To be or not to be...

Aspects of Home within Migration in Kate Clanchy’s novel 
Antigona and Me

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1. Introduction

When studying the changes and shapes of identities of immigrants within migration it becomes very hard to make a limit. I have chosen therefore to narrow and put my main focus on how the novel, *Antigona and Me* that I have selected as work for English literature, represents the characters’ immigration, how the process of immigration is portrayed and the consequences migration and diaspora bring. Moreover, I want to see how the immigrants in the novel define their own identities within migration and how the characters are adopting with a new identity.

As migration is the main reason to the huge displacement of people (forced movement of people from their places due to war or other social factors), which in addition to the movement has other major effects, such as cultural and identity differences, lead to the feeling in-between two ‘homes’. I was mostly interested in finding sources that give information on how identity is shaped through migration and diaspora and how it is to live in between two cultures by constantly ‘‘imagining’’ different ‘‘homes’’. I want to examine how migration has affected the immigrants’ lives and how the novel depicts the immigrant experience. ‘‘What is ‘home’ according to the immigrants and where do the immigrants feel home and where do they feel they belong? And why do they feel that way?’’

Today, when asking someone where they come from or what nationality they belong to, might be very difficult for a person to answer. Postcolonial literature generally discusses the notion of immigrant experience, or the experiences by those who adopt and integrate into a new country. A growing number of people are concerned with the consequences of migration since immigration and emigration are currently so common. It has become much easier to choose or to attach to an identity through globalization nowadays, meaning you can either choose the identity in the new country, keep your identity from the past or have them both, a hybrid identity. In general, people who migrate change their position in the social structure by occupying the inferior social positions in the country of destination. When moving from one
territory to another the migrants may experience consequences in terms of identity; identities change and increase within migration, globalization and diverse cultures in the world. The main problem immigrants are faced with in the foreign country is the fact that they are always in-between two cultures. However, this does not mean that it happens to all the immigrants in general, but what is relevant is that the characters in my selected novel do feel in between two cultures. When reading this novel, many people with immigrant backgrounds can surely be able to identify themselves with the immigrants’ feelings and thoughts in many ways. I chose this work of English literature to represent the migrant experience, the notion of diaspora and home, and identity formation of the characters in the novels. Despite the novel being a representation of the migration experience, in some sort of the way, through this literature, one can actually study the immigrant’s subjective experiences and feelings as migration is a world-wide phenomenon. The novel that I have selected, in its own way presents a story, of immigrants’ experiences from their old countries to their new ones. The novel, Antigona and Me, where I find the immigrant’s experience entering a new country interesting has not been researched, yet the migration experiences and the theoretical framework will due to understand the migrant’s feelings and struggles. An immigrant is an individual who leaves one’s country to settle in another permanently, meaning that immigrants move by choice; whereas refugees, even though they are also migrants, are defined as persons, who move out of one’s country due to necessity, restriction or danger to their lives; people are forced to migrate. However, the refugee becomes an immigrant in the new country eventually, if the individual is not deported. The difference is that immigrants choose to move, while refugees are forced to flee. Antigona, in this case is the refugee fleeing from war and violence in search for freedom and peace becoming an immigrant in London.

In my paper, I will study this novel in relations of the immigrant identity and see how it represents their experiences, views, and feelings from their old countries to their new ones and
how it is to live in-between two homes and diasporic culture, trying to find, ‘imagine’ new ‘homes’. What is also important is how the identities are constructed within these different concepts. In order to find corresponding results, I will be studying theories such as cultural and hybrid identity, migration, and diaspora in order to understand the notion of home and to look in depth what kind of aspects of home are implied in the novel. In addition to many other aspects, I have found the aspects of home in the sense of memory, nostalgia, and trauma. Moreover, home in the sense of belonging to and not belonging to a culture, community, a place or people for example, is also an interesting piece to my research. Furthermore, I have been looking for home in the characteristics of practices; things people do, think, say, walk, dress etc. The last aspect of home in Antigona and Me is home in the sense of family. In the end of my paper, there will be a conclusion part of my study.

2. Background:

Antigona and Me, by Kate Clanchy

The book, Antigona and Me, which is written by Kate Clanchy is about Antigona, who is an Albanian refugee from Kosovo and an immigrant in London during the late 90s. The author becomes friends with Antigona as she starts cleaning in her house and working as a nanny. By listening to her stories Kate gets inspired by her experiences day by day and starts writing about Antigona’s life. Their lives collide: Clanchy, a middle-class, educated poet and writer married to an academic, and Antigona, a Malësor (a highlander, from the mountains that include Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia), a refugee who could have become somebody but hasn’t had everything that Kate has had that has turned her into a writer. In many interviews, Kate has referred to the book as somewhere between a memoir and a biography. The story is not merely about Antigona’s life, it is also about Antigona’s and Kate’s friendship and the differences between their upbringing and their two worlds. The author explains how it was her
idea of writing down Antigona’s story and how she had to think carefully about telling someone else’s story- the rights and wrongs of it. Kate has said in an interview that “the story is about Antigona and me: I never attempt to tell her story for her, I only try to show the impact of her and her story on me” (http://www.bookgroup.info/041205/interview.php?id=57). She wanted this book to tell the truth about Antigona and her life. Antigona is offered a job as a nanny by Kate, which she correspondingly accepts and works illegally. As Kate and Antigona drink coffee together every day that is how Antigona’s astonishing story slowly begins.

Antigona, and her children have suffered the violence during the war. She flees from her homeland, which is all destroyed by the Serbian military forces and faces difficulties during her escape. Her rest of her family, her parents and sisters who escape the war remain in Albania while Antigona succeeds to flee to Italy and finally get to England and seek for asylum. The book tells Antigona’s escape from Kosovo after the outbreak of war in the region and the dangerous journey that she undertakes with her three children, Flora and Mihane, her adolescent daughters, and her little boy named Ylli, in search of her brothers in London. The novel shows in detail how Antigona was brought up in her village and her new life in London as a single parent and a refugee. Antigona has fled from a war and has divorced a violent husband, but can she escape the strict traditional view she was brought up with? What is significant about Antigona, is that she constantly talks about ‘shame and morality’ as important parts of Albanians views and traditions, as parts of the ‘clan’. Antigona does not hear from her parents or sisters for a long time and she decides to go and look for them in Albania. She finally finds them and keeps visiting them often in Albania. She is in contact with her family back home, however her brothers in London do not want to keep any contact with her because she divorces her husband. After the break up, Antigona’s ex-husband is deported to Kosovo and they never see each other again. Antigona works more than necessary to take care of her children but also help her family back home. Flora falls in love with a man from Iraq and embraces the religion.
Mihane, on the other hand becomes a drug addict and gets pregnant with a man with Jamaican background. They both become parts of their men’s clans. Ylli, on the other hand dreams of returning to Kosovo. Antigona is frustrated and does not accept her daughters’ choices. By knowing each other, Kate (the author) and Antigona realise they have everything, as well as nothing, in common. Clanchy's portrait of Antigona is ideally bright, as are her reflections on her own complex feelings. Antigona, as a woman who has been living according to her husband’s family norms, not being able to be an independent woman, also enters in the new nation in hope of making a better future. It will be interesting to study a European immigrant in Britain, more specifically a Kosovan Albanian immigrant woman, who has faced war and violence and culture clash. What is interesting with this novel that I want to further examine is particularly, the migrant’s journey and settlement in a foreign country; where it leaves the immigrant in between two worlds or ‘homes’. What makes it significant for my analysis is how by living in between two homes different aspects of home become important. The immigrants may sense home as a memory, nostalgia, trauma, family or belonging to a specific culture or community. Home can also be sensed as practices, things we do or think that make people who they are. Home can be either in the old homeland or in the new homeland, or home can be both, or else somewhere ‘in-between’. No research or analysis has been done on this novel, however the theories I am going to use, such as migration, diaspora and identity will be relevant for the analysis.

3. Theory & Concepts

In order to back-up and strengthen my analysis, the theoretical framework is needed. Different existing theories in life will be defined in the theoretical part and the reader will have an insight over the theories that occur; how the immigrants’ experiences and their senses of ‘home’ are related to the theories. I will begin with the concept of migration, immigrants and refugees.
These terms are important in order to understand the character’s situation in the novel. I will use the theory of cultural identity and hybrid identity which are related to the immigrants in the novel as they hold these identities. Later I will also try to give a definition to the term diaspora, which will be interesting to my subject as the immigrant in the novel lives in the diaspora. In the end of the theory sections I will be discussing about the notion of home, as it is the main important concept of my research, in order to find what aspects of home are mentioned within migration that are implied in the novel.

