13 Conclusion

This study provided ethnographic insights into the life worlds of Jamaican women in Montreal. In particular, the analysis of socio-cultural practices in relation to local appropriations of female spaces, home-making strategies and the maintenance of social networks on a local as well as a global level were important aspects of the ethnography. The ethnographic depictions of Jamaican women's lives in the city, their experiences and aspirations, as well as their strategic mobility to Jamaica have been proven an ongoing process of mediation and translation; for many women this becomes a steady cross-border as well as transcultural residential and livelihood pattern.

Historically, Jamaican immigrants mainly migrated to Anglophone cities in Canada, the United States or the UK. The government in Quebec began to recruit nurses and domestic workers from the Caribbean as guest workers through the *West Domestic Scheme* from the 1950s onwards. This labour migration, mostly involving women from Jamaica, has so far received little attention in the academic literature on Quebec. Hence, this study offered a first approach to comprehend the motives, narratives, practices and perspectives of second and third generation Jamaican women in Montreal/ Quebec. The narrated biographies of five different women, together with the analysis of their current life situations, illustrated the importance of family relationships across time and space. Especially female relatives and their stories about the Jamaican homeland provided insights into socio-cultural affiliation, identity and highlighted the self-understanding of these Jamaican women.

In the context of a 'multi-sited' ethnography (Marcus 1995), through actively accompanying the women on their journeys to their Jamaican homeland, strategic mobility perceived to be important. The temporary or final return to Jamaica turned out to be a life-long, multi- layered process that reveals the longing for childhood memories, traditions, places and people. The sustained and active social relations with family, friends and acquaintances across cultural, geographical and national borders has proven to be an important means to survive the dynamic process of return migration. The study gave access to a different geographical sense of Jamaican women, in which Montreal is an important old and new contact zone.

The study acknowledged the specific historical and socio-cultural impact that female immigrants from Jamaica have had on the province of Quebec. Women have dominated Jamaican migration to Montreal. This gender distribution has been an ongoing phenomenon for now 65 years and shows how labour market demands and historical circumstances in the province of Quebec have been partly influenced by post-colonial migratory inflows. Second and third generation immigrant women alike share, personally or through a close female relative, this history of migration to Montreal. Settling structures in Montreal show that there is no typical Jamaican immigrant enclave as in other prominent diasporic cities such as New York City or Toronto. Jamaicans live scattered across town without being bordered by an ethnic neighbourhood and are, therefore, in a way invisible to many people in Montreal. Hence, they built strong social networks and webs of community ties through which they connect themselves locally and, as a result, are able to assimilate themselves 'inconspicuously' into the urban environment.

Quebec's integration policy of interculturalism envisages that immigrants should develop a feeling of belonging and a comprehension of Quebec society with the help of the host society. However, the current political momentum in Quebec promotes a nationalist ideal of culture being homogenous, which strengthens markers of difference between cultural 'others' and 'native' Quebecers. Hence, language-based discrimination due to Quebec's French language policy is an issue in Montreal. Here, Jamaican women intentionally exclude themselves from French areas or even refuse to speak French in general. The ongoing language debates are restrictive and divisive conditions in their daily and work-related activities. Hence, the challenge of spatial and cultural division exists. In addition, Jamaican women report racial discrimination and police-based racial profiling as major problems in Montreal. Thus, Jamaican women feel no personal connection to Quebec society, stay largely among themselves, and cultivate identities that are strongly connected with their individual ethno-cultural affiliation. Jamaica is a very important constant in their daily lives and community life is mainly structured through social networks and meetings in important key spaces in the city: Local place-making activities, exclusive meeting points or semi-public and private home spaces strongly correlate with the conservation of Jamaican socio-cultural practices. For example, cooking food, listening to Jamaican music, following Jamaican news and politics, participating in Jamaican-based cultural events, keeping the Jamaican language Patois alive, attending Afro-Caribbean church services, holding onto Afro-Caribbean stylizations of the hair and beauty ideals, are all important aspects of maintaining connections with Jamaica, even though they are physically absent from the island. Socio-cultural practices found in important female key spaces exemplified women's socio-cultural identity constructions and self-understandings as Jamaicans. For example, Ms. Brown's church network and the women's association were significant anchors of her local life and of belonging

to Montreal. Elisha's pop-up shop network and friends in the music and arts scene create temporal Afro-Caribbean diasporic places in the city of Montreal that function not only as sanctuary zones, but also as a source of income for the younger generation.

