be magnified for my sample due to their foreign national status. My aim then from the outset of the study was to share the experiences and narratives of this category of international assignees with the wider community; specifically to contribute to theory within the Management sphere and to impart the practical implications and recommendations for IHRM and career development consultants.

A limitation of working so closely with the people under investigation is that the results might be difficult to interpret (Riley & Clark, 2000). Having returned to my own country of origin in June 2005, I have been able to re-look at the data collected in-country from a new 'outsider-in' perspective which I believe has aided reflexivity in the dissertation. Whereas previously I was 'one of them', during the analysis and write-up stages I was more removed from the environment to which I used to belong, allowing an element of objectivity. It is this reflexivity of interpretation which, I feel, adds depth and understanding and, in some regards, closure to the study. In this vein, I use the first person (I as the researcher) throughout this study; to constantly remind the reader that this is an interpretive reflexive piece of work. However, this is not an autoethnographic approach (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Reed-Danahay, 1997; Russell, 1999), as my own experiences are not interpreted in the research: the subject of this dissertation is the international community in question. Nonetheless, my participant observation and lived experiences as part of the international community have added contextual and observational background to the study; and deepen the description,

understanding and analysis of the findings. Chapter Three takes a closer look at the contextualisation and reflexivity of the research.

Very much in awareness of the contention that a 'critical point in cross-cultural research is the researcher's biases and cultural background' (Matti, 1999: 279), my frame of reference, which impacts upon the direction of the research, is shared in this chapter. I believe if there is clarity and reflexivity in the research where the researcher admits his/her own standpoint, the potential biases are restricted, with the analysis and interpretation actually serving to strengthen the argumentation of the subjectivity of research and the need to analyse perceptions from different perspectives. Nonetheless, I acknowledge from the outset that researcher bias ('bias ... caused by the respondent's perceptions of the interviewer, and ... bias ... [potentially] due to the attitudes and perceptions of the interviewer', Jobber, 1991: 175) is a potential concern here, as it is in all research undertakings. The problem here is that '[a]t crucial moments in the interview, the entire success of the enterprise depends upon drawing out the respondent in precisely the right manner. An error here can prevent the capture of the categories and the logic used by the respondent. It can mean the project ends up 'capturing' nothing more than the investigator's own logic and categories, so that the remainder of the project takes on a dangerously tautological quality' (McCracken, 1988: 21). A further bias could be on analysis of the research data, where '[o]bservers ... selectively perceive and interpret data in different ways that ultimately and sometimes seriously bias their investigations' (Shaffir & Stebbins, 1991: 14).

However I agree with Mangham's (1987: 25) proposition that: 'There is no such thing as presuppositionless research, nor does theory simply emerge from data', and

Behling's (1991: 53) that: 'it would be foolish to contend that any social research, natural science or not, is totally free of systematic bias'. Mangham (1987: 25) argues that 'One of the reflexive features of this [phenomenological or social constructionist] model of human beings is the recognition that a researcher also gives meaning to what she sees and hears'. Burrell & Morgan (1979: x) argue that all organisation theorists have a pre-conceived 'frame of reference', a series of either explicitly stated or implicitly believed assumptions, with which they approach their work. Miles & Huberman (1994: 18) believe that these assumptions are derived from experience, from theory, and often originate from the general objectives foreseen of the study.

Thus while researcher bias is a constant concern in the validation of research undertakings, my perspective is that while the researcher must be aware of the potential pitfalls of researcher bias, a purely objective piece of research is not possible. In order to prevent researcher bias as much as possible however, when interviewing my sample I adopted a 'friendly, polite, but neutral manner' in trying to remain as objective as possible (Jobber, 1991: 176), verging even on the ignorant, dim side (McCracken, 1988: 38).

2.3.2 Dominant Research Paradigms in the Study

The research paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Guba, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 1998; Kuhn, 1970), 'basic set of beliefs that guide action' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a: 185), or interpretive framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 1998a, 1998b) encompassing epistemology, ontology and methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a: 185), being followed in this undertaking has become more apparent as the study progressed and its assumptions and findings emerged. While many researchers strive

to fit their research neatly into a specific paradigm in order to achieve ‘paradigm closure’ (Watson, 1997: 5), I have adopted Watson’s (1997) ‘pragmatic pluralism’ strategy which encourages the bringing together of different disciplines (or paradigms) *providing that the theoretical coherence is upheld* and the resulting framework of concepts and assumptions contribute to knowledge. Thus as this research study evolved, my research paradigm also emerged from a not so neatly boxed entity, but a living, developing framework. This approach acknowledges Kuhn’s (1970: viii) definition of paradigms as ‘universally recognised scientific achievements that *for a time* provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners’ (italics added for emphasis). The different research paradigms referenced in the following paragraphs have all helped in the conceptual development of this study.

I am a qualitative researcher and place myself closest to the *constructivist/interpretivist* tradition, given Easterby-Smith et al’s (2002) reasoning that the epistemological and ontological framework constructed by proponents of qualitative methodologies is socially contrived and determined by people’s understanding and interpretations. I am very aware of my role as researcher and interpreter of the data collected in the study. I believe my role to be key in the research process and realise that my interpretation of the findings is based on *my individual* world-view or epistemology. I have no doubt that other researchers using the same transcripts collected could interpret the material differently, choosing different stories, focusing on different elements, based on his/her own research interests and historical make up.

It is important to distinguish between constructivism and social constructionism in social science, as they fundamentally advocate different epistemologies and methodologies. Constructivism focuses 'on how the individual cognitively engages in the construction of knowledge' (Young & Collin, 2004: 373), while social constructionism 'claims that knowledge and meaning are historically and culturally constructed through social processes and action' (Young & Collin, 2004: 373). Constructivism is concerned with individuals making sense of and constructing their social world, whereas for social constructionism the emphasis is on social interaction which serves to construct the social world. This study concentrates on the constructivist, individual, hermeneutic, narrative in order to interpret and make real the social world as constructed by individuals in the bounded transnational community. However, it also acknowledges that the structures of the social world (contextualising the research) influence how the respondents construct their reality (social constructionism).

As presented by Guba & Lincoln (1998) and described by Denzin & Lincoln (1998a: 186-187; 2005: 184): 'Constructivism ... adopts a relativist (relativism) ontology, a transactional epistemology, and a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology. The inquiry aims of this paradigm are oriented to the production of reconstructed understandings of the social world'. My relativist ontological framework (regarding the nature of reality) underlines my belief as an individual that my perception of an objective reality has in fact subjective elements, as are others' perceptions of an objective reality. Thus, to me the nature of reality is relative – it differs in perspective depending on the context and the individual. There are multiple realities in the world that can be perceived differently, all of which are socially constructed (Hudson &

Ozanne, 1988). Personal history, life experiences, as well as genetics are players in the formulation of one's perception of truth and reality. This 'nominalist' position (Burrell & Morgan, 2000: 3) is in contrast to realism which assumes that the world is external and concrete leading to a single reality referred to as 'truth' (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988: 509).

The constructivist paradigm emphasises transactional *epistemology*, ('How do we know the world?', Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b: 185), where the process of social exchange through language (written or spoken) and other social processes leads to shared constructions of knowledge and meaning. Smith (1991: 150) has stressed the key role of epistemology within the philosophy of research design: 'meaningful research demands a sound epistemological base to the research methods. Epistemology and research methods are interrelated in a complex way'. While positivism assumes that truth, reality and the social world exist externally and can be examined objectively (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 22), I do not share the realist view that meanings are fixed or permanent entities so that reality 'should be measured through objective methods, rather than being inferred subjectively through sensation, reflections or intuition' (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 28). Rather, I adopt a transactional epistemology where I see meanings coming to life as people share their experiences (verbally or in writing). I am very conscious that my beliefs and values have been shaped socially throughout my life and that although I may share core underlying morals, beliefs and values with others, the relevance and experience of such elements to me differs from that of others. The difference may be small or great but it is important to be aware that no two individuals share exactly the same history and experiences and so (in my opinion) have different world views and even though

they may share objective truths, their interpretation of such truths has subjective elements and is constructed through social exchange. Thus the epistemological and ontological framework adopted in this dissertation is such that I believe truth, reality and the social world to be socially contrived and determined by people's understanding and interpretations (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 24). In keeping with Silverman & Jones (1973: 63-65), I believe that 'an account of any reality derives its rationality not from its direct correspondence with some objective world, but from the ability of its hearers (readers) to make sense of the account in the context of the socially organized occasions of its use' (also quoted in Hassard, 1991: 141).

The constructivist paradigm adopts a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a: 186-187). Hermeneutics differs from phenomenology insofar as the 'phenomenologist is committed to understanding social phenomena from the actor's own perspective ... The important reality is what people perceive it to be' (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984: 2). In order to understand a person's behaviour, 'the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view' (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975: 14). Phenomenologists look at how people make sense of the world and develop a world view for themselves, subjectively, based on their own experience and reality. The hermeneutic researcher, on the other hand, 'would go a step further and 'interpret' these immediate events also in the light of previous events, private experience, and whatever else [he or she] find[s] pertinent to the situation under investigation' (Gummesson, 1991: 150), thus claiming the impossibility of the objectification of meaning and of separating the researcher/interpreter from the researched. Here my role as the researcher in the study is once again highlighted, particularly my insider role as member of the international community at the time of the data collection.

While I would classify my research as constructivist, the position taken is in keeping with Gergen's (Gergen, 1985, 1996, 2003; Gergen & Gergen, 2003) social constructionism which 'is principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live' (Gergen, 2003: 15). Gergen's approach is particularly useful in underlining the involvement of the researcher in the research process (hermeneutical reflexivity), and in highlighting the contextual and temporal relevance of research undertakings. He praises and uses Gadamer's (1975) notion of 'horizon of understanding' to emphasize the hermeneutical researcher's frame of reference or 'forestructure of understanding' which impacts upon the way texts or data are interpreted (Gergen, 1996). He notes that this is also in line with Kuhn's (1970) 'paradigm of understanding' whereby the interpretation of research findings takes place within a particular context and structure. Similarly he agrees with Fish's (1980) 'interpretive community' and argues that readers interpret and understand texts as members of such a community and are influenced by the traditions of that community. Gergen's emphasis on the process of social exchange (through language and/or other social processes) and reflexivity in shared constructions of meaning and knowledge was useful in interpreting how meaning was constructed by the respondents in the study, and in reflecting on my own role and interpretation of the narrative texts. In addition, his view on the 'saturated self' (Gergen, 1991) as a postmodern being whose complex identity is influenced by numerous relationships and demands was an important influence on my epistemological and methodological approach in this dissertation, where a holistic exploration of continuing career and identity construction is explored.

Another paradigm within which this dissertation is framed is the *interpretivist* paradigm. This paradigm, similar to the constructivist paradigm, also emphasises the meaning of social action and stresses the process of *interpretation* of actors' meanings in a social context. In this vein the interpreter (the researcher, 'I' in this instance) reconstructs the social action or social experience of others and attempts to analyse and re-create the subjective occurrence. In the interpretivist paradigm ideographic methodologies (Burrell & Morgan, 1979: 6), characterised by the subjectivism of the research, whereby the investigator empathises with the research subjects and takes account of the environment, of 'subjects' meaning and interpretational systems in order to gain explanation by understanding' (Gill & Johnson, 1991: 37), are analysed holistically in the social context. As this dissertation is an interpretive and reflexive piece of research, I do not attempt to find a conclusive answer to the research questions raised in this study. I remained constantly conscious of the relationship between myself and my interpretation of the findings as they emerged.

Critical theory, similar to the constructivist/hermeneutic approach, also questions the needless concern for objectivity and generalisation beyond the construction and interpretation of social action (discourse, social setting) of individuals and groups. However, the ontological basis of the critical theory paradigm is in 'historical realism – virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time' (Guba & Lincoln, 1998: 203) and the aim of the research is to 'seek to produce transformations in the social order, producing knowledge that is historical and structural, judged by its degree of historical situatedness and its ability to produce praxis, or action' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b: 187). While my research here takes on some elements of critical theory (particularly

cultural, ethnic and gender values; I also consider Foucault's (Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2009) power and domination constructs in my analysis of the findings), my aim is not as radical as to the '*critique and transformation* of the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender structures that constrain and exploit humankind, by engagement in confrontation, even conflict' (Guba & Lincoln, 1998: 211, italics in original). I do not approach the research from a feminist perspective insofar as I do not seek to highlight gender inequality in a patriarchal society. Nonetheless career influencers specific to both genders are explored in the findings and analysis chapters, where a perceived imbalance pertaining to women's careers is apparent.

While I position myself broadly under a constructivist/hermeneutic label, at the same time embracing the interpretivist and elements of the social constructionist paradigms (as described above), my acknowledgement that there are social structures or aspects of social reality which exist externally or independently of individual interpretation, as mentioned in a preceding paragraph on page 32 of this dissertation (but which may knowingly or unknowingly impact upon individual interpretation and action), is in keeping with the critical realism research philosophy (Bhaskar, 1975 [1997], 1998a, 1998b; Sayer, 2000). In this regard there is a marked distinction between ontology (what is) and epistemology (what can be known).

Critical realism attempts to bridge the divide between a focus on either structure or agency, with positivism emphasising stable structures existing independently and with the hermeneutic paradigm favouring agential and idiographic accounts of reality without considering the shared structures within which agential practice occurs. In rejecting the extreme and antonymic philosophies of science as classical empiricism

and transcendental idealism, Bhaskar's (1998b: 21) philosophy of critical realism (or, as he termed it 'transcendental realism') 'argues that it is necessary to assume for the intelligibility of science that the order discovered in nature exists independently of men, i.e. of human activity in general', while acknowledging the temporal and historical context which affects how facts may be perceived by agents (Bhaskar, 1998b: 20). In critical realism, the transitive dimension relates to how individuals perceive reality (agency), while the intransitive dimension corresponds with the underlying structure of reality (structure). Bhaskar argues the link between both dimensions is fundamental in social research. Thus the transitive and intransitive are inexplicably connected and the pure positivist or hermeneutic attempt to isolate one or the other is arguably fundamentally flawed. Mason (2002: 179) advocates critical realism's middle ground, contending that 'an empirical or "real world" does exist independently, but that it can only be known and understood interpretively'. This is consistent with Archer's 'internal conversation', which acts as a mediator between structure and agency, where 'Agents monitor themselves within situations and initiate courses of action in the light of their concerns, including modifying their projects according to circumstances that they confront' (Archer, 2003: 300).

In examining the human, social world from a critical realist perspective, reflexivity, change and process is propounded within the three distinctive domains of reality (Bhaskar, 1975 [1997]): the real, the actual and the empirical. The '**real**' consists of relatively stable social structures. I am inclined to house Bourdieu's (Bourdieu, 1977) sociological concept of habitus here – the stable, enduring systems of pre-dispositions that are individual-specific, unquestioned and accepted unconsciously without

consideration -, or the ‘internal, personal, enduring dispositions through which we perceive the world’ (Inkson, 2007: 31). The common ‘habitus’ and ‘fields’ that individuals may share tend to self-perpetuate, thereby helping to socialise individuals into specific structures, to reaffirm or reconstruct their identity. The ‘capital’ that individuals possess goes toward explaining the ability of human agents to move into different fields (see Section 6.3 for more details on Boudieu’s concepts considered in this study). The ‘**empirical**’ includes texts and social processes, that which can be observed and explored by human agents. The ‘**actual**’ mediates between the empirical and the real, thereby involving both the social structures and the human agents. ‘Thus, social phenomena emerge from the deep underlying real structures, become actual, and then empirical. Whereas our understanding of these social phenomena goes exactly in the opposite direction (from empirical to actual and then to real), which makes understanding them a very difficult task’ (Kaboub, 2001). The structure and agency relationship is constantly intertwined and inter-related, reinforced and evolving. Archer’s (2003) internal conversation construct, the mediating medium between structure and agency, is considered here (see Section 6.5).

The approach adopted for this research undertaking focused on a geographical case study. In-depth interviews were conducted with a sample from the population, the data from which was supplemented with contextual and observational fieldnotes in order to build up as complete a picture as possible of the sample’s identity and career concerns. The experiences and stories of the sample are interpreted hermeneutically given my contextual and insider knowledge, but this takes place within ‘an ‘absolute’

world of external realities' (Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983: 393) which has elements of status quo and evolution. I acknowledge that my study took place within a particular temporal, geographical and cultural dimension which cannot be exactly replicated. Nonetheless the underlying and fundamental themes that I elicit from the data attempt to address the connection between structure and agency, the transitive dimension relating to how individuals perceive reality and the intransitive dimension corresponding with the underlying structure of reality (Bhaskar, 1998a, 1998b). It was this holistic examination of the subject that led to the conceptual development presented in the latter chapters, which could be tested and applied in other contexts, among other sample populations.

Burgoyne and Hodgson use the term 'dualistic view' rather than critical realist view to describe the point of view 'that there is both an 'absolute' world of external realities and an interacting world of experience, consciousness, meaning and intention, with both realms influencing each other' (Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983: 392). This unbreakable relationship between structure and agency underlines critical realism, where objectivity and subjectivity influence and evolve each other. Critical self reflexivity is paramount in attempting to delve deep and consider the enduring and oft misrecognized impact each has on the other.

Finally, in this section I would like to elaborate somewhat on the concept of structure and agency, which was introduced above under the critical realism paradigm. In this dissertation the notion of the individual as master of his/her own destiny is examined (agent), but wider social structures and macro conditions (structure) are also considered - from the economical to the cultural (language) to societal and wider

family concerns. 'The difficulty for those studying and seeking to explain [human] geographies is to tease out just how much of their making was contributed by human agency (people making their own geographies) and how much by broader social structures (the circumstances and conditions not of their own choosing)' (Goodwin, 1999: 36). The question whether 'choice is totally determined or entirely voluntary' (De Burca, 1995: 122) centres the debate around the assumptions on human nature and the relationships between humans and their environment. To adopt a purely deterministic view would be to see human action as a mechanistic response conditioned by particular external circumstances, while the voluntarism view regards humans as creators and controllers of their environment and of possessing free will (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

In this research study, the complex nature of an individual's career within a social context is contingent on a number of elements, with context and structures playing an important part in the individuals' (agency) decision processes. Giddens' (1979; 1993a) structuration theory stresses the interdependence between human agency (the actors) and the underlying social structure shaping society (structure) in the accepted ways of doing things. He argues that a social system can be understood by its structure (formed by the rules and resources in force and available to agents), modality (the means of translating structures into action), and interaction (between the agent acting within the social system). 'Society only has form, and that form only has effects on people, in so far as structure is produced and reproduced in what people do' (Giddens & Pierson, 1998: 77). In this extent Giddens' structuration theory fits the critical realism paradigm.

The discussion in this section on the research paradigms that have influenced the study has articulated my position and frame of reference as researcher. It should serve to aid the reader to position him- or herself *relative* to my *interpretation* of the findings. While this dissertation sits broadly within the critical realism paradigm, but with a particular emphasis on constructivism/interpretivism, it has been influenced by parts of different concepts. It is within the overlap of the paradigms and theories presented here, as per Watson (1997) that this dissertation has emerged.

2.5 Research Methods & Strategy of Inquiry

2.4.1 Introduction – Qualitative Research Methods & Narrative Inquiry

Bogdan & Taylor (1975) advocate that the methods we use to study people affect how we actually regard them. Thus by reducing people's experiences and opinions to statistical data we are missing out on the richness (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) which is the subjective nature of human behaviour. Qualitative methods on the other hand enable us to get to know people on a personal, intimate basis and to follow their own world view as it develops through the research process. We, as researchers, experience what they experience in their everyday toil with their lives and society (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Qualitative research therefore emphasises validity (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984: 7), whereby the actual subject(s) under investigation is (are) reflected in its (their) complete form.

Undertaking qualitative research however, is challenging (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). It is labour and time intensive and laden with potential bias and complexity in analysing and interpreting the data (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 112). There are no

hard and fast rules to follow in conducting qualitative research, so researcher judgement is paramount (Buchanan, 1980). Guba & Lincoln (1981) advise, however, that qualitative methods are preferable when the research subject is complex human and/or organisational interactions which cannot be easily translated into numbers or statistics. They also note the use of tacit knowledge in addition to propositional knowledge which researchers using qualitative research methods (such as interview, observation, or unobtrusive measures like the analysis of written documents, open-ended questions or diary methods (Patton, 1987: 7)) avail of in order to assign meaning to the verbal and non-verbal findings of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1981: 88). This hermeneutic methodology has been discussed in the previous section under this study's research paradigm.

In deciding upon an appropriate research method, there are some items which need consideration. Firstly, it is of vital importance to determine whether or not the chosen method will answer the researcher's research questions. Next, depending on existing research and the current state of knowledge surrounding the subject, hypothesis testing or an inductive approach may be more applicable. Qualitative, exploratory research methods are needed if little is known about the characteristics of the variables in the research. The choice of research method is also influenced by the variables in the undertaking and whether or not such variables can be controlled (as in the physical sciences) (Bennett, 1991: 89). 'The crucial question ... is whether or not a particular method contributes to a greater understanding than any alternative method would have done within a given level of resources' (Gummesson, 1991: 156).

In this study an inductive (Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983: 393), explorative, qualitative approach was adopted in order to interpret the ‘meaning, not the frequency, of ... naturally occurring phenomena in the social world’ (Van Maanen, 1983: 9). I collected career narratives from a sample of bounded transnationals which I then analysed until patterns began to emerge and themes were elicited from the data. From that, I began to develop conceptual frameworks in order to make sense of the data. Then the data was considered ‘in a loosely deductive manner, by considering whether various models, theories, concepts, principles from the existing body of thought ... ‘make sense’ or ‘ring true’ in light of the data’ (Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983: 393). The particular concepts focused on in this study were determined after the data collection (post hoc) ‘in light of some of the emergent processes and phenomena’ (Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983: 396). Such an inductive approach has helped to avoid the limitations of research as noted by Weick (1989: 516) that ‘Theorists often write trivial theories because their process of theory construction is hemmed in by methodological structures that favour validation rather than usefulness’.

Using narratives (Bujold, 1990, 2004; Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Cochran, 1990, 1997; Cohen & Mallon, 2001; Collin & Young, 1992; Crowley-Henry, 2008c; Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2007; Czarniawska, 1998, 2004; Gabriel, 1995, 1998, 2000; Gabriel & Griffiths, 2004; Mallon, 1995; McKenna & Richardson, 2003; Polkinghorne, 1988; Richardson & Mallon, 2005; Riessman, 1993; Savickas, 2001) has been advocated as a hermeneutic method (Polkinghorne, 1988; Young & Collin, 1988) suited to exploring careers (and the identity dimension) from a constructivist standpoint (Bujold, 1990, 2004).

Per Polkinghorne (1988: 11):

narrative is a scheme by means of which human beings give meaning to their experience of temporality and personal actions. Narrative meaning functions to give form to the understanding of a purpose to life and to join everyday actions and events into episodic units. It provides a framework for understanding the past events of one's life and for planning future actions. It is the primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful. Thus, the study of human beings by the human sciences needs to focus on the realm of meaning in general, and on narrative meaning in particular.

Bujold (2004: 472) agrees that narratives are both processes and products. 'As process, it consists of the meaning making of one's experiences and is a form of self-construction or fluid self-awareness. As product, it is a story'. The process nature of narratives suggests that they can be constantly updated and altered to include new phenomena in a person's life (Polkinghorne, 1988). Thus they are temporal and context specific. Narratives facilitate identity construction since 'despite the many changes that attend the passage of time, the self of the past led up to or set the stage for the self of the present, which in turn will lead up to, or set the stage for the self of the future' (McAdams, 1995: 382). Told retrospectively, the interviewee articulates his/her career experiences in an attempt to make sense of the career direction chosen, and how that impacts upon possible future choices. It is not suggested that the narratives told are objectively 'real' accounts or 'factual truths' (Bujold, 2004: 473), but they are real in the sense that they are made up of identity constructs that individuals use in order to interpret and make sense of their lives. It is 'only when life transitions are retrospectively told in stories and given meaning that they really happen and transform the self' (Bujold, 2004: 473). Cochran (1990) and Savickas (2001) suggest the importance of narrative in developing career theory. Bujold suggests that from 'a theoretical point of view, we may thus look at narrative as

something closely related to the construction of identity' (Bujold, 2004: 476). Narratives are then suited to an inductive research approach where patterns from different narratives can be examined in order to develop concepts concerning the process and systems nature of careers and identity construction (Atkinson, 1998; Collin & Young, 1992; Young & Collin, 1988).

The narrative inquirer has a dual experience: he/she experiences the experience and is part of the experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000: 80). Narrative analysis enables the researcher to find out what a particular issue means to a person, how it affects them, how they think about it and what they do about it (Patton, 2002: 13). In order to understand issues and individual perceptions, the researcher is required to ask the individuals questions about their experiences and to hear their stories (Patton, 2002: 115). The researcher is able to uncover 'the multiple "truths" that operate in the social world' through 'the stories people tell one another about the things that matter to them... These stories move people to action, and they rest on a distinction between fact and truth. Truth and facts are socially constructed, and people build stories around the meanings of truth' (Denzin, 1997: xv).

In this study the researcher conducted semi-structured exploratory interviews using a topic guide to ensure key areas the researcher was interested in investigating were covered. However, the respondents were free to speak about events in their lives that were important to them in order to make sense of and map their careers (as 'bounded transnationals') since moving to France. The ensuing stories allowed the respondents to look back, reflect upon and consider their lives in order to make sense of it and in so doing, to construct recognisable selves (Chase, 2005: 658-659) or their identities.

In analysing and interpreting the narratives, I consider the truth as perceived and told to me by the interviewees during our meeting. Their stories are interpreted using observational and contextual fieldnotes and background information from my membership of the same community.

The complexity of structural factors including organisational, institutional and cultural settings which shape the lives of respondents becomes apparent in narrative inquiry (Crowley-Henry and Weir, 2007). The use of narratives is a form of story-telling (Gabriel, 2000), an interpretive basis for exploring and understanding complex constructs which could prove difficult to uncover using different analytical approaches. In this study, the narratives (Creswell, 2007; Crowley-Henry, 2008c; Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2007; Czarniawska, 1998, 2004) collected from the sample, together with the contemporaneous contextual and observational fieldnotes, are analysed interpretivistically (Blaikie, 2000: 115) and inductively in order to develop a framework of the bounded transnationals' career and identity construction.

Being a member of the non national community since 1997, firstly in Germany and during the course of the data collection for this study in France (see Section 2.3.2), I had 'first hand' experience in adjustment to life as a foreigner living in a host country. Access to fellow non-nationals was thus facilitated through my contacts, by the fact that I was 'one of them'. Such use of personal contacts in gaining access to research candidates has been advocated in research literature (Beynon, 1988: 21-33; Bresnen, 1988: 38-39; Buchanan, Boddy, & McCalman, 1988: 56; Crompton & Jones, 1988: 68-70), particularly for international research studies (Hutchings, 2003). I collected

observational and contextual fieldnotes during the study which supplemented the interview transcripts in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

‘Qualitative ... researchers study things in their *natural settings*, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c: 3, italics added). Here, it is believed that the best way to understand a phenomenon is to research it in its context (Bennett, 1991: 87; Gill & Johnson, 1991: 124; Trochim, 2008).

The in-depth interview method was chosen as the research tool within a geographical case study framework (Sophia Antipolis, South of France). The aim of the research is not to explain, describe and generalise the number or types of people sharing certain characteristics, but to understand and interpret the nature and implications of an international career from the particular perspectives of those interviewed in the context of Sophia Antipolis. This aim is in keeping with the general aim of qualitative research (Gummesson, 1991: 153), the findings of which are not usually replicable or generalisable. However in the analysis chapter of this dissertation I suggest variables that could be used in subsequent larger scale survey undertakings examining career and identity influences which could be researched across categories of international assignees and indeed domestic employed respondents. The following sections detail the specific approach of this research study.

The context of my study is very important (cf Denzin, 1997: xiii; see also Section 2.4.3 and Chapter Three of this dissertation). Not only the location context which in itself is particular (large international population; international organizations; French

Riviera: tourism, climate), but also the wider cultural context (France, social system, culture, perception of equality and balance), and indeed the even wider context of globalization, job uncertainty, transactional work contracts, weakening family ties (friends being the new family). They position the research in a particular context which would be impossible to replicate exactly. Fetterman (1998: 2) praises the process of contextualization as a means of reducing researcher bias. In this study exploratory interviews which enabled the collection of narratives is supplemented with contemporaneous contextual and observational fieldnotes in order to provide as detailed and complete as possible a record and depiction of the evolving career and identity construction of the respondents (see also Crowley-Henry, 2009b). The different data methods (such as observations, contextual fieldnotes and interviews) help to triangulate the data, thus adding a touch of validity to the coherence of the findings.

Given my epistemological view regarding the reflexivity and relativity of all research for the researcher, the researched and the reader, generalisation of findings across wider populations was not an aim of this particular undertaking. Nonetheless commonalities between the interpretations shared in this dissertation and other populations (such as the careers of home country highly educated individuals, or traditional expatriates, or those in lower level job categories) exist and the sense-making of the international careers portrayed in this study can be applied in part to others following careers in a non-international or different job category setting.

A further critique is in the validity of the findings and the extent to which the researcher has compromised the integrity of the narratives shared (Barth, 1975: 226;

Sanjek, 2000: 282). This suggests that the researcher may have inadvertently directed the respondent to answer in a particular way which the respondent deems amenable to how the researcher wants him/her to answer. In order to minimise, or at least identify any researcher led responses in this study, I triangulate the findings from my reflexive 'insider' perspective (from my fieldnotes) as well attempting to analyse the transcripts 'as they are, and not merely how [I] perceive them or how [I] would like them to be' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 18).

Emerson et al (1995: 3) do not believe that 'consequential presence' is a negative bias, but rather the 'very source of that learning and observation'. They continue that:

close, continuing participation in the lives of others encourages appreciation of social life as constituted by ongoing, fluid processes. Through participation, the field researcher sees first-hand and up close how people grapple with uncertainty and confusion, how meanings emerge through talk and collective action, how understandings and interpretations change over time. In all these ways, the fieldworker's closeness to others' daily lives and activities heightens sensitivity to social life as process (Emerson et al, 1995: 4).

I found the insider status to be most advantageous in my research understanding. It enabled an in-depth interpretation of career and identity construction for international men and women living permanently in a foreign country.

2.4.2 Case Study Approach, Geographical Case Study

This section outlines the case study approach, particularly the geographical case, and its relevance to the research. Stake (1994: 236) sanctions that the 'Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of subject to be studied'. Where research is conducted in one or several particular context(s) (in management research usually

within an organisational context) a single or multi case study approach is chosen. The prime limitation associated with the case study concerns the (in)ability to generalise the findings to other cases.

The primary research conducted for this study took place in one geographical location, thus the *single* case (Stake, 1994, 1998) approach was adopted. Nonetheless, in piloting the interview guide, interviews were also conducted in Munich, Germany, and to a lesser, more initial exploratory stage on expatriation in Lancaster, England. However, given the peculiarity and specificity of the area (Sophia Antipolis) and the depth of findings from the interviews conducted, the interviews from Munich and Lancaster are not processed and analysed in depth in this dissertation. Thus, the single case approach is relevant.

While research using location as the case study is very pertinent in ethnography / cultural anthropology (Clifford, 1988; Mead, 2001[1928]; Whyte, 1993[1943]) and geography (Castells, 1989; Graham & Marvin, 1996; Hall, 1991; King, 1990, 1996; Sassen, 1998, 2001; Yaeger, 1996), it has not received the same attention in Management studies. Saxenian (1999, 2002) however has researched the international make-up of the Silicon Valley on the West Coast of the United States of America, but her focus has been more on the political and economic effects, rather than on the social and human resource management implications.

This study is focused on international interview candidates based around the Sophia Antipolis technology park in the South of France. The choice of research location was opportunistic (Mason, 2002) given my membership of the non-national community in

the South of France. I draw parallels between the specificity of the location in which the sample is based (and which the interviewees acknowledge to be specific by its context) and the case study approach. The following quotes describe this perceived difference from the research sample's perspective:

'Here, moving down to Sophia in '83, there was a very large expat community and there were a lot of Americans and English people who you could mix with. It was quite international' (Billy, Welsh, 52, over 17 years in the area).

'How strange is the area here because it's really multinational' (Ronald, Italian, 40, over 8 years in the area).

'Putting [down] your roots in this type of environment - it's not very easy compared to other parts of France. Because here is not France... It's international, it's more Italian. It's the south of France. It's particular. ... I mean for someone just having lived here, they don't know France, put it that way' (Geraldine, British, 52, over 16 years in the area).

Sophia Antipolis, an international science and technology park located in the French Riviera, not far from Nice is particular. Not only does it house over 1260 organisations (many of which have an international presence) and employ over 25,000⁵ people, it is situated on the Côte D'Azur, a popular tourist destination spot because of its sunny climate and Mediterranean/Alpine landscape. Because of its specificity and the difficulty in generalising the environment to others (except perhaps California on the West Coast of the United States, but even there the national culture is substantially different to the French culture), I take the approach here that *the location* metaphors *the organisation* in my study, with my sample all living and working within the same specific location, albeit for different organisations. Indeed

⁵ The information regarding companies and employees in the Sophia Antipolis park was taken from the official Sophia Antipolis website: <http://www.sophia-antipolis.org/GB/sophia-antipolis/sophia-antipolis/presentation-generale/presentation-generale.htm> 22 May 2009.

this study could be seen as an *instrumental case* which Stake describes as when ‘a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory ... the choice of case is made because it is expected to advance our understanding of that other interest’ (Stake, 1994: 237). Thus although the case of Sophia Antipolis was chosen for mainly opportunistic and convenience reasons, the depth of information collected from this case contributes to the existing knowledge in the contexts of IHRM and career theory, and the frameworks that I developed could (should) be explored in other location contexts.

The name of the region - Sophia Antipolis - in itself has specific connotations. While the science and technology park was so termed because ‘Sophia’ refers to ‘Wisdom’ [knowledge creation and development within the science and technology park] and ‘Antipolis’ is the Greek name of the city of Antibes, one of the regions within which the park lies (“Innovation Champions Network: The Sophia Antipolis Cluster Description,” 2004: 1), one could deconstruct this further. The nomenclature ‘anti-polis’ suggests ‘anti-city’ or a focus on the environment and welfare. This, coupled with the feminine ‘Sophia’ could give the perception of a science and technology park with a difference, where more feminine (Hofstede, 1980, 1985, 1991, 1993, 2005) attributes, such as work-life balance, are prioritised. Further information on the park and location is provided in Chapter Three.

A case-particular emic, rather than a general, external etic, approach was adopted in investigating specifically and in depth the educated bounded transnationals’ career in a particular location. Such an approach has been advocated in social science research (Gill & Johnson, 1991). I have purposely followed an emic approach to provide

explanations and depth of understanding regarding motivations and perceptions. 'Rather the aim is to present the experiences of the sample in enough detail and depth to allow readers of the study to relate to those experiences and deepen their understanding of the issues they reveal' (Seidman, 1991: 41).

Given my ontology and epistemology (see Section 2.3), the ability to generalise findings to wider contexts is not considered a major issue or a limitation of the research. In keeping with my presumption that different people, different researchers will each make different inferences given the same data, based on their personal make-up and historical background, which as such is socially constructed, any attempt to objectify or generalise my findings to wider audiences could tamper with the validity of the research given its emic approach. The focus here is on the individuals in the sample and their narratives rather than generalising the findings to a wider group. In keeping with Stake (1994: 238): 'Damage occurs when the commitment to generalize or create theory runs so strong that the researcher's attention is drawn away from features important for understanding the case itself'. However, I do assume that 'readers will be able ... to generalize subjectively ... from the case in question to their own personal experiences' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a: xv).

While the findings from this study cannot be generalised to bounded transnationals in other locations, or across other categories of assignees (this lack of generalising ability is a prime limitation of the case study approach), the *content* of the study raises interesting questions for comparison with other locations and / or types of international assignees. It outlines the lived experiences of particular non nationals in a specific location in a foreign country. The literature review chapters (Chapter Four

and Five) include previously conducted research studies on international assignees, which, positioned alongside this research aids comparison and triangulation. Chapter Three develops further the context of the geographical case study.

2.4.3 Research Technique: Qualitative Interviewing, Ethical Considerations

Easterby-Smith et al (1991: 73) note that: ‘The label “qualitative interview” has been used to describe a broad range of different types of interview, from those that are supposedly totally “non-directive” or “open” to those where the interviewer takes to the interview a prepared list of questions which he or she is determined to ask, come what may.’ Semi structured depth interviews were determined as the appropriate methodology to explore the research questions in this study (Bennett, 1991; Easterby-Smith et al, 1991, 2002; McCracken, 1988), in order to elicit patterns concerning influential elements in career and identity construction for the bounded transnational community in the South of France. In-depth interviews have been described as a ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Burgess, 1984: 102), yielding rich insights into people’s experience, opinions, attitudes and feelings (May, 1997). The use of in-depth interviews enables a significant degree of flexibility with regards to data generation, as the interviewer can introduce questions in order to follow up interesting leads due to the unstructured nature of in-depth interviews (Seale, 1998). McCracken (1988: 9) praises the long interview: ‘For certain descriptive and analytic purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing... The long interview gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves.’

An interview guide was prepared in advance of the interviewing process where themes or general topics were outlined (also termed 'topic guide' (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 75, 94; McCracken, 1988: 37). The interview guide used can be seen in Appendix A. It consists of a number of open-ended questions or themes relating to the interviewees' experiences in working and residing in the South of France. The use of open-ended questions is promoted by McCracken (1988: 25) when conducting long interviews as 'Within each of the questions, the opportunity for exploratory, unstructured responses remains.' With semi structured interviewing, I allowed the respondents the flexibility to divert from areas on the guide so that they could inform me of experiences and themes that I had not previously considered on the interview guide. Dainty (1991: 64) notes that there may be times when a researcher may need 'to transform and, indeed, abandon [the] question schedule, use non-directive techniques, and fit questions into the conversation in the most effective manner'. Such flexibility is an integral component of the semi structured interviewing process. Nonetheless I ensured that all elements on the interview guide were touched upon in each interview in order to maintain a degree of reliability and validity (Mason, 2002: 38-39) among respondents.

Most of the interviews conducted for this work were tape-recorded (Patton, 1980) with the permission of the interviewees. A handful of early, pilot interviews were not tape recorded, and in those instances notes were taken during the interview and written up immediately afterwards⁶. This enabled me to focus my attention to what the interviewees were saying, in agreement with Smith (1991: 155)'s affirmation that tape-recording 'allows concentration on the issues of concern and rapport to develop

⁶ Details on which interviews were tape recorded and which were not can be seen in Table 2.2

more easily.’ McCracken (1988: 41) criticizes note-taking over the tape-recording of interviews: ‘Interviewers who attempt to make their own record of the interview by taking notes create an unnecessary and dangerous distraction.’ Likewise, Buchanan et al (1988: 61) agree that note-taking during the interview ‘does not capture the richness of the verbatim account which can be used to support and enliven reports and publications.’

On the other hand, the disadvantages of recording an interview ‘centre on the anxiety and nervousness provoked in the respondent. The accuracy of responses can be jeopardized since respondents do not want to be recorded saying “the wrong thing”’ (Hart, 1991: 196). Thus, deciding ‘whether or not to use a tape recorder depends much on an interviewee’s anxiety about confidentiality and the use to which any information divulged can be put’ (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 79).

This was not a covert study: the respondents were all aware (in advance of the interview) of my role as researcher and of my topic exploring the careers of the bounded transnationals in the area. Ethical considerations did arise however. ‘Ethics is concerned with the attempt to formulate codes and principles of moral behaviour... In so far as researchers critically reflect upon their own views or those of others, or consider the justification for their actions in comparison to others, they enter the realm of philosophical ethics’ (May, 2001: 59).

In advance of and again at the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was asked to consent to having the interview tape recorded. This was done in the guise of a consent form pertaining to the usage of a tape-recorder to document the interview

(Smith, 1991: 155) – see Appendix B. The interviewees were also advised of their liberty to turn off the machine at any point (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 79; Hart, 1991: 196). This did not occur. However, many respondents did make further comments at the end of the interview (after the tape recorder had been switched off) and whenever this occurred; the tape-recording was supplemented with note-taking (Turner, 1988: 109).

Furthermore, at the outset of each interview the interviewee was asked how they would consent to have their words attributed in the final dissertation. The form provided to each interviewee can be seen in Appendix C. With respondents' consent ranging from full disclosure to total anonymity, I decided to use pseudonyms for all respondents and not to name their employing organisation, thus ensuring the respondents' identities remain confidential. However I do supplement the pseudonym with details including age, nationality, marital status and number of children in the Findings Chapters (Chapters Seven and Eight) where I feel such information adds further context to the quotes in question (for instance whether the quote is attributed to a parent or not). It may be possible for individuals to be identified from the supplemental information, even though every effort has been made to anonymise all respondents and their dependents.

A further ethical justification for the anonymity of respondents is that the semi-structured interviews allowed the respondents to drift from the interview guide and to relate stories of special moments in their identity and career histories which they perceived to be relevant and formative to where they are today. Thus the interviews became quite personal in nature with respondents recounting events such as the deaths

of loved ones, to miscarriages, to intra-couple role balance/imbalance, to unemployment. Hence I opted for anonymity of respondents regardless of having received permission from many to use their names. Stake (1994: 244) agrees that

With much qualitative work, case study research shares an interest in personal views and circumstances. Those whose lives and expressions are portrayed risk exposure and embarrassment: loss of standing, employment, self-esteem. It is imperative that great caution be exercised to minimize risks.

I do not believe the use of pseudonyms detracts from the research and I am comfortable that my respondents' identities are not compromised.

Unlike organizational research where conflicts of interest may arise between organisation and employee perceptions or the rhetoric and reality, this study focuses on the individual perception of career and identity formation influences, thus avoiding such ethical choices to a large extent (Gregory, 2003: 73).

2.5 Sampling

Many postpositivist, constructionist, and critical theory qualitative researchers employ theoretical or purposive, and not random, sampling models... They seek out groups, settings, and individuals where (and for whom) the processes being studied are most likely to occur. At the same time, a process of constant comparison ... among groups, concepts, and observations is necessary, as the researcher seeks to develop an understanding that encompasses all instances of the process, or case, under investigation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a: xiv)

Non probability purposive sampling (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used in the research, with the core sample linked to the case location and following the criteria of being non-French originating, having fluency in

English, being educated to third level, and having a working career (Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2007). At the initial stages of the interviewing process, I used personal contacts as a means of gaining access to interview candidates in the bounded transnational community (Beynon, 1988; Bresnen, 1988; Buchanan et al, 1988; Crompton & Jones, 1988; Hutchings, 2003). After the early interviews, some respondents suggested others in the bounded transnational community who may also be willing interviewees. Similar to Shamir and Melnik (2002: 3): 'No systematic sampling procedure was used. Participants were chosen according to their availability using a "snowball" method.' A limitation of the snowball sampling technique is that it can be 'an open invitation for sampling bias' (McQueen & Knussen, 2002: 74).

However, as Table 2.1 presents, the core sample of thirty-seven bounded transnationals interviewed originated from a total of eleven countries and consisted of males (n=17) and females (n=20), aged from 29 to 62 (at the time of their interview); some married (n=22), some with long term partners or engaged (n=4), some single (n=6), one widow (n=1) and four divorced (n=4). Twenty-one had children (n=21), with sixteen childless (n=16). The thirty-seven core interviews were tape recorded, with their quotes and narratives included in the primary analysis and interpretation of the data. Each interview lasted between one and two hours in duration, the average interview being 90 minutes. All recorded interviews were transcribed in full, with interview transcripts ranging from 8000 to 19000 words. The ensuing stories from the sample of workers in this study was analysed and presented in terms of the contemporary literature on the expatriate assignment experience, career theory and identity.

The interviews were conducted in English, with all respondents having fluent English (either as their native language or a close second language), to facilitate analysis and prevent bias or error due to translation or lack of comprehension. This does mean a bias toward respondents originating from the established European Union countries (pre-EU expansion to new accession countries in May 2004), the USA and Australia (Crowley-Henry and Weir 2007: 247), with all respondents coming from traditional Western democratised societies.

Table 2.1 Core Sample of the Study (bounded transnationals in the South of France)⁷

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Angie	female	41	American	Married (French husband)	son (10), daughter (8)	Lead Program Manager, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	30-Mar-04
Clare	female	62	American	Twice divorced	4 step-children	Senior Manager, Educational Systems & Services, people manager, employee	Intl Assignee	04-May-04
Milly	female	34	American	Married (British (English) husband)	son (2), daughter (7 months)	Project Manager, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	05-Aug-04
Catherine	female	40	Australian	Married (British (English) husband)	no children	Employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	22-Sep-04
Diane	female	31	British (English)	Engaged (British (English) fiancé)	no children	Initial position as nanny/child minder, then moved to work in wine export trade, employee	Intl assignee	18-Oct-02
Elaine	female	45	British (English)	Single	no children	Employee	Intl Assignee (expat turned international assignee)	05-Aug-04

⁷ Arranged by gender, nationality, pseudonym

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Geraldine	female	52	French (British)	Divorced (French ex-husband)	2 grown up children	Responsible of Maison des Entreprises (Chambre de Commerce)	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	05-Apr-05
Kate	female	38	British (English)	Married (British (English) husband)	son (6), daughter (4), expecting new baby	Site Manager, people responsibility, employee, currently unemployed	Intl Assignee	06-Apr-04
Natalie	female	56	British (English)	Married (British (English) husband)	1 daughter (17)	Self-employed/Consultant (Personal & Business Coaching, Marketing Rep), previous manager, people responsibility	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	08-Jun-04
Susan	female	39	British (English)	Single	no children	Help Desk employee	Intl Assignee	24-Aug-04
Sarah	female	46	British (English)	Divorced (French ex-husband)	1 son (21)	Self employed, consultancy, own business, previous manager, people responsibility	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	30-Sep-04
Tracy	female	54	British (English)	Widow (previous husband American)	2 daughters (24, 21)	Senior Manager Marketing, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee	2 June 2004 and 29 March 2005
Hilda	female	41	German	Married (Spanish husband)	daughter (7)	Manager, people manager, employee	Intl Assignee	05-Oct-04
Katharina	female	37	German	Married (French husband)	2 daughters (12, 10)	Professor International Business, employee	Intl Assignee	26-Aug-04

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Lisa	female	33	German (East)	Married (Irish husband)	2 daughters (14, 12)	Self employed, consultancy	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	09-Sep-04
Alice	female	43	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish husband)	sons (13, 8)	Head of Recruitment, self-employed/consultant, people responsibility, <i>currently unemployed</i>	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	15-Jun-04
Deirdre	female	42	Irish	Married (Irish husband)	2 daughters (11, 8)	Toxicologist	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	02-Apr-05
Fiona	female	28	Irish	Single (long term relationship, French partner)	no children	Marketing Manager, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	20-Apr-04
Mary	female	34	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish husband)	no children	Pharmacist, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	11-Oct-04
Ingrid	female	30	Swedish	Single	no children	Team Coordinator EMEA Pre-Sales, employee	Intl Assignee	13-Sep-02
John	male	29	Belgian	Single	no children	Technology Consultant, employee	Intl Assignee	27-Jun-03
Philip	male	51	British (born Jamaica)	Married (Irish wife)	2 children (7, 5)	Temporary lecturer (Professor vacataire)	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	22-Oct-04

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Barry	male	39	British (English)	Married (British (English) wife)	1 son (6), daughter (3)	Professor, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	07-Sep-04
Joe	male	55	British (English)	Married (German wife)	son (26), daughter (25)	Trainer and Consultant, own business, previous manager, people responsibility	Expat turned international assignee	15-Apr-04
Pat	male	34	British (English)	Engaged (French fiancée)	no children	Technology Consultant, employee	Intl Assignee	16-Sep-02
Rick	male	43	British (English)	Engaged (British (English) fiancée)	no children	Industry Business Manager, employee	Intl Assignee	18-Oct-02
Shaun	male	39	British (English)	Married (American wife)	son (2.5), daughter (8 months)	Manager, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee	28-Oct-04
Steve	male	34	British (English)	Married (Italian wife)	no children	Manager Professional Services Operations	Intl Assignee	12-Oct-04
Tim	male	54	British (English)	Married (British (English) wife)	3 children (17, 15, 13)	Project Manager, self-employed contractor	Intl Assignee, interview completed over 2 stages	04/10/2002 and 23 March 2005
David	male	32	Irish	Single	no children	Networking Consultant/MBA, currently unemployed	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	20-Sep-04

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Donal	male	36	Irish	Married (German wife)	2 step-daughters (14, 12)	Manager, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee	30-Aug-04
Francis	male	32	Irish	Single (long term relationship, Swedish partner)	no children	Internet Technology Developer, employee	Intl Assignee	23-Sep-03
Vincent	male	41	Irish	Married (Irish wife)	2 daughters (11, 8)	Partner	Intl Assignee	02-Apr-05
Ronald	male	40	Italian	Married (Italian wife)	1 daughter (6)	Manager, people responsibility, employee	Expat turned international assignee	14-Sep-04
Mark	male	34	Norwegian	Married (British (English) wife)	no children	Manager/employee	Intl Assignee	14-Oct-04
Gordon	male	35	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish wife)	no children	Freelance consultant (telecoms)	Intl Assignee	11-Oct-04
Billy	male	52	British (Welsh)	Divorced (French ex-wife)	3 children (19, 14, 11)	Pre-sales consultant	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	20-Sep-04

The map below (Figure 2.1) outlines the locations in the region where the core sample of interviewees live (locations marked with the red circle). It is clear that while the sample may work in Sophia Antipolis, their homes are spread out from the heart of Sophia. Thus the interviewees were not all from the same location in the South of France, nor were they all from the same organisation or in the same age bracket or family status. This served to ‘random-ise’ the sample despite the sample having stemmed from purposive and snowball sampling methods.

Figure 2.1 Private Residence of Core Sample of Respondents in the Area



Source of map: <http://riviera.angloinfo.com/maps/>, 11 April 2008

The complete set of interviews conducted for the study consists of a core group and secondary groupings. The core group is made up of individuals that fit my sample framework (as described above). However in trying to understand ‘the complex behaviour of members of society without imposing any a priori categorisation that may limit the field of inquiry’ (Fontana & Frey, 2000: 653), I also conducted what I term as secondary interviews with other individuals that do not belong to my core sample, but which are somehow linked to the core sample. Two initial interviews were conducted with traditional expatriates while in Lancaster (one expatriate was assigned in Australia at that point in time, the other in Ireland) in July 2002. I began interviewing bounded transnationals based in the Sophia Antipolis area from September 2002. In parallel I conducted a handful of interviews in Munich, Germany with members of the bounded transnational community, which were tape-recorded. In addition, in the latter half of 2002 I also conducted informal interviews in Sophia Antipolis (**not** tape-recorded), with notes written up subsequently. A further secondary interview was with a French national returning from her international experience in England with her English husband (who was a member of my bounded transnational sample).