3.1 Migration, Immigrants, and Refugees:

The concept of migration is that people move between places. As we all know migration is when people move and resettle to another different country. People emigrate, move from and immigrate, move to a country. There are numerous of reasons why immigrants choose to migrate to another country. One example, which is related to my chosen novel, Antigona and Me is that people move or are forced to move because of conflict, human rights violations, violence, or escape persecution. Migration is the main cause to immigrants’ experiences between their old homeland and the new one. Migration, therefore is a very important source to my research as it is the main reason to why the sense of Home and belonging become important to the immigrants.

An immigrant is an individual from a foreign country leaving to settle in another country who may or may not be citizens of the new country. A refugee, on the other hand is a person who is forced to leave home because of danger and conflict. (Boyle, Halfacree, Robinson, 37-38) To be regarded as an immigrant one should immigrate and settle in the new country during a longer period. An immigrant who moves by choice and due to promise of a better life has the choice to move back to its old country at any time and refugees, though, who move out of war and violence, political instability or religious beliefs have no possibilities to move back to their
old countries, in most of the cases. The term “refugee” was completely defined in 1951 after the Geneva Convention, although the notion of taking refuge has been known for a very long time. The term refugee is now well-defined. The people who fled Europe after WWII were termed refugees, along with civil wars from the middle east and the Balkans. Stating that not all forced migrants are refugees, the authors in the book, *Exploring Contemporary Migration* argue that in the contemporary world it has become difficult to distinguish between migrations by economic reasons and those by socio-political factors. “In most cases, the motivation behind movement is a combination of the two” (Boyle, Halfacree, Robinson, 200). This shows the example of the character in my novel, as even though Antigona was forced to flee from war, she also wanted to flee from poverty and have a better future. Antigona wanted to make a better life, with better conditions, and give her children a better future. In Gayle Munro’s study it is argued how within migration “the country of destination is often portrayed as the land where dreams can come true, the process of migration is characterised as an aspirational journey in a metaphorical sense and the migrant him/herself is considered to be in pursuit of some kind of dream – usually in search of a ‘better life’ (often in a financial sense but could also be aspirations related to education, career, safety, security, health or improved family life)” (Munro, 80). Munro further claims how some migrants have accepted that maybe it is late for them to realise their dreams in the new country of destination but by migrating they hope to help their children; the second generation achieve their goals.

The children of first-generation immigrants, the children of those who have immigrated or children who have immigrated by themselves are referred as second-generation immigrants or young immigrants. To second-generation immigrants are also counted young people or children who are born in another country than the country of resettlement, or who have one or both parents that are foreign-born. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigrant_generations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigrant_generations))
3.2 Cultural Identity

Identity, as a concept, even though too general for my research, is still significant while it refers to a person’s location related to others in a situation or a society. Within identity we come to understand different aspects such as cultural and hybrid that are important to my research and which will be explained below. As identity has been studied too generally, I will try to give an understanding of how I will be observing at the identities of the characters and what kind of definitions of identity I will use when studying the identities in the novel. Cultural identity is related to the concept of migration as cultural identity becomes important after people have migrated. Cultural identity is an important concept to my research as the immigrant is faced with two different cultures, two different identities, sensing home in different aspects. Zygmunt Bauman argues how the term identity is very vague and ambiguous. ‘‘One thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs; that is, one is not sure how to place oneself among the evident variety of behavioural styles and patterns, and how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right and proper, so that both sides would know how to go on in each other's presence. 'Identity' is a name given to the escape sought from that uncertainty’’ (Hall & Du Gay, 19). This relates to the part that I want to investigate in how the characters in my novel see and place themselves in the new land.

In today’s multicultural world we have many different people from many different countries with so many different languages. With culture, we have come to understand diverse groups, manners and traditions. People around us usually speak, are dressed and perform different from us. ‘‘Cultural differences, or the sense of being an outsider or a foreigner, can make the individual feel alienated and heighten feelings of sadness, nostalgia, and create a longing for home’’ (Agnew, 42). What I believe to be an important aspect when studying immigrant identity from the cultural perspective is the idea of identity in relation to the other. Hall is the theorist speaking of the idea of identity being related to the other and states that “it
is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not… that… identity can be constructed” (Hall & Du Gay, 4-5). Stuart Hall speaks of two different ways of thinking about cultural identity. The first is an identity, which underlines the similarities amongst a group of people. The second definition that Hall points out is the view of cultural identity being different but at the same time similar to other people. Cultural identity according to Hall is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’ and they come from somewhere and have histories, yet they undergo continual transformations. Hall means that every human being is always moving beyond the statement about what we are, transcending who they were a moment earlier. He says that we are not what we are, while we are always in a process of becoming, who we are is really what we are not (yet). “Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually identities are questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not "who we are" or "where we came from", so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves” (Hall & Du Gay, 4). He means that it does not matter who we were or where we came from, but who we want to be. What is in the present is what matters. Identity and identification according to Hall can be seen as “a process never completed,” thus always shifting. Therefore, it cannot be accomplished, achieved, or gained but it cannot either be “lost” or “abandoned.” To cultural theory, the idea of identity changing all the time is very common. Therefore, it is very difficult to say what things specifically make a person’s identity. The first way of ‘cultural identity’ according to Hall is defining cultural identity in terms of “one true self”, of one common culture, which people with a same historical background have in common. “Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as “one people,” with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history” (Braziel & Mannur, 234).
The second view of cultural identity is less common. "Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of "becoming" as well as of "being." It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history, and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation" (Braziel & Mannur, 236). It is from this second position that I will be able to understand the traumatic experiences of the immigrants in the novel. As Hall and Bauman above have introduced the idea of a fluid cultural identity, it is crucial when studying immigrant identity and the identities of the characters in the novel. In my view, this is how the characters’ identities can be seen developing in the passage of the novel, as they clearly reflect their own identities in relation to the people around them.

3.2.1. Hybrid Identity

As identities are constantly developing through time and place, while settling into a new country problems for immigrants are created. There is another term that theorists use to describe the fluid, ever-changing cultural identity that was discussed in the previous section, which is called hybrid identity. Homi Bhabha argues that there is a "space" in-between the terms of identity and that this "passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (Easthope, 145). Homi Bhabha talks about how people have taken with them only a part of the total culture and how culture in a new country is different from the origin culture and therefore in this way, culture-crash appear. This relation between the cultures, is indeed something like culture's "in-between," being both the same and different. Cultural and hybrid identities are caused within migration and the main reason why hybrid identity is crucial to my topic is that the immigrants in the new homeland are feeling in between two cultures. Then the interesting part is finding
out where the immigrants feel they belong, where their home is and how they perceive the
notion of ‘home’.

Post-colonial academics that have been focusing on a great deal on the globalisation
effects, appear to be resulting in so-called hybrid identities, across between two separate
cultures. These are new identities which are invoked up from the position of an individual, not
simply as a process of ‘us’ and ‘them’, but as the continual action between cultures of the
individual; a new identity may result in the creation of this. (Hall & Du Gay, 55) For Homi
Bhabha, hybridity means more than concerning identity, it includes the idea of how hybridity
can be understood in terms of the individual and the immigrant as a part of a community.
‘Hybrid agencies find their voice in a dialectic that does not seek cultural supremacy or
sovereignty. They deploy the partial culture from which they emerge to construct visions of
community, and versions of historic memory, that give narrative form to the minority positions
they occupy; the outside of the inside: the part in the whole’ (Hall & Du Gay, 58). Bhabha,
when referring to the term “in-between” indicating the immigrant experience, he describes the
“in-between” as “neither one nor the other”, “the colonial signifier… literally splitting the
difference between the binary oppositions or polarities through which we think cultural
difference” (Hall & Du Gay, 180–182). The feeling of living in between different homelands,
is according to John McLeod very common to immigrants. McLeod describes this, “in between
[as] feeling neither here nor there, unable to indulge in sentiments of belonging to either place”
(McLeod, 214). This, consequently leaves room for the immigrant to feel as belonging to
neither the native nor the new country. In the beginning, the new country may feel unfamiliar
and foreign, but the old country can also start to feel alien, as the immigrant settles into the new
country. According to McLeod this feeling only confuses the immigrants, as living in between
two different worldviews “can be painful, perilous and marginalizing” making the migrants
having feelings of “displacement, fragmentation and discontinuity” (McLeod, 216). Home, as
an idea, according to McLeod stands for “shelter, stability, security and comfort.” (McLeod, 210) Nevertheless, as the immigrant is faced with different experiences in the new home, this comfort and stability does not hold for the immigrants living away from their native homeland.