Looking further into Jamaican women's social spaces, quickly led to Debby's beauty salon as an important community institution in Montreal. Here, beauty and 'body discourses' as well as reinterpretations of traditional Jamaican gender roles and power relations were important key aspects of this study. Female bodily practices imply meanings and constructions about socio-cultural interaction between Jamaican female bodies and Montreal's (Quebec's) socio-cultural environment, such as the Dancehall events, where Debby and her fellow fashionistas gave the reader an idea of gender role negotiations and the translation of beauty ideals. The analysis of Jamaican women's bodily practices also answered questions about the negotiation and mediation of home, cultural identity and feelings of belonging to Montreal and Jamaica. Hair straightening practices, concepts of the ideal female body shape and weight, bodily modification in the case of nails and lashes, stylization practices and female communion through body work reconstruct not only a familiar 'home-space', but also serve to neutralize experiences with racism, discrimination and feelings of exclusion as well as othering. Ms. Brown's "work wig" and her daily transformation before leaving for work is an example of such a mediated experience. The dissatisfaction with their actual living situation in Montreal, the discontent with their social status as well as the unfamiliarity with life in Quebec results in the creation of such exclusive Jamaican spaces.

However, functioning social networks did not only structure community life in Montreal, but were also a crucial aspect of reconnecting with the Jamaican homeland. The study demonstrated that women who stayed in Canada for a long time without making return visits, for example Ms. Brown, had more difficulties reintegrating in Jamaica. The social connection to local family and socio-economic resources over time and space were prerequisites for successful returns. Virtual connections via mobile phones and social media were helpful tools of structuring mobility through social networks. Daily virtual connections to Jamaica as well as remittance sending practices to their family that stayed behind or ownership structures in Jamaica strengthen cross-border identification and connection with the homeland. Additionally, many women engage in recurrent trips to Jamaica and live mobile lifestyles that give them a different mind-set in contrast to other immigrants who have to remain stationary. These seasonal travels are also used to socialize Canadian-born children to Jamaican cultural values. For example, being seasonally present and aware of changing conditions in Jamaica is a powerful motive in Carol's life, as she manoeuvres family interests, information and movement between Canada and Jamaica, easily moving and readjusting to differing places, spaces and understandings of life. Her experiences also showed sharp differences

between life in Montreal and life in Toronto. Racialization here seems to be flatter in Toronto than in Montreal, possibly due to a larger Jamaican immigrant enclave in Toronto and, of course, in terms of a common language in daily life activities. Josephine supposedly reached her goal by returning to her homeland Jamaica, but ended up constantly missing her old life and friends in Canada. Therefore, she altered her temporal and spatial presence through social networking in a way that enabled her to feel more at ease with her original decisions. Here, social networks, family bonds and feelings of care responsibilities were relevant factors about the women's decision-making processes.

Mediating belonging and negotiating connection to Jamaica and Montreal over time requires constant translation work across and beyond real and imagined borders. The concepts of space and place, meaning the focus on specific interconnected localities in the case of Jamaican female migration strategies, cannot only be seen through a temporal lens, e.g., historical migration waves or new technological advancements of globalization; migratory movements were shown to be embedded in the cultural context of the interlocutors' familial histories and an overall 'culture of migration' in Jamaica. Here, time was an important aspect in the discussion of the interlocutors' memories and experiences as necessary points of departure to interpret their present-day lives and future aspirations. The importance of discourses about ethnic 'roots' and memories about a Jamaican 'homeland-space' connected to intergenerational narratives was traced in this study. Narratives of female relatives about migratory experiences, culinary and cultural traditions, religious teachings, socializing practices and answers to life's challenges were important aspects of the women's biographies. The analysis of childhood memories and remembrances of grandmothers, mothers and sisters revealed the significance of family bonds. Memories and stories that have been preserved over time often translated into actual socio-cultural practices. For example, Carol's memory of her grandmother sitting at the kitchen table, counting the bills for the 'partner bank', helped her during her initial integration phase in Montreal. This intergenerational knowledge supported her in finding a local, social network of trustworthy peers. Another example is Ms. Brown's memory of her grandmother standing inside her tiny Jamaican countryside home, dropping spices into her Saturday soup pot and later sharing it with a needy neighbour. Acts like these and other related memories of her grandmother mean a lot for her self-understanding of being a "God-fearing" Jamaican woman, for her willpower and survivability in Montreal as well as for her devotion in her job as a geriatric nurse. The upkeep of the "soup cooking" tradition over time counteracted feelings of alienation and homesickness. The ethnographic examples found in this study explain how mental mobility into the past can function as a present-day coping mechanism of living in a completely new environment, where language, customs, the climate and the rhythm of life differ greatly from those at home.