In the latter stages of interviewing members of the bounded transnational community in the Sophia Antipolis area, I also conducted three secondary interviews with local Human Resource managers working for international organisations in the area and responsible for the recruitment of international assignees. While this study is concerned with the individuals’ career perceptions, I wanted to get a clearer picture of this and so asked the small number of local HR managers about their experiences in hiring and having non

national employees/bounded transnationals employed in the organisation. Also at the latter stages of the interviewing process I interviewed three traditional expatriate wives to gain further insight into their perceptions since they themselves were not traditional expatriates but trailing spouses, potentially looking for work as non nationals locally in Sophia Antipolis. I did not include these in the core sample of bounded transnationals since they were tied to their partners who were to be repatriated to the home country at a later stage. However, their experiences/these secondary interviews aided my study further in providing additional support and context for concepts that were emerging from the core narratives. The full list of fifty-four interviews conducted (core and contextual/secondary interviews) is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Full List of Interviews Conducted for the Study⁸

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Angie	female	41	American	Married (French husband)	son (10), daughter (8)	Lead Program Manager, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	30-Mar-04
Clare	female	62	American	Twice divorced	4 step-children	Senior Manager, Educational Systems & Services, people manager, employee	Intl Assignee	04-May-04
Milly	female	34	American	Married (British (English) husband)	son (2), daughter (7 months)	Project Manager, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	05-Aug-04
Catherine	female	40	Australian	Married (British (English) husband)	no children	Employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	22-Sep-04
Diane	female	31	British (English)	Engaged (British (English) fiancé)	no children	Initial position as nanny/child minder, then moved to work in wine export trade, employee	Intl assignee	18-Oct-02
Elaine	female	45	British (English)	Single	no children	Employee	Intl Assignee (expat turned international assignee)	05-Aug-04
Geraldine	female	52	French (British)	Divorced (French ex-husband)	2 grown up children	Responsable of Maison des Entreprises (Chambre de Commerce)	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	05-Apr-05
Kate	female	38	British (English)	Married (British (English) husband)	son (6), daughter (4), expecting new baby	Site Manager, people responsibility, employee, <i>currently unemployed</i>	Intl Assignee	06-Apr-04
Natalie	female	56	British (English)	Married (British (English) husband)	1 daughter (17)	Self-employed/Consultant (Personal & Business Coaching, Marketing Rep), previous manager, people responsibility	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	08-Jun-04
Sarah	female	46	British (English)	Divorced (French ex-husband)	1 son (21)	Self employed, consultancy, own business, previous manager, people responsibility	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	30-Sep-04
Susan	female	39	British (English)	Single	no children	Help Desk employee	Intl Assignee	24-Aug-04

⁸ Arranged by gender, nationality, pseudonym

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Tracy	female	54	British (English)	Widow (previous husband American)	2 daughters (24, 21)	Senior Manager Marketing, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee	2 June 2004 and 29 March 2005
Hilda	female	41	German	Married (Spanish husband)	daughter (7)	Manager, people manager, employee	Intl Assignee	05-Oct-04
Katharina	female	37	German	Married (French husband)	2 daughters (12, 10)	Professor International Business, employee	Intl Assignee	26-Aug-04
Lisa	female	33	German (East)	Married (Irish husband)	2 daughters (14, 12)	Self employed, consultancy	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	09-Sep-04
Deirdre	female	42	Irish	Married (Irish husband)	2 daughters (11, 8)	Toxicologist	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	02-Apr-05
Fiona	female	28	Irish	Single (long term relationship, French partner)	no children	Marketing Manager, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	20-Apr-04
Alice	female	43	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish husband)	sons (13, 8)	Head of Recruitment, self-employed/consultant, people responsibility, <i>currently unemployed</i>	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	15-Jun-04
Mary	female	34	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish husband)	no children	Pharmacist, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	11-Oct-04
Ingrid	female	30	Swedish	Single	no children	Team Coordinator EMEA Pre-Sales, employee	Intl Assignee	13-Sep-02
John	male	29	Belgian	Single	no children	Technology Consultant, employee	Intl Assignee	27-Jun-03
Philip	male	51	British (born Jamaica)	Married (Irish wife)	2 children (7, 5)	Temporary lecturer (Professor vacataire)	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	22-Oct-04
Barry	Male	39	British (English)	Married (British (English) wife)	1 son (6), daughter (3)	Professor, employee	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	07-Sep-04
Joe	male	55	British (English)	Married (German wife)	son (26), daughter (25)	Trainer and Consultant, own business, previous manager, people responsibility	Expat turned international assignee	15-Apr-04

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Pat	male	34	British (English)	Engaged (French fiancée)	no children	Technology Consultant, employee	Intl Assignee	16-Sep-02
Rick	Male	43	British (English)	Engaged (British (English) fiancée)	no children	Industry Business Manager, employee	Intl Assignee	18-Oct-02
Shaun	male	39	British (English)	Married (American wife)	son (2.5), daughter (8 months)	Manager, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee	28-Oct-04
Steve	male	34	British (English)	Married (Italian wife)	no children	Manager Professional Services Operations	Intl Assignee	12-Oct-04
Tim	male	54	British (English)	Married (British (English) wife)	3 children (17, 15, 13)	Project Manager, self-employed contractor	Intl Assignee, interview completed over 2 stages	04/10/2002 and 23 March 2005
David	male	32	Irish	Single	no children	Networking Consultant/MBA, <i>currently unemployed</i>	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	20-Sep-04
Donal	male	36	Irish	Married (German wife)	2 step-daughters (14, 12)	Manager, people responsibility, employee	Intl Assignee	30-Aug-04
Francis	male	32	Irish	Single (long term relationship, Swedish partner)	no children	Internet Technology Developer, employee	Intl Assignee	23-Sep-03
Vincent	male	41	Irish	Married (Irish wife)	2 daughters (11, 8)	Partner	Intl Assignee	02-Apr-05
Ronald	male	40	Italian	Married (Italian wife)	1 daughter (6)	Manager, people responsibility, employee	Expat turned international assignee	14-Sep-04
Mark	male	34	Norwegian	Married (British (English) wife)	no children	Manager/employee	Intl Assignee	14-Oct-04
Gordon	male	35	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish wife)	no children	Freelance consultant (telecoms)	Intl Assignee	11-Oct-04
Billy	male	52	British (Welsh)	Divorced (French ex-wife)	3 children (19, 14, 11)	Pre-sales consultant	Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse	20-Sep-04
Nathan	male		British (English)	Single (long term relationship, Hungarian partner)	no children	Lecturer, employee	pilot study (France); Intl Assignee, Not transcribed, Notes only	04-Oct-02

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Robbie	male	32	Irish	Married (Irish wife)	no children	Technology Consultant, employee	pilot study (France), Intl Assignee, Not Transcribed, Notes Only	05-Oct-02
Louise	female	29	Irish	Married (Irish husband)	no children	Channel Business Manager, employee, currently unemployed	pilot study (France), Intl Assignee, initial trailing spouse, Not Transcribed, Notes Only	05-Oct-02
Gina	female	40	British (English; Indian origins)	Single	no children	Product Marketing Manager, employee	pilot study (Munich), intl assignee, interim position	09-Dec-02
Hillary	female	29	Irish	Single (long term relationship, German partner)	no children	Marketing Manager, employee	pilot study (Munich), intl assignee, not transcribed, notes only	04-Oct-02
Peter	male	33-35	British (English)	Married (German wife)	2 children (under 6, baby)	Sales Manager, people responsibility, employee	pilot study (Munich), intl assignee	09-Dec-02
Andrew	male	38	Irish	Married (Irish wife)	3 children (6, 3, 1)	Executive Communications Manager, EMEA	pilot study (Munich), intl assignee	09-Dec-02
Brian	male	39	Irish	Single	no children	Business Development Manager, people manager, employee	pilot study (Munich), intl assignee	08-Dec-02
Fabienne	female	34	French	Single (long term relationship, French partner)	no children	Marketing Assistant, employee	Previous Intl Assignee (interesting re move to area for her also a challenge as different part of France), trailing spouse	16-Sep-02
Emma	female	44	Australian	Married (Australian husband)	daughter (21 months)	Organisational Psychologist, currently unemployed	Wife of Expat, trailing spouse	27-Jul-04
Ann	female	44	British (English)	Married (British (English) husband)	son (13), daughter (11)	from HR Manager, employee to Lecturer/Teacher, self-employed	Wife of Expat, trailing spouse, working locally at the moment	25-Mar-04
Joan	female	52	British (English)	Married (British (English) husband)	5 grown up children (28, 27, 25, 23, 20)	Teacher, currently studying TEFL, volunteer worker at hospital	Wife of Expat, trailing spouse	25-Aug-04

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Profession	Notes on Interview Status	Interview Conducted
Richard	male	34	Dutch	Married (British (English) wife)	no children	Manager, people responsibility employee	pilot study (Lancaster), Expat	10-Jul-02
Edward	male	50	British (Welsh)	Married (Welsh wife)	2 children (29, 25)	Planning Manager, employee	pilot study (Lancaster), Expat	10-Jul-02
Florence	female		French			Staff Administrator, employee	HR Manager for Intl Org in Sophia Antipolis	21-Apr-04
Laurence	female		French		no children	HR Practitioner, France, employee	HR Manager for Intl Org in Sophia Antipolis	13-Jul-04
Florian	male		French			HR Manager, employee, <i>currently unemployed</i>	HR Manager for Intl Org in Sophia Antipolis (previous)	21-Apr-04

Colour-Coded Guide to the table

Core Interviews:

Bounded transnationals (International assignees covered in this research): 37

Secondary Interviews:

Pilot study of international assignees based in France (by informal note-taking): 3

Pilot study of international assignees based in Munich, Germany: 5 (4 transcribed; 1 informal note-taking)

Previous international assignee: 1

Traditional expatriates (repatriation guaranteed): 5 (2 in Lancaster; 3 expatriate wives in France)

HR representatives: 3, all French, working/worked for international organisations engaged in recruitment of non-nationals

Determining the number of interviewees required in qualitative research is difficult (Mintzberg, 1979: 584). 'The theoretical sampling approach suggests that the actual number of interviews conducted or cases investigated is somewhat unimportant (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 69), with the most important objective of research being the potential which each interview/case brings to developing a broader and deeper perspective of the research area (ibid: 56)' (Crowley-Henry, 2007: 49). Small sample sizes have been defended in qualitative research undertakings (Mason, 1996; McCracken, 1988: 17) where the aim is not to generalise findings but to highlight areas of concern in depth (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 56; Seidman, 1991: 41), which could then in further research be tested among a wider participation grouping. Douglas (1985) states he would recommend a sample size of twenty-five interviewees in a qualitative research undertaking, if he were pushed to suggest a sample size.

From the outset of the study there was no predetermined number of interviews that needed to be carried out. Incremental sampling was carried out and continued until Kvale's (1996: 102) law of diminishing returns in research was apparent (the frequency to which research questions are repeatedly responded in a similar fashion). This is similar to Patton's (2002) theory saturation point (the point when the data stops revealing anything new about the phenomenon under study), and conforms with triangulation and the validation of qualitative research: 'To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, we employ various procedures, including redundancy of data gathering...., these procedures are generally called *triangulation*' (Stake, 1994: 241). For this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the sample until the point when I felt I was not hearing

new insights pertinent to the investigation, but rather common patterns, repetitions and reinforcement of previous ideas.

Seidman (1991: 45) lists sufficiency and saturation of information as the two criteria which should help researchers determine if they have enough respondents. With regards to sufficiency, the key is whether there is enough range of participants from the population in the sample to enable readers outside the sample can relate to those in the sample. Regarding saturation of information, the key is whether the interviewer/researcher continues to hear new information. The author feels that the number of subjects interviewed in this research undertaking was sufficient in adding depth to the area of international career research by focusing on the under explored bounded transnational community. Interviews continued until the 'saturation of information' (Seidman, 1991) effect was reached with the researcher admitting that interviews could have continued further (and still be continuing) due to the wealth and richness of the individual stories collected. However, in order to frame this study within the boundaries of identity and career construction using the concepts and theories identified in Chapters Two, Four, Five and Six, the sample size of thirty-seven core respondents was sufficient in conceptualising the data which can be seen in the latter chapters of this dissertation.

2.6 Interpretation and Triangulation

All of the interviews (core and secondary) were transcribed in full by the author herself. This is a most time consuming process (Hart, 1991: 197; Smith, 1991: 155; Turner, 1988: 110), but I felt, in agreement with Buchanan et al (1988: 62) that ‘the tape recorder has to be transcribed by the interviewer’. While the reasons given by Buchanan et al (1988: 62) include the interviewer being able to ‘reconstruct most gaps from memory’ from flaws on the tape; the interviewer being familiar with the company jargon recorded; the interviewer being able to determine which portions of a conversation to transcribe; and the interviewer being able to ‘clean up’ or ‘sanitize’ the interview conversation, I transcribed all of every interview in full in order to get closer to the data and themes emerging from the very outset, during the interviewing process.

I personally used N-VIVO for coding and analysing the interview transcripts. I had initial misgivings as to whether using the database would remove me from the data, but found that it did not. Rather than using coloured pens to code themes, I used N-VIVO’s coding stripes, which enabled me then to look at a ‘clean’ version of interview extracts with a similar theme (same coding stripe) in order to frame my thoughts and interpretations. N-VIVO also allowed me to make notes and memos on different transcripts and across transcripts during analysis, enabling me to build up themes.

Initially each interview transcript was dealt with as a single case (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994). Given the richness of data collected I ended up with hundreds of coding stripes

within single cases. I took notes and memos in parallel which helped to frame my thought process and interpretive framework. After the in-depth ‘familiarisation’ (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 108) and coding of the individual transcripts, I worked from individual themes of interest⁹ to grouping commonalities (and notable differences) across the interviewees. This quest for patterns (‘conceptualisation’ stage as termed by (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 109-110; Hart, 1991: 200) led to groupings and organisation of themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Easterby-Smith et al, 1991; Hart, 1991; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; ‘cataloguing concepts’ as termed by Easterby-Smith et al, 1991: 110; Hart, 1991: 200) which required ‘recoding’ of some parts of the transcripts (ibid). For the purpose of this dissertation I focus on the themes relating to the sample’s career and identity framework as members of the international community in the South of France. However, given the wealth of data collected, I have no doubt the same transcripts could be used to focus on other themes such as motivations to embark on (and remain) an international career, as well as nationality/cultural differences between interviewees.

Easterby-Smith et al’s (1991: 111) final stages in the data analysis process - the ‘linking’ and ‘re-evaluation’ stages - involves linking the emerging concepts and groups to the literature review and the research objectives. These stages were conducted in parallel along with primary research, whereby I was reading literature in the area while conducting interviews; with such literature framing and reframing my thought process throughout the interviewing and analysing stages. The analysis and interpretation process as I experienced is iterative, overlapping and quite messy. While a researcher can choose from countless theoretical frameworks within which to position her research, I

⁹ This could be termed the ‘reflection’ stage (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991, p. 109; Hart, 1991, p. 200).

determined the most appropriate theoretical framework was situated within structure and agency; simply described in the concept of the protean career which I develop in the latter chapters of this dissertation. This framework was chosen as it best fits my data, rather than my data best fitting it – a key difference with qualitative research undertakings.

While the stages of analysis that I went through can be linked with the ‘grounded theory’ approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I prefer not to classify my research within the realms of ‘grounded theory’ due to its positivist emphasis on causality and verification. I do concur with the fundamental rationale of grounded theory, however, that ‘rather than forcing data within logico-deductively derived assumptions and categories, research should be used to generate grounded theory, which “fits” and “works” because it is derived from the concepts and categories used by social actors themselves to interpret and organise their worlds’ (Jones, 1987: 25). In this research there were no fixed preconceptions which dictated the relevant concepts or theoretical framework that would be applied; rather categories emerged from my in-depth examination of the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 45). This is in agreement with Patton (1987: 158) that

The cardinal principle of qualitative analysis is that causal and theoretical statements be clearly emergent from and grounded in field observations. The theory emerges from the data; it is not imposed on the data

As this was an inductive piece of research, without any initial preconceived ideas about the direction the findings would lead me, coding and reviewing the transcripts was a very timely process. In parallel I reviewed literature on careers and IHRM which aided me in

grouping themes. On such close analysis, patterns emerged from the data. I had not expected gender to emerge as the key influence that it did in the research; thus I do not focus per se on gender in the findings but rather include it as a significant element in career and identity formation and construction. However, this is a further area for potential subsequent development.

In addition to the interview transcripts and secondary literature, contextual information was gathered which also helped to frame the themes that emerged within that particular historical and situational context. The following chapter details the contextual considerations. Suffice to mention here that I reviewed secondary information sources such as internet sites and media dedicated to Riviera residents (AngloInfo (website dedicated to information sharing in English for residents on the Riviera), Riviera Reporter (free monthly magazine in English targeted towards the international community), Riviera Radio, the English speaking radio channel broadcasting from Monaco), attended seminars targeted at the international community in the area (such as the AVF (a national service supporting mobility in France which provides a service for those who move for professional reasons to a new environment), SPWN – Sophia Professional Women’s Association (a forum for workshops (through English), informal lunches and meetings for professional women in the area)). Such secondary sources together with my own personal experiences and the interview data aided interpretation and triangulation of the material.

Qualitative researchers constantly look for ways in which they can validate their findings and provide credibility for the interpretations they make. As Denzin and Lincoln (1998a, 1998b: 3) postulate: 'qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand'. I acknowledge that triangulation is important in research undertakings. The cross examination of results adds credibility and validity to research. Denzin (1978) classifies four basic types of triangulation: investigator triangulation (using more than one researcher in a research undertaking, comparing findings), methodological triangulation (using more than one method to gather data), data triangulation (cross examined across time, space and persons), and theory triangulation (using more than one theory or concept in interpreting the findings).

In this study I use raw interview data from which to conceptualise and add insight to international careers and identity from a new dimension. I position this raw data in the context of the geographical case study Sophia Antipolis and my own contextual knowledge of the specificities of the area which is outlined in Chapter Three. This occurs in the context of a detailed literature review on contemporary research in the field. In so doing I attempt to triangulate the findings from a methodological dimension (interviews, observation, literature). I also use theory triangulation insofar as I consider different theoretical frameworks in the interpretation of the findings (such as Hall's protean career, Bourdieu's habitus, Archer's internal conversation, Weick's sensemaking, Schein's career anchors; see Chapters Five and Six). In addition when interviewing respondents I followed Stake's (Stake, 1994: 241, opening citation) suggestion that 'To reduce the

likelihood of misinterpretation, we employ various procedures, including redundancy of data gathering....for qualitative case work, these procedures are generally called 'triangulation', whereby I continued interviewing respondents until I felt I was not gaining any new insights.

2.7 Conclusions

This chapter sets out the research philosophy and methodology followed for this study. A pragmatic pluralistic approach was embraced in order to allow different perspectives and reflexivity in the research undertaking. While this is an interpretive, hermeneutic study, and '[a]lthough I will add my own self-reflections to this project, my aim is always to keep my text anchored in the worlds of lived experience' (Denzin, 1997: xv). An ethnographically informed study with Sophia Antipolis as the geographical case, much of the richness comes from the contextual background of the study which is presented in the following chapter. The core data are the interview transcripts from over fifty interviewees, some interviewees providing contextual background information (e.g. from the HR practitioners interviewed), the majority (core sample of 37) sharing their stories relating to their experience as bounded transnationals. The wider context of France, of Sophia Antipolis within the particular historical setting coupled with the respondents' narratives and explanations for occurrences and paths in their individual lives reflects and embodies the inseparability and intrinsically linked structure and agency of life; with choices being *both* agentially and structurally influenced over specific temporal and historical milestones. This study does not attempt to separate agential sensemaking or

internal conversations from the structures within which this occurs, but rather seeks to combine the complexity of influences which agents then attempt to deal with at specific time points throughout their careers in an international context.

Chapter Three

Contextualisation of the Study

3.1 Introduction

Given the approach adopted in this research undertaking, this chapter provides further details on the geographical case study of Sophia Antipolis and on the author's self reflections concerning the study. In substituting 'organisation' with the 'bounded transnational community in Sophia Antipolis', this study concurs with Scott (1995: 151)'s declaration that 'no organization can properly be understood apart from its wider social and cultural context'. The descriptive data produced from qualitative research procedures (people's spoken, written words; observable behaviour) gets meaning from the contextual setting and the individuals within those settings (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975: 4). In this regard, the research subject is not viewed as an independent variable or hypothesis, but seen holistically (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975: 4).

The chapter positions the geographical case study within the context of France as the country context with its particular social system, culture, and perceptions of equality and balance. Due to space restrictions, this chapter focuses on the primary French elements that impact on the respondents' everyday lives in France, as also experienced by the researcher herself. The latter section of the chapter details my personal reflections of the research journey. The aim is to share in as much as is possible, the contextual background to the study from my lived experiences there. The unobtrusive measures (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 2000) of observation and researcher reflexivity serve to triangulate the information collected from the depth interviews, and are intended to allow

the reader to clearly picture and identify with the community in question, as studied at a particular period of time.

It is acknowledged that this study is furthermore contextualised within the wider scheme of globalisation, the trend in downsizing and reorganisation resulting in job insecurity, changing psychological work contracts, and weakening family ties. The relevance of these elements is apparent in the analysis chapters of the dissertation.

3.2 France: Culture, Lifestyle Prioritisation & Work

While this study was conducted in the national country context of metropolitan France, specifically it took place in the south-east of France, a region which the respondents in the research undertaking acknowledge as being ‘different’ and ‘not France’ (see quotes in Section 2.4.3), that is, different in its lifestyle and nationality make-up to the rest of France. It emphasises the location context which in itself is particular with its large international population, notable presence of many international organisations, while being situated on the French Riviera with its Mediterranean climate and strong tourism industry (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Map of France



Map Source: <http://www.map-of-france.co.uk/physical-map-of-france.htm>, 8 April 2008

The following paragraphs consider the French culture and social policies.

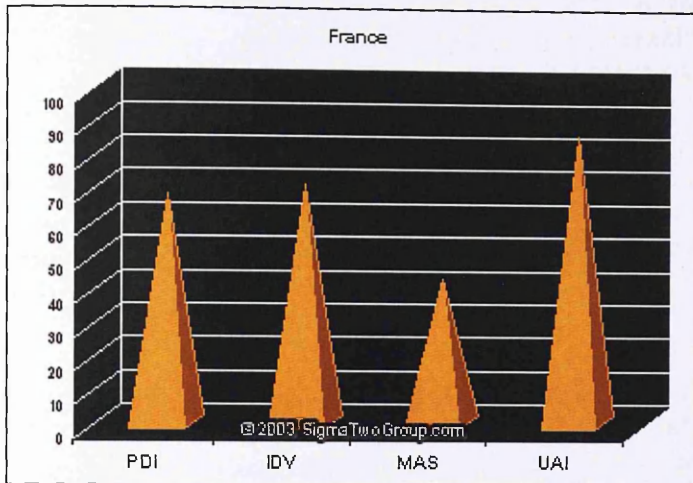
French culture is particular. As Hopkins (1997: 43, emphasis added) describes:

The ethnic population of France is a blend of Celtic, Teutonic, and Latin and includes a mixture of Nordic, Alpine, Mediterranean, a large minority of North African Arabs, and a small group of blacks from former French colonies. Because of the diverse population, *most French people consider themselves members of a family first, then citizens of France, and then members of organizations.*

This allegiance to family was very visible to the researcher during her time in the area, where I perceived the native French locals to prioritise family time. One observational fieldnote made during the time records my disapproval to learn that certain team members in an organisation I was familiar with would book their holidays well in advance, co-inciding with the school holidays, which frequently meant that skeleton staff was available during those times. The French staff did not change their family vacation plans in order to accommodate any potentially important work-specific activity that may be taking place at the same time. While this observation cannot be generalised to all French staff, it does represent Hopkins (1997) previous description.

Hofstede's (1980, 1985, 1991, 1993, 2005) cultural dimensions are also useful in describing France's cultural tendencies. On Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2005), France ranks above the European average (and indeed the world average) on Power Distance, Individualism and Uncertainty Avoidance, and below the average on Masculinity (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 France & Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions



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Hofstede's studies deduced that the majority of countries that are mainly Catholic and have Uncertainty Avoidance as their highest ranking dimension have a low tolerance for ambiguity. France, being such a country, fits into this bracket. As described on the Hofstede official website (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_france.shtml, May 2005): 'This creates a highly rule-oriented society that institutes laws, rules, regulations, and controls in order to reduce the amount of uncertainty within the population.' This is visible in the amount of paperwork, controls and charges required in France for an employer to employ or dismiss someone. This is seen by the employees in the country as being very beneficial since it protects them against immediate dismissal without notice or warning.

With a higher than average rating on the Power Distance Index, inequalities of power and wealth between people in French society are very obvious.

Power Distance Index (PDI) focuses on the degree of equality, or inequality, between people in the country's society. A High Power Distance ranking indicates that inequalities of power and wealth have been allowed to grow within the society. These societies are more likely to follow a caste system that does not allow significant upward mobility of its citizens (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_france.shtml, 23 May 2005).

Hopkins (1997: 43) echoes Hofstede regarding power distance in France.

As part of greater French society, though, they share in a French culture that is well known for its flair for the arts, the graceful, and the joy of living [joie de vie]. Another shared value common to France's diverse culture is the emphasis on tradition and *comme il faut*, or the way things are done. Also prominent in French culture is the concept of success which is generally judged by a person's educational level, family background, and financial status rather than by direct accomplishment

This was corroborated in my study by the sample finding that their not having a *grande école* education could potentially deter their vertical progression in the organisation, as the following exemplary quote from the core interview sample shows.

Angie (American, 41): *'It's very French and ... they're very set on their French school diplomas.... [T]here's the grande école and there's everything else'*.

France has a higher than average score on the Individualism index, indicating that individuality (individual achievements and rights) are promoted in French society (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_france.shtml, 23 May 2005). This is seen in the education system where individual achievement and competition is instilled from a young age.

France scores lower than the European and world average on the Masculinity index (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_france.shtml, 23 May 2005). Hopkins (1997) describes organisations with feminine cultures (such as France) as having a mode of working which places ‘work less central in people’s lives’ and ‘employees prefer shorter working hours to more salary’. This is visible in the French working culture. This raises potential tension among members of the workforce on initially joining the French labour market, where it may be felt that their French colleagues are less motivated in their work, placing private time above project completion. Comments from this study, such as Henry’s which follows, highlight this:

‘I remember when I first came here [to organisation in France] I was shocked by the attitude. In Germany I had worked for the same organisation and had put in long hours – 8 to 8 or so, like everyone else. In France they were all going off mountain biking for an hour over lunch and then would come back and take a further hour lunch break. And then still leave at 5pm. If they were asked to go somewhere, to a customer or to present at an event, it was like, “can’t do it, [I] am on holidays then” (Henry, 31, Irish; notes from secondary interview sample pool).

This corroborates my own observational fieldnotes as shared earlier in this section. However, Henry (as did I) acknowledges that after over three years in the area, having acclimatised to the different work culture, his opinion had changed:

‘Maybe they have the right attitude after all. Life’s too short. They work to live, not live to work. Family, health, ... comes first. They have their priorities right after all’.

While this work-life balance ethos would seem to favour individual employees, the study took place at an economical turning-point in France, when a number of international organisations in Sophia Antipolis introduced redundancy initiatives. The competitiveness

demanding by organisations operating in the global sphere does not sit comfortably in a culture which favours the 'life' balance over work priorities.

Florian (French national, HR manager for multinational organisation, age 30; member of secondary interviewee pool in this study) attempts to explain the deep-rooted social culture inherent in the country in more depth by describing the work ethic in France as 'a bit different'. He continues:

'[It's a] special case based on history and culture, respecting [the] rights of everyone. ... Perhaps also the fact that history has been that much valued in the French culture makes it key to people that work has never been in the past a central dimension of life. [laugh] The overall concept of work is dated from the 18th century and not more. We were not talking about it like that. The idea that work should be the only possible way to analyse life is not [accepted]'.

The notion of work centrality is important here, with the French in general working to live as opposed to living to work. Thus the concept of the protean career (see Chapter Five), where external and internal identities, where work life and private life combine and shape careers is well placed for examination in France, a country where work/life balance is advocated and even seen as a fundamental right.

Also in regard to the masculinity dimension, where France scores low, it was noted by the researcher that child care provision in France is commendable. It is praised by the sample in this research and is credited for the women with children in my sample having been able to follow a career. However, this study conversely also finds that women (at least the international women sampled) do feel disadvantaged in their career in France,

with it difficult to break through the glass ceiling, often due to their exclusion from the French grande école educational system. This is elaborated on further in Chapter 8.

Legal and social policies work in tandem with cultural preferences in France in endowing the working inhabitants at the 'cadre' level (such as the bounded transnational sample in this study) with benefits-in-kind. During the period this study was being undertaken, the legal working hours in France were reduced to thirty-five hours a week for all companies (EURES, 2005, text last edited on 01/09/2003). Any overtime in excess of these thirty-five hours must be compensated by time off in lieu (so called RTT days). In addition employees are entitled to a minimum twenty-five days annual leave. With the RTT days on top of annual vacation, total annual leave of over fifty days is not uncommon.

Redundancy in France 'must be based on a real and serious cause' (EURES, 2005). The onus is on the organisation to prove that redundancy is the final resort. The employer needs to ensure the employee well-being during this period by providing training and support for employees in seeking alternative employment either internally or externally. After being made redundant, depending on the salary earned and contributions made before unemployment, ex-employees are entitled to 57.4% of their previous gross salary per month for a duration which is weighted by their length of service in employment. This percentage varies depending on salary category and social contributions (see <http://info.assedic.fr/unijuridis/travail/pdf/Ntc140.pdf>, July 2008). This results in the ex-employee receiving very generous unemployment contributions when compared with previous net income.

There are a number of social charges which are paid by both workers and employers in France. From my personal experience the social charges I paid while in France amounted to between 19 and 20% of gross pay which is deducted at source. These charges include health care contributions, public pension contributions, and unemployment allowance contributions. The remaining 80% (approximately) is paid directly into the employee's account and the employee (or household) needs to file individual (household) annual income tax returns (in arrears). The income tax paid is individualised with allowances for different elements. Families are favoured with the tax free allowances increasing depending on the family size.

It is hoped that the policies outlined briefly in the preceding paragraphs present a picture of the benefits to workers in residing in France from a social and economical perspective. In addition, public health care is available to everyone equally in France. Many organisations offer supplemental complementary health insurance to offset any additional health costs. France was classified the 'best health system in the world' by the World Health Organization (WHO) in June 2000.

Having a family is respected through the social policies in effect in France. While maternity leave is 16-26 weeks (longer leave if the woman already has two or more children), it is on full pay for the duration (100%). In addition, unpaid parental leave is allowed for up to three years after the birth of a child where the position or a comparable position must be retained for the employee on the parental leave.

Free optional schooling is provided for children from the ages of three and six. Compulsory schooling is between the ages of six and sixteen. Schools provide after-school care and holiday programmes at subsidised rates to facilitate parents working and returning to work after having children. As mentioned previously, these are real advantages to the working women in France, as expressed by the females in the sample.

For the Member Countries of the European Union (EU), the free movement of workers is a fundamental right which permits nationals of one EU country to work in another EU country on the same conditions as that member state's own citizens (EURES, 2005, text last edited on: 08/2004). In this study thirty-two members of the core sample were EU citizens, free to move and work anywhere within the EU. The other five respondents had extended residency permits through their marriages and/or organisations. However, residents in France (non-French citizens) are unable to vote in national elections, despite how long they may have been living in the country. They are, however, entitled to vote in local and European elections. This has been highlighted by members in my research sample as a disadvantage to living permanently in the area, while not wishing to become French citizens and give up their own home country nationality in order to be able to vote in the French national elections. This is a significant factor and does differentiate the sample of respondents from local nationals.

While members of the EU are generally welcomed in France, immigrants from other (regarded as economically poorer) countries are often not greeted in the same regard. Due to France's generous social policies, some French feel certain immigrants come to extort

the system without paying taxes or returning any wealth to the state. The French, in general, differentiate such immigrants from educated workers from Western economies who work in France, pay taxes, and integrate into the system (by speaking the language (or attempting to), sending their children to school, integrating in the area). This racial distinction was evident during the initial rounds of the 2002 presidential elections when Jean-Marie Le Pen from the Far Right political wing gained much support. The following quote describes this:

Mary (34, Scottish, married): ‘It was interesting two years ago when Le Pen was getting all the votes... We sort of said: “that’s it, if he gets in, we’re out of here”, you know (laugh). And people were saying to us: “oh but it’s not you, I mean you’re white, Europeans, you know and he’s against North Africans” sort of thing... and that immediately made me feel embarrassed. I felt like I was going into the office thinking; “How many people vote for Le Pen, and want rid of foreigners [want rid of me]?”’

This un-spoken, covert but present feeling of being ‘foreign’ is important, as it is part of the identity construction process and framing which bounded transnationals experience throughout their residency in the area. This is considered further in the Chapter Seven.

3.3 Sophia Antipolis: The Technology Park

Sassen (2001) has noted that international business centres persist in relevance in spite of communication changes where on-site work would seem to be less necessary. France’s technopole of Sophia Antipolis is no different – with international organisations historically basing in the area to avail of and benefit from the locally based international ‘brain talent’.

This study took place within the environs of the Sophia Antipolis Science & Technology Park which is located on the French Riviera. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 position the park within this area (the grey area highlighted on the map, Figure 3.3, represents Sophia Antipolis). ‘Sophia currently ranks among one of the leading science parks in Europe with ... more than 65 nationalities and it spans a space equivalent to a quarter of the surface area of Paris’ (Lecompte Gittins, 2003).

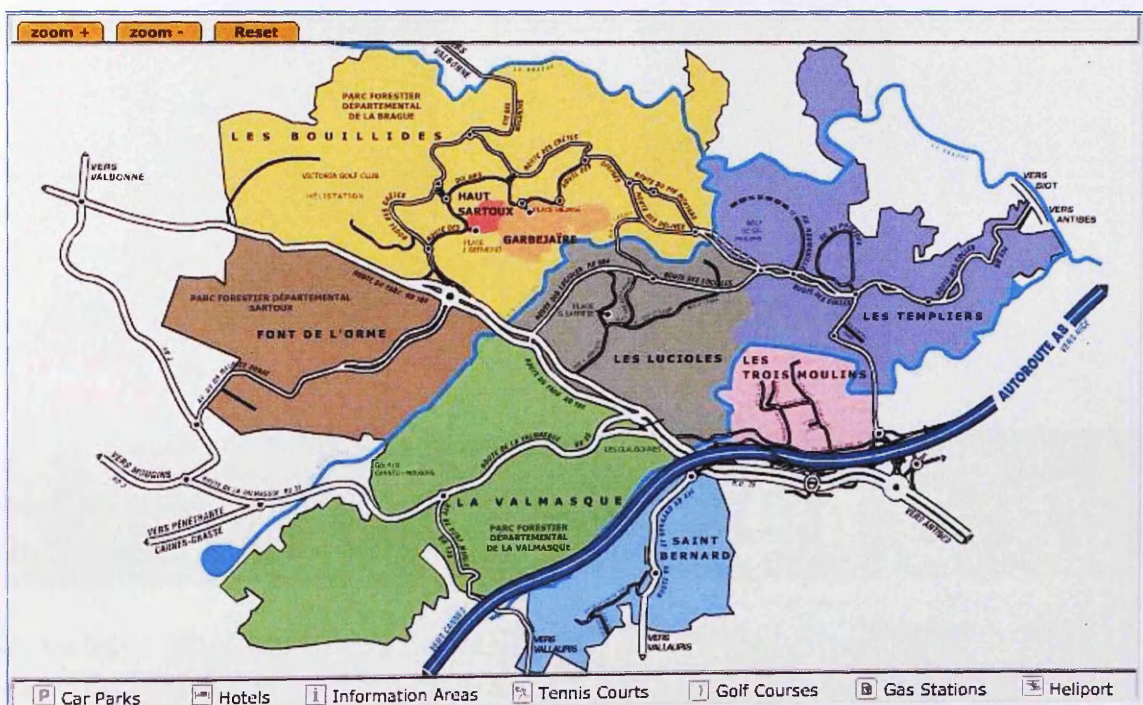
Figure 3.3 Map locating Sophia Antipolis on the Côte d’Azur/French Riviera



Map Source: <http://riviera.angloinfo.com/maps/45/Sophia+Antipolis+Map.html>, accessed 8 April 2008

The Sophia Antipolis site (see Figure 3.4) consists of a total of 2,300 hectares, with just 650 hectares dedicated to national and international companies, research organisations and centres for higher education. The remaining two-thirds of the park are allocated for green land/forestry (largely open to the public), residential properties and recreational areas (1976 Charter from the Ministry of the Environment).

Figure 3.4 Map of Sophia Antipolis



Map Source: http://www.sophia-antipolis.net/uk/pge/contenu/pge_acceder/pge_plan_general.html, accessed 8 April 2008

The working environment is unique, with quality of life for employees and society promoted. There are strict rules regarding construction for urban development where: ‘No building can exceed the height of the highest point of the hills around Sophia. The

buildings are elegant using solar panels on the roof and balconies often covered with bushes... Olive and pine trees are reflected in the glass facades of the buildings. Company cafeterias often look out onto water...’ (<http://www.sophia-antipolis.net/uk/> Development of Sophia; accessed on 18 May 2005). See Pictures 3.1.

Pictures 3.1 Organisational Settings in Sophia Antipolis



Sources: <http://www.sophia-antipolis.org/> accessed 2 October 2005; <http://www.ceram.fr> accessed 3 October 2005; <http://www.sophia-antipolis.org/entreprises2/agence-communication.htm> accessed 3 October 2005

Maintenance of the natural environment was prioritised in the development of the Park, in order to promote a creative setting, emphasising quality of life (Strategic Human Resources – Compensation News, June/July 2003). Sophia is a 20 minute drive from the beach (a coastline with 40 kilometres of beaches), about an hour’s drive from the Alpine

ski resorts, and less than 22 kilometres from the Nice-Côte d'Azur International airport. In addition, the average 300 days of sunshine a year adds to its quality of life appeal. This is echoed by the sample in my study, for instance, Kate (38, British, married, 2 children) (see also Section 8.5):

'The fact that you have this sort of weather and you can spend so much more time outdoors. I mean it kind of doubles your life, your living capacity, your living space, because you're outside so much of the time.'

Twelve percent of residents on the Riviera are foreigners, with over 60 different nationalities present in the area, rendering it truly multicultural (<http://www.ccinice-cote-azur.com/chiffresclesen.asp?generic2=en&rub=1>, accessed on May 19 2005). More than half the foreign residents on the Riviera come from other countries in the European Union. 'In 1999, the active foreign population represented 38,000 people, totalling over 60 different nationalities, and mainly working on the Sophia Antipolis Science Park' (<http://www.ccinice-cote-azur.com/chiffresclesen.asp?generic2=en&rub=1>, accessed on May 19 2005). The cosmopolitan environment encourages international highly qualified applicants¹⁰ which the businesses appreciate. International organisations 'account for about one-third of Sophia's growth and ...almost 24 percent of its employment' (Strategic Human Resources – Compensation News (June-July 2003), accessed 20 May 2005).

¹⁰ 'The Sophia employment pool represents a high level of educational attainment, with more than 40% in qualified executive positions.' (Strategic Human Resources – Compensation News (June-July 2003), http://www.humanresourcesinfo.com/global_forum.html, accessed 20 May 2005). 'Executives, engineers and researchers occupy a large proportion of the jobs, indicating how Riviera-based businesses can attract the best professionals in the world. The level of qualification of the entire working population is high (more than 40% have graduated from high school or hold a higher-education diploma or degree).' (May 19 2005, French Chamber of Commerce, <http://www.ccinice-cote-azur.com/chiffresclesen.asp?generic2=en&rub=1>).

There are 'three local radio stations and five periodicals in foreign languages' to cater for the multinational population (<http://www.ccinice-cote-azur.com/chiffresclesen.asp?generic2=en&rub=1>, accessed on May 19 2005). There are numerous international associations, from sports activities (e.g. Cricket club) to social groups (e.g. International Women's Association) to professional groups (e.g.s British Chamber of Commerce, Professional Women's Association) to more local support groups (e.g.s Adapt in France, AVF) which cater to a non-French speaking community. Sophia Antipolis also provides international schools from primary education to university to cater for its international inhabitants (Strategic Human Resources – Compensation News (June-July 2003), accessed 20 May 2005).

Sophia Antipolis suffered the dot-com and telecommunications sector crash particularly in the latter years of the 1990s and early 2000s (at the time of the study). Downsizing and reorganisation is not uncommon, with the composition of employment opportunities in Sophia Antipolis changing considerably. There is a move from large multinational employers towards smaller consultancy and specialist firms, many of which are not so reliant on international skills. The following quotes give an overview of some of the sample's obstacles in securing employment in Sophia Antipolis, as well as some comments on how the park is evolving today (see also Section 8.6).

Sarah (British, 46, divorced, one child, over 20 years in the area): '*Basically when I came out, it was as if the only thing an English person could do was teach English*'.

Lisa (German, 33, married, two children, 4 years in the area): '*They had all told me: "yeah it's all IT industry down here, no problem to find a job". And it was never difficult to find a job in Germany. So when I started looking*

around here it wasn't as easy - Yes there's the IT industry but there's no Marketing or almost no marketing, almost no business development. And if there are, they are normally filled ... already or you come in by relations [who you know] in France, so it just didn't work here. The few places that were there, basically they were totally minimum pay... I would have gotten half of what I got in Germany before and I wasn't ready to do that'

This suggests the changing nature of Sophia Antipolis as a magnet for skilled international executives, an area which is probed more in the analysis chapters of this dissertation.

This subsection has dealt specifically with the geographical case study approach which is the strategy of inquiry followed in this study. In order to provide context to the study, I have outlined the work and cultural lifestyle for international individuals living and working in/around the Sophia Antipolis Technology Park within the French social policies system. While the limitations of the case study approach have been shared in the previous chapter (lack of generalisation to other communities/organisations), the depth of information that a detailed picture of one area or organisation can provide has encouraged researchers to adopt case studies as the means of inquiry.

3.4 Researcher's Reflections

Chapter Two (particularly sections 2.3.1 and 2.4.2) includes the researcher's perspective, background and role in the research. It should be noted here that my observations and experiences as a bounded transnational are relevant in the hermeneutic analysis and direction that the study has taken. This section provides some present day reflections on

my period in France, and my decision to return to Ireland. The morphing¹¹ thought process from the beginning up to the present date is captured.

My interest in the subject matter initiated from my own experiences. Not being able to describe myself in France adequately using existing terminology (as experienced by the sample, see Section 7.2), and a dearth of academic focus on the lived experiences of foreigners (see Chapter Four), motivated an exploration of the topic. The choice I made in returning to Ireland is the result of several jigsaw pieces that inform decision making, as also evidenced by the sample (Section 8.5 in particular). In my case, after almost five years in France (and three and a half years in Munich, Germany), a new mother, with limited professional opportunities in France, removed from family and cultural familiarity; I positively wanted to return to Ireland. Circumstances transpired that enabled my husband to be relocated with his company to Ireland. However, on reflection, after four years in Ireland, hesitancy remains regarding the positioning of the decision to return to Ireland, whether it was positive or naive. While I am in a familiar cultural setting, due to employment opportunities I do not live in close proximity to close family members. I live the commuting nightmare of an eighty minute (minimum) commute each way to work. I pay over a third of my salary in childcare expenses. I experience the materialist culture where possessions would seem to define a person's identity and success.

¹¹ I chose to use the word 'morphing' here as it is used in regard to the protean career concept, as I find similarities between my own changing thought process / direction and that of my research candidates with regards to their career paths. Habitus, sensemaking, internal conversations and morphing are all relevant constructs here, as they are integral to the thesis of this dissertation regarding choices (what choice?) and identity/career construction.

This has led me to reflect upon choices in this dissertation; at how the choices we make impart on our lives although we do not realize at the time the extent that this may be so. The choices we make occur in a time and historically specific moment, based on the perceived facts and options we have available to us at that point in time. It is wider than an agent simply wanting to do something; it includes circumstances, significant others and opportunities.

On self reflection, the path chosen has been illuminating. The inner conflict felt in France, in being a foreigner and separated or different from French nationals (while being integrated into the local community) is to an extent reversed in Ireland. In the home country, while feeling very integrated and at home in the culture, a feeling of separation, of wanting more or a better life exists (where commuting is eliminated and morality prioritised over material and conspicuous wealth). While the paradox of separatism and integration persists in its co-existence, a different balance between the host and home country is evident.

As a previous bounded transnational, now based back in Ireland and reintegrated into life here, I can look at the interview data from different lenses – as a previous member of the community in question; now, with more objective eyes, having removed myself from the scene; and as an academic researcher. It is hoped that the reflexivity, insider and outsider perspectives adds depth to the analysis and interpretation of the narratives explored in this study.

3.5 Conclusions

This chapter contextualises the study in detail, giving a background to the social system in France where workers are highly protected, the Sophia Antipolis environs, and the life of a foreign resident in the area. This chapter was deemed necessary in order to provide more context to the reader, and to share the researcher's reflexivity in this hermeneutic study. It represents 'the importance of synchrony between a researcher's ontological, epistemological and methodological choices' (Cornelissen, Oswick, Christensen, & Phillips, 2008: 10).

Being in-situ and a member of the community enabled the collection of contextual background information to add depth to the narratives on their interpretation. On a more practical level, it enabled me to empathise with the sample, to gain their trust which is evident in some of the stories relayed to me by the respondents who I did not know on a personal level.

The following chapters consider literature in IHRM and career theory before moving on to consider the theoretical concepts and frameworks which inform and are informed by the findings.

Chapter Four

International Human Resource Management

/ Global Staffing

There are good reasons for suggesting that the modern age has ended. Many things indicate that we are going through a transitional period, when it seems that something is on the way out and something else is painfully being born. ... This state of affairs has its social and political consequences. The planetary civilization to which we all belong confronts us with global challenges. We stand helpless before them because our civilization has essentially globalized only the surface of our lives. [World leaders] ... are rightly worried by the problem of finding the key to ensure the survival of a civilization that is global and multicultural. ... The central ... task of the final years of this century, then, is the creation of a new model of co-existence among the various cultures, peoples, races, and religious spheres within a single interconnected civilization. ... Yes, it is clearly necessary to invent organizational structures appropriate to the multicultural age

Vaclav Havel, former president of the Czech Republic
Havel, Vaclav. 'The New Measure of Man', from speech delivered in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, July 4, 1994. See New York Times, 8, July 1994, A27 for full text
Quoted in Adler, N and Gundersen, A. (2008) *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*, Mason, OH: Thomson/South Western: 381

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have discussed the study's research approach and sample in depth. These are presented at the beginning of the dissertation to emphasize the particular inductive nature of the study. It was from that research approach that themes from the interviews were elicited and grouped according to patterns within an overall literature framework of IHRM/international assignees (the literature which is shared in this chapter) and career theory (see Chapter Five). This chapter focuses on literature from IHRM and global staffing in order to position the bounded transnational sample in that literature.

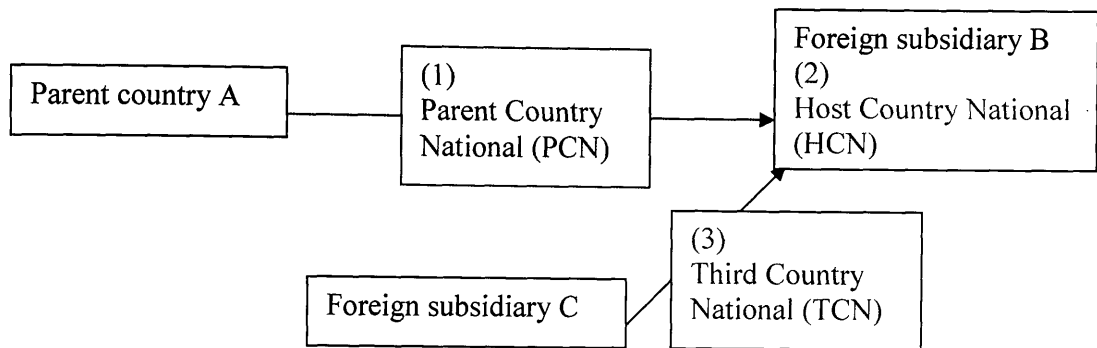
Since international assignees come under the IHRM topic of global staffing, the chapter begins with a brief introduction in today's global context, reviewing the traditional classification of global staffing options that multinational organisations can employ when staffing their international offices (Heenan & Perlmutter, 1979; Perlmutter, 1969). Next the organisation assigned expatriate is portrayed, where issues regarding expatriate assignment failure including adjustment (the acculturation framework of Berry and Sam, 1997) and personal stakeholder influence (trailing spouse, children, dual careers) are considered. The organisation assigned expatriate has been the focal point of IHRM literature (Brewster & Harris, 1999; Briscoe & Schuler, 2004; Scullion, Collings, & Gunnigle, 2007). Then an overview of contemporary alternatives in global staffing in existing IHRM literature is presented, delineating the need for further clarification and elaboration on international assignee types. Finally, the bounded transnational is

positioned among other international assignees, emphasising the need for a study such as this to open up IHRM to encompass other categories of international assignees. This development is necessary in order to provide a more complete picture of the international staffing options available for organisations and individuals in an era of globalisation, multiculturalism, change and geographical flexibility. This reflects the necessity and call ‘to invent organizational structures appropriate to the multicultural age’ (Havel, 1994) as underlined in the opening citation.

4.2 International Human Resource Management: Global Staffing Strategies

Three generic staffing alternatives which are open to organisations operating on an international scale are frequently covered in IHRM literature (for example Budhwar, 2003; Cavusgil, Knight, & Riesenberger, 2008; Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008; Deresky, 2008; Dowling, Festing, & Engle, 2008; Dowling & Welch, 2004; McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006; Mendenhall, Punnett, & Ricks, 1995; Morgan, 1986; Peng, 2009; Scullion & Collings, 2006). Organisations can staff their foreign subsidiary/subsidiaries with parent country nationals (PCNs), host country nationals (HCNs) and/or third country nationals (TCNs) (Scullion et al, 2007: 2). Figure 4.1 provides a diagrammatic depiction of the three staffing alternatives.

Figure 4.1 International Staffing Alternatives – PCNs, HCNs, TCNs



Staffing alternatives for foreign subsidiary B:

- (1) A->B PCN. An employee from an organisation in parent country A working in foreign subsidiary B is called a parent country national.
- (2) B->B HCN. An employee from foreign subsidiary B working in foreign subsidiary B is called a host country national.
- (3) C->B TCN. An employee from foreign subsidiary C working in foreign subsidiary B is called a third country national.

Parent country nationals are those employees selected from the parent country organisation (corporate headquarters); host country nationals are selected locally in the country where the organisation has a subsidiary/subsidiaries; while third country nationals are employees from neither the parent nor home country, but are selected from one of the organisation’s other foreign subsidiaries. Third country nationals have been defined as ‘employees who enjoy citizenship in a country other than that of the foreign subsidiary where they work or the country where the parent company is based’ (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006: 388).

This definition raises similarities between TCNs and 'bounded transnationals'. To distinguish between both it is necessary to point out that in IHRM literature, the starting point is the multinational organisation and the employees that it has internationally. In this study, the alternative perspective of international human agents living and/or working in a host country on a permanent basis is employed. Where bounded transnationals end up working (for a multinational or domestic organisation; as an international commuter or local hire) is secondary to the focus of this study, which concerns their decision to remain resident in the host country. Additionally bounded transnationals could end up in a position in an organisation that is a subsidiary of the parent organisation which is from the same country as that bounded transnational (for instance Milly). However, that does not necessarily make the bounded transnational a parent country national (PCN) according to IHRM literature. There is inconsistency in the literature with some sources describing a person as a PCN where the individual is initially an employee of the parent company and then expatriated to a subsidiary on a temporary assignment (Deresky, 2008), while others (Dowling et al, 2008; McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006) consider a PCN as simply someone who is a citizen of the country where the organisation is headquartered, and others considering PCNs as both citizens of the parent country *and* employees of the parent country organisation (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004). The organisational staffing concerns regarding the expatriation of PCNs and TCNs are not an organisational issue in the case of bounded transnationals.

A further limitation of this classification in today's era of multiculturalism and globalisation is that the originating culture or national affiliation of the potential

international employee is not discussed in the literature. I consider this omission to be an escalating limitation when exploring international staffing options, given the rise in globalisation and multiculturalism where greater opportunity exists for people to work beyond their home country (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall & Stroh, 1999; Harvey, Speier, & Novicevic, 1999). This study therefore *contributes to research in international staffing* by looking in depth at a specific category of international assignees and the sub-categories within which they can be placed.