3.3 Diaspora

Within scholarly discussions on migration, displacement, identity, community and global movements, diaspora is one of the most debated terms today. Hence, the term displacement of people refers to the forced movement of people from their places. It is a form of social change that is caused by several factors, the most common being war and conflicts. What makes a difference in how immigrants experience and react to life abroad is not just who moves and how the immigrant moves, but where the immigrants settle. The concept of diaspora is an important part to this research study since diaspora is what the immigrants create by immigrating in a new country making their own communities. Within these communities, immigrants interact with people of the same background and maintain their origin values and at the same time have connections with their old homeland. You could say that diaspora is an outcome of the various aspects of identity, such as in this study, cultural and hybrid identities. If it were not for these identities, diaspora would not exist. All the different concepts are related with each other. Migration is the first process of people leaving their country. Cultural and hybrid identities then become important immediately as the immigrants enter the new country experiencing culture-clash or feeling in-between two different worldviews. Diaspora is then created where immigrants with the same background connect with their own folk and community. The term diaspora is related to migration and cultural and hybrid identities as diaspora is an effect of these concepts. The reason why diaspora is a useful concept to my topic is because migration refers to the movement of people; fleeing their old countries by force or by choice. Though, diaspora refers specifically to the resettlement of the migrants in the new
country where immigrants may feel attached to their homelands. Nowadays, the term is applied as a theoretical framework used to understand the movements and settlements of people in field studies such as literature. The word diaspora derives from the Greek word *diasperien*, where the word, *dia*, means ‘through’ or ‘across’ and the word *speirein*, ‘to scatter’. Diaspora can possibly be seen as “a naming of the other which has historically referred to displaced communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homelands through the movements of migration, immigration, or exile” (Braziel & Mannur, 1). As human beings, we are constantly reminded of our past living individually and collectively. Our origins, heritage and history make huge importance in our lives. The past is always with us defining our present.

The concept of diaspora is a bond to an actual or idealised (imagined) homeland, which is distant from the new home, where people in the new country have a historical connection with the old place. (Frykman Povranovic, 82) Diaspora stands for immigrants who share common experience with other people and is also seen as a community where individuals living outside their homeland identify themselves with the people of their homeland and the country. Diaspora, according to Dufoix means “nothing more than the idea of displacement and the maintenance of a connection with a real or imagined homeland” (Dufoix, 2). Diasporic journeys are about settling down and as a result of persecution, which has been the fate of numerous Jewish people (who are the first people creating the term diaspora) at various points in history people may have had to desert their homes. In the case of my study, Kosovar Albanian Muslims are another example, as they were forced to escape for the reason of political conflict.

Diasporas occur out of immigrants collectively, meaning that people leave their countries together with their families and in the new homeland they become part of a community relating to their old homeland. “Diasporic identities are at once local and global. They are networks of transnational identifications encompassing ‘imagined’ and ‘encountered’ communities” (Brah, 182). As Maja Frykman has written in *Beyond Integration: Challenges of belonging in*
Diaspora and Exile: An introduction, diasporas include labour migrants and their children, second-generation immigrants, who choose to settle down in the new country. Even people who escaped war and violence uphold a sense of belonging to their homeland in a spiritual and cultural way. When leaving their homelands behind, these people feel emotionally attached to their homeland, especially at the beginning of their refugee experiences (Frykman Povrzanovic, 23).

What has marked Europe in the 1990s and has had consequences for political decisions and for migration within Europe is the number of refugees from the former Yugoslavia and the plight of Kosovar Albanians. Maja Frykman explains how old and young Kosovar Albanians who were leaving their country and entering a new country were frightened and traumatized. “Those who happen to stay for good will have to deal not only with their personal experiences of violence and losses, but also with social demands made on them in the course of becoming immigrant” (Frykman Povrzanovic, 11). She further describes how these people are trying to adopt into the unfamiliar new life and at the same time they are in contacts with the Albanian diaspora in the new country.

Nancy Foner argues in her book how transformations in communication have increased through globalization, making it possible for immigrants to operate at the same time in a variety of places. She states that “Today, immigrants can hop on a plane or make a telephone call to check out how things are going at home, thereby allowing them to be involved in everyday life in the home community in a fundamentally different way than in the past” (Foner, 70). She further claims how nowadays immigrants right away can hear news about people from home and they directly take part in family and home discussions. In spite of the distance, people keep connections with the people from their native homeland through the Internet. The new information technology makes it possible for no longer experiencing migration as a double absence, “never really belonging to the old ‘‘there,’’ which has become ‘‘here,’’” but also not quite belonging to the new “‘there’’ that once was ‘‘here.’” Today, the technological revolution
is opening the way to a “compresence here and there, because “here” and “there” have lost some of their meanings” (Dufoix, 100). Besides, she discusses how the most of the second-generation today do not continue to relate links with their parents’ home societies. “English may have become the global language of money, but the loss of the parental language surely has implications for the second generation’s ability to maintain ongoing ties with their parents’ homelands” (Foner, 81). Nevertheless, some scholars have argued that even though the young generation do not maintain relation across borders, they are entangled in community fields because they are raised in those networks around people who maintain connections to the home country or community. (Foner, 81) In addition, it is also stated that some of the second generation who spent or were involved at least a little in their parents’ homelands when they were younger will develop stronger ties when they grow up and they will become more interested in their roots. Yet, today’s immigrants are more assimilated by being influenced of the host popular culture. (Foner, 85) It will be interesting to find out how the immigrants in diaspora are settled in the new country, and where they feel they belong and how they perceive the notion of home. What is ‘home’ according to the immigrants and where is home, and more definitely, where do they feel they belong?

3.4. The Notion of Home

In order to understand the different aspects of home within migration that come as a result of people migrating one needs to understand how ‘home’ is conceptualized and perceived. In this research, the word Home becomes significant as it leaves the immigrant between two homes. What eventually becomes more important is where the immigrant feels ‘home’, by identifying home in various aspects. Some of the most significant aspects of home in the novel are family, memory, nostalgia, belonging, practices and trauma.
The word Home is not easy to define. For most people, home could be the place where they were born and brought up or home could be a territory, country or nation, and for others home is where one’s family lives. In Gyle Munro’s study homes is defined as a ‘‘spatial imaginary’, as a space which can represent ‘feelings of belonging, desire and intimacy’ but also of ‘fear, violence and alienation’. Migrants within the diaspora can both welcome and reject ideas of home, which are to each individual and family highly personal imagined environments, depending on a whole host of factors related to the pre-migration experience and the development of the new home’’ (Munro, 100). The process of leaving home, however is difficult and painful, but it is eased at first by hopes, dreams and imaginations of a new home in the new country they enter. Scholars have been describing how displaced peoples uproot cultures and beliefs they have brought along with them from their native homes in their new homes. When talking about home as a memory, it is important when studying migration and diaspora as memory is closely tied to historical movements and is an act of remembering which creates new understandings of both the past and the present, since memory is sensed as a bridge between the past and the present. In Vijay Agnew’s book, it is argued that women writers turn to the past effecting change in the present and not of means of nostalgia, which is described as a form of escaping from an unpleasant present into an idealized past. The concepts nostalgia and remembering are distinguished:

Whereas ‘nostalgia’ is the desire to return home, ‘to remember’ is ‘to bring to mind’ or ‘think of again’, ‘to be mindful of,’’ to recollect’. Both ‘remembering’ and ‘re-collecting,’ suggest a connecting, assembling, a bringing together of things in relation to one another… Memory may look back in order to move forward and transform disabling fictions to enabling fictions, altering our relation to the present and future (Agnew, 9).

