Migrants and Nature:
Migrants’ views on environmental activism in Western Australia

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no materials previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in university.

Signed: /Silvia Lozeva/            Date: 3rd September 2013
MIGRANTS AND NATURE:

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MIGRANTS’ VIEWS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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SILVIA METODIEVA LOZEVAG
Cover Image *Una Lumino Portentum* (2009), all images courtesy of Korean-born artist U-Ram Choe
What is the connection between migrants and nature? Is it an elusive chimera that cannot be captured, a unified, static and reified concept, or an ever-changing pattern of old traditions and new forms of residence and belonging? These questions may never be answered in a complete way. However, as a researcher, a migrant-woman and an environmental activist, I put forward through this thesis that there is a deeply meaningful connection between migrants and nature, which still remains hidden and undervalued. Many people decide to take on the difficult task to set off from their country of birth, leaving behind their memories, family, friends, native language and other multiple aspects that constitute the security of “home”. For them, nature is often the only refuge in their wandering. It offers them tranquillity, is a source of food and income, satisfies their curiosity, gives them means to relate to their new surroundings, and provides a sense of belonging and connection to other equally-minded people.

“Migrants and Nature” reveals the role of recent migrants, and particularly migrant-women, in building civil society through engagement with the environmental movement in Western Australia. In Australia, a country of immigration, the cultural norms of recent migrants have influenced the wider public perception of the natural environment. However, little is known as to what makes recent migrants who predominantly come to Australia looking for better socio-economic or political conditions care about this country’s environment. Using semi-structured interviews with Western Australian migrants from culturally and linguistically different to English backgrounds, a multicultural description of civically active citizens in the environmental movement is produced. This first study of the connection between environmental engagement and migration concludes that in an increasingly mobile world, migrants bring a greater environmental awareness to their new home. The thesis also reveals the role of recent migrants as agents who create a new form of citizenship, namely “global environmental citizenship”.

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There are several events, which have been very important in shaping this research. Amongst the seven conferences I attended, I am thankful to the Postgraduate Humanities Conferences organised annually at Curtin University. My interest in academia was marked by another memorable event: the summer schools in Greece and Germany organised by the joint European Universities network, POLITY.

Finally, I want to thank my immediate family – and especially my mother and sister – who have been a tower of strength when I most needed it, as well as my beloved grandparents who brought me up to be the person I am.
FOREWORD

After spending nearly five months in Bulgaria in early 2011, I came back to Perth, Western Australia and I saw the distant city from a brand new viewpoint. This always seems to happen when we are away from a place for some time. Regardless of how long we have been living in a certain place, every return brings new impressions and associations; those fresh first impressions stay with us, and although buried somewhere at the back of our mind, they become part of our every-day existence.

So, here I am, once again, with a brand new view of Western Australia. The first thing that struck me was the sky – open blue sky, endless horizons and plenty of space to breath and live in. The next thing which made a new impression on me was the eucalyptus trees, and their magnificent scent I was so familiar with then, but I never truly acknowledged during my earlier stay in Australia. Although I am used to their height, so peculiar for a tree, I am used to, their pleasing aroma of eucalyptus oil was so typical, yet so new to me. Next, there was the wind: the nice breeze, coming from the ocean in the evening cooling down the Western Australian land, still so warm, even in May. As a whole, what made the biggest impression on me was nature, so different from everywhere else. My presumption is that other recently arrived migrants would have felt the same, and I want to set sails to find out if this is true, by talking to some of these people.

I start with the awareness that as a researcher, I approach this subject with particular subjectivism, which is evident through my research journey. I am myself a migrant who has lived in nine different countries - Bulgaria, Russia, the UK, New Zealand, Austria, Check Republic, Slovakia and UAE - and most recently, in the state of Western Australia. My undergraduate background is in economics, with a specialization in labor studies. I also hold a master degree in gender studies from Sofia University. My first language is Bulgarian and I also speak Russian, French and English.

This thesis arose from my interest in what makes people engage with issues within society. My personal involvement with the area of public participation
came from attending a summer school in July 2005 in Delphi, Greece. About 75 students and researchers from all around the world came together to celebrate civically active immigrants as the new citizens in the European Union for a project called POLITIS: *Building Europe with new citizens: an inquiry into civic participation of naturalized citizens and foreign residents in 25 countries*. The research project included over 176 interviews with migrants across Europe. Being one of the researchers, I learnt much about the importance of civic activities and their influence on building stronger civil society. I was also impressed by the quality and the scope of the organizers, who over the course of a week gave insight into how to study and research the potential engagement of immigrants in building sustained social and political practices. Although this project did not particularly focus on the link between migrants and environmental concerns, it did highlight the importance of the public participation of migrants.

I have taken inspiration from the approaches used in the POLITIS study and its European context to develop my interest for civically active migrants in the environmental movement in Australia.

Although immigrant activists around the world are hardly visible in politics, media, civil society and even less so in environmental organizations, their combined contribution to stronger democratic and sustainable practices are of great importance. Migrants are people who have managed to cross the boundaries between at least two cultures and their unique characteristics add to the vibrancy, strength and directions of public life. The issues that migrants face in adjusting to their new country are often quite different from those in their homeland and their engagement with civic life varies.

In Australia, the major environmental issues, such as logging of old growth forests, salinity, water scarcity and abundance of solar energy are in many ways unique to this continent. How are migrants responding to these challenges in the context of their own belief systems and values? Do they get involved in environmental work and why?

Existing research indicates that immigrants, and more specifically migrant women, are bridging the gap between the private and the public and are bringing about increased awareness of environmental problems (Kaplan 1997, Peters
2001). My aim is to explore this argument and to understand how this is related toroader social, cultural and political developments. Understanding these changes
is the precondition for political action to deal with problems and conflicts linked
to migration (Castles and Miller 1993, p.16) and civic participation. It is also
important to further the environmental care agenda on a global level.

All of the thirty people whom I interviewed in this research have a close
connection with nature; some of them in their professional capacity. I have also
discovered other great enthusiasts who have devoted their life to environmental
engagement. What is even more inspiring in this story of recent migrants in
Western Australia is that a lot of the people have found the reason and motivation
to stay in Australian in their connection with the natural environment.

In this thesis, my aim is to examine the links between two very significant
movements - the mobility of people and the environmental movement. This is not
done in an abstract way, but in the context of the sustainability of Western
Australia.

Increased human migration has become a distinctive feature of present life across
the globe. With the powerful forces of nomadization (Braidotti 1994) and
globalisation (Pettman 1998), this trend is only likely to continue. What
implications does migration hold for Australia?

My preposition is that migrants are not a ‘problem’ which needs to be addressed
as such. In particular, migrants hold certain values and cultural understanding of
the natural environment, which often remain undervalued and unnoticed. The
enormous growth of the Western Australian resource sector attracts workers from
all around the world. Similarly, the educational sector and other service industries
benefit from the constant contribution of people from overseas. However, skilled
migrants should not be viewed only in the light of their formal qualifications and
skills, whilst in effect they also bring with them to Australia a variety of values,
cultural norms and beliefs, which remain hidden for the official channels of
immigration. Those values and how they relate to the natural environment are the
focus of this thesis. My hypothesis is based on the premises that contemporary
migrants in Australia do not only contribute to the skilled labour force and the
expansion of the country’s economy, but also have invaluable input to the
environmental movement. I am examining this within the context of Western Australia (WA) – a state whose economy is being fuelled by a large active resource sector, demanding and offering employment opportunities to many migrants.

The other significant phenomenon is the environmental movement. As sustainability is becoming an ever more ‘buzz’ word, the environmental movement has gained a lot of attention from various academics and activists. The effects of climate change are felt almost in every part of the world, yet most countries do not effectively agree about or engage with ‘climate change’ on a political level. Despite the wide recognition of environmental problems, including biodiversity loss, pollution and resource depletion, there is very little done for their prevention. On an international governance level, the most significant events are probably the Montreal Protocol for preserving the ozone layer (1989), the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCEP), also known as the Earth Summit (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for reducing the greenhouse emissions (1997). More recently, during the meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) in Seoul, an announcement came that Australia would introduce for the first time a Pricing Carbon Scheme (mostly known as carbon tax), which became a reality since July 2012.

Within this policy context, environmental activists are relentlessly working to protect the health of land, rivers and oceans. Little, however, is known as to what motivates those who are yet to establish themselves in a new natural environment to care about it with love, commitment and enthusiasm. This thesis is an attempt to shed light on recent migrants’ views about their engagement with the Western Australian nature.

*Migrants and Nature* consists of four parts and ten chapters as outlined below.

Part I - *Setting the Stage* – Chapter One *Introduction* opens the study and sets its aims and objectives. Chapter Two *Theoretical Framework* provides the theoretical background and reviews previous research conducted on migration and environmentalism. Chapter Three *Contemporary Migrants in Western Australia* locates the migrants in the economic, social and political context of WA.
Part II is titled Empirical Perspectives and provides a descriptive analysis of the cultural variety of migrants in Western Australia. Chapter Three Methodological Framework: Studying Contemporary Migrant Communities outlines the methodology design employed for this research. Chapter Four Profiles of Environmentally Active Migrants describes the culturally-diverse portrait of the environmentally active migrants who took part in the research.

Part III, titled Migrants Go for Nature deals with the discussions of findings. Its structure is influenced by the ancient game of Go and is divided in three mutually connected parts: Space, Territory and Connectedness. Chapter Six Space: Environmental Values deals with the image of nature in migrants’ views and the values attributed to nature. This is followed by chapter Seven Territoriality: Economic Values and is concerned with the ways migrants interact with their natural surroundings and the problems they face in that process. It is linked to objective two of the research (to describe the outcomes and the results of migrants’ environmental engagement). Chapter Eight is titled Connectedness: Social Values and it investigates the role of social values in the environmental activism of contemporary migrants. Thus this part analyses the values underpinning the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) as they manifest themselves in the migrants’ work and contribution to nature preservation from the study.

Part IV, Results and Outcomes, consists of two chapters. Chapter Nine Discussion lists some pressing problems in WA related to democracy, sustainability and migration, and includes issues about education, being a migrant, the importance of environmental activism for Australia as well as for the planetary health. Chapter Ten Conclusion summarizes the main findings from the study and outlines some future research directions.

Now that I have completed this research, I see Perth and Western Australia from a completely brand new viewpoint. It is well-known fact, that Perth is extremely isolated, in fact it is the most isolated mainland city on the planet (Glenn 2012)\(^1\),

\(^1\) In regards to its proximity to other major cities. The closest city with population of over one million is Adelaide, which is over 2,500 km from Adelaide (South Australia). Some statistics point out that the most isolated city is Honolulu (Hawaii) in relation to 500,000 populations and the
and despite of this - or precisely because of this - it is also very symbolic that such a city is being connected globally (and locally) through transnational activism and global movements in the form of global environmental citizenship. Nowhere else is the presence of those forces more visible than in Perth, Western Australia.

The images used in the thesis are from a Korean artist, who held an installation at Curtin Art Gallery in 2012. U-Ram Choe is a young artist, who experiments with kinetic sculptures, which mimic forms and motions in nature. The artist also calls them “urban species” as if to stress the importance of living in a highly urbanized world. Each of the imaginary “machine organisms” have their own lifespan as they travel to a gallery, being displayed and then be put away or re-used for another sculpture.

U-Ram Choe shares that he admires the perfection of nature. He has used his countless inspiration of the natural flawless forms and movements of organisms to create unique and stylized perspective of biomimicry. The artist aims to provoke an instinctive desire for exploration (U-Ram Choe January 2013). In his interview, U-Ram says that the work of artists transcends not only borders, but also every classification, discrimination and prejudice (U-Ram 2013).

Similarly, this thesis examines the life of recent migrants, and it concludes that they transcend nation-state borders in a mission to protect global environmental resources and to engage in environmental activism, regardless of their cultural and linguistic background.

most isolated city in terms of other million cities is Auckland (New Zealand) according to various statistics. See for example the reference in text.
PART I

SETTING THE STAGE

Image 1: Choe, U.-R. (2010). SG, metallic material, resin, motor, gear, custom CPU board, LED, 162(h) x 160(d) x 181(w)cm.
CHAPTER 1

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

“One cannot discover new oceans unless he has courage to lose sight of the shore” (Andre Gide)

“Not all that wander are lost” (J.R.R. Tolkein)

1.1 Introduction

International migration is a process in which people move away from their country of birth either temporarily or permanently. Migration can be voluntary (such as looking for better work and study opportunities or to be close to relatives) or non-voluntary (in the case of environmental and political refugees, asylum seekers or displaced persons). Hence, people come to Australia in particular for different reasons: as tourists, as refugees to seek asylum, to work, to study, or to be with family or a partner. This thesis is concerned with people who come to Australia as short or long term migrants, who are seeking employment, undertaking studies, come to visit, or who join family or reach country’s shores because of their passion for environmental activism. All these people are part of population movements across the globe.

The forces of globalisation have become an inevitable reality on a macro- and micro scale in the 21st century. Over 200 million people are crossing the borders of their home country each year as migrants, thus making migration a larger movement than ever before (Castles and Davidson 2000). Increased migration also translates into fluidity in cultures and to a greater variety of cultures, ethnicities and languages residing together. In Australia, a country of migrants, this process has evolved over the last four decades as multiculturalism. It did not happen naturally. Australia endorsed a ‘white Australia policy’ from 1901 until the mid-1970s recruiting mainly white people (preferably British but Europeans were also acceptable) to settle in the country. This began to change in the late
1960s when migration from Europe started to come to a holt. It lead to a change in recruitment policy and the countries that spawned migrants now included Asia and other non-European parts of the world. This new multicultural recruitment policy had a profound and lasting effect until nowadays on the population of Australia.

Despite the wide diversity of migrants, the views of a particular category of people were sought to inform this thesis, namely those who have arrived in Western Australia over the last ten years are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background and are engaged with the environmental movement.

According to the 2011 census data, 6 million people, or a quarter (27 %) of the population of WA currently consists of new arrivals from overseas (ABS 2013). This large movement of people raises many questions, such as: how can migrants and their new country of residence respond to the challenges of living in a new environment? Are there policies and mechanisms that can facilitate and take advantage of the movement of people together with the values they bring, as well as their social and environmental activism? How can contemporary migrants make sense of the world around them and engage in a meaningful way with their host country’s environment. These are issues that have not received a great deal of attention in the existing academic literature, but are very important for today’s world.

1.2 Objectives of the study and research question

The objectives of this research are to explore the role of public participation of migrants in the environmental movement in the process of achieving sustainable development through strengthening the fabric of civil society. The thesis looks at the importance of social capital among migrants and their contribution to building a stronger global civil society, by examining the role of recent migrants in environmental activities and organizations in Perth, Western Australia. Ecofeminist research shows that gender values and characteristics define people’s relationship with the natural environment. However, the concepts of migration, sustainability and gender have not been linked together, yet. Hence, my research focuses on filling the gap between the above three concepts by interrogating the role of public participation of recent migrants’ through their engagement with the
environmental movement. This research presents a new theoretical perspective and helps understand the new reality of the 21st century.

Thus the main purpose of the thesis is to identify and deconstruct a specific set of values, archetypes, and characteristics, which contribute to the strengthening of an environmentally active civil society by recent migrants. It draws its empirical base from evidence from Western Australia and is informed by previous research, related to migration, environmentalism and ecofeminism.

Migrants are mainly attracted to Australia by the prospects for new and better social, economic and political opportunities compared with those in their countries of origin. By establishing themselves in Australia however they discover a unique physical world, which is in many ways unfamiliar to them. This natural environment is also fragile and requires responsible care so that the future generations can also have the opportunities that exist today.

The central research question I addressed in this thesis is: “What values, cultural norms and beliefs drive recent migrants to engage with the environmental movement in Western Australia?”

The objectives which follow from this research question are:

- To investigate the meaning my participants attach to “nature”;
- To understand the ways in which migrants think and act upon their physical environment;
- To identify and describe the social outcomes that follow from migrants’ environmental engagement;
- To investigate and critique the ways in which different levels of government facilitate recent migrants’ engagement with the Australian environment.

In order to achieve these objectives, the thesis aims to contribute to the existing knowledge in the following ways: a) provide a new more fluid understanding of who is a migrant in the 21st century; b) reveal a multicultural model of civically active citizens of Western Australian and their role in the environmental movement; c) show ways in which contemporary international migrants are becoming “global environmental citizens”.

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Environmental degradation and economic development are profoundly gendered and women are key stakeholders in the struggle to resurrect human relationships with nature in more sustainable and democratic ways (Harrison 2004). From a gender perspective, utilizing feminist political ecology in the area of environmental protection and by examining the motivation and inspiration behind civic engagement, this thesis represents a new step forward into exploring the link between migrant communities and ways in which they shape environmental participation. By doing this, it also draws a unique portrait of the role-models of new migrants, especially women in their pursuit of a more sustainable future.

The world in the 21st century is witnessing increased population movements, while simultaneously experiencing globalisation of environmental problems (such as climate change, resource depletion and land, air and water pollution). What are the values and motivations for people’s environmental awareness and environmental activism in this context? Nowhere else are the answers to these questions more evident, than in the case of people who have recently moved to a new place and are already engaged in some kind of environmental activism.

1.3 Review of previous research

In this section I examine previous research, related to the study of environmentally active migrants and place it within the theoretical framework of transnational activism.

The subject of public participation of recent migrants and their contribution to civil society can be seen as part of transnational activism. Although, it does not focus on the role of migrants in the public sphere, transnational activism lays the foundation of globalisation as a catalyst for the spread of civic activities across the globe. Transnational activism shows how even “prosaic activities…take on broader meaning when ordinary people cross transnational space” (Tarrow 2005 p.2). In addition, it also explains the connection between the local and the global. Today’s boundaries between national and international activism are becoming increasingly blurry. Transnational activism has the potential for social change through giving rise to new political identities, based on agents’ participation in international protests, which Tarrow (2007, p.2) designates - “rooted
cosmopolitans”. The nation-state becomes only one player amongst others international, national, local, but these new political identities cross such boundaries in search of particular civic justices. Through their nature, many migrants are not only well-positioned, but they also actively engage in transnational activism, such as pursuing human rights, freedom of speech, child protection and other agendas.

The subject of public participation of migrants and their contribution to civil society has over the last decade attracted much interest among academia, policymakers, governmental and community organizations (Castles and Davidson 2000, Hunter, Labor et al. 2000, Tilbury and Wilding 2004, Vogel 2008, p.125). In the European Union, for example, the concept of building a civil society² through public involvement is described by the Commission’s Directorate General for Social Affairs as a civil dialogue serving the purpose of improving the effectiveness and legitimacy of policy-making in the social sector (Anheier and Toepler 2010, Liebert and Trenz 2011). Migrants tend to be seen as a special category of people, who are distinctively different and separate from the mainstream community.

Some studies (Passerini 1996, Colic-Peisker 2004, Reuveny 2008) examine the social and environmental factors for migration. Growing evidence indicates that more and more migrants are motivated by social factors in moving from one country to another and particularly in the pursuit of a better way of life. According to Europa Newsletter, the main factors that motivate Europeans to move to another country are love: following a partner and being with family (EUROPA 2006). There is further evidence that, in addition to economic factors and the pursuit of financial success, migrants today are motivated by better prospects in the host country for themselves and their children (Pries 1999, Pajo 2008, O'Reilly 2012).

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² The public participation debate at a European level did not begin until two decades ago (although the contemporary traditions of civil society and involvement of the public are rooted in the Rome Treaty (25 March 1957) which developed a particular discourse on civil society by creating the European Economic Community (EEC) which later became a pillar in establishing the European Union.
Hunter (2000) analyses the significance of environmental factors in migrants communities by comparing the environmental attitudes and behavior of native-born and foreign-born residents. She (2000, p. 565) concludes that “immigrants... express significantly higher levels of concern with regards to environmental problems” and that recent immigrants “are more likely to engage in environmentally friendly behavior compared to native-born residents”. These studies show that migrants should not be seen as separate from the rest of society, but rather as contributing to its long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability.

How important is the natural environment when people decide to leave their country; when and what motivates migrants into taking a public stand and begin engaging with environmental issues? There is not much information relating to migrants’ place in relation to a country’s environment and the Australian environment in particular. Recently arrived migrants struggle to make a living, to settle, prioritise and re-prioritise their work and social commitments. From a governmental perspective, information provided to recent migrants is focused around education, housing, health and family services, and community organisations ³ that provide services assisting newly-arrived migrants. For example, the Directory of Services for New Arrivals in Western Australia published by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI 2005) provides a comprehensive list of all agencies, community organisations and services considered important for newly arrived migrants. However, this publication and others issued by the Government of Western Australia do not give any links to environmental organisations, which may point the new migrants (or any migrants in this regard) to issues concerning the environment or how to engage with local environmental organisations. The list of possible environmental issues could include local problems with climate change, pollution, ways to protect people’s rights to live in a clean environment, free from (toxic/hazard/ radioactive) waste. The review of Government publications shows that little is done to raise migrants’ awareness about the new natural environment or encourage them to attend local

³ For example the Health Consumers’ Council WA, The western Australian Council of Social Service, Community Housing Coalition, Union WA, Western Australian Local Government Association and others.
events, such as the Kings Park Festival in spring, wildflower tours or tree planting. Consequently migrants are left to their own initiative to start to know, explore and engage with Australia’s natural environment.

Very little is known about the way immigrants are relating to the environment, despite a lot of research being conducted in the two separate areas of migration and environmental studies (Wacker 1994, Vertovec and Posey 2006, Reuveny 2008). Specific research is lacking on how migrants are contributing and interacting with the environment and even less with the unique Western Australian natural environment. Environmental problems, such as climate change, identifiers of which are present in almost all parts of the world, come with a different manifestation in each country or region. This is why the same environmental problems may remain unnoticed in a new natural environment, or on the contrary – emphasized - when people are changing their place of residence.

Over a quarter of the population in Western Australia was born overseas, according to the latest available statistical information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS 2012), and overseas migration has comprised more of the population growth since 1998-99 for every year until now except 2003-2004 (42%). These trends have been re-affirmed with the publication with the final estimation of the Australian census in 2011, which recorded that net overseas migration contributed 60 percent of the population growth (ABS 2013). Despite public participation being an important factor in strengthening the civil society in any country.

Despite signs of declining public participation (Putnam, Leonardi et al. 1993), the environment continues to be a major area of transnational activities as demonstrated with public and NGO engagement surrounding all international governmental negotiation, such as Copenhagen 2009 or the Climate Action Network, covering 850 NGOs from more than 90 countries (Climate Action Network 2013). A strong civil society in which all citizens, including migrants have their voice on environmental, social and economic issues is a pre-condition for sustainability (Vogel 2008), but not much research exists as to what makes recent migrants an active part of such a society.
1.4 Significance of the study

Recent migrants are often assumed as inactive in the arenas, surrounding environmental issues. In the case of climate change debates, we rarely hear the voices of migrants and specifically those of recent migrants in Western Australia. Deliberations on incorporating carbon tax in Australia in 2011, for example, did not include the voices of migrants, although it was said that the Australian Government will need to increase its intake of skilled migrants in order to meet growth demands from the mining, gas and oil industries, particularly in the Western Australian Pilbara region (Australian Government 2011, Tony Burke MP 2011, Uren and Franklin 2011).

In response to the labour shortage regarding the fast growing mining industry of Western Australia, the Federal Immigration reclassified Perth as a regional city for the purposes of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme in order to be able to bring in additional 16 thousand skilled migrants to the WA workforce (Cole and Koranyi 2011). What impact is this going to have on Western Australia? Why are the views of current migrants not expressed in the public sphere? Is it because migrants have nothing to say, or because they are incapable of recognizing environmental impacts? Could it be that their voices have been silenced by the lack of Australian permanent residence or Australian citizenship and subsequently their inability to take part in the official decision making channels (such as voting in elections and belonging to political formations as well as semi-formal public consultations)?

Recent migrants bring a wealth of environmental experiences, strategies and insights, which can be of significant contribution to the environmental movement not only in Australia, but in general. The Australia Student Environmental Network⁴ counterstrikes claims that migrants are apolitical and passive members of the Australian environmental movement by giving startling examples of environmental activism, where many of the participants are passionate contemporary migrants. The interest of people from a multiplicity of countries and ethnic backgrounds is demonstrated by the crew of the international

⁴ For more information see the ASEN website: http://asen.org.au/
The international environmental NGO “Sea Shepherd”. It has recruits from around the world – comprising true multicultural ‘embroidery’ of people who have in common the passion for marine protection.\(^5\) Deforestation, an environmental problem of no lesser concern to the above two, also has captured considerable attention of migrants in Western Australia (National Union of Students Australia 2000). Given the seriousness of the problem, these migrants found the need to express their passion about deforestation and greening of Perth city, by engaging with a group who call itself ‘guerilla gardening’ (GG). These migrants shape the image and status of these and other environmental organizations, which would not be the same without the devoted efforts from recent migrants to Australia. Involvement with environmental NGOs is one of the most prominent ways to become “visible” and to have your voice heard.

Within the Australian and especially in Western Australia, there are at least three reasons why the topic of migrants’ participation in the environmental movement is significant.

Firstly, the topic of migration is widely acknowledged in academia. However little has been written on the participation of migrants in environmental activities and organizations, exploring the motivation and the outcomes of such participation. Even less so, have such studies been concerned with the feminist perspective of this process. It is possible to hypothesize that migrant- women may be more likely to engage in civic participation, based on the traditionally perceived ‘feminist’ values, such as family care, future generations and care for the environment (Warren 1991, Cranford 2007). Exploring the motivations for migrants’ environmental engagement, including migrant-women, is a new topic in the field of migration.

Secondly, the issue of migrants and nature is important as it has implications for policies and Australia’s stand on immigration and environmental priorities. Investigating the extent to which migrants’ engagement with the environmental

\(^5\)The international environmental NGO ‘Sea Shepherd’ lived through a major success in their 7th Antarctic mission in the Southern winter of 2010/2011, when they forced the Japanese whaling fleet to withdraw from the southern oceans, which were protected international whaling sanctuary. This success is contributed largely to the passion of the international crew.
movement is influencing established patterns and structures, is of huge significance for the Australian society.

Thirdly, the timing of this study is very significant. Events, such as the global financial crisis which started in 2008, are a categorical expression of the globalisation and inter-connectedness of the world’s economies. Some commentators (Peirce 2009) expressed concerns that the financial crisis in certain countries, such as the USA, has been further fuelled by the lack of adequate migration politics where less than 15 per cent of the permanent visas are offered to skilled individuals (Peirce 2009). By comparison, Australia, which has favoured skilled labour migration for a number of years, was less affected by the global financial crisis. Despite this, we have very limited understanding as to the migrant contribution to civil society is, in particularly as to how this relates to nature preservation.

In summary, the significance of this thesis is in exploring the engagement of migrants and their contribution to the social and environmental sustainability of Western Australia. In studying particularly the participation of recent migrants in the environmental movement in Western Australia, this research addresses a knowledge gap in the literature, related to on migration and to environmental movement. It proposes that global voluntary travellers, both short and long-term, are broadening the idea of “citizenship” to include participation in the environmental movement as a form of “global environmental citizenship” in a world which is witnessing increased mobility of people and intensifying global environmental problems.

1.5 Challenges and limitations

The first challenge to consider in this research is the concern raised in other studies on migrants (Tilbury and Wilding 2004, Vertovec 2011) that it should not reproduce a ghetto-like representation of cultural groups by separating different birthplace groups into separate categories. One way of achieving this is by studying problems which are associated with wider migrant communities. Including different migrant groups where possible in order to find out an answer to a problem which lies outside the ethnic minorities is another approach which may be helpful. When studying public participation of migrants and their
contribution to civil society, I focus on issues dealing with civil society and public participation which are cosmopolitan concepts existing in and outside migrant communities. The rights for clean water and toxic-free environment, for instance, are not only migrants’ rights; they are universal human rights. In this context, raising public awareness should not only be specifically targeted at migrant communities, but at the general public.

The second challenge in this thesis is for the readers. It requires the readers to recognize the diversity and the importance of recent migrants to the Australian society, not only in economic terms but more significantly in relation to its social and cultural dimensions. Some may find it difficult to think of migrants not only as workers, refugees and parents, but also as environmental activists. Wide-spread myths about migrants have penetrated Western societies to portray an image of a homogenous group only partly engaged with the market forces, segregated by ethnicity and race or at the best as passive citizens in a global constantly evolving civil society. Even research which focuses on migrants rarely takes into account the diversity and the differences of immigrants. Instead, it is focused on separate ethnic groups, thus creating a particular image. The role of the state is seen as a body struggling to accommodate migrants’ basic needs for the ever-growing number of migrants (overseas arrivals in Australia now account for over half the population growth for Western Australia) (ABS 2013).

This thesis is set to explore and reject those modern myths in Western culture. Some academics (Kelley 1985) have referred to this group of society as the "gold collar" migrants, who pursue economic opportunities. The challenge of the study is to counteract widely held believes and create a new image of migrants.

The scope of the study is limited by the time-frame (three years) and resources (limited funding) for a PhD thesis.

1.6 Summary

The aims of this thesis are to paint a picture of civically active migrants in Western Australia, who engage with environmental issues. While doing so, it also aims to reveal the role of newcomers as agents for creating new types of belonging, which here can be referred to as global environmental citizenship. This
chapter outlined the significance of this study together with some of the limitations in conducting this research. The significance of this study is in portraying migrants as active citizens, who form the essential fabric of the Australian society and explore an uncharted area by bringing together migration and transnational activism.
CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter lays down the theoretical framework used in this multidisciplinary research. Through combining environmental, migration and feminist perspectives as major academic fields of inquiry, it aims to provide a more integrated approach to the study of activism of people for the protection of the natural environment. The chapter utilizes sustainability lenses in examining each one of the above three perspectives with sustainability and transnational activism serving as umbrella concepts. This approach is in response to the role of global civil society in the context of globalization, where the lines between local, national and international are becoming increasingly blurry.

The three perspectives - environmentalism, migration and feminism - find their place in the second half of the thesis in form of space, territoriality and connectedness: concepts emerging from the empirical analysis. Those concepts explain the views of recent migrants on nature in Western Australia and give light to the process of becoming global environmental citizens.

2.2 Globalisation

Sustainability is a concept which integrates in a holistic manner all environmental, social and economic aspects of development (Marinova, Annandale et al. 2006, Blackburn 2007). Migration or mobility of people also impacts on sustainability, but as yet is under-theorized in terms of sustainability analysis. For example, very little research exists on migrants’ engagement with the natural environmental movement and their contribution to the overall sustainability of their new host country. On the other hand, evidence has started to emerge about the role of global civil society to counteract the forces of unsustainable development.
Focusing on sustainability, this thesis attempts to naturalise the link between ‘transnational activism’ and ‘global environmental citizenship’. It demonstrates that transnational activism is equally applicable to the environmental movement (as it is to the political) and more than a mere reflection of globalization's ‘inherent’ tendencies or potentials and so adds explanation to environmental groundings of global non-political community through certain interpretations of the natural environment that challenge what citizenship is.

According to MacSheoin (2007, p. 105), “the last two decades have seen a huge growth in international and transnational political mobilization by non-state actors”. Transnational activism manifests itself not only politically through movements, such as “occupy”, but also environmentally through participation in sustainability forums, such as the World Summit. Perhaps the most interesting characteristic of environmental engagement is that local issues are connected to global environmental and political changes in a similar way that local economies have become part of a globalised world.

Civil society has also become globalised, namely:

“a realm of non-coercive collective action around shared interests and values that operates beyond the boundaries of nation-states”

(MacSheoin 2007, p. 107).

It ranges from activities on the boundaries of legality, (such as Guerrilla gardening or Sea Shepherd) to conventional legal voluntary and paid work (such Conservation Council Western Australia or World Wildlife Fund for Nature). These actors are shaping the global civil society and are responding to other forces of globalisation, such as the free movement of people and capital.

As Friedberg and Hunt (Friedberg and Hunt 1995 p.23) rightly point out:

“The inscription on the Statue of Liberty exhorts the words to ‘give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearnings to breathe free.’”
Migration continues to be an important aspect of today’s globalized economy, but its impact is also evident of globalisation is also evident in the spread of environmental problems (Edwards and Gaventa 2001, Kofman and Youngs 2003). Another negative dimension of globalisation lies in the decline of democratic practices within civil society, particularly as they relate to representing migrants. What drives people who come to unfamiliar shores to prioritize the importance of nature in their everyday lives?

**Civil society and world civic politics**

The starting point of the analysis in this thesis is recognizing the link between a strong civil society on the one hand and a well-developed civic sector, represented by environmental NGOs (including environmental organisations), social capital and public participation on the other (Lewis 2007). In today’s concept of civil society it has become common for it to be defined as an autonomous *social sphere* distinct from both the State and the market (Smismans 2006). Civil-rights advocates from different backgrounds, including nature conservation, racial integration and feminist groups, frame the need to protect the right to live in a clean environment as a moral issue (Brennan 1995, Elliot 1995, Guerrier 1995, DesJardins 1997). This study investigates the role that recent migrants play in Australia’s civil society by examining their engagement with environmental groups.

A study by Eade and O’Byrne (2005) suggests that civil society is “sustained through *social interactions* and through a normative engagement with values, which generate the struggle within the personality for emancipation” (O’Byrne 2005, p. 4). Therefore civic activities are important as they take place in networks and involve mutual obligations. Social networks that can affect the productivity of individuals and groups are also referred to as “social capital” (Putnam, Leonardi et al. 1993). This analysis examines what drives migrants to establish environmental social networks and contribute towards social capital.

Some scholars (Eade and O'Byrne 2005) also imply that a global ethic, which is at the heart of a civil society “*can only be arrived at by means of a dialogue within and between societies*” (Eade and O'Byrne, p.7 and p.27). Migrants’ voices are also important to consider in such a dialogue. According to Cohen and Arato
(1992), civil society is a composed sphere of association, social movements and forms of public communication; it is distinctive in its nature from the “political society” and the “economic society”. A special concern for civil society nowadays is the state of the natural environment and this is also where political and economic societies have both failed. The environmental movement is attempting to bridge these arenas.

Previous studies do not take into account the cultural and societal aspects of environmental activism: one possible explanation has been ascribed to shallow understanding of politics (Wapner 1995, Wapner 2002). If environmental activism directly impacts state policies, then it is generally recognised that it does bear a formal political meaning. However, efforts, which are directed at social, cultural and/or environmental changes, are rarely associated with politics. Such a view limits research because it suggests that you can only measure activist influence on the state.

Wapner (1995 p.312) insists that environmental activist organisations are not “simply translational pressure groups in a global context, but they are also “political actors in their own rights”. There is, however, ample evidence, e.g., the work of the IPCC or UNEP of the existence of world civic and environmental politics. Also:

“When activists work to change conditions without directly pressuring states, their activities take place in the civil dimensions of the world collective life or what is sometime called global civil society” (Wapner 1995 p.312)

Civil society exists in a constant stage of transformation and together with the actors involved (NGOs, and the cultural and social practices of all people), migrants, with their environmental practices, are also political actors in its development.

**Democracy**

A traditional understanding of democracy includes the following four key components: (1) a political system for choosing a government through fair elections, (2) active civil participation of people as citizens in civic life, (3)
human right protection and (4) a rule of law applied equally to all citizens (Held 1995, Tilly 2007).

However, other researchers, claim that democracy should also incorporate such issues as (1) racial, linguistic and religious justice and (2) environmental justice in the interest of future generations (Kilcullen 2000). Based on this wider understanding of the concept of democracy, it can be conceptualized as the main social platform and a political mechanism to achieve social, economic and environmental sustainability. This also bears the potential to give voice to often-marginalized groups of society and to create “active citizens”, including recent migrants.

Australian citizens have the obligation to participate in public life and to express their opinions and interests. The situation is different for those who have not acquired a formal political citizenship, and they constitute nearly one quarter of the population of Australia (ABS 1988, DIAC 2012). In many ways, the public participation and involvement with the environmental activism of such non-citizens act as a higher recognition of a citizenship, understood as an obligation to take part in public life. Yet, a lot of formal political citizens are less active in creating of the space, commonly referred to as ‘civil society’, than recent migrants. Should Australia (together with other traditionally perceived migrant counties) share the obligation to include civically active members of its society as “citizens” in this wider meaning of democracy and political protection?

Drawing from the above definitions of democracy (both traditional and modern) this thesis argues that migrants, and especially recent migrants, broaden and strengthen the notion of democracy through at least three vital components:

- participation in public life (through widespread bounded groups of interests), which is seen as the key element of the role of a “citizens”
- by acting as agents for social and environmental justice in the interest of current and future generations, or what is referred to as shared futures and

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• by widening the understanding of human rights, to include equal and fair representations of all sections of society, including women.

**Citizenship**

Perhaps the most widely accepted definition of citizenship is that of Marshall: “a full membership in a community, encompassing civil, political and social rights” (Marshall 1950 as quoted in Fester 2005, p.218). Since 1950s, the notion of citizenship has been a lengthy debated concept. For example, despite the fact that more than 50% of the world population now lives in urban areas, most researchers examine the notion of citizenship in relation to the state and not to the city (Fester 2005). Examining the link between citizenship and the city exposes connection between everyday lives of individuals and local governance activities. Such investigation, for example, can show the effects of gender power relationships and their bearing on the fulfilment of women’s rights.

In the context of a global political economy, the notion of citizenship is complicated by the relationship between formal citizenship and the state (Purcell 2003). Purcell (2003) also highlights that a radical reconstruction of citizenship is linked to the idea of another dimension other than national. According to him, such a change of reference can take the form of moving towards belonging to the EU rather than to a specific country. This resonates with the ideas of cosmopolitan citizenship and global democracy. However, such citizenship still requires some form of political loyalty, as the state is still at many levels the overarching agent.

“One can hold formal citizenship at many scales (i.e. municipal, county, provincial state, nation-state) but if the principle of the state’s territorial sovereignty is to be upheld, those citizenships must be nested in a territorial hierarchy with a single sovereignty power at the national level...” (Purcell 2003, p. 574).

The trend of eroding the national political citizenship means that there is need for understanding citizenship as a new notion of belonging, which is conveyed through smaller or larger scales of belonging. Young (1998) referred to this
phenomenon as “differentiated citizenship” and Yuval-Davis (2011) as “multi-layered citizenship”. What is also of interest is the notion of “re-territorialization” of citizenship (Purcell 2003, Fester 2005). This term is used to question the association between the nation states and political loyalty (Purcell 2003, Fester 2005).

According to Lefebvre’s radical explanation of alternative forms of citizenship, the city has the rights to belong not only to the political citizens, state or corporations, but to “the whole society and firstly ...those who inhabit” (Lefebvre, Kofman et al. 1996 p. 158). This is a novel proposition, which gives not simply a new definition, but also a new purpose and a meaning of belonging.

Lefebvre allocates the rights to the city to its inhabitants (Lefebvre 1991, Lefebvre, Kofman et al. 1996, Purcell 2002). What that means in simple terms is that those who live in a specific city have the rights to belong there; they have earned that privilege by inhabiting the city. These rights are shared between the political citizens and other dwellers, regardless of their accidental ethnicity, country of birth or belonging to a political state (Lefebvre, Kofman et al. 1996, Purcell 2002, Purcell 2003). Present forms of empowering include mechanisms related to policies, state-decisions and formal structures. The alternative suggested by Lefebvre is that the rights to the city should lie within all inhabitants (migrants, workers, marginalised groups). Thus the rights to the city holds the promise of empowering urban habitats: Lefebvre calls them citadins and Purcell calls them detizens in contrast to national citizens (loaded with political meaning). Most importantly, these citadins play a central role under the new round of global restructuring. This ultimately means challenging property rights and the foundation of neoliberal capitalist economic regime, together with its associated social relations.

Also in Lefebvre’s view, the urban inhabitants have the right to participation and the right to appropriation. The right to participation means that inhabitants should have the right to participate at all levels of decision-making, where the ultimate decision will be that of international institutions, the state or corporates (in the case of capital investments). Unlike the filtered vote of the citizens to participate
in decision-making through conventional neo-liberal democratic process, this new process would allow *citadins* to directly be involved in decisions producing their urban space. The right to appropriation means that dwellers of the city have the rights to full use and access to urban space (Purcell 2002). This directly and significantly alters the accepted neo-liberal national citizenship formed on the basis of political belonging.