Perlmutter's (1969) and Heenan and Perlmutter's (1979) seminal classification of ethnocentric, polycentric, geocentric and regiocentric approaches to international staffing is a further typology widely used in IHRM literature to delineate the organisation's rationale behind the decision for choosing a particular approach (for example, Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1992; Cavusgil et al, 2008; Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008; Deresky, 2008; Dowling et al, 2008; Dowling & Welch, 2004; Luthans & Doh, 2009; McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006; Peng, 2009; Rugman & Collinson, 2006; Schneider & Barsoux, 2003; Scullion & Collings, 2006). An ethnocentric staffing approach is where the parent company retains control and decision-making functions, preferring to staff the foreign subsidiary with PCNs: a colonial perspective persists with regards to staffing the subsidiary (Young, 2001). Ethnocentric staffing is useful where the host country may not have the trained employees available, where 'good communication, coordination and control links with corporate headquarters' (Dowling et al, 2008: 80) needs to be maintained, and where there is a desire to spread the corporate values and corporate culture internationally. The disadvantages of this approach include the perhaps

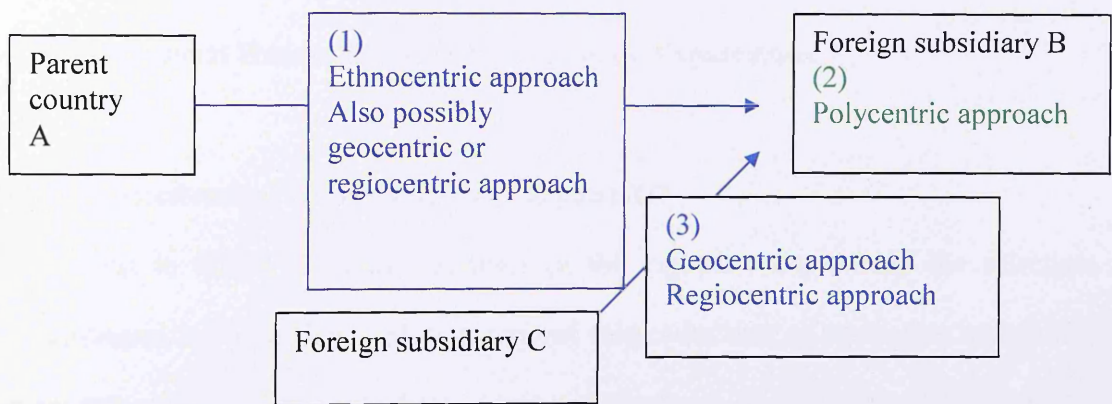
unjustified perception that the organisation would suffer a reduction in competency if it were to hire locally, that the host country nationals do not have access to promotional opportunities due to the top positions being filled by PCNs (thus the organisation may lose valuable HCN talent that moves to another organisation in order to further their professional career), and the problems associated with expatriate managers (adjustment, cost, failure).

The polycentric approach is when the organisation favours host country nationals (HCNs) when staffing their foreign offices. This approach may be necessary where host governments insist that HCNs have the top management positions, or to facilitate the parent company taking 'a lower profile in sensitive political situations' (Dowling et al, 2008: 82). Adjustment and language barriers are avoided in this approach, although communication between the subsidiary and the parent company may suffer. The financial cost of using a PCN or TCN is eliminated, and there is transparency that HCNs can progress to higher management levels in the host country organisation.

Next is the geocentric approach which is a global approach to staffing operations, selecting the best person for the position based on ability. Disadvantages include the potential cost of staffing foreign offices using this approach as well as further limitations such as visa restrictions. On the plus side it facilitates the development of truly global managers (Suutari, 2003) and a globally integrated organisation.

Heenan and Perlmutter (1979) added the fourth classification of the regiocentric approach in 1979. This approach is similar to the geocentric approach, only that staffing is limited to particular regions, for instance selecting the best candidate for a particular role in Ireland from possible candidates within Europe. Figure 4.2 summarises the connection between international staffing alternatives and approaches included so far in this chapter.

Figure 4.2 International Staffing Alternatives – PCNs, HCNs, TCNs and Ethnocentric, Polycentric, Geocentric and Regiocentric Approaches



Staffing alternatives for foreign subsidiary B:

(1) A->B PCN. An employee from an organisation in parent country A working in foreign subsidiary B is called a parent country national.

(2) B->B HCN. An employee from foreign subsidiary B working in foreign subsidiary B is called a host country national.

(3) C->B TCN. An employee from foreign subsidiary C working in foreign subsidiary B is called a third country national.

While both of the above mentioned broad based typologies are useful for classification purposes in international staffing, they are limiting given the overlap and usage of different approaches and personnel categories by organisations operating across

international borders in reality. This study intends to open up such traditional typologies to include contemporary staffing concerns and personnel. With regard to the sample of bounded transnationals researched in this study, they do not fit neatly into the classification of parent, host or third country nationals. Nor does existing IHRM literature, with its focus on the organisation's perspective of taking ethno-, poly-, geo- or regiocentric staffing approaches, consider the staffing alternative of hiring a multicultural workforce that may be resident locally or resident elsewhere.

4.3 International Human Resource Management: Expatriation

4.3.1 Introduction. Who or what is an expatriate?

The focus in IHRM literature has been on the expatriate experience: the selection, acculturation and repatriation of multinational employees sent on temporary assignment from the parent country to a host country environment (for example Adler, 1986-7; Bonache, Brewster, & Suutari, 2007; Boyacigiller, 1995; Briscoe & Schuler, 2004; Britt, 2002; Dowling & Welch, 2004; Feldman & Tompson, 1993; Geisel, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Mendenhall & Oddou, 2000; Yan, Zhu, & Hall, 2002). Given the description in 4.2, in IHRM both parent country nationals and third country nationals could fall under the traditional 'expatriate' category. However, similar to the generic staffing descriptions presented in Section 4.2, the term expatriate has been used to encompass all individuals who are or have been working abroad, without clarification as to the motivations (organisational, self initiated or enforced), extent of the period abroad or affiliations of

the individual (to an organisation, industry, country). As Briscoe and Schuler (2004: 211) note:

Most of the literature in IHRM that deals with expatriates (individuals who are or have been on foreign assignments) assumes that all international “assignees” fit into this generic category. Studies have invariably referred to “international assignment experience” or “expatriate” to simply refer to someone who has been on a foreign assignment for more than one year.

This has resulted in extensive literature on expatriates, without consensus that there are many variations of international assignee which the term expatriate does not adequately reflect (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004). More recent studies and literature have sought to overcome this ambiguity by describing different types of international assignees, which are described in Section 4.5.

However, a clear typology of international assignee types is required where consistency in terminology and description is applied across present and future research in order to avoid overlap and confusion, and to which emerging international assignee types can be added. **This study addresses this requirement**, with the closing sections of this chapter presenting a typology of international assignee as identified by the researcher while conducting the literature review for this study.

The diversity in the literature with regards to the meaning of the term expatriate is perhaps testimony to the changing nature of international employment. Cohen (1977: 5) describes an expatriate as a ‘voluntary temporary migrant, mostly from the affluent countries, who resides abroad for one of the following reasons – business, mission,

teaching, research and culture or leisure'. This definition is pertinent in its context during periods of colonisation, with expatriates espousing positive connotations of wealth and importance. Contemporary descriptions range from 'an employee who is working and temporarily residing in a foreign country' (Dowling et al, 2008: 4), to 'employees assigned to a country other than their own' (Deresky, 2008: 342), to a 'parent-country national who works overseas for an extended period of time' (McFarlin and Sweeney, 2006: 386), to broader definitions such as 'employees who come from a country that is different from the country in which they are working' (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008: 515), 'professional or managerial staff employed outside their home country either on secondment from a parent organisation or directly by the host organisation' (Harry, 2003: 284), or 'an individual moving [/living] in a different country' (Brewster, 2002: 84). While some definitions restrict the term expatriates to organisation-tied international assignees, others would appear broad enough to encompass the bounded transnational sample. For ease of distinction, this study considers traditional expatriates along Inkson et al's (1997: 353-352) description:

In Expatriate Assignment (EA), the initiative for the international experience comes primarily from a company which operates internationally. A position may become available in a subsidiary outside the country in which the company is based. The job requires both knowledge of the company's strategy, procedures, etc., and the ability to work and live successfully in a foreign environment. A suitable individual is assigned on a temporary basis, and subsequently returns to another position in the same company in the original country. Hopefully, the experience will result in career development for the individual, competent completion of the job assignment, and organizational learning from the transfer of new skills and knowledge from the expatriate after return.

which concurs with Brewster's (1991: 19) original description of an expatriate as 'an employee of an organisation who is set on a temporary work assignment in a different country from their home country'.

The differing connotation and associations that the term expatriate receives in IHRM literature is a fundamental obstacle in conducting research in the area, as the term means different things to different people. This criticism is confirmed in the findings, and Section 4.4 (see Table 4.1) puts forth a guide to international assignee types which could aid future researchers in clarifying the specific international assignee category being researched. The following paragraphs of this section discuss the expatriate experience in more depth, where the nomenclature 'expatriate' is used in terms of its more limited connotations as described by Inkson et al (1997) above.

4.3.2 Research on expatriation

Research on expatriation has focused on the stages of expatriation (pre-, during and post-expatriation) (Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1991; Dowling et al, 2008); the 'selection, preparation, compensation, and management of this type of expatriate' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 216); the 'premature return of an expatriate' (Dowling et al, 2008: 112), otherwise known as expatriate failure (Black & Gregersen, 1999; Christensen & Harzing, 2004; Dowling & Welch, 1988; Harzing & Christensen, 2004; Harzing, 1995; Tung, 1981, 1982, 1984); has found that the expatriate assignment is often unplanned (Harris & Brewser, 1999; Harvey, 1996a); requires consideration of dual careers (Harvey, 1995, 1996b, 1997, 1998) and trailing spouses (Black & Stephens, 1989; De Cieri,

Dowling & Taylor, 1991; Harvey, 1998; Stone, 1991); and has a short term focus that doesn't consider the career plans for repatriates on completion of their assignment (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall & Stroh, 1999; Black et al, 1991; Scullion, 1992, 2001; Solomon, 1995).

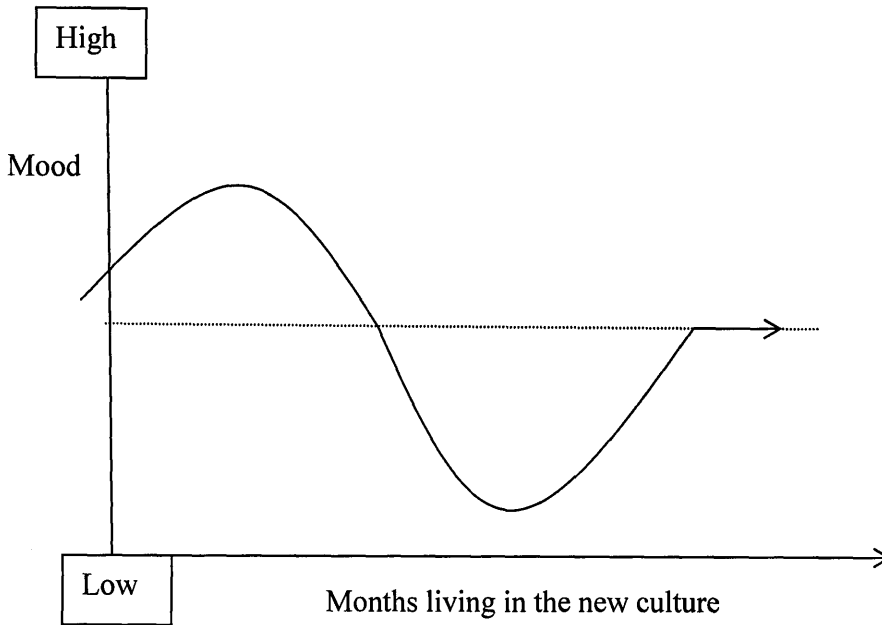
This study is interested in the 'during expatriation' phase of expatriation and the relevance for the bounded transnational sample of some of the existing research in this phase, namely acculturation/cultural adjustment (Berry, 2005; Berry & Sam, 1997; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; De Cieri et al, 1991) and personal stakeholders (trailing spouse, dual careers, children, family responsibilities). That the personal relationships or stakeholders a traditional expatriate enjoys impact upon the success of the expatriate assignment has featured in the literature since Tung's research (1982). A spouse failing to adjust to the foreign culture has a major effect on the success or failure of the expatriate on assignment, with US firms ranking at the top the 'inability of the spouse to adjust' (Tung, 1982). This issue persists today (Scullion & Collings, 2006). With the majority of expatriates continuing to be male (Adler, 2002; Taylor, Napier, & Mayrhofer, 2002), the majority of trailing spouses are female. This study does not focus on gender differentials per se, however differences between gender perceptions are discussed further in the Findings Chapters (Chapters 7 and 8), with the corresponding implications of spousal or partner preferences a determining influence on the individual human agent's decision to remain indefinitely in the host country.

Barriers detrimental to the uptake of international assignments include the potential candidate's unwillingness to disrupt his/her children's education (Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002; Scullion, 2001); concern about the respective quality of life (Scullion, 2001) and dual careers (Mayrhofer & Scullion, 2002). Dowling and Welch (2004) corroborate the growth of non-work elements including family and quality of life with regards to international mobility and work concerns/choices. The importance of personal relationships and lifestyle in the career decision making process of bounded transnationals is discussed in the Chapter 8. It is clear that while bounded transnationals have embarked upon more enduring international stays, they face similar concerns to others potentially embarking on an international assignment. While traditional expatriates contemplate their children's education, quality of life and dual careers when weighing up an international assignment move, bounded transnationals consider the same elements when determining ongoing residency in the host country. Another commonality between my sample of bounded transnationals and traditional expatriates concerns adjustment to the host country environment. This is developed in the following section.

4.3.3 Adjustment

Adler and Gundersen (2008: 322) describe 'culture shock' as 'the reaction of expatriates to entering a new, unpredictable, and therefore uncertain environment.' Figure 4.3 depicts the U-curve of cultural adjustment (Adler & Gundersen, 2008: 278; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; De Cieri, Dowling & Taylor, 1991: 380; Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Lysgaard, 1955).

Figure 4.3 U-curve of cultural adjustment



Source: Adapted from de Cieri et al, 1991: 380; Adler & Gundersen, 2008: 278.

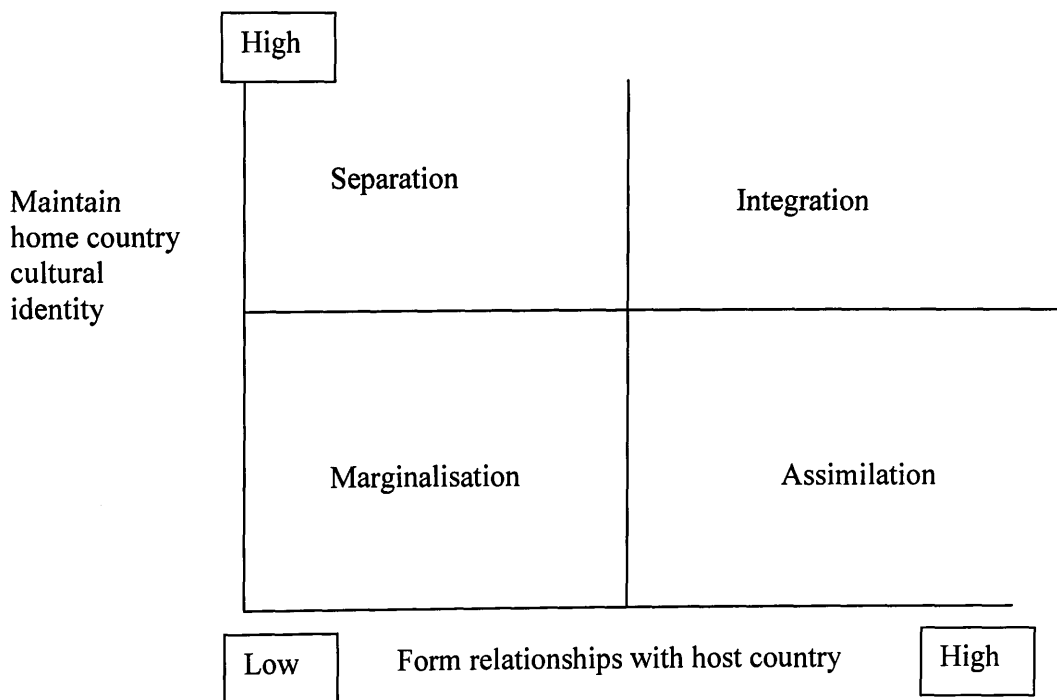
On entering the host country the initial mood or feeling may be of elation or excitement, given the newness of the situation. This is also known as the 'honeymoon phase' (Schneider and Barsoux, 1997: 160; 2003). Once this initial period of time has passed and the realisation sinks in that the differences are persistent and enduring, the psychological response of culture shock is realised leading to identity analysis and reconstruction which may lead to a return to the home country. Phase three is when the low ebb has been overcome and the expatriate comes to terms with the ways of operating in the host environment. This persists until the expatriate accepts the cultural differences, embraces the cultural differences or finds ways of coping with the cultural differences (see

following paragraphs). While some sources attempt to define approximate timelines for when expatriates experience each phase in the adjustment to the host environment (for example Adler & Gundersen, 2008: 278 depict the phase one climax at approximately 1.5 months; phase two lowest point at approximately 4.5 months, with a return to equilibrium after approximately 6 months), others insist that it differs depending on the individual and the cultures involved, with there being no guarantee that everyone will go through culture shock or at the same pace (Dowling et al, 2008). Indeed family members may each have different experiences of their adjustment in the host country. Acculturative stress (Berry, 2005) is a contemporary synonym for culture shock. It is defined as ‘a stress reaction in response to life events that are rooted in the experience of acculturation’ which calls upon ‘the study of the process of how individuals deal with acculturative problems on first encountering them and over time’ (Berry, 2005: 708).

Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1936: 149) define acculturation as follows: ‘acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups’. While Redfield et al’s (1936) definition considers *groups*; Berry and colleagues (Berry, Kim, & Boski, 1987b; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987a; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, Trimble, & Olmeda, 1986) devised a model presenting four distinct patterns of acculturation which is useful in classifying the *individual* attitudes toward cultural adjustment, acknowledging that both psychological (the internal psychological processes of individuals) and sociocultural (the linkages between the individual and the social environment including family, work,

habitus) factors impact upon the respective individual acculturation attitude (Ward 1996). Berry's acculturation model (see Figure 4.4) positions individuals within four attitudes depending on two factors: the desire and intent to maintain the home country's cultural identity ('maintenance of heritage culture and identity', Berry, 2005: 705), and the desire and intent to build up relationships with the host country ('relationships sought among groups', Berry 2005: 705).

Figure 4.4 The Acculturation Model



Source: Berry and Sam (1997), Berry (2005)

The individuals that assimilate are content to 'go native'. They do not value their home country culture but prefer to take up the new country's culture and ways completely. Those that go in the opposite direction and focus on their home country culture, avoiding

host country nationals and culture are termed separatists or are deemed to follow a separation strategy. This strategy is evident in the building up and popularity of 'expatriate communities' (Cohen, 1977), where home country food, sports, language and customs are celebrated to the exclusion of the host country's culture. The third acculturation strategy is known as marginalisation, which is when the individual rejects both the home and host country cultures. The 'ideal' strategy is integration, whereby the individual retains elements of the home country culture while also embracing the host country. It is this strategy that is deemed the most successful for traditional expatriation assignments.

This study explores the acculturation positioning of the sample of bounded transnationals presented in the dissertation as evidenced by the sample's narratives in the Findings Chapter (Chapter Seven). While the organisation assigned expatriate remains for a defined duration in a host country with the presumption of repatriation at a future date, the bounded transnationals' period of stay in the host country is non-defined and potentially permanent. The implications of the acculturation positioning on the identity construction of the bounded transnational sample is further discussed and interpreted in Chapter Seven.

4.3.4 Identity Construction and Reconstruction

The experiences and stresses from the process of acculturation differ individually, with the process itself impacting upon identity construction and the search for self identity. This process takes shape within the wider postmodern context of the claimed movement

from and loss of community and structures such as religion which had previously given meaning to people's lives (Bauman, 1994, 1995). It is argued that the present culture is that of individualism and narcissism (Lasch, 1979), where individuals want to belong and to find their self-identity (Bauman, 1994, 1995, 2001; Lasch, 1979; Riesman et al, 2001[1950]). In this study where bounded transnationals are in a new community, different to that from the home country, and displaced from extended family and long term friends, 'self-identity' construction (and re-construction) is even more apparent and emergent. The removal of familiar structures and habitus places the bounded transnationals in a position which facilitates the reassessment of such structures and previously confirmed habitus. Being stripped of the links to family and familiar routines and rituals, it is interesting to analyse the tendency for individuals in a new culture to (consciously or subconsciously) maintain or re-construct links to familiar structures in order to maintain aspects of their identity, or to avail of the new culture and environment in order to transform or evolve their identity.

To replace the loss of stabilising structures such as community, religion and family, Lasch (1979) uses the term 'psychic security' to describe the desire by individuals to be positively noticed or admired by other people. This movement is corroborated by Riesman et al (2001[1950]) who describes three phases of sociological change in American culture, from tradition directed (based on belonging to a/the community, conformity), to inner directed (based on individualism and a constant desire for more wealth), to other directed (based on peer advice and approval). The influence of 'others' in the construction of identity is emphasised. This study argues that Riesman et al's three

phases require empirical backing. In Chapter Three of this dissertation the new forms of community that bounded transnationals enjoy (such as religious church groups, clubs for popular sports from home countries, expatriate or international communities) are depicted (see Section 3.3). This suggests that the tradition directed culture persists. The extent to which the other phases (inner and others directed) exist is analysed in Chapter Seven.

4.4 International Human Resource Management: Alternative International Assignees

While Cohen commented (1977: 6) that ‘relatively little attention has ... been paid to expatriates as a sociologically distinct, analytical category’, I contend that today other categories of *international assignees* (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 212; Dowling et al, 2008: 4), a term which, I feel, better encompasses all categories of international workers, require more attention, with the aim of producing consistency of terminology and sub-category descriptions across IHRM literature. I would also suggest that confusion concerning the the meaning of the term expatriate has resulted in ambiguity regarding its usage and application to specific international assignee groupings and the respective connotations. All in all, this calls for clarity and consistency in terminology used to describe varying international assignee types (see Table 4.1).

Contemporary researchers in IHRM have called on the need to move from the dominant focus on expatriates to a pluralistic incorporation of non traditional international assignees (Brewster & Suutari, 2005; De Cieri, Wolfram Cox & Fenwick, 2007;

Mayrhofer et al, 2004; Schuler, Budhwar, & Florkowski, 2002; Scullion et al, 2007; Scullion & Paauwe, 2004; Suutari & Brewster 2000), given 'the emerging issues and realities of managing people in multinational enterprises' (de Cieri et al, 2007: 282), 'the changing nature of careers... and... changing patterns of global staffing' (Scullion et al, 2007: 309) and the growth in global labour mobility (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004). Cullen and Parboteeah (2008: 515) agree that 'IHRM must take into account several types of employees in the multinational organization'. This study is positioned within this debate, with the research objective an exploration of bounded transnationals from their individual perspective. This section regards the explosion of international assignee categories which have started to appear in contemporary IHRM literature.

Section 4.3.1 discusses the ambiguity of 'expatriate' as it exists in the literature. The meaning this study confers upon the term expatriate is synonymous with the 'organisation assigned expatriate' who embarks on an international assignment for a limited duration in collaboration with his/her employing organisation in the home country. The expatriate enjoys the perks of company expense accounts and relocation hardship packages as part of the compensation to make up for having to move internationally for a period of time. Other types of international assignees have gained attention in contemporary literature. Table 4.1 summarises these and other less researched international assignee groups, comparing and differentiating each. The main groupings are discussed next.

Table 4.1 Typology of International Assignees

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Ad hoc/'just-in-time'/contract expatriates	'are recruited [from inside or outside the organisation] only (and just) when the need arises, are hired because they possess the specific skills needed by the foreign assignment', and are placed on a contract just for the duration of that assignment. They receive no preparation and get no long-term commitment from the firm. They are strategically needed only for (typically) one to three years and are used only for that particular foreign assignment'	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 220
Assignee on short term assignment - see QUASI-EXPATRIATION			
Assignee on short-term foreign posting - see QUASI-EXPATRIATION			
Boomerangs	'initial use evidently is in application to Japanese who are returning home to work in new career opportunities as well as to foreigners who have been on assignment in Japan and who desire to return, particularly for job opportunities in high technology sectors... Gradually, this term is being applied to equivalent individuals in other countries, as well'	Self initiated	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 220
Bounded Transnational	A foreigner residing in a host country for an indefinite, potentially permanent period of time	Self initiated	Crowley-Henry, 2008
Contract expatriates - see AD HOC EXPATRIATES			Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 220

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Domestic internationalist/ virtual assignee	Domestic, home country employees who regularly deal with people in other countries (via telephone, email, etc) in the course of their work, without having to relocate abroad. The requirement is for adequate technology to enable communication and work	Organisation initiated	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004; Welch, 2003; Welch et al, 2003
Emigrant	An individual that leaves his/her native/home country and settles in another	Self initiated	
Extended business traveller - see QUASI- EXPATRIATION			
Flexpatriate/ frequent flyer/international business traveller/road warrior/globetrotter	Spend a large proportion of their working time on international visits; frequent travellers/flyers in fulfilment of their work duties	Organisation and Individual	Dowling et al, 2008: 95; Harris, 2000; Mayerhofer et al, 2004; Welch et al, 2007
Foreign national/foreign resident/non national/non permanent resident	These terms appear to be used interchangeably to indicate an individual (such as a migrant(a)) residing in a country where he/she is not a citizen of that country/state	Self initiated	
Foreign resident - see FOREIGN NATIONAL			
Freelance expatriate - see TRANSNATIONAL			
Frequent flyer - see FLEXPATRIATE			

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Global - see INTERNATIONAL CADRE			
Globetrotter - see FLEXPATRIATE			
Host country national/local hire	An individual from the host country who is hired to work in the subsidiary of a multinational organisation in the same host country	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 218
Immigrant	An individual that enters and settles in a new country	Self initiated	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004
Inpatriate	Subsidiary or third country nationals working for the corporate office with the intention of being repatriated at a later date with more international experience/corporate knowledge to their home country	Organisation and Individual	Harvey & Novicevic, 2000; Harvey, Novicevic & Speier, 2000; Harvey, Price, Speier & Novicevic 1999
International business traveller - see FLEXPATRIATE		Organisation and Individual	Dowling et al, 2008: 95; Welch et al, 2007
International cadre, permanent international cadre, global, transpatriate	'[E]xpatriate managers who specialize in a career of international assignments' (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008: 521)	Organisation and Individual	Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008: 521; Deresky, 2008: 344; McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006
International commuter assignment	This indicates individuals that commute to another country as part of their regular working week.	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004; Cummins, 1999; Dowling et al, 2008: 128; Harris, 2000; Mayrhofer et al, 2004

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
International internship/temporary immigrant	Individuals (often university graduates, skilled workers) that are hired internationally for limited term posts (on internship) in another country (where there may be a limit of such skilled/qualified workers in-country).	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 219
International recruit	Individual recruited internationally for permanent position in host country (under local host country contract of employment, but including perks to encourage international move, such as home visits, relocation expenses, language training and real estate costs)	Organisation and Individual	Crowley-Henry, 2009 (current dissertation)
International transferee	Individual moved from one foreign subsidiary to another or others in the course of professional development, the intention being to return to the home country or initial foreign subsidiary on completion of the different international assignments	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler 2004: 218
Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee	Individual working for an organization that applies for and is offered a position in another geography on a local, host country contract		Crowley-Henry, 2009 (current dissertation)
Just-in-time' expatriates - see AD HOC EXPATRIATES			Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 220

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Knowledge worker immigrants	Immigrants working in the knowledge industry with strong ties to the home country, oft returning there; 'brain circulation'	Self initiated	Saxenian 1999, 2002
Local hire - see HOST COUNTRY NATIONAL			
Localisee - see PERMANENT TRANSFEREE			
Long-term business trips - see QUASI- EXPATRIATION			
Migrant(a)/global worker	The term 'migrant worker' refers to a person who is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national	Self initiated	United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Retrieved on 30-11-2006
Migrant(b)	'Migrant worker' indicates someone who takes a short-term or seasonal or long term job in another country or area	Self initiated	
Non National - see FOREIGN NATIONAL			
Non permanent resident - see FOREIGN NATIONAL			

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Organisation assigned expatriate	An individual moving to live in a different country under the expectation of a repatriation to the home country on completion of the assignment	Organisation and Individual	Brewster, 2002: 84; Inkson et al, 1997
'Outsourced employees'	'This is a situation where the MNE [multinational enterprise] decides to pay someone else for the services of an "employee" or group of employees. These people could be traditional "temporaries" hired from an agency, leased or rented managers or specialists, or a whole task or project outsourced to an external firm.' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 221)	Organisation initiated	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 221; Cascio, 2000
Permanent expatriate	'[A]n employee who stays on at one or more foreign subsidiaries for an extended period of years'	Organisation and Individual	McFarlin & Sweeney 2006: 388
Permanent international cadre - see INTERNATIONAL CADRE			
Permanent transferee; localisee (localisation)	Traditional expatriates who remain in the host country and whose contracts are changed to local, host country contracts of employment, terms and conditions	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Sculer, 2004 : 217; Cook 2003

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
'Punishment' assignee	Is sent on a foreign assignment to a difficult ('punishment') location. A 'punishment assignment is used to get rid of an individual for a while' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 221). Is used where the individual in question may not be terminated for whatever reason (he/she has a vested interest in the organisation, is too expensive to fire...).	Organisation initiated	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 220-221
Quasi-expatriation/long-term business trips/extended business traveller/assignee on short-term foreign posting/short term assignment/unaccompanied assignment	Individuals undertaking shorter (less than one year) stays/working periods in a different country or different countries without relocating to that country/those countries. These periods are ad hoc and non-recurring in nature. These may be for specific negotiations or events' preparation	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004; Cummins, 1999; Cummins et al, 1998; Dowling et al, 2008: 128; Harris, 2000; Mayrhofer et al, 2004; Solomon 1998; Yeargan, 2000
'Retirees'	'Some firms are tapping into their retirees for short-term foreign assignments, which can provide a new source of experienced employees for international projects and who may be willing to accept foreign assignments with reduced expatriate compensation packages' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 221)		Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 221; Thaler-Carter, 1998
Returnees	'emigrants who are hired (or selected) to return to their home countries' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 219)	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler 2004: 219

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
'Reward' assignees	Are sent on a foreign assignment to a pleasant ('reward') location. 'A reward assignment is one in which an individual who is fairly late in his or her career and approaching retirement is sent on a desirable foreign assignment as a way to end his/her career in an enjoyable position and to add to his/her pension basis because of the increased expatriate salary' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 220-221). Used by multinational organisations such as Unilever and Shell (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 221).	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 220-221
Road warrior - see FLEXPATRIATE			
Second generation expatriate	[N]aturalized citizens (immigrants) who are sent on foreign assignments, but to other than their countries of origin... seen as being more "experienced" expatriates' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 220)	Organisation and Individual	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 220
Self-initiated foreign work experience - see - SELF INITIATED OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE			Briscoe & Schuler, 2004 : 222

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Self initiated Overseas Experience/self-initiated foreign work experience	Individuals embarking on a limited international or overseas experience of their own accord (self initiated) (Inkson et al, 1997), but this has generally focused on students/those at the early stages of their career (Tharenou, 2003).	Self initiated	Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 222; Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997; Suintari & Brewster, 2000; Tharenou, 2003
Short term assignment - see QUASI-EXPATRIATION			Cummins, 1999
Short term foreign posting - see QUASI-EXPATRIATION			
Temporary immigrant - see INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP			
Third country national	An expatriate from a country other than that of the organisation's parent country or the relevant subsidiary/host country operation.	Organisation and Individual	
Trailing spouse	Partner of someone employed in the host country, that has moved with that person and may seek employment in the local, host country.	Individual	Crowley-Henry, 2009 (current dissertation)
Transnational/freelance expatriate	Itinerant international assignees moving from country to country for different projects on their own initiative	Self initiated	Banai & Harry, 2002; Harry & Banai, 2004

Term	Description	Organisation/ Individual Initiated	Examples of literature identifying the typology
Transpatriate - see INTERNATIONAL CADRE		Organisation and Individual	Levitan, 2000; Rossy & Phillips, 2003
Unaccompanied assignment - see QUASI- EXPATRIATION/			
Virtual assignee - see DOMESTIC INTERNATIONALIST			

Developed by author, Marian Crowley-Henry, August 2008

Table 4.1 provides a comprehensive comparison of currently identified international assignee types. This should be considered a working table, which can be added to and updated on an ongoing basis. The next paragraphs focus on *some* of the international assignees from that table; those I deem most relevant in comparing the ‘bounded transnationals’. McFarlin and Sweeney (2006: 388) define a permanent expatriate as ‘an employee who stays on at one or more foreign subsidiaries for an extended period of years’; where the expatriate contract has been extended beyond its initial duration. However they do not elaborate on whether the category of a permanent expatriate is hired locally or continues to be hired by the parent organisation and availing of the traditional expatriate advantages, nor is the extended length of assignment clarified with regard to permanent expatriates. This underlines once more the lack of clarity in the literature and description pertaining to international assignee types.

However, the terms ‘permanent transferee’ and ‘localisation’ *do* refer to employees previously on traditional expatriate contracts and that have subsequently converted to permanent local employment contracts after a period of time (Briscoe and Sculer 2004: 217). These expatriates decide to remain in the host country on completion of their assignment duration and take on host country contracts of employment (Cook, 2003). Some individuals in my bounded transnational sample would have moved initially as organisational expatriates and then transferred to local country contracts, so would also fall into this category.

A number of terms are used in reference to the same international assignee category of people who are permanently on international assignments, moving from international assignment to international assignment. 'International cadres' (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008; Deresky, 2008: 344; McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006), 'permanent international cadres' (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008: 521), 'globals' (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008: 521), 'transpatriates' (Deresky, 2008) all correspond to 'a talented group of managers, maintained by a firm, who can be plugged into any country and successfully represent the company's values' (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2006: 388). They 'spend their whole careers in overseas assignments' (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004: 218; Hodge, McCall, & Hollenbeck, 2002). These 'expatriate managers, who specialize in a career of international assignments' (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2008: 521), represent the movement to a global manager category (Boyacigiller, 1995; Suutari, 2003). It is a geocentric or global staffing approach whereby the nationality of the individual is irrelevant with the managers thinking and acting globally, using their inter-cultural experiences in a global capacity regardless of the country they are operating in. An international transferee is similar to an international cadre but he/she returns to the home country on completion of the relevant assignments.

Similarly, Banai and Harry's, and Harry and Banai's research (Banai & Harry, 2002; Harry & Banai, 2004) identifies 'transnational managers' which they describe as a cosmopolitan breed of international assignees working across cultural borders on a series of different assignments. These assignees have also been termed 'freelance expatriates' (Harry, 2003) or 'international itinerants' (Banai & Harry, 2004), and, due to

globalisation and an increasing organisational demand for quality international managers, transnational managers are an increasingly utilised option of international assignee (Banai & Harry, 2002; Banai & Harry, 2004; Harry, 2003; Harry & Banai, 2004). For transnational managers, their enduring loyalty is to themselves and their own interests rather than to any particular organisation or country. They sell their region- or industry-specific competences to the host country employer that is willing to pay for their skills on a contract basis (Harry, 2003). During their term of employment for the organisation they are subject to the laws, pay and conditions of the respective host country organisation. Their motivations vary from having 'gone native' and 'moved their loyalty to the host society' (Harry, 2003: 103); or they want to continue enjoying an expatriate lifestyle; or may have better opportunities, pay and conditions than would be offered in the home country (Harry, 2003). This is similar in the case of 'bounded transnationals'. However, bounded transnationals are not 'free' in the extent the freelance expatriates appear to be. Rather they are transnationals but are bounded or restricted in their determination to remain resident in the host country. While the freelance nature of the work is of foremost importance for transnationals or freelance expatriates, for bounded transnationals it is maintaining residency in the host environment that is prioritised; the work element is secondary.

International business travellers (Welch et al, 2007) spend a large proportion of their working time on international visits. These are also termed 'road warriors', 'globetrotters', 'frequent fliers' or 'flexpatriates' (Dowling et al, 2008: 95; Mayerhofer, Hartmann, & Herbert, 2004; Mayerhofer et al, 2004). International commuters are

employees who reside in one country but frequently (daily, weekly, monthly) commute to work in another country where they may remain some hours or days, but have their home base and family life in the home country (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004; Cummins, 1999). Dowling et al (2008: 128) note these are also referred to as ‘commuter marriages’ as spouses may agree that one remain in the home country while the other commute for work. There are individuals in my bounded transnational sample that would also fall into this category whereby they commute to work in another country, returning to their home base in the South of France at weekends. This shows the over-lap in reality that can exist among categories of international assignees.

Further variations of international assignees are included in Table 4.1. Those elaborated on in over the previous paragraphs represent those I consider closest to the bounded transnational sample, yet do not adequately represent the residency priority of bounded transnationals, that is, to remain in the same host country indefinitely. This justifies my establishment of the bounded transnational category as a distinct type of international assignee.

4.5 International Human Resource Management: Critique and Conclusions

IHRM literature to date has not adequately reflected or discussed staffing trends in the global economy. In differentiating between domestic and IHRM some academics define domestic HRM as ‘involved with employees within only one national boundary’ (Scullion et al, 2007: 2) without taking into consideration the cultural make-up of those

employees in an ever-changing and ever-increasing multi-cultural global environment. While contemporary literature in IHRM is beginning to move beyond the focus on organisation assigned expatriates, much further work is required in this area. This dissertation provides an in-depth presentation of a category of international assignees not yet considered in the literature, namely the bounded transnationals. A primary difference between bounded transnationals and other international assignees is in the self initiated (as opposed to organisation initiated) nature of the international experience and duration of residence in the host country. For bounded transnationals, the preference is to remain in the host country if possible. This preference is at least equal (if not of more preference) to that of their career considerations.

While the categorisation depicted in Table 4.1 may be useful in differentiating international assignee types, it is clear that there is still ambiguity where some categories are called different names despite referring to the same international assignee grouping. This instils confusion, which is why a Table such as 4.1 is necessary in order to provide a more transparent overview of international assignees. In reality, there is overlap between categories, as outlined in the more detailed description of some international assignee types in the paragraphs above, with some individuals spilling across two or more categories over the course of their careers. The following table presents the bounded transnational sample from this study, and clarification on characteristics of other international assignee types to which they may also belong.

Table 4.2 Bounded Transnational Sample AND Other International Assignee Type Characteristics

Pseudonym	Bounded Transnational AND other International Assignee Type Characteristics
Sarah	Trailing spouse (came with French husband to live in France indefinitely), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Angie	Trailing spouse (came with French husband to live in France indefinitely), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Alice	Trailing spouse, organisation assigned expatriate wife, turned localisee wife, got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Mary	Trailing spouse (husband got job in area first of all, and she moved with him, got job locally after arrival) , migrant(a)
Deirdre	Trailing spouse, wife of intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee, got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Shaun	International recruit for position in area (local country contract of employment)
Natalie	Trailing spouse (husband got job in area first of all, and she moved with him). International commuter and flexpatriate for certain projects, also contracts in local market after arrival, migrant(a)
Rick	Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee
Barry	Trailing spouse (wife got organization assigned expatriate contract turned permanent transferee/localisee), international commuter turned local employee (migrant(a)) turned international commuter
Francis	International recruit for position in area (local country contract of employment)
Fiona	Trailing spouse (came with French boyfriend to live in France indefinitely), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Clare	International recruit for position in area (local country contract with some expatriate perks such as home visits)
Katharina	Trailing spouse (came with French husband to live in France indefinitely), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Lisa	Trailing spouse, wife of intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee, got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)

Pseudonym	Bounded Transnational AND other International Assignee Type Characteristics
Joe	Organisation assigned expatriate turned localisee/permanent transferee, currently involved in international commuter projects and local projects
Kate	Organisation assigned expatriate turned localisee/permanent transferee, currently self employed locally, migrant(a)
David	Trailing spouse (came with French girlfriend), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Donal	Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee, current position: flexpatriate
Pat	Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee, French wife
Tracy	International recruit for position in area (local country contract with some expatriate perks such as home visits)
Philip	Trailing spouse (wife got intra-organisation geographical permanent transfer to area), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Milly	Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee, flexpatriate position, currently trailing spouse, looking for work locally
Ingrid	Intra-organisation geographical transferee
Steve	Self initiated international assignee, got job locally, migrant(a)
Vincent	Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee, currently: international commuter
Ronald	Organisation assigned expatriate turned permanent transferee, localisee
Geraldine	Trailing spouse (came with French husband to live in France indefinitely), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Diane	International recruit for position in area (local country contract of employment), currently: job locally
Billy	Trailing spouse (came with French wife), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)

Pseudonym	Bounded Transnational AND other International Assignee Type Characteristics
Hilda	Self initiated international assignee, got job locally, migrant(a)
Susan	International recruit for position in area (local country contract of employment)
Gordon	International recruit for position in area (local country contract of employment), currently: international commuter, flexpatriate
Elaine	Organisation assigned expatriate turned permanent transferee, localisee
Catherine	Trailing spouse (husband got recruited internationally for local position), got job locally after arrival, migrant(a)
Mark	International recruit for position in area (local country contract of employment)
Tim	Transnational, international itinerant, freelance expatriate
John	Intra-organisation geographical permanent transferee

Table 4.2 attempts to make the overlap between current international assignee groupings apparent. The groupings are not fixed, but evolve as the individual's career evolves; the only constant is the bounded transnational status.

This chapter has shown that widely used concepts in IHRM are in need of empirical testing and development in order to fit with contemporary happenings in international staffing. As circumstances change in this 'transitional period' (Havel, 1994), it is important to continually examine and update the reporting of contemporary realities in IHRM in order to better understand the diversity in existence and the implications for managing international assignees.

The classification of international assignees under the umbrella of expatriate is a limitation which results in diluting research in this field due to the intricate differences between different types of international assignees, including expatriates. However much of the literature to date is useful as a starting point to exploring international staffing alternatives in more detail, taking issues such as acculturation, family status and relationships into account. This study focuses on those issues, considering the career and identity acculturation of bounded transnationals including the acculturative stress (Berry, 2005) and impediments to individual free choice in decision making such as children and spouses (Scullion & Collings, 2006).

The previous section provided an overview of international assignees as identified by the author in the current literature and from her research. Further categories not considered in the literature have been added to this guide (including bounded transnationals, intra-organisation geographical permanent transferees). This guide

could prove useful to students and researchers in IHRM, and could be used to ensure clarity in the sample under investigation. The next chapter considers career theory, and in particular the contemporary concepts of which this study shows evidence.

Chapter Five

Career Theory and the International

Career

A study of careers – of the moving perspective in which persons orient themselves with reference to the social order, and of the typical sequences and concatenations of office – may be expected to reveal the nature and ‘working constitution’ of a society.

Hughes, 1937: 413

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews concepts from career literature and contemporary research on international careers which are considered in this dissertation. While the previous chapter's focus was on positioning the bounded transnational sample within the framework of international assignees, this chapter discusses themes in career theory that this study looked at when analysing the bounded transnational sample. The core of this study centres on exploring, more holistically than previous research, the individual careers of a sub-section of self initiated international assignees. Being removed from familiar cultures, habitus and social networks, this study makes an in-depth examination of the identity and career construction of bounded transnationals. When exposed to a new and challenging environment, the study explores, discusses and interprets the coping, construction and choices made by the sample. Identity and career construction are important concepts in an ever-globalising reality, as when previously taken for granted competences disappear, it is possible to glean a deeper insight into how individuals reconstruct their lives (identity and career). The extent to which career influences are within the control of the individual is discussed here and continued in Chapter Eight (Findings and Discussion). While the human agent may have the ability to push him/herself along a particular career path, structural, economical, relational and temporal constraints impose upon the agent. The consequential career is the result of human agents mediating with the other forces in order to choose preferences which are perceived to be best at a given point in time. Further theoretical concepts considered for the purpose of this study (regarding power, habitus, sensemaking, structure, agency, and the internal conversation) are outlined in the next chapter (Chapter Six).

As mentioned in Chapter One and presented in the opening citation, Hughes' (1937: 413) widely used sociological view of careers stresses the process ('sequences') conception of careers, and the complexity in attempting to isolate the career construct (due to the 'concatenations' between factors) in his definition of careers, emphasising the evolving nature of careers and the complexity of factors impacting upon careers. He describes a career as a 'moving perspective' which is influenced by and in return impacts upon individual identity ('in which persons orient themselves') and social identity ('social order'). However, despite Hughes' dictum, much career research has tended to focus on the micro influences on career for individuals rather than encompassing macro influences as well (Gunz, Mayrhofer, & Tolbert, 2008). This dissertation attempts to address the gap in the literature by focusing on a specific sample of international assignees (bounded transnationals), and to inductively build up a framework of careers as a 'moving perspective' (Hughes, 1937: 413) influenced by internal, relational, external and temporal elements (Crowley-Henry, 2008c).

The research undertaking looks at careers through narrative inquiry which allows for a more comprehensive, systems examination of career influencing elements (Kohonen, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006a). Other researchers, also undertaking exploratory research on careers, have used narratives (Cohen, Duberley, & Mallon, 2004; Cohen & Mallon, 1999; Mallon, 1995, 1999; Walton & Mallon, 2004), where 'the data is grounded in the accounts of individuals and [the study] seeks to explore their interpretations of their experiences' (Cohen & Mallon, 1999: 329). The initial sections of this chapter present the career concepts focused on in the study. Included here is the orthodox organisational vertical career progression, contemporary concepts of career orientation such as the boundaryless career and the protean career, and

career anchors. Different lenses and career discourses are apparent, and these are also introduced in the chapter. The latter part of the chapter focuses on contemporary literature and research regarding international careers. The specific lenses and concepts which are discussed further in the study are positioned.

5.2 Defining ‘Career’

To commence the discussion, it is important to stress that varying definitions and interpretations of career exist (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989b; Gunz & Heslin, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999). Gunz and Heslin (2005: 106) criticise the ambiguity of the term ‘career’. It is therefore important to clarify the definition of career which aptly describes the research presented.

Orthodox career theory has ignored the importance of life experiences outside the realm of work/occupation (Hall & Harrington, 2004; Larsen & Ellehave, 2000). Authors from this school focus on the occupational or work-related aspect of careers, as initially proposed by Parsons (1909). Arthur et al (1989b: 8) describe career as ‘*the evolving sequence of a person’s work experiences over time*’ (italics in original). Similarly, Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2000: 9) define it as ‘the pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person’s life’. In keeping with Hughes’ (1937), Arthur et al’s (1989b: 8) and Greenhaus et al’s (2000: 9) description of careers, Larsen and Ellehave (2000: 104) underline the continuity aspect of careers as moving and evolving. In their definition (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000) the overall pattern or complexity of inputs to careers is stressed. They also include both the objective and subjective dimensions of careers in their description. However they

position careers within an organizational environment which would suggest an omission of the knowledge and learning individuals bring to their careers from life circumstances and experiences outside of organisational environments (for instance, simply by becoming a parent).

This study suggests the relevance of personal, life occurrences in the formation of careers. Others expound that non-work and leisure roles should be included in the conceptualisation of career (McDaniels, 1965; Super, 1976), which Hughes (1937: 413, quote following) also advocates:

A career consists, objectively, of a series of statuses and clearly defined offices... subjectively, a career is the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things that happen to him... Careers in our society are thought very much in terms of jobs, for these are the characteristic and crucial connections of the individual with the institutional structure... But the career is by no means exhausted in a series of business and professional achievements. There are other points at which one's life touches the social order... it is possible to have a career in an avocation as well as in a vocation.

Hughes' description suggests that careers should be researched from a broader perspective than simply focusing on jobs or occupational sequences. There is a requirement to incorporate other life events and learning into understanding careers. The inclusion of non-work roles in career theory is an interesting departure from the consideration of careers purely from the occupational level, and marks the dichotomy within career literature and theory depending on the perspective and designation of career which the researcher adopts.

An even more dynamic definition that Patton and McMahon (1999; 2006a; 2006b) adopt as their favoured definition comes from Wolfe and Kolb (1980: 1-2) which embodies life career development:

Career development involves one's whole life, not just occupation. As such, it concerns the whole person, needs and wants, capacities and potentials, excitements and anxieties, insights and blind spots, warts and all. More than that, it concerns his/her life. The environment pressures and constraints, the bonds that tie him/her to significant others, responsibilities to children and aging parents, the total structure of one's circumstances are also factors that must be understood and reckoned with, in these terms, career development and personal development converge. Self and circumstances – evolving, changing, unfolding in mutual interaction – constitute the focus and the drama of career development.

This definition places all people as career holders, whether they are in employment or not, with career being synonymous with life development. It is this definition and description of careers that I consider in the study.

This section has outlined the breadth with which career is defined, which has influenced its research and examination. It ranges along a continuum from the narrow perspective of looking at careers as occupations (Parsons, 1909) to the more holistic notion of careers as being synonymous with life development (Wolfe & Kolb, 1980). The discussion on careers then varies considerably depending on the perspective taken. An explicit distinction may become possible if a consistent usage of terminology be adhered to; for instance, using the term 'occupation' for 'what one does', and 'career' for 'the course pursued over a period of time' (Super & Bohn, 1970: 115). However, ambiguity persists concerning inclusion or omission of non-work related events in the examination of careers and career development. For the

purposes of this study and dissertation, Wolfe and Kolb's (1980) all-encompassing definition of careers (above) is the one which was found to have the most resonance.

5.3 Theory and Literature

This section overviews the different career concepts considered in the dissertation. Traditional or orthodox career theory and literature concerns careers within organisations that follow an intra-organisational path or career ladder, previously associated with a vertical progression over time and length of service (Fletcher, 1996; Larsen & Ellehave, 2000). While the 'organisation man' (Whyte, 1956) may find a home within orthodox career theory, contemporary literature argues for a development of the theory (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Larsen & Ellehave, 2000).

Gratton and Hope-Hailey (1999: 79) believe that in the context of increased flexibility there is 'a move towards a more individualistic notion of careers'. This move away from careers being organisationally managed (Kahn, 1996) to employees managing their own careers has been critiqued (Hesketh, 2003). Nonetheless Hall (2002) argues that organisations cannot plan an individual's career; that individuals own their own careers. There is an apparent shift from the archetypal career, dependent on the organisation, to a more agentially dependent career. It has been suggested that changes in the psychological contract (Gratton & Hope-Hailey, 1999; Rousseau, 1995), from more relational (where the organisation acted paternalistically to employees in return for employee loyalty and commitment) to transactional contracts (where the organisation contracts employees to work for it, but does not guarantee job security) have prompted the contemporary developments in career theory.

Rosenbaum & Miller (1996) intimate that given the changed environment in which workers are employed, their company loyalty is in question. They term the category of worker in question as the 'mobile worker' who is following a 'boundaryless career'. They explain this as follows: 'While the old company man moved up the company ladder, mobile workers move up any ladder onto which they can get a foot. They rise in their careers by hopping from firm to firm, with an eye toward ever-better positions, and the firms which employ them often benefit by gaining ambitious employees who bring new ideas, creativity, and the enthusiasm of new blood' (Rosenbaum & Miller, 1996: 350).

There are six characteristics to the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996).

They are:

1. inter-organisational movement or movement across employers
2. looking beyond the current employer to ensure skills are marketable and that employability is high
3. support from external networks (Parker, 1996)
4. the abandonment of traditional career boundaries
5. taking occupational breaks (parental leave, career breaks) without pay
6. envisaging a boundaryless future, despite any limitations

It is clear from these characteristics that followers of the boundaryless career rely less (if at all) on the organisation, but rather emphasize individual independence (Arthur, 1994).