It is further argued that nostalgia is necessary for the memory as ‘‘When we long for the past, we long for what might have been as well as what was; it is only by incorporating such longing into our narratives that we can suspend the past and ultimately change its meanings in
the present’ (Agnew, 9). In relation to memory and history, nostalgic memories have helped to shape an identity and build a positive image of the self in both the past and the present. As people try to make sense of the past, therefore, memories are constantly made and remade. Memories create a link between our past; origins, heritage and history. The past defines our present by always being with us in our voices or minds explaining how we became ourselves and settled what we call our homes. Yet, not all the migrants have a good past, not all of them remember the past with longing and nostalgia. “For example, women’s recollections of the past are often tinged with a desire to resist the patriarchal norms of their cultures and class; these norms constitute the cultural baggage brought from ‘back home’ into the new societies of settlement” (Agnew, 188). Migrants and refugees are haunted by the loss of home. For those who have been affected by war, the past continues to exert its influence as they experience trauma. The past, history and the war experiences for the migrants are not forgotten, they are alive in the present and they shape the experience of exiles. “The ghostly and shadowy past haunts the present of those in the diaspora as they create new identities on the basis of imagined homelands and play a role in shaping them” (Agnew, 153)

Homes are a physical reality, yet, home can also be a part of our imagination and a longing to belong and to be ‘at home.’ “Home brings together memory and longing, the ideational, the affective and the physical, the spatial and the temporal, the local and the global, involves a ‘unique synthesis’: an aspect of life and at the same time a special way of forming, reflecting and interrelating the totality of life” (Rapport & Dawson, 8). Home, as an individual memory, longing or presence has an impact on imposing homes as a cultural norm to which some must belong to and others must be excluded from it. Nostalgia represents a cherishing of the past over the present and human beings long for their old places. “A longing for the ‘good old days,’ can be read as ‘a search for belonging’ as well as an attempt to minimize the impact of ‘many bereavements’ (Agnew, 64). Immigrants in the diaspora also struggle with the feeling
of not belonging. “The sense of not belonging, or feeling like an eternal outsider, is perhaps most acute for migrants who are ‘visible’ as a result of their skin colour, dress code, publicly observable cultural practices, or simply their names” (Agnew, 258). In defining what is home and its location is related with self and with community identities that are constructed across borders and boundaries such as nationality and ethnicity for example. Theoretically, one can choose and name one’s home freely. What defines community is all kinds of co-existence that are familiar are to be understood as belonging to the community with your own folk. (Dufoix, 70)

The notion of home has also been talked about as a space between places. It has been argued that if the globe becomes a unified space by peoples’ movement and communication, then no place is really separate and itself, and no place is completely other. This leads to that people are always and yet never at ‘home’. Home could be defined as the organization of space over time, “homes comes to be found in a routine set of practices, a repetition of habitual interactions, in styles of dress and address, in memories and myths, in stories carried around in one’s head. People are more at homes nowadays, in short, in ‘words, jokes, opinions, gestures, actions, even the way one wears a hat’” (Rapport & Dawson, 7). Thus, home is neither here nor there, rather it is both here and there, a hybrid and “one is at home not in a thing or a place but ‘in a life being lived in movement’, and in an ‘untold story’” (Rapport & Dawson, 28). Through peoples’ migration, they continue to make themselves at home by constantly telling their stories and experiences. Home can therefore also be sensed when we talk about culture and language. “Learning and adopting a new language changes the individual because all languages permit slightly varying forms of thought, imagination, and play” (Agnew, 44).

Where are you from is a very easy question to answer, however when the question “where is home?” arises, one may have it hard to give an answer. Longing for the native homes, for the first-generation immigrants who seek a community to belong to may be intense. When
you have lived in a country as a citizen for many years and when someone asks you where you come from and what religion you belong to and you still do not know how to respond to that then a form of culture shock occurs. Vijay Agnew in her book discusses these questions and parameters of home by arguing,

What is home? The place I was born? Where I grew up? Where I live and work as an adult? Where I locate my community – my people? Who are ‘my people’? Is home a geographical space, an emotional sensory space? Home is always so crucial to immigrants and migrants … I am convinced that this question – how one understands and defines home - is a profoundly political one … Political solidarity and a sense of family could be melded together imaginatively to create a strategic space I could call ‘home.’ (Agnew, 147)

This quote shows how the notion of ‘home’, even though being ambiguous is important to immigrants. Home could be the place you were born, home could be the place you live now, home could be both and therefore it is hard to give a clear answer where home is. In the case of my study, this quote helps me understand where home is according to the immigrants living in the diaspora. Is home neither ‘there’ nor ‘here’? Or is it sensed imaginatively by creating a space called ‘home’?

The place we call our Homeland is subject to the imaginary boundaries of nation states and the imagined boundaries cover real ideas of nation, state, country and identity. The homeland, therefore, becomes imagined. Salman Rushdie, a writer who emigrated from India fleeing from his religious beliefs, in his book, Imaginary Homelands deals with the notion of home as imaginary and talks about that his present (new country) is foreign to him and the past (native country) is a lost home. He explains how he as a migrant is haunted by some sense of loss and a longing to go back and says that if he looks back, then he must do so in his knowledge that his physical disaffection from India almost certainly means that he will not be capable of reclaiming exactly the things that were lost; that he will create fictions, not actual places or villages, but imaginary homelands, invisible ones. When writing his book, Rushdie tried to make his memory of his India as imaginatively true as possible. ‘I tried to make it as
imaginatively true as I could, but imaginative truth is simultaneously honourable and suspect, and I knew that my India may only have been one to which I (who am no longer what I was, and who by quitting Bombay never became what perhaps I was meant to be) was, let us say, willing to admit I belonged” (Rushdie, 10). He notes that there is a gap, which he calls “in-between”, between leaving your own country and entering a new one to carry on in the foreign country. I find this gap that he describes very crucial to my topic and argument since it concerns about “imaginary homes”, “otherness” and the feeling of “in-between”, which are central to my paper as the immigrants in my chosen novel are situated in these terms.

Together with the concepts of migration, identity and diaspora, the different notions of home will help me through my analysis of the immigrants’ experiences, their belonging and their sense of ‘home’. Migration is the main reason to why immigrants have different cultural identities and hybrid identities in a new country. The immigrants in the new homeland may feel they belong to or not belong to any diasporic community and they have different minds of where ‘home’ is to them. In order to find any result to my research study, it is important to understand the immigrant’s journey from the old country to the new country and how the immigrant’s identity is shaped within migration by imagining different homes all the time.

4. Analysis of ‘Home’ in Antigona and Me

There are several aspects of ‘home’ to analyse in the novel, Antigona and Me. The book depicts a story of a refugee woman from Kosovo who has escaped the war and is struggling to make a life in the new country working hard to make sure her children will have it all. What I am looking to find out is how the novel depicts the characters’ experiences within migration and what sense of ‘home’ is implied in Antigona and Me. I have found the aspects of home important to my research as ‘home’ in the sense of memory, nostalgia and trauma, and also
home as a belonging, for example to a culture, place, community or to one’s own folk. In addition, I have also implied the sense of home in practices, things immigrants do, think, act, or say that make them feel home. The last aspect of home that I found relating to the novel is home in the sense of family. Home could be where the family is for example. The struggles that the immigrant is faced with having to adapt into an ever-changing situation are shown to the reader with the immigrant’s journey and experiences.