While in Lefebvre’s view, the urban inhabitants have the right to occupy and use urban space (what he terms appropriate rights), the thesis pursues the supposition that *citadins* have (1) the right to use and occupy natural environmental spaces; and (2) the right to participate in any decisions that affect, concern or transform the natural environment. For example, *citadins* who have the right to the WA environment should have the right to participate in an investment decision of a resource company, such as BHP Billiton or BP. It must also be made clear that in accordance with to Lefebvre’s view their role must be *central*.

Globalised environmental problems are adding a new dimension to neo-liberal universal citizenship. On a formal level this is expressed through the work of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) and many other global environmental connections. However, most importantly, a lot of activities and pressure are being generated through global informal networks (facilitated most notably by the spread of internet use and by modern communication technologies), such as Avaz, Care2Cause and various Facebook based web pages. It could be argued that a new global environmental citizenship is emerging. Those new forms of citizenship in a straight line challenge the dominant current social relations of neo-liberalist order. Usage of environmental space, in that regards urban space as well, has been the crucial point in accumulating capital (Harvey 2010). Globalisation has affected all of its forms, including social. However, how important is environmentalism for this new category of people?

### 2.3 The natural environment

The environmental movement has been associated with rising environmental awareness (Dunlap and Mertig 1991, Hutton and Connor 1999). It has taken the form of activities of social movement organisations, and has resulted in a rapid
growth of both the number of environmental organisations and the membership in those organisations (Vertovec and Posey 2006).

Environmental movement is a vague concept, which includes all environmental-related activities on governmental agencies, grass-root environmental organisations, the setting up of inter-governmental organisations and agreements, the establishment of a number of scientific institutions and educational courses at university level, as well as individual efforts of people to be part of the ‘green’ consumerism, which includes growing buying organic food, fair-trade products, recycling, use of energy-efficient appliances and many more (Vertovec and Posey 2006). The global environmental movement change has been advocated by the social movement organisations, which have also become mostly acclaimed and in many ways the most trusted agencies (Yearley 2003). Yearley (2003) rightly points out that those social movements attracted the attention of social scientists and commentators as they have exceeded anyone’s expectations: their innovative approaches, solidarity among members for a common goal, and their effectiveness are unprecedented.

Environmental ethics versus anthropocentrism

There are two ways to understand nature. The first one is in the sense of an independent entity with rights and values on its own and the second one is as the human perception and re-collection of images and ideas (Zimmerman 1993).

In its simplest terms, environmental ethics is based on the understanding of the value of nature, independent of human judgement. This value has been referred to as “intrinsic” (Naess 1984) or “inherent” (Taylor 1986). Naess (1984) notes that intrinsic values as “the well-being of non-human life on Earth has value in itself” (Naess as quoted in O’Neil 2003 p.131). This value is independent of any instrumental usefulness for limited human purposes. While holding environmental ethics is to agree that non-human beings and the natural world have intrinsic value, this does not place any obligations on the part of the human beings until people show how this value contributes to their well-being (O’Neil 1995).

One could claim, that to argue that nature has no intrinsic value is a contradiction in itself, since if it didn’t it would have no other value at all. The value which we,
as human beings add to the natural world is human-created. It only comes because nature possessed value in itself long before human beings existed. If it had no value until the humans emerged on earth, it would not have existed, since every living creature and the natural world have a value and a purpose (Brennan 1995, O'Neil 2003).

The bias towards human interest is an integral part of ethical theories, which is a restriction dictated by the logic of evaluative and moral concepts, and that ‘there is no coherent, possible, or viable alternative to ‘human chauvinism” (Richard and Val Routley, Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism in Elliot 1995). According to the orthodox argument in defence of human chauvinism, humans are uniquely and exclusively qualified for moral consideration and attributions of value based on the fact that:

1. Humans possess properties, which are preconditions for such an assumption, that are not possessed by any other non-human to a cut-off point of moral considerations;
2. Anatomically and zoologically different creatures from humans do not hold all morally relevant features, thus linking humanity and morality through features that only humans possess (Elliot 1995).

The major argument against human anthropocentrism is based on the idea that nature and all living and non-living beings have an intrinsic value, independent of human value or human use (Zimmerman 1993, Brennan 1995, Warren and Erkal 1997).

There are several alternatives to human anthropocentrism based on manifestation of intrinsic values and expressed through: 1) connecting with childhood memories, i.e. growing up and living close to pristine natural environment; 2) through the semiotics in myths and legends and 3) through emphasising, implementing, and acting on non-material environmental values, through expressing concerns and responsibility for the state of the planet. In all of the above situations environmental ethics refers to a relationship between humans and the physical world as it is now, as it was in the past, how we want to see it in the future or how it was conveyed to us.
The hybrid landscape theory

The majority of the world’s population now lives in urban settings and this tendency is only likely to continue (United Nations Development of Economic and Social Affairs 2009). In Australia, more than two thirds of the population is urbanised (Smith and Doherty 2006, Luck, Race et al. 2011).

The urban landscapes are characterised by the hybridity - with narratives of migrants from different regions of the world revealing a context of urban migration. Investments in development in most societies, including Australia, are targeted towards larger urban centres, and thus are attracting immigrants to those areas. This raises the question of what implications urbanisation has on the perception about the environment. The hybrid theory (Mattews 2002) claims that people have different perceptions about the environment and that they are influenced by their own cultural heritage. Some may be considering as “nature” human-made parks and in general terms, human- altered landscape, while others may consider only pristine environments as “nature”. The underlying significance of the “hybrid environment” theory is that “natural environment” is not a constant notion and that attempting to understand this concept requires eliminating the pre-conceived concepts of what nature is.

“Nature” in this thesis is understood as a construction and re-collection of images, memories, ideas and individual perceptions, rather than a static notion (Brennan 1995, O'Neil 2003, Clingerman and Dixon 2011). This understanding of nature has moved the focus of the environmental movement from studying the impact of humans on nature to how human individuals perceive the natural environment (Guerrier 1995). This is to say that the human impact is not simply physical. What has also changed is the way people think and act on their environments. It is a mutual relationship between humans and place. Perhaps a better way to ask the question “What is nature” is to try to understand what is the two-way relationship between the natural environment we live in and how we mutually interpret it (Clingerman and Dixon 2011).
\textbf{Who is an environmentalist?}

A central concern in examining the environmental perspective is to determine who is regarded as an environmentalist.

There are certain parallels between social movements and environmental movements. In many ways, the goals of both are “to change the normative base of society and to question the Government logic”, therefore ‘increase the critical reflexivity’ and the ‘intellectual ferment’ of society (Hutton and Connor 1999 p.6). Another similarity can be found in the way the two movements adopt the above strategy to define the movement boundaries. If we adopt the social movement theory of defining boundaries (Anthias, Yuval-Davies et al. 1992, Hutton and Connor 1999) and we apply to environmental activist groups, it can be argued that the goal of the environmental movement is to oppose the existing status by implying critical reflexivity and challenging the established order.

Some academics have labeled people claiming to be part of a particular social movement, but who are not opposing the existing social orders as “bureaucrats” (Hutton and Connor 1999). The social movement theory adopts the above strategy to define the movement boundaries, i.e. who is able to claim to be part of a particular movement.

Thus a bureaucrats is not an \textit{environmentalist} unless he/she engages in other forms of active opposition to the existing social order. From a philosophical point of view, this is also been referred to as the ability to divorce oneself either partially or completely from the existing social order (Laclau 1996). These are what are known as \textit{enviromocrats} - adopted from the term \textit{femocrats} which refers to feminists who hold a position of authority in the state system, but are not fighting the existing social order (Deem and Ozga 2000).

A lot has been said about the phenomenon of \textit{femocrats}— ‘feminists in bureaucracy’ (Eisenstein 1996). Eisenstein (1996) talks about the contradictory behaviour of feminists who have become bureaucrats in the pursuit of social change and have acquired distinct achievements linked to Australian history and politics. Such achievements can be found mainly towards more affordable childcare, health care, education and housing. Throughout the social and political
history of Australia, the notion of femocrats has been severely criticised. Critiques found grounds mainly on the following concerns: firstly, femocrats were not regarded as real feminists, because they were not expected to work in collective and non-hierarchical organisations; secondly, femocrats were employed as managers and hold highly paid positions, unlike most women; lastly, femocrats were not regarded as representative for most of the women do not agree with them neither politically nor socially despite their claims to speak on behalf of all women (Eisenstein 1996). Similarly, envirocrats can be seen to represent the current system and status and instead of actively engaging in changing existing behaviour towards the protection of nature.

The goals of social movements contrast those of environmental movements in certain ways. While the goal of social movements is to enable active opposition of the current social order, the environmental movement is more concerned with raising awareness, engaging in formal and informal activities, and with a change in environmental politics. Civil participation is defined as both formal and informal engagement with social groups, parties and community organisations (Putman, Leonradi et al. 1993). Utilising similar logic, environmental participation can be defined as both formal and informal, thus entailing all those who formally belong to environmental organisations, and those who are engaging informally with local groups, family gathering, community gardening, tree planting and so on.

**Space and place**

The notion of space and place have drawn the attention of many human geographers (Hubbard, Kitchin et al. 2004). Some thinkers have also conceptualised different metaphors to better illustrate the ways in which people make sense of their environments as human habitat (Buttimer 1993).

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7One such example is the work of Anne Buttimer who explores the ways that human beings have turned their attention to natural science, theology, and myths to form visions and understandings of the Earth. In her work, she employs popular the characters from mythology and literature of Phoenix, Faust and Narcissus to better illustrate humanity’s relationship to the natural environment.
defends the idea that a sense of aesthetics and beauty are essential components of human life, along with the basic human needs (Tuan 1993). Nature, in conventional understandings, acts as an inspiration and provides much needed aesthetics in every-day life.

In human geography, relation of place - space is interpreted in its complexity. Many argue that people do not live in a framework of geometric relationships, but in a world made of meanings that we attach to those places (Lowenthal and Association of American 1967, Ley 1974, Ley and Samuels 1978, Buttiner and Seamon 1980, Ley 1983, Ley, Tutchener et al. 1999). Tuan (1977) expresses that place does not have any particular scale associated with it, but is created and manifested through the “field of care” made of people’s emotional and social attachments (Hubbard, Kitchin et al. 2004). Thus sense of place is made of travel journeys and attachments people create in their personal experience whose results is a web of spaces, rather than a defined static and reified notion of place. This is especially applicable for new migrants, whose sense of place is heavily dependent on their social networks (Ley 1974, Tuan 1977, Ley 1983).

Other writers stress the importance of new place identities through hybridization, which further contests the connection between globalisation and homogenization of space (Jackson 1999, Jackson 1999, Jackson, Crang et al. 2004). Lefebvre investigates at length what space means and how it is produced to bridge the mental and physical realms, in which we live (Lefebvre 1991, Lefebvre, Kofman et al. 1996). He sets off by exploring the birth of the concept “space” to describe an empty space, conceptualised by mathematics and presented into a numberless shapes. In this, there is a connotation or relevance to space in more philosophical terms. Foucault uses space to show that “knowledge is also the space in which the subject may take up a position and speak of the object with which he deals in his discourse” (Foucault in Lefebvre 1991 p.3-4, Foucault 2010). The notion of place, however, gives meaning to space and emotionally and experientially links individuals to their environment.

Space and place can be seen as two entities, which are easily de-constructed and are dependent on each other for their existence. They are constantly re-invented through the networks of people, languages and representations (Latour 2005).
Such perspectives also imply that these two concepts are in an ever transitioning state, which are evolving and shaped based on power relations.

Overall, space and place exist in a perpetual state of inter-dependency and transformation. They connect citizens to the built and natural environment where they live. Their significance is often taken for granted by those who are accustomed to particular surroundings but they can also ignite passionate response when their existence is challenged or being infected. Migrants, on the other hand expose themselves to a new spatial and ecological learning experience when they move to a new place.

2.4 Migration

There are no studies that link directly migration with environmental movements. In this sense this study is the first to bring these two issues together. People decision-making related to migration has been studies before (Ajzen 1991, Bielby and D.Bielby 1992, De Jong 2000, Kim, M.Horner et al. 2005, H.Kulu and N.Milewski 2007, Geinst and McManus 2008, H.Kulu 2008), however the process of migration is yet to be fully understood (Arango 2000).

Previous research (Taylor 1969, International Organization for Migration 1993) focuses on understanding the motivation behind the international migration processes. It reveals a complexity of factors, influencing a decision to migrate and to settle in a new country: life-course events, such as individual characteristics, economic factors, as well as psychological pre-disposing and social and economic characteristics. It is pointed out that migration (Goldin, Geoffrey et al. 2011) is not a static process, but a process over time. Klay (2011 p. 469) argues that migration can be better understood by a “life-course perspective on goal formation”, rather than through individual snap-shots of the migrants’ lived realities. Such an approach considers the significance of three phases in a migrant’s life: the pre-decision phase, the action initiative and the action outcomes (ibid). From an organizational behaviour point of view, the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991) can also be applied to understand people’s decision to move internationally. This theory situates that:
“Intentions are the primary determinant of behaviour, which are in turn influenced by perceptions of what significant others think about this behaviour” (Kley 2011, p. 473)

Kley (2011) argues that the most important reasons for long-distance, long-term moves are *marriage* and *cohabitations*, especially for women. In a case study with 2400 participants in two German cities – Magdeburg and Freiburg– she concludes that migration needs to be viewed through the prism of life course events, such as marriage, retirement, new job or other related events:

“In young adulthood, opportunities for pursuing own interests are more important for migration intentions than in other phases of the life course, whereas in the family phase the opportunities for family life are most important for migration intentions” (Kley 2011, p. 483).

Irrespective as to what are its driving forces, migration creates a new category of people who move between national boundaries.

**The politics of migration and transnationalism**

The term *transnationalism* has been used in a variety of forms. Vertovec (2009) refers to ‘transnationalism’ as the multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states. It most commonly refers to a new approach in migration theory, which highlights the connections of migrants (and particularly, recent migrants) to various people and traditions belonging outside the formal political borders of their current place of residence (Portes, DeWind et al., Portes, Guarnizo et al. 1999, Vertovec 2002, Allievi and Nielsen 2003). Amongst others, Portes (1997) notes that migrant communities have become ‘transnational communities’ and summarizes:

“…networks across political borders created by immigrants in their quest for economic advancement and social recognition. Through these networks, an increasing number of people are able to live dual lives. Participants are often bilingual, move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries, and pursue

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8 Data is related to early adulthood participants.
According to the concept of transnationalism, migrants maintain closer ties with their home country - culturally, socially and geographically. In relation to their host society, the transnationalism approach erodes traditional, exclusive forms of citizenship and forms new types of political and non-formal memberships (Mandaville 2003).

Baldassar (2007) takes a similar approach to transnationalism and argues that the persistent emotional bonds over time among migrants and their families in the home country supports the argument that globalisation processes have not deferred strong emotional connections. In her study among Italian families in both Italy and Australia, she finds evidence of caregiving relationships and emotional labour, which can be associated with both positive as well as tension creating consequences. More importantly, Baldassar confirms that “the perseverance of bonds of emotion across distance challenges [the] arguments about the declining bonds within trans-local families as a result of globalising processes” (Baldassar 2007).

Vertovec (2004) neatly sums up much of the above argument, stating: “It is now common for a single family to be stretched across vast distances and between nation-states, yet still retain its sense of collectively” (Vertovec 2004, p.222). What is commonly discussed over dinner in non-migrant communities is becoming a subject of discussion over a vast amount of distances. The members of the same family are re-united in real time, during their phone/internet calls or instant messages. The availability of high-tech communication technologies has largely facilitated this process in recent times.

On another level, transnationalism also has the potential of affecting political structures. The specific issue about migrant networks is that they “create overlapping memberships between territorially separated and independent polities” (Bauböck 2003 p.700). Bauböck (2003) also argues that political transnationalism is not confined simply by the process in which migrants are taking part in their home country politics, but it also extends to the change of
conceptions of citizenship among the native populations (or longer-term settlers) in both receiving and sending countries.

Immigration and politics are connected through the term “geopolitics of migration”, although they have usually not been looked in connection with each other. Nagel (2002) also examines the concept of geopolitics of migration in terms of connectedness of migrants to their home country. There are a lot of examples in international politics where migration has played an important role in the spread of political influences (for example the European Maritime expansion). However, in more recent time an example of geo-politicising of migration is the merging between West and Eastern Europe, in introducing “soft security” (Cohen 2009, p.200) to escape from the Russian orbit, which has traditionally surrounded most of East and South East Europe (Cohen 2009).

**Sense of belonging**

Belonging has been described as one of the most important aspects of forming citizenship (Fenster 2005). In fact, citizenship is considered formal belonging and most often recognised through legal frameworks, state regulations and policy making. However the more important aspects of belonging lie in the informal process of forming citizenship. Such aspects include participating in informal groups, community level participation groups, are belonging to informal groups, community level participation projects, social events and interest-based migrant clubs etc. They exhibit the multilayer nature of belonging, particular in the city (Fester 2005). Belonging is a complex phenomenon involving many different aspects – gendered, geographic, and collective versus individual (Hooks 2009). It varies according to the nature of places. For example, in Jerusalem forms of belonging and citizenship are “connected to the abuse of human and citizenship rights of the Palestinians living in the city” (Fenster 2004).

Another evident example of sense of belonging in contested territories can be found in Mexico and US border, where the movement between people and capital is almost inherited. Coleman (2007) argues that the contested territories between the US and Mexico borders are “embryonic spaces of localised immigration

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9 Some academics which have used this term are Sassen in 1999 and Tesfahuney in 1998
geopolitics which shed new light in the spatiality of US immigration governance, typically thought by geographers as active predominantly at the territorial margins of the state” (Coleman 2007, p.1).

Some argue that as a result of the military concur of the Native American tribes by migrants from Europe, made the native Indians migrants themselves (Geopolitical Weekly 2012).

Being a migrant is about being in a different physical place, but also how one relates to this unfamiliar place and this requires a constant reinventing of the person. A short movie, titled “A migrant heart” (Morris, Langton et al. 2004) gives a hearty perspective of this feeling. An English actor whose parents have moved from India to England, talks about her experience of being a migrant as being “caught between two worlds” (Morris, Langton et al. 2004):

“I constantly invent a world, which is comfortable for me, in which I feel at home. The most important thing for being a migrant is to be always on the move, to be a nomad, not necessarily in a literally way - to go from one place to another, but that you haven’t a fixed sense of home.”

“I live in an imagined space, the space of a migrant. It is about constantly reinventing myself. A desperate cry for meaning”

“Why are we here? What are we doing here?”

Such questions encourage migrants to develop and reinvent their sense of belonging and some of them achieve this through connecting with nature.

**Becoming an environmentally active migrant**

Alongside the literature describing the social and economic factors, facilitating the migration process (Vogel 2008), the process of transformation is an interesting phenomenon by itself and can be explained only to a limited extend through material factors. Braidotti (2002) remarks on the journey of people in a globalised world as:
“The point is not to know who we are, but rather what at last, we want to become, how to represent mutations, changes and transformations, rather than being in its classical modes” (Braidotti 2002 p.134).

Braidotti (2002) further elaborates on the process of theoretical representation, which inevitably accompanies the establishing of the actual social and historical facts. She suggests that it is within the permanent stages of transition and nomadization that we establish ourselves as migrants, as well as being civically active migrants in the materialistic mapping of situated, or embedded and embodied positions.

The engagement with the environmental movement of recent migrants is an uncharted territory for facts and theoretical explanation. Often, becoming an environmental activist comes with the recognition that there are new opportunities. In the case of Australia, a lot of migrants, especially from social repressive regimes are appreciative of the possibility to do something for the ecological health of their new country. The driving forces behind environmental civil activism for migrants are fundamentally grounded in their relationships to nature and this relationship possesses transnational characteristics.

2.5 Feminism

A significant body of literature provides a link between civil societies, the environment and the role of gender. Wacker (1994) argues that sustainable development has been linked with concepts of justice, both within and between generations as well as within and between nations. As a concept, sustainable development requires a political system that gives residents an effective say over the resources on which they depend. It requires promoting citizens’ initiatives, empowering people’s organisations and strengthening local democracy (Harcourt 1994, Wacker 1994, Silvey 2005).

Feminist researchers have also pointed out the need to develop solutions out of the experiences that have emerged at grassroots level in women’s environmental organisations. Kaplan (1997) shows how women's movements have been transforming the possibilities for governance all over the world. She bases her research on the case study of six women activists from the United States and
South Africa, who have resisted the oppression of callous governments in order to save their neighbourhoods. These women formed local citizens' organizations that demanded the satisfaction of basic human needs for housing, a clean environment and human rights as their democratic right. Kaplan (1997) concludes that public activism is a powerful and growing force.

Since the mid-1990s, there have been increasing number of studies devoted to the participation of migrant women in the public sphere (Giddens 1994, United Nations and Department for Economic Social and Information Policy Analysis 1995, Jones Finer 2006). Many investigate the knowledge developed from the women’s movement, which has claimed the right to have equal pay for equal work, shared responsibility in childbearing and the right to vote. This knowledge has now expanded to what is known as “cultural feminism” (McMahon and Olubas 2006) which does not restrict itself to particular objectives, but rather broadens the understanding of such notions as work, home, the public and the private. It continues to strive for a more gender-balanced world by including also those women who are excluded or marginalized on the basis of race and class.

Similarly, other women’s movements, such as feminist environmentalism and socialist feminism have tended to treat class and race as subservient in the same ways as left-wing political movements have often defined gender as being of secondary importance (Gunew 1991). Such a decentered approach is also used in a relatively new synthesis of ideas – consisting of feminist cultural ecology, political ecology and feminist political economy - known as feminist political ecology (Rocheleau, Thomas -Slayter B. et al. 1996). It emphasizes the uneven distribution of the politics of decision-making and power, based on differences of gender, race, class, ethnicity and culture. What is distinctive about the feminist political ecology approach is that it sees the social, political and economic contexts as influential over the environmental policies and practices and over the women’s struggle for sustainable community development. (Harrison 2004). Feminist political ecology reads gender as a “meaning system” that is produced not only through economic relations, cultural and social institutions, but also under negotiation as a result of ecologically based struggle (Rocheleau, Thomas - Slayter B. et al. 1996).
In the process of transitioning to public engagement with environmental issues, women in particular may play a special part by taking the leading role in pursuing more sustainable democratic practices, sustained by care for others. This calls for an analysis of areas traditionally associated with women’s values of nurturing, mothering and care for the environment which have been referred to as either essential or socially constructed by theorists attempting to explain the complexity of the connection between women and nature (Gaard 1993, Irigaray 1993, Plumwood 1993, Warren and Wells-Howe 1994). Some eco-feminists view the identification of women with nature as natural, intrinsic or essential to women’s biological attributes, while others argue that the connection is socially constructed as something that women should cherish and celebrate (Harrison 2004).

Warren in particular escapes the above dichotomy by underlining that awareness about the empirical relationship between women and nature improves our understanding of women’s subordination and points out the commonalities which women share in relation to nature (Warren 1996). Some of those characteristics are a higher dependence on natural resources than men (household, garden, medicine) and shared indigenous ecological knowledge about nature. Consequently women play central roles in grassroots action for sustainable environment all around the world.

2.6 Bridging the concepts

The theoretical framework of this thesis comes mainly from the above three academic fields of inquiry: environmental, migration and feminist perspectives. Studies conducted in these fields formed the basis of the research question and the main hypothesis. However, they do not inform the research in a linear way to these perspectives. The main reason for this is that environmental, migration or feminist theories do not directly resonate with the lives of recent migrants. Many of them do not understand these perspectives and even if they find some resonance with their day-to-day activities, they rarely feel that these theories validate their actions. For example, the concept of feminism may not resonate with some participants. Some may have a generally good understanding of environmental issues, but have never asked what motivates them to engage with the protection of the biophysical world. On the other hand, the notion of
connection with nature and with others people in the environmental movement always appeared meaningful. *This is the main reason as to why the second half of the thesis transforms these theoretical perspectives into concepts that are easier to understand and deal with.* Table 1 explains this transition.
Table 1. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Perspectives</th>
<th>Empirical Concepts</th>
<th>Summary of themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Space</td>
<td>Environmental Ethics Sense of Place Sense of Belongings Importance of Nature Non-material values as a motivation for environmental engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration Territoriality</td>
<td>Social, Governmental and Environmental boundaries, Globalisation, Transnationalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist Connectedness</td>
<td>Gendered perspectives of territoriality Gendered Spaces Transnational Activism, Citizenship,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chapter outlined the theoretical perspective, while part III “Migrants Go for Nature” examines in details the empirical concepts. In a globalized world, transnational activism serves as glue to the above theories within a sustainable development perspective. The notion of transnational activism explains the connectedness between national and international issues, which gives rise to the main idea of “global environmental citizenship”.

2.7 Summary

The growing amount of attention to the environmental movement, combined with the mounting discussion about citizenship and democracy suggests that the issue about migrant participation in nature conservation requires academic and practical attention. However, the current literature has only scratched the surface of the contested multi-dimensional relationship between migrants and the natural environment in its many multi-facet aspects (including social, economic and environmental). The theoretical framework applied in this study comes from a
A main concern of this chapter was the rights of citizens to the natural environment, examined through the theoretical prepositions of the rights to the city (Lefebvre 1991, Lefebvre 1996, Purcell 2002, Fester 2005, Purcell 2003). The focus of discussion has also been: (1) how new forms of citizenship are constituted and (2) whether new forms of citizenship are transforming the notion of traditional neo-liberal democratic citizenship? It concludes that the rights of all citizens to participate may be essential part in forming a greater democracy. As such, researching the environmental activism of migrants is important subject, especially in the light of increased globalisation.

Revealing the actual link between nature and migrants is purposefully left for closer examination in the second half of the thesis. A conceptual framework is utilized to answer the main research question, based on three themes: space, territoriality and connectedness, which relate to the theoretical framework. Part III ‘Migrants go for Nature’ discusses the empirical findings structured in those themes. Before that the sections to follow explain the methodology of the study.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: STUDYING RECENT MIGRANTS

"What we observe is not nature herself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning" (Werner Karl Heisenberg)\(^{10}\)

3.1 Introduction

This study is located at the crossroads of disciplines, such as sociology, political science, demography and migration studies as well as within the interdisciplinary field of sustainability. It is also a cross point of methodologies – qualitative methods (qualitative analysis of discourse) and themes of research (narrative, identity, territory and space). The approach which I use is an integrated methodological framework combining the dialogic with the contextual validities basis of cultural studies to provide a forum for exploring the social phenomenon of migration from three different angles: actual historical facts, self-reflection of the participants on their own engagement with the environmental movement and the analysis of the researcher. Below I provide a detailed explanation of the methodology used in the thesis including theories of qualitative research, the research instrument and design. This chapter also outlines some challenges associated with researching migrants. I start by defining who is considered “a migrant”.

3.2 Who is a migrant

Before I begin the investigation of migrants’ involvement with environmental activism in WA, I need to define the meaning of a migrant.

The most comprehensive set of international statistical guidelines has been developed by International organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and International labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) in collaboration with national statistical agencies (OECD 2007). In the glossary of statistical terms, published by the OECD (2007), there are over 30 definitions of a migrant, which regard the short-term and long-term, purpose of migration, and purpose of returning to home country, skilled-based migrants, border workers, citizens in transit and as well as nomads and refugees.

Generally, the legal system defines migrants by three main categories: different country of birth, nationality and a length of stay in a new country (Anderson and Blinder 2011). Who is considered a migrant is of critical importance, in terms of public perception and policy making. However, there is not a single definition of migrant. A migrant can be someone who is foreign-born, who holds a foreign citizenship, or someone who has left their country of birth for a short period of time (Anderson and Blinder 2011). The only constant criterion, defining a person in relation to place is the country of birth, since both nationality and length of stay can change with time.

- **Country of birth**: a migrant can be defined as a person, who is born in a different country or in the case of Australia overseas; data, related to that matter is available from the Census of Population and Housing, conducted every five years by the Australian Bureau of Statistics\(^\text{12}\). This definition relies on objective facts, however the use of this alone is simplistic and

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\(^{11}\)In the UK, currently there is a shift towards recognising as a migrant also a person, seeking asylum (The Migration Observatory, 2011).

\(^{12}\)The latest census was conducted in 2006 and the next one is scheduled for 11\(^{\text{th}}\) August 2011. For the purpose of this thesis, data available from the latest census has been used, covering the period 2001-2006.
can be misleading. The question is whether those who are born overseas will forever remain “migrants” in the eyes of those who are born in Australia.

- **Nationality:** Another way to define a migrant is by their formal status in the country, such as foreign passport, type of visa and residence. *Nationality*, however, does not always represent people’s legal status (ABS 1989, Anderson and Blinder 2011). It is contested by the self-perception of each individual and often gravitates towards social or cultural characteristics. Moreover, it is not unusual for a person to have dual or multiple citizenships.

- **Length of stay in a country:** The Australian Government recognizes migration flows and their expected length of stay using corresponding information from the *arrival* and *departure cards* for everyone who crosses the Australian borders. The actual length of stay is measured using the data available from these cards. They are designed to collect information related to the exact date of arriving and departing from Australia, country of arrival or departure, flight number or name of ship, people’s name and nationality (Appendix 4).

The most widely accepted definition of a migrant relates to the length of stay in other than the country of birth. The mobility of people is also categorized by “short-term migrant”, e.g. several weeks or months, and “long-term” migrant”, e.g. months or several years) The UN (UN 1998, OECD 2007) definition of a long term international migrant, which is also the one adopted for the purpose of this research is:

“*A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year [....] so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence…”* (ONS 1991, p.4)

Another definition for long-term migrants reads:

“*long-term emigrants are residents or persons who have resided continuously in the country for more than one year, who are departing to take up residence abroad for more than one year; “*
and

“long-term immigrants are non-residents or persons who have arrived for a length of stay of more than one year but have not yet continuously lived in the country for more than one year.”\textsuperscript{13}

The above definitions are also adopted by the UK Office of National Statistics (ONS 1991) in the UK for the purpose of conducting the International Passenger Survey\textsuperscript{14} and is used to determine long-term international migrants in Australia (Appendix 4).

The official understanding of a migrant in Australia has been through major shifts. In the past, Australia’s new arrivals were expected to stay permanently in the country. However, in the 1990s the Australian government took a turn towards recognizing the significance of international temporary migration by attracting more short-term migrants, such as international students and people wishing to live in Australia under a working or working holiday visa. This shift was in response to needs of the increased forces of globalisation, mobility of people and goods, and to follow global trends in exchanging skills and knowledge around the world. All of them are particularly relevant to Australia, whose economy faces a shortage of labour (CEDA 2001).

In the period of 12 months between June 2010 and June 2011, a record number of 27.7 million people crossed Australian international borders. This number accounted for 1233 per every 1000 Australians. The majority of movements (96


\textsuperscript{14} Data is the UK is based on how long arrivals are intending to stay, rather than how much they actually end up residing because there is no available data on departure, similar to the ‘departure cards’ in Australia. Those who stay longer than intended or leave sooner than expected are the so called ‘switchers’. The only other way to determine how long a migrant resides in the country is the expiry of the legal status of their visa granted initially'.
%) in this period were recorded as short-term travels with an intention of departure or arrival of no more than 12 months. The amount of short-term visitors marked another record of 5.9 million arrivals in Australia for the year ending June 2011. The previous highest recorded number of short-term visitor arrivals was recorded in the year ending 2010 (5.7 million people). This indicates a steady trend for a large number of short-term visitors (the majority of which were educational-related, with the higher education sector, i.e. international students playing a major role, see also figure 2).

This increasing mobility of people in the 21st century also denotes that there is constant need to define and redefine the meaning of the word ‘migrant’. Until recently, it was accepted that migrants are new arrivals, who are looking to become permanent settlers in their new chosen grounds, especially in the case of the far distant continent of Australia. With the added forces of globalisation, catalysed by faster modes of transportation and developing new communication technologies, the mobility of people has dramatically increased, blurring the differences between short-term visitors and migrants.

In fact, this tendency recognizes the significance of short-term migrants. This is also acknowledged by Kley (2011) who defines as a migrant anyone who has left the borders of their home country regardless of the length of migration. This is to say that students, people on working holiday visas, working permits and others are also regarded as migrants. Such definition seems appropriate given the increased forces of globalisation and the ever more increasing movement of people. This is also the definition used in this study. However, the focus here is on relatively recent migrants whose stay in Australia does not exceed 10 years. It is interesting to note that there is not much in the literature as to when a migrant stops being a migrant with the underlying presumption being that s/he will always be one. In this study I have limited the period of stay defining a migrant from 0 to 10 years.

These are the most widely accepted definitions, which are used by various national agencies (including the Office of National Statistics in the UK and Australian Bureau of Statistics). However, the only common defining point amongst all of the different migrant groups is that immigrant population is
generally the foreign-born population. Some countries have traditionally focused on producing data, that represent foreign nationals- European countries and Japan - whilst others refer to the foreign-born population - Australia, Canada and the United States (United Nations 1998).


- Long-term migrants
- Short-term migrants
- Residents returning after (or leaving for ) a period working abroad
- Nomads

The fourth category of migrants-- those of nomads - also deserves special attention. According to the OECD (2007, p.522) and UN (United Nations 1998) nomads are:

“…persons without a fixed place of usual residence who move from one site to another, usually according to well-established patterns of geographical mobility…"

Notably, the definition also explains that when nomads are crossing national borders, they become part of the international movement of people who are stateless, because lacking a fixed place of residence; they may not be recognised as citizens by any of the countries, through which they pass. (OECD 2007, United Nations 1998). The definition of a nomad is especially important in the context of the research, since some of the participants in are crossing multiple national boundaries in pursuit of environmental activism, and although they are classified as “tourists” in legal terms, they are in fact nomads.

In the juxtaposition of defining environmentally active migrants, there seem to be no adequate term in use. “Nomads” only explain that section of travelers, who do not settle in one place, but the term does not explain the
reason for their unsettlement. Perhaps a better term to describe this new phenomenon is “environmental nomads”.

The people interviewed for this research also cover different countries of birth and nationalities, as well as short-term and long-term stay in Australia. They create the diverse model of new arrivals in Western Australia, which is a more realistic representation of the cultural mosaic of the Australian population.

### 3.3 Theories of research

The integrative methodology framework serves as an umbrella for the different qualitative research methods (Whittemore and Knafl 2005), a commonly used approach in social studies. It is grounded in Scheider’s (2002) notion of reflexivity and ethnography. Saukko (Saukko 2005 p.344) proposes this type of integrative and multidimensional methodological framework for combining the dialogic (or self-reflexive) with the contextual validities basis of cultural studies. She argues that each validity (a research program) interacts with another to create a multidimensional structure.

While one research methodology (e.g. contextual dimension analysis) is concerned with how things are and examines the existing social order, the other research analysis (e.g. dialogism) explores how these realities are experienced by different members of society in a particular social context. The last dimension to consider is the added attitude of the researcher him/herself in the process of study and interaction with the participants. More specifically, Saukko (2005) explains the interactive multidimensional analysis as:

“... a combination of (post)structuralist critical analysis of discourses that mediate our experiences and realities, and a contextualist/realist investigation of historical, social, and political structures of power”

(Saukko, 2005, p. 344).

An illustration of the above discussion appears in table 2. The three proposed methodological programs as suggested by Saukko (2005) are based on the mutual inter-relation between three types of dimensions and three types of validity. Each of these dimensions and validities contains three aspects: actual historical facts and realities (contextual), local interpretation of those facts and events, or the
lived realities (dialogical) and the mutual interactions of the research(ers) with the facts and events in each level. As a result, a matrix of nine elements emerges (table 2).
Table 2. Three methodological programs in social studies as an integrated framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Contextual Validity</th>
<th>Dialogic Validity</th>
<th>Self-Reflexive Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextual</td>
<td>Social reality</td>
<td>Local realities in social context</td>
<td>“Real” social processes shaped by researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dimension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogical</td>
<td>Local repercussions of social processes</td>
<td>Local Realities</td>
<td>Local awareness of social shaping of reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dimension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reflexive</td>
<td>Local processes or reality shaped by research.</td>
<td>Local realities socially shaped</td>
<td>Social shaping of reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dimension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Saukko 2005)

Within the dialogue dimension, I have also applied a micro-analytical perspective to the interviews with recent migrants in Western Australia. This technique involves consideration of the interaction between the interviewer and the participant, including non-verbal communication. This strategy is used not only to understand the social world, but also to explain how the social and empirical facts were brought about. The micro-analytical perspective explains the dynamics of interaction as a social process, like the cogs and wheels of a larger mechanism (Hedström and Bearman 2009, Gómez-Estern 2011).

All of the above programs are typical for qualitative research methodologies, which can also incorporate case studies, participatory inquiry, interviewing, participant’s observation, visual methods and interpretative analysis (Terre Blanche, Durrheim et al. 2006, Denzin and Lincoln 2007). In this research, I am
using in-depth interview analysis and each interview also serves as a separate case study.

In-depth interviews (with their variability of open, structured, semi-structured or closed) are a widely used technique in qualitative studies (Bogdan and Taylor 1975, Bogdan and Biklen 1982, Denzin and Lincoln 2007, Zingaro 2009). They allow for the researchers to engage with the participants in their study and to collect comprehensive information about them, obtain personal impressions and to relate actively to the interviewees, allowing for a wide angle of capturing of data for further analyzing. In a similar area, in-depth interviews have been applied previously in the study of the environmental justice movement in order to comprehend and understand the process of becoming an activist (Aronson 1993). Aronson (1993) explains this transformation as a series of specific stages, which help environmental activists relate their personal troubles to social problems and later to define their political roles. According to Blumer (also in Blumer 1986, Wellman 1988), the theory of “symbolic interactionism” points out that the inappropriate governmental response to environmental concerns is essential in the essential trigger of becoming an activist. 15

Furthermore, the interviews are also used as case studies. This is an especially useful technique for developing theory through on-the-ground-research. According to Flyvberg (2006), case studies are seen as the basis of human learning:

“…only few [people] reach the level of true expertise for more specialized skills, such as playing chess, composing a symphony, or flying a fighter jet” (Flyvbjerg 2006 p.222)

Studies of the learning process emphasize the importance of context-dependent knowledge and experience at the very heart of expert activity (Snowden 2002). It is only because of experience with cases that one can move from being a beginner to being an expert. The main advantage of using a case studies approach is that it enables the researcher to find a pattern of data to tackle the scholarly question;

15It should be noted here, however, that in the case of migrants, political inclusion is lacking due to their status as new arrivals.
they also provide information for making certain assertions and generalizations about the case; most importantly, case studies emphasize the selected research theme (Stake 2005). In this case, I do not use quantitative data or ethnographic descriptions, but I provide contextual background and enough details to depict the personal story of each migrant.

Combining the above theoretical perspectives enables me to present a panoramic view of the general narratives and their specific authentic aspects, as they relate to the engagement of recent WA migrants with the environmental movement.

3.4 Research design

This section gives background information about the research instrument applied to meet the challenges of the research question, which relates to the values, cultural norms and beliefs that drive recent migrants to engage with the environmental movement in Western Australia.

The research design is based around conducting semi-structured interviews with recent migrants from around the world, who are active in the environmental movement in Western Australia. This is a suitable approach for an inquiry into the interaction of people with the outside natural and social worlds and it also provides opportunities for a self-reflexive perspective (Van Maanen 1983, Silverman 1985, Taylor and Bogdan 1998, Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, Creedy 2008) A list of open-ended questions was compiled as the instrument to facilitate the interviews. This section outlines the selection criteria for identifying the participant group. The sections to follow discuss ethical issues and recruitment strategies, associated with the research instrument, designed to gather the necessary information, as well as the data collection process and its analysis.

Selection criteria of participant group

The group of participants for this study is a sample of recent migrants who are active in the environmental movement in WA.

The selection criteria were designed to accommodate a very focused group of participants in order to meet the objectives of the research. The participants were required to comply with the following criteria:
• to have resided in Australia for less than ten years;
• to have reached at least 18 years of age;
• to come from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, which for Australia means to be from non-English cultural background.
• to be engaged in formal or informal organizations in an occupational or voluntary capacity (environmental activism) and
• to be willing to share their opinion about environmental activism with the researcher.