Schein (1978, 1990) formulated the concept of career anchors ('occupational self-concept') from his longitudinal study of alumni members of the Sloan School. He recognized that a career anchor develops as an individual acquires more self knowledge in their early working lives. He found that individuals have different career anchors, despite the sample all coming from a graduate management school. The career anchor has three parts: firstly, the self-perceived talents and abilities an individual has which are based on real successes in different work settings (that is, an individual's traits); secondly, the self-perceived motives and needs which are based on the opportunities for self-tests or self-diagnosis in actual situations and on feedback from others; and thirdly the self-perceived attitudes and values which are based on the actual relationship between the self and the norms/values of the organisation and work setting (Schein, 1978: 125). Schein's empirical research identified the following career anchors:

- technical / functional competence
- general managerial competence
- security/stability
- entrepreneurial creativity
- autonomy/independence
- service/dedication to a cause
- pure challenge
- lifestyle

Schein (1978: 126) propounds that the 'purpose of the career-anchor concept is to highlight the gradual integration of motives, values, and abilities in the person's total

self-concept'. This self concept ties in with identity theory and the balance between the objective and subjective career.

Sparrow & Hiltrop (1994: 429) separate the internal and external career frames of reference into 'individual aspirations and occupational realities', where the 'internal career is generally described in terms of career orientations, career anchors, decisions between personal and professional life, dual-career marriages, and progress through psychological life stages'. The internal career is the individual's subjective view about work life and his/her role in it (Van Maanen & Schein, 1977). It is concerned with reaching objectives, fulfilment, self-conception, identity, work attitudes, personal choice and responsibility, and autonomy (Hughes, 1937, 1958; Weick & Berlinger, 1989: 320-321). In contrast, the external or objective career refers to those elements that can be seen and measured concerning an individual's working life, such as position, status, title (Hughes, 1937, 1958; Mallon, 1995, 1999). Weick (1996: 40) argues that given the context of transactional rather than relational contracts, future careers will be more concerned with 'internal, self-generated guides, such as growth, learning, and integration'. The increased focus on the internal career or subjective career is suggested.

Hall (1976: 2-3) forwards four different definitions of careers

1. Career is an advancement, a vertical progression in the organisation's hierarchy
2. Career refers to one's profession
3. Career is 'a lifelong sequence of jobs (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 109), an individual's job history

4. Career is 'a lifelong sequence of role-related experiences' (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 109), as perceived by the individual

The first three definitions concern the objective career, while the final definition looks more at how the person experiences his/her career over the course of his/her life, and includes the subjective career. The subjective side of careers is emphasised in the protean career concept, and it is this career focus which is considered in my dissertation.

The 'protean' career is coined from the Greek God Proteus. Proteus was a mythological God who was able to change form at will (into animals, fire, water etc) in order to avoid capture. The protean career is more concerned with the subjective or internal career dimensions taking contemporary realities in the employment market into consideration, whereas it can be argued that the boundaryless career is influenced by objective career dimensions (Hall & Harrington, 2004). The protean career (Hall, 1976) theory focuses on the individual and his/her role in transforming his/her own career path. Hall (1976: 201) describes it as follows:

The protean career is a process which the person, not the organization, is managing. It consists of all the person's varied experiences in education, training, work in several organizations, changes in occupational field, etc. ... The protean person's own personal career choices and search for self-fulfillment are the unifying or integrative elements in his or her life. The criterion of success is internal (psychological success), not external. In short, the protean career is shaped more by the individual than by the organization and may be redirected from time to time to meet the needs of the person.

The emphasis is on internal or subjective success rather than objective success (position, salary). The protean career fits in with the boundaryless career theory (individuals being more mobile and less bound to a particular organisation) and to boundary/border theory and work-family integration (Desrochers & Sargent, 2003), where (for instance) because ‘professional identity may no longer play as dominant a role for such individuals, they are free to focus on other subidentities, such as family, community, or other personal interests’ (Hall & Harrington, 2004). People reifying the protean career concept ‘are less concerned with ... organizational rewards and are more motivated by autonomy, personal values and psychological success’ (Hall & Harrington, 2004). By taking an in-depth look at the protean career concept, discussion and analysis of the particular issues for bounded transnationals is enabled, concerning their identity and career construction when away from familiarity. It deliberates questions such as ‘who are we when the things we thought defined us disappear?’

The connection between identity, self and career is central in the concept of the protean career. Hall and colleagues (Hall, 1986, 2002; Hall & Harrington, 2004; Hall & Moss, 1998; Inkson, 2007) identified self-direction, identity and adaptability as the career ‘metacompetencies’ facilitating the protean career. A person’s ‘sense of identity – understanding who he or she is and knowing his or her values, needs, goals, and interests’ (Inkson, 2007: 94) - provides direction to the other characteristics. The integration of identity in the protean career concept seeded the theoretical conceptualisation that takes place in this study, and is shared in Chapter Nine. The importance of identity in objective and subjective career research has been identified (Baruch, 2004; Goffman, 1961). The adaptive nature of the protean career concept

renders it a constituent along the developmental or process career discourse. Subjectivity is stressed again, since ‘subjective careers changed with time as individuals shifted their social footing and reconstructed their past and future in order to come to terms with their present’ (Barley, 1989: 49). The ongoing reconstruction of career identity can be checked using Weick’s (1995) retrospective and prospective sense making, and Archer’s (2003) internal conversation. These are among the further theoretical constructs examined in the next chapter, and used in the dissertation to present the findings.

The study contends that the link between identity and career, or more specifically between identification (Bauman, 2001) and the protean career is more than one being a characteristic of the other, but rather that they feed off each other and are difficult to separate. While the contemporary construct of the protean career does stress the ‘psychological dimensions of career’ (Arnold & Cohen, 2008: 13), it does not adequately explain the *rationale* of a protean career. It is the contention of this research undertaking that such rationale can only become evident by indeed focusing on the individualised nature of career choice, but in so doing, recognising the need to incorporate structural, contextual and historical elements which impact upon the self and the movement toward ‘proteanism’.

5.4 Career Lenses and Discourses

There are different lenses and concepts through which researchers can examine careers (Arnold & Cohen, 2008). Kim (2004) demonstrates the breadth of research on careers and the overlap among career orientation theories, oftentimes with similar,

although differently termed, concepts. Some authors have attempted to group and frame career theories into different discourses (Herr & Cramer, 1992; Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996; Patton & McMahon, 2006a; Young & Collin, 2004). Young and Collins (2004: 379-383) argue that there are four dominant career discourses which they base on Savickas's (2001) four levels of career theories. Table 5.1 presents these.

Table 5.1 Young and Collins (2004) Career Discourses

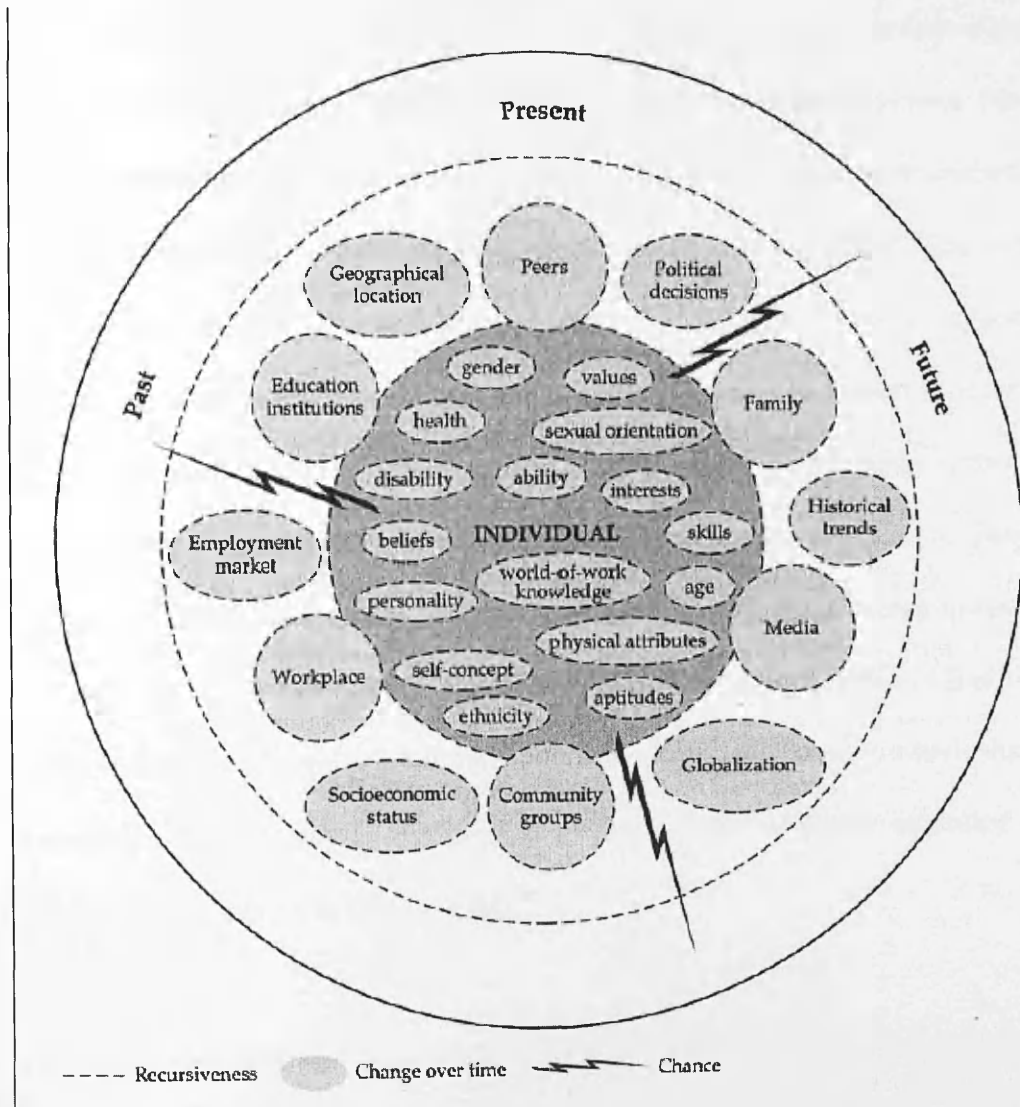
Career Discourses (Young and Collins 2004 developed from Savicka 2001)		
Discourse	Content	Source
dispositions discourse	Matching individual traits and occupational traits	Young & Collins 2004: 379-380; see also Patton & McMahon 1999: 12-35
contextualizing discourse	Locating individuals, actions, careers in different contexts (temporal, social, economical...)	Young & Collins 2004: 380-381
subjectivity and narrative discourse	Taking the individual's subjective perceptions	Young & Collins 2004: 381-382
process discourse	Concerning how a career develops	Young & Collins 2004: 382-383; see also Patton & McMahon 1999: 36-57

The four are the dispositions, contextualising, subjectivity and narrative, and process discourses (Young & Collin, 2004). The dispositions discourse reflects the traditional trait and factor theories stemming from Parsons' (1909) and Holland's (Holland, 1966, 1973, 1985a, 1985b, 1992) vocational choices. The contextualizing discourse highlights the importance of context when exploring careers. It situates individuals' careers within their respective contexts (social, economic, cultural, and temporal), and includes work such as Savickas' (2002) 'career concerns' reflecting the social context; Saxenian's (1996) Silicon Valley research (geographical, cultural and economic context); and Gottfredson's (2002) circumscription and compromise theory which suggests four non-sequential developmental processes of important relevance in the individual-occupational matching process (namely *cognitive growth* or

maturity, *self-creation*, *circumscription* (ongoing elimination of least favourable occupation alternatives) and *compromise* (accommodating external limitations on occupation choice)). The subjectivity and narrative discourse focuses on the unique individual, subjective perspective and construction of self over time and context (Young & Collin, 2004: 381). Finally, the process discourse deals with career development, including Super's (1980) lifespan developmental theory.

Patton and McMahon (2006a) prefer to focus on two dimensions – theories of content and theories of process. They build these into their systems theory framework, which they describe as an over-arching framework encompassing all career theories. Figure 5.1 presents their systems theory framework of career development. It includes content/individual theories and contextual theories. Time, serendipity and the inter-linking of elements are included to show how these elements influence and inform the career decisions that individuals may make. Their systems framework reflects how previous decisions and present or future perceptions impact upon present and future options, and on how previous choices are regarded and made sense of (recursiveness).

Figure 5.1 Systems Theory Framework of Career Development (Patton & McMahon, 1999: 164)



In this study the systems theory framework (Patton & McMahon, 2006a) is respected with particular focus on the subjectivity and narrative discourse, as well as on the process and contextualising discourses (Young & Collin, 2004). The systems career framework (Patton & McMahon, 2006a, 2006b) mirrors my own conceptualisation of career development influences for the sample of bounded transnationals, which is elaborated upon in the conceptualisation chapter (Chapter Nine).

A further career theory which proved useful in the conceptual development of my findings is Catherine Hakim's (2000) preference theory. Although her theory is very much situated in her study of females' careers, I believe it is pertinent across genders. She suggests three career 'preferences' for women: home-based (where family is prioritised above occupational career), career-based (where career is prioritised), and adaptive (balancing occupational career and home/family priorities). She contends that women can move between these preferences over time. I would suggest that, increasingly, males also experience the dilemma of choosing between occupation-related and non-occupation-related careers. This argument is developed further in the analysis of the findings from the research undertaken. Hakim's preference theory has been criticised for its non-incorporation of context and structures which impact upon the ability of its subjects to follow their ideal preferences. Nonetheless, I find that the categorisation of preferences into three categories is a useful theory, which should be considered from a systems perspective. Findings from the study regarding career preferences are shared in Chapter Eight.

I recognise that contemporary critical research on individuals outside the mainstream employment categories is furthering knowledge and understanding of careers. Super (1980)'s life span developmental theory has been critiqued for its failure to recognise, in particular, female career patterns, many of which do not evolve linearly as his theory suggests (Hall & Harrington, 2004). Exploratory research has been conducted on the move to portfolio careers from the 'push' and 'pull' perspectives (Mallon, 1995, 1999). Individuals following a portfolio career balance different projects which change over time. Such topics are considered in the Findings chapter of this dissertation.

I would like to reiterate here that this PhD study was inductive in nature: the intention was never to check boxes regarding which theory or theories my sample would fit into. Rather, the objective was to develop an independent conceptual framework from the narrative data. While the concepts and discourses included in this chapter serve as a useful guide summarising other existing career theories which can be used to examine careers deductively, this study worked backwards from the data in developing a framework of career concepts which I considered were being reified by the individuals in the bounded transnational sample. In that regard, it was not so much classifying the individuals in the sample into the different career orientation theories, as it was examining patterns among all individuals in the sample in order to build a new conceptual framework. That framework is shared in Chapter 9.

5.5 International Careers

Chapter Four has focused on the global staffing alternatives available to organisations and has compared the different types of international assignees. This section reviews existing research on international careers. It has been argued that empirical studies on international career moves has generally ‘lagged far behind’ the theoretical models of the process (Feldman & Tompson, 1993: 510). However, regarding the research that does exist in this area, it is recognised that most studies in IHRM have been American focused (Boyacigiller & Adler, 1991; Brewster, 1993; Larsen & Ellehave, 2000; Linehan, 1998; Tung, 1998). They have generally been limited to international staffing: dealing with the problems associated with the selection and management of traditional expatriate managers going on a temporary assignment (Adler & Gundersen, 2008; Black et al, 1999; Borg & Harzing, 1995; Brewster & Scullion,

1997; Dowling & Welch, 2004; Mendenhall, Dunbar & Oddou, 1987; Scullion & Collings, 2006) and international management development (Bonache, Brewster, & Suutari, 2001; Brewster & Tyson, 1991; Scullion, 1995: 376), often focusing on the repatriation of expatriates and their difficulties in re-adjusting and the oftentimes lack of a position in the home country organisation that would be on par (or an advancement) to what the expatriate had performed abroad (Baruch, 2002; Harvey, 1989; Scullion, 1992; Solomon, 1995). Although the focus has in general been on expatriate men (Torrington, 1994), limited studies on expatriate women have taken place (Adler, 1986-7, 1987, 1999a, 1999b, 2002; Harris, 2002; Linehan, 2002; Scullion, 1992). Research has also been conducted regarding expatriate failure (Harzing & Christensen, 2004; Mendenhall et al, 1987; Tung, 1981) and on the role of mentorship and networking in aiding expatriate success for female senior executives (Linehan, 2002). In addition research in the area has been conducted showing the relevance of national cultures on the organisation structures and policies, and on the work-related values of employees (Brewster & Tyson, 1991; Hofstede, 1980, 1985, 1991, 1993; Schneider & Barsoux, 2003; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1999), and the acculturation process of expatriates in the host environment (Tung, 1998). Recent research has also studied the expatriate experience in the context of boundaryless career theory (Eby, 2001; Stahl et al, 2002), finding that expatriate assignees view their international experience to be of value to other organisations, while doubting its value recognition in the current employing organisation, thus supporting the notion of boundaryless careers.

While the traditional expatriate's temporary international assignment and the implications for his/her career have been examined to varying degrees in IHRM

literature (Dowling & Welch, 2004; Yan et al, 2002), **there is a gap in international career research with regard to the bounded transnational sample of this study.** Inkson et al (1997) do address the self-initiated foreign work experience, which is extended further by Suutari and Brewster (2000) who categorise different types of self-initiated international assignees. My research takes an even closer focus in the case study of the Sophia Antipolis area and investigates the bounded transnationals resident in the area

Contemporary writers in IHRM have begun to broaden the scope of the international assignee to ‘other choices apart from the traditional “expatriate, local or third country national”’ (Suutari & Brewster 2000: 28). Table 4.1 presents a comprehensive typology of international assignees in the literature. Research on bounded transnationals residing in the host country for an undefined duration or permanent nature has not received the same attention. It is the aim of this research to therefore extend IHRM and international career literature by describing a further category of international assignee, the bounded transnational (Crowley-Henry, 2008c, 2009)¹².

Further research on careers which is useful in this study because of its international focus or its concentration on the careers of highly educated individuals include Whitley, Thomas and Marceau’s (1984) study of Masters graduates careers across three graduate schools (INSEAD, France; London Graduate School of Business Studies; and Manchester Business School) who agreed ‘that there is no necessary relation between the availability of “qualified” persons and their chances of access to specific positions in the occupational structure’ (Whitley et al, 1984: 4). Similarly,

¹² I originally termed the bounded transnational sample ‘simpatriates’ in a conference paper (Crowley-Henry, 2004b)

Bailyn and Schein's (1980: 71) research of MIT graduates from the 1950s who found that 'people have different orientations towards their work at mid-life, even those whose educations were similar' (ibid: 71). Sylvia van de Bunt-Kokhuis' (1996) doctoral research investigation into 'what determinants play a role in the decision of faculty members to go abroad' examined the international mobility of the sample she termed 'Academic Pilgrims'. Her study underlines the complexity and breadth of issues to be considered and which play a role in international mobility (position, life cycle stage, gender, personal/professional benefits and constraints...). These studies look at professional, person-centred careers. My study, in contrast, focuses on inductively building a model to explain and describe the identity and career construction of bounded transnationals, international assignees removed from cultural familiarity who reconstruct their identity and careers in a new environment. Nonetheless, all of the studies mentioned immediately above stress the heterogeneity of international assignees, with varying motivations and career experiences (also Suutari & Brewster's (2000) paper).

5.6 Career Focus of the Study & Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has posited some key literature and concepts on careers and career theory. Given the extensive nature of career theory and literature, only those concepts and theories which are brought further in the analysis and discussion of the empirical study are considered here. Since this study was an inductive undertaking, the career related themes that emerged from the narratives on my analysis of the transcripts are what are addressed. In particular, the conversation concerning organisational, boundaryless, portfolio and protean careers is continued in the Findings and

Discussion chapters. Additionally the contextual relevance of the changing psychological contract is underlined. The satisfaction of both internal (subjective) and external (objective) career elements, with an emphasis on subjective elements as apparent from the interviewees, is also addressed.

This study looks at careers through the subjective and narrative discourse (Young & Collin, 2004). The research approach taken facilitated an examination into how individuals in the bounded transnational sample construct their careers, lives and identities. In taking 'career' to follow a more inclusive definition (Wolfe & Kolb, 1980), the linkage to life and identity is underlined. The process and developmental discourse on careers is also pertinent, given the study uses narratives and life history recollections from the interviewees in conceptualising a careers framework for bounded transnationals. Given the specificity of the sample and the geographical context, the contextualisation discourse (Saxenian, 1996) is relevant. Patton and McMahon's (2006a, 2006b) systems theory of career development is a most useful framework which corresponded with the empirical study's findings, showing the complex nature of careers.

It becomes apparent that 'What makes this academic field fascinating and dangerous is the contrast between the enthusiasm with which new knowledge is gained through research, and the simultaneous lack of knowledge about a number of important contextual, organizational and individual factors influencing careers' (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 102). My study seeks to incorporate macro and micro factors influencing career and identity construction from a detailed analysis of the narratives collected. This is the advantage of an inductive approach.

Contemporary career discussions recognise the ‘need to tailor psychological contractual conditions to the specific needs of the individual’ (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 114). This mirrors Swart and Kinnie (2004) that organisations adopting a uniform, one size fits all approach to career management is not sufficient. Baily and Schein (1980: 70-71) believe that organisations need to ‘think more creatively about the various kinds of people carrying on careers within them, with the goal of providing the possibility of career satisfaction for all and thus increasing the effectiveness of the technical, professional, and managerial workforce’. This underlines the requirement for different individual career alternatives to be discussed in career management sessions. Orthodox career theory has assumed that ‘most people are interested in a managerial career, and want vertical progressions’ (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 114), however this has not been empirically tested.

The following paragraphs identify some key gaps in the contemporary career research and literature domains which this PhD undertaking hopes to fill to some degree.

Arthur & Rousseau’s (1996) analysis of 150 empirical articles regarding career issues from five of the leading US journals between 1980 and 1994 found that more than three-quarters of the articles on careers presumed ‘an intrafirm [organisation] focus with this focus in turn subordinating the subjective perspective on careers to the objective perspective’ (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996: 8). Hall and Harrington (2004) call on career research to include non-work aspects of an individual’s life. They argue that the protean career incorporates work in the context of the person’s life as a whole; that it is more a ‘systems’ view of looking at work and career (Patton & McMahon, 2006a, 2006b; Wolfe & Kolb, 1980). This underlines the necessity for career research

to encompass the whole person in its discussions, and not simply focus on what is happening in the individual's work life. This PhD study uses narratives from the interview transcripts to analyse and interpret the protean career for my sample of international workers who, removed from familiarity, are able to take stock, reassess and reconstruct their identity and career. The evolving nature of the protean concept with its systems connection (influenced by many variables) is of the essence.

In the traditional career theory approach (linear, vertical, organisation career path) careers have been generally considered as dependent on the organisation, rather than the independent variable in the organisation/career relationship. There is a lack of literature on careers as the independent variable, for instance considering career patterns' implications for the organisation (Arthur et al, 1989a, 1989b; Larsen & Ellehave, 2000; Weick, 1996). This PhD study takes this less travelled approach by examining the bounded transnational's career in detail and outlining potential implications for organisations.

A further critique of the orthodox career theory is its micro-level definition (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 94). The 'whole, rather than ... the experiences of individual employees within the labor market' (Barney & Lawrence, 1989: 425) has been the focus. This research study, in contrast, examines in-depth 'the experiences of individual employees within the labor market' (Barney & Lawrence, 1989: 425) through inductive analysis of patterns from their narratives.

Arthur and Rousseau (1996) noted the focus in career research on the managerial career track. Given the current organisational tendency to flattening the hierarchies

and reducing management layers, it is assumed that there will be less management positions available in the future (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000; Sparrow & Hiltrop, 1994). There is a need to develop ‘alternative theories and practices for the “residual” group, which ... [is] by far the largest’ (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000: 97), thus extending career theory beyond management levels. This study does not discriminate its focus on bounded transnationals in the managerial level, but has included managers, senior managers, consultants and non managerial level employees, thereby developing career theory to other categories of worker or employee.

This study answers the calls for more transdisciplinary research on careers (Arthur et al, 1989b), for using new research methods (Kohonen, 2005), for extending research on international assignees beyond organisationally assigned expatriates (Brewster & Suutari, 2005; Crowley-Henry, 2008c; De Cieri et al, 2007; Schuler et al, 2002; Scullion & Paauwe, 2004), and for investigating identity construction for individuals moving inter-culturally (Sparrow, 2000).

The next chapter considers some further theoretical concepts that were useful in framing the findings, and presenting the research. I use those concepts, along with career specific theories presented in this chapter, in discussing the findings.

Chapter Six

Theoretical Frameworks

To get away from one's working environment is, in a sense, to get away from one's self; and this is often the chief advantage of travel and change

Cooley, 1922: 249

6.1 Introduction

This chapter lays out the concepts which aided the researcher in interpreting and conceptualising the bounded transnationals' identity and career construction. As mentioned in Chapter One, this study takes a pragmatic pluralist approach (Watson, 1997) by including different theories and concepts in the discussion and analysis of the data. Using various concepts is only advocated as long as the integrity of the entire study remains intact (Watson, 1997). In this study of identity and career construction in an international context, the researcher reviewed concepts which she felt could facilitate deeper analysis of the category of international assignees in question. The previous two literature review chapters which focused on international assignees (Chapter Four) and career theory (Chapter Five) respectively, in particular have sought to set the scene for positioning the bounded transnational assignees in the context of existing typologies of international assignees (Chapter Four) and within the context of existing career theories and concepts (Chapter Five). These are the fundamental foundations of this research in throwing a spotlight on an under-researched category of international assignee, and on the breadth of conceptual literature on careers. The concepts presented in those chapters are brought forward in the subsequent chapters. This chapter, however, provides a theoretical analysis of the concepts which served useful in illuminating the process of identity and career construction for bounded transnationals, and in facilitating the conceptual development which is continued in the following chapters.

It is acknowledged that there is a plethora of theories which researchers can choose to examine in their respective research undertaking; the ones outlined here are those which had a particular resonance to this specific research undertaking as it progressed

from observation to patterns in the narratives to literature to concepts to interpretation to further concept development and understanding. The inductive nature of the research, where concept development originates from the data is underlined.

The particular concepts that are discussed in the following sections in the chapter are power and control (Braverman, 1998 [1974]; Deetz, 1998; Foucault, 1990; Latour, 1986), habitus and field (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990b, 2000; Inkson, 2007; Mayrhofer et al, 2004), the internal conversation (Archer, 2003), sensemaking (Weick, 1995, in particular its individualistic and retrospective properties), and identification (Bauman, 2001). Each of these concepts is considered in light of the intricately woven web of identity construction and reconstruction, options and choices, and living with the consequences. The roles of structure, agency and process are presented and questioned in light of the protean career concept, where the continual morphing of careers and identity is suggested. Adopting this pluralist approach to considering the over-riding research question which is how the bounded transnationals construct their careers, I acknowledge that this dissertation does not (and indeed cannot for space limitations) delve into each concept in as much detail as each merit. The focus here is on extracting elements from the constructs which enabled the conceptualisation process with regards to the sample in question.

Charles Horton Cooley's (1922) quote which opened this chapter has resonance with this study of identity and career: it emphasises the intricate link and relationship between the 'working environment' (in this study, specifically the unfolding careers of the sample) and the 'self' (through the lens of identity or that by which we define ourselves). The sample explored in this dissertation has encountered both 'travel and

change' in living and working in a host country, France; more specifically in an environment (South of France) which is generally perceived favourably by the sample's home country contemporaries, something Lasch (1979) and Riesman et al (2001) consider of most value in contemporary narcissistic societies. The sample investigated in this research undertaking has removed itself from its home country environment by travelling to and residing in the South of France. The inference that embarking upon change and travel enable a break 'from one's self' is explored in this study which looks at the identity reconstruction of the sample during adjustment to the host country.

6.2 Power & Control

This study reflects upon the concept of power relations (Deetz, 1998; Foucault, 1990; Latour, 1986) in career preference decision making: in particular, the perceived agential power (constructivism), organisational or capitalist power and control (Braverman, 1998 [1974]), and the power of social conformity and social constructionism.

Braverman (1974: 212) strongly critiques capitalism and 'the progressive elimination of the control function of the worker, insofar as possible, and their transfer to a device which is controlled again insofar as possible, by management from out side the direct process' (Braverman, 1998 [1974]). He argues that the worker's autonomy in the capitalist system is controlled by the captains of capitalism. In acknowledging Braverman's convincing argumentation, this author considers the perceptions of her sample of *highly educated, knowledge professionals* concerning the control and

autonomy they have over their own careers (Crowley-Henry & Weir 2009). This dissertation discusses and analyses their career narratives in the shared context of being bounded transnationals, and attempts to conceptualise the choice and self-determination of their career direction and career construction.

As a critical realist, I find Foucault's work (particularly his later work) on power and governmentality interesting and relevant in that he argues the inter-connectivity between political/structural influences from the sovereign state **and** the contemporary individual agent, with each influencing and being influenced by the other (Foucault, 1982: 220-221). He explains (Foucault, 1993: 203-204) the processual interconnection between the concepts of governmentality, technologies of the self and technologies of domination, in that they impact upon each other and serve to further support and strengthen the existing technologies of domination, or they are involved in the process of altering or modifying them. Foucault's concept of subjectification is significant in representing his shift from the view of individuals having limited power and control, and as being subject to domination, to his later work in which he is more optimistic about individuals' self-development (Foucault, 1982: 212). The concern shifts toward self-creation, with Foucault postulating that the 'main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning' (Martin, Gutman & Hutton, 1988: 9). The inherent linking between the individual's response to domination (be it to succumb to dominant forces or to revolt against them in attempting something novel) is fundamental in Foucault's later writing where he stresses more the ability of individuals to 'create their own "selves"' (Starkey & McKinlay, 1998: 231). This has resonance with the structure/agency debate, where the important role of *both* structure and agency is considered. The connection between

power, subjectification and identity reconstruction is discussed in the context of the bounded transnational sample in the following chapters.

A further element of control which is found in contemporary discussions considers 'concertive control'. Barker (1993: 411) describes concertive control as 'a set of core values, such as the values found in a corporate vision statement. In a sense, concertive control reflects the adoption of a new substantive rationality, a new set of consensual values by the organisation and its members'. Control is achieved through a common discourse shared by members in the organisation (management, colleagues, subordinates) which reduces the self-control of individuals in the organisation, by pushing them to give in to peer pressure through social constructionism.

The power and control discourse is examined in the Findings chapter of this study in light of the concepts presented in this section. The underlying necessity to balance structure and agency in interpreting the findings of this study is carried throughout the dissertation, stressing the importance of holistic studies in order to better understand and forward learning in organisation and management studies. The following section looks at Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field and discusses how this author interprets and uses the concepts (together with Foucault's, Braverman's and Barker's power and control concepts) in conceptualising and developing career preference theory using the data attained for this study.

6.3 Habitus, Field & Capital

Similar to the previous section, Boudieu also looks at domination and the agents' struggle (or apparent lack of struggle) against domination. Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' could be described as consistent and commonly held (objective) dispositions within a particular social domain, which lead agents to 'misrecognise' domination, equity and justice in rationalising why dominant structures exist within fields. Inkson defines habitus as

the system of internal, personal, enduring dispositions through which we perceive the world. We acquire habitus through exposure to the social conditions around us, which we typically receive from, and share with, others in our predominant social groups, including family. Thus, we internalize external constraints and opportunities and build and develop our habitus over time from new experiences. ... Habitus is the vehicle in which much of our inheritance of values, interests, ideas, motivations, and social connections are incorporated (Inkson, 2007: 31).

Habitus goes beyond social class distinction in that individuals with shared habitus operate in different 'fields' or conditions of existence (such as work, organisational, professional, educational, social). To me, the following quote from Wright Mills describes the concepts of habitus and field:

What ordinary men are directly aware of and what they try to do are bounded by the private orbits in which they live; their visions and their powers are limited to the close-up scenes of job, family, neighborhood; in other milieux, they move vicariously and remain spectators. And the more aware they become, however vaguely, of ambitions and of threats which transcend their immediate locales, the more trapped they seem to feel (Wright Mills, 2000 [1959]: 3).

Habitus influences and is influenced by the individuals that share habitus and their interest in perpetuating the habitus in their own best interests. Habitus would seem to

have an enduring quality because the agents sharing habitus ‘misrecognise’ their ability to change what they perceive to be ‘the dominant structures of interpretation and evaluation within the institution’ (Cunningham, 1993). The ‘symbolic capital’ (Bourdieu, 1990a: 111-112) that agents possess can be equated with their level of power and influence on maintaining the habitus within a specific field. However, Scahill (1993) argues a change in habitus is possible; that ‘While the social constraints of one’s formative environment are inscribed in the habitus, transformation of habitus can result from radical environmental change and/or “pedagogic action” of such a nature as to effect an altering of consciousness’ (Scahill, 1993: 8-9).

From a career perspective, Mayerhofer, Iellatchitch, Meyer, Streyrer, Schiffinger and Strunk (2004) present Bourdieu’s habitus, capital and fields concepts as follows:

Career fields are the social context within which individual members of the work force make their moves. They are equipped with a specific portfolio of field-relevant capital and try to maintain or improve their place in the given and unfolding network of work related positions. This is done through a patterned set of practices which are enabled and constrained by the rules of the field and, in turn, contribute to the shaping of these rules. ... Habitus and field are linked in a circular relationship. Involvement in a field shapes the habitus which, in turn, shapes the actions that reproduce the field... The actors’ logic is shaped by both their habitus and requirements and logic of the game as it unfolds (Mayerhofer et al, 2004: 873-874).

The concept of habitus is empirically examined in the Findings chapters, with regards to how individuals/agents reconstruct their identity in an unfamiliar cultural setting. In keeping with Bourdieu (1990a: 130), I agree that there is ‘No doubt agents do construct their vision of the world. But this construction is carried out under structural

constraints'. The marriage of structure and agency is further discussed below in Section 6.4.

Bourdieu also argues that reflexivity is prerequisite in the transformation of habitus; in 'allowing agents to challenge the dominant structures of a field' (Cunningham, 1993). In reflexivity the agent views a-new the dominant pressures in a habitus and, rather than misrecognising the functioning within the habitus as an objective reality, the agent assesses how the symbolic capital shapes habitus and domination in social institutions. In refusing to 'misrecognise' the norms of habitus, agents can seek to go beyond compliance and conformity, and instead question and attempt to change and evolve habitus.

Given that this study interprets the reconstruction of identity when displaced from a familiar culture and familiar habitus, in discussing the findings the extent to which individuals reaffirm, rebuild and resocialise within the confines of their prior habitus is examined. In other words, do 'bounded transnationals' reaffirm and solidify their pre-move habitus OR do they change in the new geographical context? Does a bounded transnational habitus exist? This study examines the extent to which individuals recreate or reassociate with their habitus when displaced outside their familiar field and habitus. Linked with the concepts of habitus, field and capital, Gergen's emphasis on the process of social exchange (through language and/or other social processes) and reflexivity in *shared* constructions of meaning and knowledge is useful in interpreting how meaning is constructed and shared by the respondents in the study.

6.4 Structure & Agency

Before moving on to the *mediation* between structure and agency as professed by Archer (2003), this section considers in more detail Giddens's (Giddens, 1976, 1979, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1992, 1993a, 1993b; Giddens & Pierson, 1998) discussion on the importance of both structure and agency. The key theorists in previous sections in this chapter, in their own right, appear to reflect, at least in its most basic form, the critical realist ontology which stresses the significance of both objectivity *and* subjectivity, of structure *and* agency.

Giddens (1984) discusses in structuration theory the duality and inter-connectedness of structure and agency: where structure both constrains and enables individual action; with continuous individual reflexivity progressing the ever evolving opinions, actions and behaviours of people (social agents) who adapt in accordance with their evolving knowledge or perceived knowledge. Due to reflexivity and evolving understandings, the predictability that agents will engage in certain actions is not absolute. Nor is the result of actions undertaken predictable given the dialectic nature of structure and agency influencing each other. Giddens proclaims that 'social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution' (Giddens, 1976: 121).

While an objective reality and structure exists, it is important to recognise that 'society only has form and that form only has effects on people in so far as structure is produced and reproduced in what people do' (Giddens & Pierson, 1998: 77). In this study, I undertake to explore identity construction (reconstruction) in an international

context, given that the familiar structures of the home country are no longer relevant. Even prior to analysing the narratives, I would assume that being in a different, unfamiliar structure impacts upon the individual, who in turn shapes his/her identity and lifestyle in order to make best the options perceived open to him/her in acculturating and integrating into the new environment.

I, as a social scientist, am interpreting a social world which is also being interpreted by the individuals within that social world. Giddens (1987) terms this the ‘double hermeneutic’ where there is a connection between the knowledge of the social researcher/scientist and actual human agent action. While I include my interpretation of the narratives, I also, in including extracts and quotes from the interview transcripts (see Chapters Seven and Eight), am allowing the respondents to speak for themselves, through the texts they shared with me in the course of the interviews.

6.5 The Internal Conversation

[T]hrough inner dialogue, we prioritise our ‘ultimate concerns’, with which we identify ourselves. Simultaneously, we accommodate other, ineluctable concerns to a subordinate status within an overall *modus vivendi*, which we deem worthy of living out and also one with which we think we can live. This is the stuff of our inner lives; a reflexive defining of ourselves, based upon self-knowledge clarified through the internal conversation. Dialogical reflexivity thus integrates ourselves around what we care about most (Archer, 2003: 32)

Archer (2003) presents her concept of the inner conversation or ‘human reflexive deliberations’ (Archer, 2003: 14) as playing a crucial role in the mediation between structure and agency. The internal dialogue that agents have with themselves in formulating decisions about courses of action to follow is particularly relevant in this

study. It incorporates the situational, temporal and historical intricacies of how agents act as they do. Per Archer (2000: 318) 'the world cannot dictate to us what to care about most'. That is because what we care about most depends on a number of elements, oftentimes such elements being subconscious to the agent at the time. We only make sense of our choices through retrospective sensemaking, which may result in knowledge of why certain decisions were made over others, or in simply the agent 'boxing' their respective decision in such a way so that it enables them to continue their lives without dwelling on the choices that have been made and cannot be unmade.

An advocate of critical realism, Margaret Archer's (2003) internal conversation is used in this study as a means of explaining the mediation between structure and agency. Her work concerning the internal conversation has similarities with Burgoyne and Hodgson's (1983) study where they collected 'data about managers' experience of their work... having them 'think aloud' while doing their work, and 're-live' episodes soon afterwards' (1983: 387). The retrospective sensemaking (see Section 6.6) of choices and decisions made is apparent in the narratives of this study, as the individuals relate their stories and reflect upon the pathways they are on, making sense of their choices retrospectively (Weick, 1995). In real time however the internal conversation is apparent as the sample, consciously or unconsciously, acted outside or beyond structures, fields and habitus which they may have initially been part of; in remaining in the host country. The development of new fields, habitus, structures is evident here, albeit is often described as a difficult transition and reconstruction of identity. The moment or moments of deliberation (or indeed of inaction) concerning the individual bounded transnational's respective position with regards to living in a

host country results in the respective choice taken. That choice or decision is then subsequently reflected upon post-effect and re-wrote or re-told in a way that enables the individual to make more sense of the decision made. I am aware of the limitations of considering choices or decision on apparent options post hoc, as memory may not be definite. As Burgoyne and Hodgson (1983: 391) note in their study ‘the ‘validity’ of data collected in this way is constrained by the extent to which the person concerned ‘censors’ his thoughts before articulation, and the possibility that some of the pertinent thoughts are unconscious, semi-conscious or in a pre- or non-verbal form’. What is of interest is however, how the sample in their narratives builds up their story of living abroad in such a way as it is in line with the identity they have constructed for themselves or are in the process of constructing for themselves. The ‘unconscious process’ that Burgoyne and Hodgson (1983: 392) refer to, whereby ‘it is possible to locate ideas, thoughts, assumptions and feelings that seem to arise in a stream of consciousness from no obvious source in perception, memory, reasoning’ has resonance with Archer’s internal conversation, and is apparent in this study.

The internal conversation is synonymous with ‘reflexive deliberation’, which Archer (2003) describes as ‘the mental activity which, in private, leads to self-knowledge: about what to do, what to think and what to say’ (Archer, 2003: 26). In reflexive deliberations or via the internal conversation, agents’ unique identities are played out in practice, where choices are made or courses of action are chosen.

Our personal identities derive from the pattern of our concerns together with how we believe that we can live it out. Although each *modus vivendi* is both fallible and subject to revision, it implies a conscious awareness of our concerns and an active agent who deliberates over their ranking, patterning and pursuit (Archer, 2003: 27).

Archer argues that the human agent has the power to determine how to act in different circumstances or situations or structures. She propounds that the

private life of the mind [is] not a passive matter of “looking inward” to see what we found there, but an active process in which we continuously *converse* with ourselves, precisely in order to define what we do believe, do desire and do intend to do. In other words, it is the personal power that enables us to be the authors of our own projects in society (Archer, 2003: 34)

Archer acknowledges that a pre-existing, social world exists, external to the agent. However the agent has subjectivity, which is ‘*causally efficacious* in relation to himself and to his society’ (Archer, 2003: 14; emphasis in original), and allows the agent to deliberate upon, and ultimately choose, his/her respective best course of action. Archer reasons that agents are self-reflexive and deliberate subjectively concerning their objective circumstances, weighing up the best course of action at any particular point of time.

In her research, Archer identifies three types of reflexive, namely communicative, autonomous, and meta (Archer, 2003). Communicative reflexives ‘are people who do indeed initiate internal dialogues in the privacy of their own minds, but that is not where they complete them. Instead, their pattern is one of ‘thought and talk’. Having raised an issue intra-personally, they seek to resolve it inter-personally’ (Archer, 2003: 167). Autonomous reflexives engage in ‘an internal dialogue with themselves and one which they do not need and do not want to be supplemented by external exchanges with other people’ (Archer, 2003: 210). The autonomous reflexive ‘seems highly confident in the outcomes of his lone inner conversations. Certainly, he often admits himself to have been wrong, but, conversely, he would not agree that he would

have done any better by consulting others, and is more likely to assert that he would have fared much worse' (Archer, 2003: 211). This reflexive grouping would appear most pertinent to the bounded transnational sample, which experience 'contextual discontinuity' or removal 'from their original social backgrounds' (Archer, 2003: 228), and this is explored further in the Findings chapters. Finally, meta-reflexivity 'entails being reflexive about our own acts of reflexivity' (Archer, 2003: 255). It is an activity we all engage in, by questioning our initial questions and reasoning why we pose the questions we do. The narratives of the bounded transnationals in my sample include examples of the reflexive process in practice; such as in the ongoing justification of remaining in France.

While Archer's concept of the internal conversation is interesting and I examine it in my analysis of the narratives, her research does have methodological limitations, in that her sample size was limited to twenty, with a quarter of her sample (N=5) not falling into any of the three reflexive categories she identified.

Nonetheless, I find her discussion on inner deliberation very pertinent in seeking to explain and understand how and why my sample has made the choices they have, despite oft difficult circumstances in an unfamiliar country and culture. Her argument that it is 'the very contingencies of life in an open system' (2003: 74) which consistently enables us to conceive of alternative futures for ourselves (2003: 73) has resonance with this study, where the choice of where to live and work; and the lifestyle and identity to embrace is apparent.

The duality of structure and agency is also a strong feature of Archer's writing (see Section 2.3.2, page 38 of this dissertation), where she proclaims that 'agents monitor themselves within *situations* and initiate courses of action in the light of their concerns, including modifying their projects according to circumstances that they confront' (Archer, 2003: 300, emphasis in original). This ability to modify projects is significant in its similarity to the protean career concept, which suggests that individuals/agents modify or morph their career direction in line with their life experience and learning. The parallels I am drawing between the different concepts in this chapter strengthened my resolve to include the different, though overlapping concepts in this theoretical chapter, so that the concepts are introduced here and can then be brought forward in the following analysis and discussion chapters.

6.6 Sensemaking

I include this brief overview of sensemaking so it can be compared with the internal conversation. The big differentiator between both concepts is that sensemaking is retrospective, whereas the internal conversation is the real-time reflexive deliberations of agents. Sensemaking is the process whereby individual agents give meaning to the events in their social and organisational environment. Weick (1995: 17) ascribes the following seven aspects to sensemaking:

1. Grounded in identity construction. Sensemaking is what it says: it is how individuals make sense of their life choices and direction.
2. Retrospective. After a certain time has elapsed, the process / the occurrence is reflected upon and takes on historical relevance. Retrospection makes the past

clearer than the present or future, but it does not (and cannot) make the past transparent. The texts analysed and interpreted in this dissertation come from interview data where respondents look back over their careers and explain their perception of how it has evolved. In this regard they are retrospective. The objectivity with which one reflects upon past decisions is questionable, but this is not an issue in this study. In this study, analysing how individuals make sense of their choices, or how they think they made sense of the choices they have made enables me to interpret their current priorities and preferences, which may (or may not) be the same priorities and preferences as when previous choices or courses of action were undertaken.

3. Enactive of sensible environments. Sensemaking occurs in complex environments which are shaped by other actors, externalities (politics, policies) and by the individual's own actions. This dissertation stresses the relevance of context in research undertakings.
4. Social. Sensemaking is a social [collective] process, with people's actions dependent on others. Stereotypes and roles are important signs here.
5. Ongoing. Sensemaking is an ongoing process. This implies that individuals constantly re-assess and make sense of their behaviour based on past experience, current knowledge etc.
6. Focused on and by extracted cues. Sensemaking is subjective. People filter out and focus on certain cues or signs, depending on their individual frame of reference.
7. Driven by plausibility rather than accuracy. Once people believe they have made sense of a question or can explain part of their lives retrospectively, they ignore other possible explanations.

The favoured methods used in sensemaking include interviews and critical incident; interviews being the research tool used in this dissertation. The following chapters consider how the bounded transnational sample has made sense of their decision to remain resident in France, and how they make sense of their career and identity in France.

6.7 Identity, Narrative Research & Identification

This section looks at identity construction in contemporary times. The concepts discussed are useful in conceptualising the identity construction of bounded transnationals. It has been shown how identity is an integral part of contemporary careers (see Chapter Five); thus identity construction is tied to career construction. Given that this research study engages with individuals who are removed from familiar structures, the issues of choice and agency become more visible. It is thus possible to garner a much more in-depth look at the process of identity and career construction; to see how identity impacts upon career paths; to examine the continued way in which identity and careers work together.

Gergen's 'saturated' (Gergen, 1991) self is a postmodern being, whose identity is strongly tied to multiple different relationships in different fields. The saturated self is pulled in several directions due to the constantly increasing demands of work, relationships and travel. Identity confusion has been linked to the notion of fragmentation of the self, with individuals engaging in 'multiphrenia' (Gergen, 1991) which is 'the splitting of the individual into a multiplicity of self-investments' (Gergen, 1991: 74). Given the permeable roles individuals take on over their life span,

it is not implausible to suggest that the inner deliberations of the internal conversation serve in aiding the process of identity construction for individuals. Their identity and priorities evolve and morph as life experiences shape them. The empirical research conducted for this study enabled an observation of the increasingly variable roles that individuals play in the course of their lives, which shape and influence career and identity construction. This is furthered in the next chapter.

Goulding, Shankar and Elliott (2002: 264) note that ‘we have witnessed a moral, social, and identity crisis over the past decades which, coupled with the demise of community and the loss of traditional family networks has resulted in feelings of emptiness and loss’. This view of identity crisis is similar to Lasch (1979), Riesman et al (2001[1950]), and Cushman (1990)’s respective discussions on identity construction and changing association in contemporary times.

Firat and Venkatesh (1995) suggest that the fragmentation of life, experience and society is visible in the rejection of authority and in the disintegration of social institutions such as the church, marriage, family and in the fragmentation of the self. Where social institutions may previously have served as solid structures for social identity, Firat and Venkatesh (1995) argue that consumption is now king, representing how individuals construct and express the myriad of identity options available to them. This dissertation does not develop the consumption discourse, but it does look at the extent to which social institutions are being rejected in contemporary society in taking the bounded transnationals’ experiences into account.

This study has engaged with narrative analysis in attempting to conceptualise the bounded transnationals' identity and career construction. Narrative analysis 'seeks to describe the meaning of experience for those who frequently are socially marginalised or oppressed, as they construct stories about their lives' (Marshall and Rossman, 2006: 53). As outlined in Chapter Two, in-depth exploratory interviews were conducted. Czarniawaska (2004: 49) describes the interview process as purposive, in 'representing nothing but themselves', as a 'window to one social reality but is a part, a sample of that reality'. In that respect, the stories and narratives collected during the interview process are temporally and contextually limited. However, narrative analysis is considered an apt approach in understanding identity construction. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006: 6), 'All people construct narratives as a process in constructing and reconstructing identity'. Since 'telling stories' seems to facilitate people in their identity construction, a narrative approach would appear most appropriate in understanding the construction of identity.

Giddens portrays self identity as being neither inherited nor static, but an evolving work in progress, a negotiation that is continually reflected upon and revised 'through linked processes of self-exploration and the development of intimacy with the other' (Giddens, 1991a: 97). This 'self-exploration' is possible through Archer's internal conversation or reflexive deliberations, and through sensemaking.

A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor – important though this is – in the reactions of others, but in the capacity *to keep a particular narrative going*. The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self (Giddens 1991a: 54).

This continuous integration of events in the forming of identity is in keeping with the protean career concept whereby agents evolve in their careers, using experiences they encounter along the way in constantly reassessing and rebuilding their career focus, priority and direction.

The lifestyle ('a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces', Giddens, 1991a: 81) that people follow does not satisfy only practical needs, but also gives 'material form to a particular narrative of self-identity' (Giddens, 1991a: 81). Thus, the lifestyle embarked upon or the routines chosen 'are constitutive of the reflexive narrative of self' (Giddens, 1993b: 75, and 'are reflexively open to change in the light of the mobile nature of self-identity' (Giddens, 1991a: 81). In the context of this study, the lifestyle that the bounded transnationals have chosen (as internationals living in France) reflects upon and is reflected in the identity construction of the individuals in the sample. Giddens (1991a) continues that 'the selection or creation of lifestyles is influenced by group pressures and the visibility of role models, as well as by socioeconomic circumstances' (Giddens, 1991a: 82). The pressure (Barker's (1993) concertive control; see Section 6.2) on the sample in this study to adopt a new lifestyle as a foreign resident in France is examined in the Findings chapters.

In this study, the sample has removed itself from 'pre-existing patterns and habits' (Giddens, 1993b: 74) or from their previous lifestyles in their home countries. Thus, in the new host environment they are free 'to negotiate life-style options' (Giddens, 1993b: 74), or to reconstruct their lifestyles and their habitus, in so doing reconstructing their self and career identity.

There are also dramatic occurrences in individuals' lives (be it redundancy, illness, becoming a parent etc) which result in a phase of identity reconstruction that is more extreme and marked in shaping the person. Giddens (1991a: 113) terms these significant life occurrences 'fateful moments'. Such significant life occurrences or fateful moments play a crucial role in identity construction in that it acts as a catalyst in transforming identity, in bringing about a re-conceptualisation of habitus, roles and priorities. Significant life occurrence exemplifies that 'nothing can be taken for granted', that 'What is acceptable/appropriate/recommended behaviour today may be seen differently tomorrow in the light of altered circumstances or incoming knowledge-claims' (Giddens, 1991a: 133-134). In this study, the extent to which significant life occurrences are relevant in the identity construction of the bounded transnational sample is explored in the findings.

In the globalised economy there are increasing choices that individuals can make, such as determining the lifestyle one can follow. However, these choices are bounded within the constraints of structures and agent considerations which are pertinent at that historical period of time. The choices undertaken also feed into and limit and shape the future choices or pathways that can be followed. As Giddens (1990) explains: 'The reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character' (Giddens, 1990: 38). Young and Collin (2004) concur and write that 'The construction of self and narrative in its various forms relies on the construction of meaning in temporal and social contexts and in relationship with others' (Young and Collin, 2004: 381). In this era of permanent change, whether it be dramatic or evolving, the individual's identity which

influences the career choices is an ongoing reflexive system which incorporates a holistic view of the agent's roles (parent, spouse, manager...), ambitions (lifestyle choices) within particular structural contexts (culture, social class, macro economic forces). The agential 'freedom' with which to choose is therefore constrained and it is necessary to take a more holistic approach with regards to self and career identity than that which has been on offer to date.