4.1 Home in the sense of Memory, Nostalgia, and Trauma in Antigona and Me

Antigona describes how the Serbs came for her in March ’99 looking for Fazli, Antigona’s husband and how the policemen threw Flora, Antigona’s daughter off the roof. Antigona could not even get any medical care for her daughter. Antigona left with her children before the Serbs destroyed her house and never looked back. “They left everything behind: furniture, livestock, the ends of crops painfully harvested the previous autumn, seeds for the coming year, pots, plans, clothes. And a dog, Ylli says. A dog he really liked and who liked him” (Clanchy, 16). Antigona describes how they spent many days hiding in the forest and how she had to carry Flora as she was wounded and the days before crossing the Albanian border were very hard and painful. Antigona’s village was ruined and they were homeless. She was displaced with her children. Internal displacement is the most devastating effects of the war which leaves the immigrant with trauma. “‘Internal displacement meant losing your home, your assets, being a beggar, being terrified, being ashamed’” (Clanchy, 45). Antigona shows through her experiences that home for her relates to trauma due to the displacement and therefore she does not want to look back because she has lost everything. As is mentioned in the theory part, migrants and refugees are haunted by the loss of home. “Often, the loss of
personal possessions meant the forfeiture of memory itself, and, as such, the loss of self and identity’’ (Agnew, 58). This is also related to how Agnew talked about how the immigrants are haunted by the loss of home. While Kate Clanchy implies to Antigona that her life in England is hard for her and asks her if she was the right one to be saved from the war, Antigona, on the other hand, answers that she is the lucky one. ‘‘No. You don’t know, Kate, the difference my life there and my life here. There I was like a dog. I borrowed money for bread. Here – I can work. I can do anything. I can choose my life’’ (Clanchy, 21). Here, Antigona refers to England as her home, as she is independent to make her own choices and she has mostly bad memories from her home in Kosovo. Whenever it is mentioned in the book about Antigona returning home, the question is not actual even though the war is over. As the author explains, it is confirmed that ‘‘not only was Kosovo still dangerous, but it was an impossible place for a divorced woman: neat feminism, just what interests me most’’ (Clanchy, 26). Home in Kosovo is just a memory of ruins and impossibilities for a woman to make it on her own. Because she has experienced trauma and lost her home back in Kosovo, Antigona senses home in the free and peaceful England. This also explains how Munro in the theory part argues about how the country of destination is portrayed as the land of opportunities where the immigrant is in search of a better life. Despite Antigona’s pains and ‘‘however terrible the war, however much Antigona suffered, she never says that she regrets the house she was forced from or the people she left behind. Her life there was shattered, but the shattering set her free’’ (Clanchy, 46). However, later in the book the new events start to frighten Antigona as Kosovo is supposed to be safe now meanwhile the war is over and Kosovars are being deported. She does not want to go back, because she is not safe there because of her ex-husband. As Agnew argues, women want to resist the patriarchal norms of their cultures.
Antigona explains how she did not know about London or England specially, she just wanted to get out. “She wanted the life she saw on the screen. Not just the new clothes, the shining interiors, the preposterous jewellery, but the freedom. There were women all over TV doing jobs and making choices. She wanted to join them. She wanted to be in The Bold and The Beautiful, because she knew she was; because she wanted some choice, some agency in her life; because it seemed to her she deserved it” (Clanchy, 39). What kept Antigona going on through her horrible experiences as a refugee is the hopes and dreams she had for a better life, in a civilised country, where she could feel at home with no fears attached. This shows how it is explained in the theory part that memory is closely tied to historical movements and how memory is sensed as a bridge between the past and the present.

Regardless of the traumatic experiences of violence and war, Antigona has beautiful memories of her homeland. Her memories of food and farming, for example are connected to her mother. “Antigona is especially nostalgic for her fresh, unpasteurized butter, and for her moons of new cheese, sliced with oil or fried in more butter” (Clanchy, 125). Moreover, Antigona is being nostalgic as she misses the good old days, back in Kosovo. “Antigona still remembers how good it tasted. Lunch on the terrace, under vine: soft white cheese made fresh that morning, drizzled with bright, peppery cottage olive oil; salad just pulled from the garden, shockingly sweet; flatbread from the oven, tasting of wood smoke” (Clanchy, 126).

Compared to the fresh cheese in Kosovo, Antigona talks about how the cheese in England is plastic-wrapped and does not taste good at all. She explains how everything in her old country is fresh and original. Antigona remembers her good times just as Vijay Agnew talks about nostalgia and how ‘remembering’ is to bring to mind the old days. According to her, remembering suggests a connection, a bringing together of things in relation to one another. This proves how Agnew talked about how immigrants tend to turn to the past making changes in the present by escaping from an unpleasant present into an idealised past. Agnew also
states how when we long for the past, we long for what might have been as well as what was. Besides the good old memories, Antigona also remembers the times in her life when she was poor. ‘‘She remembers what it was to be protein-deprived – to long for meat…and not being able to feed her children’’ (Clanchy, 126). In England, she feels proud that she can offer her children food and she says: ‘‘They don’t miss anything’’ (Clanchy, 127), meaning that her children have the elementary things, such as heat, food, and comfort. This is what makes Antigona consider England, as a land of opportunities and hope, an idealised country.

According to the theorist, McLeod, talking about home as an idea, he refers to the migrants needs of shelter, stability and comfort in the new home.

Clearly, home is sensed as a memory in this passage. All that has to do with the old homeland for Antigona is now a memory. However, memories are either bad or good. Antigona is nostalgic about her good things in her past, such as her childhood, fresh food and the fresh air, but she is also traumatized by the awful events in her old homeland. In this way, we can see how trauma and nostalgia are related, yet contrasted. This leaves Antigona with a hybrid identity as she is in-between the good memories and the bad memories. She misses many good things from her home back in Kosovo, yet she feels more safe and free in England. This is also related to how home is sensed as a space representing feelings of belonging but also of fear, poverty and violence.

4.2 Home in the sense of Belonging in Antigona and Me

When referring to belonging to another culture or people, Antigona always refers to herself as an independent woman, saying: ‘‘I was always more city girl’’…’In my head.’’ (Clanchy, 34). She goes on to describe how her ex-husband was very narrow-minded and jealous. ‘‘They are like country boy,’ she says. ‘I am more city girl’’ (Clanchy, 64). The novel depicts Antigona as
a strong woman breaking her traditional views in the way that she leaves a violent husband and works fulltime to take care of her children. She becomes a powerful woman year by year and a symbol to other Albanian women and at the same time a threat to the men. “In the closed village of East London’s Albanian community, Antigona became famous. First: she is the only Albanian woman anyone has heard of who actually used the British courts to divorce her husband. Second: she is unbowed, and as the years go by, she only grows richer and stronger. She learns to drive, she keeps a lovely house, she visibly has good employment and counts middle-class Englishwomen as her friends. She is a figure of gossip and scandal, but none of it sticks” (Clanchy, 108). Even before migrating, Antigona had a dream to live in a free world, in a place where you are free to make your own choices in life. The quote below explains how Antigona wished to belong to a free place and her hopes and dreams for a better life kept Antigona carry along:

And it is true that when Antigona left Albania she was not just running from a war; true that when she got into the lifeboat, when she fled across Europe, she also had The Bold and The Beautiful in her mind. She did hope that, apart from staying alive, she might raise herself and her children above desperate poverty. She thought, even, that she herself might live somewhere where she would not be regularly raped and beaten with the sanction of an entire community. It was her hopes, these bold, tremendous hopes, which carried her along her terrible journey, and a few years down the line, it is these same hopes that will do her in. (Clanchy, 58)

The feeling of being caught in the middle of two cultures, of “not belonging to either one”, is exactly the feelings that Antigona is struggling with. (McLeod, 214). She does not have a place which she can actually call a home. It is especially the cultural, traditional view on life that keeps Antigona from feeling home in the new country, despite her positive thoughts about England as a free country. This is related to what Stuart Hall talked about how we are not what we are while we are always in a process of becoming. Who we are is really what we are not yet. Stuart Hall emphasized that what matters is who we want to be. In this case, Antigona wants to be independent. No matter how much Antigona had wished to be free and independent, she could never escape from ‘shame’, the word Antigona uses throughout the story to make it clear
how much the opinion of other people matters. In order to understand this, we need to look into Stuart Hall’s theory in defining cultural identity in terms of a one shared culture, which people with a same historical background have in common. Antigona’s cultural identity reflects common historical experiences and shared cultural codes that are unchanging. Similarly, Maja Frykman’s theory on diaspora helps us understand why Antigona cannot change her old views and thoughts, such as ‘shame’, even though she wants to become independent from traditional ways of life. Frykman has argued how heritage, origins and history are important as the past is always with us defining our present. She also states that even people who have escaped war uphold a sense of belonging to their homeland in a spiritual and cultural way. Thus, cultural identity is related to diaspora as it becomes significant merely when you live in diaspora, where immigrants feel they belong to their own folk or community, sharing the same culture and tradition. Immigrants who share common experiences in the new country have historical relationship with the old place. Therefore, Antigona has a past, which is not easy to leave behind. She is unwilling to change her customs and views practically, even though she fights hard to live her new life in the new country. The word ‘shame’, itself is connected to the clan, Albanian tradition that one should be living up to. This also relates to how Agnew talks about how norms from the native homeland constitute the cultural traditions brought from back home into the new country.

