



Transpersonal Effects of Self-Initiated Expatriation on Retirees

Abstract

By 2018, Finaccord forecasted that in 2021 the number of expatriates will reach around 87.5 million. Among them, retirees will account for 5 % or roughly 4.6 million. However, if academic research on forced immigration or expatriated workers is extensive, very little literature exists on retirees who chose to live abroad as perhaps death and old age are taboo subjects in Western societies; thus, the present research, which may contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon,

A new class of citizens is emerging, symbolized by the archetypes of the Old Sage and the Traveller, promoting transnationalism and multiculturalism and looking for novelty and freedom.

Using organic inquiry as a research method, the dynamics behind the decision of moving abroad are explored as well as the transformative process experienced not only by the expatriated retirees but also by the host and the home countries. The psychological and spiritual consequences are scrutinised through a transpersonal lens, i.e., focusing on the transformation of the self, the unfolding of a new identity, and the emergence of a different level of consciousness.

Three main themes emerged from this research:

- The multidimensionality of the causes of the departure ;
- The transformational and challenging dimension of the expatriated retirees' journey which makes the return to their home country impossible, and
- The impact of their decisions on multiculturalism and transnationality.



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Research Question

What are the spiritual and psychological impacts of retired people's choice to live abroad, in an unknown country, and how self-initiated expatriation can contribute to their psychospiritual growth?

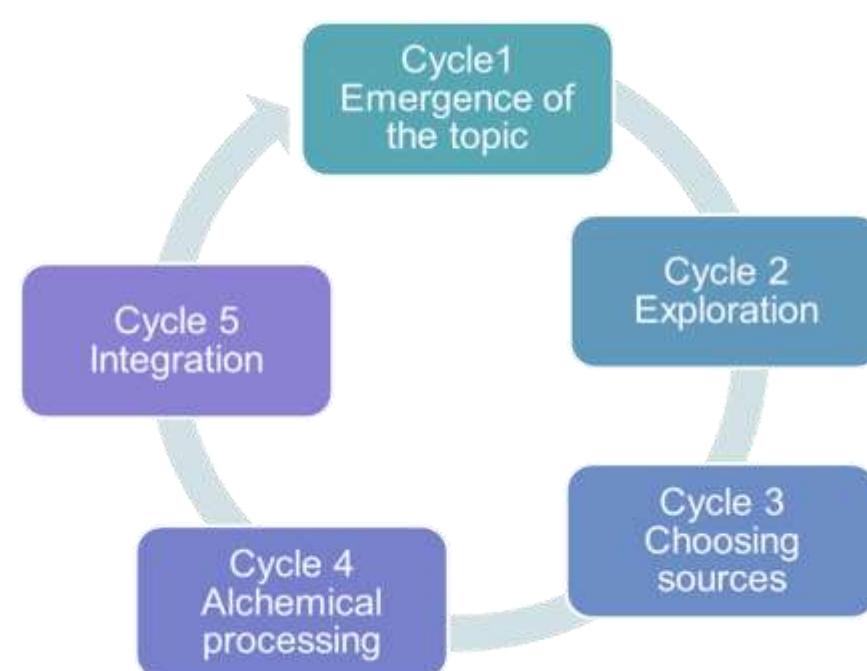
METHOD

Organic inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Creswell, 2018) was used as a method for this research project. Organic Inquiry (OI) is an iterative and alchemical process that encompasses three stages:

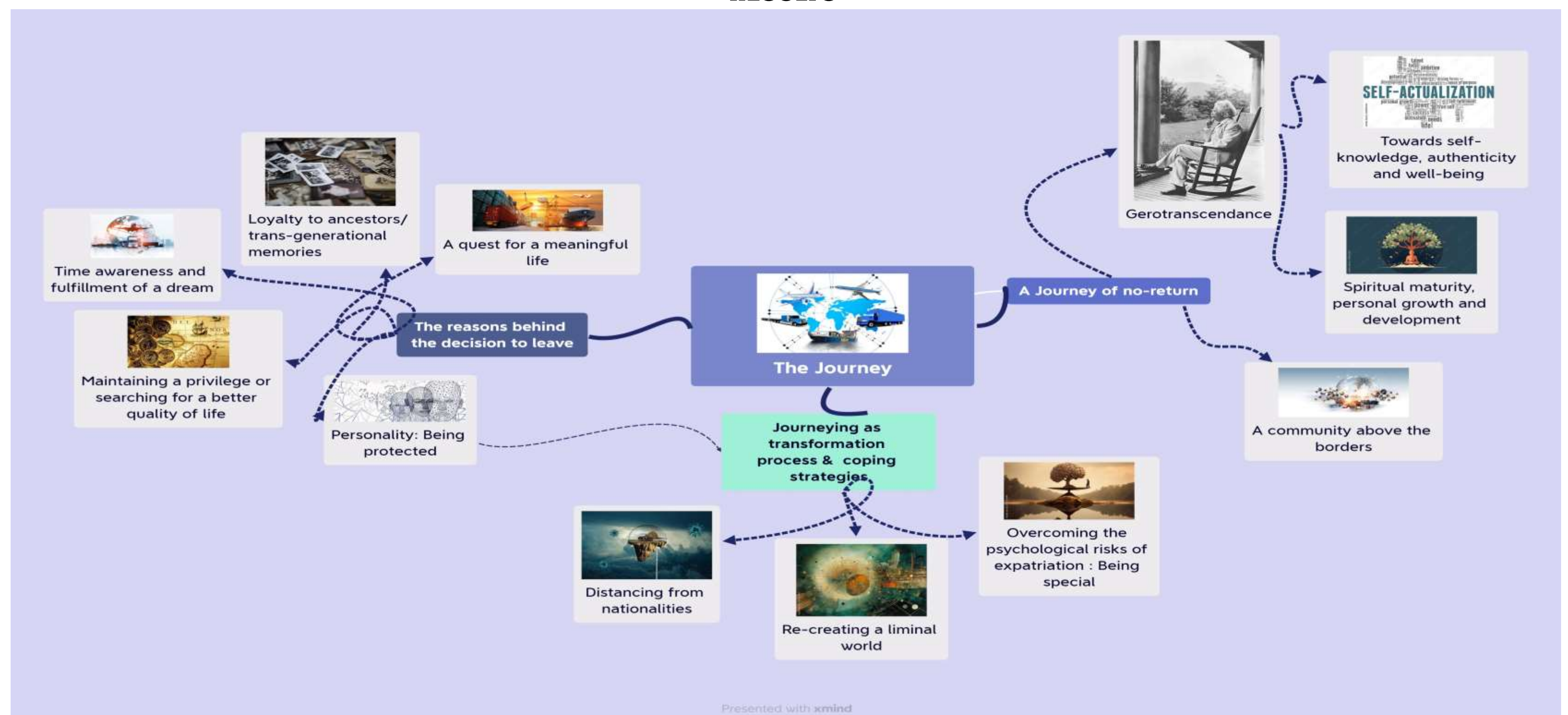
- an inward examination of my own experience and perspective on the topic,
- an outward movement on analysing other participants' experiences and relevant literature, and
- an inward return to reflections on my own shifts and changes in understanding the topic in the light of the collected data.

This approach is particularly relevant in this type of research which is about observing what is emerging through discussions and readings but also dreams or intuition. The researcher as well as the four other participants were considered co-researchers and knowledge emerged from our collaborative experience.

Other sources of information were used in addition to interviews and literature review: Journaling, meditation, dreams analysis, and shamanic journeys.



RESULTS



CONCLUSION

Eternal Exile

Whatever their reasons for leaving their countries, the expatriated retirees do not intend to return; thus **the emergence of a new archetype: The Old Sage Explorer,**

When abroad, these retirees re-created a community of like-minded people with its codes and values, showing distancing from the local cultures. Living in a foreign country prompts them to improve their self-knowledge and their level of spiritual maturity characterized by a deep understanding of one's spiritual beliefs, a sense of inner peace and purpose, and the development of qualities such as compassion and empathy.

The attainment of this higher level of consciousness added to the ageing process makes their return to their previous state and their home country impossible.

Pollinating countries

The retirees' decision to live abroad does not only transform the individual. Because their number is increasing, the retired SIEs modify also societies' beliefs, **promoting multiculturalism above the frontiers and pollinating local culture.** They also teach younger generations the **importance of freedom and call into question the preconceived ideas on retirement, death and life.**



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