The initial intention was interviews with 30-35 participants. I, indeed, found that enough data was collected with about 30 interviews because of: (1) the richness of the information provided to me by the participants and (2) some repetition starting to appear in the major themes discussed by the participants. I interviewed such recent migrants regardless of their gender; however at the end of the data collection, it became clear that I had interviewed more women than men. I bestow this peculiarity to the possibility that there are more women than men who are active in the environmental movement in WA, without in any way making claims for a representative sample.

The final number of interviewees was thirty-five and the fieldwork lasted around one year during the 2009-2010 period. The data was transcribed promptly after each interview to allow for its subsequent analysis.

3.5 Ethical issues

A substantial amount of text has been written about the humanism and ethics of conducting a research (M.Smyth and E.Williamson, Clifford and Markus 1986, Schwandt 2001, Buchanan 2004, Johns, Shing-Ling et al. 2004, Christians 2005). Although academics are predominantly dealing with themes, which are of interest to the public, the “right to know” does not belong neither to the public, nor to the scholars. The value of the best research cannot justify any person’s injury or the exposure of their private life which may cause a loss of dignity, self-esteem, employment or other types of embarrassment (Stake 2005). Rules for protection of human rights and dignity should be strictly followed by the researchers.
In Australia the principles that guide human research are outlined in the following sources:

- National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research (The Act 2007);
- Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (The Code 2007);

This research involves humans as participants and therefore needs to comply with the requirements of the above documents. Ethics permission was applied for and subsequently granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Curtin University (Approval Number RD-59-08).

The key stages in the conducting an ethical research, which I have sought to comply with are: (1) ensuring research is soundly designed and (2) ensuring that the welfare of the participants is protected.

The research design involves interviews (using a questionnaire) with people from different cultural backgrounds. It was important not to infringe basic ethical principles, such as respect, beneficence and justice. Particular potential harms to the participants that also needed to be avoided include: damaging physical, psychological, spiritual or emotional well-being, exploiting cultural knowledge, infringing confidentiality and imposing burdens with little benefits.

In order to address those potential harms, the core principle of the “The Act” (2007) are derived from the Belmont Report (1978). This is to say that: (1) a research merit and researcher integrity have been recognized as essential in the involvement of human participants in the research, (2) justice in the selection and recruitment of participants has been recognized as essential, (3) a justifiable balance between the benefits and the risk for the participants has been sought and (4) a careful consideration has been paid to what is needed to respect participants (The Act 2007). Hence the research was designed and carried out in a way that

16 The Belmont Report was commissioned after the Tuskegee study which ran between 1932 and 1972 and recorded the physical changes in black people with syphilis. It was found that, tragically, when penicillin became available in 1974 as a treatment, it was withheld from the participants in the study. For more information see for example Reverby, S. (2000). Tuskegee's truths : rethinking the Tuskegee syphilis study. Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press.
minimized risk and harm for the participants and the well-being of the respondents took precedence over benefits to knowledge.

The respondents had the freedom to choose to participate or not in the study and to give an informed consent (see Appendix 2). Communication with participants was conducted clearly and they were asked to provide consent only after they were presented with an information form outlining the nature and aims of the research (Appendix 3). The issues related to research ethics also require considerations in relation to protection of the information obtained during the study. This requires adequate storage and security of the collected information for 5 years after the completion of the study, namely on password protected computers at Curtin University. Finally, the results are published and described appropriately.

The images used are from a Korea-born artist, U-Ram Choe, who had an installation at John Curtin Gallery Perth in 2012 (U-Ram Choe 2013). See appendix six for permission rights.

3.6 Recruitment strategy

Participants were recruited using the snowball sampling technique, starting with easily identified public figures and the researcher’s own environmental activism contacts17. Additionally, the initial recruitment strategy involved distribution of information leaflets to those who might be potentially interested. Below I explain each of these methods in details.

Initial recruitment strategy

The initial recruitment of participants involved compiling a “Call for participants” (Appendix 5) and distributing it through various public venues, where there was a higher probability of finding environmental activists. Examples of venues where the call for participants was distributed are educational institutions and environmental organizations as well as public events as listed below:

17 Such direct activism included doing gorilla gardening and volunteering for the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS).
a) Environmental events: Carbon Neutral Fremantle Council, Walk Against Warming, Sun Fair, Keep WA GM Free;

b) Alternative green coffee shops (X-Wray café, Tropicana, Tiger Tiger, The Aubergine, Moore &Moore building art gallery and café, and others.

c) Distributed through the university open days at Curtin University, Murdoch University, University of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University;

d) Electronic bulletins of environmental organizations, such as the Green Party and the Conservation Council of Western Australia;

e) Electronic e-mails to a number of ethnic migrant organizations, such as The Italian Club, The German Club, The Bulgarian group ‘Rodina’.

Another strategy used to recruit potential participants for the study was community engagement. More specifically this involved visiting ethnic migration groups such as the Italian, German and Bulgarian ethnic clubs, the women's council and others. Field notes were kept throughout the duration of the data collection to ensure that up-to-date information was included, and most importantly to keep track of the outcomes of different approaches, their highs and lows during the research.

Despite considerable efforts, this approach had a very limited success in its effectiveness to attract participants; only two people were recruited using this strategy. The main problem was that the groups I was targeting were either environmentalists with limited presentation of culturally diverse migrants or too much ethnically based with restricted interest in relation to the environment. My aim was to find people at the cross-section of these two arenas and the snowballing approach proved to be more valuable.

Snowball technique

Sample snowballing is a technique for finding research subjects in which an initial participant refers the researcher to other possible participants (Vogt 1999). Such sampling was an appropriate method to use because the desired sample characteristics (namely recent migrants engaged with the environmental movement) were difficult to find (Atkinson and Flint 2001). It starts by locating initial interviewees who later refer the researcher to other possible participants. It
is also applicable for research where participants are “hard to reach”, especially in urban settings (Saunders 1979).

The main advantage of the snowball technique is that it utilizes existing social networks. This is especially beneficial when the subjects of the research belong to migrant communities who usually rely on strong social networks. Some other advantages are outlined below.

This strategy overcomes the problems associated with sampling small isolated populations. Snowball sampling can be placed within a wider set of link-tracing methodologies which seek to take advantage of the social networks of identified respondents to provide a researcher with an ever-expanding set of potential contacts (Thomson, 1997). This process is based on the assumption that a ‘bond’ or ‘link’ exists between the initial sample and others in the same target population, allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance (Berg 2004).

This technique offers an established method for identifying and contacting hidden populations (Atkinson and Flint 2001). From this, there is an important distinction between snowball strategies as a method of contact in a practical sense and as a method of sampling in a more formalized sense. The latter was used in this research.

“Snowball-based methodologies are a valuable tool in studying the lifestyles of groups often located outside mainstream social research. They may also be used to compliment other research methodologies in the study of less stigmatized and even elite groups” (Atkinson and Flint 2001 n.p.).

Despite some of its disadvantages, such as being pointed out to be trivial and obscure, snowballing sample is still the most widely used technique in studying marginalized and hidden groups of society (Goodson and Phillimore 2010, Hankivsky, Reid et al. 2010, Sage Publications n.g.). In this particular case it proved to be a very useful technique when studying environmental activism and recent migrants and about 30 participants were recruited in this way; a major starting role in these play key informants.
Key informants

By their very nature, members of populations, which are not easily identifiable are regarded as “hidden populations” and are difficult to locate (Van Maanen 1983, Payne and Payne 2004). Often studies require some inside knowledge in order to identify initial respondents (Brinker-Gabler and Smith 1997). Such prior knowledge may not be readily available to researchers and may be very time consuming and labour intensive to acquire. Under these circumstances it is possible that people in positions of relative authority may provide a route into the required population. These people are described as key informants (Taylor and Bogdan 1984, Mason, Richter et al. 1985).

While using the snowball technique, I was able to identify such key informants who were able to direct me to other environmentally active migrants. As explained above, in addition to the initial distribution of leaflets through the various venues explained above, I approached a number of people and organizations at key environmental and community events. Some of the events included: the launch of Carbon Neutral Fremantle Council (November 2009), the Walking against Global Warming (organized in December 2009 corresponding to the Copenhagen day to take decision on CO₂ emissions), the GM free rally (in February 2010), the Sea Shepherd ship docking in Fremantle in November 2009 and in November 2010, the Sun fair on sustainable technology organized annually at UWA, "Unlocking the mysteries of Swan River" talk in the Perth Zoo, various presentations at the Conservation Council of Western Australia during 2009-2010, meetings at the Anti-Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia (ANAWA 2011), the socialist alliance group (Socialist Alliance 2011), and many others.

The outcome of these events was twofold. In the first stage, it allowed me to recruit key informants and meet environmental activists, including migrants. In the second stage, it provided a valuable opportunity to engage personally with current environmental debates and to keep myself informed about the latest developments.
Identifying easily recognized public figures

Easily recognizable migrants involved with environmental activism held some key positions, which made it possible for the researcher to approach them. Such participants were the environmental manager of an island off the coast of WA, political figures or politically influential figures popular through the press (such as the Green Party), journalists, academics, NGO managers and public servants.

I used this approach in order to sketch an initial portrait of recent migrants engaged with the environmental movement in WA – it was both necessary and informative. It was necessary, because my research focuses broadly on migrants’ engagement with the public sphere, including environmental activism. As a first point of research, to contact such figures was expected and recommended (Vogel 2008). It proved informative, however, not for the obvious reasons. That is to say not to identify and interview directly recent migrants.

None of the migrants I approached through the above channels appears as a case study in my research with one exception. While the reasons for this were multifold, they were mainly due to the fact that public figures are hard to approach in the first place, and even after the initial contact being established the response was slow when it was followed up. Another reason was that there were not many recent migrants with the criteria outlined for this study that held key positions. Most migrants whom I contacted through this channel had been in WA for longer than ten years and were often second/third generation migrants.

Another explanation for not finding many such participants for the research was that publically visible migrants were simply not active in the environmental movement.

Direct involvement with environmental activism

The direct involvement method means that participants are recruited via direct interaction with the subject of study. This is to say that the researchers identify people to interview through hands-on-experience with the type of work or involvement their selected research group is taking part in (Filstead 1970, Silverman 1985, Fraser, Dougill et al. 2006, Goodson and Phillimore 2010).
The direct involvement with environmental activism as a recruitment method proved to be by far the most successful way to recruit participants for my research. Becoming involved with direct environmental action, sharing the enthusiasm of equally minded people and genuinely being here and now was an invincible method compared to any other in this type of research, namely for studying the motivation of recent migrants for environmental activism and their values associated with nature. Migrant participants were also recruited in this way.

At the very last stage of my research, I found an opportunity to become an on-shore volunteer for the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. Through my direct engagement (which included painting of spikes, general cleaning, strictly vegan cooking, removing rust and painting with mastic, pumping out water from the ship), I interviewed three migrant women who were volunteering on board of one of their vessels. Those participants helped me to redefine a new category of migrants as people who have left their home country and are constantly on the move without settling anywhere. Through participant observation and volunteering for a total of four weeks, in addition to those interviews, I was able to collect valuable data for further research. What is more, the passion of the individuals provided a much needed fuel for carrying my research and proved to be invaluable experience (Cohen and Arieli 2011).

### 3.7 Research instrument

The main method used for gathering the data was a semi-structured questionnaire. Comprised of open questions, this questionnaire was designed to explore the role of migrant women and men in the environmental arena in Western Australia; their perceptions of the natural environment, as well as investigate their role in actual historical facts and events and their self-reflection about environmental activism. The questionnaire also contained additional probing questions to encourage

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18 In a paper just published (Expanding the Stages of Migration within a Life-Course Framework,) in the Social Sciences and European Sociological Review, Volume 27, Issue 4 (August 2011), migrants are defined as anyone who has left the borders of their home countries regardless of the length of their migration.
participants to reveal narratives about emotions, relationships, memories and personal stories about environmental engagement (see appendix A).

The foundations for developing the questions lay in the objectives of the study, which are located in the area of sustainability. The central research question, as outlined in Chapter 1 is “What values, cultural norms and beliefs drive recent migrants to engage with the environmental movement in Western Australia?” The questions aimed to interrogate the research objectives deriving from this question and the main objectives of the research, the questions were structured to capture six main themes:

1. Personal profile of environmentally active migrants
2. Perception of migrants about the natural environment
3. Types of engagement with the environmental movement
4. Perception by migrants about themselves
5. Gender differences and values
6. Motivation for engagement with the environmental movement.

The above six themes (Table 3) are explained in more detail below:

a. Personal profile of environmentally active migrants—seeking information about country of origin, ethnicity, age group, education, employment history, length of stay in Western Australia (and other countries if participants have lived overseas between departure from their country of origin and Western Australia); questions also seek to reveal the depth and level of engagement with the natural environment in their home country and in Australia.

b. Perception of migrants about the natural environment; also investigating perceptions of what are the biggest environmental problems and challenges in Australia, memories of the natural environment in their home place and its bearing today in Western Australia, finding out what are the differences in the meanings of nature in the home place and in Australia.

c. Types of engagement with the environmental movement – the main motivating factor behind designing the questions for this theme was to find out what are the most common ways of recent migrants to engage
with the environmental movement; whether such involvement included voluntary, educational or paid activities, whether there were more popular themes of special interest (such as climate change, water scarcity, air pollution and so on); whether certain group of migrants tend to have specific interests toward particular environmental issues;

d. Perceptions of migrants about themselves – this theme investigates the role of self-reflection of the interviewees themselves; self-reflection is not only applied in the methodology by the author as a self-reflective perspective, but it is also examined in relation to the interviewees themselves.

e. Gender differences and values – this theme investigates the gender values differences; including whether men and women relate differently to the environment.

f. Motivation – what are the main reasons for engaging with the environmental movement in Western Australia or for previous engagement in the migrants’ home country or/and other counties.

Table 2. Research Instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1   | Personal profile of environmentally active migrants | ➢ Name, age group and cultural background  
➢ When did you migrate to Australia?  
➢ Have you lived anywhere else apart from Australia and your home country?  
➢ What sort of public engagement were you involved in before moving to Australia? |
| 2   | Perceptions of migrants about the natural | ➢ What does nature mean to you?                                            |
| 3 | Types of engagement with the environmental movement | ➢ In what sort of environmental activism/public participation are you engaged in?  
➢ What problems have you encountered in your public engagement with the environmental movement? |
| 4 | Self-perception of contemporary migrants | ➢ How do you feel as a migrant in Australia? |
| 5 | Gender differences and values | ➢ Do you think you relate differently to the environment as a man/woman?  
➢ What does family mean to you? |
| 6 | Motivation for engagement in the environmental movement | ➢ Why did you migrate to Australia? What visa did you use?  
➢ What motivates you to engage in the environmental civic activities? |

The questions in this research were designed by following the principles of validity and reliability in collecting verbal data (Silverman 1985). The formulated questions followed clearly from the objectives of the study (Berg 2004, Bryman 2008, Pink, DylanTutt et al. 2010): to discover the values, cultural norms and beliefs which motivate recent migrants to engage with the environmental
movement in Western Australia. The interview schedule aimed to answer this main research question, it also allowed for an open-ended discussion, but quite often it served only as prompts to get the conversation going.

3.8 Dealing with data

Data collection

The data collection took over one year in 2009-2010. The ambiguous “hidden” nature of the selected participant group and recruitment strategy required larger timeframes than initially expected. There are three phases which can be identified in the data collection process:

a. **Identifying and approaching potential participants:** this phase did not fall within a specific timeframe, but was re-positioned according to the needs of the research. Thus I was recruiting migrants for interviews for over one year while I was also conducting interviewees with others, who have already been identified. Even after the recruitment process was finished, there were still requests for interviews from people whom I have approached earlier in the research, or from migrants, who have heard about the project from other participants.

b. **Interviews:** This included meeting person-to-person with the participants, conducting face-to-face interviews, taking notes and recording the interviews; observation of the participants during the interviews. The interviews took between 30 minutes and one hour, and were generally performed only once, except when there was a need for a follow up. The interviews were conducted in the Perth metropolitan area in a variety of places. Among other venues, the semi-structured interviews took place in different cafes (Old Jail Café, Art Centre café, Clancy’s Fish Bar, the Dome), at Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute, Murdoch University (the Bush court), Curtin University (Ambrozia Café). Other locations also included the kitchen and the stern of the ‘Steve Irwin’ Sea
Shepherd ship (referred to as the ‘scullery’ and ‘the Bridge’ respectively), and also at the participant’s own house as at the time I was renting a house with that same family.

c. Direct involvement with environmental activism: Interestingly, this phase was the most engaging and most enjoyable part of the study. As a researcher, I not only listened to what people were saying, but I was actively involved with their lives (using the participant observation technique). Examples of such involvements were planting trees with a group passionate about guerrilla gardening in the middle of the night, attending an astronomy club run by a Mexican volunteer and volunteering on a ship for the radical environmental NGO ‘Sea Shepherd’ for nearly four weeks. The latter involved me grounding and painting spikes for the ship, cooking vegan food and even celebrating a 21st birthday on the ‘Steve Irwin’ ship. Through my direct engagement I interviewed three migrant women who were volunteering on board of one of their vessels. Through further participant observation and volunteering for a month, in addition to those interviews, I was able to collect valuable data for further research.

d. Follow-ups: The last phase of the data collection included follow-ups and in some cases a second interview with the participants. Such an example is one of the participants, whom I interviewed again after one year, due to a change of circumstances, and also because we kept in contact and she wanted to have another half an hour interview with me. I also found that a lot of the respondents have decided to settle permanently in Australia a year later following the interview and/or have moved to a different type of employment. In some cases, there was a follow-up interview a year later, because the participants have changed their social, economic as well as legal (visa-wise) status. However the main reason for the follow-up interviews was to capture the process of becoming an environmentally active migrant recognizing that no one and nothing stayed the same.
Data analysis

This study involved taping and transcribing all of the respondents’ interviews. Since the author of the thesis was also the person who collected and transcribed the interviews, the summative data has remained relatively unchanged, as far as the qualitative analysis allows for that. The most important tool in this process was the relatively large number of in-depth case studies, which were recorded and transcribed in full (Miles and Huberman 2002).

Qualitative data analysis requires summarizing large volumes of data collected during the study into easily communicated theories incorporated into the text. Data analysis is not without its challenges. Miles and Huberman (1984) wrote that:

“One cannot ordinarily follow how a researcher got from 3600 pages of field noted to the final conclusions, sprinkled with vivid quotes through they may be”(Miles and Huberman 1984 p. 16).

Some authors have even referred to the process as a ‘death by data asphyxiation’ (Pettigrew 1990). However, there are a few steps that could be identified in this process (Miles and Huberman 2002) and which I have used for my data analysis as shown on Fig. 1.

a. Within-case analysis or familiarizing with the data

This stage involves description of each case study, which is central to generating ideas (Pettigrew 1990). This initial phase helps the researcher to grasp the huge volume of data collected during the fieldwork. Such initial analysis can take nearly as many forms as there are researchers. There is no formal way to achieve this initial familiarizing with the case studies and the researcher needs to draw on their own existing knowledge, skills and intuition.

b. Searching for cross- case patterns/ intense engagement with the data

The key for the success of this stage is not to jump into quick and even false conclusions as a result from the researchers’ own biases and information related processing. One way to achieve this is by finding examples of counter-arguments
and combining groups of similarities with groups of differences. For instance, where there are participants with higher degree of education and their understanding is that environmental activism amongst migrants group is of significance for Western Australia; there might be another group of interviewees, who also have strong educational background but who differ in their beliefs about the importance of environmental engagement among contemporary migrants. This provides a useful way to avoid simplistic thinking and to find subtle differences in seemingly similar pair of groups (Miles and Huberman 2002).

c. Forming hypothesis/ Key terms and phrases collated to subcategories

The way hypotheses are formed often involves the following two components: (1) selecting and defining the emerging ideas from the cross-case patterns and (2) finding enough evidence in support of each constructed hypothesis. This phase requires constant comparison between the collected data and any built hypothesis.

d. Reaching a closure/ Inter-relationships between sub-categories and thematic texts.

This final stage requires the researchers to constantly cross-check for discrepancies between the collected data and the theory. A good indication of when this stage is completed is when the researcher starts noticing repetition between the data and the theory that is used.
3.9 Challenges in studying migrant communities

Researching migrants is a challenging task. For those, involved in studying migrant communities it soon becomes clear that there are at least three obstacles which need to be considered (Tilbury and Wilding 2004, Brutt-Griffler 2006).

- The first problem arises when trying to determine which community we should study and why in the context of a given host country. Minor communities often are excluded under “others” and there is little argument as to why their contribution is important, although they have been understudied and often neglected;
- The second problem correlates to the interrelationship between the communities themselves, and more specifically in relation to creating a representative sample which includes all migrant communities equally: how do you decide how many of each ethnic community should be interviewed and why one community should be studied more than another;
- The last constraint in researching migrant groups lies within the very concept of being foreign, different from the rest of society, which is very often based on ethnicity. If such a concept is adopted, researchers...
would be risking the enforcement of a ghetto-like representation of
cultural groups and their exclusion from the rest of society.

All of the above challenges have been resolved through the research design
adopted in this study. Although the environmentally active recent migrants do not
represent a community per se, from a distinctive social group that be studies using
the defining criteria as explained earlier. The importance of the ethnicity
dimension for these migrants fades completely in the formative underpinning of
their environmental activism. Being different to the rest of society is being
manifested not so much along the lines of being a migrant, but through the
engagement with the environmental movement in WA.

3.10 Self-reflection

Self-reflective activity is reflexive reference to self, an “indication of the
individual of the significance which his/her actions have for other
individuals” (Mead and Morris 1934 p.122). According to Mead and
Morris:

“Rational conduct always involves a reflexive reference to self, that is,
an indication to the individual of the significance which his actions or
gestures have for other individuals.” (ibid, p.122)

It is inevitable that in any given research (particularly such as social science
research) there is a dose of self-reflexivity. A text is rarely neutral with a passive
observer. Therefore, I feel it necessary to acknowledge the fact that I am a female
researcher, from white European background and have considerable experience in
environmental activism in different parts of the world and have also been
involved in the governmental and non-governmental side of the environmental
movement. All of this has helped me shape my own understanding of the
importance of environmental activism in all of its forms. In order to de-construct
any fixed beliefs of the respondents in the study, I have attempted to start this
process by deconstructing my own beliefs first.

Throughout my experience as an activist and a researcher, I have come to believe
that for a strong civil society, which categorizes contemporary democracy, it is
vitally important to have an avenue for participation in the decision-making that
shapes the current political and social stage. In the absence of such avenues, I have attempted to provide this for recent migrants, who are currently silent regarding environmental issues, particularly as they have very little political influence and many do not have the right to vote in Australia. My own belief is also that women have a special part to play in this process because of their unique needs as child-bearers and their special role as home keepers to play in both modern and traditional societies. An integral part of this thesis is my own journey of becoming an environmentally active migrant. This included going to seven different countries, speaking three other languages and feeling the need for environmental protection in different parts of the world – from the remote Russian island of Kamchatka to the waters of the south islands of New Zealand.

The main challenge appeared to be the way in which I had to negotiate my own views about the environment as a migrant with those of the interviewees and to find ways in which to escape from my own subjectivity. The theoretical framework provided a good opportunity to discover ways to avoid my personal points of view, however, while conducting the interviews it soon became clear that such an escape was no longer possible, neither desirable. Thereafter, in an attempt to balance the objective academic research with the subjectivity of self-disclosure, I laid here my own biases and prejudices as a female European researcher, which I have come to believe, are integral part of any study I conduct.

### 3.11 Summary

Like many other academics and feminists I have drawn on my own experience in identifying the object of my inquiry. The methods, which come from the process of raising my own consciousness, hold many limitations. However, I believe that personal experience is a valid starting point of departure, but not necessarily a final destination, for academic analysis.

I have based my research on a qualitative methodology examining the number of interviews as individual case studies. In analysing the collected interviews, I have favoured the integrated methodology framework, which relies on a mixture of dialogic, self-reflexive and contextual validities of cultural studies. It provides channels for examining actual historical facts and the self-reflection of the participants on their own engagement with the environmental movement.
Key points:

- Who is considered a migrant? The most widespread notion of a migrant is: a ‘person who has crossed the boundaries of their country of birth’; this definition is not without various interpretations depending on the purpose of use of the word ‘migrant’ (i.e. within statistical, economic, theoretical context). There is a need for creating a new category of visa (other than) to reflect that contingent of people, who transgress international boundaries to do environmental activism – environmental nomads could be used.

- Mobility of people has become an increasingly significant process, thus making migration more and more of an influential process on the social, economic and environmental landscapes of the receiving countries.

- The most effective research methodology in studying migrants and their environmental activities is direct involvement with environmental activism.

- In researching the migrants’ view about the natural environment, using a wide angle of cultural and ethnic diversity of migrant communities was most appropriate; thus the researcher does not risk to put migrants ‘out there’ and to create an isolated ethnic image of a particular migrant community;

- The chosen method and research design also allow for capturing a variety of issues across different disciplines.
PART II

EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVES

Image 2: U-Ram Choe (2009). Una Lumino Portentum. Scientific name: Annap sispl Avearium cirripedia Uram, metallic material, motor, LED, CPU board, polycarbonate 360(w) x 180(h) x 48(d)cm
CHAPTER 4

MIGRANTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

4.1 Introduction

The framework for discussing migration issues and their place in Western Australia must be set against a background of political, economic and environmental developments in the recent history of Australia. Upon migrants’ arrival in Western Australia, each one of them enters new cultural, economic and natural landscapes. It would be impossible to understand the specific experience of recent migrants in their new home country, without providing an economic, social and environmental description of the realm of Western Australia.

This chapter starts with an overview of the Australian context. The three contexts of economic, environmental and socio-political environment are further applied in the concepts of space, territoriality and connectedness, examined in the second half of the thesis. Each of them is broadly linked respectively to environmental, economic and social contexts.

4.2 Migration in the Australian historical context

Unfavourable perceptions about immigrant cultures have dominated the cultural politics of Australia during the period of white migration policy, and common perceptions about migrant cultures continue to form some of the social and political background of WA (Peters 2002). The discussion about the current multicultural framework as well as multicultural feminism forms one of the focuses in this chapter.

The importance of the migration movement is undeniable; particularly with the enormous expansion of the resource sectors and the continuing shortage of skilled labour in Australia. Traditionally perceived as a migrant country, Australia has been historically officially populated by settlers from Europe from 1788 and since then it has become an ever-more attractive destination for new migrants. The traditional custodians of the land, the Aboriginals, have become a marginalized
group and their presence has been outnumbered by the Anglo-Saxon settlers. The Australian government had long favored the intake of white British migrants (Peters, 2001) through its ‘White Australian Policy’ after World War Two, resulting in a larger number of Anglo-Saxon migrants in Australia.

Despite the fact, that this policy ceased to exist in 1978, the cultural connection to Britain and New Zealand remain strong, and migrants from those countries ranked on the first spots of country of origin for newly arrived migrants for a prolonged period of time (ABS 2008 B). In 2011, however, for the first time Chinese migrants exceeded in numbers new arrivals from the UK (Reuters 2011). This fact was not entirely surprising, since the number of migrants from culturally and linguistically diverse background grew steadily over the last decade. A factor, which allowed for more Chinese migrants to look for new opportunities in Australia, is the boom of the resource sector, particularly in Western Australia. The shortage of skilled workers means that Australia needs to expand the intake of skilled migrants but it also allows for many people to reside in the country on working visas as well as with a variety of other working permits (e.g. visa 457).

At present, a quick snapshot of the Australian population by the Census of Population and Housing reveals that over a quarter (26%) of all Australians were born overseas (ABS 2012). This points out to the importance of recent migrants to the overall population and demographics of Western Australia.

4.3 **Socio-political realm**

*Multiculturalism in Australia*

The concept of multiculturalism was adopted by the Australian Government in the mid-1970s when it became obvious that assimilation was not a workable policy expectation for the huge and diverse migrant influx that characterized Australia’s

\[19\] Although, net overseas migration population (NOM) in WA decreased in 2010, WA recorded the smallest decrease in NOM, compared to other states in Australia. Moreover, migration in Western Australia had the highest impact on the turnover of population (3.8%), compared to the national average of (3.1%).

The policy of multiculturalism that followed a period when integration was the driving concept, was in sharp contrast to the previously “racially restricted” immigration policies that determined the ethnicity of intakes up until the late 1960s (Koleth 2010 p.1). The White Australian Policy, as it was popularly known was instituted with the establishment of the Australian Federation in 1901 and obligated migrants to become a homogenous mass with the remaining Australia-born population, to adopt its culture and to speak English. After 1970s, policy development took a turn towards acknowledging and accepting the national identities of newcomers, and thus giving them a chance to become part of the Australian society and to be successful new residents or citizens while retaining their cultural heritage (Koleth 2010). This move from assimilation and integration to multicultural politics emulates policy developments in Canada and the USA, traditionally perceived as other immigration countries (Hage, Couch et al. 1999, Jacobson 2009, Prato 2009).

Later, in 1982 the Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs issued a policy named “Multiculturalism for all Australians” which also dealt with the same problem of cultural diversity (Koleth 2010). Interestingly, the policy refers to multiculturalism as “a way of looking at Australian society' that 'involves living together with an awareness of cultural diversity” rather than simply as a “provision of special services to minority ethnic groups” (Koleth 2010, p.8). The main significance of this policy was the added fourth element of “equal responsibility” to the already existing definition of multiculturalism, which included social cohesion, cultural identity and equal opportunities. The fourth element stated that:

“the success of multiculturalism in Australia relies on participation by all Australians” (ACPEA 1982 p.2)

20 The Australian Council of Population and Ethnic Affairs (ACPEA) was formed in 1981 as a result of a merger between the Australian Population and Immigration Council, the Australian Refugee
A response from the then Prime Minister states that the government needs to continue to encourage the multicultural attitude amongst the Australian society:

“The Government accepts that it is now essential to give significant further encouragement to develop a multicultural attitude in Australian society. It will foster the retention of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups and promote intercultural understanding” (Commonwealth of Australia April 1978).

Migrants from cultural and language diverse backgrounds are now playing an increasing role in the Australian continent. This trend is only likely to continue with the booming WA economy. Government policies are geared towards people who settle in Australia. However, what Australia experiences nowadays is a large population movement which blurs the distinction between permanent migration and temporary visitors. For example, the immigration cards completed at the point of entry require information on the intended/actual length of stay in Australia as less or more than 12 months. Such information is also collected for tax purposes. Furthermore, who is considered a tourist, a student, a permanent or temporary resident is subject to constant changes. For example, the visa, called “Working Holiday Visa” is attracting a large numbers of new arrivals, who are looking to remain in Australia. It becomes increasingly challenging to determine who is a migrant and what policies need to be developed for those migrants who are coming to Australia for less or around 12 months, and who form a significant part of the movement of people (Jarvis and Peel 2009).

Perceptions of immigrant cultures

Immigrant cultures are continuously perceived as demising national cultures. This view has been widely expressed in a lot of countries regarded as traditionally migrant societies, such as the US (Vertovec 2011). Apart from the idea that migrants are seen as presenting a national threat, they are most often perceived as a threat to the “cultural integrity” of a nation. Popular notions of alien versus national cultures reproduce and reinforce current cultural politics, which are based
on the common understanding that “culture, whether national, ethnic, or religious” is a static and “finished object” and “something that one has and is a member of” (Baumann 1999 p.83-84). Baumann (1999) continues to explain that “having culture” is a comforting feeling, since it may help in predicting one’s behaviour and thinking. Yet, a sharp contrast to this notion is the understanding of “making cultures” – a dynamic, anti-essentialist view which recognises that values and practices are constantly shifting concepts.

A critique of the use of the terms “migrants’ cultures” is addressed not only to the Governmental and common-spread understandings among long-term settlers, but also spans to anthropologists, sociologists and other theorists alike. For example, Grillo (Grillo 2008 in Vertovec 2011, p. 250) argues that social scientists should “eschew homogeneous, reified, static and unchanging notions of culture and emphasize its dynamic, heterogeneous, changing, contested and transformative nature” He continues to highlight the dangerous “othering” of immigrants in the following way:

“If the social sciences can deliver this message then they may provide a much-needed check on what in recent times has become a dangerous ‘othering’ of immigrants and their descendants” (Vertovec 2011, p. 250 and in Grillo 2008, p. 32)

Migrants are being both celebrated and denigrated (Johnson et al.1997, Coutin 2003) for weaving diverse cultural heritages into the national fabric (Vertovec 2004). In the context of Australia, it is not any different.

How the adopted multicultural policies affect the new arrivals? Consideration about migrants as a global nomadic movement and especially questions about “the otherness” of those who have recently arrived in Australia are rarely taken into account. What is then the role of minorities, of women and of marginalized groups within the Australian society?

While the scope of the study does not allow for a close examination of these questions, an attempt to address the question of the role of women in the development of the multicultural realm of Australia is made below, as in many

**Multicultural feminism**

Amongst the many different pathways of feminism, such as Marxist, liberal, radical and socialist feminism (Tong 2009) one has been carved by the experiences of non-Anglo-Saxon women, and has been referred to as multicultural feminism (Shohat 1998, Shohat and New Museum of Contemporary 2001, Disch 2003, Kirk and Okazawa-Rey 2004). Multicultural feminism is a stream of feminism for women from culturally diverse backgrounds, whose first language is other than English. Multicultural feminism challenges the preconceived ideas about women’s role in society (Butler and Scott 1992) by highlighting the diversity within the groups of immigrants. It deals with issues of power, calls, privileges and ethnicity. This section is devoted to investigating some of the problems related to the development of multicultural feminism in Australia.

Migrant-women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have shifted Australian feminism from ‘universalism’ to ‘a unity of diversity’ (Caine 1998). Feminist scholars have long recognized the variety and relativity of women’s experiences from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Multicultural feminism is one of the most important facets of Australian feminism. Black or Asian migrants help to form the basis of the Australian society, just as much as the Anglo-Saxon, European or others migrants. The old slogan, which gave rise to the multicultural feminism, was directed at the centre of the problems of the impossibility or the contradiction of being both a feminist and a migrant: ‘You can’t be a feminist. You are Italian’ (see for example Senzani 2008 p. 232).

Today Australian feminism is more frequently viewed through the prism of *cultural hybridity* (Hughes 1997, Caine 1998). From this perspective women’s identity is perceived not as a single entity, but rather as a plurality, thus breaking down the boundaries between women, regardless of their ethnicity, cultural background or language spoken (Pettman 1998, Pettman 2005).
Furthermore, while being aware that migrants play a significant role in contemporary Australian society, it does not oppose the established hierarchal order, based on class, hetero-sexualism, and ethnicity (Pettman 1996). Social, cultural and ethnic differences are multi-layers of complex relationships with each other, and do not easily fall into categorizations. Some of the differences, which influence migrant-women’s identities, are based on class, urban and rural geographical background, religion, age, sexuality, ability or disability. These experiences interact with issues of migration, ethnicity and language and shape the identities of migrant-women in Australia.

Migrant women should not be a “special case”, and cannot be viewed as lesser category to a “woman”, or a “migrant”. The very opposition of female versus ethnic continues to re-establish the dominant role of Anglo-Saxon feminism. Similarly, the challenge of feminism to recognize women’s status as equal to men’s continues to encounter many contradictions stemming from the very basis of that struggle, i.e. that women and men belong to the opposite spectrum and thus having to recognize the very same hierarchical opposition which they are trying to reject in the first place.

The argument here is that being a migrant in Australia poses its challenges, and it is even more challenging for migrant-women, mainly because of the Anglo-Saxon domination of the Australian society. Although migrant women play an especially important role in the inclusion of various groups in the feminist discussion, there is little recognition of their place. According to Murdolo (1996), migrants from cultural and language diverse backgrounds “interrogate commonly understood narratives about Australian feminist history” (Murdolo 1996 p.69). Pettman (1992) warns about the possibility to positioning migrant – women “out there” and excluding them from any discussion about women and the environment, women and the state, and women and feminism.

Without a doubt, women are expected to bear the responsibility for upbringing children and for the household, regardless of their origin; many also have the

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21 Having recognized these differences, however, does not mean that Anglo-Saxon migrants are simply situated in the opposite linear to those from cultural and linguistic diverse background.
disadvantaged role of being both migrants and women. With those traditional expectations, combined with the forces of globalisation providing more opportunities for women to participate in the labour market and to share economic power within the family, a few would expect that migrant-women would also be regarded as role models of leadership in environmental activism.

Migrant women are often seen as responsible for maintaining cultural values and traditions in the family and for passing those onto their children. However, this should not only be their obligations but a responsibility of the Australian community as a whole. Unfortunately women are identified too often by their ethnicity and gender alone (Yen, Truong et al. 2008, Tong 2009). Carvajal (Carvajal 1999, Hage, Couch et al. 1999) describes a vision of the future multicultural feminism:

"I look forward to the moment to the day when women, especially indigenous, immigrant and refugee women are able to share on an equal basis the power, resources and privileges this society has to offer“(Carvajal 1999 p. 109)

Migrant-women have brought with them to Australia a strong tradition of feminist activism. Some of the non-governmental organizations formed with their contributions include: the NSW Immigrant Women's Speakout, the Association of Non-English Speaking Background Women of Australia, the NSW Working Women's Centre, Asian Women at Work, Non-English Speaking Women Background Housing, The Immigrant Women's Health Service.

There are however no explicitly environmental culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) networks. A possible reason for this can be attributed to the fact

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22Raquel Carvajal estimated that about 80 per cent of the world's refugee populations are women and children. Raquel Carvajal (Carvajal, R. (1999). Analysis of Multiculturalism in Australia from an NGO Women's perspective. The Future of Australian Multiculturalism: reflections on the twentieth anniversary of Jean Martin's The Migrant Presence G. Hage and R. Couch. Sydney, Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sydney.
that environmentally active migrants have not associated with a single NGO or other organizations, but are spread throughout the widely existing environmental groups and associations, rather than through migrant and ethnic clubs. In Western Australia, specifically, I have not been able to locate any environmentally active migrant-women through approaching ethnic clubs and organizations.

The masculine realities, in which migrants, and migrant-women live is also exacerbated by the dominance of the mining industry, the most masculine industries (Gier and Mercier 2006) in the economic realm in Western Australia. The next section outlines some of those economic realities in the largest state of Australia.

4.4 Economic realm: Western Australian economy

The landscape of WA is dominated largely, by the mining industry. However, the educational sector and the temporary skilled migration programmes have proven to play an increasingly important role in the Australian economy.

*Mining industry* 23

Western Australia (WA) is regarded as a resource-rich state. At its highest value, WA’s mineral and petroleum industry was estimated at $53.1 billion; in 2007 represented 15% of the world’s exploration and contributed a massive 86% (or $52.9 billion) towards the State’s export (Department of Industry and Resources 2007). According to the Department of Industry and Resources’ (2007) statistics, nickel, gold and iron ore are the largest contributors towards the increased value of the WA mining representing respectively 30%, 19% and 10% of the State’s exports. The strong demand for Western Australian minerals was triggered by China’s continuous economic growth described as ‘economic prosperity’ (Department of Industry and Resources 2007 p.2).

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However, the resource-rich state of Western Australia poses some other questions. Although the mining industry contributes to over one third of the total GDP of the state, ABS\(^{24}\) reports that only 7.2 percent of workers, mainly migrants, are employed in the mining industry.

It has been argued that global inequalities disrupt established economic patterns, produce massive displacement of workers, and lead to migrations within and abroad (Portes, 1978; Zolberg, 1979; Sassen-Koob, 1981). This is evident from the example of Western Australia where not everyone benefits equally from the mining boom.

According to Doukas et al. (Doukas, Cretney et al. 2008, n.p.) in periods of mining boom ‘(h)ost communities benefit from a jump in jobs, infusions of cash, and investment in infrastructure’. This case is much more difficult to be argued in the case of Western Australia. The WA mining operations have some unique characteristics which add another layer of fragility and uncertainty when it comes to the role of gender relationships. This relates to its fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) and drive in/drive out practices.