Antigona’s brother has distanced himself from her because of her bad parenting saying ‘her daughters were lost to shame’ (Clanchy, 202). Antigona’s daughters even though in the beginning were shown to be interested in mainly Albanian boys, later they change and find different ways that make Antigona very disappointed. Flora, the older daughter, remembers where she came from and everything that happened. However, she only remembers the bad memories. Mihane, on the other hand, the second daughter, ‘She says she never thinks about Kosovo. Never looks back. She gets on with her next thing’ (Clanchy, 211). This explains how
Nancy Foner argues about how most of the second-generation immigrants do not continue to relate links with their parents’ home and society. The author, when talking to Antigona about her brothers says, ‘‘Well, I think – they should be ashamed. And she nods and I see that one of the reasons she told the story was so that I would say that. So that I, who have become one of her gauges of Englishness, of how things are here, in the New World, would listen to her story and say that’’ (Clanchy, 56). But even though Antigona begins to give in to Western ways, she still holds dear many significant and traditional Albanian views and attempts to pass the information and importance to their children. Here you could say that Antigona despite wanting to break up her old views and thoughts she relates herself with the Albanian diasporic community. Antigona is obviously mostly concerned of what people of her own community think and what people will say, how they will judge her. She proves it strongly in many passages in the novel. For instance, Antigona is a Muslim, but she is clearly of little faith. Being a Muslim, according to Antigona in the novel is not as important as it is to be a part of the clan, the tradition. She states that ‘‘tradition is the important thing. Opinion. What people say’’ (Clanchy, 69). Shame and the opinion of what other people will think of your actions is what Antigona talks about as part of her Albanian identity. However, this is not the case of all the Kosovan Albanians. She talks about the traditional code of the ancestral mountains of Malësi (Malësi is the region’s official name which means Greater Highlands), the system of penalties and customs known as the Kanun of Lek. (The word Kanun comes from the Greek word, canon and Lek from an Albanian legendary leader). ‘‘The Kanun was the most important set of ideas in Antigona’s upbringing: holier than the pronouncements of the Imam’’ (Clanchy, 72). Furthermore, it is described how The Kanun, ‘‘Their clanish way of life and oral code of law have remained stronger for them than Catholicism, Islam or Communism’’ (Clanchy, 34). Kate is influenced as Antigona learns the language and improves her: ‘‘Antigona adapts, she changes: it is one of the markers of her great intelligence’’ (Clanchy, 88). However, Antigona
never learns to rub along with the Kanun. Instead, she fights it, yet “With her head, she rejects the shame of the Kanun of Lek, but her body feels it” (Clanchy, 92-93). Antigona is caught in-between, she is in the ‘gap’ which Salman Rushdie and Homi Bhabha talked about. As much as Antigona wants to fight her traditional past she is still in-between both cultures, “she has had no education in abstract concepts: she grew up under communism but has no idea what the term means. She has left the village behind, but keeps bumping up against it in her mind, against the shadow of the Kanun, against Shame” (Clanchy, 145). She is willing to change, to adapt within the new society and break her norms but her past holds her. She has no power to change her present, because of the lack of education. “Antigona wanted to study, she did not want to clean and she missed her chance. “Much as she has changed here, the change from the life of the body to the life of the pen is beyond her. This exceptional verbal woman will never write because she was forced to clean instead of reading” (Clanchy, 145). This relates to the concept of in-between that both McLeod, Homi Bhabha, and Rushdie have talked about that feeling home neither here nor there leaves room for the immigrant to feel as belonging to neither the native nor the new country.

However, her daughters in London have both learned the terms such as racist, culture, prejudice and value at school, “Both of them use them fearlessly against any sort of discrimination against them, and both of them shout their mother down when she voices the crude racist prejudices of the Malësi” (Clanchy, 217). Here, we see the culture-clash between the first and second-generation immigrants. Antigona has taken with her part of her origin culture and views. In this section, we can see that Antigona belongs to both cultures. She wants to break from her traditional views but at the same time she is who she is because of her ideas and views brought from back home. As Agnew has mentioned, cultural differences make the immigrant feel alienated and arise feelings of nostalgia by creating a longing for home. Cultural
identity is thus, a process never completed, but always shifting and therefore you cannot tell what things specifically make a person’s identity or where an immigrant belongs to.

4.3 Home in the sense of ‘Practices’, in *Antigona and Me*

For many people, home can be sensed as a physical aspect, as “things people do, say or think”. Home can be sensed in the daily routines people involve. Kate Clanchy gives an example of how she and Antigona have different thoughts when talking about money. “I have been brought up not to mention money, or to mention it in an encoded way – ‘good value’, ‘quality item’, ‘solid investment’ – which indicates at once unworldliness and prudence. But Antigona mentions money all the time: she grew up in poverty and under communism, so how and where to get cheap goods is crucial information” (Clanchy, 63). The author describes how Antigona, tells her where she for example can buy something for less than she generally pays for and how this information for Antigona is a favour, an act of sharing and for Kate it does not really matter. These principles that Antigona is brought up with in her old homeland, make her who she is. The example of the quote above shows how these practices are with Antigona even if she lives in another country. Antigona lives in the new country, but her values and attributes from her past remain with her. She has got these norms inside her and wants to keep them even if she is living in a different country with different views. These practices, as the way she considers money make Antigona sense home in the new country but keeping her norms from her old homeland with her. Once again, we can see Antigona belonging to the Albanian diasporic community, sharing the same views with her own folk. Antigona has become that independent woman she always wanted to be, making money and all that but indeed she does not enjoy her freedom and money as she must always help others. “O Brave New World, as Antigona does indeed see it. But not for her: because a lot of that liberated female energy went into making private money rather than changing the world” (Clanchy, 131).
Another example is how Kate, the author describes Antigona’s different views in contrast to the views people are raised with in England. Antigona does not like Kate’s new antique furniture. “And she thinks our ripped Thirties leather armchairs are a disgrace, rather than ‘vintage’” (Clanchy, 120). Everything new to Antigona is clean and fresh, she does not see the antique in old things, according to the author: “In reaction to this, ‘new’ is Antigona’s highest term of approbation, as ‘authentic’ is mine” (Clanchy, 119). Maybe Antigona thinks that way because of her low standards living back in Kosovo, not being able to buy anything new. Everything new and fresh to her is a choice of freedom. Buying new things refers to the home in England, where you have the free choice and money to have everything new. This is what Antigona has dreamt before entering the new country. The old possessions, nevertheless mean not having a free choice to buy new stuff. Here we can relate to the diasporic identity as Antigona is attached to her homeland and she has a bond to an actual or idealised home, distant from the new one. The way she sees Kate’s furniture in that way explains how she has connections with her old place. Maja Frykman also argues how Kosovar Albanians are trying to adopt into the unfamiliar life and at the same time interacting with the Albanian community. The quote above expressions how Antigona’s values and views from the past are still important to her. This makes her belong to a diasporic Albanian group where they live in the new country but where they still keep their values and traditions. Antigona keeps complaining how today’s children have many needs. She shows how she agrees educating children in Kosovo is easier and better, meanwhile she says: “I wouldn’t like to have children here’…’It is too hard. Here, you have to talk to them, play with them, and all these things” (Clanchy, 257). She also complains how children in England have too many choices: “Too many toys, too many sorts of food: she thinks it makes them wasteful and quarrelsome” (Clanchy, 258). It is these practices and views that kind of make it hard for Antigona to cope into the society, even though she says England is her new home and she wants to break from her old views. Her Albanian
cultural identity is what is of significance when it comes to these ‘practices’. Antigona creates an idealised, ‘imagined’ home in the new country, where she is neither ‘there’, nor ‘here’, but somewhere in-between.

Throughout the story, Antigona emphasizes how cleanness is very important to her, and to the most Kosovar Albanians, as it is connected to moral standards, and the word ‘Shame’ that she uses as something associated to being ‘clean’. As has been mentioned earlier, whenever Antigona talks about the opinion of others, she mentions the word ‘shame’ as something bad; if something is not clean for example than it is a shame and people talk about it. The author explains how ‘‘Antigona has slapped Mihane because her room is untidy ‘like an English girl’s’’ (Clanchy, 127). Antigona is ‘trapped’ in her past, when it comes to the way she sees things. ‘‘Antigona needs to feel ‘clean’ in the sense of the Kanun, or her life is intolerable to her. Part of feeling ‘clean’ is expelling dirt, even, or especially, when the dirt is near you’’ (Clanchy, 189). It is particularly these different views, different culture identities that were mentioned in the theory where Stuart Hall talked about that makes it hard for Antigona to completely feel home, in the new country.