Identity, therefore, is not stable, but is a process that evolves over time and circumstance. Bauman (2001) has chosen to use the term 'identification' in relation to identity in order to emphasise the process; the 'never-ending, always incomplete, unfinished and open-ended activity in which we all ... are engaged' (Bauman, 2001: 129). The focus on self and career construction as a process that is ongoing is resonant in this study and the conceptual frameworks that shapes the analysis. The concepts proclaim the reflexivity and processual nature of identity construction within the duality of structure and agency.

6.8 Conclusions

This chapter has examined theoretical concepts which the author references in developing an understanding of bounded transnationals' identity and career construction in an international context. The duality of structure and agency as key forces in the determination of self and career identity is argued. It is also put forward that identity construction is mediated through narratives, through making sense and deliberating (via the inner conversation) upon past events and current possibilities, within the boundaries of permeable habituses and fields which frame the context

within which one can construct an acceptable identity. The reflexive and evolving nature of identity (identification) is underlined.

The discussion on structure and agency has been equated with macro (structure) and micro (agency) emphases in research, where proponents on the macro side favour functionalist approaches to research, with proponents on the micro side favouring phenomenological approaches. In keeping with Giddens' contention of the necessity to combine both structure and agency, I would fall within the social scientist research paradigm category of critical realist (see Section 2.3).

As a critical realist, I am conscious of the tension between the influence of structure and agency that has existed in the social sciences. In reflecting upon my own ontological foundations and how this ontology and my thoughts on the matter have evolved throughout the research process, I confirm moving from favouring structure to favouring agency to my current position which regards both structure and agency as feeders, enablers and limiters of each other. Both co-exist and, while structure may direct agency in so far as it provides a potential reduction in the choices available, it is still possible for human agency to choose patterns of living or lifestyles that are outside the previously conceived habitus and fields where the agent operates. Indeed in today's globalisation age, stories permeate of 'ordinary' people who take risks, tempt fate or are simply in the right place at the right time and take up an opportunity and can move beyond pre-determined routes which would be considered acceptable on a social or structural level. Even in such instances while it may appear the agent is in more control, it is however within the structure of that temporal moment and within the context of all things learned previously (independently, from social networks,

through different capital individuals have) and current stakeholders. Moreover, as the thesis of this dissertation centralises on the reflexivity and evolving nature of identity which impacts upon career choices, structure and agency are fundamental elements in understanding the holistic picture. The complementarities and interrelationship between structure and agency is a conceptually more complex construct which this study attempts to capture.

The aim is to enable a development and enrichment of the protean career concept by including elements from the other constructs examined in this chapter, which are then analysed in the context of the data collected and the themes that emerged from the data. The constructs are reviewed here with regards to how they can enlighten and aid understanding regarding identity formulation and how individuals come to follow certain life/career paths. Given the limitations to date of the protean career concept (Chapter Five) and the recommendation that this concept requires enhancement, the research findings presented in the next chapters work together with the theoretical underpinnings in this chapter to produce a more elaborate development of the protean career concept. The aim thus is to incorporate the elements of the constructs into the protean career concept which are supported by the qualitative research undertaking.

Chapter Seven

Findings & Discussion: Identity

Disjuncture and difference define this global, postmodern cultural economy we all live in... National boundaries and identities blur. Everyone is a tourist, an immigrant, a refugee, an exile, or a guest worker, moving from one part of the world to another

Denzin, 1997: xii

7.1 Introduction

In this and the next chapter on Findings and Analysis, issues that have been outlined in previous chapters are critically examined for bounded transnationals. The chapters explore the nature of reflexive and continuous identity and career construction and reconstruction for bounded transnationals in a period of time where changes in the macro environment are accelerating. It is explored how different issues (such as adjustment, power and control) combine to shape the experience for the parties concerned, and impact on the morphing bounded transnational's sense of identity and career choice/direction.

This chapter presents the main findings from the thirty-seven core subjects interviewed (the bounded transnationals resident in the South of France), together with the seventeen secondary interviews conducted. The information is structured in keeping with the second research question, as outlined in Chapter One, which seeks to examine the identity construction of the sample. The first research question (a description of the bounded transnational sample) was provided in Chapter Four, where the sample was integrated into a comprehensive overview of international assignee types. Chapter Eight turns the attention to career construction as evidenced by the sample, and deals with the third research question concerning career construction.

The findings are discussed and analysed in relation to existing literature, research and theoretical concepts (from Chapters Four, Five and Six). In this chapter the sample's identity construction, as how they would essentially identify themselves (Côté &

Schwartz, 2002), originates through the discussion on national identity and international assignee category (see Chapter Four). However, through the narratives the multi-faceted nature of identity becomes evident, with roles switching from offspring to sibling to parent to friend to foreigner to integral member of the community to work related. The extent of retention, development or promotion of a hybrid identity is explored, with the boundaries of children (and their respective identities as perceived by the parents in the sample), extended family, trailing spouse, career and role priority also examined. Individuals' perceptions on their international life adjustment is presented, how such perceptions change over time, and how the adjustment experience impacts on identity (re-construction) and career drivers. Chapter Nine builds on the analysis and develops a model of factors influencing the adjustment and identity construction aspects of bounded transnationals following an international career which stems from the findings and the literature review.

Given the vast amount of rich data collected and the extensive nature of the research, it is acknowledged that the author had to make hard choices regarding the key areas on which to focus. Data pertaining to each of the research objectives alone was lengthy, but the author decided that, rather than limit the focus onto one (perhaps two) of the research objectives, that the key findings (that is, ones that tended to re-appear among different interviewees) of all three research objectives would be shared. Each of the respondents' respective stories added new insights into why individuals decide to embark upon and remain on international assignment in a particular area indefinitely. If space allowed, each of the narratives and their respective transcripts would be scripted into the findings as individual cases (cf Crowley & Weir, 2007), given the richness each adds to others. The comparisons between the respondents'

stories are equally numbered by the differences, uniqueness and individuality of each. Thus, as a prelude to the following sections, it is the findings that were most common and pertinent to the specific research objectives that are presented here. The focus is on aligning quotations to the respective research questions in order to extend knowledge in the area. Where necessary I have supplemented the interview data from the core subjects with additional contextual interview data from secondary sources (see Chapter Two, 2.5 regarding the samples used). In order to respect the identity of the interviewees (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4), each quotation is identified by that interviewee's pseudonym. To provide context for the quotations, the interviewee's age, marital status (children's ages) and nationality is also given. To adhere to word count restrictions for the dissertation I had to cut back the length and number of quotations from an earlier draft. A full transcript of each interview (anonymized) is available from the author.

7.2 The Bounded Transnational

The respondents infer different connotations from terms which are currently used to categorise the typology of international assignee under which they fall. Terms such as 'expatriate' which has common usage in IHRM literature, as well as 'immigrant' are perceived differently by the sample, most of whom would call themselves either 'European' or 'an English-, Irish-, whatever nationality-man/woman working in France' when pressed to categorise themselves. This can be seen in Deirdre's (42, Irish, married, 2 children¹³) comments below.

¹³ Please note that more detailed information on each respondent can be found in Table 2.1.

'I don't think I, we ever looked on ourselves as expats or immigrants. We're Irish people living in France.'

Deirdre's Irish husband, Vincent (41) concurs:

'every time I see "expats"... I always assume they're talking about somebody else... I don't know why but I don't apply the term expat to myself...'

When pushed to defining themselves further both stress that they are Irish. This is in keeping with all of the interviewees in the core sample who retain completely their national identity despite no longer living in their countries of origin. They simply consider themselves Irish/British/American (etc.) people working in France. The following quotes underline this.

Francis (32, Irish, single):

'I've no doubts about who I am. ... If I ... married ... a French woman tomorrow, I probably wouldn't take French nationality, I'd remain Irish. ...It's part of who I am. I am Irish... I couldn't be not Irish. I'm 100% Irish. And I think a lot of the values I've been brought up with, ... not just family values, but also values of the country, my whole education, friends... I would strongly identify with being Irish.'

Similarly, Joe (55, British, married, 2 children) who has been more than half his life outside of his home country still feels bound to his originating country:

'I'm probably 80% what I was created by the fact that I was 21 years in the UK before I left it: with my family and the schooling and the English university and all that sort of thing... I mean that leaves its mark on the personality obviously.'

Likewise Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 son) who is also longer in France than she was in her home country still considers herself British.

'I say I'm British every time... Some people would say to me: "you're French now". I'm not. I'm not French My roots are not. I still feel British. But I think I've been influenced a lot by France'

Another long term resident in France, Geraldine (52, French¹⁴ (originally British), divorced, 2 children) also still *feels* British:

'If I had had the choice, I would have kept my British nationality. To me that's important. [It's my] ... origin. ...I still feel British though; British, not English. ... British sounds more to me more large than being English. ... English means to me sort of typically English, the caricature of an English person.. While British sounds more - well you've lived and been educated in England but you don't have the sort of English ways any more.'

She, similar to Sarah (above) wants to retain her national identity, but this has changed and broadened in its scope. For Geraldine, this is evident in her description of herself as British rather than English; for Sarah in her being British, but with French influences.

The stereotypical classification of being 'typically English' re-surfaces when describing 'expats' or 'expatriates', with the sample perceiving certain connotations with the expression(s). Geraldine describes:

'An expat means that you're living in a country where you know you're going back home so it [my situation]'s not really an expat status. I don't know [how you would describe my situation].'

She considers expatriation to be a temporary state – to be in the host country for a temporary period of time.

¹⁴ Geraldine married her French husband at a time when female spouses automatically took on French citizenship after a lapse of a certain amount of time unless they applied to retain their home country citizenship. As she explains: *'In those days when you married a French person you automatically became French'*. Geraldine simply was unaware of the law and became a French citizen unbeknownst to herself, only realising when she went to have her British passport renewed. *'Well I didn't know.... It was years later when I was told that... "well you know you're no longer English", and I said, "What do you mean 'you're no longer English'?" They said... " there's a period of time when you have to choose nationality". And I didn't know. So I became French without even knowing!... If I had had the choice, I would have kept my British nationality'*.

Vincent and Deirdre develop their perception of what an expat is, underlining that *'it's completely stereotypical and probably wrong'* (Vincent), but to them an expatriate is *'English people living in France'* (Vincent). Deirdre elaborates:

'I think expats are people that don't speak French, that ... frequent other English speaking people and ...buy a lot of food in the English shops and ... do a lot of English-y things...'

They qualify an expatriate as someone who continues to live in the host country as if they were still in their originating country. This fits in with the extreme case as described by Berry and Sam (1997)'s separation acculturation classification, with the foreign resident living in the host culture as if it were an extension of their home culture. Their description also has bearings of British post-colonialism, with the term 'expat' or 'expatriate' associated with British (English) natives.

Thus while the sample could be described as integrated into French culture (Berry & Sam, 1997) they have a strong sense of where they have come from, retaining the separation element (Berry & Sam, 1997), positively (proudly) differentiating themselves from the host nationals.

If pushed to identifying themselves as immigrants, some respondents admitted they were indeed immigrants (by definition of the term), for instance Francis, (32, Irish, single):

'I don't really think about it that much, but yeah I would say I'm an immigrant.'

It should be noted that Francis' move was initially for economic reasons and to that extent he *had* to leave Ireland, which could explain why he would describe himself as

an immigrant. His decision to stay has not been for economic reasons, given he has since been offered positions back in Ireland, but has chosen to remain in the South of France where he has made his home.

Ronald (40, Italian, married, one child) finds that Italian-European or European best describes him. He derives negative connotations from the category of 'immigrant' to which he would not assign himself:

*'I would call myself Italian or European Italian... [An immigrant?]
...maybe I'm seeing a negative shade on the immigrant: you know having difficulties in doing all the basic things, starting from scratch and everything. Which was not really true. OK we had a few difficulties but absolutely non insurmountable and we didn't start from scratch. We started with work, good social relationship, respect from everybody. ...it would not have been very different if we moved maybe from one region of Italy to another one, apart from the language of course.'*

Others in the sample also refuted the 'immigrant' classification categorically; for instance Lisa (33, German, married, 2 children) who, like Ronald (above) feels that the term immigrant suggests *having to* leave the home country (e.g. for employment) rather than *choosing to* leave the home country:

'An immigrant for me is somebody who ... had to leave somewhere else and ... for me it's the person kind of has to stay there or you're only allowed to stay there because of certain circumstances.'

Francis (32, Irish, single) re-looks at his identity during the course of our interview, and draws on his being a citizen of the European Union as granting him certain privileges. This is similar to Ronald's comments (above) where he categorises himself as Italian or Italian-European.

'I avoid that question [of being an expatriate or an immigrant] by living in Europe. ...I'd probably have to have another look at that question if I was living in South America or somewhere else. I'd certainly have a different view on it. But because I live in Europe, I can attack that question differently and I can say I'm Irish. ... I get certain rights here that as a European that no-one can take away.'

The other European Union nationals in the sample also identify with being European.

For instance Tim (54, British, married, 3 children):

'I call myself a European...when I'm tempted to put myself in a different category. I mean we started out, the conversation started with [my introducing myself as]: "I am English, I was born in Manchester". ... And I think of myself as English...'

Steve (34, British, married) describes himself:

'In terms of identity I feel like someone from the North of Europe living in the South of Europe.'

The Germans in the core sample (3 females) seem most willing to surrender their nationality, as the following interview extracts show.

Lisa (33, German, married, 2 children):

*'I don't feel German - certainly not. ... Because for me ... Germans are a bit narrow-minded and very ... settled. ...When I went back now over the summer I was like, I couldn't live there any more (laugh)... I wouldn't appreciate it to live there (laugh)... I certainly wouldn't feel French either... **I'm European.**'*

Katharina (37, German, married, 2 children) agrees: *'I really feel very European.'*

Hilda (41, German, married), 1 child) however retains her German identity:

'I'm born in Germany, I'm German, my parents are German. Although I was not very proud of being German in the first years in France [where she experienced racist comments] but I don't want to change...'

Being from a member country of the European Union seems to collect more positive opinions from host country nationals as opposed to being from ex-French colonies, as the following quotes demonstrate (see also Section 3.2 including Mary's (34, Scottish, married) comments).

Hilda (as above):

'There's still a difference between being a European in France and being from somewhere else.'

Francis (32, Irish, single):

'The North Africans have to deal with pretty much hostility and prejudice in a lot of situations in the country.'

Gordon (35, Scottish, married):

'If we were a different colour we would have a lot more trouble I think...'

Being from a member country of the European Union facilitates acceptance by host country nationals of foreign residents in the international community. They are considered the immigrant elite since they pay their taxes and attempt to integrate and enjoy French customs and ways of life.

For those in the sample that have been living in France for more than half of their lives, their identification with both their original home and long term host culture appears complicated, even confused, as Geraldine (52, French (originally British), divorced, 2 children) attempts to articulate:

'They would have to invent another word ... for people who have lived [abroad] over a certain period of time. I mean when I speak to other people in the same situation and we all know what we're talking about and we all know exactly how we feel, but there aren't really words for it.'

Her inability to describe herself under existing categories describing international assignees (such as immigrant or expatriate) vindicates the coinage of bounded transnational in describing the sample. The degree of attachment to the home country culture for this sample is quite high, with the respondents identifying strongly with their home country nationality (along the Berry and Sam (1997)'s 'separation' acculturation classification), even after twenty years as residents in France, while also engaging in becoming a member of the new society ('integration' acculturation classification (Berry & Sam, 1997)). The following comments from Susan (39, British, single), who has been resident in the area for over ten years, highlight the identity quandary.

'I think you become displaced anywhere after you've been away for a long period of time. Because ... actually I feel more at home here than I probably do when I go back to the UK. I enjoy the UK and I will probably go back there one day, there's no doubt about it, but ... I have my life ... here. In the UK now I have my family, I have friends, but ...I tend to keep ... my friends here now...'

It is clear in the findings that the issue of how to describe oneself proves difficult for the sample. They are both separatists and integrated (Berry & Sam, 1997). They consider expatriates to be individuals on temporary stay in an area, who do not integrate or attempt to enjoy the host country culture. They consider immigrants to be individuals who have had to move due to difficult (economic) circumstances in the home country, rather than having chosen to move and remain as they have done. The most comfortable description they would be of themselves as Europeans or home country nationals living/resident in France. This difficulty in self-description

was also experienced by the author during her time in the area; of not truly belonging in the home or host country, but being part of that bounded transnational community in which difference is the commonality (see Section 7.4).

As presented in Chapter One, bounded transnationals are transnationals in the sense that they are familiar with and continue to be connected to at least two cultures (their home and host environments) (see Chapter Four for a more detailed discussion on the nature of transnationals). They are ‘bounded’ by being restricted in the number of countries with which they are familiar (since they are settled and resident in the South of France, the number of countries with which they are familiar is dependent on their residencies prior to settling in France). They are also ‘bounded’ by structural, situational, temporal and relational factors which are explored further in the rest of this chapter and in the following chapters.

7.3 Identity: Relational Ties

This section examines the relational and social identity elements pertinent in the ongoing identity construction and/or validation of the sample. It delves deeper into the composition and apparent influencers shaping identity within the sample. The notion of the individual as a free agent, able to make decisions freely, is critiqued by the findings which show the complex web of actors which play a part in what the individual may ultimately choose to do.

As Section 7.2 showed, the retention of connection and bonds to the home country by the sample of respondents is apparent from the narratives. The relational ties to

extended family members persist for bounded transnationals. They would defend their culture from unjustified critique or host country stereotypes of the home country, which upset or annoy them. While they may have chosen not to live in the home country themselves, they still retain an affinity with that country. They feel that they have opened their minds to life in France, oft biting their tongues when things seem to be askew, and would appreciate the same courtesy accorded to their country of origin.

Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 child):

“England, oh yes, you eat so bad, the food is so awful in England” ... And it just annoys me at dinner parties for example if ... I’m introduced to new people and the whole conversation has to go: “oh England, oh and the scandals of the royal family...” And it’s just so cliché.... So that I find a real pain.’

Thanks to globalisation and the ease and reduction in cost of air traffic, access to family and friends in the home country can be maintained by many in the sample, at least over the short term. Katharina (37, German, married, 2 children) says she does not feel isolated in France since she has kept the relationships with her friends and family, and sees no problem in continuing to do so. Philip (51, British, married, 2 children) acknowledges that he gets to

‘see them [family and friends] all the time. I go back every ... 6 weeks – 2 months... ...Flights are cheap from the Cote D’Azur. ... I keep in touch with them because I see them so frequently... I mean London’s only about one and a half hours on Easyjet.’

Susan (39, British, single) concurs:

‘with the Easy Jet flights, I actually go home, I fly back to England once a month anyway. ...So I sort of have a foot in both countries. ... I’m closer here now to home than [when I lived and worked in England] ... It takes me less time because also we live right on the edge of the airport so I actually walk home from the airport sometimes...’

The physical and temporal proximity to the home country as outlined by the above quotes exemplifies how globalisation facilitates a flexpatriate (frequent traveller) approach to living internationally, whereby individuals can easily return to their home country for a weekend or short break if they so desire, thus easing the adjustment process for those with a reasonable air commute between the home and host country. This enables ties to be maintained with family and friends in the home country; for contact to continue which facilitates adjustment to the new environment by allowing the bounded transnational the opportunity to keep 'a foot in both countries' (Susan, above), and so enables the allegiance to both countries.

In the desire for some in the sample to remain 'close' to the home country, (potential) moves to other destinations were ruled out if those destinations would not facilitate ease of frequent return trips to the home country. Mark (34, Norwegian, married) mentions the proximity to his and his wife's extended families:

'I don't think that we will necessarily go to Norway or the UK because we wanted to be closer to the family. But we don't want to go too far away. We have to be within reach. ... You know, within a short period of time.'

While identity literature would suggest the weakening of the family unit (see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.4, and Chapter Six, Section 6.7) (Cushman, 1990; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Goulding et al, 2002; Lasch, 1979; Riesman et al, 2001[1950]), this research finds that family ties remain for the individuals that have uprooted and moved to a new culture. Indeed the family connection is a more conscious factor for individuals, given that they are removed from the frequent or regular associations with their extended family. To this extent it means a lot for respondents to retain the links to their extended family, and their extended family remain very important

factors in the potential further choices that individuals can make. Thus the individual agent's power to make his/her own decisions is not definite, as relational responsibilities and ties restrict the agent in acting purely in his/her interests. The connection between technologies of self (Foucault, see Chapter Six) or the individual agent's willingness and ability to act, and technologies of domination including, in this instance, the pressure to be close to family and so to be able to 'jump on a 'plane' at short notice if need be, is shown.

Some respondents stem from outside Europe and so are not able to commute so regularly to their home country. Nonetheless Milly (34, American, married, 2 children) recommends maintaining contact with friends and family in the home country during and after the integration process. She feels that this helps individuals in their identity reconstruction, in providing them with grounding in their identity (as perceived by the relationships in the home country environment) from which they can then build and re-examine their identity in the host country environment:

'My one bit of advice would be to keep in touch with ...some people from the past who know you, as a support, because you're going to need it: ... you're going to be put in completely different roles and be expected to perform in different ways. And just feeling how that doesn't feel true to you is going to be quite stressful, and I think continues to be quite stressful. ... People who know you as you see yourself, because you're going to be seen in a different way and you're going to think of yourself in a different way when you get in a different culture and in a different organisation. ... Different stereotypes, different expectations; and if you're used to meeting expectations or exceeding your expectations and suddenly you've got a different stereotype to meet or exceed there's a whole learning process and deciding which parts of it you want to meet, which ones you want to not meet, that/it's difficult.'

She feels that in keeping close ties with people you knew really well in the home country, you retain part of your old identity. It helps to remind you of what you are,

where you come from, who you are/were. It acts 'as a support' when reassessing your identity during adjustment and integration in the host country.

The bounded transnationals in the sample also retain links to their home country in the host country environment by joining social groups where they can experience familiarity with events they were accustomed to in the home country in spite of taking on French residency. The familiar habitus and fields are re-joined in as far as they exist in the host country. The bounded transnationals enjoy being part of different communities, sharing pre-known habituses in fields similar to those with which they were engaged in the home country. Some are involved in international groups (such as international sports clubs or business groups) and also involved in host country communities (such as on school boards, involved with local charity/voluntary work or part of a religious community). While these may not be traditional communities to the extent that they are not exact replicas to what exists in the home country, the underlying zone of comfort similarity affiliates them to the traditional community structures as described by Riesman et al (2001[1950]); for instance Steve (34, British, married) and the Church.

'I go to the English church in Nice which is like a Church of England church and I go there most Sundays.'

This finding is in conflict with suggestions of contemporary individuals moving away from community structures (such as religion) (Cushman, 1990; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Goulding et al, 2002; Lasch, 1979; Riesman et al, 2001[1950]), perhaps proposing that a reversal move back to such structures is more prevalent among bounded transnationals in seeking to construct and understand their identity in the new cultural environment. In being stripped away of familiar structures in the host

environment, there is a searching to re-build an identity with which the agent has some familiarity and congruence. The relational ties to the home country persist in importance for bounded transnationals and continue to be an identity defining element in the host environment.

Being away from extended family members leads the sample to build up close friendships within the host country environment. Mary (34, Scottish, married) philosophises regarding the friendship ties one develops when outside the home country:

*'You know life goes through kind of waves of happy periods, not so happy periods. Here in a good period in your life everything is going well then maybe you don't feel lonely or whatever. And if you go through a bad patch ... immediately people notice this lack of close connects with family and ... friends... I think that's why here we've good friends. **We'd be a lot closer to them than you would with normal friends at home because you haven't got anyone else. ... It's a little family in a way. There's no one else so I think you kind of look out for each other a little bit more.**'*

The suggestion of friends replacing family in contemporary society due to people moving away from home communities has resonance in Mary's comments (above) (Cushman, 1990; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Goulding et al, 2002; Lasch, 1979; Riesman et al, 2001[1950]). Bauman's (2000) liquidity metaphor espousing inconstancy in the nature of contemporary society is apparent. However, the findings suggest that friends are embraced as substitutes to family, rather than a demise of family and community connection. Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children) is in agreement that having friends on whom she can rely has been essential in her ability to maintain a career and run the household:

'One of the reasons that we decided to stay here and that we would never follow [Vincent] when he's working on a long term project somewhere, [is] because I have a very good network here so I'm very well looked after

by my friends. And if I ever have an emergency or anything that comes up, then I can always call somebody to collect the girls or ...that they can stay with them...'

The friendships forged vary and tend to be multicultural: of the same home country nationality, of the host country nationality, of third country nationalities. The friendship bonds are through common interests or backgrounds (work, children, social clubs, language, nationality, similar international moves...). However, the transience of some of such friendships has also been broached by the respondents. The frailty of adjustment and ultimately integration is rendered even harder when living in an international community when friends in that community are transient. Thus deep friendships may be affected when some contacts decide to move on to new country assignments or to return to the home country. Such was the case for Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) when she returned to France after an interlude in the USA where her husband was offered a three year expatriate contract. Alice found that it affected her so much that she began to keep to herself and not form new relationships the second time around in France as she was tired of making the bonds and then having people leave and having to start all over again. She missed the permanence and stability within the international community.

Similarly Billy (52, Welsh, divorced, 3 children) finds that after over twenty-five years in France, his circle of friends in France is more intimate than it was when he worked in England:

'You have quite a small social circle. I think you have to work hard to expand the social circle out. I mean in England I probably had a group of you know 50 or 80 people I knew indirectly, whereas down here it's probably a much smaller group.'

He feels that this can have a negative impact on the individual:

'From a personal point of view I suppose if you're not careful you become a little bit sort of inward looking. I mean you just focus on what you and your partner, and your close circle of friends around you...'

A further observation is the importance of retaining ties to the home country through friends made in the host country. Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 child) observes that her affinity to people originating from Britain has increased over the years.

'I have noticed as I've got older, it's more and more important for me to have English friends. I think my roots are really important for me. ... I prefer English humour to French humour. I mean I appreciate both but I think... it's just ... different... I just feel that I've got this sort of something ... more in common with, not with every English person, but with the English people that I acquired out here'

Maintaining friendships and ties to the home country as well as forging bonds of friendship with people in the host country (with host country nationals and other members of the international community) would appear to be the healthiest option for the international community. Given the potential transience of members within the international community, such ties to the home country and friendships with host country nationals and fellow bounded transnationals should help reduce stress caused by close friends relocating to a further new country (or returning to the native country).

For those in the sample who were in long term relationships or who were married, the respective partner's happiness plays a large part in the decision making process of whether to remain or leave, as the following quotes portray.

'Let's think about what's going to be good for us as a couple. ... I mean if I know I'm going to go somewhere and I know my wife will be unhappy then that's not good.' (Mark, 34, Norwegian, married)

'I miss Italy (laugh). So I like it more than here definitely. ... [But my wife] would like to stay here ... for life ...' (Ronald, 40, Italian, married, one child)

Mary (34, Scottish) confirms that dual careers and the boundaryless career path (see Chapter Five) or the ability to relocate internationally is a big limitation in assessing potential opportunities that would suit both parties in a relationship:

'Maybe we'll go somewhere else. And then it's exactly the same thing - where can we go that we can both get jobs... And also the market's not so great.'

The opportunities available are considered in light of both careers.

Similarly for Barry (39, British, married, 2 children) and Kate (38). Barry explains how he encouraged his wife, Kate, to take the position in France while she had initially turned it down thinking of his career in the UK.

'And then the opportunity came up in '95 when [Kate] was offered the chance which she turned down originally because she didn't think I would move because I was doing this HR manager job... And I remember her telling me ... "I've been offered this job in the South of France but I've ... said no because you won't move there". So I said: "you've done what? (disbelief tone)". So she went back to them and said "is it still open?" They said "yes" and we considered it ...'

The ultimate decision to move to France was a joint decision, where they weighed up the pros and cons of how such a move would impact on them both.

This complicates further the process of returning to a home country or moving elsewhere, as the feelings of the significant other players in the relationship also need to be considered. The relational sacrifices, the give and take is evident here, and is even more pronounced when children are considered (see next section).

For the majority of parents in the sample, their children were born in France. Their home is now France, as Vincent (41, Irish, married, 2 children) and Deirdre (42, married to Vincent) explain.

Vincent: *'Any time I'm ever ... asked at work, which kind of happens once every couple of months, ... "would you like to move?" and I kind of think "hang on, you're asking me to uproot my family from where they consider home?". ... It's not like we're abroad for a few years, it's actually home you know.'*

Deirdre: *'Well the girls they were born here so they don't know any other home.'*

However the sample in question remains adamant that rather than seeing their children as French, they regard them as being bi- or multicultural. Milly (34, American, married, 2 children) describes:

'My husband calls them English and I call them American (laugh). ... Well they're not French. Being born here doesn't make them French. ... I consider them frankly English, American, French. I mean they're even more hybrid than we are.'

Similarly Kate (38, British, married, 2 children):

Kate: *'I'd probably still say English... English or European. Probably swivel between the 2. But if you ask me my nationality, I'd say English.'*

The question of the children's ultimate nationality is seen more as an administrative task rather than as an integral identity defining entity, as Katharina (37, German, married, 2 children) propounds:

*'Probably the choice would be France by convenience because if they continue to live in France, well it will be French I guess.'*¹⁵

The sample considers instilling an international mindset (one of acceptance of difference) in the children at an early stage to be a positive attribute. Katharina notes:

'I see that with my kids - I'm really happy about it - they have this kind of attitude of "you're different, great!", not "you're different, woof". And the younger you are and when you understand that, the better it is. I mean we took them to all sorts of places, ... exposed to other languages ... The best moment in the school year for them is when the new teacher asks what is their nationality and when they can say: I'm Franco-German.'

Barry (39, British, married, 2 children) sees the advantages for his children in being in an environment where difference is not seen as a threat, but as interesting. He compares his 6 year old son's experiences so far it to his own upbringing.

'When you're brought up in a mono-culture where everybody speaks the same, ... looks the same, ... does the same things, supports the same football teams, somebody who comes into that culture who's different is different, you know. You recognise it, you notice it, they're strange, they're not like you. Whereas when you're in a culture where there's already diversity, it doesn't matter, ... you just accept it. He [Barry's son] does it already... with people ...that have arrived in his class that are disabled or a different colour or Dutch or whatever. He's taken it in his stride. And I can compare that with my direct experience: when I was in primary school and we had a child who moved into the area - he was white, ... British, but he was from London. And he was ostracised because he spoke with a different accent; ... a southern accent. And you know already I see at 6 years old that he's not going to be like that. And that's

¹⁵ Code Civil (France) Art. 21-11 (Act no 98-170 of 16 March 1998) 'A minor child born in France of foreign parents may from the age of sixteen claim French nationality by declaration, in the way laid down in Articles 26 and following where, at the time of his declaration, he has in France his residence and has had his usual residence in France for a continuous or discontinuous period of at least five years, from the age of eleven.' <http://195.83.177.9/code/liste.phtml?lang=uk&c=22&r=225>, from <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?idArticle=LEGIARTI000006419871&cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070721&dateTexte=20080512&fastPos=1&fastReqId=1645964404&oldAction=rechCodeArticle>, accessed 12 May 2008

great. So I'm hoping that he's not going to be fixated on ... what tribe I belong to; that tribalism would have left him.'

However, for those in the sample with grown up children, the realisation that their children are French, while they themselves remain affiliated with their home country nationality, is difficult. For instance Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 child) has long accepted that her child would not be British, but French with a British mother. However she still hopes that 'he'll catch up on it later':

'My son has got a French passport and French carte d'identité... I've hung on to my English, my British... I'm really pleased to see that he's now no longer ashamed. ...When children are little all they want is to be the same as their friends. So for a long time ...he hated it at school being teased, people calling him "rostbeef"... He just went: "I'm ... not English I'm French". ... he's ... now 21, the last few years he's got over that and is now proud of being ...half and half: his father's French...He loves my family in England... I feel he's lacking in the culture. He doesn't know the literature... So that I find yeah a bit sad. But for me the priority was for him to be, especially since he went through a divorce and everything, I wanted him to feel good and to be with his friends, to be you know well balanced and so it was less important at that time. But he decided he wanted to go to this French school, he didn't want to go to the international one. He wanted to be with his friends. So I thought that was more important than the culture aspect at that point. But ...I think he'll catch up on it later. ...He'll always be more French than English that's for sure, which is a bit weird.'

Geraldine (52, French (British), divorced, 2 children) understands how children try to conform to their peers:

'You know what kids are like at school: I mean if they're in an English environment they want to be like everyone else and speak English. If they're in a French environment the same'

This adaptability in the children in order to conform is interesting. While the sample has moved internationally and remains tied to their home country, their children's affinity and potential identity is different due to their own life experiences which are

more closely aligned with living and being schooled in France (regardless of whether it be an international or a French school). This in turn affects the sample's future moves, as Billy (52, Welsh, divorced, 3 children) explains:

'I'm used to the living conditions here, plus ... the fact that my children were born in France. And I consider myself close to my children. I don't want to be a long way away from them.'

The respondents in the sample hope their children will retain close ties with their parents' home country, even by going to study there.

Deirdre (42, Irish): *'And they may go to university in Ireland. Could be an option.'*

This was realised for Tracy (54, British, widow, 2 children), whose daughters have/are studying in the USA and in the UK respectively.

However it is a difficult question for the respondents regarding where their children's cultural affiliations will lie. Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) deliberates:

'That's the fascinating thing looking ahead. Because we're very happy here, but ... I am Scottish... And I feel very Scottish and British I suppose. I don't know what they end up feeling. Because our household is British, a lot of the influences are British. ...They're in a very French environment, they've French friends... in ...an international ... mixed school, but it's a very French school. So it will be interesting to see in a few years time what they are. And I've heard from people whose children have done school here and then made the decision to go back to the UK to go to university - suddenly this sort of holy grail of Britain and what they always thought they were, they realise that they're not. ...I don't know ... how uncomfortable it will be for them. ... At the moment they have the best of both worlds: they have growing up here and they think going to Scotland to grandma and grandpa is heaven on earth.'

The retention of ties to the sample's home country by their children is important to the sample, in incorporating their origins into their children's identity, but also in

connecting themselves to their children. However, when the children grow up and choose pathways for themselves, it can then become apparent to the bounded transnationals that their children are different to them; that their ties to their parents' home country (-ies) are less deep. As Billy (above) describes, this impacts on the bounded transnational's own identity, since he/she may want to remain near to his/her children, and such restricts his/her 'freedom' to return to the home country or move elsewhere.

Relational connections play a fundamental part in the choices embarked upon by the respondents. For some respondents the relationship could be the significant other (the partner or spouse), for others it is their children, for all the ties to the home country are retained and continue to constitute part of who they are. Social identity is very pertinent for bounded transnationals. It helps them to associate themselves with their home country nationality, while at the same time recognising that they (or by proxy, due to a significant other (spouse/partner or child)) have chosen to reside in the South of France. Social identity is but one multi-faceted component of the bounded transnational's identity. The following sections explore further components.

7.4 Identity Construction – being different, but the same

Rather than being ashamed of their nationality and background or embarrassed by their non-national status, the bounded transnationals seem to enjoy being different. Indeed for some, there is a disliking of being considered 'normal'. John (29, Belgian, single) tells how he was in a good job in Belgium when he applied for an international position.

'I would have probably been there until my pension, because ... the people there have been there 35 years and everything. And I didn't want that... So I still had this desire to go out of the country and to work abroad.'

Brian (29, Irish, single; Munich secondary sample), similar to many respondents, pioneered the move from the home country to settle in Munich. Indeed, he not only was the first person in his family to relocate abroad, he was the only one in his family to do so. Comparing himself to his siblings he remarks that:

'They're very confident in their own surroundings and I think that's very important as well. I mean you grow up in a place and you know the area and you know the contacts. You develop ... your life around that.'

However, compared to the family that has remained in the home country, the bounded transnational sample proffers unashamedly their being different. While the sample acknowledges that they retain links to their home country, they choose to be resident in France. They are not French and would be considered as foreign residents in the host culture. Equally to their home country nationals, they do not conform to the norm within that culture since they live external to it. Vincent (41, Irish, married, 2 children) describes how this non-norm conformity is actually liberating:

'I think one huge advantage of living in a foreign country is that ... when you move into a completely different culture you kind of get away with a lot of stuff... There's not a requirement to conform to anything, you just feel like, you do what you want to do... And there's a lot of opportunity around that.... I mean the UK is very strong on ...what you own, ...where you live, all that kind of stuff... A lot of that stuff melts away and you don't have to be driven by owning the house in such and such a place or owning this or owning that.... The rules that you would normally live your life by in your own culture don't apply any more. ...It gives you a lot of flexibility. You can kind of define yourself so to speak.'

This not having to conform in the host environment because the sample recognises it as different is common across the interviewees. It shows the (perceived) different

balance between technologies of self and domination (Foucault), and also how residing in France is justified through the internal conversation (Archer) in self deliberating on the liberating and non-conforming inherent advantages. Escaping elements in the home country (such as commuting, drinks culture) are mentioned as positives in living in the South of France and away from the home country culture.

Both Pat (34, British, single) and Steve (34, British, married) are happy to have left the drinks culture they experienced in Britain behind.

Pat: *'I had a wish to not have a hang over Saturday, Sunday and Monday.'*

Steve: *'...there was this kind of, certainly amongst the people in their 20s, ...drinking culture... I just felt there was an emptiness in this existence. ...just thought there has to be more to... life than this.'*

As previously shared, the respondents find it difficult to define their status in France. They see their status as 'strange' (Milly, 34, American, married, 2 children) and describe themselves as 'different' (Clare, 62, American, divorced). Angie (41, American, married, 2 children) imagines that having a French partner/husband, as she does

'helps but ... I've seen other women that ... are American ...with a French partner [that] still have a certain level of frustration in adapting. ... maybe it's just because they're maybe missing the mind sets and they just need to get over the basic reaction that "different's bad".'

Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children) agrees:

'I think that might be the hinge. Because I think a lot of people ...look to hook themselves on to something and they can't find it. So I think the difference in being able to settle in or not is that the people who are looking to hook themselves into the culture that they know and they can't find it because it's different and they're the people that will always hanker

after the culture they've come from, or always feel like they don't belong. Or the people that come and say: great, I can do what I like (laugh). ... I think the attitude that you come with and the way you see the possibilities. And if you see them as a hindrance or an advantage, that makes a difference.'

Given the need for individuals to construct a 'self-identity' and the displacement from extended family and long term friends, Lasch (1979) argues that people require psychic security which is only tenable through being noticed or admired by other people. This is evident in the interviews as exemplified by Tracy (54, British, widow, 2 children)'s comments:

'I love travelling and going abroad on holidays. I love living here in the South of France. I love that I am living where other people want to go on holidays. It was the same when I lived in Miami. It's fun and exciting!'

All respondents in the core sample note the desire for family and friends to visit them and take holidays in the area, given its climate and environment.

'We're always having people coming to stay because it's a nice location for holidays so we haven't had the time to be homesick.' (Deirdre, 42, Irish, married, 2 children)

Barry (39, British, married, 2 children) notes the change in rationale for relocating to the South of France. While previously, multinational organisations were the major employers in the area, the economic downturn which has resulted in many multinationals leaving the area shows people relocating to the South of France for the lifestyle (cosmopolitan) and quality of life (climate, environment, gastronomy, French social system) it offers.

'Because of Sophia, there's always been a steady stream of people who come here to work. But I think that has actually got less because, again for economic reasons - the jobs aren't around in Sophia like they used to be. So I think people are now choosing to come down here for life style

reasons and economic reasons [cheaper air travel facilitating having a dual flexpatriate lifestyle] rather than career reasons.'

The bounded transnational sample is removed from the lifestyles they had enjoyed in their home countries; from their 'pre-existing patterns and habits' (Giddens, 1993b: 74; see Chapter Six, Section 6. 7). In compliance with Giddens' argumentation, the sample is thus liberated and able 'to negotiate life-style options' (Giddens, 1993b: 74). They can reconstruct their lifestyles which give 'material form to a particular narrative of self-identity' (Giddens, 1991a: 81). The 'other directedness' (Riesman et al, 2001[1950]) reflects the desire by bounded transnationals to be perceived as having an exciting international life and by the desire to have the approval of others, to be for the Other (Bauman 1994). This is evidenced in the above lifestyle quotes. Being different, living an enviable life is an important factor for the international sample in this study.

The blurring of reality and fantasy (hyperreality) is evident in this study with the respondents echoing their thoughts on the South of France being a nice place to live, where others want to go on holiday (see respondents' quotes above). Drawing parallels from Firat and Vankatesh's (1995) proposition that hyperreality is visible in postmodern society in the oft but not necessarily conspicuous consumption of branded products, the sample in this study justifies their desire to remain in the host environment because of the lifestyle and environment it offers and portrays to others. They get to live the dream.

However, in spite of the sample admonishing conformity and enjoying being different and living an envied lifestyle, there is conformity, even a subtle concertive control

(Barker (1993), see Section 6.2), in the promotion of the new lifestyle as superior to a possible one in the home country. A contradiction exists in being different to family, friends and colleagues in the home country, while being similar to fellow bounded transnationals in France.

As Section 7.2 proposed, the sample is unsure of what to call themselves or as what they would categorise themselves. This again suggests the individuality (not conforming to a particular category or group) of the sample, who position themselves as different, as individuals within an international community (suggesting the exclusivity factor of being a member of such a non-conforming group). However, there is also an element of being within an international community, where others have similar experiences and have made similar choices. Catherine (40, Australian, married) describes this:

'I don't think of myself as an expat, ... expat has this sense of being different. I'm in a community where I'm actually the same as everyone, because everybody's quite different.'

This environment of being just one of many other bounded transnationals is facilitating in that it provides the individuals with a group/social identity, other than their original nationality, which aids integration (Berry & Sam, 1997).

Donal (36, Irish, married, 2 step-children) accepts that he is not your average member of the local community in France, but questions whether he would be in the home country either. It is very difficult to predict how life would have progressed had one remained or returned to the home country. Donal reflects:

'I probably never felt that I was part of the German community. I'm not part of the French community down here either... I'm living here, I enjoy it, I try and get involved in whatever the kids are doing... I'm not an active member of the local community ... If I was at home I'm not sure I would be either, I don't know.'

Angie (41, American, married, 2 children) also wonders how life would have been were she still in America.

'I don't know what my life would be like in America. I have these ideas, for example the school system, I have these ideas of how it was. Sometimes I go back and I hear other people talking about the school system and I think, it sounds weird... I think sometimes if I go back what I know, yeah ... I might be happy for a while, but you know America's gone on as well so if I go back there I could be almost just as lost, or it'd be just as different to me as France...'

This appreciation that the home country has moved on; that it is no longer the familiar place where the sample had grown up and lived is a factor in their decision to remain in the host country. Rather than have to re-adjust and re-integrate again; to re-learn their home country culture as it is today, they choose to remain where they have integrated and get on in the day to day dealings of their lives in the host environment. While many respondents feel they no longer 'belong' in their originating home country, there is an expectation that should they choose to return and re-integrate, it may not be too difficult as

'Maybe it's cultural to a sense that you're integrating to a certain extent with people you knew before.' (David, 32, Irish, single)

While the respondents are currently content in the host country, there remains a feeling of detachment, as Lisa (33, German, married, 2 children) remarks:

'It [France]'s home, it's not home country. I wouldn't say there's a home country for me.'

The respondents are very aware that they live in a host country environment with language communication barriers experienced by some more than others, while retaining core characteristics of their original country culture (such as educational system, language). The following quotes from Tim (54, British, married, 3 children) and Francis (32, Irish, single) express this lack of perfect fit:

Tim:

'I think of myself as English. But actually "what status do I have here?" The answer is "perennial foreigner". I'm not integrated by any extent. It's not because it's France. I mean if I move to Lombardy I would still carry my own English world.'

Francis:

'Now I know... I'm not from here. ... There are things you just can't get away from – the difference in education, ... the general culture. Like, in this country you ... can't even watch "Who wants to be a millionaire" and get the easy questions. ... You don't know the nursery rhymes and you don't know the little rubbish that everybody knows... and you know you're ... never going to belong totally.'

The acknowledgement of never being able to become truly French may answer why ties remain close with the home country; in order to anchor identity to some extent.

Being resident in France, but being non-French brings about its difficulties and problems with regards to how one is perceived by the locals. Whether one perceives comments from the host country nationals as derogatory differs among respondents. Donal (36, Irish, married, 2 step-children), for instance, accepts that some individuals in the host countries are just ignorant and rude to everyone, indiscriminately, while Gordon (35, Scottish, married) finds it insulting:

'I always remember when we first arrived and I didn't know the word for 'seedless grapes' and I was trying all sorts of different words which sounded like 'seedless'... and the woman ... just refused to attempt to engage with me. And I suppose it's just symbolic ...of that kind of attitude.'

Similar to traditional expatriates, resident internationals also go through adjustment stages from moving to adjusting to living in a host country environment (see Chapter Four). For the interviewees here however, this adjustment is on-going. While they feel they are *more* comfortable now with their status/position in France, it has taken some time to adjust, with assimilation (Berry & Sam, 1997), or going native never taking place. They acknowledge that they are different, but are protected in the knowledge that there are others equally different living in the area. They enjoy the lifestyle on offer and the image it portrays of them. They realise that their home countries have moved on as well and that it is impossible to know how their lives would be had they remained or returned to their home countries. Despite difficulties, they take a pragmatic approach and simply get on with life in the context of their being bounded transnationals. The identity confusion and re-construction, which the sample has gone through in adjusting and integrating in France, is considered further in the next section.

7.5 Identity Reconstruction

IHRM literature looks at the adjustment of expatriates to their host country and on repatriation to their home country. This study uses the interviewees' stories on their adjustment to the South of France to highlight their identity re-construction post-move.

It is very difficult for the sample to articulate how their international experiences and integration into France have influenced their identity. On reflection, via retrospective sensemaking (Weick), Catherine (40, Australian, married) says:

'Sometimes I think it hasn't given me sort of quite the purpose that it's perceived to give you. It probably has and maybe it's been invisible or unconscious.'

All of the respondents went through the stages of adjusting to life in France (Gullahorn & Gullahorn 1963); how they had brought with them their learned behaviours and cultures from their prior country (or countries) of residence, which they then had to re-construct to fit in with the way of life in France, as the following comments exemplify.

Joe (55, British, married, 2 children):

'I've got an English base... But I've gone past that if you like and I've had the luck to have impacts from different cultures like the German and the French.... When I first came here after 4 years in Germany, I was a German driver. I hated the way these French didn't follow the rules. And I was doing German crazy things by looking at them and flashing the lights... and after a while I said to myself: "this is crazy. You're not German. You know why don't you just calm down." And I quite like the way they drive now, because they're very... here they're sort of "yeah I know it's a rule but re-word it, we'll bend it a little bit".'

The incorporation of learning from other cultures, and the placing of the non-relevant learning aside in the context of residing in France does not come naturally. As Joe (above) describes, it took him a while to change his outlook on how the French drive compared to his Germany experiences.

Unsure of how life would be had they never left or should they return to their home country (as shown in previous Section 7.4), some actually realised their affinity to remaining in France only after being extremely close to returning to the home country. Catherine (40, Australian, married) describes how she feels more affinity to Europe now, despite being from Australia:

'I feel a bit more European. ... I took a sabbatical for 6 months ... about 2 years ago and I thought this really would be the test if I really wanted to go home to Australia... At first I liked it and then it just drove me crazy. I mean it's such a conservative country and you just don't feel like you quite fit in..., you're not quite Australian any more. You do see it quite differently.'

Similarly for Francis (32, Irish, single), who only truly felt at home in France when offered the chance to return to Ireland, which he turned down, favouring his life as constructed in France:

'Up to then I was kind of unhappy. I was kind of at a period where I wasn't very stable in some way. And I had to do that interview in Ireland and get an offer ...to actually make me decide that really that wasn't what I wanted to do. I wanted to stay in the area...., I'd got to the point in 5 years of really deciding that going to Ireland was something I didn't want to do.'

Up until that point Francis was unsure of his true motivations in working in France. Only when there was a clear choice presented to him, with each alternative being positive, was he able to determine his true motivation. The driver of his decision was both job content related and lifestyle related. With the foundations of his life in France having been established, he chose to remain in France. This finding is consistent with similar stories from other respondents, and in harmony with Archer's (2003: 300) 'internal conversation' where 'agents monitor themselves within

situations and initiate courses of action in the light of their concerns, including modifying their projects according to circumstances that they confront.’

Identity is re-constructed during the adjustment and integration period, which can result in confusion regarding identity or affinity to the ways of doing things. The interviewees acknowledge their ‘hybrid’ identity state: their allegiance to their home originating country (however tentative it may be, but allegiance nonetheless due to their personal histories and experience with the home country culture, through family, education, language), their non-French-ness (even Geraldine, the unwitting French citizen), their being ‘different’, their feelings of non-participant observer toward their home originating country, their ties to the host country (through children, spouse, work, community). They are boundary spanners in a complex international life.

Milly (34, American, married, 2 children) describes her status in stronger language terms:

‘I see myself as a true bastard (laugh). You know, a true hybrid is probably the nicest term. Yeah I’m American and I’ll always be American... I realise that’s my roots, but I don’t ... fully identify with “American” anymore and I don’t fully identify with English [English husband] or French [both children were born in France]... I feel like a true hybrid. I mean I couldn’t go back to North Carolina or Croydon and fully feel comfortable. I’d always miss the interaction with completely different people...’

This concept of being a hybrid is common across the interviews: whilst retaining your national identity to some extent (i.e. the country in which you were reared), there is a feeling of no longer fitting or belonging in that context simply because your experiences are different, your everyday life is now played out in a different country stage.

Rick (41, British, engaged) remarks that:

'You get to the point of just being foreign everywhere, including in your own, home country.'

Mary (34, Scottish, married) presents a dilemma for foreign residents:

'I feel almost in a... dilemma between here and Scotland. ... Because in some ways I'd like to go back. But now that I'm so attached to here and having 2 cultures almost, I think I'd miss it a lot if we went back. I'd miss speaking French, having French friends and... I think I might get bored if I just went back and had same friends in Scotland...'

Joe (55, British, married, 2 children) reflects on how the international identity just 'happened':

'I suppose we became to a certain degree international people just because of the way the work went and the opportunities we were offered.'

While the pendulum swing from home to host country happens gradually, almost unconsciously, it is evident that the bounded transnationals embrace difference and being different. Whether their acceptance of being different is something they truly promote as positive, or is something they have [had to] come to terms with is debatable; that is, just how comfortable are they in being different?

The difficulty during the adjustment and integration stages, and the effect on the individual's identity is well articulated by Milly (34, American, married, 2 children), who has really had to reassess her identity during her adjustment and integration into France. She explains:

'Things that I valued about myself: I thought I was a very good communicator, I thought that ...I was an achiever. If something was going wrong I could definitely ... find ways out it. And all of those things I

found: No. Those are misconceptions of myself. Obviously I'm not such a great communicator, ... I just... can't pick up these languages ... I just don't excel in areas I thought I excelled. And the things that I held as truth about myself are kind of in doubt. But at the same time, then you learn other things'

Milly's narrative above expresses the difficult identity reconstruction process that is undergone by bounded transnationals. Removed from familiar habitus and fields, suddenly unsure of one's competences and abilities, one has to re-build one's self-identity and try to maintain/re-construct into the 'new' identity a modification of the strengths one had perceived to have previously had. There are opportunities in being presented with the occasion to re-invent oneself, to embrace a new lifestyle and become a 'new' person, but this is at the potential expense of a reduction in self-confidence as evidenced in Milly's situation.

The language ability and competency of the interviewee is a notable factor in facilitating adjustment to living in France. The fluency in French and its impact on the ease of integration is highlighted. Some respondents continue to feel strongly affiliated with their home country, often-time by virtue of their mother tongue. They stress the inability to communicate as one would in their native language as a boundary to their integration into France completely. For instance Tim (54, British, married, 3 children):

'I can speak French for fun, but I don't want to get better at it because I have a fabulously rich vocabulary in English that I love and want to use.'