Nearly 20 years after the introduction of the FIFO way of operating the majority of mines in Western Australia, it has become clear that bringing a labour force for shift work from the city to remote locations is exacerbating the complex gender relationships with respect to mining. According to the FIFO jobs website (www.flyinflyout.com/about.htm), the mining work is ‘usually carried out by someone who lives in the city area and ‘Fly’s In’ to the work site, carries out their roster and ‘Fly’s Out’. In order to maintain efficient productivity, such sites operate 24 hours a day 7 days a week, with a roster of workers, engineers and other professionals who work long shifts (e.g. 12 hours) each day for a number of continuous days (e.g. 2-3 weeks) followed by an extended period of rest (e.g. 1 week) spent back in the city. According to Watts a practical definition of the fly-in/fly-out or drive-in/drive-out phenomenon is: ‘Circumstances of work where the place of work is sufficiently isolated from the worker’s place of residence to make daily commute impractical’ (Watts 2004 p. 26). Such a mode of operation adds

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\(^{24}\) ABS “Mining” Year Book (2012)
enormous pressure on communities where mining operates (Storey 2001), but also to families located in the main place of residence.

Even the State’s peak mining industry body, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, recognised that the enormous growth of the iron ore expansion and the oil and gas industry, especially in the Pilbara region, poses some serious challenges, such as higher rent: “It’s also a pretty tough place to live; rents are expensive and there’s accommodation issues in the north so it does face some other challenges as well.” (Bruce Campell-Fraser for The West Australian 2011).

Western society’s preoccupation with extracting resources from the ground for monetary value has long been attacked from a range of perspectives, including environmental and ecological economics (e.g. Daly and Farley 2004, Tietenberg 2004). In some cases policy makers have tried to reconcile the demands of environmentalists and business. An example of this in Australia is the arrangement for multiple uses of arid zones where nature conservation takes place along commercial activities such as exploration and mining (Cohen 1992).

Despite its enormous economic wealth, the Western Australian mining industry is strongly susceptible to the volatility in resource prices as demonstrated throughout the years, including the 2008 financial crisis. Many mining operations in Western Australia are affected by this state of affairs and major projects were put on hold. The resurgence of mineral prices in the future will allow mining companies to continue their economic profits, as it has been the case in the 1980s with the price of gold (Rola-Rubzen, Marinova et al. 2008, Lozeva and Marinova 2010). Many questions remain unclear, for example: what are the effects from mining development on the Australian cultural and environmental landscapes? Could it be that migrants are differently affected by the mining industry or are they affected equally?

25The price of nickel, for example, fell from $50,000/tonne in May 2007 to $18,000/tonne in August 2008 or a drop of 64% (Freed 2008) to $10,000/tonne in December 2008 or an 80% drop(newsvote.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/ids/hi/business/market_data/commodities/11662/twelve_month.stm, accessed 17 December 2008).
Educational sector

The education services in Western Australia are acting as another major attractor of migrants. It is also recognised by the Immigration Department as the major export industry. The new strategy of attracting international students is seen as having many other ramifications:

“The international education sector is important to Australia in establishing bilateral ties with key partner countries and supports employment in a broad range of occupations in the Australian economy as well as delivering high-value skills to the economy’(ABS 2009-10 p.1).

Many of the people who enter Australia as students are likely to become not only short-term but also long-term migrants. According to the latest ABS statistics, the educational sector (vocational education and training sector, higher education and other students) was on the top place in terms of attracting a total of 33 % (or 65,000) net overseas migrants (Figure 2). Furthermore, one in every five students in Australia was born overseas and almost half of the visa applications were submitted for higher education (ABS 2011).
This tendency further re-affirms the temporality of a migrant in Australia, as temporary visas account for the highest number of migrants – 54.3% (106,507 people net international migration) compared to about 40% permanent visas (or 77,626 people net overseas migration) issued.

**Entering new landscapes**

A lot of immigrants are faced with the harsh environment of the Australian landscape when they first arrive in Australia. This may not be the case particularly for the highly qualified migrants, arriving as part of the skilled migration programme. Their first experience in Australia proves to be quite comfortable urban dwelling in the major cities of Australia - Perth, Sydney, Darwin, Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne and Brisbane. If exposed to life outside these areas, they discover a completely different world. Entering isolated and
desert environments is, however, typical for the blue and gold collar workers of Australia.

The typical experience in the resource extracting industries is being further perpetuated by the Fly-in/Fly-out practices, described as ‘living in two worlds’: one in the comfort of home in larger urban dwellings and the other in the Australian outback where mining camp sites are located. The mineral industry has seen a tremendous growth in past years, and with its further expansion, the negative social and environmental effects of the industry are felt stronger (Connell and Howitt 1991, Emberzon-Bain 1994, Gier and Mercier 2006).

Students, on the other hand are faced with other challenges. For young people, the sense of belonging is constructed through connecting to a network of people and forming connections with a specific place becomes vital for their future and the way they see Australia.

4.5 Environmental realm

The Australian outback is unique with its spectacular sights and cultural richness. It is characterised by features that are fundamentally different to any other natural or social environment, such as climate variability, patchy human population, persistent traditional and local knowledge, low primary productivity, remoteness from markets and decision-making (Stafford Smith 2008, Stafford Smith, Moran et al. 2008). The environmental history of WA also bears its uniqueness. The Australian history of environmental movement has been described in a variety of ways. Some of the characteristics, which I find useful to apply here for the purpose of the research are two fold, as described by Garden (Garden and ABC-Clio Information Services. 2005).

Firstly, it is a 'black armband history' interpreting history purely in the aim of identifying the troubles that have led to the present crises (and as a reaction against the past dominant way of regarding history as a record of the inevitable 'progress' of humanity and its advancing technologies). It is an environmental repercussion of human “progress”. While it is useful to talk about the positive achievements of the environmental history, such approach would neglect the negative effect of technological development and human progress. The element of
“black armband history” means looking closely at the reasons that have contributed to the current environmental crisis as an opposite approach to the previously established way of looking at advancing technologies as an indisputable pathways to continuous human development and progress.

Secondly, the hybrid landscape versus the authentic landscape (or hybrid landscape versus eco-correctness theories) needs to be understood. The hybrid landscape refers to the understanding that there is no original ‘pristine’ wilderness left and it contrasts with the view of many environmentalists who see their job to protect wilderness (Matthews 2002). The hybrid idea suggests that we cannot turn the clock back to some imagined pristine landscape. Today's landscape, according to the hybrid model suggests present landscapes are a mixture of indigenous and anthropologically altered ecosystems: a degraded concept.

It is important to note that the hybrid thesis does not necessarily exist as purely an anti-environmental or pro-environmental idea, since it can be interpreted as either. For example from an anti-environmental point of view it could be assumed that anything that humans do can be regarded as natural including radical environmental change. Pro-environmentally, a hybrid landscape can be interpreted as a degraded landscape which is damaging the Earth's ability to sustain either humans or nonhumans.

The ideas of the natural environment as a hybrid environment is not new, it exists as a notion in various understandings. Support of this idea can be found in some of the distinction that Dower (Dower 2004, Dower 2007) makes namely:

1. Physical versus social: the ideas of the environment depend on which environment we are referring to: the physical environment or the environment as a social movement. Dower (in Elliot 1995) included in “social” such aspects as laws, customs, which make up the economic, cultural and political aspects of that “social” development.

2. Natural versus artificial: natural environment means one that has not been modified by human existence with pristine natural objects and present wilderness. In a contrast, a state or city park, or ornamented gardens would be examples of an artificial environment.
3. Local versus non-local: the environment as a local or a global idea, i.e. concerns about my own backyard or the whole of the world. (e.g. which are the biggest environmental problems in the home country and in Australia).

I will explore this further with the aim to look at the effects which each of these aspects has on migrants’ lives. Our understanding of the environment of all these aspects plays a significant role in the migrants’ engagements with environmental informal and formal groups and organizations which come out of that understanding.
4.6 Summary

The significance of migration can be summarized as follows:

- The Australian immigration policies have experienced a great shift towards multicultural oriented strategies. However perceptions of migrant cultures still remain problematic.
- Migrants from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are playing an increasingly role in population and in the demographic characteristics of the Australian continent.
- The mining industry has been continuously growing in the Australian outback and represents the most important economic sector of Western Australia. New arrivals need to adapt to the local environment and a lot of migrants are also faced with additional challenge: the Flying-in/Flying-out or drive-in/drive-out practices widely used by Australian mining companies.
- The educational sector is playing a major role in attracting new short-term as well as long-term migrants.
- The unique natural environment of WA poses some fundamental questions on dichotomies (local vs non-local, natural vs artificial, physical vs social) which require further attention.
CHAPTER 5

PROFILES OF RECENT ENVIRONMENTALLY ACTIVE MIGRANTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains six sections. The first one gives an overview of the demographic profile of migrants, who participated in this study and most notably their places of origin. The second part contains a discussion about the native language of the participants. The third section is concerned with education and its relation to environmental awareness, while the next two discuss age and family, and visa and employment respectively.

A brief discussion of who is considered a migrant and distinction between long-term and short-term international migrants (or visitors) are provided. The chapter also contains analysis beyond the purely demographic characteristics of the participants’ profiles. These discussions evolve around the role of education and its relation to environmental awareness; ethnicity; and self-perception of being a (non) migrant. The chapter concludes with some key findings from the profiles of these migrants.

5.2 Background

Within the multiculturalism framework, in which Australian politics operates, migrants from all around the world are expected to be welcomed and to be celebrated for their cultural diversity. The policy of multiculturalism was firstly introduced at a federal level, and later the Australian States and Territories re-
developed their own policies within this multicultural framework (ABS 2010). The Australian government recognises that a large proportion of the multicultural policy development is undertaken at state and territories level, as well as at the grassroots level, through Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and various community organisations (Koleth 2010).

One of the earliest formal recognitions of multiculturalism in Australia dates from 1978 with a statement from the former Premier Malcolm Fraser.

“The Government accepts that it is now essential to give significant further encouragement to develop a multicultural attitude in Australian society. It will foster the retention of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups and promote intercultural understanding” (Commonwealth of Australia April 1978).

In Western Australia multicultural affairs are being co-ordinated by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) within the Department of Local Government. The first Western Australian Charter on multiculturalism was adopted by the Cabinet in 2004. The OMI launched a strategic plan for 2009-2013 to achieve participation from all community groups in order to promote equity for the benefits of Western Australia’s cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD).

These policies aim at attracting migrants from around the world and have facilitated the arrival of new settlers from different cultural backgrounds. The latest figures revealed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, show that about six million people born overseas call Australia ‘home’ (ABS 2009-10).

Another significant factor is that in the years between 2004-2009, WA had a record number of 79% increase in temporary visa (compared to the national average of 62%). (ABS 2012 A). Further, it must be noted that in November 2010 the majority of the recent migrants (719,600) in Australia were born in a

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26 This marked a shift from the previously adopted white Australian policy.
country, whose main language is other than English and 91 percent were aged 15-44.

### 5.3 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The variety of places of birth of the interviewees reflects largely the diversity of migrants in general in Western Australia. Recent migrants in Perth originate from all continents and come from about 80 different countries. Significantly, over half of the growth in population in Western Australia was contributed to overseas arrivals based on the 2006 Australian census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009).

Among the participants in the study, identified were seven major regions where the environmentally active migrants came from (see also table 4):

- Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Slovenia)
- Western Europe (Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain)
- Latin America (Venezuela, Mexico, and Columbia)
- Middle East (Iran, Iraq)
- South East Asia (India, Bangladesh)
- Far East Asia (China) and
- Africa (South Africa, Tanzania).

A map of these places is located in Figure 3 and table 3 provides a detailed description of the sample. Quotes from interviews with participants are given in italics with the pseudonym of the informer included in brackets. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, I have allocated fictional names to the people in my sample.
Figure 3. Countries of Origin of Interviewees
### Table 3. Overview of participants (place of origin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of interviewee</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Dhaka</td>
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<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Bogota</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Benjamin</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Danish</td>
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<td>Stara Zagora</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
<td>Munich</td>
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<td>Belgium/Dutch border</td>
<td>French/ Spanish</td>
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<td>F</td>
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Table 3. Overview of participants (place of origin) -continued

<table>
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<th>No.</th>
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<th>Gender</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Stara Zagora</td>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Marian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>Teheran</td>
<td>Persian (Farci)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mariette</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Caracas</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mehdi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>Teheran</td>
<td>Persian (Farci)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Milena</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Bologna</td>
<td>Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Neeti</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Nagpur (State-Maharashtra, Central India)</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Karlovo</td>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Praveen</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Malaysia/India</td>
<td>Kota bharu</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Rochelle</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>France/Italy</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>French/Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Austria/Slovenia</td>
<td>Ljubliana</td>
<td>Slovenian/German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Saeid</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>Teheran</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Soma</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are two aspects which must be noted. The first one is that regions, such as Eastern Europe and Middle East for example, are becoming more a floating concept with constant shift of cultural and political borders. The definitions of regions are further complicated by the self-perceived image of the residents in those regions. For example, people living in Iraq could identify themselves as Kurdish and not Iraqis, and in the Czech Republic, some people think of themselves as ‘central Europeans’, although the country shares a similar socialist political experience with the rest of Eastern Europe. Thus regions are not simply defined as geographic concepts, but are loaded with a lot of economic, political and cultural meaning.

A closer examination of the brief profile of respondents also reveals another aspect which could be explained with the forces of globalisation, where the political borders are becoming of lesser significance. For example, some of the interviewees have identified themselves as representative of two countries of regions, or from two cities, due to their mixed origin. This could be because their parents are from different countries or because they were born in one country, but moved at an early age to another, either to live and/or to study. Katherine, Rose, and Kate are such examples; they were unable to choose one particular country as their place of origin as they felt strongly connected to two places. Kate’s constant shifts between the two countries also marked her sense of belonging to both Belgium and Spain.

A more detailed demographic profile of the respondents, including age group, type of employment, level of education and a length of emigrations as well as time spent in Western Australia appears in Table 4 below. It includes general profile characteristics and factors, which play a significant role in migrants’ settling in their new home country (Samani 2010).
Table 4. Demographic profile of contemporary migrants involved with the environmental movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant name²⁸</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Current visa on arrival</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Length of migration</th>
<th>Education field and highest level of education obtained</th>
<th>Employment and type of employment</th>
<th>Type of Environmental Activism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agata²⁹</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Permanent resident (PR)</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Geography, M.Sc.</td>
<td>Water conservation, Full-time</td>
<td>Water conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(spouse visa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anis</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
<td>Physics, M.Sc.</td>
<td>University Tutor, Part-time</td>
<td>Environmental research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>³⁰</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁸ All the names have been modified for ethical and privacy purposes, but they are culturally and ethnically fitting with the real names of the participants.
²⁹ In the case with Agata, some changes regarding her visa have occurred during the one year since I have known her. The first time we met, she had come on a spouse visa, while the second time she had already become a permanent resident and hoping to get a citizenship in due future. Other migrants have been through a similar process, but due to limitations of the study, I have not conducted follow up interviews.
³⁰ Originally Anis arrived on a spouse visa, currently is PR, and is hoping to gain citizenship in due future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant name</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Current visa on</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Length of migration</th>
<th>Education field and highest level of education obtained</th>
<th>Employment and type of employment</th>
<th>Type of Environmental Activism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antonia</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Political science, M. B.</td>
<td>Social worker, Part-time</td>
<td>Guerrilla Gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beau</td>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guerrilla Gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Civil Engineer B. Sc.</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Environmental research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baba</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Forrest Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Education, M. Phil.</td>
<td>Environmental Education, Full-time</td>
<td>Environmental partnership building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dona</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Temporary residency</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>5 months</td>
<td>Geography, M. Sc.</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Environmental media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant name</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>Current visa on arrival</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Length of migration</td>
<td>Education field and highest level of education obtained</td>
<td>Employment and type of employment</td>
<td>Type of Environmental Activism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Unemployed, housewife</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Employer sponsored</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
<td>IT/ Biology, M. Sc.</td>
<td>Biomemetics, Full-time</td>
<td>IT environmental work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunter</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Environmental Management, B.A.</td>
<td>Environmental management, Full-time</td>
<td>Governmental support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Tourist</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Accounting, B.A.</td>
<td>Marine Conservation, Volunteer</td>
<td>Marine conservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 Originally arrived on working holiday visa
32 Although some participants are on a tourist visa, the purpose of their visit to Australia is not sightseeing, but environmental activism. Since there is no category of migrants, who come to Australia to do environmental work, those people are still categorised as tourists.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant name</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Current visa on</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Length of migration</th>
<th>Education field and highest level of education obtained</th>
<th>Employment and type of employment</th>
<th>Type of environmental activism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katherine</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Employer sponsored</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
<td>Environmental management, M. Env. Sc.</td>
<td>Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Full-time</td>
<td>GIS modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>NZ citizen</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
<td>Biology, M. Sc.</td>
<td>Health/Sleep consultant, Full-time</td>
<td>Biodiversity protection, wildlife rescue, gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marian</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Chemistry, M.Sc.</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Environmental leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariette</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Environmental Management</td>
<td>Ecology, Part-time and</td>
<td>Campaign volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant name</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>Current visa on</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Length of migration</td>
<td>Education field and highest level of education obtained</td>
<td>Employment and type of employment</td>
<td>Type of Environmental Activism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milena</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Environmental Conservation, M. Env. Sc.</td>
<td>Language Teacher, Part-time</td>
<td>Gardening, Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neeti</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Architecture, M. Arch.</td>
<td>Unemployed, Volunteer</td>
<td>Urban environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Biology, M.Sc.</td>
<td>Consultant, Self-employed</td>
<td>Environmental Consultancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Civil Engineer, Bachelor</td>
<td>Engineer, Full-time</td>
<td>Scientist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praveen</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Business, Bachelor</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Gardening, coastal environmental protection, wildlife rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant name</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>Current visa on</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Length of migration</td>
<td>Education field and highest level of education obtained</td>
<td>Employment and type of employment</td>
<td>Type of Environmental Activism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochelle</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Tourist</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Environmental Journalism, Bachelor</td>
<td>Marine Conservation, Volunteer</td>
<td>Marine conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Biology, M. Sc.</td>
<td>Unemployed, Volunteer</td>
<td>Marine Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saeid</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Engineer, Bachelor</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Environmental research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soma</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Permanent resident</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Architecture, Master</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 Culturally and linguistically diverse migrants

The participants of the study were chosen to be from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, because it was recognised at the initial stages of the preliminary research, that migrants from such background share similar problems in establishing themselves in Australia which are very different from migrants who come from native English-speaking countries. Therefore their experience in engagement with the environmental movement is quite different from those whose native language is English.

Recognizing the limitation of the English language as a non-native language to the participants in this study, it was also assumed that English will be the language in which migrants would be communicating while engaging in the environmental sphere. Being able to conduct the interviews in English also meant that the respondents possessed relatively good communication skills.

In order to ensure that the questions were delivered in an equal way to all participants, the chosen language for the semi-structured interviews was English. This also gave the opportunity to all migrants to communicate with me in the same way and thus allowed the subsequent analysis of the data to be done consistently.

5.4 Education and environmental awareness

Information related to overseas-born migrants who live in Australia, is available mainly from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing and from the various data sources from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). More than half of the newly arrived migrants have higher education level (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009). There is no specific statistical information about people engaged in environmental activism, including recent migrants (section 5.6 - types of environmental activism - explains what environmental activities are being considered as environmental engagement for the purpose of this study).
The majority of the respondents in my sample have completed a Bachelor’s degree and more than half of them also have a Master’s Degree. Some of the participants either already had a PhD or were striving to achieve it.

“I have a degree in Social Communication and I have worked as a journalist in Columbia...“

“I also have Master in Political Science and I have worked on evaluating public policies programmes. We focused on the work of international companies in Columbia, but also some national companies.” (Antonia)

The international education sector is proving of increasing importance for Australian overseas immigration and this is seen within the participant sample.

5.5 Age and family

There is a different pattern in the correlation between age and family amongst the newly arrived migrants, active in the environmental movement. The majority of the participants are within the 20-30 years old bracket. The age group varied between 18 and 41 years old. For some of the more mature respondents, other factors are playing a role in their life, such as bringing up their children, which interrupts their professional or educational paths. Bearing a child was recorded as the main reason for migrants’ halt in their education. Antonia shares in her interview that:

“Then I took a break for a year and a half, because Beau was born, so I was a full time mum (laugh) - Antonia

This is the case with Maria, whose plans for pursuing a PhD were interrupted by her first pregnancy. Many migrant women struggle to accommodate professional, educational and family needs.

Among the sample, ten interviewees are married, twelve are single and one is engaged. Six women and four men are married and one man was engaged. Equal number of two male and two female respondents reported to be engaged to be married. Eight interviewees are single,
the majorities of whom (seven) are migrant-women\textsuperscript{33}. Two women are divorced. One woman has three children, two have two children, and three women have one child.

### 5.6 Visa and employment

General information provided by DIAC regarding overseas arrivals and their employment cannot answer the key question, as to what is the relationship between migrants’ visa status and their economic activities after their arrival in Australia (ABS 2010).

A strong tendency towards gaining a more permanent status in Australia exists among the respondents in this study. Out of all interviewees, ten have come with the desire to settle down in Australia and have already achieved that, while five others are still in the process of obtaining permanent residence. Here is an example of how one of the respondents explains her shift in status:

“I migrated to Australia in 2007, June. I came on a student visa, but my husband had already applied simultaneously for a migration visa, so we call B 136. That’s a permanent resident visa, which we got in May 2008. So I have been here for two years, but I came as a student and then I got my permanent residency.” (Soma)

In other cases, respondents are still not certain what their future will hold, but a general perception is expressed that for better work opportunities for themselves and their respective partners, gaining a residence will benefit their career.

“Honestly, I am a material engineer, and I’ve searched and I’ve heard beforehand that Western Australia has very good material mining and material engineer, that’s why we are here. Because I was interested in doing a PhD and after my PhD... I don’t have any idea at all, but maybe because of my husband - he is a mechanical engineer and it is better in a long-term maybe to remain here. We should make decision after my PhD. But I like Perth; it is so calm and peaceful ...I like it here.” (Marian)

\textsuperscript{33} The higher number of females recorded as single, could be attributed partly to the fact, that there are uneven number of men and women respondents (1:3).
In order to effectively develop future immigration policies (including their evaluation), information about ‘visa category’ and the above migrants’ participation in the labour market has been collected previously by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The Australian policies recognise that migrants may have difficulties finding employment especially those who have recently arrived in the country. In the last ten-fifteen years, Australian policies have been focused on attracting skilled migrants. The rate by which the number of skilled migrants is increasing in Australia is 5.7 %, based on an unrepresentative sample from 2006-2010 (ABS 2010).

It is important to examine the link between those migrants, who arrive based on their qualifications and the type of employment they find once in their new home country. Enquiring about the quality of employment includes revealing information on rates of pay and working conditions as well as how closely this employment is related to their skills and education. Although the skilled migrants programme aims at attracting qualified migrants from around the world, it still differentiates different types of visa within this programme. The four main categories in terms of skilled visas are: ‘Australian sponsored’, ‘Employer sponsored’, ‘Independent’ and ‘Other’. The ‘Australian sponsored’ visa allows for Australian citizens or residents to sponsor members of their family, which are assessed on a point system (taking into account their professional skills, age, education etc.). The ‘Employer sponsored’ category allows for highly skilled migrants to live and work in Australia for employers, who have been unable to find suitable skilled Australian applicants for their business. The ‘Independent’ skilled visas are designed for unsponsored applicants who have satisfied high level of skilled conditions, such as English language ability, have obtained higher education and possess professional experience in particular areas, all of which is expected to make them highly employable and valuable for the Australian economy. Other visas, based on skills are ‘Business skills’ (for those who wish to transfer their business to Australia) and ‘Distinguished talents’. They all attract people with significant skills. Half of the new arrivals in Australia (aged 15 and over) have come to this country using the Skilled Migrant Programme, which also reflects the situation in WA.

The interrelation between place of origin and the skilled programme for the period 2006-2010 shows that most migrants have arrived from North-West Europe (22%) followed by the regions of North-East Asia (20%), Southern and Central Asia (18%) and South East Asia (17%). Half of the newly arrived migrants through the skilled programme originated from
United Kingdom, India, China and South Africa (ABS 2010). ‘Employer sponsorship’ made up almost a quarter of all visas granted to migrants from the UK (23%) and South Africa (23%). In comparison, half of the migrants from the Philippines and 40% from Sri Lanka were granted visas under the Australian Sponsorship Programme.

The majority of male participants in the study had acquired a full-time employment, while most of the female respondents held either part-time or casual employment. Types of employment vary between a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist, land and marine conservation, environmental consultants, to civil engineers, ecologists and biologists.

5.7 Religion

Most of the participants declared their religion to be Christian, followed by Muslim, Hindi and three of them identified themselves as non-religious.

One of the respondents, Neeti, points to the fact that the ‘new generation’ have been influenced by different religions, and although she categorises herself as Hindu, she is also largely influenced by Catholics as her mother is Christian.

“I am Neeti..., I am 25 years old, and my cultural background is a little mixed, because my mother is Catholic and my father is Hindu, Brahman. I don't know if you know about it: Hindu Brahman. We have different religions in India, so he is a Brahman, which means they don’t eat meat ...vegetarian, like that; but my mother is Catholic, so we have influence of both the religions, so yeah...”(Neeti)

These tendencies are somewhat a reflection of the religious affiliation in the state. Over half of the recently arrived migrants reported affiliation to Christianity (ABS 2012). Recent arrivals were less likely to affiliate with Christian religion, compared to long-standing migrants, and they reported higher percentages affiliation with Hinduism (10% compared to 3%), Islam (8.4% compared to 4.7%) and Buddhism (7.7% compared to 6.6%). This reflects the fact that recently arrived migrants come from non-European countries. Notably, a large proportion of recent migrants reported “no religion” (24%), which was also higher than the long-standing migrants (19.5%) (ABS 2012)
5.8 **Types of environmental activism**

I consider as environmental activism not only formal engagement with the environmental movement, but also informal networking and especially voluntary involvement. This kind of informal engagement is recognised as an important part in building the social fabric of a strong civil society and is believed to be an essential link in creating social change and making a difference. According to Putnam (1993), sharing recipes, attending a bowling club or belonging to a group, can be more influential, than being a formal member of a political party (Putman 1995, Vogel 2009). This is the reason why I have chosen to include formal, as well as informal environmental engagement as part of environmental activism in relation to the participants in this study. Participants’ environmental activities include growing plants from cuttings, social peer to recycle and other informal activities, which often attract very little attention if any at all and many others (Table 5).

5.9 **Images of the environment**

Why examine images of nature? Environmental activism, and especially environmental awareness, is formed to a large extent by the images of the environment we have gathered through our lifetime experience and since early childhood (see chapter 6). Investigating images of the environment helps to better understand the perception, the attitudes and the values attributed to nature. Stories about the environment can be compared to short movies, while images of the environment are like a snapshot of these stories.

Some of the images of the natural environment are positive, such as beautiful traditional sites, mountains and pristine waters, while others are negative, like forest clearing and environmental destruction. Many are of a mixed nature.

I chose to include ‘images of the environment’ in the profile of contemporary migrants, since they help explain the values each of the participants invests in nature and the meaning that they put into it. Another reason why images of the environment are important to consider in this research is because of the correlation between images from the home country and of the migrants’ new place of residence, namely Western Australia, and the way they compare. Lastly, images of the environment can be a powerful motivation for a strong reaction to
environmental problems, especially if they are deeply imbedded in memories. Below I provide a table with some extracts from the interviews which are related to images of nature from home.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narratives</th>
<th>Images in home/other countries</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[The forestry is cut] From the government, from the military army, and the military army is digging holes for new building. And it is completely horrible! When you see the beautiful land has turned into big holes, huge caves…. Shit! It is absolutely ridiculous. You can’t believe that human beings can do that sort of things. I don’t want to think about it. Because this is where I grew up, that’s where my life was...if you go you find wholes and concrete… - Baba</td>
<td>Images of home environment as the place where growing up</td>
<td>Forest clearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And South Africa was, you know, is a mess and don’t go and try to save the environment in South Africa, because that would be a lot more difficult… - Katherine</td>
<td>Natural environment in home country</td>
<td>Destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You know, Iran has plenty of beautiful traditional cities, especially in the north we have some forests, or in the middle</td>
<td>Natural environment in other countries, Beautiful traditional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
some traditional cities, or sometimes we went abroad.

-Marian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iran</th>
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Yeah, some places in Austria are much more beautiful because of the mountains

-Katherine

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<th>Natural environment in other countries, Austria</th>
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…in my memories the winters are different, they are associated with certain sounds and smells and singing of the birds, but they are not there anymore. And we wonder what happened!

-Soma

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<th>Natural Environment in home country</th>
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5.10 Summary

It is a difficult task to draw a portrait of the diverse profiles of migrants who are passionate about environmental problems in Western Australia. Categorising the participants purely by their home country, spoken language or even by gender would be too simplistic, especially given their complex identities. The profile of recent migrants is equally shaped by their feelings, memories, and values, different kinds of present and past civic engagements and so on. However, a general demographic profile of contemporary migrants active in the environmental movement has been drawn in an attempt to shed light on who they are, where they come from and to reveal the diversity and the range of people who are trying to make a difference in their new country. This study is not in a position to construct a statistical profile as I have chosen a qualitative approach to elicit this new information. However, a general demographic profile of the respondents, including age group, gender, place of birth and education was obtained as well as employment status was provided.

Key findings from the profiles of environmentally active recent migrants:

- The gender ratio of recent environmentally active migrants in the interviewees for this study was about two third women and one third men.
- The average length of stay in Australia was found to be less than two and a half years.
- Religion: The majority of the respondents have self-identified to be Christians, followed by Muslims; one respondent self-identified as Hindu, one as Buddhist and two as non-religious.
- The majority of participants (nineteen) have arrived on a temporary visa. While only eight have come to Western Australia as permanent settlers; five have shifted their visa status from temporary to permanent during the course of the research. This shift shows a strong tendency that many environmentally active migrants see a long-term future for themselves (and their family) in Australia.
- Strong educational background is the basis for high environmental awareness: most of the participants in the study either have obtained a
higher degree by research or are currently in the process of that achievement (Neeti, Soma, Mehdi, Anis, Marian, Rose).

- Environmental activities of recent migrants in their new home country resemble largely their previous environmental activities in their country of origin or other places of residence before immigrating to Australia.

- The interest in environmental problems in Western Australia arises from their environmental awareness, developed in the home country, i.e. air pollution, car use, marine conservation, sustainable forestry and so on. This means that immigrants who have been exposed to certain environmental problems in their home country or other countries of residence are more motivated to engage in environmental activities related to those problems.
Part III

MIGRANTS GO FOR NATURE: SPACE, TERRITORIALITY AND CONNECTEDNESS

“Instead of trying to win every game, I think, that the player has to give his best to make a good game, which he could be proud of. In our life we constantly meet opportunities to take the right path. The same is with Go – opportunities to take the right path are met every move. Life is beautiful, and so is Go.”

(Korean master Cho Hun Hyun)34

Part three of the thesis examines the interplay between the notions of territoriality, space and connectedness. The connection between those terms, although not evident at the start of the research, became clear with the deepening of the data analysis. The underlying logic in the behaviour of many stakeholders involved in the environmental movement in Western Australia was resolved within the framework provided by these three concepts.

Environmental ethics considers the players in the environmental movement to have most commonly two opposite perceptions of the surrounding natural world: the first group perceives nature as the material physical surrounding around us and values nature for the benefits it brings to humankind (such as environmental resources and material possessions) while the second group values nature for its non-instrumental, transidental value (such as the air nature provides to breathe) and the integrity of the natural ecosystem as a living thing with its own rights to exist independently from human existence and human needs (Brennan 1995, Elliot 1995, Guerrier 1995, Routley and Routley 1995, O'Neil 2003).

In Western Australia, the players in the environmental movement are stakeholders, parties and individuals who also represent these two different perceptions of the environment. Each of these views has its part to play in environmental activism, but they often clash with each other and cascade until a unified approach is agreed upon. In this game of constant shifts of power, three major themes emerge - space, territoriality and connectedness.

34 Cho Hun Hyun as quoted in Lazarov, I. (2008) “Forget all Sorrows! Weiqiland”, and also in Malinowski. Go(or Igo) is the Japanese name of an Asian board game, which is considered to be the oldest strategic game in human civilisation. Some other popular names by which it is known are also wei-ci (Chinese) and ba-duk (Korean).
The concept of *space*, understood as a philosophical concept covering core environmental values and ethics, throws light on the role of the non-material values in migrants’ environmental engagement. The main research focus of this thesis is to explain the role that social and environmental factors play in the migration experience as it influences recent migrants’ environmental activism. Chapter six *Space* explores the views and meaning attributed to nature which cannot be measured in economic terms. The concept of *space* examines the values, attributed to nature by recent migrants and the way in which these values are being translated in their lives.

Chapter Seven *Territoriality* is devoted to defining the physical territory in which migrants’ environmental activism takes place. The main location is the physical surroundings of the natural environment of Western Australia, which includes its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) extending up to 200 nautical miles (Australian Government 2011). In some cases, however, the environmental activism of migrants extends far beyond these boundaries and takes place in international waters, including some of the harshest environments on Earth, such as the Antarctic Ocean. In such cases, their activism is supported by cross-global networks of people and organisations – such examples are the ‘Sea Shepherd’ and the ‘Guerrilla Gardening’ groups. These international environmental groups are becoming increasingly popular to gain the support of members across the globe and are rarely defined by political borders.

However, *territoriality* can also be understood in a metaphorical way to map the social territory of any new migrant in Australia, which like any other new territory needs to be adopted, and in turn, for the territory to adapt to the needs of its new inhabitants. Changes are never one-fold and with a single dimension. Inevitably, contemporary migrants not only learn how to live in their new physical and social environment, but in doing so, they also alter the natural and cultural landscape of their new territory.

35 Chapter Eight *Connectedness* explores the meaning of family.
Overall, part three _Migrants Go for Nature_ examines some of the problems and challenges that recent migrants face in the process of making their new country of migration their ‘own’. Such difficulties are multi-dimensional and complex and include migration problems, language barriers, and even negotiating gender experiences in different settings. The chapter about _territoriality_ also discusses another important aspect - that is the creation of a new form of citizenship based on a world with global borders and the global mobility of people.

The notion of _connectedness_ (Chapter eight) provides a useful framework for the role of social factors in the environmental engagement of recent migrants. It touches on the motivation for environmental engagement in Western Australia in all aspects: economic, social and environmental, but it also illuminates the undervalued role of social factors in the life of recent migrants, both in terms of motivation for migrating to Australia and in their subsequent environmental engagement. While exploring the notion of _connectedness_, the need of new arriving migrants in Western Australia to _connect_ to their new environment becomes overtly evident. Connecting to other equally minded people when one finds him/herself in new surroundings is a vital social human need. Interestingly, many recent migrants find that connecting to other environmentally aware people and environmental engagement provides ways to link to their new home country both socially and environmentally.

All of the above notions should not be looked at separately, but rather as a whole since territoriality, connectedness and space, in relation to migration, are related at multiple levels. They make it possible to see these population movements across national borders, not only in geographical terms, they also help to understand them as a transfer of transnational legal and moral precepts shaping discourses around the globe (Benhabib and Resnik 2009). These three perspectives also allow us to see the experiences of recent migrants from both an analytical and ethical perspective.

It is of note that in some instances difficulties, such as language barriers and ethnicity have restrained the civic participation of recent migrants, but in others have motivated them into taking a stand in pursuing their own beliefs. In this study, the migrants’ predominant concerns are associated with environmental protection and conservation.
Thus the following text explores the three main themes which have emerged from the analysis of the environmental activism of recent migrants: *space, territory and connectedness*. 
CHAPTER 6

SPACE: ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES IN MIGRANTS’ ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

“Without nature, the sensations of living on Earth seem incomplete.”
(Soma)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the meaning of space, understood broadly as environmental values and as a sense of emptiness. It seeks to answer the question: what role do non-material, non-economic values play in the lives of environmentally active migrants? The chapter begins with an explanation of the term space as used in the context of the thesis. It continues with describing the different perceptions of nature by recent migrants as representation of space. The parts to follow are concerned with the gendered perspectives of space and specific motivation for migrant-women to engage in environmental activism. This section employs a view shared by eco-feminism that science and technology have played a special role in establishing the formation of gendered perception of nature. The last parts explore the time dimension attached to space: that is, the role of myths and legends in the imagination of migrants and the role of their upbringing and memories connected to nature. Such memories play a crucial role shaping one’s identity and consequently environmental behaviour.

The final section provides a link to sustainability through the sense of responsibility for the future generations articulated by many of the participants.
6.2 How to understand ‘space’

The notion of space takes a variety of different meanings. The word *space* is used as both a verb and a noun, and it originates from the Latin *spatium*. Linguistically, the Oxford dictionary defines *space* as 1) ‘a continuous area or expanse which is free, available, or unoccupied’ 2) an interval of time 3) the freedom to live, think, and develop in a way that suits one and 4) the dimension of height, depth, and width within which all things exist and move (Oxford University Press 2011).

The first meaning of *space* is being interpreted here to denote *emptiness*. In ancient Asian beliefs *space* is inevitably attached to the concept of *emptiness* – both concepts are inseparable and mutually re-inflicting. For Westerners, the representation of the concept of emptiness has often served as justification for economic development of the land, seen as barren and alien. However, the concept of emptiness employed here explores the role of non-material values for recent migrants in the new country which provides the grounds for their new lives.

The second meaning attached to *space* has a time dimension. In this chapter, I explore the meaning of memories in the imagination of migrants. Specific myths and legends, which exist in a perpetual state of transition in all parts of the world, have the ability to re-allocate the realm we live in. Explaining or rejecting those myths is not possible, since they only exist in our imagination; however, what is of significance is that they play an enormous role in the way migrants conceptualise the new world they live in. Migrants, especially, can help understand what implications memories of one’s landscapes can have on the perception of another continent, often too another hemisphere. The time dimension of space is also evident in the way migrants understand the future including care for their children and grandchildren.

The third interpretation of *space* is understood as the freedom to act based on non-material values, rather than economic incentives. Non-material values and their role in relation to nature are discussed later in this chapter.

The last dimension of *space* considers its physical characteristics: sometimes described as having such attributes as depth, height and width. This meaning is
evident through the descriptions of Australia given by migrants of “wide distances”,
deep oceans” or “vast land”.

To create and sustain *space* and *emptiness* has long been the goal of Asian arts
(Korean Theatre Studies, Kim et al., Heisig 2001, Berger 2003). For Westerners, the
endpoint of their attempts to be proactive is to compete with nature by creating a
copy better than the original. This is largely evident in the use of technology in the
Industrial Revolution that gave rise to celebrating the human power over nature. The
prominence in Western culture of such legends as Prometheus, the fire-stealer and
Sisyphus, who is forever destined to roll up the same stone on the same hill, like an
ever-repeating and never ending story of painful existence, was the representation of
a lot of social philosophers and a symbol of our inability to free ourselves from the
repeating destiny of human struggle.

These perceptions were set up from the time when Socrates proclaimed humankind
fundamentally different from nature and also declared its superiority to nature. This
effort entails a dominant role of humans over the natural universe (Humphries 1999).

The Eastern cultures and arts have not tried to control or master the “natural” in this
sense. The Japanese have epitomised the concept of “emptiness” to its peak and it is
nowhere more acutely presented than in a completed game of Go\(^36\), where sustaining
an empty space is the ultimate goal. The relations between Go and environmental
ethics have more in common with the subject of physics and philosophy than with
any other games theory or social sciences. The reason for this is that it employs a lot
of physical concepts of shapes while combining them with the real social life
behaviour of people. Some of the game’s original names were a ”model of the
universe”, “the game of all wonders” (Pinckard 1992). Buddhism, also, affirms that
living and non-living things have spirits and meditation is a way of liberating all
living and non-living things from suffering (Sogyal, Gaffney et al. 1992, Takeuchi

The Australian Aboriginals are attaching a greater meaning to all living and non-
living things: every stone, tree and rock has a spirit, which is cherished from one

\(^36\) Although I largely agree with Humphries (2000) in his explanation of emptiness, here I disagree
with him he that such epitome of emptiness is mostly evident and present in the bonsai tree.