The author explains how Antigona confronted difficulties adapting in the society when she first came to England. One example is how dates and times for her were difficult: ‘‘Antigona found calendars and timekeeping nearly impossible. She has learned, of course, as she learns everything, but her talk with her mother still happens in an Albanian time frame, where there are tomorrows but very few names of months or years’’ (Clanchy, 179). This quote clearly demonstrates how Antigona is still haunted by her past. She is brought up with these ideas and thoughts. Her mind may want to break from the traditional past, but she cannot break from the practices which have become a routine in her life. It is difficult to make choices to live differently from the way you were brought up. These practices, the things Antigona values and have an opinion about, like the way she sees Kate’s furniture, the way she considers money,
and how she highlights the importance of ‘cleanness’ make Antigona create a home as a space, a home in the new country, but within a diasporic community.

4.4 Home in the sense of Family in Antigona and Me

Antigona’s daughters have chosen different lives, one of them marrying at 17 and wanting to wear a hijab and the other one running away as a drug addict and being pregnant. Mihane, Antigona’s second daughter starts dating a Jamaican guy and she falls in love with the extended Jamaican family as it reminds her of the clan back home. ‘It is noisy and busy and irregular: a permissive, dynamic version of an Albanian fis’ (Clanchy, 218). This shows how being a part of the fis, the clan, is important to Albanians. (The word fis in Albanian refers to the word clan). Mihane is obviously imagining a real comfortable home that was lost within migration. She keeps saying that ‘It’s just like home, really…’ the family. Grandmas and everything. Mum would like them’ (Clanchy, 248). We can see here that Mihane is imagining something beyond home in Kosovo and home in England. As stated earlier, Mihane seemed not to bother much about Kosovo, she did not think of Kosovo as her home. Nevertheless, whenever she thought of the home in Kosovo, she associated it with family. However, she seems to be longing for a home similarly to that of the place she was born in. This is exactly what Salman Rushdie talks about when he says that to him the present time, the new country is foreign and the past, the native country is a lost home. This is what makes the migrant haunted by some sense of loss and longing to go back, but knowing in his mind that he will not be able to reclaim exactly the things that were lost, but instead he will create imaginary places, imaginary homelands. Mihane has lost the ideal place of home within migration. By entering the new country, she has lost the big family they used to live as previously and is therefore trying to ‘make’ her own kind of sense of home. This demonstrates how Mihane is creating home as a space, an ‘imaginary
home’. “They lack family. They miss their clan. Their uncles are frightening people for them, because of all the shamings and the rows” (Clanchy, 212). Throughout the novel, the girls are described as feeling lonely, maybe because their father is not living with them anymore and maybe also because their mother is working all the time. They seem to be wanting to belong to some sort of community but they are in-between both cultures as they are not allowed to do anything either within the Albanian community nor interact with English people because they have so many demands by their mother. “But in a Kosovan village they would have been in a group, surrounded by women of the fis doing similar jobs: here, they are alone” (Clanchy, 213).

Flora, as well as her sister Mihane is making herself a home of her own, she “is making herself a little Malësi in her own house, constructing herself a little village” (Clanchy, 230). Flora finds comfort and her sense of home in religion, the Islamic community. Once more, we see how Antigona’s daughters have created their imaginary homelands, as Rushdie has argued about. Antigona reconciles with her daughters in the end of the novel, but “Antigona’s daughters are both part of their husband’s clans now” (Clanchy, 271). Her daughters never question why she must work all the time, because they know that she works to pay back their passage and to get them luxuries she has dreamed of all her life, to have something in case they would be deported and to freeze her memories of war and her grief of her lost family. The author explains how Antigona’s daughters never feel bitter about this “as English girls might, being left alone to look after their little brother. ‘It is our culture,’ they tell me, proudly…the older children look after the younger” (Clanchy, 213). In the book, it is stressed how family is the most important thing, “Because, in the Malësi, the worst thing is not to have a family” (Clanchy, 112). This shows how home is sensed as a family as family is the most important thing in life. This also relates to the cultural differences that were mentioned in the theory part. The daughters are aware of the cultural differences they have but this does not keep them from making a ‘home’, where they indeed feel home in the new country.
Antigona is continually concerned of what people of her own culture and community will think and react and shows over and over again how important the opinion of one’s family is. She has it hard to accept that Flora wants to marry a man from Iraq and that Mihane is having a baby with a black man. Antigona wonders how her daughters could choose to live this life when they had all the choices in the world in England. Antigona’s daughters are described in the novel as extraordinary, balanced, organized and high-achieving comparing to other asylum-seekers in the country and Antigona has high demands on them. She says that her daughters have forgotten how they came to this country and what kind of life they left behind, how they escaped the war. But, Antigona feels that she has lost both of them. ‘‘If she let Flora have a boyfriend she would be dirty. ‘People from my culture’ – she means her brothers – ‘do not accept that,’ she shouts’’ (Clanchy, 164). Even if Antigona changes a lot throughout the story, in this passage Antigona’s cultural identity is fixed and unchanging, where people with a same historical background have a shared culture, according to Stuart Hall. She clearly makes a distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ by saying: ‘‘That’s the way you think here. English people. But that is not my culture’’ (Clanchy, 165). Antigona is in a hybrid identity once again as her demands on her daughters are very ambiguous as she does not want them to ‘‘marry like an Albanian, but not to have boyfriends like an English girl, either. To be flirtatious and admired at all times, but never to kiss anyone. To remember the shame of Kanun and to forget it, at one and the same time’’ (Clanchy, 212). Antigona is clearly in-between, but home for her is not in Kosovo, it is in England, thus sharing some of her cultural views within the Albanian diasporic community.

As Antigona has visited her family a few times back in her home country ‘‘Finding her family has reunited Antigona with her Albanian self: with her mother’s love but also with the Kanun and all her internalized shame. She doesn’t know quite where she is any more: when she speaks on the phone to her sister and then looks up to see a wall of flats, a multicultural Hackney
bus, she feels her old and new selves collide” (Clanchy, 223-224). This explains how Maja Frykman argued that Kosovar Albanians who have left their country are traumatized and deal not only with experiences of losses and war but also with social demands in the new country of becoming immigrants. (Frykman, Povrzanovic, 11) What is related to the quote above is also how Maja explained how immigrants are trying to adopt into the new life meanwhile being in contact with the Albanian diaspora in the new country. To understand how and why Antigona feels her old collides with her new self, I look back at the theory in Dufoix’s book which states that globalization and the new information technology has made it possible to not experience migration as a double absence. This is also related to how Nancy Foner argued about how through globalization, transformations in communication have increased and immigrants therefore are at the same time in a variety of places. Antigona can contact her parents and sisters whenever she wants. Financially Antigona has succeeded very well in the new country. She works more than is necessary to not only take care of her children but also to help her mother and sisters back in Kosovo. Her connection with her old home is still close as she visits her family in her home country and is always in contact with them. As mentioned earlier, Foner has argued how in a new land immigrants are possible to operate in different places through globalization. Nowadays immigrants according to her can hear news right away and take part in family and home discussions. They are ‘there’ even if they are ‘here’ physically. (Foner, 70-71) We can once again see Antigona’s hybrid identity, as by visiting her parents back in her homeland and by being in touch with them constantly her mind is both in England and in Kosovo. That is why Antigona feels her Albanian old self is colliding with her new self as she is neither ‘there’ nor ‘here’. However, Antigona clarifies how after the war much of the Albanian identity in Kosovo and Albania is changing now under the overwhelming forces of globalization. The Kanun of Lek is slipping away and is more followed in very few and rural villages. Antigona highlights that after coming back to England from her visits in her home
country she feels free. ‘When I come back to England…’I kiss the ground. Because here I am free’…’Free to get money’…’Free from opinion. Free from people talking behind your back’” (Clanchy, 265). Yet, Antigona is unsure if she will ever be free of ‘Shame’, but she proclaims that she is “Free to walk on the street, no one will hurt you…Free to choose” (Clanchy, 266).

Antigona, despite her Albanian self, her Albanian identity and values, she feels more home in England, where she is free to live her own life as she wants to. Home for her is choice and freedom. Family is very important to Antigona as she visits them as much as she can, but being free and independent is what Antigona has always wanted to be. This independence empowers her to support and help her family with money. Family is also connected to Antigona’s sense of home as for her the opinion of her family is very important. This means that she cannot totally break from her norms and therefore she feels home in England but has the same opinions and values as her own folk in the Albanian community.