Gordon (35, Scottish, married) finds the language as a major cultural stumbling box to integration:

'I do feel like an outsider. ... because language and culture are such a key focus for people ... and your inability to explain yourself in precise linguistic grammatically correct terms... And I think there is an element of people looking down on you... You know it's people who probably have a lower level of education who will do that because they don't make an effort to understand what you're trying to say, whereas people with a better level of education, typically work out what it is you're talking about... And it's not helped by the fact that this area is full of tourists and I do feel when I go out and I talk people probably think that I'm here for 2 weeks and then going back to wherever it is in Northern Europe I came from. Rather than I've lived here for 6 and a half years and I'm more local than some of the locals. And that does make me feel like an outsider and therefore makes me feel less at home.'

Gordon's narrative above includes a number of elements – his language ability which results in a demeaning sense of his competences; his exclusion from proper discussion with locals due to his limited vocabulary which suggests his isolation; his perception of being stereotyped as another tourist which is specific to the location; his experience with rude locals who he feels consider themselves superior to him due to his incompetence in the language. In Gordon's (as in all respondents') narrative (s) the complexity of emotions and experiences is evident. I have (for space limitations) cut a number of the quotes presented in these chapters, but where I have kept them long, it is to show the variety of themes that come from a single excerpt, which show the structure and agent interplay rendering it impossible to prioritise either since they are irrevocably woven.

Gordon's wife, Mary (34, Scottish), agrees that there is a perception of being treated differently because of not being French:

'There are the people that we met through work are open- minded and mostly want to learn English and so they're really happy to meet foreign people and to make a bit of an effort when you explain yourself and everything. But sometimes I do have that feeling that every time you open your mouth that people think "foreigners".'

Similarly Mark (34, Norwegian, married) realises the difficulty in fully adjusting to the area without having fluent French. In working for a multinational organisation where the spoken business language is English, he, as others, has found it very difficult to immerse in the language.

'The only problem that I have is the language. And if I have opportunities to stay, I will learn the language. ... And of course my French is much better now and I'm understanding much, much more so I think if that was integrated [more] I would very much like to stay here.'

Milly (34, American, married, 2 children) confides how difficult the process was for her – from being an out-going, social organiser on home country soil to feeling helpless at times in the host environment (due to cultural, particularly language barriers).

*'I just missed being fully competent and ... pro-active. Here I'm not able to do the things that I would normally be able to do and succeed in the ways that I'd like to succeed or go in a different direction or volunteer or help or do something along those lines, like I would like to do. ... **It kind of strips away all the things that you think you know about yourself and really leaves the bare bones about what you really are...** It's both good and bad: it's a very painful process but at the same time I mean what you end up with is maybe a bit more real.'*

Her description of needing to re-assess her competencies underlines the identity reconstruction that is undergone, at times quite painfully, when integrating into the host country.

Billy (52, Welsh, divorced, 3 children) who has spent more than half his life in France recalls how his identity was reconstructed when adjusting to life in France originally; where the most mundane of previously conceived routine tasks suddenly became challenging.

'I lost quite a lot of confidence I think in those initial 6 months... Obviously I used to take the lead in the family role in Britain. I could no longer do that here, and I found that quite destabilising initially. Even the fact of initially just going to buy bread, you feel awkward about it... In time you get over that, but it was quite destabilising initially I found.'

This acceptance of who you really are, although the self-discovery may be a painful process is all part of the adjustment process. The coming to terms with whom 'you really are' (John, 29, Belgian, single) takes time, and evolves gradually through experiences while adjusting to the host environment. It affects the individual's core (as evident in Milly's and Billy's quotes above) as it forces them to reconsider their competencies and abilities and the person they perceived themselves to be, reshaping their identity and how they think others perceive them to be in the host country. This difficult identity reconstruction process is a central part of the adjustment process, and even when feeling integrated, the question regarding identity never completely evaporates. As shown in Section 7.2, the sample is unsure of what they could be termed collectively. In this section, the confusion regarding the person you are and the person you were in the home country remains to an extent. However, in order to get on with life and make the best of the situation, the bounded transnationals attempt to make sense of their identity. In relaying their experiences to me during the interviews, by articulating their retrospective stories they engage in sense-making (Weick 1995). They stress the difficulties in adjusting, but parallel that with stories of how they feel displaced from their home countries now, and are more hybrid in their cultural identity, given their international experiences. They focus on the positives, while noting the difficulties encountered and still being encountered along the way. Bauman's (2001) identification is evident in their narratives where even those respondents that are over twenty years in the region still grapple with how they would identify themselves.

7.6 Fateful Moments

Living as a bounded transnational in France has no doubt impacted on the identity of the sample. Other situational and temporal events also shape identity construction. The ‘fateful moments’ (Giddens, 1991a: 113) or significant life occurrences in people’s lives have a crucial impact upon identity reconstruction, as Kate’s (38, British, married, 2 children) account shows of when she was made redundant from her senior management role in France:

‘It’s difficult to feel [successful] when you’re sitting in this position [that is, just starting a portfolio career] thinking: “who the hell’s going to take me now?”’

Suddenly being faced with an unfamiliar and unsure future is daunting for individuals. It unbalances their identity, who they had considered themselves to be, their competencies and abilities. Similar to being made redundant (Kate’s story above), adjusting to life in a host culture leads to identity examination and reconstruction, as has been evident in the quotes shared in earlier sections of this chapter.

Experiencing a ‘fateful moment’ changes an individual’s perspective on life and who it is that they want to be. Kate continues in her narrative that:

‘Before we were closed ... I was senior manager and the next level up was ... partner and I was ... keen to do that. But looking back that would have been selling your soul really, the amount of work you have to put in. Now I’m not quite so keen. I want to be able to do my job and enjoy it, but also have some time for myself which I’d never had before, and enjoy the kids.’

In making sense (Weick 1995) of being made redundant (the fateful moment), Kate can justify, in hindsight, that it (being made redundant) was possibly not so bad. It

gave her space to re-examine what is important in her life, and rather than surround her professional career with that, to build her professional career around other things which she values (such as her family and time for herself, to reflect).

Similarly, Susan (39, British, single)'s 'fateful moment' (Giddens, 1991a) (in her case the death of a close family member) was the catalyst in her reassessing her career priorities and identity, and led to her taking a wider view of what were the most important things in her life:

'I'm not particularly interested in middle management or rising up a ladder in a corporation ... I have a very different attitude now because my father died when I was 25 and before he died my mentality was go it alone, you don't think of anything else outside of just getting ... a job and proving... Now a death in the family of a very close loved one really completely changes your outlook of how you should be living your life and it makes you wake up ... to say "hang on, am I enjoying this?". And so now I tend to really live my life where ... money isn't, obviously you need enough to survive, but it's not the be all and end all.'

These examples of 'fateful moments' play a key role in the reconstruction and re-examination of an individual's identity. Such experiences build a person's identity and influence the career and life direction that person chooses or prioritises going forward.

A 'fateful moment' can also become apparent when experiencing a new culture, as Steve (34, British, married) did when he went travelling in Australia.

'When I was working in London ... you were defined ... implicitly by the salary you earned or how important your job [was]... When I was in Australia you were defined by what you thought and whether you were an interesting person and where you were going and what interesting places you'd been to visit ... It was a completely different mindset... In London, I always felt everybody was trying to climb the social ladder somehow through their jobs. And people worked extremely long hours... and

[would] then go to the pub and get really pissed ... [as] kind of a payback ... , certainly amongst the people in their 20s -... a drinking culture - ... I mean I was sucked up in this ... as well.'

Steve's 'fateful moment' of firstly embarking on the Australia adventure led him to corroborate his perceptions that one is defined by money in London, as opposed to by one's core values and characteristics. His decision to move to France and remain in France is in defiance of what he experienced when working in London. He didn't want to be identified by what he did, but by who he was. This exemplifies the interconnection and intricate balance between identity and career; the need to satisfy both the objective and subjective career dimensions (objective job and the subjective personal development).

The bounded transnationals appear more rounded in their evaluation of their identity. The objective career (see Chapter 5) is not THE central component of their identity. Moving to France and embarking on a new life with a different lifestyle thanks to the weather and the environment and the social laws (See Chapter Three) enables the bounded transnational to construct an identity that comprises of nationality, background (including language, education), career, family and so on. It is a complicated web of identity constructs, rather than a neat typology which enables prediction of how an individual will act or make decisions regarding their life or career. This is in keeping with Giddens's discussion on identity in Section 6.7.

7.7 Roles & Identity Construction: Gender, The Trailing Spouse

Role identity considers the multiple roles (Gergen's 'saturated' self; see Section 6.7) that individuals occupy which permeate identity boundaries and determine choices

undertaken at certain points in time and circumstances. The roles people perform within their identity make-up, and their priorities change over their life span. This section looks particularly at the roles that came across very clearly in the study in relation to identity, namely gender and career. These are further considered in Chapter Eight, with more specific regard to careers¹⁶.

Twelve women and four men in the core sample moved to France with their partners/spouses as the trailing spouse (De Cieri et al, 1991; Stone, 1991), with their careers *secondary* to that of their partners (see Table 7.1).

¹⁶ Note the connection between identity and careers as examined in Chapter Five, with the call for career theory to encompass more the holistic life concerns of individuals. Chapter 8 considers the holistic careers of bounded transnationals, including roles and change over life stage.

Table 7.1 Categorisation of the Sample by Trailing Spouse

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Move to France
Alice	female	43	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish husband)	sons (13, 8)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with Scottish husband who was relocated there on local country contract. She had no job on arrival
Angie	female	41	American	Married (French husband)	son (10), daughter (8)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France after marrying French husband. No job on arrival
Barry	male	39	British (English)	Married (British wife)	1 son (6), daughter (3)	Male Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with British wife. Wife main breadwinner. He maintained portfolio of clients in UK and worked as flexpatriate initially. He had no job locally on arrival
Billy	male	52	British (Welsh)	Divorced (French ex-wife)	3 children (19, 14, 11)	Male Trailing Spouse. Followed French wife who returned to France. No job on arrival
Catherine	female	40	Australian	Married (British husband)	no children	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with British husband after working in UK, Australia. No job on arrival
Clare	female	62	American	Twice divorced	4 step-children	Prime bread winner. Single

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Move to France
David	male	32	Irish	Single	no children	Male Trailing Spouse. Followed French girlfriend to France. No job on arrival
Deirdre	female	42	Irish	Married (Irish husband)	2 daughters (11, 8)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with Irish husband who was relocated there on local country contract. She had no job on arrival
Diane	female	31	British (English)	Engaged (British fiancé)	no children	Prime bread winner. Single. Now in dual career relationship. Her partner's career predominates
Donal	male	36	Irish	Married (German wife)	2 step-daughters (14, 12)	Moved for job.
Elaine	female	45	British (English)	Single	no children	Prime bread winner. Single

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Move to France
Fiona	female	28	Irish	Single (long term relationship, French partner)	no children	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with French boyfriend. No job on arrival
Francis	male	32	Irish	Single (long term relationship, Swedish partner)	no children	Moved for job.
Geraldine	female	52	French (British)	Divorced (French ex-husband)	2 grown up children	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with French husband. No job on arrival
Gordon	male	35	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish wife)	no children	Moved for job.
Hilda	female	41	German	Married (Spanish husband)	daughter (7)	Dual career couple. Prime bread winner. Remained in France after studying 1 year in France
Ingrid	female	30	Swedish	Single	no children	Prime bread winner. Single
Joe	male	55	British (English)	Married (German wife)	son (26), daughter (25)	Moved for job.

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Move to France
John	male	29	Belgian	Single	no children	Moved for job.
Kate	female	38	British (English)	Married (British husband)	son (6), daughter (4), expecting new baby	Prime bread winner. Married with 2 young children
Katharina	female	37	German	Married (French husband)	2 daughters (12, 10)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with French husband. Reciprocal trailing spouse, dual careers, depending on whose career/position was most important to the family at time (financially and lifestyle)
Lisa	female	33	German (East)	Married (Irish husband)	2 daughters (14, 12)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with Irish husband who was relocated there on local country contract. She had no job on arrival
Mark	male	34	Norwegian	Married (English wife)	no children	Moved for job.
Mary	female	34	British (Scottish)	Married (Scottish husband)	no children	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with Scottish husband who was relocated there on local country contract. She had no job on arrival

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Move to France
Milly	female	34	American	Married (English husband)	son (2), daughter (7 months)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with British husband on local country contract. Had job on arrival. Dual career from outset
Natalie	female	56	British (English)	Married (British husband)	1 daughter (17)	Trailing Spouse, dual career. Moved to France with British husband. Kept her portfolio of clients in UK and worked as flexpatriate initially. She had no job locally on arrival
Pat	male	34	British (English)	Engaged (French fiancée)	no children	Moved for job.
Philip	male	51	British (born Jamaica)	Married (Irish wife)	2 children (7, 5)	Male Trailing Spouse. Moved to France with Irish wife. Wife main breadwinner. He worked as flexpatriate previously; now working locally - portfolio career
Rick	male	43	British (English)	Engaged (English fiancée)	no children	Moved for job.
Ronald	male	40	Italian	Married (Italian wife)	1 daughter (6)	Moved for job.
Sarah	female	46	British (English)	Divorced (French ex-husband)	1 son (21)	Trailing Spouse. Moved to France after marrying French husband. No job on arrival

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Nationality	Marital Status	Children	Move to France
Shaun	male	39	British (English)	Married (American wife)	son (2.5), daughter (8 mths)	Moved for job.
Steve	male	34	British (English)	Married (Italian wife)	no children	Moved for job.
Susan	female	39	British (English)	Single	no children	Prime bread winner. Single
Tim	male	54	British (English)	Married (British wife)	3 children (17, 15, 13)	Moved for job.
Tracy	female	54	British (English)	Widow (prev husband American)	2 daughters (24, 21)	Prime bread winner. Single
Vincent	male	41	Irish	Married (Irish wife)	2 daughters (11, 8)	Moved for job.

Note to Table: the description regarding trailing spouse status is in the 'Move to France' column

Of those, Milly (34, American, married, 2 children) was the only trailing spouse to have a job on arrival, working out of the area on a flexpatriate basis for an IT/Networking multinational with whom she'd also worked in the US. Since having children, the commuting she is required to do for the job is no longer something she wants to have to do so regularly. She acknowledges that in the relationship her husband's career is prioritised, with him on the fast track to senior management.

'I mean right now we're focusing on [my husband]'s job, since I would ideally like to change jobs... And I'm very fortunate that I have a partner that's always said: "ok, you came here for me, this was my move, the next one's yours." ...So, while I'm the secondary following partner in this case ...I don't feel placed in that position. ...Although if things continue as they are, we are going to go in different directions and it is going to end up being following [husband's name] because obviously he's ... increasing stature and professional experience and all of those things where I'm stagnating. ... The thing is that, I mean if you'd asked me [if I would place my career secondary to my husband's] before the kids were born, then I would have said: "heck no", you know "no way" and "we could have made that work". But the kids came and the priorities just changed for me...'

The complex choice of being a mother and being able to spend time with the children given the favourable parental leave offer in France has on the one hand enabled Milly to spend time with her children. However her career has 'stagnated' as a result. The ability to 'have it all' – career and mother - is questioned. To add further complication, while she has enjoyed parental leave with the children and the time out to assess how she could morph her career to better balance her home life (that is, take on a position with less travel involved), her husband's career has been progressing, rendering him the prime breadwinner in the family. Even if she were to find a position that would suit her lifestyle choice, her husband's position would still be prioritised given that he earns more, and that they need to rely on that salary as the staple for the entire family. The vicious circle which feeds into itself of being unable to devote

more time to career progression for females due to family responsibilities is thus further affected given that while her career is stalling, the male's career is improving (even incrementally), and so given the choice that the couple focus on the female's career going forward, they are restricted by virtue of the earnings that she could bring home to the family table as compared to that the male spouse can provide. Due to the female earning, in the norm, less than the male, her career is secondary to her partner and so the female is generally the one that takes on more of the family responsibilities, thus restricting her career progression further and her propensity to earn more in the future.

The remaining trailing spouses did not have any job in the host country on arrival. While their partners were adjusting within the context of being involved in an organisational environment, they were forced to 'make their own way' (Suutari and Brewster, 2000) and find employment locally. Particularly for women that have made the international career move because of their partner having been relocated to the area, adjusting to France was most difficult. These women had had careers in their home countries and on relocation, suddenly found they could no longer identify themselves to others by their career, but as an extension of their husbands. Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children) remarks on how difficult the adjustment was in the beginning:

'I must say I was a bit lost when we moved in the beginning. Because in the beginning I had this romantic idea of living in the South of France, it being wonderful and everything. And I did find I was a bit lost when we moved here. Obviously the culture is so different, I didn't speak very much French, and for the first time I found myself without a job and a sort of career of my own. ... And we had just got married so that a big change - being somebody's wife and ...so my only role in life at that point seemed to be being [Vincent]'s wife... So I found that really a bit difficult.'

Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) felt the same way as Deirdre and reflects that moving from the UK to France meant changing her role in the relationship as in the UK her career (and that of her husband's) had been on a par:

'Until then ... our approach to choices in terms of where we were living, what careers we were doing was totally and utterly even. There wasn't one that had any ... great importance than the other.'

Many of the women that moved internationally as trailing spouses found the first years difficult in trying to get work locally that somehow followed on from their educational qualifications and previous career paths in the domestic country.

Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children)'s story tracks this feet-finding exercise.

'I did a lot of things the first year... I just applied to any place I thought would be interested in me and [husband's company] ... were quite helpful in setting up some contacts through the Chamber of Commerce in Nice... And also ... I had worked very briefly in university in Galway and somebody there had a contact. So I just contacted all of the various people that I'd heard about through the different routes. ...I worked briefly for the Red Cross in Nice... I joined a Women's group here and did hiking and tennis with them and through them a lot of people, ... when they found out that I was a biologist, ...asked me to give classes to children in the International School in Nice. ...So I did a lot of things like that but I also just sent out CVs to all the companies in Nice and in Sophia Antipolis that I thought might be interested in somebody with my qualifications. And the company I work for now was the first one to reply to me and offer me an interview. And I went along to the interview. And then by a very complicated process got a job with them.'

Networking and using contacts were sources of employment opportunities that she used to her benefit. However the complex process she had to go through in order to get work renders her unwilling to move again and have to go through that whole process again.

This is similar to Mary (34, Scottish, married)'s case. Mary's husband, Gordon worked for a period of time in Germany while living in France. Initially he had wanted his wife (Mary) to relocate to Germany with him.

'But I didn't want to because I'd had such a struggle to learn French and find a job that I couldn't face it again so quickly. So we didn't and [Gordon] commuted.'

Catherine (40, Australian, married) moved with her British husband back to Europe so he could be nearer his aging parents. She describes her story of finding work in France as having to grasp at all her previous experiences in order to reassess her skills and reconstruct her career as a technical writer:

'When I came over here I thought "well I've done HR, but I'm open to do anything". And we didn't actually need much extra money to live here. ... And I tried getting professional work but the trouble was because I hadn't been in French HR, it was really very hard. I didn't speak French. It was nearly impossible to do a French HR job. And then I thought that I'd do anything and I was out trying to get secretarial, those sort of jobs, but because the French are so focused on a career they wouldn't accept me when I'd said I'm happy to do these jobs even though I'm not using all my skills. So I couldn't get any of those kind of jobs either. And then I basically started as a sort of a computer programmer, I did that for a year. I basically kind of re-wrote myself kind of as a technical writer and then used the old technical skills. I kind of over-described then and managed to get into technical writing. So it was a great change, but then I did eventually find some kind of work'.

Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) recalls how she, similar to Deirdre and Catherine (both above) found it very difficult to find work locally after moving with her husband:

'It was settling in and vaguely looking around and trying to get to know people and see what was happening. And to be honest reaching pretty quickly the conclusion that it was going to be pretty difficult for me to continue what I had been doing. Because HR in France is a very different structure and approach compared to the HR I had been doing which was much more in a head office kind of environment than in the kind of

environment that was mainly based in Sophia. And most of the HR professionals in Sophia are French and I don't have obviously a French HR background, so that was ... a concern to me obviously. ... Then you start looking around at the obvious alternatives that might be and I didn't want to go down the route of teaching English as a foreign language and stuff like that. ... Or interpreting or translating or anything like that.'

Alice didn't want to completely change her professional identity and re-construct herself based on her English native language competency (i.e. to become an English teacher or interpreter). Both Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 child) and Geraldine (52, divorced, 2 children) however did move down the route of English language teacher initially. They had both moved to France immediately after graduating and having married French husbands. They did not have any professional career behind them in the UK before leaving.

To some of the females in dual career relationships, continuing to be on par career-wise with their partner is very important to them.

Katharina (37, German, married, 2 children):

'It's good that I've done my PhD. It's probably one of my best ideas (laugh) - for the career and for my personal satisfaction as well. ...I don't have the character of somebody who can ... be married to a manager on a high level without having... I have to feel equal (laugh). That's just me. I like being equal to my husband in the work. ...And I also earn almost as much as he does. And I mean that's just wonderful. ... And probably I could live without it but I'm very satisfied by it.'

However most of the women that moved with their partners in the sample were the secondary careerists as regards they positioned their career secondary to that of their partner, and many began their career in France at a lower level to that which they were qualified. For instance Mary (34, Scottish, married), a qualified pharmacist,

admits her jobs in France have been *'a lot less interesting than what I was doing in Scotland'*, more assistant type work but she took the work because *'I didn't have much choice.'*

The females in the sample that are in dual couples do tend to sacrifice their own professional career ambitions, putting their partner's first. Mary (34, Scottish, married) confides that

'I'd quite like to go freelance actually (laugh). Because I realise now that there's a huge market in France for a native English speaker in scientific medical writing. Because everything has to be submitted in English to all the European health authorities and the ICA and the US, everything is written in English. So there's quite a big demand for it. And there's quite a few French people who write very well in English but it's still never the same as having an English speaker. So it's the way I'd like things to go. ... [But] at the moment Scott's freelance so we need the stability of a salary.'

The traditional organisational career is still perceived as being more stable, with a guaranteed income, and it is a primary factor in individuals choosing traditional career paths. In the dual career couples in this sample, the majority are split with at least one partner following the traditional organisational career path.

The male trailing spouses in the sample also sacrificed their career progression by supporting their wives' international career moves. Barry (39, British, married, 2 children) followed his wife Kate to France, giving up his career in the UK. He found the initial months of finding his feet and working as a flexpatriate in the UK to be very challenging.

'I had a part time contract to go back in the UK, running workshops and stuff, but there were long periods actually in the first 6 months when I wasn't doing anything and I was thinking: "just moved from a relatively high powered, fairly senior job in the UK and now I'm kind of sitting

around. And I've broken my career ...it's not obvious where my career's going now or am I still ambitious? Or have I traded in moving to France for my ambitions?" And there were a couple of times when I was thinking, you know on rainy days in October in 1995, thinking: "well, have I done the right thing?" ... I don't think we ever actually thought of going back. It never got to that point.... But I think from a personal point of view it was a period of ... reflection and "what do I really want to do with my career?"'

Another male trailing spouse is Phillip (51, British, married, 2 children) who moved to France with his wife when she got a job initially in Paris, then in the South of France with a pharmaceutical company. He explains their motivations for moving:

'It was a decision that we both made. ... At that time, we were both working long hours and the children were very young and we decided well ...we both can't do this, we both can't work these long hours and the children are being left alone all the time. ... I'd given up wanting to work for 12 hours a day doing work for an investment banking company in London and I wanted something different. ... Her career was taking off... So I decided to follow her, ... do something different whilst I was abroad. ... So what's happened's [lecturing job at a local international graduate business school] exceeded my expectations actually. Because I was really pessimistic about what I was going to do.'

While it is apparent that both male and female trailing spouses go through the difficult and challenging re-assessment of their career identity and their role within the relationship (from dual career partner to house-wife/house-husband), it should be noted that the majority of trailing spouses in this study are female, and that they did succeed in finding employment locally, albeit at a lower level than they would have accomplished in their home countries.

Geraldine (52, French (British), divorced, 2 children) emphasises the impossibility, particularly for women, of being able to fulfil all of one's roles to the highest level without compromise.

'I was the generation where they told you: you can be a mother, a wife and a professional person. And everybody in my environment was on that type of mode. With reflection, I mean I'm 52 - you can't have the 3. Something has to go.... I mean there's a sacrifice. And it's either your family or your career. ...I really don't believe ...a woman when she says that she is able to be a wife, a mother and a professional person.'

This notion of and question about 'having it all' is repeated in career literature concerning female managers, with Catherine Hakim's preference theory outlining the options or preferences open to women (see Section 5.4). The roles that the individual has to play depending on their personal circumstances (be they married, single; with/without children; stage of career) cannot be neatly categorised and separated. They spill over onto each other and frame the choices that are made in specific contexts. This is examined further in the following chapter.

How one adjusts to life in the host country varies depending on the individual traits of the person involved. Self esteem, tolerance and most of all, resilience to any obstacles that are encountered are key traits which facilitate adjustment and commitment to seeing it through and integrating locally. Having children and/or finding a job in the area helped the female trailing spouses in the sample to overcome their initial identity crisis (of being seen as an extension of their husband), by introducing a new identity component (mother) or re-introducing the career identity which then served to alleviate some of their stress of identity re-construction in France.

7.8 Conclusions

This chapter has presented findings relating to identity construction in an international context which came from the interviews conducted. It notes the difficulty in

categorising the group of individuals when they themselves find their classification as being simply different in a context where there are many others that are also of this different status. Identity constructing elements such as nationality (and European-ness), relationship to the home country family and friends, children, roles and integration/adjustment efforts are considered. The saturated self (Gergen, see Section 6.7) is epitomised in the respondents' narratives where a series of roles are evident (child, sibling, partner/spouse, parent, friend, club/group member, employee, community member...), each influencing the identity reconstruction of the bounded transnational in the host environment, South of France.

The extent of retaining connection with the home country is noted in parallel with integration in the host country. This would classify the sample as both integrated and separated (Berry & Sam, 1997), with the individual retaining attachment to the home culture (separation) while also engaging in becoming a member of the new society (integration), but never affiliating themselves as being French (assimilation).

It takes time to acclimatise and come to terms with living in a new culture. However, the integration to the extent that that the individual starts to feel more at home in the host culture than the home culture seems to just evolve almost unconsciously over time, rather than be a sudden revolution. It is a difficult concept for individuals to grasp if they consider it – of uprooting from what one has known – but it seems many individuals do NOT consider it; it just seems to happen with the passing of time. Given the difficult experience in acculturating, the respondents are lax in wanting to undertake a further international move, even to relocate to the home country, given

the knowledge that the home country may have changed from what the respondent had known.

While this chapter has presented the difficult process of identity reconstruction for the sample and the obstacles they face, it should be noted that the sample is content in the South of France; that the respondents do not constantly feel victimised and reclusive. Their comments shared here must be taken in context of their relating how they adjusted and are adjusting to life in the South of France. They like being non-conformists to their perception of their home country; they like being different and enjoying a 'holiday' lifestyle of good weather, beaches and mountains. They have built up social networks and identity groups, oft times mirroring the habitus and fields they had in the home country. Those with partners/spouses and/or children appear to be more restricted in the potential of reconstructing their identity insofar as they need to consider their significant others in constructing the international lifestyle, ensuring (probably through the internal conversation) that a balance of benefit to all/most is met.

The findings suggest that each of Riesman et al (2001[1950])'s proposed phases persist and co-exist for the sample. The new forms of community that bounded transnationals enjoy (such as religious church groups, clubs for popular sports from home countries, expatriate or international communities) reflect the 'traditional society'. The 'inner directed' or individualism of society is emphasised in the differences that are apparent among bounded transnationals, where the inner conversation reflects on preferences which make most resonance with the individual in a particular context and time. Finally the 'other directedness' reflects the desire by

bounded transnationals to be perceived as having an exciting international life and by the desire to have the approval of others, to be for the Other (Bauman 1994).

Chapter Eight

Findings & Discussion: Career

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference*

Robert Frost (1874-1963) *The Road Not Taken*

8.1 Introduction

The opening citation of this chapter from the poem by Robert Frost represents the path embarked upon by the bounded transnational sample. Each respondent in the sample has his/her own story to tell, but this is shared by their commitment to continued residency in the South of France, regardless of the work and professional careers that they follow. They have taken the 'road less travelled' in removing themselves from familiar structures and re-establishing themselves, their families, their careers, their lives in a foreign international context for a potentially permanent duration.

Chapter Five in the literature review shows how this study examines careers and career construction through the subjective and narrative discourse. The process and developmental discourse on careers is also pertinent, given the focus of the study on looking at more holistic and ongoing influences on career construction from a structure and agency perspective. An attempt at unpacking career construction was deemed a core objective of the study because of the richness of the primary material collected (narratives and life history recollections, contemporaneous contextual fieldnotes). Due to the specificity of the sample and the geographical context, the contextualisation discourse is relevant. Thus this chapter discusses and interprets the findings under the bases that the material was collected in a particular temporal and geographical context, with subjective narratives a key source of data facilitating an in-depth analysis of the process of career construction.

This chapter focuses on the third research question that was outlined in Chapter one: to find out the primary career influencers of the sample of bounded transnationals. Adopting the inclusive description of career to encompass identity, the chapter positions the members in the sample along established and contemporary career concepts (traditional, boundaryless, portfolio, protean careers), and discusses the concepts in light of the findings. Extracts from the respondents' narratives are presented to elaborate and facilitate interpretation of the findings. Chapter Nine depicts models representing the conceptualisation of career construction for the sample. The research shared attempts to progress and contribute to career theory from both an inductive empirical (the findings presented and discussed here, and further modelled in Chapter 9) and from a theoretical analytical perspective (here and in Chapter 9) by analysing career construction as a protean process.

8.2 Career Orientation - Traditional

The traditional career has evolved. Previously followers of an orthodox career remained with the same organisation for life, moving internally within the organisation's structure, up through the echelons over time. With the contemporary global business environment espousing downsizing and delayering of managerial levels, while there are increasing graduate numbers vying for similar positions with ambitions to become managers, the vertical promotional opportunities within organisations (Larsen & Ellehave, 2000) are simply not available to everyone. Today's traditional career is situated in the context of a very dynamic environment where intra organisational careers may be halted due to unforeseen circumstances (layoffs, company closures) or altered due to mergers or take-overs. Nonetheless the

experiences gained while working for the incumbent organisation shape further career directions.

Table 8.1 Representation of the primary sample's current career categorisation based on the findings in this study

Career	Respondents	
Traditional, vertical career	Shaun, Angie, Clare, Tracy, Ronald, Hilda, Elaine	Vincent, Donal
Traditional, intra-org role change (horizontal career)	Pat, Catherine, Francis	
Traditional, new role*	Fiona, Steve	Katharina, David, John
Traditional, stagnant career	Billy, Deirdre, Rick, Francis, Milly, Ingrid, Susan, Mark	Mary, Barry, Geraldine
Traditional to portfolio - pushed (unemployed, compulsory redundancy)		Sarah, Alice, Kate
Traditional to portfolio - pull (voluntary redundancy)		Joe, Gordon
Portfolio (self employed by choice)		Natalie, Lisa, Tim
Portfolio to traditional		Philip
	Incumbent Organisation (with same organisation since in France)	Boundaryless (have moved organisation since in France)

* = New role if commenced it less than two years previous to the date of interview

This section reviews the primary sample of respondents who were following what could be termed a traditional career path with their incumbent organisation at the time of their interview. This sample is further broken down into those who have moved vertically, horizontally, have recently joined an organisation, and those that remain at stagnant level in the organisation (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.2 depicts in more detail the sub-category of the sample that has followed a traditional, vertical career to date. Within this category there are individuals that have remained with the same organisation for the duration of their time in France, and those that have moved their positions to a different organisation since their time in France (boundaryless). Please remain conscious that these classifications are based on the interpretation of the findings. Thus the findings relayed here are placed in context, with additional information provided regarding the interviewee when deemed necessary.

Table 8.2 Representation of the sub-sample following a traditional vertical career path based on the findings in this study

Traditional, vertical career	Incumbent Organisation (with same organisation since in France)	Boundaryless (have moved organisation since in France)
Upper middle management-senior management	Shaun, Tracy, Hilda	Vincent, Donal
Incremental promotions-middle management	Angie, Elaine	
At peak of career, glass ceiling	Clare	
Vertical career currently stalled	Ronald	

Shaun (39, British, married, 2 children) is on a traditional career path. He has been with the same core organisation for the last ten years. However, as a proof point that there is a 'new' traditional career path in existence, the original organisation he joined was taken over by two different organisations during that period. Shaun, nonetheless, has managed to maintain his fast and relatively smooth career progression to date, which he accredits largely to his manager. He realises that his experience is not commonplace, and mentions at varying points during the interview that he feels different to the other employees in the organisation:

'I wouldn't say career planning is wonderful here... [T]here's only a few positions where people can ...evolve to. We try and evolve people within their jobs to gain more technically competent, and for most people that's ok... But for some, they're looking for managerial positions, and there's only limited positions here. ... [For me personally] only last week I was on an assessment centre for 3 days ...and that's part of [a] career development programme for me personally, but I'm one of the exceptions. I know not everyone's being treated like this.'

Shaun speaks about being 'chosen', being 'proposed' to go on expatriation to the USA, and having a personal 'career development programme' which suggests that his organisation takes responsibility for managing his career progression. However, he is clear that the same opportunities are simply not available to many other staff members, which is in keeping with what is said in the literature.

Clare (62, American, divorced) followed a traditional career path with her previous employing organisation, and subsequently with her current employing organisation, having worked over ten years in both. She finds herself currently at a glass ceiling. Nearing retirement age, she finds she is being blocked in any attempts she makes to move, even laterally, within the organisation.

'Sometimes it makes me very angry. I ... tried to move and I was just you know branded the scarlet woman. ...It was: "no, no, that's what [Clare] does". So there was even not lateral opportunity.'

She feels restricted in her desire to develop her career further; that she is boxed or labelled as the Training Manager and that is that. She feels it not worthwhile to fight and demand consideration for lateral moves since she is close to retirement; however she is not satisfied in her present role in the organisation.

The question of the respondents clearly planning their careers was met with complex replies. While some had an *idea* of where they wanted their careers to go, the agency of acting on such ambitions was restricted or enabled through opportunity (job offers, economic situation, personal ability to take opportunity). Hilda (41, German, married, 1 child) admits:

'I was ambitious, I wanted to move forward, but there was no clear plan.'

Careers are more likely to evolve as opposed to moving in accord with a master plan, as Ronald (40, Italian, married, one child) describes:

'I know what I'd like to do next but I'm not in a hurry. If I see a nice opportunity ok, otherwise I try to grow. I started this centre with one contractor reporting to me. Now I have 9. ... I still have growth plans doing what I do currently but ... I've accumulated some kind of experiences, definitely in managing centres, so there are centres which are bigger than this one maybe in the States ...that I would be very interested to see how to work and to contribute.'

Ronald recognizes the difficulty in moving ahead within an organization because *'there's more good people in the world than roles available'* and that in attempting a move to the USA it would be *'very difficult to get a work permit and things like that'*.

This echoes the new traditional career path as described in contemporary literature (Chapter Five) where vertical advancement is restricted to the rare few.

Mark (34, Norwegian, married) concurs that the opportunities for career progression in France with his multinational employer is *'very limited'*. However he is unwilling to move to a different location with the organisation *'until I know it's a good move'*.

Table 8.1 shows the representation of the sub-sample following a traditional intra-organisational role change career path based on the findings in the study. Catherine (40, Australian, married) is an example of an employee willing to invest (heavily) in pursuing things she is interested in, in the hope of furthering her career long term, despite the lack of support from her employer. She gives the following example:

'I got invited to speak at the Academy of Management Conference on a case study for [her company]. And would [her company] pay for it? ... I spent 14 hundred Euros of my own money going over there. I'm speaking at a conference... in Geneva in 2 weeks time. And [her company] ...won't pay for it. ...I'm prepared to pay to have my own coach as well because I think you've got to invest in yourself. ...It actually goes against my values to want to leave it to an organisation anyway even if they were any good at it.'

Her organisation does not support or facilitate her personal development. She is being paid to do the job she does, and any other activity is left up to her, despite it potentially bringing visibility and promoting the organisation on a world scale. The transactional nature of the psychological contract between her and the organisation is notable here, as is the move towards individuals looking after their own careers (not relying on their employing organisations to do so) as was discussed in Chapter Five.

Unlike Shaun's story, and similar to Catherine, most of the other respondents acknowledge that in order to progress in their career they have needed to take control themselves and to proactively pursue different directions.

Billy (52, Welsh, divorced, 3 children) notes that:

'It's been very much a question of me looking after it myself... I do get training but it's always down to myself ...to initiate the steps to move forward. ...It was very clear to me ... up until ... early 90s when the company was going very strongly that there was well an initiative to ...be trained, to move forward. There were opportunities to move forward ... opening all the time. Since the mid 90s it's been very difficult because the company's been shrunk, opportunities are less and less. It's a question of you wanting to go out and get it rather than the company forcing it down your neck. So it's very much left to the individual.'

Billy is one of the older respondents in the study, and has been with his current organisation for over twenty years (albeit, similar to Shaun's organisation, having been taken over by two different organisations at two different periods of time since his joining the organisation, again underlining the call for a 'new' traditional career concept). He is able to see marked changes in how organisational careers unfold. While in the past the organisation seemed to proactively encourage career progression through scheduled training programmes, it is now left more up to each individual to compete for advancement in the organisation.

In Steve's (34, British, married) organisation he finds that:

'you look after yourself here. It's a bit chaotic to be quite honest with you. You have to look after yourself'

These quotes (above) are proof of the psychological contract becoming more transactional between organisations/employers and their employees. The relational

notion of nurturing employees is retained only for the elite few and is far from the norm.

The respondents stress the importance of new experiences (Ronald and Catherine above) in their organisational careers in their personal professional development. Francis (34, Irish, single) comments how he purposely moved horizontally in the organisation so that he could gain technical experience which ‘looks really good on a CV’:

‘I was more interested in what work I was doing on a day to day basis and being team lead wouldn’t change that. ... [C]hanging job[s] horizontally set me back probably ... in terms of the hierarchy. It helped me out in terms of the CV, because I got to do stuff that... looks really good on a CV, so I’m very happy about that’.

Catherine, Billy and Francis, while following a career path with the same organisation, exemplify respondents proactively taking their careers into their own hands, whether it is due to a lack of involvement from their organisation or a personal decision to go in a particular direction. Their career path has not seen the vertical progression that Shaun’s case has; thus delineating the divergent nature of traditional career paths in contemporary organisations. Francis in particular espouses the importance of having options for a potential boundaryless career; in having a skill set that ‘looks really good on a CV’.

8.3 Career Orientation - Boundaryless

While the boundaryless career has been explored with regards to international assignments in contemporary literature, this study uses the respondents’ narratives to

explore the concept of boundaryless careers in an international context. Evidence supporting the existence of the boundaryless career is evident in the research findings.

Vincent (41, Irish, married, 2 children) (see Table 8.2) found it easy to move from one organisation to another. Despite having moved to Sophia Antipolis on a permanent transfer with the same organisation with which he was employed in Ireland, he did not feel he should remain with that organisation for the rest of his life. He did an MBA (funded by the organisation) and when circumstances came about that enabled him to take redundancy from the first organisation he did so and moved immediately to the organisation with which he is still with. Fear of the unknown did not enter into his decision to move to a huge extent since he had worked with the current organisation as customers/partners to his previous organisation. He is currently following a traditional intra-organisational career path with the current organisation; however his role is particular in that he works as a flexpatriate/transnational Monday-Thursday on a contract in the UK, while working in the local office on Fridays. He explains his reasoning for moving organisation below.

'I think one of the reasons I moved ... from Ireland was ... if I'd stayed where I stayed I wasn't going to move where I wanted to move to. So at that point that was a choice of either you're doing something else in Ireland or kind of mixing 2 ambitions - one is to go abroad and the other is to do something different, to move here. Which I did... Then after having worked ...4 years with [company name] I ... decided again, ... I need to do something else, so I started the MBA. I'd always had in my mind when I started the MBA that ... I wasn't going to do an MBA and just stay working in [company name]... And then I joined [current employer]. ...It was very easy to join them in that they pretty much offered me a job straight off... It ... [is]a quite a hierarchical organisation. You kind of have to move up through the organisation or else you kind of fall out of the organisation... And I kind of joined it half way... [T]hey just give you more and more responsibility, you tend to take on more and more responsibility. ... There are a lot of opportunities and ... it partly depends on what you want to do yourself, it partly depends on the business... Obviously from a personal point of view we'd like to stay living here

which is not beyond the realms of possibility, I mean I'm running, ... 80% of the office here so that keeps me here anyway. The job in Leeds is a 10 year contract. I will hardly be there for 10 years but don't know. ... It's not beyond the realms of possibility that after 10 years of [organisation name] or so I might just say: I've had enough of this, and I'll do something different. But I haven't got there yet.'

Perhaps a fact of modern day life is the desire for motivating work, a challenge. This desire changes over time. The above excerpt from Vincent's narrative shows his motivation to move to France with his work initially, and how he values change with regards to career in general. Loyalty to a particular organisation and having a relational psychological contract with that organisation would appear to be only to the extent that such support is reciprocated by the organisation and that the position matches the individual's motivations at a certain point in time. Once the individual begins to feel 'hard done by' the organisation or has external responsibilities or desires which take priority at a point in time, any such loyalty is tested.

Vincent's situation (above) compares well with Francis' decision to move laterally within the same organisation because it would enable him to gain a skill-set that 'looks ... good on a CV'. Having the right curriculum vitae and qualifications to enable moving across organisations was recognized by the respondents. Some consciously and proactively chose courses or work positions that would facilitate their joining different organisations.

Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children):

'I started doing some work towards a Masters in Career Counselling, which was something that I felt I could perhaps more easily manage if we ended up moving around to different locations.'

Susan (39, British, single) equally recognizes the transferability of her skills:

'I have done a secretarial course and so I could easily... go into an office sort of type arrangement. ... One of the reasons I'm doing this job now is that I think it would give me better skills that should I go back to the UK, I could probably get myself a job easier than I would if I stayed in my other job.'

Some qualifications render themselves more transferable than others. When Mary (34, Scottish, married) and her husband both agreed they would like to experience living abroad for a while, they jointly decided to focus on her husband getting a job, since Mary's skills were more transferable.

'And we decided it would be easier for my husband to try and get a job and then for me to follow and find a job when I was there. Because being a pharmacist it's relatively easy depending on the language and the country. ... I can find locum work in pharmacies quite easily, the next day even, even though it's not the line that really interests me.'

Similarly, academia facilitates following a boundaryless career: Katharina (37, German, married, 2 children) admits the ease in moving from one academic institution to another, which she has done

'because I didn't like the working atmosphere a lot and I had another offer at the business school ...'.

In addition Tracy (54, British, widow, two children) notes the tendency for people to move organisation in the I.T. industry:

'people move around companies every 2 or 3 years and probably our company is a good one to have on your CV.'

The respondents mention the value of social capital and personal contacts in facilitating inter-organisational (boundaryless) career moves. Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 child) recalls as

'interesting the way I got the job - I called up people that I knew. Through networking.'

Similarly Mary (34, Scottish, married)

'One friend gave me the address of Head of Department in another company... which is where I went next.'

The respondents admit to consciously working their career in order to amass experience that is marketable externally. For instance Mark (34, Norwegian, married) who has moved laterally but currently is stagnant on his traditional career path.

'...you cannot sit and relax and think you're going to be safe in a job anymore. You always have to be one step ahead. ... I want to be as employable as possible. And I believe that I have a better chance of being ... interesting for employers if I have a wide variety of experience, rather than just working in one segment. So I've worked in ... very different roles... I want to keep my options open, because companies today they're not going to do you any favours. If you're doing a good job, fine you're in. If they have a tough time, you're out. Simple as that.'

This transactional relationship with the employer, looking out for oneself is also evident from David (32, Irish, single) and John (29, Belgian, single), who make no qualms about following a boundaryless career. David, as Mark (above), shrugs off the notion of stability in a traditional career mode. Having a permanent job does not mean stability. There is no job for life anymore. The argument that the individual is the agent in determining his/her own fate is underlined.

'Stability is what you make it yourself. It's not really what is given to you. You can make a situation as stable or unstable as you want to make it.'

John (29, Belgian, single)'s story is similar insofar as he doesn't feel any nostalgia in moving from his current employer. He moved from Ireland to Sophia Antipolis on a permanent transfer with the same organisation, and after three years in France he took a voluntary redundancy package from the organisation. He explains:

'It was just that I happened to be in the right place at the ... right time, in the right country and everything, where they have ... social plans that are very ... beneficial to the actual employee, that I ... could take ... that opportunity [of voluntary redundancy with a large financial package]. But I didn't feel ... I owed anything ... to them or the company owed anything to me. I thought that was paid ... in full before. I did ... good work for them and they paid me.'

This extract is exemplary of the internal conversation (Archer 2003) in action, where the respondent weighs up and deliberates the perceived options or potential choices available in making a decision and in justifying the decision made. John would fit in with Archer's autonomous reflexive category (see Section 6.5) in that it would appear he made his decision without necessarily communicating with anyone else.

Hilda (41, German, married, 1 child) agrees that

'nowadays ... it's not so easy to find a job, less easy to find a job at a certain age, when you are not 20 or 25.'

Individuals with no intention of leaving their current organisation may be tempted to make a boundaryless career move through head-hunters and serendipity, as was the case for Donal (36, Irish, married, two step-children). Having no plans or thoughts on leaving the job he was in, opportunity arose to move internationally to a place he was not unfamiliar with and he grabbed the chance.

'a ... head hunter in the UK called [me] up and [asked] was [I] interested in a job in Germany. I had no plans to go abroad, none whatsoever

and was in Dublin.... And to cut a long story short, found out it [the headhunter's job on offer] was for [multinational company] in Munich. I had been in Munich before because a friend of mine from college was a German guy on an exchange and I had been back there ... in Nurnberg on ... work experience. And basically I went for the interview and they flew me over there and I suppose in some ways it was to see what it was like but the other thing it was a free weekend in Munich. ...And one thing led to another and about 3 months after the first interview I got a phone call ...wanting to offer me a job. So I decided to pack up and go.'

It is interesting how other factors then transpire to support and justify the initial career move decision. For Donal that was rumours of layoffs in the company he was with in Dublin, which materialised as the company did close down.

'I think about 2 or 3 days after I had announced I was leaving, suddenly it was announced in the US that [the company had been bought out] ... And as it turned out they basically shut down the plant in Dublin'.

This coincidence justified Donal's choice, or at least it does to himself as he engages in sensemaking as to why he moved from Ireland; given the alternative had suddenly been rendered not feasible. In this context the boundaryless career can be seen positively.

The above examples of sample respondents who have been tempted by the boundaryless career do not suggest their disloyalty to their original organisations. As Brian (39, Irish, single) from the secondary sample of interviews conducted in Munich explains, the connection between the transactional nature of the psychological contract and the boundaryless career concept does not translate that individuals are less loyal to the organisations that employ them. Rather that loyalty is bounded within the terms of the psychological contract, with the employee remaining loyal while respecting the transactional contract and reciprocal arrangement with the employer.

Brian has been loyal to every company he's worked for, despite moving on to new organisations.

'It wasn't being disloyal to [company name], it was a time to move on. I'd given everything and it was a good time to go'.

The cyclical nature of employment affects the respondents' career opportunities and job security, and by default the propensity to follow a boundaryless career. Ronald (40, Italian, married, one child) recalls when he initially moved to France in the late 1990s:

*'It was a different time for the IT market. It was possible to get a job ... wherever you want. So I would say in a realistic way we were thinking -ok, "we'll go back to Italy in 3 years". On a more chatting way it was like, "yeah but after these 3 years we'll go maybe somewhere else together. Whatever." It looked much more a land of opportunity, the IT job market at the time than it does today.'*¹⁷

The negative side of the boundaryless career concept is evident in periods of widespread economic downturn. As opportunities diminish, so does employee morale, as Gordon (35, Scottish, married) describes.

'Most of the roles down here are for tech-ie engineers like as in problem solving or development engineers. Or for other kind of ancillary support functions. ... Whereas 4, 5, no 6 years ago there were some headquarters, European Headquarters, there were some other companies that would have a wider operational focus in the area. Now it's really just call centres and support centres and some development centres. And so there's really nothing down here for me. ... You know so in a sense I've definitely sacrificed... something to remain here.'

To further contextualise the boundaryless career concept at the time of the interviews, a HR manager, Florian (French) notes the desire for employees to be in secure

¹⁷ That extract from Ronald is a further example of the internal conversation (and could potentially be classified as 'communicative reflexive' (Archer, 2003) as he has discussed options with his wife).

employment, particularly those that had gone through redundancy in different organisations.

'Nowadays we're in a situation where managers are as likely as workers to be put in the bin when money is involved. And they react to that by [availing of] ... this freedom. ... They realise they're free to move. It's more individualistic. Younger people are much more opportunistic... To a certain extent we can say that the economic rationality has won. They make people think rationally and economically for themselves... And one interesting thing to look at ...is the amazing figures of ex French executives that have decided after 5 or 6 years to quit the private sector and to become professors. There was, I think it was this autumn the first statistic from the education ministry about that and it's amazing the proportion of people that were in high position in companies that decided to quit everything to go back to school and are now teaching in college. It's a big, big change. ... People that were unemployed just think twice. They don't want to suffer 3 times from unemployment in their life and they basically say no and they make the compromise to earn less to have a more meaningful work as a professor and of course to have secure work because they're working for the administration [civil service].'

Florian furthers his argument that people desire permanent positions as much as ever; and indeed need them in order to perform common basic activities in life, such as buying or even renting a house:

'People are still very much interested in having a secure position within companies just because life is built up on the idea that people should have a permanent job. When you hear some people, politicians or managers, people that are in companies, saying that people should be employed for a limited term contract to maximise flexibility, concretely for people it's also impeaching them to buy or rent their house. And if you're not employed permanently, the view of society reminds you that you're not in the normality and that you cannot get good loans, you cannot rent, you cannot do anything basically. ... People, when they talk about flexibility, they should take into account the fact that our societies are based on the rationality of people having permanent jobs.'

The notion of a weakened psychological contract (see Chapter Five) pushing people to seeking more stable and secure employment is reinforced by Philip (51, British, married, 2 children) who spent a lot of his career in banking in the UK.

'Ambition was zapped in banking. Because after a while you realise - well you're not going to get any further really. And the money is good. So [even] if you work long hours for the money, they eventually might chuck you out as well, so it wasn't going anywhere really.'

Concerning the boundaryless career and this study, the findings relate well to contemporary research and critical thought that the notion of the boundaryless career suits the transactional psychological contract on offer by today's organisations more than it does so the individuals who may be forced to embark upon such a career due to lack of opportunity or stability in their current position, particularly in periods of economic downturn when inter-organisational opportunities may be diminishing. The pressure of meeting financial responsibilities adds stress to individuals which leads to a search for secure employment while at the same time results in a lack of trust towards employers/organisations that could potentially downsize at any time.

Some individuals in the sample knowledgeably purchased property in the South of France which was within their means, having learned from past experience of the stress that goes with repaying a large mortgage. For instance Susan (39, British, single) notes how she consciously bought a small studio for herself in France so that she would not be 'forced' to work all hours to pay for it.

'I'm financially secure in the sense that I own my little studio and ... I could just fly right back to the UK... If I had a family and a big house and ... a big mortgage to pay, then I would be concerned, very concerned. ...That's exactly how I was 10 years ago leaving my job. I couldn't leave because I had this mortgage around my neck and I had to work... I didn't have that security of ... being able to just sit back... Money was really, really tight. And I don't think I'd ever want to put myself in that position again. I've done it once and now I like where I live, what I do, and so for me if the job isn't there any more, then I'll just go back to the UK and do something else'.

The previous experience she encountered has influenced her present decisions and future options. This is in keeping with the protean career concept (see chapter Five), where previous experiences (both professional and life/personal experiences) impact on the career direction of the individual. She is open to returning to the UK and looking for work there, should the employment situation in the South of France worsen and she is made redundant. She is open to embarking on an international boundaryless career.