By contrast, in Western culture, *emptiness* has been predominantly understood as a word with largely negative connotations. The first European settlers declared the Australian outback to be *empty*, meaning barren, alien, desert-like and thus being deprived of a valuable meaning on its own. Apart from the purely theoretical discussion on the ephemera of empty space, there are large political, socio-economic and environmental implications resulting from it. For example, the mining of the so-called *empty* land was justified generally based on this understanding. When a specific concept becomes the reason for justification of developing of new technologies and their use, it spreads beyond the theoretical and philosophical discussion and it implies important consequence on the lives of local people (Moyal, Newland et al. 1978). For Aboriginals, "empty" means full of water, trees, shelter stories, healing as well as other not visible for the Western perception values of the “empty space” of the natural environment. Myths are also based on the imbedded reality of landscapes as well as on their imagined spiritual power (Bozic and Marshall 1972).

Kopusar (2003), an Indigenous woman from Western Australia tells:

> “If asked indigenous woman will tell you that every tree has a meaning and a use, warmth and comfort, shelter and shade, healing and food. The land isn’t empty. The bushes and trees are teeming with food for the children. The valleys, the mountains, the great boulders, the sky, the fire, the lightening, the thunder, every part of the land has a message for the people” (Patricia Kopusar in MacDonald and Walker 2002 p.13).

Misconceived ideas about the land as empty have led to a popular justification for the rise and boom of the resource-extracting industries in Western Australia. The land is seen as bare ground needing discovery and intervention; an economic resource for more development, thus opposing the notion of “space” as a value on its own (Miller 2007).

While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate in length the concept of *space* and to provide a deeper understanding of the meaning of space and emptiness
as seen through authentic Asian belief, a brief explanation can be found in the work of some Western writers and in available translations\textsuperscript{37}. Empty space is regarded as sacred; the importance attached to space, or ‘emptiness’ is far greater than the meaning of material things and possessions. This refers to all aspects of life: art, literature, architecture, religion (Humphries 1999). Meditation is a way to ‘empty’ one’s mind (see for example Osho 2002). The Buddha talks about emptiness of the heart: knowing the empty heart, beyond thoughts, feelings and sentiments- the door to eternity which exists within everyone. A vase is only cherished and takes its meaningfulness because of the emptyess inside, not because of its shape (Tze around 600 BC).

Lao Tze (around 600 BC) in his only book-masterpiece “Tao TeChing” (Chapter 11) gives the most poetic and appealing illustrating of the meaning of space:

\textit{We join spokes together in a wheel,}
\textit{but it is the centre hole}
\textit{that makes the wagon move.}

\textit{We shape clay into a pot,}
\textit{but it is the emptiness inside}
\textit{that holds whatever we want.}

\textit{We hammer wood for a house,}
\textit{but it is the inner space}
\textit{that makes it liveable.}

\textsuperscript{37} Part of these limitations is that the author does not speak /read Japanese, Chinese or Korean languages. It was relied on literature accessible in English, Bulgarian and Russian languages.
We work with being

but non-being is what we use.

Taoism, a movement, following the study of Lao Dze believes that emptiness is foremost a state of mind.

From the many different definitions of ‘space’, for the purposes of the thesis, I will be using the understanding of space as a sacred notion of emptiness, of inner space that makes material things liveable. Hence, in relation to nature, space can be understood as both: (1) the foundation to all life on Earth and (2) as an integral part of human existence, which is not divorced from humans’ lives.

The concept of deep ecology, also attaches a special meaning to nature. It claims that the value of space or the value attributed to the natural world is not measured purely in economic terms, but in a value, independent from humans’ interests. In contrast, eco-feminism originates from the valuable connection between nature and women, either explained as a biological connection or as a socially-constructed connection (Warren 1991, Butler and Scott 1992, Mies and Shiva 1993, Plumwood 1993, Zimmerman 1993, Warren 1996).

Going to the interview sample, participants’ perceptions of nature resemble the understanding attached to space as sacred and deeply meaningful to their lives. From there, it follows the determination that it is worth devoting time and energy to the environmental movement for the sake of ‘nature’ itself and the acknowledgement that humans are not divorced from the natural world in which they live, but are part of “the same thing”.

6.3 Perceptions of nature

Environmental disciplines have been routinely dominated, both in terms of environmental ethics and environmental politics, by a large division between

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38 Furthermore, the principles applied in the Asian form of art, Go, are also evident in the subsequent two chapters in that creating larger groups is a mean of survival technique; and that territories do not exist until the very end, that is to say that they are constantly a subject of negotiations and re-negotiations.
intrinsic values and instrumental values attributed to nature. Intrinsic value is based on non-instrumental value (Zimmerman 1993, Brennan 1995, Elliot 1995, DesJardins 1997, O'Neil 2003, Benzoni 2007). An instrumental value is described when “an object has instrumental value as it is a means to some other end” (Naess 1984 p.266).

Similar distinction can be found in the responses of recent migrants in regards to the meaning of nature: while some of them attach a non-material value, others see nature as conflicting in terms of economic interests. Many of the participants used metaphors, or allegories in describing the meaning nature has for them. Many also hesitated to give an immediate answer and made shorter or longer pauses: Difficult question! “What does nature mean to me?” Oh, a difficult question! (Anis)

The perceptions of nature in migrants’ views were loud and powerful. They talk about ‘connections with nature” in a different, more abstract form. Caroline, an environmental activist from Spain, in her mid-twenties, said: “Nature is the strongest connection we can value”. 39 Below is a summary of the respondents’ answers to what nature means to them. They touch on all of the above four meanings of space providing a vivid picture of nuances, philosophical views and determination.

Which notion of value of nature is the driver for environmental activism? To be involved in environmental movement is to share the belief that nature and non-human beings have a certain value in the first place. However, to maintain an ethical position it might be that defenders of both kinds of values need to oblige to the rules of dialogue, cooperation and negotiation. Whether this is the case is a central concern of this research. This is also expressed in the multiple meanings of space as adopted in this analysis. There is always potential conflict between the notion of preserving the intrinsic value of the “emptiness” and utilising it for economic profit.

- **Nature as space**

  “Nature is the space we live in: the house, the area, the physical space” (Praveen)

  “I’ve always wanted to expand my space around me – expanding!

39 Issues about connectedness and the gendered aspects of that issue are further discussed in Chapter 8 Connectedness.
• **Nature as a cradle**

The beginning of life, as often associated with the cradle, served as a useful metaphor for Anis, a Pakistani migrant, who is undertaking his PhD in environmental science at Murdoch University.

“*Nature means to me that ... (pause) It’s ... how do I describe it? (Pause) It’s a kind of cradle maybe, you know what I mean, cradle – where babies live, it’s kind of cradle where humankind should live in...*

A sense of protection ‘as living in a cradle’ is also linked with a sense of danger from the natural forces:

“*...and from where the humankind should be protected from the immense power of the nature.*” (Anis)

• **Nature as our house**

Marian, an Iranian-born migrant says that she lacks the appropriate words in English to describe the concept of nature but she uses a metaphor to illustrate her thoughts. This metaphor is of a *house*: a place where people live ‘healthily’. In her own words:

“*[Short pause] Nature is our house. Without nature, being good, we can’t have any place to live or we can’t even be healthy*”.

This is very much in line with Lao Tze, who compared the meaning of space to the wooden frame of a house to illustrate the core value of space as a sacred notion, which gives the ability of a material framework to become livable.

In a similar way, Marian also uses the idea of a house/nature as essential to human survival: without it “*we can’t...live*” (and space makes it *livable* in Lao Tze).

For Marian, who comes from a traditional society, home is a place which is also associated with women’s presence. Since in Iran it is traditionally expected that women bear the majority of the chores and the rearing of children, home often has a sense of *femininity*: a place where one feels taken care of.
• Nature as life

Similar, yet different, understanding of nature is expressed by Baba, a Tanzanian-born environmental activist. Nature for him equals life itself. While Marian expressed that nature makes living possible in the way we live in the comfort of home, Baba takes a more extreme stance to say that nature not only makes life possible, but it is life itself. In this sense, he says nature is the space where life is born, exists and evolves:

“Life. Life! Life, like you live now, you have life, living”

“Having a life is nature. Life of its own but there is a dependency...how you call it...ecosystem... that dependency.”

Baba has the background of an environmental activist in his home country, Tanzania. For me, as a Western researcher it is almost impossible to comprehend the values associated with living in a generational co-dependent symbiotic relationship with the forest and forming a strong connection with the surrounding natural environment. Baba’s perception of nature was especially powerful, as he was also dependent on its nurturing role for his physical survival, especially in his childhood years. He shared with me that when the forest near his “upbringing place” was destroyed by the bulldozers before his own eyes, his life had ended. There was a lot of sense of anger expressed during his interview; in some parts he lacked the words to describe his feelings. For Baba, nature is “a cosmic thing”, something that was there from the day the Earth and life were formed, and he never had to distinguish between his own existence and the existence of the natural world around him. The meaning of space as a sacred and cherished concept of nature came strongly through his words:

“Nature as everything around us as a cosmic living thing”

When asked to reflect on what does nature mean to him, Baba, took a different approach and tried to convey the more traditional understanding of nature as the physical surroundings around him. Since it was more convenient to talk about nature as the visible landscape, he described it conveniently as “land, sky, water, ocean, air”. However Baba noted at the end of the interview again that it is “life and death”, which points to his original understanding of nature as a cosmic thing and the foundation of life:
“Nature…? Everything around me is nature! Even my sound is nature. I always think a lot about nature and people think about nature and talk about nature, but in most cases I have been limiting nature to mean land, environment, water, sky, ocean and air and, you know, that sorts of things as nature. And life and death. It is a component of life.”

Such a view corresponds to the understanding expressed by the deep ecologists in environmental ethics and is in sharp contrast with anthropocentrism, which put humans at the centre of the natural world (Benzoni 2007).40

- **Contradicting interests**

According to Frank the need to sustain the pristine natural environment comes in a sharp contrast with economic interests. This is expression of the detachment of people from nature:

> “The environment means to me very much. I try to live environmentally friendly, to minimise my carbon footprint and well… I am always bitching about other’s people’s stupidity, but driving around in a car is all kind of schizophrenic, really.”

In the light of natural versus economic interest, an interesting description of different, gloomier experiences with the natural world are also playing a role in migrants’ perceptions of nature. Some of those are loaded with memories of destruction and neglect:

> “When I think about the forest, I remember the bulldozers!” (Baba)

- **Nature as sensation**

Other participants referred to nature as a sensational experience - a combination of visual images, scents, sounds and tastes. Soma spoke beautifully about her image of the environment in her home country, India.

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40 See Chapter 2 “Theoretical Framework”: Environmentalism
“Nature I think is part of every human being. Not to think about nature as... I cannot visualize life where I can’t hear birds, I cannot smell fragrance of flowers, and the air smells different when there are no greens around. I don’t know if you have noticed, but in every city, every place has a smell associated with it.”

Space is a powerful concept that emerged from the participants’ interviews as the physical qualities attributed to the natural environment, but most of all as a concept of representation of nature in a sense of a valuable and deeply meaningful concept, which acted as a strong motivation for migrants’ environmental activism. Even so, when some saw it as “empty”, they also saw it full and rich colors, scents and sensations. Some even called nature as “the space” we live in directly referring to the main idea of this chapter.

The section below discusses space as a gendered notion and examines the differences between men and women in their perception of nature.

6.4 Gender perspectives of space

The concept of space entails a gender perspective in the way that space refers to a pristine and wild environment, which presumably exists without the technological interventions of humankind. In eco-feminist literature it has been argued that environmental problems have been caused predominantly because of men’s pre-occupation with technology and the exclusion of women from science (Plumwood 1993, Warren and Erkal 1997). Because of this, eco-feminism compares the ecological movement with cleaning up the mess after the destruction of industrialisation in a similar way in which the housewife cleans the mess left at home. “Cleaning up the mess” expresses the gender aspects of the notion of space, understood as a pristine environment, untouched by human technological development.

Another aspect of the gendered space, originates from the special connection attached to women and nature by some feminist scholars: because women experience
(biologically or socially constructed) connection with the natural environment, their experiences of the natural world around them differ significantly from those of men (Mies and Shiva 1993, Giddens 1994, Marchand and Parpart 1995). How are these views evident in the views of recent migrants to WA?

Migrant-women are talking about their perceptions of the natural environment in a slightly different way than migrant-men. A commonly shared belief in eco-feminist thought is that men are more abstractly connected to the environment than women. They prefer abstract notions, such as the biosphere environment, while women prefer more concrete expressions, such as the local community. Throughout the interviews there was a sense of more explicit and emotional description of the environment, and what it meant to them. These emotions were less anthropocentric—it was not as much reminiscence for the old times, but a desire to speak on behalf of the other living creatures—birds, trees, animals and plants. Often women’s perception of the environment was connected to specific smells, particular birds or animals, sounds of nature which were present in their memories.

Below is an extract from the interview with Soma, 32, who describes how she felt the impact of climate change on her own life in the place where she grew up. Her account is expressive and very personal:

“It’s terrible ...and we don’t see many... in spring we used to hear cuckoo herald the spring, the cuckoo bird. Now you can’t hear it much because there are chopped up trees and built bridges basically in the name of development. Literally there is no green area in the city anymore where you can sit, relax and joke. So those birds are very few...these are just a few examples. Like in my memories the winters are different, they are associated with certain sounds and smells and singing of the birds, but they are not there anymore. And we wonder what happened! The environment has changed drastically and one of the reasons is that the environment is not supporting the habit anymore”.

The perceptions of nature expressed by women are in some ways more practical as they also see the connections between the natural provisions and the implications for

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41 Recognising that the local community may be regarded as an abstraction or construction as well.
human life. An example of such connections to the environment is evident in the case of Antonia, 41, who is a mother and student in Australia, but also a Guerrilla Gardener in Perth.

“We (women) have different perspectives about the environments. I met many women and men working in the environment who have more sense of reality, more connected to the necessities. For example, to provide, to protect the family; we have more connection with the cycle of the air, the cycle of life.”

The theme of being one with nature emerged also in a much stronger way among the female participants. Mariette, a Venezuela-born migrant, who is active volunteer for a few NGOs in Perth, namely Oxfam Australia, Save Our Marine Life and the Wilderness Society, sees nature and human existence as inter-tangible and contingent. She strongly abides to the idea that the natural world cannot be separated from human existence, since our existence is part of nature, which can be understood to include all living and non-living things.

“What does nature mean to me? ... to me nature is part of our existence. It is part of connection and the moment you feel you cannot disregard it. It's part of us.”

“I don't think that they [people] realize that it's the same thing. It’s not like the world is here and we are there in a different place. It's the same thing (smile). We are so related.”

”Nature is not really an extension of us but we all are part of nature. But it's greater than us.”

Soma, an Indian-born migrant, shares similar view of the contingency between humans and nature. In her view, nature forms life itself.

“It is ...it is ...I don't know...nature is part of life, I can’t think of anything without nature.”

Soma used beautiful, yet simple words to reflect on nature at the end of the interview.

‘Without nature, it seems incomplete –the sensations of living on Earth.’
Space also reveals a difference in gender roles in respect to responsibility. Baba explains that men have a more thorough and in-depth knowledge about their natural environment and therefore their ascribed responsibilities in the community differ.

“It is because I have more knowledge. I have more knowledge than my mother, than my sister...they don’t know the name of the trees, but I know all the names, everything! Every tree around the forest, when to use it, how to use it, but they don’t know.”

Not only there is a specific gender distribution of knowledge, but more importantly, this kind of differentiation serves as the basis for gaining status within their community, which is associated with the level of responsibility. A higher level of responsibility means more power in decision-making.

“I think I have more responsibility as a man to control and manage the environment.”

The particular responsibility in the community arises from the knowledge that each of the men and women have accumulated individually or collectively. When prompted to give examples of a particular task that women do on a regular basis, and what their responsibility may be, Baba talks about the firewood, which is essential for cooking. Collecting firewood is perceived traditionally as a women’s job and is associated with the responsibility for housework and care for the food supply for the family.

“But they [women] do know a lot about vegetables that I don’t know. They know these types of vegetables where you find around which I don’t know. And they kind of know ...they go to the forest to collect firewood and there is only certain type of firewood and this knowledge develops over time.”

In this example, men are given more responsibility within the community, based on their ‘privileged knowledge’. Contrary, women remain in the household, and are responsible for the firewood; they are ‘the custodians of ethnic culture’, which entails ‘their subordinate status within the ethnic community’ (Mazrui, 2004 p. 66).
The responsibility for men lies in making sure that there are enough resources for the survival of their community:

“What would I be doing? (Smile) I have other work to do. I milk the cows, I take them away, take them for grass and to drink water. And this is where the native environment comes...” (Baba)

6.5 Stories from the homeland

Without being deliberately such, the concept of space applied to nature also emerged with a very strong time dimension. This applied both historically, particularly in relation to the migrants’ previous experiences, and also for the future. Previous studies have already pointed the significance of landscapes to the formation of individual and collective national memories, like the woodlands, the valleys and the seas of historical events, which formed the mindset of a nation; the sceneries which gave us a sense of homelands (Schama 1995).

The landscapes are not only real, but imaginary, too: they are transplanted in our imaginations in the form of myths and legends. The dark forests, especially, have played a powerful role in the European imagined origins through space and time (Schama 1995). Landscapes are deeply imbedded in our social instinct and in the way we form ideas of the domestic and the wild and one’s identity (Schama 1995). The section below explores the role of real memories of nature as well as imagined landscapes, which have played role in migrants’ social and environmental behaviour; and which have shaped their perception of domestic and wild originating from deeply meaningful stories from the homeland in the form of myths and legends.

Memories

Amongst the interviewees’ motivation, even for some of the most radical environmental activism in the form of direct action, is often linked directly to childhood memories or growing up close to nature. The reason for this is because memory, both individual and collective, is deeply important to us (Leydesdorff, Passerini et al. 1996). It helps us integrate into the bigger picture, and gives our individual existence, and even makes us seem less insignificant. It is able to give us
answers to questions, such as: Who am I? And why am I like I am? (Fester 2005). Memory locates us as part of family history, as part of a tribe or community, as part of city building and nation making. Loss of memory is basically a loss of identity (Schama 1995, Sandercock 1998).

Nearly every migrant interviewed for the research had a personal story to tell when I asked them what has made them passionate about the environment. For example Rose, a Sea Shepherd volunteer, describes her upbringing in the following way:

“My grandparents have a house on the Atlantic Ocean, in France, and you can breathe there outside the city. The fact that I could go there, any time, made me cope with the live in the big cities, the thought that you have somewhere to go to breathe, relax, be oneself....the thought of destroying it, destroys me.”

Living in the big cities becomes possible for Rose mainly by remembering that she could leave any time, “to breathe”, and “to be yourself”. There also is a sense of identifying with that pristine beauty: “The thought of destroying it, destroys me!”

Another similar example can be found in the interview with Christine from France, who is working as the secretary for an environmental NGO:

“We grew up outside. We always lived in the countryside. It was part of our upbringing. This was why I decided to work with Aboriginal people, when I came to Australia, because they seemed to be always outside, better connected with nature…”

Perhaps the most touching memories from nature in her home country was given by Soma, a migrant from India, who shares:

“So when I used to go to my village, because I didn't see much green in the city, the moment I set foot in the village, I could smell different things—so I could smell the firewood burning, I could smell freshly cooked mince, roasted things over fire, a mix of calgon and ...flowers, different flowers; some bloom in the evenings, some bloom at night, some only in the mornings...and the memories always have the smells, aromas within it. And then when I go back to the city and the plane lands in the
city I can smell the hot melting concrete, the roads, and the heat that the roads give off and the smell of nature is not there. And the sounds I hear are of cars, of people, but there is no sound of the trees, of the wind blowing through them."

Why are these memories important to consider in the light of environmental engagement? Fester (2005) insists that memory is important to us, because it creates and helps us maintain a sense of belonging. Whether it is a short-term memory based on everyday life practices of our use of the city as pedestrians walking along rivers and footpaths, or a long term memory, related to one’s own identity as a woman, migrant, gay, black etc.

More importantly, memories bring a sense of global connectivity. In the case with Rose, a volunteer for Sea Shepherd in her mid-twenties, memories acted as a powerful motivation to protect the global environment. She brings an urgent sense of awareness with her concern about destroying others pristine childhood memories:

“And it is not about just my beach, and my house, and my village, but it is about all of us. What would happen if people start destroying other beaches and someone else’s environment they grew up with?” (Rose)

The next section focuses on the historical path through the memories and stories of migrants’ homeland and their meaning to them when transplanted to other landscapes, other nation and other country.

**Myths and legends in the imagination of migrants**

Myths and legends are a powerful tool for influencing people’s imagination and hold the ability to re-allocate the realm we live. These means that all the myths, both traditional and modern, are passing ideas from one generation to another and strongly influence the perception of the world we live in. As myths and legends are entirely socially constructed, so are the perceptions of the physical environment.

The importance of myths in urban society is enormous: they continue to shape our perceptions of the realm and with it of the physical environment. It could also be argued that there is nothing physical or objective about how we, as a society, see the physical environment. Since the aim of this thesis is to shed light on the relation
between migrants and the environmental movement, it is interesting to know the myths related to the different cultural backgrounds of migrants. As the purpose of this research is to reveal what are the driving forces in migrants’ environmental activism, it is essential to recognise the powerful role of myths and legends in their mindsets.

Upon their arrival in a strange continent, migrants have no pre-conceived ideas about the stories of the deserts, rocks, trees and the rivers. Local myths and legends which pre-occupied the Australian Aboriginal minds shape a unique view of the Australian environment. Such understanding is lacking in the new migrants: they are transplanting their own stories of their own environments in Australia. The importance of this process is enormous, as it explains why a person who has not yet found employment or struggles to find their place in the social and economic realm in an unfamiliar surrounding is motivated to participate actively in the environmental movement. In this process, the stories of the Western world are not more significant than those of how other cultures have conceptualized the meaning of nature and of human environments (Buttimer 1993).

How are these myths reflected in the cultural background of the recent migrants?

Let’s take as an example the three participants who were born in Bulgaria. Bulgarian folklore is rich and goes more than 13 centuries back in time. Fairytales represent the local folklore and the physical environment is the background for every one of them. Vivid descriptions of dark forests, vast oceans, clear rivers and fast-running streams, distant kingdoms and turbulent weather are used not only as a background, but to reflect the storylines and the psychological state of the characters. The dark forests hold the secrets of something mysterious, but also they are home for the most loved forest dwellers samodivi, beautiful young girls. They appear only at night dressed in white and bring good fortune to those who are lucky to meet them. In contrast to the red riding hood, where the forest is full of dangers and the young girl meets the bad wolf, wolves are not regarded as bad creatures in the Bulgarian folklore.

One of the participants from Bulgaria shared that at night she used to climb up a tree and go wandering in the forest or the hills near her home, without the knowledge of her parents. She was not scared, but excited and felt “free, but still at home”. Her current motivation for engaging with protection of the environment is preserving the
wilderness. She explicitly said in her interview that she valued the non human-made environment more than the human-made. In her view, restoring the native wilderness and bringing people and especially children close to nature is one of the most motivating and inspiring things in her life.

Below are some further examples of semiotic analysis to show how nature has been portrayed in Bulgarian fairytales.

In a fairy-tale called, “Fairy tales about the barrel” from the Bulgarian Folk Stories (Karaliychev 1948, 2006, Фолклор БГ 2013)\(^2\) the barrel serves as a metaphor for the wide world through which a father passes wisdom for the future to his three sons on his dying bed. The old father is telling a story and asking his sons to reveal its hidden meaning. The story goes like this:

“There was once a big oak tree in the forest. Big tree with strong branches. Its roots sucked juices from the deep of the earth. The storms have been shaking the tree, but could do no harm to it. Once in the forest arrived a woodman. He measured up the oak with his eyes, rolled up his sleeves, stroke with his ax and began to cut the tree down. He made a barrel out of the tree, and every autumn filled it up with fresh, rich and sparkling wine to sell to the villigers for weddings and nameday celebrations\(^3\). One day the rings of the barrel busted out and the wooded barrel fell apart. Then the children rolled away the rings of the beautiful barrel, and his wife burned the remaining wood. What is the meaning of the story? The old father explains after no one can guess:

‘The tree with the big branches is our country. Strong forest it is. Its trees grow all the way to the sky. The barrel is the family, the bows are us, the rings are the cooperation and mutual agreement, and the wine is the joy from happy life. Until there are cooperation and

\(^2\) Приказки за бъчвата, Ангела Каралийчев, translated by the author.

\(^3\) Nameday celebrations are popular events in Bulgaria. The names' roots are traced back usually to biblical times and once a year, most common names have a special day of the year, on which the patrons celebrate. In some occasions these celebrations are regarded as more significant than a birthday, since they are well-known dates and all friends and relatives are invited par-se.
mutual understanding in the family, life will be happy. Households in which there is no cooperation and mutual understanding, can burn in fire! Protect the rings of the barrel, my children!’

After this wisdom, the oldest son kissed his father’s hand and promised never to forget this lesson.” (Karaliychev1948, 2006)

In this particular fairytale the forest represents the country and the barrel the family. The barrel is a human-made creation, which depends on the trees in the forest, i.e on the county’s survival. The trees of the forest are ‘big’, their branches ‘strong’ and the roots ‘deep’. These adjectives are positive and essential to the image of life. The forest is the beginning of everything else; without it, nothing can be created or survive. What is more interesting is how cooperation and mutual understanding are being placed in the center of human survival.

This fairy-tale is only one example, but numerous myths and legends exist in each culture. The migrants bring to Australia this wisdom and it also shapes their environmental and social behaviour. The next section explores the transplanting of those myths and legends into their endeavours in a new place; that is the conceptualising of non-material values attached to nature and the sense of responsibility.

6.6 Non-material values as a motivation for environmental activism

The section below explores space for the future through the notions of intrinsic values and responsibility.

**Intrinsic values**

The underlying theoretical premise in this thesis is that environmentalism is important. People become attached to their land or community. Motivation for environmental activism stems from many different values. In Soma’s words:

44 Author’s translation from Bulgarian.
45 These same concepts are also applied in the art of Go strategy for survival of groups.
“I think we have an amazing planet and we really need to take care of it. And if educated people don't do it, who is going to do it? If you value something you are happy to do something for it as well.”

Pursuing and acting on non-material values play a vital role in the environmental activism of recent migrants in Western Australia. Two striking examples of such activism inspired by the moral consideration of nature can be found in the very first and the very last case study of my research: Guerrilla Gardening and The Sea Shepherd conservation society. The theoretical belief behind Sea Shepherd, to which migrants from all over the world adhere, is the idea that:

“*We live in an interdependent state. We should judge the intelligence of other species by their ability not to use tools, but to live in harmony with the rest of the natural world*” *(Capt. Paul Watson 2010).*

**Responsibility**

Another aspect of *space* and in environmental ethics is the notion of responsibility. Although no questions were explicitly asked about our responsibility as humans for current and future generations, this theme was present in many of the interviews. It could be argued that if we claim to be responsible human beings, we need to address the current environmental problems for the sake of future generations and to make responsible decisions for the use of resources and preserving biological diversity *(Atkinson, Dietz et al. 2007, Marinova, Annandale et al. 2007).*

A strong sense of responsibility was expressed in the views of many of the migrants interviewed in Western Australia. The following quotes point to the fact that responsibility for environmental engagement does not lie within the government of any specific country alone but in the passion and inspiration of individuals. It is this strong belief that acts as a main motivational factor for many migrants to engage with environmental activism, regardless of their gender, age and ethnicity. The strong belief that one’s action can make a difference is deeply imbedded within those who are striving for a cleaner world, preserving the biological diversity and conservation.

Such is the example of the participants from Sea Shepherd, whose goal is a global marine protection, including in the WA waters.
“We have just reached a point where we can't live in harmony with nature. And this will destroy us together with nature” (Rafaela)

“Every minute counts. And even if we had all the time in the world, now is the time to start count down. Money isn’t everything” (Rose).

The notion of responsibility plays a major role in the field of environmental ethics (DesJardins 1997, Marshall 2002). The idea of responsibility is often brought up as a basic ethical concept when discussing the ethics and morals of collective action (see for example Patridge 1981). Irresponsible environmental management has been portrayed based upon the conversion of future people into 'means' to our generation's 'ends' (Shrader-Frechette 1991). In other words, we are using future people (people-not-yet-born) to solve a problem we want to resolve now; and we do this in order to carry on living the way we like (i.e. in the supposed security and lifestyle made possible by natural resource exploitation to produce goods and services).

Being a responsible human being means not only caring about the future of the planet; it is essentially simultaneously caring for the future of humanity. According to Mariette:

“I don't think that we are up to saving here; we are up to saving ourselves.”

“The planet will, it will just change very much...and you know geological history will go on and this part of history, but we ...it’s our own interest, we are protecting ourselves, because we are the ones that are not going to make it through the change” (Mariette).

A strong theme of responsibility is also evident in the interview with Baba, a migrant from Tanzania. In his case an overall sense of responsibility for the planet we live on becomes evident.

“I have to feed the cows and sometimes it is getting dry and then I enclose and make sure that no one goes in there to let it [the land] recover. For the sake of the cows” (Baba).

According to Baba, the responsibility of people is to lead to a sustainable future: not for their own sake, but for the “sake of the cows”. The particular human interests become irrelevant, when Baba talks about the future prospects. It is this long-term
vision about the future, which sustainability is particular concerned with, and which forms the basis for sustainability studies. The quote “for the sake of the cows” means a lot more than its literal words. It also means that human interests are not isolated, they are in close relationship with environmentalism and preserving the natural environment, making sure that resources recover. He sees the responsibilities of humans securing enough ‘native environment’ and that the land does not become dry. Baba expresses this in relation to the cows, but he articulates in very simple terms the inter-connection between human and non-human interests. He expresses the fundamental ecological principles of the intrinsic values of deep ecology (Naess 1984) and environmental sustainability where humans cannot exist independently from their environment (Zimmerman 1993, Brennan 1995).

“What will happen if we reject these principles?

The grass is eaten, the leaves are all dry and the plants are eaten.” (Baba).

Another worldwide socio-environmental problem, recognized by the participants in the study is creating environmental refugees. This was strongly emphasized in the interview with Rafaela:

“The biggest problem is the environmental migrants, especially the one caused by global warming. It’s terrible! You take away the roots of people, and you create migrants. Where are they going to go? They have nowhere. Can you imagine if your country, Bulgaria, one day disappeared, one day they tell you that you can’t go back, because it is all under water? How would you feel?” [She looks straight at me a with very serious expression].

6.7 Summary

This chapter drew attention to the notion of space, understood in a broader sense as a representation of the emptiness and as a value attributed to non-material values. It examined the meaning of environmental values and it attempted to give an answer to the question: to what extent the meaning of emptiness and non-material values act as a motivation factor for environmental activism amongst migrants? In the views of
respondents, *nature* was understood as a ‘cradle’, as a ‘cosmic thing’, as ‘life’ and as an essential part of human existence.

Four interpretations of *space* were the focus of attention in this chapter. The first one is space understood as *emptiness*. The second interpretation adopts a *time dimension* in the form of past experiences, different myths and legends and a sense of responsibility for the future. The third interpretation of space comes through as a concept of intrinsic values transplanted in the motivation for environmental activism. The last interpretation of space is understood as dimensions of depth, height and shapes and other physical characteristics: this is evident through the interviews when participants talk about “vast oceans”, “large distances”, “deep waters”. In this chapter it was also found that space is a gendered notion in a sense that the relationship between nature and women is loaded with more subtlety (partly explained by the development of science and technology).

In sustainability terms, the notion of *space* is especially useful when talking about the sense of responsibility for current and future generations. The participants strongly affirmed the idea that if we are to label ourselves as a responsible generation, we have to take responsibility for the environmental degradation, we’ve caused rather than leaving it for someone else.
When you start in a new country, you start from zero.

(Antonia)

Political and civil involvement is my way of making my new place home

(Tineke)

7.1 Introduction

The word territory originates from the Latin territorium, which is a derivative from terra meaning “land”. Oxford Dictionaries define territory to mean 1) an area of land or sea under the jurisdiction of a ruler or state; 2) an organized division of a country that is not yet admitted to the full rights of a state and in more abstract terms 3) an area of knowledge, activity, or experience (Oxford Dictionaries 2012). The word territory has gone through shifts of meaning depending on the historical and cultural contexts, and gives rise to other derivatives, such as territorial and territoriality.

Given the theme of the chapter, territoriality, and at a time when territorial disputes and matters of ownership and identity are so prominent in the affairs of the world, it is appropriate to raise the question as to how migrants understand their territory in delimiting and designing the word. Who determines who does the designing and on what authority?

The word "territorial" apart from referring to a particular territory, district or locality, also relates to the ownership of an area of land or sea (Oxford Dictionaries 2012). The issue of ownership is also linked to a power relationship amongst people who
inhabit this land. “Territoriality”, on the other hand, refers to association with a territory, or the process of creating and establishing one’s territory.46

A possible answer to the question as to what determines one’s territory is the place of birth. The place where we are born automatically grants us the rights to belong, at least in legal terms. Hence people can legitimise claims on physical and political territory. It belongs to them and they are the custodians. However, does this exclude others from belonging to this place? In the absence of war or political conflict if you want to belong to a certain place, you have to respect the cultural norms set up by the people from this territory. If you want to belong there, you must obey largely to them.

Given the above explanations, the following questions arise in investigating the environmental activism of contemporary migrants. The first one is concerned with the dynamics and characteristics of the place, or the territory in which the lives of people who have recently arrived take unfolds (i.e. urban cities, rural areas, outback) taking into account the fact that most of the Australian population lives in large urban areas. The second one is: what are their rights in participating in a democratic, civil society, which Australia claims to be (i.e. how far the boundaries of democracy extend and are there global borders). The third one seeks to answer the questions: What are the boundaries which define the territory of the new arrivals in terms of environmental activism? Lastly, what are the problems and barriers associated with creating one’s own social and cultural niche within an already existing territory (including immigration policies, language barriers, or racial discrimination)?

In this study, I refer to territory in its metaphorical sense, meaning a place where the lives of newly arrived migrants unfold. By territoriality47 I understand the process through which recent migrants go about to create their own territory, their own sense

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46 “Territoriality” has been used mainly from a zoological perspective to describe behaviour of animals when establishing and defining their territory. Also when people map out a favourite spot for themselves, to which they constantly return (i.e. students in lecture theatres) can also be regarded as a form of territorialism (in psychological terms).
of belonging within the context of the existing political, social and cultural characteristics of Western Australia.

The chapter explores the complex interaction between the recently arrived migrants and their environmental engagement. Are there gender complications from the politics of the state? What are the difficulties, which define migrants’ public participation? I follow this 1) a discussion about multicultural cities, which have become home for most of the migrants around the globe and 2) a section on the boundaries of environmental engagement and migrants’ problems and responses in engaging with the environmental movement.

7.2 The Australian territory

The Commonwealth of Australia is a union of 6 states and 10 territories. There are five states and two territories on the mainland - Northern territory and Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. The sixth state is the island of Tasmania. Additionally, there are 6 island territories as well as Australian Antarctic Territory. 

Australia is a continent of 7 659 861 square kilometres on its mainland area and with its additional island areas (32 163 km²), it amounts to a staggering 7 692 024 square kilometres (Geoscience Australia 2012). The capital cities are Sydney, Melbourne, 

48 Historically, there were other territories, which no longer remain part of Australia’s political boundaries. In the period 1926-1931, additional territory, called Central Australia was added in the present day Northern Territory. In the period of 1949-1975, the Commonwealth of Australia also claimed the territory of Papua New Guinea, until the Republic of Papua New Guinea gained independence.

49 The island territories are Ashmore and Cartier Island, Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling Island, Coral Sea Island, Jervis Bay, Territory of Herald and McDonald Islands.

50 Most recently acclaimed territory was on the Antarctic continent following the Antarctic Treaty in 1959 Triggs, G. D. and British Institute of International Comparative Law The Antarctic Treaty regime: law, environment, and resources, Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press.


. The Antarctic Treaty was the result of vast cooperative efforts over 18 months in 1957-58: a period referred to as the International Geophysical Year (IGY). The original aim was to collect scientific data on the coldest continent on Earth, the Antarctic continent and it was attended by scientist representing 67 countries. For more information see :


Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Darwin, Hobart and Canberra is the country’s capital. Western Australia has been in the past and still remains the largest state with a total territory with over two and a half million square metres (2 529 875 km2) (Geoscience Australia 2012).

The Australian territory also extends into the sea in what is termed *Exclusive Economic Zone* (EEZ) by the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) in 1982. Internationally, the EEZ is determined in Article 57 of the Law of the Sea Convention, according to which it cannot extend “beyond 200 nautical miles from the baseline from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured” (UNCLOS 1982 p.44). At the same time, the EEZ is – as Article 55 specifies – “an area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea” (UNCLOS 1982 p.43). The maximum breadth of the Territorial Sea is, according to the Article 3, 12 miles (Kwiatowska 1989 p.1). What this means in the context of Australia, is the Commonwealth Government recognises “the management rights, enforceable against foreigners, only cut to twelve miles” (Harry 1980-1981, p.732).

The EEZs give rights to the States with exclusive sovereignty over all living and non-living resources within this zone (see generally Joyner 1980-1981), but it does not give territorial sovereignty rights (Harry 1980-1981). According to commentators, the EEZ has been set up to serve an important socio-economic purpose, which is to reduce the inequalities between nation-states.

This is the background for the environmental activism of recent migrants. Australia’s population is highly urbanised and Perth is the central point of activities in WA. This city is 1) the main basis for a lot of initiatives happening within its boundaries; 2) a starting point for many initiatives that extend outside our own boundaries, even outside the Australian borders.

### 7.3 The multicultural city

Cities are the obvious place where researchers turn their attention to modern day migration studies. More than half of the world’s population lives in urban areas\(^{51}\) (see for example Flood 1997). Foreign arrivals, especially, are drawn to the cities,

\(^{51}\) Definition of ‘city’ varies from country to country, 2001 census estimated just over 50 percent urbanised population.
where work opportunities are more easily available in comparison to rural areas (Vertovec 2011). This makes cities an arena of dynamic social, economic and environmental activities. The multicultural model of the modern city serves as the hub for environmental and social change.

Australia is one of the most urbanized countries in the world, with 12.6 million living in the major urban areas (Smith and Doherty 2006). Thus more than half of its 23 million population lives in the city.

The city “functions to work out largely impersonal relations among diverse cultural groups” (Redfield and Milton 1954 p.55). It is not only a market-place where one can buy and sell, do business, truck, barter and exchange, but is also a cultural and ethnic hub of different races, religions, and creeds (Redfield and Milton 1954). Because the cities are becoming ever more than before a multicultural place, this is also where anthropologists are turning for their modern day studies (Vertovec 2011).

For a long time, cities were regarded as “integration-machines” because of their capacities to incorporate people of different backgrounds in a functionally differentiated system. However, cities are themselves becoming “multicultural cities” and a cross point of economic, social and environmental transformation (Body-Gendrot, Martiniello et al. 2000, Penninx 2004, Hanley, Ruble et al. 2008). The urban contexts of super-diversity have been a discussion point in the growing body of literature on everyday multiculturalism, evident in the increasing diversity of food, languages, customs and traditions (Vertovec 2007, Prato 2009, Blommaert 2010, Gmelch, Kemper et al. 2010, Vertovec 2010). Every city bears its own unique mix of processes, contexts and migrants’ experiences.

A growing body of literature recognizes the increased multicultural diversity of cities—a phenomenon referred to as ‘multicultural urbanism’ (Keith 2005). According to Keith ‘the demography of most of the major metropolises of the twenty-first century is in large part a product of migration’ (Keith 2005 p.255). Such migration movements come internally from within the same country, or externally in the form of international migration. Perhaps some of the more famous examples of cultural international mosaics are cities, such as New York, London, Sydney, but also cities like Toronto, Perth and Singapore.
This multicultural city presents a mixture of transnational movements, labour markets and urban policy. In order to understand how multiculturalism is formed, with all of its associated problematic notions, a new form of cultural relationships born from the forces of globalisation needs to be examined. Sassen (1991, 1998, 2000) talks about the spatial and technical transformations over the last 15 years, which have contributed to forming a new type of a city, away from the old model of industrial centres. The new cities formed under the forces of globalisation, which includes free movement of goods as well as people, are identifiable by the specific characteristics of the global city that they exhibit.