The life of the children compared to the life of their parents is very different. The children live more like English lives, watch English movies, go to school and have English friends. As has been explained above, we can see how the parents, being first generation immigrants, directly assume their identities from their home countries. What family and the community, basically what the opinion thinks, still matters. Throughout the novel, the clash between the first and the second-generation immigrants is visible; they both struggle in life but in very different ways. The second-generation immigrants only know the country they live in and view it as their home. Their parents on the other hand are mostly loyal to their motherland as they formed their views and thoughts there and for them “home” might be somewhere else. However, in the case of Antigona, home is where she lives now in the new country, but within a diasporic community sharing the norms and values with her own folk.
5. Conclusion

The aim of my research study was to examine different aspects of home that are implied in the novel, *Antigona and Me* and how the novel represents the immigrants’ experiences, after having left their place of origin to settle down in the new destination country. My aim has been to look into the identity changes that occur within the individual human beings when they migrate into a new country taking with them their own values and behaviours and adapting with the new values and culture they meet there. The reader is introduced to characters struggling with their experiences in the new country. In Clanchy’s novel we are shown the life of a first-generation immigrant, the Kosovan woman, Antigona and the second-generation immigrants, Antigona’s daughters, Flora and Mihane. Antigona is portrayed as a strong working woman, doing everything in her power to make sure her children have it all. Kate Clanchy has presented a character that shows the struggles of immigrant identity formation as well as a general theme of “unhomeliness” and displacement that can be created from a person having an intense background. In the novel, we can see that Antigona has not only a cultural identity but a hybrid identity as well that shows fluidity. The reader is shown the experiences of the first-generation immigrant in creating who she is in the new country, but through the novel we are also shown significant aspects of the immigrant hybrid identity. The research questions that I wanted to find out was how migration has affected the immigrants’ lives and where home is according to them and where they feel home. Further, I wanted to find out where the immigrants feel they belong and why the feel that way. My main focus has been to analyse what kind of different aspects of home are created within migration in the book, *Antigona and Me*.

To give an understanding to the novel, *Antigona and Me*, a review of the novel is made as a background to the research. In the background section the story of the Kosovan refugee woman, Antigona is described. The book tells us how Antigona takes her three children and
runs through the forest, across land and across seas hiding in lorries and trains and finally ending up in London. Antigona’s migration experience leaving everything behind to enter a total different country is of high relevance to my research. By living in diaspora facing cultural differences and feeling somewhere in between two homelands is what makes it interesting to analyse the different aspects of home within migration, in Antigona and Me.

In order to achieve the right results and goal of the aim of my work I have in the theory part used relevant main concepts and theories to my subject. The basis to why I have chosen specifically those theories is to give a broader understanding on the migrants’ experiences leaving their old homeland and entering the new country and creating different aspects of home within migration. The concept of migration, the term immigrant (including first- and second generation immigrants) and the term refugee are the main ideas to why people move and how they experience the movement. Cultural and hybrid identities are also of high importance because we come to understand the two different cultures the immigrants face in the host country. It is after entering the new country that these identities become significant and it is important to see how the identities are constructed living in a different place. I have also explained what diaspora means and how it is an outcome of migration and the cultural and hybrid identities. Diaspora is important to my research because it means that immigrants share a belonging and nostalgic memory to a certain place and have similar values and traditions with their own folk. The notion of home has been most helpful in conceptualizing the various aspects of home. By living in a new homeland as an immigrant with different background people may perceive home either in the new country or in the old one, or maybe in both countries or in neither one of them. Immigrants then create an idealised sense of home, an imaginary homeland.

In my analysis, I have eventually come to the conclusion of my aim and research where by reading the novel I have found different aspects of home that are important to the immigrants
in the story. In order to have a clear understanding of the different aspects of home that the immigrants have created within migration, I have related the analysis with the already existing theory. In this research, I have analysed the different aspects of home in four parts. My first focus was to analyse home in the sense of memory, nostalgia and trauma, because these are the first features the immigrants are faced with in the beginning of their lives in diaspora. Secondly, I have concentrated in finding out how home is sensed as belonging according to the immigrants in the novel. Immigrants either belong to their old home or to the new one, or to neither one of them, or maybe to both of them. Moreover, I have tried to study how home can be sensed in practices; things people do, act, value, dress, or think in their minds. To complete the analysis, I have examined home in the sense of family as in many ways home is where the family is according to the immigrants in the novel I have chosen.

In the part where Home is discussed as a memory, nostalgia and trauma, I have found out that Antigona is haunted by the loss of home. She has awful memories of the war and she remembers the violence and struggles she has been through. The horrific events make Antigona not want to go back to Kosovo and live there. The trauma the immigrants have been through as is depicted in the story make them not want to look back. She wants to create a new life where she is safe and secure with her children in England. Even though Antigona was forced to flee her country because of the war, she remembers how she always wanted to live in another country being free from poverty, patriarchal norms, and have a better life for herself and her children elsewhere. These hopes and dreams for a better future are what keeps Antigona carry on in the new different country. Besides the unpleasant memories, Antigona has good memories from her homeland. Remembering her childhood, the taste of food and the fresh air are just some of her memories that make Antigona nostalgic about her past in her old homeland. In this chapter I have come to the conclusion that Antigona has a hybrid identity. She is in-between
the good and the bad memories of her homeland. However, she feels safe and free in England, which makes her feel ‘home’ in the new country.

When Home is discussed in the sense of belonging, I have found out that one is at home not in a thing or a place but in a life, being lived in movement. By migrating, people have automatically created two different homes. Antigona belongs to both cultures as she is caught in the middle of both homelands. There are moments when she feels belonging to only the Albanian culture and there are times when she wants to break from the traditional norms and views and cope with the English culture. Antigona has a hybrid identity as she belongs to both cultures or sometimes to just the Albanian culture. Antigona does not want to return home ever. She feels home in England, where she is free and independent making her own money, but she cannot be free from her cultural thoughts and views as she was brought up with those ideas. Antigona belongs neither ‘there’ nor ‘here’, but she shares the same values and opinions with her own folk in the Albanian diasporic community.

In the third section of the analysis, Home is discussed in the sense of practices, such as things people do, say, think or value. Antigona may want to break from the traditional past, but she cannot break from the practices which have become a routine in her life. It is difficult to make choices to live differently from the way you were brought up. These practices make Antigona sense home as a space. Home is sensed in the new country, but within the diasporic community.

In the last part, Home has been analysed in the aspect of family. Here, both the first and the second-generation immigrants’ experiences have been discussed and where they feel they belong. Throughout the novel, the clash between the first and the second-generation immigrants is evident; they both struggle in life but in very separate ways. Antigona, as the first-generation immigrant in many ways senses home as where the family is because the opinion of her family matters and is very important to her. She cannot break from the rules and norms she was raised
with her family; therefore, she is attached to the same views and opinions that her own folk share within the Albanian diasporic community in England.

I have come to the conclusion with this research study that the immigrants are depicted in the novel to be living and adapting each day with two different cultures. During the process of everyday life in the new country, the immigrants’ identities slowly and effectively shape as they each day are surrounded with cultural differences. The immigrants feel they are a part of both the Kosovar Albanian belonging and English belonging. They are a mix of both or in-between, which give them a hybrid identity. The ambiguity and the feeling of in-between is what make the immigrants in the novel feeling home neither ‘there’ (referring to the native homeland) nor ‘here’ (the new country), but within the diasporic community. Within the Albanian diasporic community, the immigrants with their own folk share the same experiences, histories, lives, values and so on. Therefore, they find a sense of comfort together with each other keeping their own traditions and values, but at the same time coping with the English lifestyle. In many cases the immigrants then tend to sense home as an imaginatively or idealised place, which is neither back home nor in the new country, but somewhere in-between. To answer the question to where the immigrants feel they belong to, I have found out by reading the novel that they do not belong to only the Albanian community or to the homeland back in Kosovo and neither do they feel they belong to only the English society. They are, as has been discussed above somewhere in between these both cultures. They are either this or that; but still, they are both, and then they are neither this nor that, instead they feel they belong to some ‘imagined’ place or home, a space which the immigrants create themselves.
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