

Contents

Structural Overview	9
Acknowledgements	11
Introduction	13
Research Objective.....	14
Framing Mexican Migration	15
General Panorama of German-Mexican Studies.....	17
Mexican emigration to Germany	19
Significance of this Research.....	22
Monograph Structure.....	24
1 Theoretical Lens	27
1.1 The Imaginary: History of a Concept	28
1.2 Mapping the Imaginaries in Different Academic Contexts	32
1.3 Approaching Social Life from the Perspective of the Imaginaries	35
1.3.1 Foundations for Understanding the Imaginaries: The Social Construction of Reality.....	36
1.3.2 Fields of Action of the Imaginaries	40
1.4 Migrant Imaginaries	67
1.4.1 The Imaginary Dimension of Life in Migration.....	68
1.4.2 The Nation as a Dominant Imaginary and its Effects on Migration	72
1.5 Summary.....	83
2 Methodology	85
2.1 Research Design.....	85
2.1.1 The Life Story Approach	91
2.2 Procedure for the Collection of Empirical Materials	95
2.2.1 Selection Criteria for Participants.....	96
2.2.2 Finding Participants	97
2.2.3 Participants' General Information	97

2.2.4	The Conversations	98
2.2.5	Methodology and Tools	103
2.2.6	Transcription & Translation	105
2.3	Analysis Procedure	106
2.3.1	Zooming Out – Getting to Know the Stories as Unities	106
2.3.2	Zooming In – Thematic Analysis	107
2.4	Critical Reflection on the Research Procedure	110
2.4.1	Reflection on Challenges and Limitations	110
2.4.2	Reflection as Researcher and Co-producer of Stories	114
2.4.3	Reflection on my Own Story	115
2.5	Summary	117
3	Re-imagining Life through Migration	119
3.1	Lifestyle in Migration	120
3.2	Motivations for Mobility	124
3.2.1	Motivation for Migration Prior to Germany	127
3.2.2	Motivation for Migrating to Germany	131
3.3	Re-imagining Life in Germany	136
3.3.1	Arrival and First Impressions	136
3.3.2	Internal Mobility in Germany	145
3.3.3	Re-Imagining Life Quality, Lifestyle and Security	154
3.4	Summary	174
4	Re-imagining Mexicanness	175
4.1	Dialectic between Self-Perception, Perception of Others and Meta-Perception	180
4.1.1	Being Mexican	180
4.1.2	Double Role: as Ambassadors and/or Prisoners of Culture	188
4.2	Re-configuration of Mexicanness through Practices	202
4.2.1	Mexican Cuisine	203
4.2.2	Celebrations, Folkloric Dancing and Traditional and Ethnic Dress	211
4.2.3	Socio-Political Practices	221
4.3	Summary	224
5	Re-imagining Change and Belonging: Agency between Dominant and Emergent Imaginaries	227
5.1	Being Germanized	228
5.2	Fuzziness: "Not Here, Not There" & "Trapped between Two Worlds"	238
5.3	Practices in the Context of Change	240
5.4	Summary	243

Conclusions	245
References	251
List of Figures/Tables	287
List of Abbreviations	289
Appendices.....	291
Appendix A: Conversation Index	291
Appendix B: Rules for Transcribing	292
Appendix C: Participant Overview.....	294