As examples of the third generation, Canadian-born women's lives have shown that intergenerational memories and stories can leave significant marks on the younger generation. For example, Elisha's experience of the desperation of her grandmother who was unable to return to her beloved Jamaican homeland until she died. Being part of the traditional nine night and realizing what it meant to her grandmother to be buried 'in Jamaican soil', left her with a generational mark. Additionally, Debby's non-negotiable Jamaican pride became known each time she picked up her half-moon shaped needle. A hairstyling tool that evokes the memory of her mother who made a minimum living wage with her "hair salon" in the early days in Little Burgundy. Furthermore, the birth of Josephine's grandchild, for example, catalysed into a new life purpose that not only counteracts her loneliness in Jamaica, but also shows how intergenerational narratives and practices of care continue to be relevant across borders.

Jamaican women have agency and are able to overcome visible borders. The research with interlocutors "on the move" revealed a distinctive Jamaican cultural understanding of migration and the simultaneous relevance of time, space and place for mobile people. Due to their personal flexibility, resilience and redefinitions of space, Jamaican women were able to develop altered routes towards a desired future in or with Jamaica. The strategic mobility and trajectories of the women of this study called for a temporal and spatial awareness of the interconnection of narratives, memories and practices to certain 'yearning spaces', places and people. In this sense, imagined and "real-life" spaces are interrelated and intersected by the social actors who move through and within them. The mental, virtual and physical mobility of this study's interlocutors made clear that return migration is not the endpoint or outcome of mobility after initial migration.

The analysis of female patterns of migratory mobility also included moments of immobility. However, this study proposed to not assuming that in times of physical immobility, a simultaneous mental stasis is given. Instead, in times of stasis, the thoughts and mental preparations for the next movements to Jamaica are the priority. In addition, not a bipolar travelling between two poles alone should be considered, but also the possibility to move back and forth and swing between different localities and third spaces. Even though frictions and traumas occurred along the women's pathways –both practical and psychological difficulties, mainly compounded by the women's memories and expectations of an idealized homeland– they found alternative ways to overcome developing obstacles. Elisha, for example, is now off to new shores (Ghana), while still believing in the possibility of going back to Jamaica at a later point in time. Ms. Brown sorted out almost "en passant" her chaotic and socio-economic precarious family situation after her visit to Miami, which has helped her to realize that her future life is in Jamaica. Future returnees will increasingly live a life of 'here' and 'there', moving based primarily on personal and familial circumstances as well as social networks. Ageing returnees

might become ailing or ill and their movement may be restricted. For others in good health, younger and mobile, movements are unpredictable and complex. For the numerous ways of constructing belonging to Jamaica beyond the confines of national borders, the concept of oscillation was introduced.

Migratory oscillation processes here revolve around the equilibrium point 'Jamaica', which are composed of mental, virtual and physical mobility practices with individual characteristics for each person. At the same time, the affective intimacy with Jamaica remains the relevant component for all. The study was able to present a diverse collage of the multi-dimensional and multi-layered experiences, practices, narratives, memories and imaginaries of past, present and future that conceptualize a "mobile mode" of these women's 'being' in the world. A mode highly privileged through holding dual citizenship, being visa-free movers that enable them to recreate their existence, identity and belonging. This privileged form of migratory movement plays a crucial role in Jamaica, where returnees greatly contribute to the island's society. However, Jamaican migrations to Canada also entail a large number of undocumented, trapped and less fortunate people, over-stayers and deportees. Again, it is necessary to acknowledge that 'our world' is far from being borderless or fluid as 'transnationalist sophistry' oftentimes suggests. Sociocultural and spatial division and differentiation is a complex process of historical and political constructions that have gained a lot of strength in recent times, both publicly and academically.

In the future, the number of first and second generation "original" returnees will decrease and the phenomenon of return migration might become irrelevant. However, this study revealed that desires of returning can also spark in the third and fourth generation as racism, discrimination, and alienation in metropolitan areas such as Montreal prevail. Based on these realities, many young people might continue to hold onto the aspirations and dreams of their ancestors: The desire to return to a place where they will be accepted, belong, and feel at home regardless of language, social class, skin colour and ethnicity. Above all, this study highlighted one of the most crucial aspects of the human existence, which is the yearning for a place of 'heart', a place that feels like home. I conclude this book with a line of Bob Marley's song "Rastaman Chant[1]". This song is a popular anthem in Jamaica and expresses the idea of yearning for a reconnection with an ethnic homeland. Elisha used to sing this song on our road trips in Jamaica:

1 Original source: Bob Marley & the Wailers, Rastaman Chant, Capitol Records, 1973.

"One bright morning when my work is over
Man will fly away home
[…]
I say fly away home to Zion, fly away home
One bright morning when my work is over
I will fly away home […]"