Within the context of multicultural cities (Keith 2005) stresses the dynamic shifts of cultures, which shape the urban fabric:

“The hybrid forms of multicultural and their increasingly hyphenated forms of demographic mixing challenge a rubric that makes the city visible as a competing arena of ethnic cultures precisely because these cultures do not stand still to be photographed, analysed and measured” (Keith, 2005 p.255).

The relationship between territorial boundaries and their residents has also been examined in relation to the construction of otherness (Woelfel and Haller 1971, Nagel 2002, Habermas and Cronin 2005). “The others” are perceived as those who belong outside certain boundaries. Racism is then seen as a subtle form of excluding those who do not belong to the case ethnicity, but also those who do not share the same cultural characteristics. This process has been also described as the “imagined others” (Anderson 1983).

“This involves exclusionary/inclusionary boundaries… dividing the world into “Us” and “Them” (Davies 1992, p. 92).

National, ethnic and racial differences are not mutually exclusive, but linked together through the processes of social construction (Davies 1992).

“National, ethnic and racial divisions tend to be treated separately and in isolation from each other, if not actually treated as mutually invalidating theoretical constructs.” (Anthias, Yuval-Davies et al. 1992 p.88)

Perhaps, nowhere is the contested relationship between the national, ethnic and cultural more evident than they are in the modern cosmopolitan cities.

Modern cities are also making the shift to sustainable cities. The concept of sustainable cities takes into account the needs of all future generations and all living creatures: “it recognises that our present forms of agriculture, architecture, engineering, and technology are deeply flawed” (S. Van der Rym and Cowan 1996 p. ix).

Sustainable cities not only incorporate urban planning and associated transport infrastructure, but also recognise the need for taking measures against social exclusion, urban poverty and in support of growing cultural diversity. Such recognition of this understanding was strongly expressed at the international conference on sustainable cities held at New Delhi in September 2011, organised by the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, in Göttingen, Germany. Examining cities through the lenses of cultural diversity points to the fact that the need for understanding how the multicultural cities function will be an underlying part of building sustainable cities. As Vertovec 53 neatly summarises:

“We have to look after how best to manage interactions to avoid conflict and to support the innovation and creativity that comes out of better opportunities for contact,” (Vertovec in The Economist Intelegence Unit 2011)

When talking about territory, it is important to consider which or whose territories we are referring to. The territory, metaphorically speaking in this chapter could be imagined to be the environmental and social resources of WA. Resources, like water, clean air and soil, forests, lands (including sacred land), biodiversity etc., are limited.

53 Director of the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen, Germany and former director of the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society at Oxford University.
The time that people can allocate and their ability to engage in protecting those resources are also limited. These relationships and their importance are negotiated through the public and private sphere in the lives of recent migrants in the city. Their time and resources are even more limited than those of other long-term settlers in WA. Below is how a migrant-woman, Antonia, describes her experience in arriving and finding a sense of self in WA, and how she was able to negotiate between the demands from the public sphere and private aspects of her life.

“It is very difficult for me to be involved, to use my skills and knowledge. I feel like I have three main restrictions here: 1. It is the language; 2. because I am not a rich person and I have to work; 3. I don’t have much time; I have to look after my son.” (Antonia)

Antonia explains in very simple terms what most migrants feel when settling in their new territory:

“When you start in a new country, you start from zero, it is very difficult.”

Dynamics of the multicultural city: Perth, Western Australia

The territory of the newly arrived migrants takes place in the multicultural settings of a 21st century’s city, namely Perth.

While it doesn’t exactly reflect the global movement of people from the countryside to the urban areas (because of Australia’s relatively short European history), Perth is a highly urbanised city. In Australia the urbanisation rate is nearly 90 percent with an annual increase urbanisation growth of about 1.3 percent (CIA 2013). Fifty years ago less than one third of human population lived in cities, now more than half of the people inhabiting Earth live in urban areas. The UN estimates that the urbanisation share will reach 70% by 2050 (United Nations Development of Economic and Social Affairs 2009).

The city of the twenty first century becomes more and more complex and with this, it escalates the processes of social mobilization and multiculturalism54 (Murji and

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54 I prefer to use the term multiculturalism, than ‘racialization’ as it has been applied by other scholars before (see for example Michael Keith and ‘Racialization and the Public Spaces of the Multicultural City’ (pp. 251-271).
Indeed, Young (1990, 2000, 2003) stresses the need and the rights of citizens of the city to create and define their own polis through deliberative debate and creative performance. In this line of thought, taking part in environmental activism acts as a catalyst for connecting migrants to their new polis. Tineke, a recent migrant-woman from Belgium, who approached me after one of my presentations, explicitly said that she felt that there is not enough ways for her to engage with public life, and especially environmentally, and expressed her own view on why this was important for her:

“Political and civil involvement is my way of making my new place home” (Tineke).

The “deliberative debates and creative performance” of new migrants can be identified in Fremantle, a satellite town to Perth, where a lot of the participants have found their niche/territory to engage with environmental activities.

**Fremantle**

The unique character and vitality of Fremantle draw a number of people and a large part of them are international migrants. There is a certain sense of pride amongst the Fremantle community in being an artistic hub within the Perth metropolitan area. Located on the shores of the Indian Ocean and just 20 kilometres from Perth’s CBD, Fremantle is a cross-point of global travellers, live music, markets, fashion boutiques, coffee shops and universities. The multi-facet presence of Fremantle has been shaped by its colourful past, and amongst others, by the presence of Italian, Greek, Irish and other ethnic communities.

There have been different waves of migrants and refugees to WA and their impact is present in Fremantle, too. These were marked notably by European and Vietnamese refugees, whose presence is felt nowadays. Fremantle’s migrant culture is also marked by escapees from the oppression in South America.

Important facets of Fremantle are the “leftish” political discussions in the Fremantle Town Hall. Topics include “welfare, refugees, Aboriginal Land Rights, social justice, and bid to save Ningaloo Reef in the State’s far North, The Republic and The Greens all have strong support...twenty years ago nuclear disarmament was a big issue” (Davidson 2007 p.276). In 2012, the Town Hall witnessed a heated
discussion on a new town planning scheme, which attracted interest among a wide range of people – current local residents, long-term settlers, students, businesses representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, students from Notre Dame and Curtin University, members of the Fremantle historical society as well as researchers and other interested individuals. However, there were very few representatives of recent migrants, who spoke there.

Yaspara, a recent migrant from mixed origin (Austria and Slovenia), who is completing her PhD in biology and is a visible figure in many environmental protests in Perth, notes the strong community in Fremantle as a basis for environmental consciousness.

“I think it has a pretty strong community... that we have here in Fremantle.” (Yaspara)

Another participant in the study, Benjamin, arrived at Fremantle station for his interview and the first thing that he said after he sat down was:

“Fremantle is like a home, which I didn’t have before”.

The multicultural cities offer refuge and home for many recent migrants but their dynamics not always encourage real engagement and participation with the fabrics and visions for the future of the place.

7.4 **Boundaries of territoriality**

A central concept of the notion of territoriality is the way we apply our understanding of boundaries (Agnew and Corbridge 1995, Kymlicka 2001, Bauböck 2003, Cohen 2005). Literally and metaphorically speaking, there cannot be a territory unless there are boundaries. The same principle can be successfully applied to creating social and environmental boundaries. An efficient way for creating such territory is by engaging with respectively the social and environmental movements. Therefore, defining the boundaries, the limitations of these movements would ultimately help in defining and explaining the forming of territories by each of the

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55 The public consultation on Amendment 49 held on the 15th February 2012 in the town hall.
movements. I set up by exploring the boundaries of environmental engagement, as limited by the economic and social realm of migrants’ new territory and the difficulties they face in their new territory.

Those boundaries are established by the Government and its institutions, by common social perceptions and attitudes towards migrants, and by some environmental barriers (Figure 3). All of these categories should not be regarded separately, but rather as mutually contingent; like an apparatus or interlocking device. Starting with the Government setting high expectations for English language proficiency and even health requirements, those attitudes are spread to other institutions, including Governmental agencies, and finally affect the social perception of other naturalized citizens as well as by other migrant groups.56 Subsequently, the public opinion is also set up by those expectations.

56 The “model migrant” syndrome and the “minority syndrome” are such examples.
Studies continuously show that views of the ethnically diverse groups are penetrated with stereotypical perceptions (Suzuki 1977; Chun 1980; Atkinson, Morten et al. 1993; Choi 2001; Sue and Sue 2008 (Suzuki 1977, Chun 1980, Atkinson, Morten et al. 1993, Choi 2001, Sue and Sue 2008). In many cases, those views are of “model minority’, which means that they are seen as “well-adjusted with few social, psychological or economic problems” (Choi 2001 p.50) Perceiving migrant communities as grouped together poses challenges for their psychological wellbeing. Moreover, the stereotypical perceptions combined with the ‘model minority’ image posed from outside of their community also affect migrant groups within and “incite competition, envy and prejudice from members of other ethnic diverse groups” (Choi 2001 p.37). For example, it is widely expected that newcomers need to speak English not only for the purpose of their visa, but also in public places and often in informal
gatherings. This is also evident within ethnically diverse groups where members of the same ethnic community may be required by others to speak in English.\(^\text{57}\)

Lack of political support for environmental engagement is another example of how Governmental boundaries are applied to the social sphere: it often translates into a “don’t-care-attitude”, where governmental and social attitudes overlap. This becomes evident in the public attitudes towards environmental degradation. For example, in January 2012 the “don’t-care-attitude” as demonstrated in the failure of the Australian Government to act on the presence of a Japanese whaling ship with armed guards\(^\text{58}\) in the waters of Australia off the coast of Bunbury, near the heritage island of McQuire. This breached the law from 1980 for banning of all whaling activities including the presence of foreign whaling ships in Australian territory (The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society 2012). Three activists from The Forest Rescue, Geoffrey Owen Tuxworth (47) of Perth, Simon Peterffy (44) of Bunbury and Glen Pendlebury (27) of Fremantle, boarded the Japanese whaling ship “Shonan Maru” No. 2 “because our government has failed to uphold its pre-election promise to end whaling in the Southern Ocean” (The Forest Rescue 2012 A). The Japanese whaling ship was located at 32 degrees zero minutes south and 115 degrees 21 minutes east, which is 16.2 miles off the coast and 22 miles Northwest of Bunbury, Western Australia, and just 2 miles beyond the territorial sea. What this means is that the ship was able to catch whales right on the border of the Australian EEZ.

Other examples include clearing of forests throughout the WA South West, which also destroys the habitat of endangered species and species threatened with extinction, such as the black cockatoos (The Forest Rescue 2012). Oil and gas development in the Kimberley and in Margaret River areas were other controversial projects, which demonstrated political ignorance to environmental degradation and

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\(^{57}\)Personal observations gathered during my stay in Australia for a period of 6 years.

\(^{58}\)“The black-clad and armed ninja characters on the Shonan Maru No. 2 have lasers, concussion grenades, semi-automatic weapons and LRADs, in addition to their side arms and rifles” (The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, January 23, 2012, “The Boarding of the Shonan Maru No. 2 was a Huge Success”, Commentary by Captain Paul Watson accessed from http://www.seashepherd.org/commentary-and-editorials/2012/01/23/the-boarding-of-the-shonan-maru-no-2-was-a-huge-success-510 on the 12 February 2012).
biodiversity. The Margaret River region is ranked as the only internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot in Australia (Tourism Western Australia 2011).

The difficulties that migrants experience when deciding to engage with the environmental movement overlap with some aspects that any migrant would experience but there are also new insights. The main obstacles experienced by the majority of newly arrived migrants in settling down are related to finding suitable accommodation and communicating in another language. Engaging with the environmental movement also includes an array of other issues: from ethnic resentment to polarising of society due to lack of environmental consciousness (see table 6).

Table 6

| Governmental boundaries | • Visa requirements  
|                       | • Lack of political support  
| Social boundaries | • Language  
|                    | • Ethnicity  
|                    | • Don’t-care-attitude  
| Environmental boundaries | • Hot and Dry Climate  
|                        | • Lack of environmental consciousness  
|                        | • Others  

Some of the main social difficulties for new migrants in engaging with environmental activism appear to be language and ethnicity, while limitation within Governmental boundaries were expressed in lack of political support and often through state border management (i.e. immigration policies). Environmental boundaries were set by the lack of environmental awareness and overcrowding (amalgamation) of environmental engagement, such as too many volunteers wishing to be involved with the same iconic species. For example, too many people express
interest in monitoring the little penguins on Penguin Island near the coast of Rockingham. 59

The variety of problems, which participants of the study experienced in engaging with the environmental movement in Western Australia are discussed below.
Governmental boundaries

Visa requirements

Among the issues about engaging with the environmental movement, one of the most serious for recent migrants is obtaining and maintaining their visa status. In many cases, this is not a one-off problem as migrants need to change visas several times. For example, a student visa may be followed up by an employer-sponsored visa and then by a permanent resident visa. Below is an extract from Frank, a geo-specialist who migrated from Germany, but had to go through difficulties re-obtaining his visa. His employment is closely linked to environmental conservation and maintaining his visa status that allows him to continue to live and work in Australia, is of vital importance for him and for his environmental work.

“Immigration policy. That’s my main issue. I have an employer, I do valuable work for my employer, my employer values me and shows it to me, by giving me a high productive environment.” (Frank)

Frank also makes a sharp critique of the Government immigration policy, in the fact, that he is finding it difficult to obtain an employer-sponsor visa (subclass 457), despite support from his current employer.

“...I think I am falling between the meshes. I am falling though the social net of what is probably “the system”. They probably didn’t mean to put so many obstacles on the way as it is at the moment.”

He later expresses his commitment to Australia:

“But I am willing to pay my taxes here in Australia, willing to put my work and my education (which I got with German state money) into action in Australia. Well, let’s see if the system can keep me away.”

This extract stresses some of the problems which contemporary migrants face when establishing themselves in their new territory. It is a constant battle, associated with applying, re-applying and renewing a visa including meeting the various conditions associated with it: from continuous adequate health cover to having an employer and/or restriction on the amount of working hours to being in good health. This constant need for reshaping of legal and moral precepts linked to population
movement can be seen as reflecting the permeability of national borders. In the case of Australia, migration policies and respective regulations have been informed in the past by the “White Australia Policy”\textsuperscript{60}, which was Australian central approach in the later part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009). The White Australian Policy had some elements of the original Immigration Restriction Act from 1901 (Museum of Australian Democracy 1901) and still surviving until 1970s (Tavan 2005). The policy was abolished over a period of 25 years, starting with the decision of the Immigration Minister Harold Holt from the coalition of the Liberal and Country party to allow 800 non-European refugees to remain in Australia in 1949 (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009). In the 1950-1970 period, the “assimilation policy” was encouraging blending with the Australian population (Haebich 2008). Later, the introduction of the Migration Act, in 1966, dismantled the White Australian Policy with the final remains removed in 1973 by the Labour Government (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2009).

Currently, the Australian migration regime has two major focuses: one is orientated towards attracting skilled migrants, fuelled by the booming WA economy and secondly, it is the humanitarian programme designed for refugees and asylum seekers (DIAC 2012). In addition to this, there are also two major streams of migrants: (1) students and (2) working-holiday visa holders. However, there is a constant need to examine and re-shape current migration policies to reflect the changing dynamics of the ever-increasing global mobility of people. There is still a lot to be desired to facilitate this process and to straightforward it for those who satisfy the required criteria. This is an issue that all migrants point out.

For example, what a migrant needs to do in order to apply for a visa is to collect original, translated, verified and signed by a Justice of the Peace (JP) documents. In the case of a migrant, coming from a relatively small country, a simple task, such as translation into English could be challenging, especially if the person needs to maintain full time employment. In the case of Tanzanian documents, you need to find someone within the locality, fluent in your local language in a new city, with which you are not familiar and with limited time and resources. Re-applying for a

\textsuperscript{60}The white Australian Policy took place between 1890s and the 1950s and favoured white Anglo-Saxon migrants.
visa is also a challenging task, since one is required to read throughout a number of
Australian documents, which are not always clear to a foreigner. Using a migration
agent is costly. When applying for a visa, there is no guarantee that it would be
successful. One is left with a tormenting feeling of living in two worlds – one in their
home country, and the other Australia. A Korean migrant61, shared his experience:

“It is difficult for me like this....I want to give up. I have only my
company here. I don’t even know if I will get the visa [employer-
sponsor] ...now I even realise I don’t have any close friends, like at
home. Why continue? (Placing both hands on his face to try and hide
his tears).”(JK)

The migrants I interviewed talk about the discomfort caused by living out of boxes
and the feeling of not being able to settle while waiting for a change in visa status.
This combined with other problems, such as English not being their first language
and cultural differences also adds to the overall background in which environmental
activism takes place amongst recent migrants.

Lack of political support

Lack of political support for pressing environmental issues does not remain
unnoticed and it leaves a striking impression on migrants, involved with
environmental activism. As the interviews took place in 2010 this was also during
the proposed discussions of allowing oil and gas drilling in the WA South West
biodiversity hotspot of Margaret River. Some participants spoke about this
controversial project as an example of political ignorance. Frank, in particular, shares:

“And then the Government: it is well known that there is a hotspot of
marine biodiversity just off Margaret River. And they are just trying to
build a platform there! For crying out loud, that’s where 80% of the
world whale population migrate through. Oh, no, no, wait: 80% of
known species of whales migrate through there and this is a hotspot,
you can’t build platforms.” (Frank)

61 Quote is from secondary research from my work in progress on experiences of migrants in Western
Australia.
Hilda, a migrant-woman, who raised her voice in the Fremantle Town Hall after a talk given by Forest Rescue, a Western Australian based environmental NGO, shared:

“Twice I was arrested. I am not a hero, but alone we can’t do anything. Mark Short cut down in front of me a healthy jarrah tree just to show me that he had the power to do it. If there is no space for a tree, how can there be a space for an animal, for a child?

Take these thoughts with you; think about creating a party with our own voices. Think about how we poison our environment.

I lost 28 trees, I lost my confidence and I was arrested twice…”

“The time is against us. You have a lot of problems with water. With no trees and no water, this place is a desert. Think about the climate, think about the environment!”

Other problems are communicated as general difficulties in finding avenues for environmental engagement, despite their passion and enthusiasm. Migrants argue that it is the Government’s responsibility to provide more avenues and more channels for recent migrants to articulate their environmental concerns and to take part in the building of a stronger fabric of civil society in Australia by acting on their views about the environmental problems using their unique skills and knowledge.

“I haven’t done anything like this here in Australia. It is very difficult for me to be involved, to use my skills and knowledge.”(Antonia)

The experience with dealing with the government is not only negative. There are notable examples. Western Australia, and more specifically local town councils have shown some examples of leadership in environmental education, which have been noticed by newly arrived people. Such is the case with Soma, who shares that Perth has become an attractive city to settle because the city is ‘green’:

“I haven’t been in any Australian city, but in the non-Australian context I find Perth very green and there are constant efforts by local councils to educate the public and give free plants. When I lived in South Perth, I was so surprised that the council was giving free mulch and free plants (natives) and also educating the public on planting native trees and how
it’s beneficial to the Australian environment. Mm, I found that very very interesting—that the council was actively involved in educating the public. I don’t know if that’s the same with other Australian cities, but in the Perth context I found the South Perth council very very good!

“(Soma)

Social boundaries

Social boundaries are generally harder to recognize than economic or environmental boundaries, yet they bare a huge significance for recent migrants who wish to engage in environmental activism. Social boundaries are mainly defined as problems of ethnicity, language and social attitudes. They evolve around social barriers, which affect migrants in their environmental activism. The section below examines those social boundaries.

Language barriers

Perhaps one of the most influential factors which play a role in migrants’ resettlement is language. In examining the complex relationship between race, ethnicity and culture in an English speaking host country, the common characteristic, which all of the participants in this research possess is that English is not their first language. Along the dichotomy of white versus minority, affluent versus poor, English is becoming another ‘class’ characteristic. Since no language exists in a vacuum, all its elements attest the distinctiveness of English dialects and respectively to each attributed ethnic identity. Ethnic dialects in the English language define what is often referred to as ‘native speaker ownership’. Widdowson (1994) calls them “different and exploratory” (Brutt-Griffler 2006 p. 97).

In another, more poetic explanation of the use of native languages, Oritiz shares the following:

“I’ve striven to express a language that concerns itself with not only a mechanical and technical facility or use but with the poetic-literary nature…. An indigenous language (or any language) that has only a technical articulation, no matter how accomplished, is nothing without the depth (sacredness) of the myriad connections to land, culture, and
community. Literally, language as cultural consciousness brings us into being” (Wallace 2007 p. 94).

It is expected that migrants speak, or should be able to acquire the ability to speak English when they arrive, live and work in Australia. The Government sets very clear requirements for new (and existing) migrants: a score of the International English Testing System, or commonly known as IELTS, is the benchmark in this expectations (or similar). For an employer-sponsored visa, the current score of the General IELTS is 5.0 points, for an independent-skilled migrant, the required score is 7.0. The latter is an increase by a crucial 0.5 points from previous years which confirms the high expectations. In other visa categories there are also high requirements for new migrants. Exceptions are tourist visitors and those who come under the humanitarian programme.

Because the Australian Government largely poses the need for international migrants to pass the English Proficiency Test, there are also widespread public expectations from the Australian society for newcomers, i.e. people who do not have an English background.

English is the dominant language in the world with the number of English users estimated to be a probable 2 billion (Liu 1999). However, English is probably spoken mostly by people who are born outside English-speaking countries. Some have referred to the phenomenon of the widespread use of English as a “language murder”, since it largely affects other languages and cultures (Phillipson 1992). The loss of language is a loss of identity (Chambers 1994, Brinker-Gabler and Smith 1997). The implications of using the English language as a migrant are deeply rooted within modern cultural imperialism. Bradley and Bradley (2002) compare the spread of the English language to the spread of genetically modified crops in the way it unifies and diminished diversity and minority groups.

Some have used the term ‘language murder’ and ‘language suicide’, suggesting that languages do not die natural deaths. They are instead ‘murdered’ (Nettle and Romaine 2000). Another way to describe the domination of the English language is with the embodiment of ‘cultural imperialism’ (Phillipson 1992) since learning a
new language means adopting a new, ‘alien’ culture, becoming the victim of cultural and language imperialism (Phillipson 1992)  

Some writers (Widdowson 1994) insist that since English is widespread, it serves the communal needs of the community from different countries. So in order to accept its growth and its development, native speakers need to embrace these changes.

Secondly, although there are strict Government requirements for the ability of new migrants to speak English, including for those who wish to become Australian citizens), there is no such a law that states that in public places, informal gathering and so on, one must speak English. In this sense, imposing the English language in such circumstances is inappropriate.

Thirdly, the wider public is largely unaware of the experiences that migrants need to go through when learning English to obtain or renew their visa. The IELTS is a very difficult exam to such extent that a native English-speaking person cannot fully and adequately answer the questions it contains.

Widdowson (1994, p. 377) calls the widespread use of English “a luxuriant growth from imperial seed” The offshoots, the outgrowth are disregarded as not the genuine article. No matter how good the offshoots are, they are never considered the real thing.

In a careful manner, preserving the symbolic possession of certain community, values and identity, the custodians of English are the gatekeepers of the standard English and subsequently of their own security for their community and institutions (Widdowson, 1994). It is an entry point to the privileges of membership, to the community of English speakers and the tools are its lexis and grammar, most carefully and vigorously preserved. The chances are that if one cannot express themselves in a grammatically correct way, their ideas or their words are not going to be regarded as important.

What also must be noted here is that standard English itself has an array of different dialects and vocabularies. In fact, the lexis of different accents of English is quite

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62 It must be noted, however, that the Dutch behaviour does not reflect this concept.
significantly different in that it may employ a lot of local words. In the case of Australia, Aboriginal words are widely used especially when naming places and local flora and fauna. A language is never static, it evolves constantly and it is recognised even by the custodians of the language that the vocabulary grows at least by 200-400 words a year. If we can accept that it is part of the norm that English exists in a perpetual state of change and transformation, then why could not be suggested that the different ethnic communities have just as much right to use and develop the English language? Here is an answer:

“The question is which community and which culture, have the rightful claim to ownership of standard English? For standard English is no longer the preserve of a group of living in an offshore European island, or even of larger groups living in continents elsewhere. It is an international language. As such it serves a whole range of different communities and their institutional purposes and these transcend traditional communal and cultural boundaries” (Widdowson, 1994, p. 382)

What implications have the use of English language in the lives of recent migrants and in the way they engage with the civil society in their new country, Australia?

Nearly half of the people I interviewed have expressed some difficulties in using the English language or apologised for their level of English. Even when their grammar and expressions were correct, a feeling of being uncomfortable with their second (or third, fourth and fifth) language was observed throughout the interview. Participants from India and Pakistan also found it somewhat challenging, despite English being widely used in their countries of origin, particularly when answering the question about the meaning of nature. Core spiritual concepts framed in the heritage language of the group can be difficult or impossible to express with equal clarity and depth is inescapably diminished or lost when a person replaces the ancestral language with another (Phillipson 1992). To express a deeply meaningful connection in an adopted language is not always easy, even when one is fluent in this language.
Ethnicity

The other emerging influential factor for engaging with environmental activism appears to be ethnicity. I prefer to talk about ethnicity rather than race since the latter strikes connotations about power relationships and oppression. Therefore, the question about language and ethnicity (and not race) is examined more closely.

In exploring the social and cultural borders within Australia and the dichotomy which has been created as black–white, Indigenous–non-Indigenous, it becomes evident that such separation is similar to the division between permanent settler (second or third generation migrants) and recent migrant (who have arrived in less than 10 years). Rovisco (2010) explores the social and cultural borders within Europe and the division which was created of East-West, civilised-barbarian and so on. Using the concepts of hybridity, transnational identities, and cosmopolitan affiliations (Rovisco 2010), it becomes possible to understand the newly formed identities of recent migrants63.

In Baba’s case, a Tanzanian-born migrant, finding a place where he could share his passion about climate change was not a difficult task because of the widespread interest in climate change amongst Australians. However, his passionate interest about climate change declined over time as he experienced more subtle forms of segregation, being the only black person to attend environmental meetings.

“You know, you might go to a group and you are all alone, the only black person alone in a group. You know these feel like: ‘Oh, what am I doing over here?’ You know these feelings when people look at you and they start discussing about third world, it’s easy to take it personally.”

Later follows a bitter acknowledgment by Baba of the matter-of-fact: ”It’s just a challenge, not that they really do it consciously”, but also sense of disappointment and even offence:” You get offended sometimes. When people say stuff like that.”

63 Rovisco draws attention mainly on the separation between Europeans and natives as fundamentally unjust and based on the power-knowledge of European imperialism.
The question of self-perception of one’s ethnicity becomes central when talking about people of colour. Baba is clearly unable to escape from his ethnicity should he wanted to blend in with the rest of the still dominantly Anglo-Celtic population of WA. Inda (2001) refers to this phenomenon in the following way:

“*It is a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, a racism which, at first sights, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but ‘only’ the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions...*” (Inda 2001 p.48)

Social construction of ethnicity reveals an act of cultural imperialism which threatens the existence of cultural diversity (Phillipson 1999). Some (Fishman 1998, Phillipson 1999) also argue that white skin is an act of identity which serves the instrumental purpose of establishing a dominant ordering.

Brettell (2007) provides another view on crossing boundaries related to territoriality. She emphasizes “the fluidity of racial and ethnic identities that are shaped, negotiated and contested in specific context and situations” (Brettell 2007 book jacket).

The real question which needs an answer is whether there is still a need to ‘escape’ from one’s ethnicity in the 21st century, in a democratic country, which Australia claims to be. Feelings of isolation and alienation are still evident in the case with educated contemporary migrants. Where, then, do the rest of the more recent members of the so-called multicultural society stand in the WA versatile population?

*Don’t-care-attitude*

Another barrier for migrants’ participation in the environmental movement is the wide-spread lack of interest and engagement from Australian society, concerning environmental issues. There is an expressive tendency among participants in noticing the ‘don’t-care’ attitude of the general Western Australian population as both a social barrier to engaging with environmental activism as well as a problem on its own, creating further negative ecological consequences. Frank shares:
"Yes... then there is so much stupidity and so much "don’t-care-attitude". This ‘don’t-care’ attitude manifests itself in how many people run the sprinkles in the rain…and lawns take up so much water."

Another example of the ‘don’t-care-attitude’ is provided by Mariette, born in Venezuela, from her experience in volunteering for the Save our Marine Wildlife NGO, whose particular campaign was for protecting the Kimberley region from oil and gas drilling to save endangered species and the unique local marine habitat (see fig. 6).

“I went with them [Save our Marine Wildlife NGO] a couple of times to protest about this project that they wanted to do in the Kimberley that would affect whales. So we had whales’ costumes and all that. And this was here in Perth in the CBD, people were going through the streets and ... we were trying to contact them, to give them information. Most of them were just walking to work and couldn’t be bothered. They did not want to talk to us at all. So the problem is with that group of people. They are just into their own thing.”

Further examples of poor or lack of environmental consciousness also concern the lack of support from people who don’t have enough awareness. The fact that Mariette mentioned that she considered friends those with whom she could share her interests is a touching evidence of her own passion against environmental degradation.

“I had a few friends and we all didn’t really have knowledge and support and it was difficult sometime. It was hard. It was a bit hard. Because people are not aware of this. To try to tell people: ‘this is wrong; we need to preserve the environment, the natural forestry’

Environmental boundaries

Environmental boundaries in Western Australia are defined based on the environmental problems which come into account in migrants’ life. Environmental problems are not an isolated phenomenon from the rest of the world. Globalisation is taking place at a faster than ever before pace (Cohen 2005, Eriksen 2007) , and recognising this is vitally important for the current WA environmental movement.
The participants in my study are aware of the challenges for the conservation movement in the ‘driest continent on Earth’, which is getting drier and drier (Australian Government 2008).

Climate

Some of the challenges are related more to the Australian context than others, such as the scarcity of fresh water and the strong presence of mining industry. According to an official bulletin from the Australian Government, Australia is: “the driest inhabited continent on Earth, with the least amount of water in rivers, the lowest run-off and the smallest area of permanent wetlands of all the continents” (Australian Government 2008). This problem has been clearly identified by the participants.

Hilda, a migrant woman expresses:

“The time is against us. You have a lot of problems with water. With no trees and no water, this place is a desert. Think about the climate, think about the environment.”

In many cases, however, the climate of Western Australia, served a paradoxical role. The hot climate of WA, combined with vast beaches, clear sky and the both terrestrial and land biodiversity hotspots acted as a strong motivation factor for migrating to this part of the world. According to Kristine, she was attracted to the climate of WA, and her aim was not only to come to Australia, but to WA, specifically, precisely because of the weather. Nearly half of the participants identified the hot and dry climate of WA as a reason for either deciding to come to Australia, or even more often, as a motivation factor for remaining on the Australian continent.

Lack of environmental consciousness

An example of lack of environmental consciousness within Australia was also expressed by Gunter, another German-born migrant, who is employed for the Green Loans programme (assisting distribution of Governmental Funds for environmental purposes):
“And then, the problem in Australia is, I think, the environmental conscious is hardly there. For a large part of the population, mostly in the lower income range it’s just not there, the education is lacking. And it is not a fault of the people, it is fault in the education system, it’s a fault of those people who allow junk food advertisement on TV, those people who allow fuel prices to be lower than the environmental impact. And it’s the fault of people who allow drinking water to be put onto loan, to be sprinkled onto lawns.”

What follows is his recommendation and some easy to implement solutions:

“The way it should be is: if you have a lawn you should have a rain water tank. Have the rain water tank subsidised, just as the hot water solar system is subsidised, use the rain water to sprinkle the lawn, have a plumber who can build it into your house. There are so many good ideas. Technology is all-available. And it would reduce the carbon water footprint so much and not impact on life quality at all (stressing).”

Recent migrants are often shocked by the passiveness of the WA general public and they feel uncomfortable trying to change things because they are still in the process of establishing their territory. However, by building boundaries and sometimes crossing them, and establishing friendships they also create the new WA.

Other related environmental problems, easily recognised by the participants in the study are global warming, toxic waste spills, loss of biodiversity, sacrificing of environmental issues in favour of economic development.

“Flocking” of engagement

It was found that popular types of species, such as little penguins, attracted interest among recent migrants, however due to the amalgamation of engagement of other volunteers, they found it impossible to participate in their desired environmental activism.
Marine wildlife in Western Australia is one of the main attractions for tourists, with 70-90 per cent of the marine species being unique to Australia due to its geological isolation, major southerly current and a history of no major environmental disturbances in geological time (Smyth 2009). All of this factors bring about a variety of species including Blue whales, Great White Sharks and Leatherback Turtles as well as a series of biodiversity hotspots dotted along the WA coastline (Houtman-Abrolhos Islands, the Perth Canyon, Geographe Bay, Cape Mentelle, the Naturalist, Plateau, the Diamantina Fracture Zone)(Smyth 2009).

Apart from the tourist sector, marine wildlife also bears a great amount of added economic benefits nation-wide. First attempts to estimate its economic value suggest that marine wildlife is worth over $25 billion, while revealing that Australian oceans contribute at least that much to the national economy in ecosystem services, like carbon storage, fish nursery, and recreational fisheries (Eadie and Hoisington 2011).

### 7.5 Gender perspectives of territoriality

This section examines the issue of territoriality through gender lenses. It focuses on the main themes expressed as obstacles in the process of creating one’s territory - the question *which territory* we are referring to when we move across international borders.

*Which territory*

Antonia took interest in environmental activism soon after her arrival in Australia (in a matter of months) and became involved in Guerrilla Gardening, which made her “feel useful” as well as helped her integrate with other like-minded people. The difficulties in settling in Western Australia were especially due to the fact that she had a 14-year old son (Beau) whose passion and motivation for the environment had led him to join the Environmental Association for Students Network. In fact, Antonia shared that one of the main reasons for her to move to Australia, despite all difficulties she anticipated was the fact that Beau could freely engage with the environmental cause.
“I am very supportive of Beau; it is an opportunity to do many things and to have discussions with him. It is my way to motivate him. We [me and his father] have to stop him from doing the wrong things sometimes and to encourage him to follow his passions.” (Antonia)

Antonia expressed that the main deciding factor for her to remain living in Australia, and more specifically in Western Australia is the freedom of speech and the opportunities to engage in environmental activism.

“The people here are very free; they can really do what they want. This is my main motivation for living here. Especially for my son. I can’t imagine what would have happened in Columbia – you can’t feel safe to protest. You can easily disappear. Here I am very relaxed about him engaging with [environmental] activities. Of course we set certain boundaries - respecting the law and non-violence, but other than that I am fine with him. We discuss it with his father, of course, and he is happy for Beau to develop himself.” (Antonia)

Antonia’s story as a mother is not unique. Many other women and men also support or encourage their children to look after the environment.

Other examples, of environmental engagement of migrant-women are also found in creating art forms based on local flora and fauna, in the case of biomimcry (Marshall and Lozeva 2009). Tineke, a recent migrant from Belgium, shows her appreciation of the plants and animals in Western Australia in the form of jewellery which takes the form of art (See Figure 13 in Images section).  

“My environmental involvement is with making jewellery based on local plants. For example, this ring is a replica/ impression from a gum nut and on the inside there is a Western Australian pearl. And this necklace is made based on the shape of seaweed and other local plants. I took a course in silversmith, when I came here.” (Tineke)

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Additionally, Tineke shares that she is “more interested in the social justice processes”, rather than politics, although the two are seen tangible.

### 7.6 Summary

Territoriality refers to the process of creating one’s own territory, defined by symbolic borders. It means different things and its meaning also differs to different people. For some, it is going fishing at dusk on Saturday on their birthday at Woodman Point and cooking a meal later with friends; for others it may well involve lying in front of a bulldozer to protect the trees from being cut down or even setting a formal organisation for migrants’ public involvement.

This chapter discussed the process of forming new territory within an unfamiliar social, environmental and political arena; this process is referred to as “territoriality”. In examining the concept of territoriality, there are a few themes, that emerged.

- Firstly, *which territory* are we referring to? The territory of Australia has been contested both in political terms (changing of states and territories) as well as in socio-political terms (changing multicultural mixture of different migrants, reflecting the change of migration policies). In both cases, the Australian Government plays a major role in the process and significance of establishing new territories and shaping their borders and boundaries. Further boundaries are created in the social and environmental arenas, which have been set largely by the Government. One such prominent example is the requirements for English and the social perception of having to speak English in public places as well as at informal gatherings.

- Secondly, another contested relationship is the dimension of ethnicity and the state, which has also been found to affect the environmental engagement of migrants, especially those from Africa.

- The concept of territoriality is linked to boundaries, borders and travellers. Apart from having local aspects, they are also global.

Territoriality dealt with the process of the initial settlement and of the most common difficulties in environmental activism for recent migrants as well as highlighted some possible outcomes of such engagement, such as building the notion of global environmental citizenship to be discussed later in the thesis.
CHAPTER 8

CONNECTEDNESS: SOCIAL VALUES IN MIGRANTS
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

‘Connect, Connect, Connect’

(Go Proverb)

“I wanted to fit in, I wanted to fit in!” (Praveen)

8.1 Introduction

Connectedness can be understood in a variety of ways: in terms of political economy, as an anthropological view as well as a philosophical concept. In this chapter, I make a link between the notion of connectedness and sustainability through the lenses of recent migrants’ environmental engagement. I aim to understand foremost: What are the values which drive contemporary migrants to be active in the environmental movement? In doing so, I aim to draw a clear connection between the importance of social networks for environmentalism and the importance of social connections in the lives of migrants. Finally, a link between the two movements: the environmental movement and the mobility of people draws together the conclusion that social co-operation and networking play a central role of migrants’ environmental activism.

This chapter is organised into sections highlighting (a) different ways of interpreting connectedness from a philosophical, political-anthropological and sustainability

\footnote{In this chapter connectedness is understood explicitly as a connection with other people (humans) unless stated otherwise. For a discussion on the connection with nature (and non-humans) see the earlier chapter on "Space".}
perspective (b) examination of the roles of social capital in environmental organisations and in its meaning to migrants, and especially environmentally active migrants in WA, and (c) discussion of the notions of social acceptance and social exclusion.

8.2 How to understand connectedness

Connection refers to a relationship in which a person or thing is linked or associated with something else (Oxford Dictionaries 2012). “To connect” then means to relate something in some respect; to bring together, so that a real or notional link is established (Oxford Dictionaries 2012).

Connectedness can be argued, is the outcome of the social process of forming connections with other things or beings, and this process is strongly influenced by language and culture (Mansouri 2009, Dashwood and Son 2011). Connections can be formed in real life as well as in virtual space66. Connectedness also bears a more philosophical connotation, understood as the greater sense of connection with the outside world, and especially the natural environment. Some academics have used the term ‘the consciousness of connectedness’ to describe this aspect of connectedness (Vertovec and Posey 2006).

The way in which I interpret connectedness in this thesis is in the light of recent migrants here and now, in WA. I emphasise their need to become part of society not in the old-fashioned term of being ‘integrated’ but rather through building a stronger fabric of civil society. The interviews in this study indicate that sense of connection is a strong motivation factor not only for people’s global movement but also for participating in the environmental movement. Thus connectedness plays an equally important role in both the movement of people across international borders and in the environmental movement. In the case of recent migrants in WA, it translates into environmental activism.

8.3 Social networks and mobility

Studies show that the number and the quality of the connections we have with other people are directly relevant to our well-being, integration, influence and recognition (Renzaho 2009, Taket 2009). Migrants are especially vulnerable in this regard; they create their own frontiers in unfamiliar surroundings without having established social connections in their new territory. They rely extensively on their own skills, abilities and potential. Such efforts are not conceivable without forming social connections, in both their new place of migration as well as maintaining strong ties with their families in their home country. According to a long-standing view, migrants are helping in bridging the gaps between nation-states by creating global network connections (Tilly 2005). Such networks create asymmetrical social structures of new and old connections, recognised by researchers as transnationalism and re-affirmed by the spread of new communication technologies (Taylor 2004, Vertovec 2004).