The boundaryless career then seems to have boundaries as people look for more security in their employment. Mark (34, Norwegian, married) would embrace moving to a different country for a period of time (but only as a traditional expatriate with the same organisation) because you

'get a letter of return. You go away, you do an assignment for 3 years, you come back, you have a guaranteed job here. These are the sort of things that you would be looking for. That would be important.'

This section has considered the relevance of the boundaryless career concept for the bounded transnational. While it is an option for the sample, and the sample are open to embarking on a boundaryless career, the extent of inter-organisational movement is restricted (or bounded) by a need for job security in order to fulfil the pragmatic tasks of property rental or purchase, for instance. While the desire for more individual agential control from the employee exists (such as with regards to the job role they perform within the organisation), this is restricted by the opportunities on offer. Perhaps in order to balance the lack of control that the individual may have in moving to a position that they would like within an organisation, the individual then focuses on elements in the rest of his/her life which may be more easily controlled, such as a

focus less on the objective career (title, financial rewards) and more on their subjective career (further learning, being content in one's professional role, balancing career and other responsibilities).

8.4 Career Orientation - Portfolio

This section relates the findings concerning those respondents following a portfolio career. These individuals are either been pushed (through lack of alternative options/choice) or pulled (through a desire to take complete control of their own working life and careers) to working as consultants or independent contractors while having France as their home base (see Table 8.1). All of the respondents listed as having portfolio careers fall within the boundaryless category in that they have moved organisation since they have arrived in France.

I would like to re-emphasise here that portfolio careers are different from protean careers. Portfolio careers are where individuals work independently on one or more contracts for one or more clients. It could be a combination of lecturing (perhaps in a number of different institutions) and consultancy (for different clients) for instance. The protean career is more a conceptual framework to explain the holistic and evolving nature of careers in the 21st century. It underlines the subjectivity inherent in careers, and the conscious or unconscious, forced or voluntary morphing of a career (with career defined in its wider context) over a person's life, being led and influenced by different structures and more individualistic factors. Proponents of a portfolio career may be as a result of a reification of the protean career concept. That is, where individuals have been able to marry subjective and objective career

dimensions, past experiences, interests and concerns in order to build a (portfolio) career which encompasses the protean career concept. However, having a portfolio career does not necessarily mean adherence to the protean career concept. This section examines the portfolio component of the sample in more detail. The following section concentrates on the protean career.

Tim (54, British, married, 3 children) is self employed by choice. He gives the following reasons for this.

'I think, when you see how much the people at the top make and when you see how much the staff make... You join a lot of companies when ... you're 25 and you do ... more or less the same job and they give you 3 % or 5% a year, and if you're good, bonuses..., but then suddenly you turn around when you're 55 and you're still no closer those top jobs. ... So I never felt like wanting that stable role to predictability. ... I mean the point about being staff is that ... supposed to have a job for life and it's supposed to be predictable, but I mean [for] a lot of different people I know and a lot of the companies I know that didn't prove to be the case. ... [As an independent consultant/contractor] I don't feel more in control, I feel less worried about being out of control. ... [For me], when you lose a job, well it's just another job. If ... I actually filled in my CV and listed every job I've probably got a couple of hundred jobs on there. So if I lose a job well it's just on to the next, who cares. I mean literally, quite literally. ... I create my own work and opportunities.'

Tim's narrative reflects what many traditional employees feel as their professional ambitions are ignored by their employing organisation. However, while the organisationally tied employee may try to control his/her career by retraining or focusing on their subjective career, 'pulled' portfolio workers are driven by being their own boss, by not relying on an organisation for work but by seeking out projects themselves. A flexpatriate/transnational, Tim's contracts can be anywhere. He prides himself on the global profile he has built up.

Nathalie (56, British, married, one child) enjoys a portfolio career which fits in with her flexpatriate (see Chapter Five) life style.

'This [the area] is beautiful. It's lovely to come back to if I'm travelling, but if I'm here for any length of time I miss the vibrancy of cities... When I go up to Paris ... I just love that edge to it, that vibrancy. ... I ... go [to Paris] Monday to Thursday ... of every other week. ... And then every other week I'll be back here'

On the other hand, respondents that have been pushed to a portfolio career due to a lack of alternatives down the traditional organisational career path, are less enthusiastic about their careers. For instance Philip (51, British, married, 2 children) who has worked for organisations and done consultancy, but is now seeking a permanent job in an organisation. This concurs with literature in this area (Cohen & Mallon, 1999; Mallon, 1999).

'What I want now is I want to be rooted in a permanent job ... I don't want my wife to feel like she's the major breadwinner and the pressure's on her...'

The preference for following an organisational career is echoed by Sarah (46, British, divorced, one child):

'If ... I was offered a job that looked really exciting, ... then I might be tempted to, for the security... Because there again I think when you're a single woman ... - my son's still doing his studies - I haven't got the reassurance of having a husband who can fly by and provide if I don't earn'.

Personal circumstances then are very pertinent for those engaged in portfolio careers. For some of the respondents having a portfolio career is the only viable career for them as it allows them more control over the jobs, contracts they agree to complete, as well as enabling them to use many of their past experiences and attain personal

development and growth (Sarah, Joe, Nathalie, Lisa and Tim). For others, particularly those new to being independent of a large supporting organisation (Sarah, Alice and Kate) it is a daunting prospect, especially after a confidence blow (Kate and Sarah in being made redundant) and being unsure of their abilities or the sale-ability of their competencies. However, the perceived security of having a permanent job with an organisation without the worry or stress of thinking about the next job cannot be under-estimated. Indeed that is why both Phillip and Barry have returned to organisational careers, and why Sarah admits she may if offered the right position.

8.5 The Protean Career

The protean career is a concept where professional, personal and environmental circumstances influence the professional career direction undertaken by an individual. As described in Chapter Five, the Greek god Proteus was able to morph and change shape at will to avoid capture. The protean career is one where individuals proactively and/or reactively morph or change their professional career orientation in order to survive in the complex network of life occurrences, serendipitous events and macro environmental challenges in post-modern times. This section reviews the respondents' stories and outlines the elements of a protean career which unite across the research study.

Rick (43, British, engaged) notes how his career has morphed from technical to business, and how his past experiences would serve him well should he be forced to change career due to potential lay-offs in his current organisation.

'One of the things I've been priding myself on is being able to pick up a new topic: either when I was technical, learning a new technical detail or re-using the technical skill initially in a remedial sense and then in a pre-sales and a consulting and a marketing sense. So you've got 2 or 3 aspects to your job. ... I could keep what I know technically or from a business perspective but do different things with it. So either of those 2 dimensions could be changed. And so if I'm laid off, or if I was forced to move for one reason or the other, I would be looking at trying to expand that role out.'

Another respondent, Barry (39, British, married, 2 children), has had quite a divergent career history to date. Having studied the Classics at university, his *'first career choice was as a pilot'*, from which he moved into Human Resource Management for a large organisation, then to consultancy, then to academia. He explains how this came about:

'I'd started flying when I was at college and I loved it, so I chose to enter that career... But when that didn't work out and I realised actually I wouldn't be a very good pilot, I thought "well there's probably other things I can be better at". One of things I considered in university was HR, was personnel work. ... I'm aware that it was a choice which was made from the point of view of my kind of personality and interests.'

His career morphed into HR, and through other opportunities into consultancy, and into academia.

His wife Kate (38) also found her 'ideal' job when her educational background in languages, coupled with her accountancy qualifications which she learned through development with the organisation, together enabled her to move quite rapidly to senior management when the opportunity to manage the Sophia Antipolis office arose:

'That was the connection - it was the languages and the accounting finally came together.'

Sarah (46, English, divorced, 1 child) stresses how being made redundant from her managerial position during the economic downturn lead to her new career direction where she was able to combine and use all of her past experiences:

'A lot of people... say to me "how come you did a French degree and now you're in Management Consulting?" ... And I think I just found opportunities that built on each stage of my career and today I'd say I'm using everything - I have to do quite a lot of research - so studying at university and now I have to do quite a lot of studying in research for these companies. I have to write reports which remind me of when I had to write essays in university so all that's useful. I have to facilitate which is my teaching background. I have to communicate a lot, there again teaching has been important and sort of helping people see the pros and cons of different situations, all that is sort of coming from the teaching experience. All my customer and sales knowledge has come from working in the customer centre. I really am using everything. I think I've sort of managed to intelligently move from one thing to another.'

Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children) explains how she has had to consistently re-invent herself internally within the organisation in order to be able to remain in the South of France:

'I started at [company name]... as an eco-toxicologist and I've been in the company since, but they've changed name 3 times... So ... I've had to sort of re-invent myself every time it's become a new company because there's been reorganisations and things. ... [W]hen the company [merged], my department actually moved to Germany so they proposed to move me to Germany but I didn't want to. We didn't want to uproot... So I decided to stay in Sophia. So they offered me a post as a toxicologist which entailed quite a lot of retraining and restructure for myself. And then when the company became [new organisation] in 2000 ... my role changed somewhat. So even though I've been in the same company since... the end of '93, ... it's been a big change process as well with the company changing each time and having to change and evolve with that.'

The combination of past experiences in developing future career pathways is a central element of the protean career concept. The ability to transform over time depending on the life focus, for the mothers in the sample from career to children to changing career direction, is apparent in the narratives (Crowley-Henry, 2008a). The protean

career also focuses on the subjective career dimension rather than on the objective one. Learning new tasks, combining work and personal life, thereby taking a holistic approach to careers is underlined. These examples (above) of individuals using their past experience in re-inventing their careers or in progressing more in their careers corresponds with the concept of the protean career whereby individuals morph their career focus over time, depending on opportunity and circumstance, in order to survive.

While organisations tend to advocate career planning and reward management based on objective career motivations (financial rewards, promotions, job title), this study finds that the subjective career motivations far surpass the objectives motivations regarding career ambitions for the sample in question. Some of respondents perceived that their objective careers had suffered negatively by virtue of their location choice. For instance Angie (41, American, married, 2 children) noted that:

'In [company name] and in France ... they pay us with the sunshine and the beautiful Côte D'Azur and the ten weeks of vacation, but there's still just [laugh] a money limit on salaries. That can be very annoying. I think financially [I] would have progressed [had I remained in the US].'

This sentiment was echoed by Rick (44, English, engaged):

'[U]nless I was completely stupid, I'd be far better off financially and up [had I remained in England]. I think here you're trading location for career advancement and money. If you're not in Paris in France, then you're not in the right place.'

Ingrid (30, Swedish, single) agrees:

'For me right now I can't say that it helped my career. I would say I would have even done better in Sweden perhaps.'

While the respondents perceive their careers in France to be potentially of a lower level on the objective career scale to that which they would be following in their home countries, they are still happy in their decision to remain, prioritising the quality of life in the area. The lifestyle anchor (Schein, 1978, 1990) is a common pattern among the respondents.

However, this does not mean that objective career factors are unimportant. For instance Gordon (35, Scottish, married) was not willing to compromise his own perceived value in taking a position which paid less:

'I got offered a job at [name] but I turned it down because I didn't think they were paying enough.'

However, on analysis of the bounded transnationals' narratives for this study, the subjective elements (such as personal development, pride in work, having a good quality of life, being able to balance work and personal life) appear to supersede any objective focus, and play a major role to play in the respondents' career location decision to remain in the South of France.

Milly (34, American, married, 2 children) mentions that free time is a big incentive:

'Sundays, taking vacations... They sound like little things but it's a completely different culture outlook for me, from being American. ... I mean even ... on vacation ... you'd still be expected to carry your mobile and take your [laptop]... And here [France] I mean you're on vacation you know. And that's a big difference...'

Steve (34, British, married) has no desire to return to the 'rat race' and commuting nightmare he experienced when working in a 'high flier' position in London. He describes the commuting nightmare below:

'The ... trains... were crowded. There were a lot of drunk people on the trains: quite often you would have like a drunken idiot staggering up the and down the corridor, bumping into people and ... talking to himself and stuff. And this was ... happening all the time. ...You would be crammed in, sat next to somebody who would be eating a Big Mac and then shoving their face full of the Big Mac... And I don't like that kind of confined space ...so yeah that got me.'

The respondents all acknowledge the value they place on the quality of life in the environment they are living, and consider it a key influencing factor in deciding to remain in the area. For instance, Kate (38, British, married, 2 children):

'The fact that you have this sort of weather and you can spend so much more time outdoors. I mean it kind of doubles your life, your living capacity, your living space, because you're outside so much of the time. And psychologically I think (laugh) it makes you happier when as soon as the sun-shine comes out this time of year [April], it's just a wonderful feeling. You're so close to the Alps. You can go into the mountains, you can go into the hills, and you can go to the sea – the variety...'

Billy (54, Welsh, divorced, 3 children) concurs, with him having proactively sought to be moved to the area:

'Having lived in California and liked the weather and the ...sea, I was always looking for opportunities to move here, and the company ...at the time was growing like wildfire and they recently opened a place down here.'

For one Irish married couple, Deirdre (42) and Vincent (41, 2 children), they will do whatever they can to avoid moving from the area:

Deirdre: 'Well we've both had the pressure to move ... We chose not to ... All of the time we have prioritised living here. We haven't ...had to sacrifice our jobs either time; we've been lucky enough to work around them... To be able to stay living here but still have the careers, with whatever it takes - either the travelling or maybe sacrificing a career move or ... accepting to do a different kind of job.'

The subjective career dimension out-balancing the objective career focus is emphasised, for had they chosen to focus primarily on their objective careers, then they would not have sacrificed career moves for remaining in the area.

Similarly for Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) and her husband as the next quote describes:

'We're very settled here and we'd need a very strong reason to go. ... [Husband] ...was beginning to get under a bit of pressure to move to the UK with [organisation] and we decided to stay. So in fact he resigned. ... Because the job was going to be very different to the job he was doing here and we felt for the right job we would make the move, but we wouldn't ...if it's not the right job. And from a financial point of view we're in the position where we could make that decision.'

Alice notes the personal gain in quality of life that an international move can make:

'The fact that quite often making an international move you can make something of a jump in terms of your quality of life.'

She further justifies wanting to remain in a host culture in the following anecdote, as living in a different country encourages you to make the most out of the different experiences on a daily basis, almost slowing life down:

'We have a good friend who's a diplomat and his view on it is: moving countries is a way of stopping time, because once you're established somewhere and the routine comes, time passes very quickly, very. And one way of making time move more slowly is making that kind of move because every single minute is new and there is a sense it feels slower. Like you know you go off on holiday and the first week goes slowly and the second week goes much more quickly...'

The favourable lifestyle that this area in the South of France appears to offer is emphasised by the sample, as shown above. Personal life (including friends, family, spouse and children) is placed before professional career for the sample, which chooses to remain in the area despite perceiving their careers would be more

successful elsewhere. The lifestyle anchor (Schein 1978) is emphasised here (Crowley-Henry, 2008c, 2009c) (see Chapter Five).

The opportunity for self development also impacts on the career decisions embarked upon by the sample. Francis (34, Irish, single) turned down a promotional position in order to work in an area that was particularly exciting to him, where he could learn innovative skills that would be easily transferable in a buoyant employment market, 'stuff that looks really good on a CV'. (See Section 8.2, also Catherine, 40, Australian, married). Learning and self-development are prioritised over organisational advancement.

The job content is also crucial for Sarah (46, British, divorced, 1 child), who made the decision to change her job after having taught English for a period of time, because it had come to the stage that she was feeling unchallenged:

'Because teaching English, it wasn't even English literature, it was English, after a while it feels though you're not learning anything. And for me one of the most important things is learning, learning, learning'.

A desire to 'have more control' (John, 29, Belgian, single) is evident from the interviewees. Rick (43, British, engaged) also expresses a desire to be at the centre of business in an organisation. He is currently following a traditional career path with the same organisation, but economic circumstances and threats of redundancy are forcing him to think of other potential opportunities. The following narrative is another example of the inner conversation, where Rick speaks about the options open to him. In his case it would appear that he falls more under the communicative reflexive

category as identified by Archer (2003) (see Section 6.5) where the pattern of deliberation is more one of ‘thought and talk’ (Archer 2003: 167):

‘I’ve definitely got one eye open right now to what other opportunities happen. And as a result of the merger, I’m expecting that there will be quite a lot of kaffuffle and something will come up, including I might get laid off. ...If I got laid off, hopefully I would get quite a good package..., so that would open up a lot of opportunities for me to either go retrain into something or learn another set of skills or get into maybe a fairly different line of work. ... I’m at the sort of dangerous age of ... early 40s - like how unemployable can I become in the next 5 years, 10 years and that’s in the back of my mind. ... If I was going to remain in the area not working for the current company, the first emphasis I’d put on is into being much more fluent in French and being able to work in a ...French environment. And I would probably be looking to work maybe for the French head office or the French subsidiary of an international company, so you’ve got the opportunity to move around internationally and what I could bring to play was my experience of being international, but working in France. ... What I’m looking for would be the opportunity now to take the knowledge I’ve got, take the skills I’ve got and then apply them to something where the head office is local, or the head office is in Europe.’

This element of agential control has been discussed in the literature review (Braverman, 1974; Crowley-Henry & Weir, 2009; Foucault, 1982, 1990). Rick’s narrative (above) shows the complexity of career decision making and the internal conversations that individuals undertake in making sense of their present circumstances and what options may be available to them. Particularly when faced with a significant change such as a new organisational structure (due to a merger or take-over), individuals begin to examine their options and weigh up where they may like their career to go. In Rick’s case (above), if he gets made redundant he could go in a different career direction by re-training or moving to a new organisation. If he gets a new opportunity in the existing organisation due to the reorganisation his career could go in another direction. He questions how one can use one’s past experiences and situation to reformulate a career direction – this is an integral component of the protean career concept, the ‘morphing’ of a career over time thanks to past and

present experiences (professional and/or personal), and potential future opportunities. It is interesting to note that Rick himself uses the term ‘morph’ in his description of career progression within the organisation since he left the UK. He would like to morph again - to take his experiences into a new role and advance his career. However the opportunities open to him in the current organisation are restricted due to his being located in France and being unwilling to relocate. He sees the alternatives more on a boundaryless career front - where he could move organisation or job type in order to be in the right place for career advancement again because he does not want to move location from living in the South of France. However, as has been outlined in the earlier sections of this chapter, further factors also influence the decision making process. In Rick’s case he notes his age as a factor he perceives to be becoming very relevant in his future career possibilities.

Donal (36, Irish, married, two step-children) and Rick’s (43, British, engaged) comments that follow are further examples from the respondents showing the prioritisation on job content for the sample.

Donal: ‘I’m back into more of a position where I think I can influence stuff.’

Rick: ‘If I was going to make a job change as opposed to a location change, I would like to get into an organisation where I can much more directly affect the end result of whatever happens.’

Being open to new challenges is a characteristic of the respondents. Clare (62, American, divorced) enjoys ‘the challenges of new’ as she explains:

‘[I]f I couldn’t have all this different environment, I would be very unhappy. I don’t like things that are the same day after day after day... I like the challenges of new.’

Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) agrees.

'I've always feared the idea of being pulled too much down a completely routine track'.

This desire for difference and lack of routine prevails across the sample of bounded transnationals.

'It depends how you're measuring success in a career. I think my career's been quite interesting here, it's international and multicultural, whereas if I was working in Scotland I might have got probably a slightly more senior position and more money, but I think it would have been a bit more boring (laugh).' (Mary, 34, Scottish, married).

Geraldine (52, British, divorced, two children) stresses the importance of being challenged and learning new things (as Sarah postulated, above) for her in her career.

'I like learning..., being curious I think pushes you to take on more. The reverse side of that is that once you know what you're doing you tend to become a little bit bored. ... I don't function ambition wise. I function more activity wise... I'm the type of person that if I'm working in the same thing for 3 or 4 years, I want to move and do other things. But it's more new and other activities rather than career wise I have to say.'

Catherine (40, Australian, married) also advocates doing a job that is enjoyable and interesting.

'As long as I'm doing something that's interesting... I will not stay in a job that I don't enjoy and that isn't giving me the things that I need.'

Learning and self-development are given priority over organisational advancement. As Mary (above) proclaims, *'it depends how you're measuring success in a career'*, the sample are prone to measuring success more along the subjective career dimension or internal success rather than the objective career dimension or external success.

Valuing quality of life (lifestyle anchor, Schein 1978, 1990) and personal development (subjective career success) above the realism of local employment conditions and advancement opportunities is evident from the sample. It bonds the sample in terms of a common identity, with the focus on the internal rather than the external experiences and successes. While each respondent has a different story to tell of his/her career and life as a bounded transnational in the South of France, this common pattern of an introspective (meta reflexivity on Archer's (2003) inner conversation categorisation) dimension is apparent, whereby the sample has questioned and continues to question what it is that he/she really wants and who it is that he/she really is.

While the respondents reflect that they could have progressed more in their respective careers had they remained in the home country (see comments earlier in Section 8.5, page 296), they value the overall experience of moving, adjusting, learning more about oneself in a challenging new environment, and consider it as being worth more than anything that may have been lost on the professional career side (see Ronald's comments below).

'This international environment [that] I work with I really enjoy. It's very difficult to get [that] out of Italy. So career wise it was not dramatic, it's not that I'm a CEO of anything now, but it was a wise career move.'
(Ronald, 40, Italian, married, one child).

Wider factors in individuals' lives - life stage, marital/parental status - all play a part in building up their respective protean career, which by definition, is unfixed and ever-changing, with significant life occurrences changing career priorities. Barry (39, British, married, 2 children) acknowledges that having children encourages reluctance

to pursuing opportunities where a lot of travel is required: *'I certainly wouldn't want to do it with kids.'*

Shaun (39, British, married, 2 children) concurs that the personal ties of responsibility with a wife and children have changed his outlook on his career and organisational ties. He comments that:

'My personal situation over here has changed and that's been, perhaps ... far more radical and impacted everything I've done in my way of living... I mean to be honest if I was on my own here then I wouldn't think twice about going to [corporate headquarters location on assignment for a few years]... But I don't think I'd survive away from my family.'

This would suggest a requirement for organisations to acknowledge the potential desire for change in job content as a result of parenthood. The roles that an individual takes on when becoming a husband/wife, parent go largely un-heeded by organisations that seem to be focusing on trying to get the most out of their workforce in terms of value/performance. However, the juggling of new roles is a stress factor for employees as it forces them to make choices time and again regarding potential career enhancing opportunities, such as for Shaun (above), in moving internationally again. See also Section 7.6 regarding 'fateful moments'.

Billy (52, Welsh, divorced, 3 children) consciously chose to prioritize his family over an ambitious career.

'I think you have to take a choice at some time in your career: either you want to stay around your family or you decide to, you want to make a career. And so my choice was to stay around my family, to avoid travelling if I could. So that limited my career path... I mean the social and the family life is essential, and that over-rides my professional life, any kind of career move...'

The role prioritisation change is evident over an individual's life stage as introduced above with regards to having children. One of the youngest in the sample, John (29, Belgian, single), who had initially moved from Belgium to Ireland and then with the same company on to Sophia Antipolis, reflects that his priorities have changed since his first move from Belgium to Ireland. He believes being older has an important part to play.

'You get older as well. When I moved to Dublin, ... I didn't think of ... what happens after 2 months when I ... maybe get made redundant...?. ... I probably would have had to go back to Belgium. Now, you think of those things. You go like: "OK if I leave the company, which is... still a good job and everything..." , [but] because you want to advance in your career, you want to do something more, something different, what's the risk involved if it doesn't happen? What are you going to do then? What are the alternatives? ... So therefore when this opportunity came, with voluntary redundancy at the company and the social plan and everything, which was introduced probably about a year ago, then you start weighing things off, and saying: "OK now you have some more time, that even if you don't find a job or it's not what you want to do ..., you still have some financial aid there".'

The inner conversation is once again in evidence here. The morphing of careers within the protean career concept describes how pieces of one's life's jigsaw of experiences and make-up contribute to the direction most attractive to the individual at particular points in time and under context specific circumstances.

This section has looked at different pieces of the narratives collected from the sample. The examples describe the three key elements in a protean career (see Section 5.3, page 156 of this dissertation): autonomy (for example having control over one's working life), personal value (for example prioritizing personal goals to organisational goals), and psychological success (for example feeling content in

oneself), thus highlighting the relevance of the protean career concept in contemporary career theory, as exemplified by this sample of bounded transnationals.

Nonetheless, the economic circumstances facing all individuals in Sophia Antipolis frame the willingness of the agents in determining the future career direction. The following section further describes the economic situation in the area at the time of interviewing.

8.6 Structural Impact on Career Choice - Economic Change

Given the downturn with regards to employment in the global economy and its knock-on effects in Sophia Antipolis, the respondents are more cautious in proactively pursuing new jobs beyond their current employers. However, in the back of their minds they are considering their marketability both internally and externally should opportunity present itself that would fit with other elements, interests, ambitions and stakeholders in their lives at that point in time.

David (32, Irish, single) recalls the beginning of the economic downturn in the area:

'In the middle of 2001 the tech market just bottomed out. [company] were in serious difficulty. So they came up with the severance package at that site to cut staff'

Ronald (40, Italian, married, one child) has also seen first hand the changes in employment in Sophia Antipolis and reminisces on how it was:

'You may move to London today because you say, ok it's a nice job ...and if I fail, there [are] many other job opportunities. So that was at the time one reason for Sophia. Sophia was full of job opportunities.'

John (29, Belgian, single) agrees that

'In today's economical environment, it's just not that easy. You could easily find yourself without a job. So you don't have that luxury anymore to just go like "OK, you know, I'll get a job anywhere". It's not like ... 2 years ago.'

Similarly for Steve (34, British, married)

'I'd assumed that I would walk into another job of a similar level of experience with my 8 years of promotions and doing very well behind me... And you can't do that ... in a depressed area like the South East of France where there's very little work anyway. Most of the organisations are making people redundant. And everybody's hanging onto their jobs like crazy because there's nothing going. There's no movement at all. Not only is there high unemployment in this region, but there's no transitional employment which means there's no-one's actually changing jobs.'

This finding emphasises the role of external market factors on the individual's career choices. Similarly for the secondary sample of bounded transnationals in Munich, the economic downturn has affected the career choices for bounded transnationals, as Andrew (38, Irish, married, 3 children; secondary sample (Munich)) and Brian (39, Irish, single; secondary sample (Munich)) describe next.

'I think a lot of people right now are just happy to have a job...I've been lucky to avoid [redundancy]. Very lucky. I see an awful lot of extremely good people being let go right now. There is no job security in this industry.... [I]t is a concern. Particularly when you have kids because the reality is if I'm laid off, then I'm in a significantly worse position here than a German would be. And in terms of the scope, opportunity of employment beyond what I have is limited. So there is that issue without a doubt.'

'I would say [that my current position is a] stop gap. I was general manager of a small company and when that basically went to the wall through the downturn, through complications, it was a question of finding a job, another job, so when this opportunity came along it was like you know I have to take it. I mean it meant quite a huge reduction in salary but it was either that or just get unemployment.'

Geraldine (52, British, divorced, 2 children) reflects on how times and the necessary employment credentials have changed which impact on being able to follow an agency-led career:

'I mean before you could, as soon as you went to university, you were sure of getting a job. Now it's not the same. I mean you can have a university degree as long as your arm, it doesn't mean you're going to have a career. It doesn't mean you're even going to have a job! I mean I meet a lot of people, who at the age of 40, 45 have done 2 or 3 different careers and that's becoming the norm now.'

This movement from life long work with the one employer to moving employer and even changing career has come about from both structural and agential, or push (due to redundancy and unemployment) and pull (the rise in individualism and seeking other alternative employers or employment) forces.

Geraldine also finds that the previously accepted advantage of being a native English speaker has dwindled in the last decade.

'I mean the difference was more apparent in the '90s. Now ...even for French people, the fact of speaking English now is just no big deal. You have to speak English. So I mean being an international person is no big deal any more - just part of the... normal life in Sophia really.'

Mark (34, Norwegian, married) is direct about how the unstable economic situation impacts on his proactive search for alternative job/career opportunities:

'We don't know what's going to happen with any company. So you have to be prepared. You cannot expect to stay in the one job for the rest of your life. We all know that. But we have to accept that and be prepared for the next move... [company name] is a good company but it's not the only company that's a good company.'

Given this context of economic uncertainty and potential downsizing and job losses, the concertive control of peers (Barker, 1993; Bentham, 1995; Foucault, 1977, 1980) in pushing individuals to be content with one's lot is clear, as outlined by Tracy's experiences below.

'Then you sort of hear: "well unemployment is so high. You should be happy that you have a job". If you complain about the stress, then ...you hear "people who are unemployed ...would like to have the stress that you're saying you've got".' (Tracy, 54, British, widow, 2 children).

This explains the tendency to remain with the current employing organisation in times of economic downturn, and to avoid the risk of moving to other potential job opportunities. In such a structural climate, the power within the employment relationship is on the organisation's side. However, should employment conditions improve, it could be that this power and control would revert to the individual agent/employee, who would potentially not be so dependent on their incumbent organisation for work and financial security. This is in keeping with Deetz's (1998: 153) 'constant reconfiguration of power relations', and also with Foucault's deliberations that power is only maintained provided it is accepted by social actors. When power shifts from the employing organisation to the individual agent, for instance, where particular skills are in short supply comparable to demand for such skills, then the already questionable loyalty of employees to their employing organisations (see Section 8.3 above) would be further tested, with the positive aspect of the boundaryless career enabled (see also Crowley-Henry & Weir 2009).

8.7 Career and Gender

While this study did not set out to identify gender differences in the pursuit of international careers pertaining to the sample in question, it became obvious from the findings that gender differences exist with regards to role division and the positioning of careers in the family unit. Some women in the sample expressed contentment with their career progression, not having personally experienced any discrimination due to their gender along the way. For instance Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) accepts that she (agentially) made the decision to put her family (structure) before her professional career and has no regrets; in fact she sees it very favourably that she was able to make that choice:

'To be honest, the gender thing I have to say absolutely, definitely not, I've never felt that [discrimination]. .. I have made personal decisions which suited me, which meant that I wasn't going to go up a corporate ladder... Maybe I never got to the point and it could well be that's where it was an issue... If I look at [ex-company] in France, [only] 2 years ago they voted their first female partner. It [gender discrimination] clearly exists. To what extent it exists because women made the decision themselves to opt out, I don't know. That was the decision I took and I'm perfectly happy with it. ... For me it's the great luck of being a woman. ... I think that I've been much freer in choices than my husband has.... The minute ...the first decision was made that we would move to come here, he became the prime breadwinner inevitably, which released me hugely..., in a way unfairly.'

The following extract provides further context to Alice's career motivations which essentially shifted her priority from professional career to having children. It suggests the complexity of factors at play with regards to career path decision making.

'You know inevitably things happen that are unexpected. When we came, ... the idea really was I would spend a few months thinking about what I was going to do, if it was going to be even possible to get a job down here... And it was around the same time we were thinking about kids. And so it was a mixture of things then. I actually had a miscarriage and of

course as soon as that happens the child thing becomes the most important thing.'

Angie (41, American, married, 2 children) is clear in her narrative that her career progression has matched her ambitions, which has made her ultimately satisfied in her professional career and being able to juggle her work and home life:

'I wasn't one that was really looking ...to climb in the hierarchy. I was more than happy to have ... responsibility for ... a certain project. ...I think that I'm probably somewhat at my limit or at least at a certain plateau for a certain... time (laugh), for probably a long time (laugh). And for a couple of reasons: one is that I don't really want to go much further. I also feel like I've gotten here ... fairly easily. ... I haven't made a big sacrifice or a big effort to really get where I am. But there's a certain limit relative to my personal life that I'm ... willing to take. And then at least for the moment I have the choice..., if the company were in a critical situation and they really were pushing me to do something else I might revisit that decision. But ... I don't want to compromise my whole ... personal life. Just to give an example, the director I work for as of Friday last week did not know if he was going to the States for these meetings with this company, and ... I don't want them calling me ... one day before the trip has to take place and running around... And secondly, I think that financially at [company name] and in France in general, I think the salaries are not extraordinary. ... I can't [afford to] have a full time live in nanny where I could just get up and travel. And even ... my own director ... doesn't have a full time nanny [his wife stays at home]. So it's a constant compromise and in my case my husband has a profitable business and [my career comes secondary to his as he earns more than me...]...'

Angie's interpretation of what is required to move to a higher managerial level illustrates the dilemma for working mothers – affording to pay for flexible child care support (a live-in nanny being desirable), needing to travel at short notice; versus balancing work and family life, not aiming to reach senior management. This echoes Kate (38, British, married, 2 children)'s previous comments (see Section 7.6) about 'selling your soul really the amount of work you have to put in' to become partner. This suggests the need for organisational support if women are to be successful in their careers.

Many of the females in the sample appear happy in their professional roles, admitting they may not have their professional career at the top of their priorities, but have done so purposely. Mary (34, Scottish, married) says:

'I'm not particularly career-driven person and I don't want to end up ... head of the department or director of R&D or anything like that. But I do need to have an interesting job and earn an appropriate salary for it.'

Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children) agrees:

'I'm not as ambitious as [husband, Vincent]. We've got 2 children, we've got the house, we've got the garden, we've got [Vincent] away all week. I think within the company I've had as much progression as I've chosen to have actually. A couple of things you know with the company changing, becoming [company name] and becoming [company name], [not] moving to Germany probably career-wise wasn't a good move for me... I chose not to do that. Having said that, you know within the new area I work in ... I've progressed quite a lot ... in the last 4 or 5 years. But I also took an option after [daughter] was born, to work part time. So I work 4 days a week. ...I think I've got the career that I want. ... I've got an interesting job that I'm able to manage home, children, work at the same time, sometimes a little bit too much work. ... I mean you typically do find ... women without family responsibility being promoted more. But I think that's because they put themselves forward for those jobs more than people with family responsibilities.'

However, the more career-minded Katharina (37, German, married, 2 children) notes the gender divide continues to persist:

'Without the children I might not have done what I've done. I might not be a professor without the children. ...My husband was the first one to find a job... At the beginning I followed him and so I decided that I would be the one to take care of the children mainly. Then my husband always said: "the day you earn more than me I drop out without any problem, I'll take care of them". Now... they are older etcetera it's not necessary anymore. ...I think most of the time it's the woman who takes care of the kids, taking them from here, bringing them to school... I just think it should be equal, as much as people manage, and I think it depends much on what the people do in their professional lives... - where they live, where they work, ...who's closest to the school to pick them up...'

Having children restricts the choices on offer, particularly to the mothers. For example Alice (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) hopes to get accepted by a British University to follow a course in Career Counselling by distance learning as she is unwilling to break up the family unit that is happily based in France.

'I've been looking for the last 3 or 4 years hard for a course to do in this area. It's not something they do in France for a variety of reasons and until now I hadn't come across a course which I could manage from living down here. Everything else was residential; you know I would have had to have gone to relocate there.'

Partner and family support (close family and extended family), as well as external support infrastructure (particularly childcare availability) is brought up time and again in the interviews as being prerequisite to enable individuals, particularly women/mothers, to focus on their professional career. Kate (38, British, married, 2 children) describes this in the following quote:

'I had to make sure that [Barry] was around. I mean they [the children] were both in the crèche or at the maternelle during the day. And luckily I've got Anne-Marie... [local woman who helps out with housework, child pick-up etc]. I couldn't have done a lot of stuff without Anne-Marie.'

This is echoed by Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children):

'One of the reasons that we decided to stay here and that we would never follow [Vincent] when he's working on a long term project somewhere, is because I have a very good network here so I'm very well am looked after by my friends. And if I ever have an emergency or anything that comes up, then I can always call somebody to collect the girls or to... stay with them... '

Organisational support is also essential. Thanks to the social laws in France, the balancing of work and childcare never seemed to cause an issue for the respective respondents in this study.

'Each time [after birth of her children] I took additional leave. What I'd done was banked all my leave for the year and a half months beforehand and then took it straight after the birth. ... Both of them were 5 and a half [months] when they went into crèches – so I had 5 and a half months with them after the birth. So that's quite a long time which was quite good. And my boss was always very, very good about it – if they were sick or anything like that, I worked from home... I always had the mobile with me and my laptop at home.' (Kate, 38, British, married, 2 children)

Whether Mary (34, Scottish, married) has been the subject of pay abuse due to her gender is unclear, it is apparent from the following extract from her transcript that she perceived she was being discriminated against within the first organisation she worked. She explains why she moved organisation in France after starting from quite a low position with her first employing organisation but with her responsibilities increasing exponentially.

'So I was doing really quite a senior job. ...[But I] never got a salary increase (laugh). I was still on the salary of someone who was admin almost. And I was travelling all over Europe and... By this point my French was pretty good. So they were asking me to go to Luxembourg and Belgium and France but also to deal with the UK all the time because I speak English. ... And I really enjoyed it at [company name] but ... I was really getting quite frustrated thinking here I am a qualified pharmacist but I'm just earning... like a good secretary.'

There is a marked difference between women with children and those without children and/or those with children but in positions as the main bread winner in the family (such as Kate and Tracy, see below).

Kate (38, British, married, 2 children) was made redundant from a senior management role in a multinational organisation in the South of France. She has begun a portfolio career, doing work for clients in the area. She was the prime bread winner in the family and that has put more pressure on her to succeed in her consultancy work. She has had to respond quickly to changes in the internal (wanting flexible hours so she

can spend time with her young family; wanting autonomy) and external environment (unemployment) in order to morph into a portfolio career so she can support her family financially.

Tracy (54, British, widow, 2 children) felt as a widowed single mother that:

'I just felt I had no choice. And I had to work'

A further gender-related finding relates to the apparent need for females to embark on further education and qualifications as a means of justifying their career position and importance. At the time of the interview Alice, as quoted earlier, (43, Scottish, married, 2 children) was applying to return to university to follow a course which would take her career in a new direction – from a HR/recruitment focus to a career consultant focus. She suggests the justification for formal educational qualifications may be a gender issue.

'I think that's quite a female thing... that you kind of rely on qualifications. That you take that to give you the push, where [the man might] ... go and do it anyway.'

While an examination of gender and career was not a research objective of this study, the focus of which was on international careers per se, however, it was observed that gender was a career element where there were notable differences in motivations and career formations, and where further research and analysis is recommended. The empirical research conducted for this study showed that the female multi-roles continue: that of mother, wife and professional. The male counterpart, while being more involved in the father and husband role than previous generations, maintains the main bread-winner role, emphasizing the importance of the professional role for

males. However, even in scenarios where the female was the main financial earner in the relationship, the duties of organizing childcare and household responsibilities were retained by the female. This may be due to the female unwilling to hand over her family and household responsibilities to her husband (in case he may not do as good a job, or sub-consciously in case her role/identity as mother and wife is marginalized). This is a question (how gender is mediated by being in a transnational career) for further sociological study and contemplation.

8.8 Career Glass Ceiling

While most participants in the study acknowledge their international status as having been a factor in their recruitment and professional role within the organisation, the opportunities for hierarchical advancement within their employing organisations are contingent on the respective country job market conditions and policies and internal politics. This naturally has repercussions for the retention of key employees which have the international acumen (Black & Gregersen, 1999; Feldman & Thomas, 1993; Tung, 1981) supposedly of major importance for multinational organisations operating in the global economy. This section explores some of the experiences of the sample in this research undertaking (Marian Crowley-Henry 2005).

With regard to bounded transnationals' career development aspirations within the same organisation (i.e. following an organisational career path), the findings from my qualitative research vary considerably. Some of the interviewees in this study perceive their international identity to be an obstacle in their career advancement within the same organisation. Schneider & Barsoux (1997: 142) suggest that 'cultural

biases may be responsible for the “glass ceilings” experienced by foreigners in many international companies’. Indeed, other research has suggested that many companies are still reluctant to promote minorities (including non-nationals) to the top of the corporate hierarchy (Anon/The Economist, Nov 7 1992; Saxenian, 1999; 2002). The following quotes show this (see also Section 3,2).

Vincent (41, Irish, married, 2 children): *‘I mean there is this old belief that for a 100% French company the only way to succeed is to have gone to the same grande école as the boss or marry his daughter or son.’*

Francis (32, Irish, single): *‘The problem with working here is that France is very much geared around their grande école system. And it’s very hard to have respect here when you come from outside that system. ... Unlike ... what I perceive from the UK, which is that they are results-driven, and it’s based on your experience, and the results and what/how you’re performing, ... [i]n France, you’ll still hear of a 60-year old being described as coming from “X” or poly- or centrale or whatever. And it’s nearly ridiculous ... to talk about what school somebody went to when he’s already got 30 years of a career behind him.’*

Some females in the sample feel that by virtue of their being in a French masculine organisational culture (even if it is a multinational organisation), their promotional opportunities are limited (see Crowley-Henry 2008a). These interviewees are of the opinion that the education ethos which embodies the French managerial hierarchy within all organisational forms in France continues to prevail, whereby non-attendance of the French ‘grande école’ restricts promotion opportunities. For women international employees this barrier, added to the potential gender glass ceiling, renders progress in an organisation much more difficult to achieve. Tracy’s (54, British, widow, two children) complaint about her stagnation in the vertical career progression in the organisation shows her perceptions concerning this bias.

‘I’ve been at [current level] for 3 years now and I asked if there’d be consideration for promotion this [year] ...and I didn’t get it. But you

*never know why. I mean I got a fabulous evaluation. ... My career would have progressed much more if I had stayed in the States. [I]n France they look at your personal situation too much. When I was first hired by [private sector IT Travel organisation] in the US, no one knew or asked about my personal situation. They didn't know I was a single mother, widowed with 2 very young [children]. That was private. I don't think I'd have been hired in France in the same situation. Because here they want to know your personal situation; they see it as relevant. [But I think] if you are able to do the job and want to do the job, then your personal situation should not matter. ... Men in France that went to the same grande école [elite French third level education school] and mixed in the same social circles... That is **the** barrier for non-French here.'*

It should be noted that although such barriers are perceived by some members of the sample, the degree to their actual existence within the organisation has not been researched. Other international assignees in the sample were certain that their international identity actually aided their advancement in the organisation since it increased their visibility. One respondent in the secondary sample (Munich), Brian (39, Irish, single), says he was explicitly chosen above his German colleagues to give training to other Germans. His difference was actually promoted and enjoyed throughout the organisation.

'I actually find that doing business in Germany ... a lot of the Germans wanted to do business with me instead of German colleagues. I don't know why. I think it's just that if ...you bring this Irish charm into the business meetings ... So quite often ... my German colleagues ...like me to ... focus on the German markets, because they saw that I was able to deal with German customers better than they were.'

Kate (38, British, married, 2 children) also felt valued by her employer:

'Well anyone that's worked on an international basis I think is valued because they've got different experience of different nationalities. And not everybody has that.... I think the company treated us pretty well to be honest in the whole, with the bonuses they gave us, and just the general package that the way they looked after us – regular salary increases...'

Fiona (27, Irish, single) experiences positive discrimination in her job:

'I think I'm definitely treated differently. ... Even the approach of my boss. ... [A]lready I've established a nice relationship with him which is very direct. I started as I meant to go on... I think that's probably a novelty for him ...'

Similarly, Andrew (38, Irish, married, 3 children; secondary sample (Munich)) sees no professional discrimination regarding his cultural diversity in his employing organisation:

'I wouldn't see a glass ceiling at all. I think there's definite opportunities ... whether it's in the wider business groups within the company or whether it's a return to a marketing role at a different level. There're huge opportunities and it's not just geographically limited because you're at the top level within an EMEA function. You have exposure across all of the geographies as well which is good. So it's not limited at that in that sense.'

Some organisations place more value on international experience than others. In Shaun's (39, British, married, 2 children) organisation

'it's absolutely valued... To get to a senior management position in this company you have to have travelled. And you have to have experience, probably in at least 2 different continents.'

Other organisations seem to take their international workforce for granted as Mark (34, Norwegian, married)'s following quote portrays:

'I think that ... the combination of having French and international here is a good combination... I don't necessarily think that a lot of people ... get a lot of extra recognition for that. I think it's just the way the company is structured. It's normal. That's how it works.'

This suggests the potentially untapped value of international managers in multinational organisations. The cross cultural know how and “charm” that

internationals can bring both internally and externally (to the organisation and its customers) may be under-recognised by the employing organisations.

Hilda (41, German, married, 1 child) praises her organisation for promoting her on her return from maternity leave.

‘On the day that I came back from maternity leave I was promoted... Which I think is quite a good move for [private sector IT Travel organisation]. ... I got more functionality in the group and more people. And now since April I’ve been promoted to senior manager and I have expanded further and further the group and the responsibilities.’

This could suggest that the role an individual plays in the organisation as valued by the superiors is paramount in being able to access the upper echelons within organisational life. Hilda works in a technical role, while Tracy is in Marketing, which could suggest that the harder technical knowledge is valued above the softer marketing skills within the French organisational culture.

The perception from the sample is thus that women’s promotional opportunities are potentially constrained by virtue of their gender, their specialism (as Tracy’s story depicts above) and contextually in France, their educational background.

8.9 Promoting an International Career

The international aspect of their career is found by the individuals in the research study to be just one component of their overall career. It adds to the career experiences of the sample, but the whole career package is built upon many experiences wound together rather than just on the international part.

Barry (39, British, married, 2 children) and Mark (34, Norwegian, married) believe their experience in working and living abroad are a definite advantage when it comes to employment prospects:

Barry: '[name] nearly fell off the chair when she realised that I could actually work in French with [customer organisation] ...There's the language thing... I've got a range of experiences now which I think are a good range of experiences which would be an advantage... The thing about being in France, ... I think it marks you out. It's interesting, it's something different. It's a characteristic that's unusual. It's an unquantifiable unique selling proposition... [that] ... has given me... something that nobody else has got. ... It's another piece to the jigsaw. And it's an important piece.'

Mark: 'Personal value I think is unique.... So you value it yourself and then the external company would see that you ... have worked in different countries.'

Vincent (41, Irish, married, 2 children) confirms that international experience has served him well in the recruitment process:

'Well it was very easy to join them in that they pretty much offered me a job straight off.'

This feeling is echoed in the next quote by Donal (36, Irish, married, 2 step-children):

'Certainly in the ... roles I've ended up doing [it's] always [been] working with or for or to multi-cultural people and doing different things. ... I ... keep dealing with teams... or people that are all spread over Europe - whether they're customers, colleagues, or whatever. ...I can explain to the Americans why it's different in Europe or why it's different in every part of Europe, because you know you can't fire people in Spain or France or Italy or England or or or. There are all these rules. So yes, I'd say that's valued. That's probably one of the reasons I ended up doing what I'm doing now, because of my experience. Because I had worked with European wide team and that was what I was taken on to do here.'

The interviewees, like Donal (above), acknowledge that their cultural knowledge would only be appreciated if working in the international sphere. The following quotes from Steve and Clare also relay this:

'I don't think it's relevant unless you're in an international job. If you spend all your time working in the UK with UK-based customers I don't think it makes any difference.' (Steve, 34, British, married).

'[I]f I worked in a French company, a pure French company without the international environment, what's the need quite honestly? I don't see the need. But in an international company, having the international background I think is a plus. ... It's a bonus, because you're already a multicultural individual and able to work in that environment.' (Clare, 62, American, divorced).

Hilda (41, German, married, 1 child) believes that her international experience is very valued by her current multinational employing organisation.

'I think [company name] is always, has always been very proud of having so many different nationalities and it was always important for the communication. The ability to adapt, to be able to work in an international environment, [to] adapt to the different cultures - that has always been seen as very important. When you can do it then of course you are valued'.

Mary (34, Scottish, married) admits her first hand experience at being offered a job because of her native English language ability:

'It was actually like a medical writer: they write up clinical study reports and dossiers for the health authorities. ...He wanted me because I'm English speaking. So for once the tables had turned - I now had the advantage (laugh), being an English speaker, over anyone else. He couldn't find anyone who was English speaking to do this job..'

Combining English language fluency (the global business language) with a technical qualification served Mary well in her search for employment as the above quote shows. This was the same for Deirdre (42, Irish, married, 2 children) who sees her

initial career break in France as having come about due to her English language fluency coupled with her qualifications.

'I think again moving here was actually a good ...decision in terms of my career even though at the time ...that wasn't why we moved. ...I worked in fish farming at the time and my speciality was in zoology so it was quite hard for me to break into pharmaceutical, agri-chemical companies at that time because there were a lot of other people ...with qualifications ... in the areas that those companies were looking for. ...I think I was quite lucky in one sense ... and also I had looked very ...long and hard when I came down here. But I think when ... [organisation she joined in France] offered me a job, ... one of the reasons they did was because I could write protocols and reports in English. And because the company was very French at that time ...so they needed somebody ...with my sort of qualifications, but the fact I spoke English was a big advantage. So I think in Ireland at that time if I had been in competition for the same job, ... I probably wouldn't have got it because there would have been other people with similar qualifications and English wouldn't have been part of the criteria.'

All in all, being a non national (English native/fluent speaker) and the experience of working internationally would seem positive characteristics that would impact encouragingly on the sample's career, if not presently, then the expectation is that it will in the future.

8.10 Conclusions: From Career Anchors to Life Anchors, the International Protean Career

From the individual standpoint, the 'new' traditional career path which has resulted from boundaryless career opportunities coupled with job uncertainty and individual motivations, is one where the individual positions his/her career within the one organisational context (be that in the same department or in a different department; in the same location or in a different office/subsidiary of the same organisation in one or more countries) for as long as it corresponds with that individual's holistic career

ambitions and motivations. Other externalities, such as the organisation downsizing or bringing about changes that in effect influence the individual's career within that organisation, also impact on the traditional career. In simple terms, the 'new' traditional career path could be regarded as simply following a career with the same organisation. Thus in the 'new' traditional career, the individual/organisational connection is crucial; that is where the individual remains an employee of the same organisation, either in the same position, in a lateral position, or in a vertically placed position. The previously held expectation of the organisation managing the individual's career is no longer a given from all organisations. The employee's role in marketing him/herself within the organisation, in improving and gathering skills and contacts becomes most important concerning the potential career opportunities that individual employee may be offered. In this context, the durability or permanence of remaining an employee of the organisation is loose and dependent on organisational/environmental-led factors (such as mergers, downsizing etc often beyond the control of the individual employee), on organisational/manager factors (such as the management relationship and the support from management for an individual's career), on individual factors (such as the individual's ambition to perhaps fast track their careers by moving inter-organisationally), and on individual role priorities (such as deciding to put family, children etc before career at specific life stages).

Even though all respondents say they would move internationally again should circumstances prevail that require it (e.g. economically) or for opportunity (career progression), the notion of moving from organisation to organisation (that is, following a boundaryless career) was not confirmed by the sample. While the

respondents may have moved organisation over the course of their working lives, the tendency is to remain with an organisation that is providing an acceptable psychological contract. That is, that enables the employee to develop within the organisation. In the current economic climate of potential lay-offs and job losses, this sample is very vulnerable given the inconsistent knowledge of the French language across the sample and the lack of comparable opportunities with other organisations in the area. In this context, the sample is most keen to retain their current positions in order to maintain some element of security. While they all acknowledge that there is no such thing as a permanent job for life any more, they pragmatically focus on keeping the job they have with their employer during this economic downturn, while keeping an eye on the market to see if alternative, less risky opportunities are on offer in the external job market. They do not trust (perhaps due to past experience) that their job is completely secure with their current organisation, and so keep scanning the market for alternative options.

Structurally, the sample remarks that Sophia Antipolis has changed from being a large employer with many multinational organisations' subsidiaries fighting over the pool of locally placed international workers, to becoming a mixture of some remaining large, but downsized multinational organisations and an increasing number of small enterprises including consultancy that are the new employers. These new employers require different skills to simply being delighted to hire English native speakers.

The findings show that portfolio careers tend to morph from organisationally bound careers, whereby individuals are either forced into portfolio careers (through redundancy for instance) or by a desire to take full control for their careers without

being tied to an organisation that may or may not proactively be engaged in an individual's career progression. The freedom to run the business to suit their particular lives is a prime advantage of portfolio careers. However, there is an element of being a 'small fish in the pond', whereby being employee of a larger organisation is perceived to offer more security in the form of holiday, sick, maternity leave pay, and even redundancy pay.

