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# Builders of a New Europe

Women Immigrants from the Eastern Trans-regions

Aino Saarinen  
and Marina Calloni (eds.)



Aino Saarinen and Marina Calloni (eds.):  
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Women Migrants from the Eastern Transregions

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We hope that this volume can stimulate further debates on gender and migration in research, policy-making and activism, at various levels from the local to the multi-level one up to trans-national communities.

Helsinki and Milan, Summer 2012,

*Aino Saarinen and Marina Calloni*

# INTRODUCTION

## Aino Saarinen and Marina Calloni: Feminised Migration across the East- West Borders – A Challenge to a “New Europe”

The feminisation of migration in Europe has been intertwined with the restructuring of the East-West borders. This volume focuses on Eastern European women and calls for new analytic and methodological innovations. It participates in the EU debates on the transformation of sub-regional welfare regimes in both the North and South by exploring new forms and spaces of work, changing forms of families, intimacies and sexualities and, lastly, migrant women’s political empowerment.

### The Transformation of East-West Borders and Feminised Migration in Europe

The borders in Europe have changed radically in the last two decades. The present configuration has been determined by the interaction of two simultaneous and interrelated processes - the dissolution of the socialist regimes and the post-dating transition and, on the other hand, the enlargement of the European Union (EU) towards the East. Out of the ten post-socialist countries, the so-called EU-10 that joined the union in 2004 and 2007, some were former Soviet republics, some parts of the former Yugoslavia, some Central European states which had been behind the Iron Curtain since the end of World War II<sup>1</sup>. Horizontal and vertical processes are intertwined and interdependent in the establishment of new boundaries between EU and non-EU states. In this geopolitical scenario new forms of mobility have been induced across the former East-West divide. Sensitive passages have been opened for increasing contacts and collaboration between people in different nation states. The former “frontier regions” (Veggeland 1994) – separated by the two military alliances, the Western Nato and the Eastern Warsaw Pact – have been transformed into “transregions” where the borders have been removed, or become permeable channels for departure and/or commuting. The transregions are comprised of both member and

<sup>1</sup> The EU-10 member states are: Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic.

non-member states of the EU throughout the “belt” extending from the Barents Sea and the Baltic Sea to the Central European and the Alps-Adriatic/Mediterranean areas. The supra-national EU itself extends well beyond the East-West political borders from before the 1990s: altogether there are 27 member states and five hundred million inhabitants in this territory.

The transregions mark a new cross-border dynamic in which migration acquires a new meaning. This volume reflects upon these epochal changes by concentrating on the role played by East European women in the enlarged union. The argument presented by the authors is that women migrants who now form a majority of East-West movers make an essential contribution to the constitution of a “New Europe” in the socio-economic, cultural and political domains as well as to both Eastern and Western everyday life. Special attention is here given to transregional areas<sup>2</sup> in the North and South around the Barents and Baltic seas and the Mediterranean.

Developments in the EU and the non-EU countries are interrelated: the change of the latter cannot be fully understood without consideration of the former, and vice-versa. In particular, the authors wish to highlight the accelerated feminisation of migration in Europe due to the opening of those former East-West borders. Enquiries about the causes and consequences of migration (both in the countries of arrival and origin and in Europe as a whole) in view of the daily realities and different national policies concerning migrants’ economic and social rights are central to the volume. (See Passerini et al. 2007; also Slany, Kontos and Liapi 2010; Anthias and Cederberg 2010.)

The targeted EU countries include several new member states from the former Baltic republics of the Soviet Union (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia), the area behind the Iron Curtain (Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, now split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania), and the former Yugoslavia (Slovenia). The present non-EU countries of origin mentioned in the book are Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Croatia, Bosnia and Albania. The countries of destination in North Europe are Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark; in Central Europe, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands; the UK in the British Isles; in South Europe, Italy and Slovenia. Many of the targeted countries are in a dual or triple role as countries of origin, arrival and transit.

When analysing mobility from across the new transregions, the book raises a major question: what are the reasons that persuade women to migrate? The motivations seem to be multiple: women have moved due to marriage, family reunion, work, studies, or because they were forced to do so. They therefore have different migration statuses: they are economic migrants, students, marriage migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, undocumented/illegal residents or trafficked women. Often the original motivations intertwine and change over time, as indicated by the narratives of women: they have set off due to personal reasons or the crisis of welfare states. Returning or alternatively settling down permanently are the options that occupy the minds of migrants, even years after

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<sup>2</sup> Non-EU/EEA countries are in formal political documents called “third-countries” in contradiction to the EU/EEA countries which include both the member states and the countries of the European Economic Area: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and (in practice) Switzerland.

crossing the border. Maybe the prospects for welfare in the home country have improved? Maybe life in the affluent West is not as interesting or exiting as they believed? Or maybe the local partner proves not as attractive as at first sight and during the courtship? Perhaps violence in a relationship has been unbearable? Lastly, as to forced migration, it may be that political measures against trafficking have at last offered women options for going back.