A lot of previous research has used in different ways a social network perspective to better understand the process of international migration (see among others Tilly 1986, Massey 1998, Brettell and Hollifield 2000, Schweitzer 2000, Vertovec and Cohen 2003, Tilly 2005). This does not come as a surprise, since it is regarded that networks are the channels for the very process of migration.

Tilly (1974, 1986, 2005, Tilly and Tarrow 2007) examines the historical flow of migration into the United States, and highlights that not just individuals migrate, but in some cases whole “networks migrate’ (Tilly 1986), or what is also referred to as chain migration (Massey 1999, Yu 2007, Peters 2010). He talks about transplanted networks to describe the effective units of migration that are neither individuals nor households but “sets of people linked by acquaintance, kinship, and work experience” (Tilly 1986, p. 84).

Networks are also regarded as the building block of migration in time and space in a study by Boyd (1989).

“Once begun, migration flows often become self-sustaining, reflecting the establishment of networks of migration, assistance and obligations which develop between migrants in the host society and friends and
relatives in the sending area. These networks link populations in origin and receiving countries and ensure that movements are not necessarily limited in time, unidirectional or permanent” (Boyd 1989, p. 641).

For recent migrants, networks of people are vital for finding accommodation, employment and also for their psychological wellbeing (Boyd 1989, Vertovec 2002, Poros 2003). Social networks are able to lead migrants through the web of places and occupations. Local environmental activities can become linked through certain networks of interpersonal ties surrounding migrants (Poros 2003). Social networks have also been identified as crucial to migrants’ movements and for their economic behaviour. From the point of view of economic sociology, interpersonal ties have been found very influential in finding employment (Poros 2003).

Ditte, a recent migrant from Denmark met her first friends through the network of promoting Al Gore’s film ‘An Inconvenient Truth’. One of them, Andrea, is also a participant in this study. Using the snowballing technique I interviewed both of them, and one year later (after the fieldwork was already completed), they were both working at the same Western Australian Department of Water where Agata originally worked. Ditte shares:

“I met some really amazing people through getting involved with this voluntary work. Andrea is my friend from Mexico... Her partner and mine are close friends now, too, and they go out windsurfing on the weekends. I am very happy that I have such friends, even though I have been in Australia only 5 months.” (Ditte)

These claims are also supported by a five-year study on the lives of central Italian migrants from Tuscany in Western Australia which reveals that recent migrants keep strong social contacts with friends and family in their home country – tendencies, which have been called cosmopolitanism and transnationalism of recent migrants (Vertovec 2001). This helps migrant to live comfortable and secure, wherever their destination as migrants was (Boncompagni 2001, Boncompagni and Bosworth 2002).
For other informants it was environmental engagement that provided a much-welcomed opportunity to expand their range of physical outdoor activities geographically as well as to widen their social circles. Paraveen shares:

“I made huge networks (big smile)...What it has led me onto is stuff like camping and hiking and that sort of things, which are an offshoot from going to the garden. I started doing a lot more of outdoor things.” (Praveen)

In the light of international migrants, who cross political and social borders (and often manoeuvre cusp of legal and political borders) these connections and networks are felt particularly strong. Migrants rely on forming different sets of connections – some within the immediate circle of people others spread thousands of kilometres to their home country. Such is the case with most migrants, and Rafäela is a typical example. She is an Italian migrant, who came to Australia on one of the Sea Shepherd ships – the “Steve Irwin”:

“I would not be able to do what I am doing if I didn’t know that they are there and support me. And it doesn’t matter if they are 10 thousand miles away or just 10, to me it is all the same...” (Rafaela)

Praveen also shares that his need to be so active with the vegetable garden for the past three years was inspired by the possibilities of building “huge networks”, where he unexpectedly became connected to:

“I created huge networks, by doing environmental work! And ironically, none of the people are Australian – they are from all over the world.”

Although such findings are useful in establishing the fact that social networks are crucial in the lives of recent migrants, they do not explain the way those migrants become involved with environmental activism. It can be argued that similarly environmental activism is also affected by the social networks, the newly arriving migrants are establishing in their new country. The role of social factors, such as connections with other migrants, in engaging with the environmental movement of recent migrants in WA is examined more closely later in this chapter.
Social capital or connectedness plays a vital role in both the environmental movement and in the movement of people, in the way migrants make sense of their new place and maintain their well-being (Putnam 2002).

**Social capital**

Social capital is fundamentally about the way (how) people interact with each other. It has been described as both a glue for society as well as a lubricant (Chen 2000). Among the diversity of definitions of social capitals, are:

- "friends, colleagues and more general contact through whom you receive opportunities to use your financial and human capital" (Burt 1995, Burt 2010);
- “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures” (Portes 1998 p.6)

It also refers to the social networks, norms and informal structures that facilitate individual and collective action (Halpern 2005). Another description of the term social capital is “a way to conceptualise the intangible resources of community, their shared values and trust upon which we draw in daily life” (Field 2003, book jacket).

It is perhaps more important to examine the function of the social capital, rather than its nature. Social capital has the potential to transform individuals from self-seeking and egocentric agents with little sense of obligation to others into members of a community with shared interests, a common identity, and a commitment to the common good (Adler and Kwon 2002). There is also evidence linking social capital to greater innovation and flexibility in policy-making (Knack 2002).

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67 Social capital is a well utilised concept in social studies. However, there it still does not have a clear definition. I agree with Robinson (2002) when he states that definition of social capital depends on the discipline and the purpose of the research (Robinson, D. and S. Victoria University of Wellington. Institute of Policy (2002). Building social capital. Wellington, N.Z., Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.)
In examining different types of environmental groups in Western Australia, Dhakal (2010) found that the “friends” group, such as “Friends of Kings Park” or “Friends of the Cockburn Wetland Education Centre” struggle the most to obtain funding and resources. His study shows that funding success among environmental groups varies but they all heavily rely on connections that the volunteers make. Some environmental groups (such as catchment groups) interact more than others, and become very well connected with other regional organisations, which increases their chances of successful delivery of their mission and goals (Dhakal 2011). Since they have little access to funding, by networking and appropriately situating themselves among other stakeholders, environmental groups (including their volunteers) are able to ensure they can perform successfully.

Some of the problems related to social capital are that its ethnic and gender dimensions remain under-recognised (Fox and Gershman 2000). In the literature, social capital is generally conceptualised, gender-blind, playing little attention to gendered intra-household issues of power and hierarchy (Silvey and Elmhirst 2003).

**Social capital in value-based organisations**

Social capital has been increasingly recognized as a fundamental ingredient to the success of natural resource management (Webb and Cary 2005p.1). In the field of development it offers the potential for more participatory, sustainable and empowering approaches in theory and practice (Evans 1996). Local groups with locally developed rules and sanctions are able to make more of existing resources than individuals working alone or in competitions (Pretty and Ward 2001). Social capital “has a profound impact in human life and development: it affects the provision of services in both urban and rural areas; improves the management of common resources” (Van Bastelaer and Grootaert 2002 p.344).

The environmental movement is built around the intrinsic values people associate with the natural environment. Motivation factors, attributed to participation in value-based organisations, such as social and environmental NGOs, are highly inspired not by material values, but by a sense of contributing to the greater good: better justice, equal access to resources, or improved environmental awareness (Edwards and Fowler 2002). The ultimate goal of the environmental movement, can be argued, is
social change on the outside of the environmental NGOs (Edwards and Fowler 2002). In general, personal commitment, satisfactions and a shared ideology are better incentives than material awards. The latter are also highly relevant, as the general level of salary in NGOs and other environmental organisation is modest, and therefore it proves to be of significant importance. Environmental NGO’s then have fewer ways of influencing and attracting their staff and are faced with the challenge of negotiating their place in the space of communities, government and institutions of other kinds. The extract below uses the notion of connectedness to describe in essence the vital role of environmental and development NGOs:

“Making and sustaining the right connections lives at the very heart of effective development Non-Governmental Development Organisation (NGDO) management. The strength of NGDO lives in their abilities to act as bridges, facilitators, brokers and translators, linking together the institutions, interventions, capacities and level of action that are required to lever broader structural changes from discrete or small scale actions” (Edwards and Fowler 2002, p.2).

Similar view is expressed by Pretty and Ward (2001) who argue that social capital represents a potential link between policy level thinking and community level action. What this means is that successful environmental organisations and in this case - environmental movement, nowadays need to rely on building better relationships with other stakeholders as well as with their own employees, to build effective alliances, and create strategies for mutual collaboration; an integrated action on a local, national and international level. On the other hand, the weaker the social capital is within an environmental organisation, the harder it becomes to attract funds and volunteers; the stronger the social capital is the easier it becomes to overcome organisational problems and to achieve environmental protection (Dhakal 2010).

Some examples of the importance of social capital for the effective provisions of the environmental movement can be found in the work by the participants in this study. Mariette, 33 from Venezuela volunteers almost every day of the week for a different environmental NGO and uses every opportunity to express her environmental concerns. At the time when I spoke to her, she was participating in a protest march which happened simultaneously with the UN Climate Change Conference in
Copenhagen (COP15) (Denmark.dk 2009). She expresses the need and opportunity to be active in the environmental movement as ‘lucky’ and describes a sense of being ‘powerful’ and ‘inspired’. In her interview, Mariette shows a strong sense of appreciation of the opportunities to make a difference.

Soma could connect to other members of her local community through a seminar ran by her local council. She was able not only to build an environmentally-friendly garden, but also to connect to other members of her local community through a free seminar on gardening.

“In went to the workshop on how to save water in the last moment, but I was able to meet wonderful people, who were concerned about the environment.” (Soma)

Ditte, a recent migrant-woman from Denmark also shares her success story in environmental activism, which was to promote Al Gore’s movie “An Inconvenient Truth”:

“Our voluntary work is to promote Al Gore’s movie, and we do so by advertising screenings in people’s local area, through the website. So far, we have about 400 people who attended our screenings. I am very proud with this!” (Ditte)

The latter quote also explains the help of the website as an element in promoting her environmental work. In the section below I explore in more details the meaning of modern-day technologies for the lives of contemporary migrants (and their environmental engagement).

**Linking contemporary migrants through communication technologies**

Globalisation is widely linked to the boom of advanced communication technologies. It is argued that nothing else has facilitated global connections more than the spread of such technologies (Vertovec 2010). The rapid growth of communication technology, such as low-cost phone calls, web-based calls and internet messaging is widespread across the globe and they “serve as a kind of social glue connecting small-scale social formations“ (Vertovec 2004 p.219). Globalisation is commonly characterised by rapid development of interconnectedness and
compression of space-time (Vertovec 2004). This had an enormous effect on the lives of migrant communities. Although understudied, the area of modern-day communication technologies and the impact they have on enriching and enhancing migrants’ communities has been indisputable. In comparison to mail sent via slow post and expensive phone calls (which many newcomers were unable to afford), low-cost internet calls and messaging (often free with access to the internet) are widely spread among transnational communities (Vertovec 2004). The effect which they have on the lives of migrants (and especially recent migrants) is a regular day-to-day communication with members of their family and friends and has the powerful potential to change domestic and community life together with its intergenerational as well as gender relations (Vertovec 2003).

A study by Vertovec (2004) shows a strong connection between the use of low-cost phone cards and ethnic communities. In his research he points out an industry analysis:

“It is a well-known fact, that the main users of prepaid calling cards are first generation migrants. Their desire to stay connected with family at home, strong networks within their US based community, and the ability to pass the news of a well-priced product help drive the competition among providers…although producers of prepaid cards have responded to this [the need for different marketing strategy] by creating various pricing patterns in their cards that attract certain ethnic users, success still lies in their placement.” (Mensah and Smith 2002 as cited in Vertovec 2004 p.221)

In 1997 Cairncross predicted that: “the death of distance will be driven by the plummeting price of long-distance and international calls” (Cairncross 1997 p. 27) and in 2012 this prediction seems to have become more or less true. Some cards offer zero charge per minute/second and operate only on a connection fee comparable to local calls. Others have no connection charges and the fee per minute is often less than a cent. They all are intensively used by recent migrants.

Increased opportunities for communication also mean that it is easier for migrants to engage with the environmental movement. A lot of the participants recognise the vital role of the internet as a facilitator for their environmental activism, if not their
major form of environmental engagement. Below are some examples of how recent migrants talk about their experience in using the internet:

“I organised an Astronomy club through the Internet, mainly for the Mexican community, but other have joined as well and are most welcome.” (Agata)

“I met other environmentally-aware people (and most of them are migrants) through the website. We do a lot of tree planting...I have become good friends with some of them”. (Kristine).

Another participant, Rafaela, a young traveller on the ‘Steve Irwin’ ship shares that despite the extreme difficulties of being in the open seas, she always finds a way to keep in touch with her family:

“Being on the ship it is not always easy to use modern technologies, we use it mostly for the journalists. But I talk to my family almost every time I can use the internet...They are very important to me.”(Rafaela)

8.5 Meaning of family

A very special aspect of connectedness is reserved for the meaning of family. This is the most basic cell within society which allows for any further links and networks to be established. It is also a powerful element for building social capital. When I asked the participants: “What does family mean to you?” nearly all of them attached a significant value to their families, both in the home countries and in Australia. Specific answers, which they gave, are:

“Family means everything to me” (Marian, Baba, Maria, Mariette)

“Family is what I live for” (Kristin, Soma, Neeti, Baba)

For Baba, a recently arrived migrant from Tasmania, who is engaged to get married with his Australian-born wife, family is:

“[family is]...really, really very important! To me happiness is having a family, not only a family for fun, but a family where there is someone I love, a wife and children and having a permanent home...home! Family
to me is where you feel proud that people come and visit and RAISING children, and having your wife."

Other attitudes to family include:

“Family means fun!” (Maria)

“Family is a fundamental thing” (Mehdi)

“Family is my motivation” (Said)

“My family is my friends” (Mariette)

In Marian’s case, keeping in touch with friends and family was essential for her wellbeing. Nevertheless, when I asked the question: “What does family mean to you?” she expressed sadness about being away from her family in Iran.

[You mean your family back in Iran?] Yes, and they are far away from me, but now my husband is everything for me.

Similarly, Praveen also defines as family anyone who cares about him despite their country of origin or their nationality.

“Because I have travelled so much, and because I don’t live with my birth family anymore, so I think for me family for me has been anyone who supports me. In recent times, it is the people around me, here in Perth. So anyone who supports me is my family – in any way: whether is financial or emotional.” (Praveen)

They all point the importance of family as a source for individual wellbeing but also as a focus for many other links and relationships – with relatives, children, and friends.

8.6 Other ways of developing connectedness

Connectedness in a more abstract form includes connections with nature. It is closely linked to the intrinsic value of nature, and the way people feel connected with their outside world.
Some find a sense of connectedness in sharing particular gifts of environmental importance. Soma shares her experience in contributing to the environment in simple terms, such as gardening at home:

“\textit{I feel giving plants is a much better gift than something that is just going to stay in somebody’s cupboard and end up in a shop somewhere in good Sammy’s}\textsuperscript{68}. With the plant maybe perhaps if they really plant it, we still have hope of changing the global climate. I know it’s been very ambitious, not everybody plants but if somebody asks me I am always ready with some plant to give them. \textit{Take!”} (Laugh)

Environmental activism and environmental awareness combined with an eager sense of sharing environmental knowledge with other members of the community can potentially have a bigger effect than belonging to a formal political party, or even a larger impact than a formal council workshop on “How to grow plants”, for example.

Paul, born in France, an environmental activist in forest groups, also talks about connecting with the Australian environment and about his experience in engaging with the environmental movement in WA:

\textit{“It is a great way to feel connected to your new place of residence. The Australian environment is so beautiful! I feel sorry for people who have been here for years and have lived closed in their little circle. Engaging with the environment when you have just arrived is a great way to meet people, to get connected, to get a sense of place.”} (Paul)

Forming connections, especially in multicultural societies, is of vital importance for the newly arrived and recent migrants. In turn, social networking allows for an alternative lever of action in the field of civil society. Despite the considerable power by the state to shape institutions and discourses of citizenship (Kofman 2005), civil society is an influential tool to leverage the state and the market forces.

Hidden avenues of raising environmental awareness often remain unrecognised and undervalued in policy-making. Firstly, these types of involvements are difficult to study and measure, and secondly, they are hard to control and manage. However,

\textsuperscript{68} Soma refers to second hand shops, such as the Good Samaritan.
throughout this study it is evident, that these ‘hidden’ kinds of activities are widespread and were common among all participants in the research, regardless of their formal engagement with the environmental movement. Such activities can serve as leadership examples among the community (and in some instances take a larger form). A similar example is found in the interview with Marian, an Iranian born migrant:

“When we were in our country, all year, especially in summer and spring we always went to travel and, honestly, my husband and I were representatives of the environment! Everybody that was with us was saying: ‘Oh, Said and Marian are here! They will tell us—don’t put that there! It is recycling, you should recycle that” (Marian)’

8.7 Gender perspectives of connectedness

Women experience connectedness in some ways differently from men and this relates to schooling children, looking after the house and relatives. An artist, jewellery designer, a social activist and a migrant from Belgium, who lived in Australia for around 10 years, despite not being directly involved in environmental activism finds inspiration for her work in nature. A reviewer from a local writer’s club in Northern Perth commented on one of their member’s recent book Café d’Afrique, based on her 9 years’ experience in Africa:

“We go on and on, invest in family, relationships, community and we never, never give up” (September 2009).

The connectedness she creates is not only between people but between people and nature and she does it in a very unique way. Is she correct in separating the women’s world from that of men?

It is argued that cooperation, trust and moral values can be of a higher significance than economic incentives in successful environmental organisations (Agarwal 1992, Fukuyama 1995, Baland and Platteau 1996, Edwards and Fowler 2002). Can it be also argued that such values are of equal importance for the recent migrants’ engagement with the environmental movement? If so, what are the possible gender
differences in environmental activism and environmental cooperation? Are women more altruistic, more social/relational or on the contrary, are they less exceptive of the ideas of cooperation? As connectedness is essential for the environment, do women feel more at ease in this territory? Although it is not possible to give a one-sided answer to these questions, the discussion is worth pursuing.

An answer to this question can be found in a study by Agarwal (2000) based in South East Asia. The study reveals the connection between gender and environmental management in terms of building connections, creating trust and pursuing moral norms. Agarwal (2000) argues that factors, influencing the effectiveness of environmental management (both in the long and short term) are social networking, moral norms, trust and cooperation, and altruism. From a gendered point of view, Agarwal (2000) examines the constraints and the problems in Community Forest Groups and sheds light on the ways of facilitating participation. The most important contribution, which she makes, is revealing the importance of women’s work - both formal and informal- in forestry conservation. Their daily dependence on these resources for survival (such as collecting firewood) depends on the formal Community Forest Groups’ decisions, to which they have little access, based on their gender, social status, socio-cultural norms and beliefs imbedded in the rural areas of South Asia.

Agarwal (2000) contrasts this with some successful forestry groups’ cases formed solely by women. In such groups, she notes that the level of cooperation is greater, partly due to the fact, that women feel more comfortable and have a greater chance of being heard. Moreover women’s groups are easily built based on pre-existing social networks of trust and reciprocity. Far from suggesting that community forest groups should be all women-groups, the author refers to the notion of ‘critical mass’ which can empower women to speak up at meetings, to be able to better present their needs and concerns (Agarwal 2000).

From a gendered point of view, being able to connect to others translates into an ability to think in a wholesome, cooperative way, to achieve results, which otherwise would have been inconceivable. The inter-connection between “the ability to connect” and being successful in environmental-based organisation is articulated clearly by one of the participants, Antonia, 41 from Columbia, whose previous engagement
with the social and environmental movement spans across governmental, grass-root and various community organisation is her home country:

“Women try to complement everything. They are seeking ways how to complement all skills in the family, in the community. Women have more facilities to connect to the communities; in my culture this is very strong. It is common to see a woman to connect with the neighbours, to do everything; to connect people, to think more about the general benefits. In my work I have been successful because I was able to connect. Women try to join resources, people...not to use authority. I try to improve motivation in my team, to create good environment for generating ideas. Sometimes I feel like I am just a facilitator for providing good ground for ideas.” (Antonia)

Similar view was expressed by another participant, based on her experience in working with people at different levels engaged with environmental organisations.

- “Women and nature connect through creation and procreation. When I was pregnant I had different connection with nature. We refer to nature as mother -nature. Nature is creation. You plant a seed and see it grow. It’s miraculous, it’s amazing!”(Yaspara)
- “I love the environment, it is absolutely amazing! It is the one thing that I feel mostly connected to and one thing that makes me feels passionate about preserving it.”(Yaspara)
- “And I really like everything that has to do with being outside and being connected with nature. I love hiking in the mountains. Just in the last European summer I was climbing some places in Europe and hiking for weeks in the mountains and being disconnected from everything that is around us, that’s so disturbing.” (Yaspara)
- “When you have been outside it is just so energizing. Happy and feel so connected...sudden encounters. I had these amazing encounters with manta rays in the Ningaloo reef in April where I was on the reef for two and a half hours. 19 manta rays just passed me and there were no tourists around me, it was just ... totally overwhelming. It is really inspiring!” (Yaspara).
A critique of the current sense of attachment and belonging to the more abstract term of nature is expressed by Yaspara, in her mid-thirties, a European migrant, who is in Perth to complete her doctorate on biology:

“I think women have more warm approach to things, but when it comes to nature we are the same. We have detached so badly that we can’t connect anymore.” (Yaspara)

8.8 Belonging and exclusion

This section deals with the ideas of social acceptance and social isolation, which are essential part of the notion of connectedness.

Social acceptance: Ideas of belonging

Forms of citizenship and belonging are found not only on a legal basis but also with community opportunities. Legal measures can include the right to associations, to belong to a religion, to vote, and freedom of speech. Informal ways of forming citizenship include association with various migrant groups and memberships, social gathering, environmental groups or creating particular interest groups such as sports, dancing or astronomy. Some Perth examples of informal environmental groups are the formation of the Swanbourne Alliance as a response to the building of a proposed marina development and the Al Gore dialogues organised by a group of people who have arrived recently in Western Australia. Other examples are Guerrilla Gardening (GG), which involves planting trees and plants in public spaces; people from this group also participate in other environmental organisations, such as the Student Youth Environmental Organisation. This organisation is engaged with other environmental issues and campaigns, such as stopping the coal delivery train to the port for two days by physically blocking the rails and risking being arrested by the police. Below are some quotes from an online forum devoted to GG plant-lovers:

“I GG-ed a small patch near the bus stop (on railway reserve) where I catch my bus to work every morning. I carry milk bottles of water to water the garden when I go to work. Garden is thriving at this time of
year - been in since May. I now have a garden buddy, who I met through the garden itself, which is a huge help with the watering!” (Raelene)

Neeti, a recent migrant from India, who is a postgraduate student in Built Environment, takes a slightly different approach to the idea of belonging. She explains that forming connections with a specific place, including the surrounding area, and the people who live there as vital for sustainable urban planning.

“As I am from architecture. ...we have to get involved with people and with surroundings, because we need to know what people want. We build the houses. So we need to know which areas different people will be comfortable in. We took photographs, to see the frequency at different times of day, to see how people are using that street, so in summer it was peak time for them in the morning, and it was dark and deadly at night.

So we got engaged with people like that.” (Neeti)

The ideas of belonging to a group of similar minded people, or to a specific place is a powerful experience which not only bonds recent migrants with other people but also allows them to pursue things that they are passionate about environmental protection and contribute to the process of change.

An organisation, which has a big migrant presence, is the Green Representatives on University campus and the Vegetable Garden, which both see cross-over of participants, such as Praveen. The motivation for Praveen, to start engaging initially with the vegetable garden was his eagerness “to try new things” and “to get to know the locals”. Most importantly – it was not only a “gateway to sustainability”, but also even more so to Australian culture”. In the case of Praveen, environmental engagement proved to be an opportunity to “fit in” the Australian culture.

“One thing is that I like to try new things, and another is that I wanted to fit in, I wanted to fit in.” (Praveen)

He further stresses the importance of environmental engagement in order to be socially accepted in the Australian society.

“[Interrupting his own train of thought] ... When I came to Australia, of course, I wanted to fit in; you wanna get to know the locals (Praveen)
A new sense of belonging emerges, which is relevant to the global environmental citizens. Praveen defines himself as “a foreigner” wherever he goes, not as a momentary state, but as a permanent state. Having Indian parents, being born in Malaysia and lived around the world, including Oman and Australia most recently, he started by saying that he feels like a foreigner when he goes back to India. Then he continued that he had reached the conclusion that being foreign is a permanent feeling to wherever he went, despite recognising that he is quite included in the Australian society. The feelings of “belonging” and of “being welcomed” are two separate notions, and this becomes very clear when Praveen answers the question “How do you feel as a migrant in Australia?”

“I feel quite welcome, actually. I have lived in places where I have been treated as 3rd and 4th category person, and felt a lot more excluded.”

Not only does Praveen feel welcomed in Australia, but he also says that he finds it a place, where he can comfortably define himself as a foreigner:

“I fit in perfectly in Australia.”

A sense of acceptance and isolation is also present in the lives of environmentally active migrants. Here is how Mariette from Venezuela describes the feeling of being connected to other environmental volunteers. This feeling of belonging to a group, which in a way substitutes the family in her home country Venezuela, is particularly touching.

“You want to feel that level of comfort of togetherness and of support wherever you go. When you encounter people from different cultures you are also talking different languages and it’s really hard to get through and to understand really what they are trying to do sometimes. You may have really big misunderstandings. But when there is someone that you can feel comfortable with and is like family, means that other people recognize this, you know, they acknowledge that sense of isolation and appreciate you as a person. And it's good.”(Mariette)

The experience of Baba, who is a male migrant from African origin, is somewhat different from that of Mariette. His feeling of connectedness to other environmental groups is overshadowed by the lack of action on environmental issues in Australia.
He finds that Australian people do have general awareness about environmental problems, particularly about climate change, but they often do not act on them. However, Baba acknowledges that his involvement with other volunteers is facilitated by their common interests:

“It’s very easy because it’s a big awareness here. Everyone, relatively everyone (smile) is aware about climate change (pause) …but again I think they all have the knowledge and all the information and all resources, but they ignore it! They don’t take action. But it is easier if you are passionate about it, it’s easier to find a group to get involved with. Still trying to get involved in that and trying to survive in daily life, like settling here is not easy for a person like me; to get involvement because there are a lot of things going on and sometimes you feel a bit different.” (Baba)

Baba’s sense of isolation is in strong contrast with the sense of acceptance, about which Mariette speaks earlier. Yet, both of them find that they don’t have “that feeling of comfort, togetherness and support” (Mariette) within the Australian society.

**Social exclusion: The “Australianness” of people**

In historical terms, since the nineteenth century, Australia has promoted a certain trends in its immigration politics, known controversially as the White Australian Policy (Castles 1992). This had a tremendous effect on the ethnic and cultural background of people migrating to Australia. The number of non-European migrants was kept low up until mid-1960s, when the Government allowed a proportionally small number of middle class non-Europeans to enter the country. Castles and Miller (1993) claim that the numbers of those migrants were kept low in order to make them socially invisible within the preferred white immigrant groups (Castles and Miller 1993).

The differentiation between long-term settlers and new or recent migrants continues to be felt even now. In the case studies of my participants, a particular sense of isolation was felt either throughout their length of stay in Australia or at least at
some periods in their lives. Maria attributed this sense of isolation to the “Australianess” of people.

“I’ve got Australian friends, but it is a completely different thing. Because they cannot really understand what is like to be a migrant, so they think they are there for me but I don’t feel it that way. Because they may not be aware of the needs I may have. And they may underestimate the fact that I am calling them and asking them for help for any random thing and they say ‘Oh I can’t do it today, so maybe some other time’. But that was really important for me and they don’t really understand that. So they are good, they are nice but they don’t really... They can’t relate to what is like to be here that way…”

Articulation of these feelings is a very important part of the life of migrants; they acknowledge their presence in a new foreign environment and help them recognise the importance of friends as family.

Mariette came to Australia and soon became fascinated by the newly open possibilities for her to make a difference in the environmental movement. With a lot of constrains to do so in her home country, she felt a sense of freedom and with it a possibility to influence, to connect and to affect other people’s thinking.

Other participants, like Neeti share their positive feedback from being a migrant in Australia. During her stay in Australia (1.5 years), Neeti personally did not experience cases of racism or a feeling of being segregated.

“It’s good... the culture is really different from where I come from, in India. And I don’t find as people would say racism and all; I have not faced it up till now. But my friends are faced with it, but I am not, luckily (laugh). And it’s nice here; it’s nice, comfortable in a way. I don’t know if I have faced any racism, at least not as such, not institutionalized…”

One reason which could be attributed to this feeling is that Neeti’s experience from living in Western Australia has been predominantly in a university setting, where a large proportion of the students are from overseas, especially from Asia.
"They [my friends] have mostly faced it [racism] on the streets, like through truck drivers, construction workers. I think they are not very well educated, that’s why they would do it, but here in the University, I don’t think anyone would do it." (Neeti)

Another social phenomenon pointed out by the participants in the interviews is the polarising of the Australian society.

“I think here is very polarized. There are two groups of people. There is a group of people that care and know about the environment and you don’t need to work with them, cause they already know, they come to you and they want to participate, they want to sign your petition ‘cause they want to collaborate somehow. And there is this other side of society that is not really aware of anything, that can’t be bothered with any of that.” (Mariette)

This social polarising could be attributed to the disconnectedness of different groups separated not by economic characteristics, but by their level of environmental awareness. Although there was no one else in the interviews who pointed out this particular social phenomenon, it was widely expressed that the sense of belonging and connectedness with others depended largely on the environmental concerns of other equally minded people. Furthermore, the polarising of society is a sign of a disconnectedness, a diametrically different notion of connectedness, which serves as an additional barrier to environmental engagement and social belonging.
8.9 Summary

This chapter’s key points are listed below:

- Recent migrants are relying on maintaining their existing connections while also forming new ones, driven by their need to establish themselves in a new territory. New migrants and travellers rely extensively on communication technology to maintain their connectedness.

- Connectedness plays another very important role in the lives of recent migrants: it takes the form of social values, such as family values, collaboration and trust, which are in turn the most significant factors in the environmental movement. The link between the two areas becomes evident in the research.

- On a larger scale, a sense of belonging can be achieved by acquiring citizenship in the new country of migration, or gaining a full membership of one’s community.
PART IV

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

Image 4: U-Ram Choe (2009). Una Lumino Portentum, Scientific name: Anmopispi Avearium cirripedia Uram, metallic material, motor, LED, CPU board, polycarbonate 360(w) x 180(h) x 48(d)cm.
CHAPTER 9

DISCUSSION

9.1 Introduction

What values, cultural norms and beliefs drive recent migrants to engage with the environmental movement in Western Australia?

Since the 1970s, research, focused purely on migration studies, has not been concerned with answering this question. The theory of environmental ethics also cannot clearly explain the motivational values of such engagement. The most relevant research that can shed light on the issue comes from trans-global activism and sustainable development.

This chapter provides a discussion of the main findings and outcomes derived from this research. Drawing from the presentations of the three themes of space, territoriality and connectedness in the previous part, its purpose is to provide a clear connection between the aims and the objectives stated at the start and the findings and outcomes from the research. Thus, this chapter links the results directly to the main research question and provide some clear answers. It also provides a summary of the reasons for environmental problems in migrants’ view, a discussion about global borders, democracy and present day migrants and a discussion on the subject of globalisation and of the idea of global environmental citizenship.

9.2 Globalisation

Globalisation with its ethics and critics across the world shows that the challenges which Australia faces in the 21st century are not entirely unique and this essential recognition has not gone unnoticed by the participants in the study. The forces of globalisation have shaped the current state of free trade, of social movements and of
many other facets of today’s life. In fact, hardly any aspect of the world as we know it has remained untouched by the forces of globalisation. The participants identified not only the uniqueness of the WA’s natural, social and cultural landscapes, but also some notable similarities, such as the spread and effects of the mining industry (in South Africa), the overly evident connection between social, economic and environmental problems, expressed in lack of awareness and proactivity, economic constraints in engaging with the environmental movement. The origins of those similarities can be traced back and consequently subscribed to globalisation. Awareness of our global connectedness leads me to rethink both the research questions and the methodologies for doing research.

I can now answer the key research question of this study: What values, cultural norms and beliefs drive recent migrants to engage with the environmental movement in Western Australia? The answer is at least three-fold and it draws on the roots of globalisation and democracy theory for environmental justice. First, environmental ethics is equally applicable for the purpose of the research, the conceptualisation of environmental activism, and the perspectives of migrant research. Second, nation-states need to rethink their theoretical assumptions and useful ways of addressing migrant environmental activism in the light of the globalisation of environmental problems. Third, migrants’ environmental engagement in Western Australia is building on the critical connectedness to other environmental activists and is inspired by the globally-aware activists. This study is a response to the political and methodological challenges of doing research in an age of globalisation.

### 9.3 Change and continuity

What are the values which drive contemporary migrants to be active in the environmental movement? The reasons for environmental activism are incredibly complex, rarely lie within one parameter, and span across an array of experiences, collected memories, educational backgrounds and one’s upbringing. The underlying presumption from the start of the thesis was that social values, such as the meaning
of family, play a more important role in the environmental engagement of migrants as opposed to economic factors.

The social values of democracy and policy are not just based on institutional elements, such as the Constitution and the Bill of Rights in the United States (Carrow, Churchill et al. 1998) or the Federal and State legislations in Australia. They need to be constantly negotiated and re-negotiated, which is the case in many East-European and Latin American countries, for example. Common values shared in a society have the ability to hold it together and the inclusion of these values into policy making is a preposition for a successful policy-making. Social values are driven through a “complex deliberative, cultural, legal and political process” (Carrow, Churchill et al 1998, p. ix). They are undoubtedly non-static, but instead fluid and flexible. Although, they are derivative of basic moral values and principles, they are also largely dependent on particular societies and cultures.

Values, both environmental and social are at the heart of creating new forms of citizenship. Many recent migrants are not Australian citizens, yet their sense of belonging, their passion and care for environmental justice are presenting a long-term vision and commitment to common shared futures.69

It appears that the need for connectedness among the migrants also indicates that there is a special meaning attached to family which acts as a major motivation factor in their environmental activism. Most environmentally active migrants see a long-term future for themselves in Australia. This is manifested with changes in visa status: originally arrived on a spouse visa (Agata), working holiday visa (Gunter) or a student visa (Soma) and then moved to become permanent residents of Australia. Where the shift towards settling down in Australia has not been finalised, there is a strong trend to do so in the future. In other instances, there is some possibility of extending their visa status if the circumstances allow for it in the future (Neeti). There is also the case of those, such as Praveen who feel that they are foreigners wherever they go or in other words, they are global citizens.

69 Although a comparative study between long-term settlers and recent migrants have not been conducted in this thesis, such long-term vision of “shared futures” could be lacking in many formal citizens.
A large proportion of the environmentally active migrants can be classified as short-term migrants (i.e. with the intention of staying less than a year). This corresponds to a recent tendency in Australia, where a record number of short-term visitors have arrived in the past years (5.7 million people in 2010, 5.9 million in 2011, 6 million in 2012 and 6.3 million in 2013) (ABS 2013).

Interestingly, the impact of foreign students is quite significant for Australia, especially for the states of Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. The total number of arrivals on a student visa marked a record high in Australia accounting for 27% of population growth or 122,400 people in the period 2008-2009. The top three countries of origin of those migrants were respectively India, China, and Nepal (ABS 2009-10).

The international education sector is proving of increasing significance for Australian overseas immigration. One in every five students in Australia is from overseas. Therefore it is of vital importance to take account of those contemporary migrants, who arrive on a temporary student visa. Their contribution is not only a matter of numbers and in using Australian educational services but also in all other aspects of this country’s social and political life. Many of the participants in my study belong to this category of people.

The importance of environmental activism for Australia

As discussed in chapter six intrinsic values and responsibility played an important role in the motivation of environmentally active migrants. Building on this argument, here I discuss the theme of the globalisation of environmental problems. The importance of environmental activism for Australia rises with the globalisation of environmental problems. Below I also point out the reasons for this in the views of migrants, which is a useful debate in addressing current and future environmental problems and associated migrants’ activism. The purpose of this discussion is to address the objective of this research as well as investigate and critique the ways in which different levels of Government facilitate recent migrants’ engagement with the natural environment.

The importance of environmental activism for Australia consists of a web of reasons. Ideas around space, territoriality and connectedness have been definitely identified in
the answers of the participants in this study, and they are also linked directly to the main aims and objectives of this research.

In geo-political sense, the impact which recent migrants have on the Australian environmental landscape can be measured by their understanding of the importance of environmental activism for Australia. Although these perceptions have limited formal power as many recent migrants do not have the right to vote, they can provide policy makers with valuable understanding and feedback from understudied groups within the Australian society as well as give some indication about the future of the environmental movement in WA.

*Reasons for environmental problems in WA in migrants’ views*

The reasons for environmental problems in Western Australia in migrants’ views include social exclusion, language barriers, political decisions and lack of education: The usually dry climate of WA was pointed out also as a main reason for environmental problems by recently arrived migrants.

The causes of environmental problems in WA emphasise social (polarising of society, social exclusion), socio-political (education system) and socio-environmental reasons (environmental consciousness) (see table 7). An overarching theme is the globalisation of environmental problems
Table 7. Reasons for environmental problems in WA in migrants’ view

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Social Exclusion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Language Barriers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-political</td>
<td>Educational System</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Political ignorance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-environmental</td>
<td>Lack of environmental consciousness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-economic</td>
<td>Polarising of society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Dry continent</td>
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**Education and environmental education**

There is a strong connection between environmentally active migrants and education obtained either in their home country or in Australia. Environmental education has attracted a large amount of attention from scholars, but very little has been said about the connection between this kind of education and immigrant societies (Charney, Brenda et al. 2003).

The modern stage for popularising environmental education was set in 1975 with the Belgrade Workshop on Environmental Education organised by UNESCO and UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) and it was shortly followed up by the Tbilisi Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education. Indisputably, the landmark event took place much later in 1992 with the Earth Summit’s Agenda
217 report, which stated that environmental education is “critical for achieving environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behaviours consistent with sustainable development” (United Nations Commission on Environment Development 1992 Chapter 36, p.2). According to Palmer (1998) there are three dimensions of environmental learning: education about, from and for the environment. He defines each of them in the following way:

“...education about the environment seeks to discover the nature of the areas under study often through investigatory and discovery approaches…”

“... in education from the environment, teachers must have sought to forward the general education of the child by using the environment as a resource...”

“.....to be education for the environment…is education which is environmental in style with emphasis on developing an informed concern for the environment...” (Palmer 1998 p.137).

The process of education is underpinned by the personal experience of people, which affects their concerns and actions. Knowledge helps in building personal experience and thus facilitates the development of a more ecological perspective as a worldview (Biomimicry 3.8 2012).

**Globalisation of environmental problems**

The themes distilled from the interviews with recent migrants reveal that there is a need for comparison between the challenges of environmental protection as well as the problems in engaging with the environmental movement in both their countries of origin and their new home Western Australia. Without trying to generalise or to summarise, such environmental problems and the challenges related to them, this chapter rather gives an idea of the trends in the environmental movement that influence the lives of nowadays migrants. The transformation in becoming an environmentally active migrant exposes certain gender biases and poses the question: are migrant-women equally affected by the environmental degradation as migrant-men? The findings below suggest that becoming an environmentally active migrant is propelled to a large extent by personally experiencing problems related to air and
water pollution, biodiversity loss, deforestation and so on. Since the number of migrant-women in this study was almost twice that of migrant-men, this is an indication that women may feel more strongly affected by environmental degradation.

9.4 Democracy, recent migrants and global borders

As territoriality is ultimately related to the borders that mark a particular section of the Earth, the issue about how they are interpreted and understood as static or dynamic dimensions, is worth exploring.