The protean career concept espousing the necessity of a holistic career approach is paramount in the findings of this study. That is, defining career along the purely objective dimension is no longer satisfactory. Many sides to career are important, with factors traditionally not associated with career influencing the career choices that are made at specific periods of time; factors such as relational ties, work/life balance, juggling other responsibilities, external opportunities, internal ambitions etc. The respondents seem prepared to morph their career into different areas to survive given their specific circumstances (for example, if they are a parent; if they need to work financially); to use past experiences and situations to reformulate a career direction should it be required. The protean career concept and the survival instinct are linked with regards to looking at career opportunities from multiple angles, age, lifestyle, family, economic circumstances etc. Tracking and mapping careers illustrate the protean and fluid nature of careers (and career drivers) over time. The unique nature of the individual's career ambitions is a finding that comes out strongly from the research undertaken. Trying to adopt a 'one size fits all approach' would seem very inappropriate.

Extending the protean career concept, Schein's typology of career anchors (see Chapter 5), is a useful framework to include. In this study it is apparent that there are further anchors which impact on the career choices individuals undertake. These anchors have not traditionally been linked directly to careers, but they are most relevant as they represent the ties an individual accumulates and moves into and out of at different points in time. Having children is one such defining anchor that occurs over the individual's life and career stage. Shaun's quotes in Section 8.5 noting his hesitancy in moving along an organisational path that would force him (and more specifically his family) to move internationally imply the wider context that needs to be considered in deciding a career direction.

The sample in this study describe themselves positively as being different; however the generic career issues of gender and opportunity (glass ceiling) persist across international boundaries. While exploring gender was not a research objective of this undertaking, it is obvious that the roles and indeed career choices that individuals encounter and engage differs across the gender and role responsibility divide. For female bounded transnationals the perception of advancement restrictions due to their gender is emphasised further by virtue of them being non-French, thus not fitting the educational background that prevails for management positions in France (e.g. grande école education).

The complexity and integral web of temporally differently weighted elements influencing careers is underlined in the findings. The sample finds the international aspect of their career to be just one component of their career. It has added to their career experiences but the whole career package is built upon many experiences

wound together rather than just a focus on the international part. While careers may not be rigorously planned there is evidence from this study of career directions being like jigsaw pieces that fit together to allow that person to proceed to the next stage. Individuals may have had plans of where they wanted their careers to go, but due to numerous circumstances such plans may never have been formalised. However, informally, even subconsciously such plans, if deep desires, remain hidden or semi-hidden in the individual's mind and when time and/or circumstance changes that make such a move more feasible, the individuals make a definite effort to move in that direction. The internal conversation is evident by the sample in determining the course of action to take. Additionally the sample engages in sensemaking when relating decisions made in order to order them in their minds, and justify the rationale of the decision made somehow.

Context plays a major role with a number of the respondents who had moved to Sophia Antipolis without work locally to begin with finding work by virtue of their English language ability. This attribute in itself forced those respondents to re-evaluate their skills and competencies in the area. Their competitive advantage of being a native English speaker, a plus for a multinational organisation, came to their benefit in finding work locally. However, economic conditions have changed since 2000 with many multinational organisations in the region downsizing and reorganising their operations. The new employers in the area are more local market targeted, where the status of being an English native speaker is not such an advantage any more. Secondly due to the large number of layoffs and redundancies there is a large pool of highly skilled non-French who have remained in the area (for family, for lifestyle reasons) who are all vying for the same or similar types of work. This

environment is very difficult for workers, trying to find a good job with a good salary. In contemporary Sophia Antipolis it is a buyers' market with the supply of labour plentiful. This is bound to affect the future influx of international knowledge workers to the area.

Chapter Nine

Conceptual Contributions of the Research

It is more important in the long run to think in terms of having ideas and using ideas than to become unduly preoccupied with the logic of inquiry, or with the more daunting connotation of theory and theory construction. A lot of people find theory a rather daunting prospect, not least because the social and cultural disciplines too often celebrate grand theories that seem to have little contact with the empirical data of field research. Equally, there is too great a reverence for difficult, obtuse theorizing that does little or nothing to illuminate the realities of everyday social life. What are needed are the generation and imaginative use of ideas that guide our exploration and interpretation of the social world

Coffey and Atkinson, 1996: 156

9.1 Introduction

This penultimate chapter synthesizes the conceptual contribution of this body of research. It summarises the discussion in the previous chapter and meets the criteria of ‘the generation and imaginative use of ideas that guide our exploration and interpretation of the social world’ (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996: 156). It answers the initial research questions concerning ‘who are bounded transnationals?’ and provides a reconceptualisation of the protean career concept with respect to careers and identification, and incorporating structure and agency.

Firstly, it places and describes the bounded transnational sample in the context of the emerging international assignee types as identified in the literature. Next and fundamental to the thesis of this study, it typologises the elements in the protean career concept that stemmed from the research, and in so doing reconstructs and develops the protean career concept as a framework when analysing international career choice. This framework is depicted in Figure 9.1. In it the pragmatic pluralistic considerations I undertook in conceptualising the model are outlined, notably the concepts of Bourdieu’s habitus, field and capital; Archer’s internal conversation; Foucault’s power, technologies of the self and governmentality; and Hakim’s preference theory, as well as the contemporary description of the protean career itself. While the empirical study took place in a unique location, I present both my description of international assignees including the bounded transnational sample (Table 4.1) and my protean career model as a framework for understanding enduring international career choice as my theoretical contributions to knowledge.

In this chapter I also include a model which generalises the career considerations for Human Resource Practitioners. That model incorporates elements from the protean self/career framework (see Table 9.2).

9.2 Typology of International Assignees

Table 4.1 was shared in Chapter Four, discussing IHRM and global staffing. It depicts the evolving categories of international assignee that have been identified in the literature, along with a brief description and statement of whether the international move was organisationally or individually initiated (or both).

While this categorisation is useful in differentiating international assignee ideal types, there is overlap. It was shown in Table 4.2 that there are individuals in the bounded transnational sample which also spill into other categories. While the majority of the sample would not classify themselves as emigrants, immigrants or migrants, since they moved to France for non-economical reasons, technically, given the definition of these terms, they could fall under these categories. Similarly with regard to the terms foreign nationals, non nationals etc, which is a category under which all the sample could also be positioned, except for Geraldine who inadvertently became a French citizen when she married her French ex-husband.

To provide a deeper description of the bounded transnational sample in this study, Table 9.1 sub-divides the sample based on the varying explanations for residing in the South of France as derived from the interview narratives. It should be noted that these sub-categories are depicted here in their ideal states, but that in practice (and

evidenced in the empirical study) there is overlap between states, with some individuals potentially positioned in a number of sub-categories. In addition, given the central premise of this dissertation of identification and protean careers as a given for the sample in question, it should also be noted that individuals may re-position their rationale from sub-category to sub-category based on both retrospective sensemaking of their decision to remain in France, and on their current internal conversation.

Table 9.1 presents considerations that are deliberated upon in the internal conversation when assessing the option of remaining in France or returning to the home country, or indeed moving to a third country. As stated, these levels of analysis, which I have elicited from my interpretation of the interviews and labelled accordingly, overlap and are not exhaustive but they do demonstrate and deepen understanding regarding the complexity of concerns an individual has which all impact upon the choice that is made.

Table 9.1 Sub-categorisation of bounded transnationals based on the rationale to reside in France

Label	Description	Informed by literature	Sample respondent
Cosmopolitan lifestyle	Craving the admiring glances of contemporaries; wanting to be perceived well by others in having the exotic lifestyle or image	Lasch (1979), Riesman et al (2001), Schein (1990)	Tracy: 'I love that I am living where other people want to go on holidays', Lisa, Inge, Rick, Katharina, Donal, Vincent, Tim, John
Redemption lifestyle	Wanting to escape the commute, the media, the drinking culture in the home country. Difference is that they choose NOT to engage with negative aspects in the host environment. There is an element of rebirth, the phoenix, a new beginning in avoiding a self-destruct lifestyle, anti rat race.	Schein's lifestyle anchor 1990	Kate, Philip (commute); Steve (anti media); Pat (anti-drinks culture)
Proving self	Wanting to be perceived by others as having made the right initial choice; not wanting to take a step back, looking glass self. Pride.	Cooley's 'looking glass self' (1902, 2003)	Sarah, Tracy, Natalie
Fear of return	The home country that they left has changed and moved on, a feeling that they would no longer fit in there without the need for readjustment ('reverse culture shock')	Harvey's (1989) reverse culture shock	Angie, Geraldine
Relational (home) / Relational (host)	This relates to the relationships in the home and/or host country between the individual and their significant other (parent, child, spouse) where the duty of care and an empathy with the significant other's desires is taken into consideration, such as offspring, a spouse – immediate family that don't want to move, that feel at home; that bind you to the place whereas you may like to move yourself		Tim, Billy, Sarah, Ronald (relational host - children); Catherine, Barry, Fiona, Philip, Milly, Shaun, Steve, Vincent, Gordon, Mark (relational host - spouse/partner), Susan David (relational home - parents)
Life quality	Wanting to remain in order to enjoy the quality of life on offer	Schein's lifestyle anchor 1990	Kate, Donal, Lisa, Alice, Deirdre, Shaun, Natalie, Rick, Francis, Katharina, Tracy, Pat, Ronald, Diane, Hilda, Susan, Catherine, Tim
Home, integration	Feeling more at home in France than in home country	Berry and Sam's (1997) assimilation	Sarah, Angie, Deirdre, Clare, Joe, Geraldine, Diane, Billy, Hilda

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Label	Description	Informed by literature	Sample respondent
Tough adjustment	Not wanting to go through readjustment phase again		Mary, Milly, Deirdre, Barry, Catherine
Job	Having a job in the area which one may not get equivalent of in home country		Elaine, Mark

Source: developed by Marian Crowley-Henry, June 2008

To conclude this section on bounded transnationals, I think it is apt to explain once again in more depth the rationale behind its nomenclature:

Transnational stems from Harry and Banai's (2004) transnationals, who they describe as performing international contracts in different countries before moving to take up their next contract in a new or previously visited country. These individuals undertake new contracts or international assignments on a continuous basis.

However, while the sample of this study is trans- or beyond- national, they are constrained by certain elements, most of which are self imposed constraints. As the findings show (Chapter Seven) the bounded transnationals fell into Berry and Sam's (1997) acculturation categories of integration and separation meaning they retain their home country nationality and culture as an integral part of their identity (separation) while embracing the host country culture and integrating into that environment. This follows through with regards to future options with remaining resident in France OR a return to the home country or to where extended family is as the main options. Other

international location options may also be considered but the consistent desire is to maintain connection between the home country culture and France. Thus they are bounded by virtue of the number of countries of which they will have knowledge (minimum of two – host and home countries). A primary constraint is that they do not wish to move from the area. They limit their desire to moving to another country to a less permanent or a more short term stay, maintaining a desire to retain residency in the host area and to be able to return there when they so choose, even to retire given that it has a pleasant climate and environment.

The sample is further bound by the labels and categories shared in Table 9.1. For instance, with regards to ‘Tough Adjustment’, the difficulty experienced in settling into the area further binds the sample in that they are reluctant to go through the same, traumatic, experience again. This is shown in Milly’s vivid description of how her self concept was torn apart when she moved to France:

‘I remember ... things that I valued about myself: I thought I was a very good communicator, I thought that ... I was an achiever... And all of those things I found: No. Those are misconceptions of myself. Obviously I’m not such a great communicator... I just can’t pick up these languages... I just don’t excel in areas I thought I excelled. And the things that I held as truth about myself are ... in doubt.’

Such negative adjustment experiences are further boundaries to the bounded transnationals wishing to engage in purely transnational behaviours. Similarly the relational (host and home) elements restrict the individual agent in making independent choices without the proper consideration of all stakeholders. The freedom of choice is therefore bound by such elements.

The wider environment, including the political and economic arena, is a further structural boundary for the sample. Having a job (employment), having access to childcare and medical insurance serve as pluses and it therefore may prove difficult to make a *rational* case for leaving the environment.

A unifying element in the sample attempting to define itself is how it perceives itself within the environment. Home identity (thesis) is retained to the extent that it is one stable element of identification. Despite integrating, none of the sample feel like they are now 'French' (antithesis). A middle ground or synthesis can be seen where some members in the sample define themselves as European.

The expat identity does not have resonance for the sample – it is considered an external frame of reference

(Vincent: 'you know that magazine called the "Riviera Reporter" ... and they talk a lot about expats and every time I see "expats" ... I always assume they're talking about someone else... I don't apply the term expat to myself')

as opposed to an identity that is considered in the internal conversation when it comes to making choices.

9.4 Toward a typologising of elements in the protean concept

In Chapter Eight the findings from the sample were discussed as being in keeping with the protean career concept. This section presents the framework that was developed to depict the developed theorisation. A case has been made which places

the protean career and identity constructs within the meta-dialogue of the protean career discourse. It is from the elements of this discourse (from the discussion in Chapters Seven and Eight) in the context of internationalisation that the framework (see Figure 9.1) is constructed.

Figure 9.1 The Protean Discourse

Protean Global Environment/Society & Structural Conditions in Sophia Antipolis

- positively facilitated by globalisation (travel and telecommunications), ability to travel internationally and maintain close contact with home country relations/friends (*'Flights are cheap from the Cote D'Azur'*)
- results in a closer network of community (friends in host country) (*'We'd be a lot closer to them than you would with normal friends at home because you haven't got anyone else. ... It's a little family in a way'*)
- uncertainty concerning employment, economic situation (*'the jobs aren't around in Sophia like they used to be'*)
- temporal changes (*'I mean the difference was more apparent in the '90s. Now ... even for French people, the fact of speaking English now is just no big deal'*)
- France's social policies regarding child care; legislation for organisations ensuring parental leave allocations supporting protean career and lifestyle
- gender difference. With more female participation in the labour force, gender difference persists with regards to career advancement. There is development, with more men undertaking extra-work responsibilities such as sharing childcare and other care duties. Nonetheless, gender imbalance persists





Identity - protean factors of the bounded transnational sample influencing priorities, preferences and choices

- on a social/relational/inter-group level: family (immediate family – spouse, children), (extended family - home, host countries), peers, contemporaries. This reflects the social identity of the individual. This study does not confirm Lasch's (1979) concern regarding death of close relationship with/connection to family and community. Regarding home country family, friend, links and communication are maintained; while they may not be seen regularly, they continue to be an integral component of the choices made (past, present, future), impacting on perceived identity roles and career preference choices.

-a lack of individual agential control is evident, whereby other stakeholders (spouse, children, family) are key figures in preferences and choices. Sacrifices are made - career, lifestyle – in order to proceed on the chosen path, weighing up and balancing choice, preferences and opportunities that arise.

- maintaining home country nationality as a concrete identifier, given the difficulty in putting forth an identity in the host country. The sample is different from host country nationals and to their home country peers (an element of Lasch (1979)'s narcissism where individuals enjoy being perceived favourably by others, but inter-mingled with insecurity regarding potential racism and discrimination), but not isolated in its difference (*'I'm in a community where I'm actually the same as everyone, because everybody's quite different'*). Recognition that others have and are undergoing similar adjustment facilitates the adjustment process. The sample is classed under Berry and Sam (1997)'s Integration and Separation, with language ability (French in this case) acting as a filter for successful integration, but nevertheless separation is still maintained. This sample has not assimilated, but retains a specific identity apart from host country nationals and home country peers

- bounded transnationals as being a hybrid of the separation and integration acculturation classifications: maintaining home country connections and national identity (separation) while building up friends locally (*'I have a very good network here so I'm very well am looked after by my friends'*)

- protean as reified in the bounded transnationals' experiences, constantly under reconstruction, reassessing self. While there is a lack of control in this regard, having to re-learn oneself, there is a release in feeling away from home country peers to the extent of not needing to conform, being able to *'define oneself'*

- individual traits: personality: self esteem, tolerance, resilience to obstacles as common among bounded transnational sample

- networking and relationship building as being critical elements in facilitating proteanism in the professional and private spheres (in being able to find work, move to a boundaryless career, find good childcare etc)





Protean Career

- autonomy and self reliance, personal value, adaptability, and identity (psychological success) are regarded as key elements in the current contemporary protean career concept. Taking control of own career through autonomy and self reliance (*'changing job horizontally set me back ... in terms of the hierarchy. It helped me out in terms of the CV, because I got to do stuff that... looks really good on a CV, so I'm very happy about that'*), personal value (*'I want to be able to do my job and enjoy it, but also have some time for myself which I'd never had before, and enjoy the kids'*) and learning (*'learning, learning, learning'*), adaptability (*'I've morphed into this sort of more business role, the centre of gravity for that happens to be in the States'*) are fundamental in the contemporary protean career concept, and the sample has displayed each of these elements. Hall (2002) believes that a person's 'sense of identity - understanding who he or she is and knowing his or her values, needs, goals, and interests' (Inkson 2007: 94) is the compass or direction setter for the protean career choices that are made taking the other elements into consideration.

- psychological success; focus on subjective side of career. Lifestyle anchor (Schein) of quality of life, environment, weather in the South of France (aesthetics). Putting personal, family life before professional life, as a bounded transnational the opportunity to be able to enjoy life more, slow it down (*'moving countries is a way of stopping time'*)

- evolving career plans (protean path) due to uncertainty regarding employment, regarding organisational futures. The 'new' traditional career path of uncertainty; boundaryless and portfolio options. Lack of agential control given employment conditions which are beyond their control as they are part of a network of activity (economy, supply and demand...). A focus on non-career elements where agential control may be more possible, while focusing on employability (building up a good employment history – *'looks really good on a CV'*)

- career/life preferences (Hakim 2000) which changes over life stage and circumstance and is influenced by structural and individual conditions. Such as the need for one party in a relationship to have a fixed career role (organisational career) before the other pursue a portfolio career or self employment (*'At the moment [Gordon]'s freelance so we need the stability of a salary'*). This balance of 'secure' and risk is an attempt to maintain an element of agential control (hoping organisational career to be less risky) to the extent that such control is possible. Prioritisation of career or private life, and the balancing of both (work/life balance).

- career as a framing element of identity, where career is not enduring, but undergoes change; is protean due to life being protean and identity being protean

Internal conversation as the mediation in real time of choices that may take place sub consciously in determining preferences given individual career preferences and current identity values and priorities in the present context

The conceptualisation presented above is complex. It is multi-faceted and not all-inclusive given the complexity of taking a holistic approach to proteanism. However, the aim of the framework is to present the global, societal, bounded transnational, individual and career elements of proteanism, and how they overlap and connect, with individual choices being made depending on the positioning of the individual within the various contexts of the framework. The essence of the protean career and proteanism framework presented is to highlight continuous, evolving change according to circumstance. I consider Figure 9.1 a working model, one which is consistent with this study's research, and which would gain value from further empirical analysis and discussion.

9.4 Suggestions for Organisations and Human Resource Management Practitioners

While the analysis and discussion so far has focused on the sample in question and the findings with respect to that sample, in this section I draw on those findings to put forth suggestions for organisations and for human resource management practitioners concerning the career determining elements that impact on individual preferences and career decision making. This model was initially published in Crowley and Weir (2009), and has since been developed taking the more comprehensive findings from this study into consideration

The implications of the table below, the content of which stems from the research's findings, underlines the necessity for organisations to attempt to understand identification as a process, an ongoing occurrence. It suggests the requirement for

organisations to attempt to understand their employees and potential employees on a more holistic level over their working careers as career preferences can alter. My model development from analysis of the data resembles Patton and McMahon's systems theory framework of career development (See Figure 5.1, Chapter 5), which validates the model to a certain extent, strengthening the case for its adoption given that other researchers have concluded similar patterns. There is much scope for opportunity, given the move toward a broader conceptualisation of the protean career to protean discourse (see Figure 9.1). Organisations can increasingly look internally within their current organisational structures when deliberating on staffing. People in current positions that may be less relevant to the organisation's future may be very interested in morphing to a new role.

Table 9.2 Model of Career Influencers

Primary Career Influencers*	Dependent on (examples, not exclusive)
<p>Individual 'I am fulfilled'</p>	<p>Personality (habitus, openness to working in another country/culture, tolerance, dedication, perseverance, technologies of the self...) Motivations, vision, goals (ambition, work/life priorities, preference theory)</p>
<p>Family Situation 'work/life balance'</p>	<p>Spouse/partner (dual career, trailing spouse, single income...) Children (ages, schooling) Extended family dependents Responsibilities and role priorities</p>
<p>Organization 'where, with whom I work'</p>	<p>Structure (flat or hierarchical, domestic, multinational) Intra organization mobility (open systems, blocked by management) Power (line manager, HR...) Politics (gender, ageism, networks, social capital) Organization culture (informal, individualistic, collective, team work, open door) Traditional career, boundaryless career, self employed, portfolio career</p>
<p>Job 'I love my job'</p>	<p>Technical ability (suitability to the job/aptitude) Protean career concept (adaptability, self reliance, identity; psychological success) Work preferences (individual or in group) Enthusiasm/interest (Hobby Job) Learning (ongoing challenge, change) Travel (desire to travel with job) Own boss/autonomy</p>

<i>Ctd</i>	Primary Career Influencers*	Dependent on (examples, not exclusive)
	Society 'what others think'	Social groupings (membership of professional associations, informal social societies) Perception of individual among peers, among social group Perception of individual among wider community
	Country 'context'	Legal (employment law) Language Social welfare (unemployment benefit, childcare support...) Economic situation (labor market) Global influences

**The prioritisation of these primary career influencers changes and evolves over time due to age/life stage, significant life occurrence, circumstance, and temporal and structural context*

Source: Marian Crowley-Henry, June 2008, adapted from Table 19.2 *Model of career influencers* in Crowley-Henry, M and Weir, D (2009) *Control and the Protean Career: A Critical Perspective* from the Multinational's International Assignees, in Voronov, M, Wolfram Cox, J, LeTrent-Jones, T and Weir, D (eds), *Critical Management Studies at Work: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Negotiating Tensions between Theory and Practice* (forthcoming), Cheltenham, Edgar Elgar Publishing Ltd

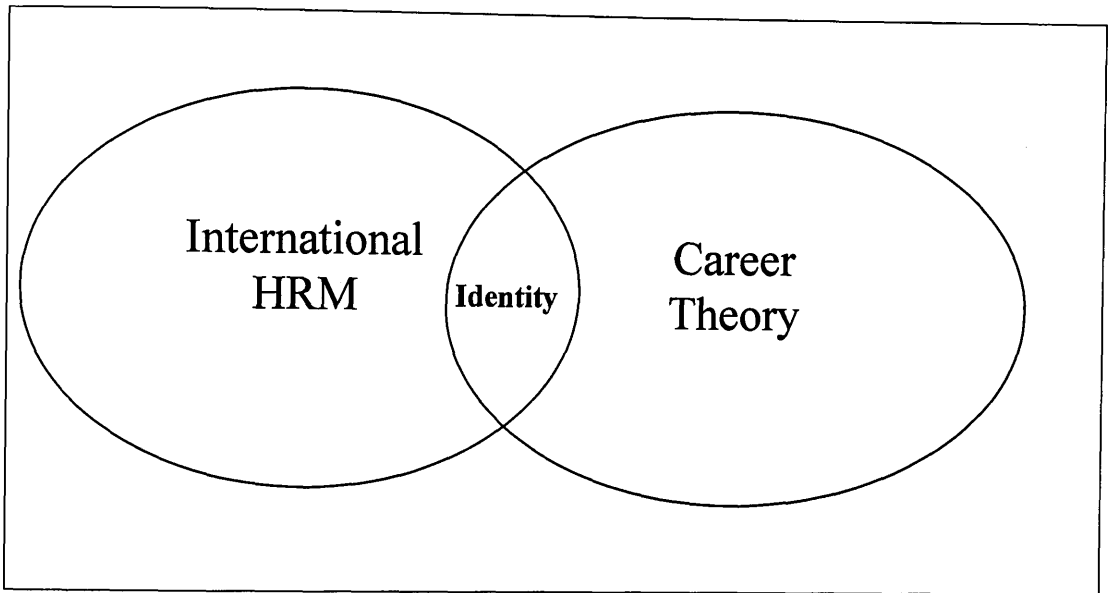
A further implication for organisations concerns gender, particularly working mothers. The voice of the female working mothers in the sample is uniform in their expression of the organisational requirement to facilitate working mothers, by perhaps reducing travel load, being conscious of notice being required to enable child care cover etc. Many women consciously choose not to forward their career ambitions due to their determination not to relinquish their mothering role. The question concerning the ability 'to have it all' persists for women, with many working mothers choosing the adaptive preference.

Finally, the 'charm' of the bounded transnational sample as employees in multinational or domestic organisations is an interesting concept. In a protean world, embracing change, cultural diversity and different ways of doing things can benefit an organisation internally, among fellow employees, and externally, among clients seeking novel ways to learn about products or services. This is an element of the bounded transnational sample which would benefit from further research from the organisational standpoint.

9.5 Conclusions, Scope of the study

The scope of the study can be seen in Figure 9.2 (a replica of Figure 1.1)

Figure 9.2 Scope of the Study



The three specific research questions were:

- i) What are the specificities of this sample of under-researched self initiated international assignees that become foreign residents of a potentially permanent duration; so called bounded transnationals? The research objective sought to describe and categorise the typology of the sample in the context of other international assignee categories. This is covered in Table 4.1.

- ii) How does the sample make sense of their identity (identity construction, reconstruction) in their host country? The research objective was to examine the identity boundaries and permeability including roles, social identity (membership of groups); and perception of competencies/limitations in the home and host country. This is developed in Table 9.1 and Figure 9.1.

iii) What are the primary influencers of career construction for the sample of international assignees, bounded transnationals? The research objective is to consider the key factors impacting on career choice and construction for the sample. This is answered in Table 9.2 and Figure 9.1.

In sum, the study addresses two principle concerns:

- 1) Who are bounded transnationals and how do they compare with other categories of international assignees?**
- 2) How do bounded transnationals (re-)construct their identity and career in the international context?**

This study had ambitious research questions and the depth of information in the findings permitted interpretation and discussion concerning the nature of career and identity construction in post-modern society in a globalising world. Taking a pragmatic pluralistic approach where a number of constructs were discussed which I felt had resonance to aspects of the study, the theoretical contribution of the study elaborates the concept of the protean career and forwards it as a meta-dialogue in the protean discourse encompassing identity, career and wider societal concerns where inputs from structure and agency are evident. A protean discourse seems apt given the findings where change and adaptability were consistent themes from the narratives. This central thesis of the study is conceptualised in Figure 9.1 concerning a development of the protean career concept to a protean discourse and the notion of proteanism. Finally, this chapter offers suggestions for human resource management practitioners regarding career management considerations for employees.

Chapter Ten

Conclusions & Recommendations for Further Research

Disjuncture and difference define this global, postmodern cultural economy we all live in... National boundaries and identities blur. Everyone is a tourist, an immigrant, a refugee, an exile, or a guest worker, moving from one part of the world to another

Denzin, 1997: xii

10.1 The Study's Research Questions

This dissertation attempts to assess and conceptualise the international career construction and composition of Western foreign residents in the South of France, termed bounded transnationals for the purposes of the study. The findings contribute to filling a gap in IHRM literature, specifically pertaining to the international careers of the particular sample of international assignees, and in furthering knowledge on the nature of career (and identity as an integral career component) construction as experienced and lived by the sample in adjusting to their international residency. The dissertation includes a number of theoretical frameworks (a pragmatic pluralist perspective) in its efforts to analyse and interpret the international careers of the respondents from a holistic, process perspective.

There has been a call for additional empirical work that studies the self initiated foreign work experience in contrast to the traditional expatriate assignment which has received so much focus in IHRM (for example, from Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Developments in career theory have led to an increase in interest regarding the impact of new career boundaries upon employees and employers (Becker & Haunschild, 2003), where empirical qualitative information is lacking. This study combines a comprehensive elaboration of IHRM literature with an in-depth consideration of existing international careers and career theory. It underlines the necessity to incorporate the complex and individualised dynamics of career and identity in order to better understand career construction for individuals, and in turn, to better structure policies and reward systems in human resource management.

The study explores the process of identification and career for a specific sample of self initiated international assignees (bounded transnationals). It considers the identification and career process through the lens of the narrative, contextual and developmental/process discourse. As the opening citation to this chapter suggests (also the opening citation to Chapter Seven), the international context has changed and continues to change with the development of globalisation and the liberalisation of markets facilitating the international movement of people. It is within this context of change and the relevance of the temporal period in which we are living that the subject matter for this dissertation presented itself. While the previous focus in IHRM and international career literature has been on organisation initiated expatriates, this study has focused on a category of self initiated international assignees who have made the South of France their residence, and who are actively engaged in employment. The experiences (facilitators and limitations) of this sample with regards to their career preferences and opportunities is investigated and interpreted inductively, encompassing individual agential drivers and struggles as well as relational and structural considerations which have impacted upon the identification and career process of the sample.

The research sub-questions were three-fold. Firstly, the study sought to find where the sample of bounded transnationals in question fits into the existing literature on international assignees (self initiated international assignees). In presenting a typology of international assignees (Table 4.1), international organisations, human resource management practitioners and academics should be better able to identify from the international staffing alternatives which international employee type may best suit a specific organisational task or role.

Secondly, the study sought to explore identity construction and acculturation for the bounded transnational sample. Literature in the area recommends integration as the best option for individuals in acculturating to a host country environment; however this study identified proof of separation (where identity with the home culture is continued and openly displayed) *and* integration (where the host country culture is accepted in line with acknowledgement of one's origins) elements as prevalent among bounded transnationals, suggesting that a degree of both enable the identification process and facilitate adjustment to the host environment. Also with regards to identity, it has been suggested that there has been a movement towards other directedness (Riesman et al 2001 [1950]; see also Lasch's (1979) 'psychic security'), where individuals desire to be perceived positively/favourably by others. However, the sample also exemplifies traditional- and inner-directedness, (Riesman et al, 2001) which suggests the co-existence of layers impacting upon identification.

In addition to these findings, the author developed models differentiating members of the sample based on their differing motivations to remain resident in France (Table 9.1), and on the protean, process, evolving nature of identity construction or identification (Figure 9.1). The identities of the individuals in the sample undergo considerable reconstruction, and continue to shape the life and career decisions that are encountered. The study shows that identity construction is not a fixed entity, nor does it take place at a specific moment or moments in time. Indeed the study suggests that identity construction is a continuous, lifelong development and that it is influenced by several elements. Thus, in keeping with Bauman (2001: 129) it may be best 'to speak of *identification*, a never-ending, always incomplete, unfinished and open-ended activity in which we all ... are engaged.'

Thirdly, the study sought to provide an analysis of influencers to career construction from the qualitative standpoint of the bounded transnationals. While contemporary literature associates international assignees with the concept of the boundaryless career, this dissertation investigated the association and furthered knowledge in the area of international careers by inductively building a more holistic systems career frameworks from the information gathered for the study (Table 9.2). Additionally, the study developed the protean career concept to a protean discourse of relevance to the bounded transnational sample (Figure 9.1). The protean career concept, although requiring development as a concept, is an apt description of the evolving career process, where structure and agency play roles to varying degrees at different points in time. Rather than an association between international assignees and the boundaryless career, a deeper interpretation of career drivers, preferences and directions is required, taking structure and agency into consideration.

The intricate and reciprocal link between identity as a continual process ('identification', Bauman, 2001) and career as a protean concept (Hall & Harrington, 2004) is examined in the study. A pragmatic pluralist approach is used where perceptions from structuration (Giddens, 1991b), sensemaking (Weick, 1995), internal conversation (Archer, 2003), habitus (Bourdieu, 1977), power (Crowley-Henry & Weir 2007; Foucault, 1977) and preferences (Hakim, 2000) are used to aid understanding and in the development of the models and frameworks espousing the protean nature of contemporary society, identity and careers (see Figure 9.1). Taking a pragmatic pluralist approach enables a novel interpretation of the data collected, thus contributing to the development of identity and career research respectively.

Archer's morphogenesis and morphostasis states suggest, as does the protean career concept, an activity of 'transforming the *status quo*' (Archer, 2003: 356). The structural conditioning or pre-existing disposition and habitus of the individual within the respective fields to which he/she belongs need also be considered, although it is accepted that such can also morph or alter depending on the experiences or circumstances encountered over an individual's life. Indeed the field and late formed habitus of bounded transnationals would be apparent in the unspoken understanding of sharing common experiences (in adjusting to France as a non national, non citizen of France) while, at the same time, being different to the wider population in France and being different to each other (having different cultural backgrounds, habitus, etc.). The inter-relationships or figurations between different habituses is evident here. As one respondent, Catherine, remarked:

'I'm in a community where I'm actually the same as everyone, because everybody's quite different.'

Foucault's discourses on power, technologies of the self and governmentality were also useful in discussing the contemporary career as evidenced in the research's findings. While a previous publication (Crowley & Weir, 2009) emphasises the subjectification element of the protean career concept, this dissertation acknowledges the co-existence of objectification. While the human agent is to an extent master of his or her own destiny, it is not as simple as that. Responsibilities, relationships, circumstances, indeed the protean life transpire to render choice much more complicated than agential control. The subtle but enduring and constraining ties and bonds that connect individuals in different relationships affect decision making, as does the wider historical, economic and cultural context within which the agent operates.

Catherine Hakim's preference theory (2000) also proved invaluable in my re-conceptualisation of the protean career. Her acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of women with regards to their career preference was most insightful. While the theory has not been widely tested across genders, my comparably small qualitative study finds resonance in the home-based, career-based and adaptive typology of career preference. I agree that these categories are also protean in nature, with individuals potentially moving between categories (or not) over their life span.

This chapter concludes the dissertation. The next section discusses the specific contributions of the study to knowledge. Then limitations of the study are outlined. Additional research opportunities related to the subject matter are suggested in order to extend further the work completed for this undertaking. Finally, the dissertation is concluded with some closing remarks.

10.2 The Study's Unique Contributions to Knowledge

In response to the sub-research questions, this study has developed models and frameworks to enable practitioners and academics to better understand and identify varying aspects in relation to identity and career in an international context.

With regards to the sample explored, the dissertation has presented a comprehensive table of international assignee types, including organisation initiated and self initiated international assignees. This table provides the basis for human resource management and career practitioners to practically identify the international assignees prevalent in their current international staffing, as well as providing options of alternative types of

international assignees that the organisation could use in the future. For academics, the information facilitates the development of research projects developing the comparison between the different international assignee types, as well as expanding knowledge on particular categories, such as this dissertation's focus on bounded transnationals. See Table 4.1 (Typology of International Assignees).

Hughes' (1937) description of careers as a process, linked to wider structures as well as individual agential desires is apt. The relationship between identity and career is reified in this study through the medium of the protean career concept. This contemporary career concept is developed and a framework (Figure 9.1) of a more informing protean career typology is generated from analysis of the narratives. This typology includes a broader conceptualisation of careers, and one which has developed from the empirical qualitative study, both areas (that is, a broader conceptualisation of careers and more empirical research) requiring further research and development as suggested by Arthur, Hall and Lawrence, 1989b; Brewster and Suutari, 2005; Mayrhofer et al, 2004; Scullion, Collings and Gunnigle, 2007; Scullion and Paauwe, 2004. The framework presented is a living development of the protean career concept; it is an elaboration of the descriptive concept which up to now had little empirical support and indeed has come under fire from critics (Arnold and Cohen, 2008: 14). However, I contend that by reifying abstract concepts, they become user-friendly and bridge the gaps between academic and practitioner circles. Figure 9.1 is an attempt to do that.

The framework developed in Figure 9.1 reverts to the origins of the term Proteus/protean, and conceptualises the term by drawing on its contemporary meaning

and the findings in this study where the whole notion of career is investigated from both a(n) (international) career and identity lens. The inductive nature of the study enabled the author to 'fit' the protean career concept to the process of career construction that the sample undertakes in practice, thereby reifying the protean career concept. In showing how the protean career concept can be reified and seen to exist in practice, the resulting framework provides impetus for further empirical testing and development by academics and career consultants in the future, in exploring actual career preferences and decisions.

Within the bounded transnational sample, the research identifies sub-drivers which inform the choice and decisions undergone in the past, being undergone at present and may will be undergone in the future, regarding the preference to remain in the host country environment (see Table 9.1). It is also clear from the study that categories and labels are not and should not be regarded as fixed and concrete. Like the protean concept, they also can evolve and morph dependent on time, circumstance and the agent in question.

This study takes an in-depth examination of career from the perspective of individuals by analyzing narratives and considering the elements outside the contemporary remit of career literature but which is evidently crucial in career considerations. The study takes place in a particular geographical, cultural and political context, which has been outlined in Chapter Three. The relevance of the context is far from neglected in this study, indeed it is an integral component of the study, showing that career is indeed multi-faceted and multi-layered, and that an overly simplistic, one size fits all approach is far from appropriate in this millennium. The qualitative, hermeneutic

approach adopted for the research has enabled a detailed, in-depth contribution to IHRM and career literature and theory, with specific regards to a particular previously un-investigated category of international assignee (the bounded transnational). By focusing on a specific sample, the author/researcher was able to induce identity and career elements from the narratives rather than be blinded by inter-category comparisons among various types of international assignees.

The dissertation shows that the link between identity (identification) and career is important (career helps to define ‘who am I?’) and suggests the need for a new conceptualisation of career itself. The metaphor of career as a ladder or stepping stone, where people can progress forwards or backwards or laterally needs to be re-assessed, with the idea of career as encompassing an integral part of the overall identity framework, a core argument of this study. The external responsibilities a person has frames their career perception and the value placed on objective careers.

In sum, this research contributes to existing knowledge and generates new knowledge by extending and deepening learning in the areas of *identity* and *career construction* in an international context, which has particular value for IHRM. The research, although limited as a geographical case study, has produced findings and concepts which warrant further elaboration and testing across different contexts and countries. However they form the basis of an up to now non existent empirical development of such concepts.

The study has also discussed practical implications for IHRM practitioners and organisations that employ bounded transnationals by sharing a systems model of

career considerations for this sample which may be extended to both other categories of international assignees and to domestic employees.

10.3 Limitations of the Study & Suggestions for Further Research

This was a qualitative research undertaking. The specificity and idiographic nature of the research sample is acknowledged. Due to the detailed nature of the study, a limited number of interviews were conducted. However, from the exploratory research conducted and the inductive development of frameworks as presented in Chapter 9, further research should set out to test the validity of the frameworks for larger sample sizes, in other locations, across occupations and cultural backgrounds.

In following a pragmatic pluralist (Watson, 1997) approach, this study has been guided by ideas and concepts from different fields. While some may argue this distracts from a focus, it is counter argued that the findings, analysis and interpretation shared in the study provide a unique and novel focus on existing literature and theory. While I would position myself as a hermeneutic researcher, where I find knowledge to stem from interaction with the respondents as well as from the researcher's specific role in the process, I would have empathy with the critical realist position. As a critical realist, the value of the process between structure and agency is respected. Indeed it is the 'black box' between structure and agency that informed the conceptual development. Thus, although the author is very interested in narratives and individuals' stories, she is grounded that such takes place in a particular context, within social structures that exist external to the person and over/about which the person may have no control or knowledge. The inductive nature by which the

career and identity themes have been connected in analysis and discussion of the interview transcripts ensures that theory has been informed by empirical research. Further research from other novel perspectives would develop the linkage between identity and career even more.

A limitation of all research is that of researcher bias. The central role of the author as researcher in this study has been stated, as has the specific ontological, epistemological and methodological positioning. The findings shared were elicited from the data collected. My interest, as apparent in the research questions, framed the way in which the narratives were interpreted. Margaret Archer's (2003) 'internal conversation' was used as a real time sensemaking (Weick, 1995) activity which I do believe people undertake in weighing up possible paths (sensemaking being retrospective and individuals attempts to make sense of their choices or courses of action by looking retrospectively; whereas the internal conversation is the weighing or balancing of current choices or courses of action). The choices that exist for people are not open, however. This research has shown that individual agency is but one element in a much more complicated internal negotiation considering choices and pathways. Other in-depth research looking at different categories of international assignees which could build up a comparative picture between international assignees would be most interesting.

Large scale projects that would build on the findings of the research conducted for this study could include a research project concerning migration. In such a project international flows and comparative data could be collected quantitatively, while in addition, a qualitative aspect to the project exploring preferences and trends toward

migration of longer duration (for instance intra-EU migration; other global pockets such as North America and Australasia to compare intra-region moves).

This study did not set out to focus on gender differences within the sample. However, it became apparent that differences continue to prevail between gender, with the female career role (preference) being more adaptive or home-based to the male's career-based preference. However, the heterogeneity of career preferences as propounded by Hakim (2000) was validated by the sample in this study, with individuals falling into each of her three categories from both the male and female genders. The study did not analyse in-depth the gender differences, preferring to focus on the over-riding conceptualisation. This area would benefit from a more detailed exploration of inter-gender differences in motivation, preference and identification.

The methodological limitations of the study were discussed in Chapter Two, acknowledging that given my ontological and epistemological position, I personally consider the depth uncovered in this research to be of more value than the ability to generalise a smaller part of this detailed study. However, the models and frameworks depicted in Chapter Nine should be considered as foundational whereby further research in different countries or among different categories of international assignees or with larger sample sizes would supplement and add to the findings of this study. In this case multivariate questions would need to be formulated taking the variables presented in the protean framework and surveying potentially different international assignee categories in different host countries in order to compare the findings cross-nationally and inter-assignee category.

I have re-conceptualised the protean concept by incorporating certain other concepts or theories which had resonance with my world view and philosophical tendencies. These are not conclusive. However I included as much as I felt would add to a usable and provable (from the research data) concept of proteanism. There is scope for further testing of this framework in other situations and samples, which could add to its current form.

I had initially planned to include in the dissertation the motivations of the bounded transnationals to embark on their international career experience. However, due to space considerations I had to make certain choices whereby I prioritised presenting a clear picture of bounded transnationals from the identity and career construction standpoint. I am hopeful that I can use the collected data concerning motivations for future research papers, to further add to knowledge of this category.

Another suggestion for further research in this field is a more longitudinal study which would follow the sample over a longer period of time, tracking them at different career and life stages and engaging in in-depth interviews at different periods of time in order to further track and add validity to the evolutionary (protean) nature with which identity and careers unfold.

This study does not analyse which international assignee types (see Table 4.1) would be best placed in which international organisational contexts. However, a conceptual study of such would be informative for organisations engaged in international staffing, as well as founding the basis for empirical testing of such concepts.

Finally an elaboration of the concepts pursued in this study from an organisational or managerial standpoint would add further richness to the limited knowledge concerning bounded transnationals within specific organisational contexts (such as within multinational or domestic organisations), and would provide further elements of relevance to the protean discourse.

10.4 Closing Remarks

This study has generated knowledge regarding a previously un-investigated population of self initiated international assignees, termed bounded transnationals. The rationale behind the nomenclature has been argued in previous chapters, where the sample is arguably separatists and integrated (Berry & Sam, 1997), and not adequately described under existing terminology (see Table 4.1).

Gunz et al (2008: 307) are 'interested in exploring how examinations of the broad context within which work careers are lived help us to understand better the nature of career in an Internet-based, globalised economy and how these careers, in turn, influence developments in the context'. This study elaborates the conceptual framework of the protean career, by considering the complex and complicated multi-level factors which determine careers, and which have been demonstrated and are evident from the empirical research. This is one of the specific areas identified by Gunz et al (2008: 308) as requiring further contribution. The social and political context in which careers unfold is a fundamental component if an in-depth appreciation of career is to be achieved.

The connection between identity and career construction has been developed in this dissertation. The complexity of structure, agency and temporal conditions suggests the validity in espousing the protean nature of both. The linkages between different influences regarding identification and the career process highlight the difficulty faced by practitioners and academics in developing definitive models to explain or aid understanding with regards to identity and career construction. This study has attempted to open up and advance discussion and further learning in this area by taking a wider, though focused examination of identity and career for a specific population sample. Further development (conceptual and empirical) and cooperation in this area is anticipated.

In conclusion, to quote Mills (1959: 12): 'No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society, has completed its intellectual journey', I am confident that this study has considered the issues and interconnection of biography and history and society, and indeed has underlined the necessity to at least attempt more holistic studies in social science, emphasising the reflexivity and temporal element of all research.

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Appendix A

The Interview Guide

- **Tell me about yourself, your background** (nationality, age, family, marital status, education, your professional career path to date (organisations you've worked for (industry, number of employees...), duration of employment, your positions within the organisation(s), professional experiences outside your home country)...)
- **When and why did you move abroad (to France)?** (Did you move abroad alone or with a partner? Was it for career, personally, trailing spouse? Your motivations (who/what): professionally (expatriate assignment turned local contract or ?), personally, was it your first move abroad, in your family background, have others worked/moved abroad?, other)
- **How did you feel about moving abroad?**
- **Supports/obstacles in moving?** (Organisational - Did you receive any training or assistance prior to your international (career) move? If you moved as a trailing spouse, did you get support on job search?; personal - family, children, intrinsic fear/motivation to go somewhere new...; social - friends, clubs, work...; other?)
- **What support/obstacles has the organisation(s) you've worked for presented since the move?** (Initial adjustment - What are/were the organisational barriers/supports which hindered or helped you to adapt, integrate, and get an equal level job in the new area?; Now)
- **If you have worked in more than one foreign country, did the organisational support/obstacles, personal, social support/obstacles transfer across countries?** (Can countries be easily compared, from your experience?)
- **Tell me about your family, social / personal life living as an international worker/a non-national?**
- **What are/were the personal barriers/supports which hindered or helped you to adapt, integrate, and get an equal level job in area (children? Husband/partner?)?** (What support/obstacles have you encountered yourself personally (family, relationship, language)?)
- **What are/were the social barriers/supports which hindered or helped you to adapt, integrate, and get an equal level job in area?** (What support/obstacles have you encountered socially (clubs)?)
- **What are/were the country barriers/supports which hindered or helped you to adapt, integrate, and get an equal level job in area?**
- **Do you feel you have integrated into the relevant country(ies) to a good extent?** (How, give examples.
How about your family, spouse? Or would you consider yourself still a foreigner?)

- **How did the move / you working internationally effect on your career?** (Pre-move position, Post-move position, Organisational recognition...? Financial benefits/rewards? Promotion/vertical career path?)
- **At what stage do you consider yourself to be currently in your career?**
- **Do you think your career path would have progressed more/less had you remained in home country?**
- **Have you hit the glass ceiling in your career?**
- **In your current (latest/last) organisation, how many non-nationals are/were employed? How many are in management positions? How many in senior management positions?**
- **Do you think, and if so what do you think are the barriers which prevent non-nationals from progressing to senior (management) positions internationally?**
- **How did you get (to) your current (managerial) position?**
- **Did you always want an international career?**
- **Did you plan your career?**
- **Do you think that educational qualifications are important?**
- **Do/did you ever have a mentor in your career? Tell me about him/her?** (Do you think it is important whether a mentor is male or female?)
- **Do you consider that there is a lack of role models in international management?**
- **Do you consider yourself a role model in the organisation?**
- **Have you experienced any negative attitude towards you?** (as a non-national, racism)
- **Do you ever feel a sense of isolation in your position?**
- **Do you think that networking is important for working in another country? Why?**
- **Do you find it difficult balancing a personal life with your career?**
- **Are you happy with your career choices? Do you consider yourself successful in your career? What do you attribute your success to?**
- **How does/did the organisation support you in your career path development?** (HR, line manager meetings?)

- **Has your experience proved valuable to your own career development?** (Is it recognised within your organisation? Is it recognized externally?)
- **Do/Did you feel valued by your organisation due to your “difference” (being a non-national, different cultural and professional knowledge)?** (Is it recognised by your organisation?)
- **Did or Does the organisation offer additional support to you compared to host country nationals?**
- **Do you think international work experience is important in today’s organisations?** (Why? Why not?)
- **Does your organisation consider itself to be an international organisation?** (Why / explain / give examples?)
- **How do (did) you feel about following an international career?** (How do (did) you feel about following your partner’s career? (put yours on hold or decide to focus completely on partner’s career...?))
- **Does your partner support your career choice/s?** (How?)
- **Is this life, as an international worker the best life choice for you?** (What is/are the driver(s)? If you could choose – what would be your choice?)
- **Was your international work experience as you imagined it would be?** (What did / do you like, dislike about your international work experience (living/working abroad)? Any regrets?)
- **From your own experience, what would be the profile of an international worker?** (What are the qualities you believe to be necessary to be an international worker?)
- **What are the drivers for moving/working abroad?** (Motivations)
- **What are your experiences with repatriation?** (If any? Any difficulties?)
- **What are your future plans?** (More international moves, settle back to home country? How long do you think you will remain abroad? Why?)
- **How do you call yourself?** (What is your status or identity now - European, expatriate, immigrant? Why?)
- **If you had to make a choice between country and company (location and lifestyle versus position and career), what would that be?**

- **Do you think that being within the E.U. has facilitated your mobility within the E.U. block?** (Did it influence your decision to move within the E.U.? E.U. barriers/support for you to adapt, integrate, get an equal level job in the area. Would it have aided your decision to work abroad?)

If applicable

- **Do you adopt a male/female/individual style of management?**

For women interview candidates only

- **In your current (latest/last) organisation, how many women are/were employed? How many are in management positions? How many in senior management positions?**
- **What percentage would be both female and non-nationals?**
- **What do you think are the barriers which prevent female(s) (managers) from progressing to senior (management) positions – in their home country, internationally?**
- **Do you think that female(s) (managers) want international careers?**
- **Do you consider that there are additional barriers for female managers in international management?** (Do you think that you experience(d) any additional difficulties because of gender?)
- **Do you think that female managers choose between a career and marriage and children?**
- **What are the implications of career breaks and time out for child-bearing and child rearing for female managers?**
- **Is networking important for females following an international career?**
- **Does your organisation advocate a policy of female career development?**
- **Do the qualities needed to be successful in following an international career differ for women?**

Appendix B

Tape Recording Consent Form



PhD in Management

Lancaster University
Graduate School
Lancaster University
Lancaster
LA1 4YX

PhD Candidate: Marian Crowley (-Henry), registered July 2002 (part-time away)

Tape Recording of Research Interviews – Consent Form

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the research process.

The data/input from your interview may be used in the research analysis and documentation of research findings in the PhD candidate's dissertation.

For the sole purpose of empirical data collection/information gathering pertaining to the field of research being undertaken by the PhD candidate MARIAN CROWLEY (-HENRY), your interview will be tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. This will facilitate the researcher in using quotes from your interview in the final analysis of the research.

Please certify your agreement with being tape recorded for the purposes of research.

Signature:

Date:

Please note that, *on your request*, the researcher will forward you (as an e-mail attachment) the quotes/data from your interview, that are to be used in the thesis, for your absolute consent.

If at any time during the interview, you wish to turn off the tape recorder, simply let the researcher know.

Thank you for your valuable contribution to this research.

Yours sincerely,

PhD Candidate, Lancaster University

Appendix C

Interviewee Anonymity Form



PhD in Management

Lancaster University
Graduate School
Lancaster University
Lancaster
LA1 4YX

PhD Candidate: Marian Crowley (-Henry), registered July 2002 (part-time away)

Interviewee Confidentiality Declaration / Data Protection

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the research process.

The data/input from your interview may be used in the research analysis and documentation of research findings in the PhD candidate's dissertation.

You have the right to choose the level of attribution of an opinion to yourself as an interviewee, or the level of anonymity you wish to impose on the usage of your data in the dissertation.

Please tick the box, which corresponds with how you wish your interview data to be applied:

1. I agree to the use of my name and the company name in the final dissertation (e.g. Mark Shaw (Marketing Manager), Texaco UK).

2. I agree to the use of my name in the final dissertation, but not the company name (e.g. Mark Shaw (Marketing Manager), Oil Company A).

3. I do not wish to be named in the final dissertation, but the company name may be used (e.g. Marketing Manager, Texaco UK).

4. I do not wish to be named in the final dissertation, nor do I wish the company name to be used (e.g. Marketing Manager, Oil Company A).

Thank you for your valuable contribution to this research.

Yours sincerely,
PhD Candidate, Lancaster University