Global borders

The idea of global borders has not been closely examined by migration researchers, and it has never before been applied in the light of recent migrants and environmental activism. The oxymoron concept of ‘global borders’ has been used as an alternative to the understanding that borders divide the world in static and motionless territories (Benhabib and Resnik 2009). Feminist migration researchers also see geographically bounded borders as a social construction heavily influenced by the notion of power and gender differences (Silvey 2005). Drawing on feminist geography, the nation is seen as “founded on the conception of citizenship that exclude specific women, specifically international women migrants” (Silvey 2005 p. 139).

Migrants involved with environmental activism today, not only cross political and social borders, more importantly are acting as social agents for breaking the preconceived ideas of a bordered world. With their passion, beliefs, cultural norms and active engagement, with the strong connection which they create between other like-minded migrants and locals, they act to breakdown social exclusion, stop environmental degradation and unite a bordered world. It could be argued that if there were, metaphorically speaking, a new Berlin Wall which divided the world between environmental conservation and degradation, those global migrants would be the active agents in bringing it down and creating a new space and with it a new territory.

The concept of the “world beyond boundaries” has been criticized by Keith (2005), who claims that there is a tendency to romanticize the idea of no borders of the state.
and to promote the “virtues of civil society and community mobilization” (Keith 2005 p. 253). He claims that civil society operates within the boundaries of governmental control and that exaggerating the romantic views of world beyond borders may limit, instead of advance our ability to move towards, for example more cosmopolitan cities (Keith 2004). This may be true in the case of urban areas but global borders are a powerful concept when it comes to the environmental unity of the planet’s ecology.

Borders are only preserved for expert knowledge and are used for policing rather than as a geo-political division to such an extent that border management becomes identical with migration management (Andrijasevic and Walters 2010). Previous research suggests that in a truly democratic society, the state’s border control needs to embrace foreigners in their decision making (Abizadeh 2008).

Abizadeh (2008) argues that in line with the democratic theory a legitimate state border control is owned by political institutions in which citizens as well as foreigners can participate. By definition, Abizadeh (2008) explains, a democratic theory of political legitimating requires for members to “exercise self-determination, including control of their own borders” (Abizadeh 2008, p.38). The human rights exceptions such as asylum seekers or environmental refugees are seen as out-of-the-norm, not the rule, and create “a tension with the right of a democratic people unilaterally to control their own boundaries” (Abizadeh 2008 p.38).

The need to maintain strong connections with family is of extreme importance in settling not only in a new country and creating a physical and social territory but even more so for those migrants who are unsettled, and constant global travellers. This fact stresses the importance of the existence of symbolic borders which stretch the meaning of territory. Perhaps the most adequate definition of borders which relate to this finding is provided by Lamont and Molnar (2002) as “symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinction made by social actors to categorise objects, people, practices, and even time and space” (Lamont and Molnar 2002 p.168). Despite many attempts to create global policies, some more successful (e.g. Global Financial Crisis agreements) than others (e.g. climate change negotiations), the planet remains the ultimate border for human activities. Recent migrants’
engagement in the environmental movement emphasises their understanding of these global borders.

**Democracy**

At the heart of democracy lies the ability to “make things public” (Beck 1992, Latour and Weibel 2005). Latour (Latour 2004, Latour and Weibel 2005) discusses the ways to trigger the political passion and interest at a time when people feel the need more than ever before to have their voices heard. One such way, it could be argued is providing the means for the environmental engagement of migrants since democracy has also been recognised to mean the ability of citizens to participate in the decision-making process (Latour 2005, Vogel 2009). Citizens are expected and even required to make a contribution to democracy through “active citizenship” (Vogel 2008), and thus the relationship between citizens and democracy is seen as contingent.

Democracy is providing the means and assuring that “the access to public sphere is open to all citizens” (Habermas and Seidman 1989, Habermas and Outhwaite 1996). According to Habermas and Cronin (Habermas and Cronin 2005 book jacket) “the rights of the individual that are central to liberalism can be guaranteed only within a constitutional framework that at the same time fosters democratic rights of political participation through the public sphere”. This definition, although applicable, needs revisiting because of today’s increased global movement of people and global borders. Given that nearly half of the population in Australia and increasingly so in other parts of the world is mobile, talking about citizens is becoming an exclusive concept for those privileged to be born in the political borders of Australia (or having acquired citizenship) without taking into account the multicultural model of civically active citizens of today’s metropolitan and multicultural cities, which Perth is also claiming to be. If we are to call ourselves a democratic society, we need to reconceptualise the concept of citizenship in terms of its role in building the foundation blocks of democracy. The first step in this process would be to recognise the existence of global environmental citizenship in addition to the already coined term “environmental citizenship” (Luque 2005).

Although some authors have emphasised the need to re-visit democracy from a global perspective, that is to include notions, such as global society and global cities
in an era destabilised by climate change, pollution problems and biodiversity loss, research and policies on recognising the environmental activism of migrants as a building block of democracy is still lacking.

There are, of course, limited formal political avenues available to migrants, such as election vote; so their needs and rights for engaging with public life are not recognised nor met, or at least not in a meaningful way. Some of the migrants come from a highly active political background and they express a sense of frustration about not being able to contribute to the public life or to engage in any way with political parties. Tineke, a migrant from Belgium, whose interest is in social justice, shared with me over one of the university institute’s morning teas her difficulties in engaging formally with the public life:

“I have been here 10 years and I am still finding my ways around…I really think there isn’t much support for migrants. I still cannot vote, maybe I can next year. My background is political, and my mother is in the European parliament. But here I have found it impossible to engage in any way of the political parties or in any other work, which I am normally interested in.”

“I was thinking of setting up a party, just for immigrants here, but this would be too exclusive. There need to be many different interest groups in all of the parties. Otherwise it creates, you know… negative ethnic image.”

Another main value associated with democracy is personal autonomy (Carrow, Churchill et al. 1998, Young 2000, Kelly 2001). According to Raz, personal autonomy is “the vision of people controlling to some degree, their own destiny” so that they can see themselves as “creators of their own moral world and not subjected to the will of others” (Raz 1986 154-155, 369). Raz continues to explain that there are three conditions which need to be met in order for a person to maintain their personal autonomy, and therefore being essential for the democratic polity:

1) The person has the mental capacity to form personal pursuits and aims
2) To have available a wide range of options and
3) To be independent, free from the will of others through coercion and manipulation.

According to Raz (1986), the third condition is being permanently violated for foreigners by the nation-states’ legal apparatus and its coercion on citizens and especially foreigners through immigration border control. This is particularly manifested by the visa problems that almost all of the people I interviewed have experienced.

On the other hand, these migrants are bridging the gap in achieving a more democratic society by (1) overcoming the nation-state coercion threats and (2) by broadening the notion of borders to include wider environmental rights through their environmental activism. Environmental problems are rarely happening in isolation or being disconnected from each other. A genuine concern for the environmental world means that in parallel to their struggle, migrants are thinking beyond political borders and beyond the legal apparatus. The Sea Shepherd efforts are a good example of such a phenomenon. While acknowledging global borders, they are prepared to act beyond political borders in the name of a common threat: the environmental destruction of the oceans and their wildlife. In their enthusiasm, creativity and support, what becomes evident is that they comply with Raz’s three characteristics for a democratic society: mental capacity, valuable options and independence (Raz 1986).

Paradoxically, Australia materialises itself as a place of contrast: one that both excludes and includes newcomers. Traditionally, a place where migrants came as prison convicts, long-term settlers, driven out of the terror of wars and violent conflicts, or in a search for a better life for themselves and their family, it became also a place of social exclusion. Now, with these new types of young and vibrant migrants, Australia is showing a potential for being a place of inclusion, not exclusion; a place where one can fit in perfectly, precisely because they are “foreign”.

“What motivated me was to try it out – it was presented to me as part of the Australian culture. And it is a big thing!” (Praveen)
My argument here is not that the environmental organisations where the participants work are inherently democratic. They all have their weaknesses and strengths. Sea Shepherd, for example, has been both criticized and praised for its direct action tactics, for risking the lives of its volunteers as well as those of whalers and fishers (Greenpeace USA 2008). In particular, they have been the target of critics from the pro-whaling nations, led by the Japanese Government. Greenpeace has also criticised Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS) for its tactics, which may endanger the lives of people involved in their unsafe operations (Greenpeace USA 2008), although SSCS has continuously stated that they have not hurt or injured anyone during their actions (SSCS 2012).

However, the fact that these migrants are involved as volunteers and supporters of such conservation societies means that they are acting by the very definition of a committed democrat (Wollheim 1964, Walzer 1981). According to Wollheim (1964), in democratic theory there exists the paradox of a committed democrats, explained as:

“(1) As a citizen of a democratic community, I review the choices available to the community and conclude that A is the policy that ought to be implemented. (2) The people, in their wisdom or their wilfulness, choose policy B, the very opposite of A. (3) I still think that policy A ought to be implemented, but now, as a committed democrat, I also think that policy B ought to be implemented. Hence, I think that both policies ought to be implemented.” (Wollheim 1964 as quoted in Walzer 1981 p. 385).

Despite the linguistic and the philosophical dilemmas, following this paradox, what is clear is that policy needs to be created around the duty of the committed democrats in contrast to remaining silent. Regardless of which policy may be the final choice, what is of significance here, is that a choice has been made for policy A or policy B.

Consequently, from this point of view, environmentally active migrants broaden and strengthen the idea of democracy and question the current definition of citizenship in terms of its role to democracy in Australia and all around the world.
9.5 Global environmental citizenship

Global environmental citizenship is one of the answers to the objectives of this research, namely to identify and describe the outcomes that follow from migrants’ environmental engagement.

Discussions about citizenship suggest the need for new forms of citizenship to be created (Morokvasic, Erel et al. 2002). The more traditional definitions of citizenship involve equality and homogeneity, while new forms of citizenship emphasize the issues of difference, such as cultural, ethnic, racial and gendered diversity (Fester 2005).

Traditional perceptions of citizenship have seen it as a linear connection between the individual and the nation-state through practical membership (Castles and Davidson 2000). Challenges, such as globalisation and migrants’ consistent ties with their home countries (or transnationalism) have changed those perceptions. These tendencies lead not only to re-scaling of citizenship, but also to new forms of citizenship (Nagel and Staeheli 2004).

I argue that there is a need to regard citizenship, as well as the idea of a nation in more inclusive terms. Recent Australian migrants, such as Soma, Baba, Rose and Praveen are informing new ideas and new definitions of citizenship. Being new migrants, they are not covered by the traditional definitions and legal provisions of citizenship. Nevertheless, they act towards strengthening the social fabric of modern-day civil society, and ultimately broaden the understanding of what it means to belong to a nation. What is more, there is a need to re-address the current political, social and cultural borders as boundaries of environmental engagement.

Often, recent migrants in Western Australia unexpectedly connect to other migrants from all over the world, rather than to Australian-born citizens, despite their desire to “experience Australia”. This phenomenon, both ironical and somewhat logical, in the sense that migrant networks develop and grow on the basis of attracting similar-minded people, who thus share something in common (e.g. overseas background) for example – connection to the global environmental consciousness, which defines their social groups. It is argued that the presence of multicultural networks in
Environmental engagement acts as an indication for the *connectivity* of environmental activism, as well as for the mutual influence that such networks have on each-other. For example, Praveen’s participation with the Green Representatives programme has put him and the other participant on a stage, where each of them can share similar environmental values, concerns and actions. Thus each of the participants can continue their environmental work not only in Western Australia, Australia, or even their home country, but also in third and fourth destinations, where they may go in the future. With the increasing mobility of people, there is a larger sharing of environmental awareness, which cannot any longer remain unrecognised or denied.

Environmental problems are not an isolated phenomenon and span across continents and political borders. This is because movements of people are also taking place on an unprecedented scale and can no longer be viewed as a separate isolated political matter. Social values, shared amongst migrant communities are helping in bridging the gap of environmental concern and help in facilitating discussions about global borders and global citizenship. Social values, however, cannot alone bridge the gap of environmental problems that have become endemic to the market-based global economy.

Furthermore, transforming the notion of rights to the city (Lefebvre 1991, 1996, Purcell 2002, 2003, Fester 2005) to rights to the natural environment means that those who live (inhabit) the territory confined by political borders (be that migrants) have the rights to (1) take part in the decision-making related to the use of that natural environment and (2) to use, occupy and access the space of the natural environment.

Finally, building on Habermas’ definition of democracy, seen as the rights of all citizens to participate in public life (Habermas 1996) and on Latour’s ideas about democracy, which is making “things public” (Latour and Weibel 2005), I proposed the term and concept of “global environmental citizenship” to include global travelers in the process of building the foundation of a global democratic society. Their passion and interest in the environmental movement should not be left unnoticed and excluded from the active citizenship, which is not only desirable, but also required for a modern day democracy.
Migrants’ critical environmental engagement can help social scientists attend to the power dynamics within environmental research and to influence the conceptualization of their research. This applicability depends on the coupled role of sustained public participation of citizens, which here is described as global environmental citizenship, and on the globalisation of environmental problems and boundaries of territoriality in this process. Looking ahead to the future, global environmental citizenship and global connections among people from seemingly disconnected cultural and geographical settings is only likely to continue and expand.

*Global environmental citizenship* is one of the answers to the objectives of this research, namely to identify and describe the outcomes that follow from migrants’ environmental engagement. Environmental citizenship and global citizenship have been used before, but not together. Although this type of citizenship may not necessarily be underpinned by a global activist network, it does link with the others equally-minded people through the process of creating space, creating territorialities and sustaining connectedness amongst the migrants.

The reasons that recent migrants rarely participated in organised meetings by the town councils or by the political parties, is not apathy to current environmental development, but rather a sense of social exclusion, which is due to the some of the barriers, described above (see chapter 7) in engaging with the environmental movement, such as ineffective outreach to those groups.

Recent initiatives, which started within the last 10 years, like “Get Up” (Get Up 2005) are undoubtedly contribute to that sense of global environmental belonging, however, it was not part of the methodology to research online forums and the types of participants there, so it remains unclear if migrants were actively in those forums.

However, one thing that becomes clear is that there is a link between education (either in migrants’ home country or in Australia) and environmental engagement, and dissemination of information about environmental degradation is a significant factor in taking part in the environmental movement. The establishment of global support networks are the logical answer to connecting the global environmental awareness.
9.6 Summary

The increasing globalisation of environmental problems together with the amplified global movement of people poses some fundamental challenges to each particular country or a region, and WA is not an exception in this regard. Some of the most pressing social and environmental problems of WA evolve around issues concerning inclusion of migrant communities and environmental justice for current and future generations. The discussion derived from this research suggests that there are certain steps which could be undertaken in order to accommodate the challenges posed from the cross-over of the unprecedented speed at which globalisation has increased the processes of both mobility of people and spread of environmental degradation. Some of those steps are identifying areas of future environmental degradation, addressing the future possibilities for migrants from those areas and recognising that migrants, who act as environmental activists, are encouraging greener world and greener politics. Increased localised environmental awareness in some regions of the world could result in increasing environmental awareness in Australia due to migrants arriving from those regions.

The most important findings of this research were threefold. The first one is concerned with the environmental values, expressed by recent migrants; the second finding is on the issues of democracy and global borders and identified environmentally active migrants as agents for broadening the notion of democracy; and the third one revolves around questions about global environmental citizenship.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 Concluding remarks

What becomes evident from my research is that the mobility of people has become an increasingly influential process, both in terms of actual number of people as well as a multi-dimensional process in which migrants are relating to the ever-increasing globalised environmental problems.

When the Greens Senator for Western Australia, Scott Ludlam, visited the Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute in October 2011 to talk about the proposed changes in the public transport system, amongst other questions, he was asked: “How do you see the connection between democracy and sustainability?” What interested me was not just the nature of the question, but the fact that it came from a recent migrant from Rwanda. He did not want to know about the technicalities of expanding the public transport system, but instead was concerned mainly with its affordability and with the way it may contribute to democracy. Had he not been in the room, such a question is unlikely to have been asked.

During my field work, I had passed through the office of the Australian Greens Senator for WA hoping that I would find recent migrants engaged in one way or another with the Greens. The secretary politely informed me, that “there were too many Anglos” in the Green Party and hardly any migrants. In the two years, since this conversation, despite the friendly offer by the secretary to pass on my contact details, I have still not found any recent migrants who are engaged with the Green Party.

70 This was on the 29th September 2009, two years earlier than the senator’s visit to CUSP.
Looking retrospectively on my research, it has become clear that here I have tried more or less to answer the question addressed to the senator. I explore the dynamic, challenging and transformative connections between sustainability and migrants and their role in the contested nature of democracy (see chapter 7). I do so not only in theoretical terms but also in the light of the experience of more than thirty people who have decided to move to Western Australia. They have manifested different ways of “making this part of the world their own place” through a much-needed environmental activism, and have transformed the notion of citizenship through an eager sense of what environmental justice means (see chapter 7). I have shown that this new form of citizenship rarely involves political parties, or even formal ethnic groups; immigrants’ social and environmental engagement is scattered across local, national and international environmental NGOs, universities, small groups of interest, various workshops, devoted to different topics (such as water conservation, better community gardens and astronomy clubs), participation in student-based organisations concerned with climate change and many others.

In the framework of global citizenship and ever-increasing global movements, a vital part in strengthening democracy in Australia is to include recent migrants in the decision-making processes. With very weak political power, their voices are silent, and therefore there is an even greater need for their inclusion in other governmental and non-governmental, venues of conversations. It has been argued that democracy needs to be strengthened by the inclusion of “non-parliamentary institutions of representations” (Sawer and Zappalà 2001) and this need is nowhere more visible than in the modern day multicultural societies.

Democratic processes are mutually dependent on citizens’ participants (Touraine 1997). This requires efforts from both the state and the “citizens” and involves education practices on rights and responsibilities as citizens as well as participation of those citizens in civil society. What at first glance seems like a smooth process becomes problematic with the concept of citizenship which is only attributed to some of the population in Australia.
The current approach to involving migrant communities in the decision-making processes lacks some basic understanding in the ways such communities function. This reproduces an asymmetrical pattern of over-representation of some groups of society and under-representation of others. If until now, it was regarded as a generously inclusive approach to involve migrant communities by advertising for participation in public consultations at train station and local newspapers, or even with the functioning of ethnic clubs (e.g. the Italian Club, Chinese Society and Bulgarian Club), such methods can no longer be relied upon as an effective and inclusive way. They rarely produce the desired outcomes, that is to include a wide range of participants in a public community consultation and more often than not fail their original purpose, which is to effectively engage many (if not any) members of the wide-spread migrant movement.

Such an example is the meeting at Fremantle Council held in February 2012 on the proposed amendment 49, which would allow for higher urban density in Fremantle. Although public attendance was encouraged as much as possible, there were no recent migrants there to express their opinion. Amongst the long queue of people, who registered their interest to make a short speech of 3 minutes each, the person, who had been residing in Australia the least, had been there 30 years. Perhaps this is not a surprise, given that recent migrants need to deal with other pressing problems, such as learning a foreign language, finding accommodation and employment. However, their views are just as important to hear, as those of the Fremantle Historical Society, business representatives, long-term residents, and other individuals and organisations.

Such cases are not isolated. Another example is the discussion in April 2013 of Perth City Vision 2029 at the Council House, where the only representative of the migrant community was the author herself, despite the formal recognition of the many

71Even when there is genuine interest amongst governmental and national institutions in giving voice to a broad range of communities, the approaches, and instruments for such intentions are too often inadequate.

72Perhaps a better way to attract a small proportion of the migrant communities (or nearly half of the population in Western Australia) for the next public consultation meeting on the use of newly proposed public transport system, or new town planning scheme is to take a more innovative and indisputably more challenging approach of contacting various environmental organisations, social groups of interest, university networks and many other small networks, which are not ‘explicitly’ migrant.
international students who reside and study in the city, together with the increasing contingent of short-term skilled migrants (under the 457 subclass visa).

During my field work, it became clear that a far more reasonable and “inclusive” approach is to recognise that cultures do not exist separately as a “homogenous, reified, static and unchanging notion” (Grillo 2008 p. 32) and with it, they should not be looked at as a hidden, disconnected and isolated concept, but rather as inclusive of the dynamic and renewed nature of modern-day society.

The concepts of democracy, sustainability and migration can be symbolically illustrated by the ancient game of Go where:

“...every piece is of equal value and can be played anywhere on the board. The aim is not to destroy but to build territory. Single stones become groups, and groups become organic structures which live or die. A stone’s power depends on its location and the moment. Over the entire board there occur transformations of growth and decay, movement and stasis, small defeats and temporary victories. The stronger player is the teacher, the weaker is the learner, and even today the polite way to ask for a game is to say: ‘Please, teach me.’...the point of the game was not so much for one player to overcome another but for both to engage in a kind of cooperative dialogue (“hand conversation”, they used to call it) with the aim of overcoming a common enemy. The common enemy was, of course, as it always is, human weakness like greed, anger and stupidity” (Pinckard 1992 p.5).

Although migration is described here as simply leaving the country of residence to live somewhere else, issues about deciding to migrate and pursuing subsequent economic and social behaviour still remain unanswered. One of the main reasons for migrating to another country of residence remains going along with a partner or the willingness of a partner to migrate with them, a decision made in the face of the perceived opportunities; or in other words: the consolidation between family needs and job needs. This was shown through the stories of the participants in this study.
Another finding that came out from this research is that irrespective of the outcomes from their environmental activities, the environmental fight strongly impacts on the lives of these recent migrants. This includes the perceptions and the values attributed to the environment that become very relevant to the lives of the new migrant arrivals in WA and thus presented my main focus of interest.

According to Prof. Blair Fitzharris, the reason why we experience the same problems in different parts of the world – despite their differences in physical geographies – is because our social systems are the same. For example, New Zealand and Australia experience the same problems, draughts, and environmental refugees, increased rainfalls in some places, despite being physically and geographically different. He posed the question of whether adaptation to climate change lies predominantly in the socio-political and economic systems. Such answer would place a special importance on the role of the global agents of creating new systems, an essential part of which are the group of people I term here “global environmental citizens”.

The presumption which underpinned the theory and findings are as follows.

- Firstly, the separate themes of space, territoriality and connectivity exposed here are connected to each other; this simply means that the data is not a shapeless pile of information, but rather presents a solid social structure, an organized field of human practice and social relations.
- The second presumption, which was validated throughout the research, was that the two levels of factual information discussed in this thesis – personal life experience of recent migrants and their public engagement with the environmental movement – are linked in an essential and constructive way. It makes no sense to theorise one without also considering the other. This becomes an issue of private versus public (Yuval-Davis 1997). One of the very first slogans of feminism: ‘Even the hem of the dress is public’ can be easily applied here as well.

Below was what the thesis was to discover.

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Talk on Climate Change on the 24th April 2013 at Elizabeth Jolly Theatre, Curtin University, Perth, Australia.
It was found that the recent migrants’ motivation for engagement in formal or informal ways with the environmental movement was driven mainly by personal and social reasons. A lot of touching personal stories pointed to the fact that the success (or the fall) of the environmental movement is perpetuated by such factors, as pursuing the loved ones, searching for a healthier environment for one’s child or even achieving a sense of freedom, which had been denied in the migrants’ previous home country. All this suggests that the reasons for taking part in public engagement are very complex and difficult to generalise.

An undeniable trend, evident in the first decade of the 21st century, is that worldwide population is becoming increasingly mobile. In the case of Western Australia, the population is constantly boomed by migrant arrivals, and migrants account for amounting increase of the Australian population. In many cases, these arriving people are not committed to staying and they arrive as students, visitors or with other short-term purposes, while others are simply not allowed to stay. This, however, does not mean that their contribution to the environmental movement should be underestimated. Some of the most influential participants in my research were relatively short visitors on the Australian shores, yet highly important. Example of this is the Sea Shepherd crew members and volunteers and their contribution to lifting the profile of marine conservation. As most of the oceanic territory falls under the term of ‘international waters’, the diverse crew of volunteers from all over the world, represented a picturesque map of the world in the very same way as the marine and water conservation is of shared international responsibility.

In the absence of an adequate category for people, who cross international borders in active pursue of environmental protection, a new notion can be put in place to describe those people – environmental nomads – instead of the misleading and unrealistic label of “tourist” under which they are currently placed.

Public participation in the environmental movement is affected by our ethics, values and care for future generations. The ethics of our cultural background and also the intrinsic value of nature contribute to the ways in which we reflect and engage with the environment in its various forms. In Australia - a country of immigration - the cultural norms of recent migrants have influenced wider public perception of the environment.
So what is the connection between migrants and nature? Nowhere else is the sense of place, and feeling connected to others and to the new place of migration, is felt stronger, than in the connection with nature. Nowhere else is the connection with nature more needed, more valued and more cherished than in the case of people, who are in a need to establish their physical, social and cultural territories, such as recent migrants. It brings a sense of belonging, a sense of understanding and commitment to this new territory. Such connection is also multi-fold, in that it contributes to a wider environmental awareness of the globalisation of environmental problems.

This is overly evident when migrants were asked to describe the meaning of family and nature. Strikingly, the ways that they talk about family and nature are remarkably the same. Even the words, which they use to describe their meaning are similar: ‘means everything to me’, ‘what I live for’, ‘fundamental thing’ are some examples.

Trying to achieve a multicultural model of civically active citizens in the environmental movement, “Migrants and Nature” examined contemporary migrants’ contribution to civil society and social sustainability in Western Australia. It mapped their cultural beliefs, norms and values in the section devoted to Space, the difficulties on their way to become environmentally active citizens in Territoriality and the important role of connection with other beings and the natural world in Connectedness. What became clear is that the global environmental citizenship phenomenon emerged out of a range of challenges, obstacles and development that poses threats to the ecology, but also out of love, care and hope for a better planetary future.

10.2 Reflections

Upon his second visit to the CUSP Institute in February 2012, Senator Scott Ludlam, gave a wide angled perspective on the current environmental crisis and its interconnections with the economic and political realms, which touched on issues from oil pick to chaos theory. The first question, which he was asked, was: “How can we possibly deal with the increased number of people that come to Australia?” The question was set against the background of limited environmental resource and the
need for their future allocation, and especially the way we design living spaces in cities.

Is it really surprising that the first concern raised was regarding recent migrants? Such concern is perhaps the most prevailing response to globalisation in the Australian public and perhaps worldwide. It reaffirms the myth that migrants are continuously seen as economic threat, “stealing jobs” and competing for limited housing. This myth is so widespread, that it even penetrates those who are migrants themselves, but have been in Australia longer than others. In those terms, people who arrive afterwards are seen often as an economic threat. Perceptions about migrants and especially recent migrants are still predominantly negative, even amongst environmentalists. We must understand that the roots of these perceptions are deeply imbedded in the aids organisations, NGOs, educational institutions and stem from the Government itself. The strict regulations posed on migrants on English requirements, and even health requirements, are spread amongst the common perception that migrants must comply to those requirements not only in formal terms, in order to maintain their visa, but also informally, in public and private spaces.

This question seems to be part of a bigger picture, and it is called globalisation. The increased forces of economic trades and the blurring between the political and economic spheres (Pettit 1991, Goodin and Pettit 2006) pose the question of re-examining the increased mobility of people and their relation to the increased environmental problems not in a simple dichotomy, but as a complex interactions, which is formed on the basis of the specific historical, political and social context. In the context of Western Australia, recent migrants have not only contributed immensely to the environmental movement, but have also influenced the views of those, who proudly considered themselves Australians, but are not always the active citizens, which is the building block of democracy and civil society. Migrants have re-defined the meaning of “family” to those who share the same passion and enthusiasm in a new territory, and have fostered the formation of new social connections with other equally-minded people, as well as have established new connections with nature, each of them in a very personal and meaningful way. Recent migrants, are not “a burden to the economy” and are people, whose values of
the natural world lie not simply in material terms, but also in value attributed to nature.

Who are the recent migrants of Western Australia? They are certainly not a homogeneous group, but a more diverse and more versified group than the “Australian” group (if we can distinguish at all between the two in very simplistic terms). They come from a range of ages, social and political backgrounds, speak at least one different language than English, and have their own memories, values and experiences, which are valuable assets (although highly unrecognised) to the Australian society. They are more diverse than any other group of people, be that minorities groups, ethnic groups or any others, yet, we still talk about them as one.

One thing, however, which participants in this research shared, was their common passion for the natural environment, in most cases this was the Australian environment, but in many others these concerns were spread to their home countries, their local beach or forests, and even beyond all political borders into the Antarctic Ocean and the preservation of the unique marine biodiversity. There were examples of cross-interest in all of these spheres, and also of co-operations between groups, which seemingly have different interests. Such example is the close collaboration between two WA environmental NGOs which have come together in a number of occasions, without trying to raise either of their profiles, but guided by common interest, the preservation of the unique biodiversity of our planet.

The Sea Shepherd ship also presented me with a useful metaphor of the state of the environmental battle in 21st century: a group of migrants whose only common interest was their passion for saving the planet; a ship with more than one or two home ports with a crew from 40 different countries who is constantly on the move. It represents to a large extent the global mobility of people and the globalisation of environmental problems, which often simply take a different manifestation in different parts of the world.

This thesis was concerned with the question of how the environment and migrants go together: not in the extreme ways of environmental refugees, but in a more subtle and multi-faceted way. Some authors (Welzer and Camiller 2012) claim that soon it will no longer be possible to distinguish between war refugees and environmental refugees, since fewer and fewer people will have means to ensure their survival, and
this will lead to violent conflicts amongst those who wish to feed off the same area of land and drink from the same tinkling water. I however argue that it is no longer possible to distinguish between economic, social and environmental migrants and that we are all global citizens concerned with global environmental problems.
10.3 Further research

This research provided some answers but many questions remain open and much more needs to be discovered as to what makes people care for the environment. Further research could be directed in the areas of perceptions of migrants (and refugees) in WA and other parts of the world, experiences of migrants (and refugees), as well as examining the commonalities and differences between Aboriginal, traditional people and recent migrants. Each of these topics is discussed briefly below.

Who Cares? Attitudes to migrants in Western Australia

A major hurdle in all migration studies is the re-production of a homogenous image (Tilbury and Wilding 2004, Vertovec 2010, Vertovec 2011). Migrants, as well as refugees are often put into categories and very little recognition is being given to their differences. Migrants and refugees may all share the common characteristic of being foreign-born, yet there are immense differences amongst them. Attitudes to migrants are too often shaped by their religion, place of origin or ethnicity, without taking into account the differences within the same religion, ethnicity, or even the same country or region.

The predominant perception of WA as a state has been of a masculine image of male-mine workers and vast open-cut mines (Lozeva and Marinova 2010). Perhaps this is why there is very little emphasis placed on the role of migrants in the social, environmental and economic development of the largest state in Australia, where they are contributing to over half of its population growth (ABS 2008 B). Their presence is felt not only in numbers, but in a deeply meaningful interaction with the Australian society and with the unique environment of the West (Lozeva 2011).

Refugee communities are a lot more complex than migrants who come to work or study or to be with family, but ultimately many of the refugees achieve migrant status and are allowed to settle in Australia. The most emblematic place for refugee arrivals remains the ironically named Christmas Island, which attracts a lot of publicity in the media. However, there are other refugees camps scattered around the
harsh Australian outback which remain less visible, such as in the towns of Leonora and Northman.

Future research can focus on: a) examining the existing attitudes in WA toward migrants in the political, institutional, academic and public realms and b) interrogating the current context of Australian multicultural policies.

**How different are we? Migrants and Australian Aboriginal experiences in Australia**

A research question, which may be of interest to explore further, could be to conduct a comparative study between long-term settlers and new arrivals in a specific setting. Such study would allow comparing interesting characteristics, such as the difference in attitudes to the natural environment and views on the most urgent environmental problems. A study carried out in the U.S. (Hunter 2000 p. 565) reveals that immigrants “express significantly higher levels of concern with regard to environmental problems as compared to native-born residents” and also that “shorter-term migrants are more likely to engage in environmentally friendly behaviour”.

Another recommended research area, which was not able to be included in the scope of this study, is comparing the native people of the land – the Aboriginal and recent migrants in terms of their understanding and values they place on their surrounding environment. Such research, however, would require a very careful comparison of the difference in historical and cultural settings in which both groups–contemporary migrants, and Aboriginal or Native people – have been subjected to.
GLOSSARY

Civil Society – a space between the governmental, non-governmental and private sectors which is commonly attributed to a democratic societies, characterised with freedom of speech, representation of minorities groups and participation in the public sphere.

Connectedness - the outcome of the social process of forming connections with other things or beings, and this process is strongly influenced by language and culture

Environmental nomads – travellers, who do not settle in one place and who are crossing multiple national borders in a pursuit of environmental activism

Global environmental citizenship - global travellers, who subscribe to the same environmental values and engage in the process of building the foundation of a global democratic society.

Go- probably the oldest continuously played board game in the world; also referred to as “conversation with hands”, “the games of all wonders and the “surrounding game”.

Migrant – a person who cross the political borders of their country of birth.

Nature – the physical and sacred characteristics of the natural environment.

Space- The meaning of space is used to defines 1) ‘a continuous area or expanse which is free, available, or unoccupied’ 2) an interval of time 3) the freedom to live, think, and develop in a way that suits one and 4) the dimension of height, depth, and width within which all things exist and move.

Structural functionalism – a stream of thoughts that sees all cultural values and practices as inherently interlinked.

Synecdoche –a linguistic term used when specific symbols stand for an integrated set of cultural attributes
Transnationalism - the multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-state.

Territoriality – The process through which recent migrants go about to create their own territory, their own sense of belonging within the context of the existing political, social and cultural characteristics.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABS- Australian Bureau of Statistics
CALD- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
GDP- Gross Domestic Product
GM- Genetically Modified
NGO- Non-Governmental organisation
NIMBY- Not-in–my-backyard
SSCS – Sea Shepherd Conservation Society
UN – United Nations
UNCED- United Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP – United Nation Environmental Programme
WA- Western Australia
WWF- Worldwide Fund for Nature
APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONARY

Guidelines for semi-structured questionnaire for PhD Research project called “Feminist Perspectives of Migrant in Public Participation”

1. Name, age group and cultural background

2. When did you migrate to Australia?

3. Why did you migrate to Australia? What visa did you use?

4. Have you lived anywhere else apart from Australia and your home country?

5. In what sort of environmental activism/public participation are you engaged in?

6. What motivates you to engage in the environmental civic activities?

7. What sort of public engagement were you involved in before moving to Australia?

8. What does family mean to you?

9. What does nature mean to you?
10. Do you think you relate differently to the environment as a man/woman?

11. How do you feel as a migrant in Australia?

12. What problems have you encountered in your public engagement with the environmental movement?

13. How would you describe the importance of environmental activism for Australia?

14. How would you describe the importance of environmental activism in your home country?

Thank you!

Leave contact details and ask for their contact details.
CONSENT FORM

Feminist Perspectives on Public Participation

I __________________________ have read the information on the attached letter. Any questions I have asked have been answered to our/my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research but understand that I can change my mind or stop at any time.

I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential. Unless I request otherwise, the interview transcript will not have my name or any other identification on it.

I agree for this interview to be taped/recorded.

I agree that research gathered for this study may be published provided names or any other information that may identify me/us is not used.

Name__________________________       Signature_______________________

Date: __________

Investigator: _____________________     Signature_______________________
APPENDIX 3

INFORMATION FORM

Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute

Participant Information Sheet

My name is Silvia Lozeva. I am currently involved in completing a piece of research for my doctorate degree of the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute.

Purpose of Research

I am investigating the motivation and outcomes of civic engagement of active immigrants in the environmental movement and their contribution to civil society.

Your role

I am interested in finding out what factors have influence of participant’s engagement; what motivates people to take part in environmental activism; and what outcomes such engagement has on the participants and on the civil society.
I would like to find out what are the differences in motivation for environmental civic engagement between men and women.

I will ask you in what sort of activities you are taking part, what is your perspective on it and what motivated you to engage. I will also ask you questions about your demographic profile, such as name, age, family status.

The interview process will take approximately 30 minutes.

Consent to Participate

Your involvement in the research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any stage without effect on your rights and my responsibility. When you have signed the consent form I will assume that you have agreed to participate and allow me to use your data in this research.

Confidentiality

The information you provide will be kept separate from your personal details, and I will only have access to this. Unless you request otherwise, the interview transcript will not have your name or any other identifying information on it. In adherence to university policy, the interview tapes and transcribed information will be kept in a locked cabinet for five years before they are destroyed.

Further Information

This research has been reviewed and given approval by Curtin University of Technology Human Research Ethics Committee. If you would like further information about the study, please feel free to contact my supervisor Dora Marinova on d.marinova@curtin.edu.au.

Thank you very much for your involvement in this research, your participation is greatly appreciated.
APPENDIX 4

PASSENGER CARDS

Incoming Passenger Cards (IPC) or arrival cards p.1

- family name, given name and passport number
- flight number or name of ship
- intended address in Australia
- intended length of stay in Australia: for the next 12 months or less/more
- declarations relating to customs and quarantine items.

Incoming Passenger Card (IPC) or arrival cards p.2
• the country in which the flight/vessel was boarded
• date of birth and usual occupation
• nationality as shown on passport
• contact details in Australia and emergency contact details

Outgoing Passenger Card (OPS) p.1

• family name, given names and nationality
• passport number
• flight number or name of ship.

Outgoing Passenger Card (OPC) p.2
Are you taking out of Australia AUD$10,000 or more in Australian or foreign currency equivalent? If answered “Yes” you must complete a Cross Border Movement – Physical Cash (AUD$10,000 or more) Report to present with this card.

**Note:** If a customs or police officer asks, you must report travellers cheques, cheques, money orders or other bearer negotiable instruments of any amount.

**Did you know?**
You can find any lost superannuation accounts you may have by visiting www.ato.gov.au/superseeker
You will need to provide your Australian tax file number, address and date of birth to access the system.
If you worked in Australia on a temporary resident visa you can claim your superannuation money back. For more information on how to apply visit www.ato.gov.au/depantaustralia

Information sought on this form is required to administer immigration, customs, quarantine, statistical, health, wildlife and forestry laws of Australia and its collection is authorised by legislation; it will be disclosed only to agencies administering these areas and those entitled to receive it under Australian law. The leaflet “Protecting your personal information is available at Australian ports and airports.

**MAKE SURE YOU HAVE COMPLETED BOTH SIDES OF THIS CARD. PRESENT THIS CARD ON DEPARTURE WITH YOUR BOARDING PASS AND PASSPORT.**

**SAMPLE**

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16 Design date 11/09

sign and date
APPENDIX 5

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Environmental Research Project

Are you a recent migrant in Western Australia? Have you been in Australia less than 10 years? Are you passionate about the environment and regard yourself an “environmental activist”? If the answer is yes, then you can contribute to a research project aimed at understanding migrant’s perceptions of the Australian environment. The interview takes about 30-40 minutes and all information is only used for purpose of the research; your identity will remain anonymous unless you specify otherwise. If you are interested, please e-mail silvia.lozeva@postgrad.curtin.edu.au or call on 0422010277.

Your participation can make a difference!
APPENDIX 6
PERMISSION STATEMENTS

PERMISSION TO USE COPYRIGHT MATERIAL

I give permission for the use of the following photographic materials:

- **SG**, 2010 (metallic material, resin, motor, gear, custom CPU board, LED)
- **Una Lumino Portentum**, 2009 (Scientific name: *Amploplispl Averarium ciri RED* Uram metallic material, motor, LED, CPU board, polycarbonate)
- **Una Lumino**, 2008 (Scientific name: *Amploplispl Averarium ciri RED* Uram metallic material, motor, LED, CPU board, polycarbonate)

I hereby give permission for Silvia Lozeva to include the abovementioned photographic materials in her higher degree thesis for the Curtin University, and to communicate this material via the Australasian Digital Thesis Program. This permission is granted on a non-exclusive basis and for an indefinite period.

I confirm that I am the copyright owner of the specified material.

Signed: [Signature]

Name: **U-RAM CHOE**
Position: **ARTIST**
Date: **2012. 6. 4**

Please return signed form to Silvia Lozeva, 3 Pakenham Street, Fremantle, WA 6160, Australia
Silvia.lozeva@curtin.edu.au