All in all, women navigate within and across the new geopolitical boundaries that have created constantly changing and complex dynamics between native citizens, new EU citizens and non-EU citizens. Therefore the dialectic between “flexible” or “insurmountable” or “hostile” borders between the EU and non-EU countries<sup>3</sup> has become central in the analyses of the changing socio-economic structures, welfare regimes and political institutions in the West as well as in the interpretation of “hybridised” cultures and intercultural agency. The issue of a European identity is crucial, and it cannot be approached from the perspectives of EU citizens only but must include those of East European people commuting across the borders within the transregions or leaving the home country for good, and, lastly, of neighbours in the non-EU areas. Gender is tightly interwoven in cultural images and political constructions of “Europeanness”.

The growing tensions and contradictions between different vertical levels of action from the local, national, EU, and the global levels must be brought to the fore also from the angle of the construction of identities and feelings of belonging. Trends toward multi-level institutions do not always facilitate the movement of people across the borders. The EU’s free movement directive concerns mainly the citizens of the union and is controversial as it leads to the tightening of the control on the external borders and to increasing marginalisation, exploitation and violation of human rights, up to new forms of slavery and trafficking in human beings inside the union. The forging of the notorious “Fortress Europe” actually reverses the trend towards free or relatively free movement and the formation of East-West transregions.

We should however not forget the diminishing importance of the national borders between the EU member states. This has induced innovative ways of life and new individual and collective identities from the perspective of the “Europe of the Regions” or the “Europe of Transregions”. The shaping of East-West transregions in particular offers opportunities for multi-sited identities and daily life: social contacts and friendships, marriage, work, networking and culture that do not “bend” to the old ideological divisions and political constructions. Within these hybridised frameworks, bi-polar either-or definitions in regard to time (before and after socialism), space, and culture are being questioned. At the same time this contributes to a double morality outlined from Western standpoints. In all spheres of life, particularly in terms of gender relations and sexuality, Western countries are emphasised as spaces for general welfare and normative benchmarks; on the other hand, post-communist Eastern states are portrayed as building liberal democracies and free market economies but not having been “modernised enough”. No wonder that female migration across multiple old and new blocks has become one of the key issues in Europe.

<sup>3</sup> The “second countries” are the EEA – European Economic Area countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, in practice also Switzerland. In the introduction the EEA citizens are discussed as EU citizens.

## Challenging “Traditional” Migration Studies

In sum, without focusing on migration as feminised one cannot figure out and understand the recent history of Europe, and certainly not look to its future and consider prospective developments in the domains of economics and welfare, the private sphere of the household, the intimate domain of marriage and sexuality and, lastly, the public realm of politics. The central debates in this volume will touch upon all these issues and themes. A gendered view offers the opportunity to consider in complex and comparative ways the changing nature of welfare states and many central ethical issues. Human mobility is also discussed here from a normative angle of social justice and socio-economic redistribution, and moral recognition, and, importantly, political justice, the inclusion of new citizens and residents in decision-making.

However, it is not fruitful or even possible to present any joint or final analyses of ongoing migration processes. The book is characterised by manifold standpoints and the coexistence of multiple analytic positions rooted in various contemporary socio-political theories. The chapters make use of different qualitative and quantitative methods and many kinds of empirical materials. They are even based on contrasting commitments ranging from modern critical and hermeneutic approaches to various post-theories, among them post-socialist criticism inspired by post-colonial/post-socialist criticism. Irrespective of these differences, the authors encourage research both at the micro level concerning the changing dynamic of daily life and at the macro level concerning the transformation of the political and economic structures of different welfare institutions and diverse ideas of fairness, justice and the political past. These micro/macro considerations induce several paradigmatic shifts.

The first one is evident, gender, the problem that has already been discussed in many few feminist contributions of the 2000s (Passerini et al. 2007; Slany, Kontos and Liapi 2010; Anthias and Cederberg 2010; Pajnik and Campani 2011). Until the beginning of the 1990s, migration studies and theories were extremely male-centred and gender biased. Women were relegated to the role of housewives and accompanying family members, although they were de facto moving more and more often on their own or as heads of their families when bringing along the children born in the East. The feminisation of migration has called for a different approach on both epistemological and practical levels: with the new millennium gender has become a central category. Gender must naturally be explored also in East-West migrations, as linked with the formation of East-West transregions, a relatively new issue till these days.

Along with gender, migration has been approached from intersectional perspectives where gender is related to the multiple heterogeneities of migrants: different social and educational backgrounds, family statuses, age, nationality, legal/illegal status, and ethnicity. Men do not figure as main actors in this volume, although they are interdependent and represented as spouses, lovers, clients or, occasionally, as abusers. In many chapters interest is focused on new kinds of relationships which have developed between women, not in terms of gender solidarity but in the form of a labour contract in the household, i.e.



the housekeeper/caregiver and the entrepreneur/owner. This phenomenon is a complex and ambivalent problematic and cannot be analysed without interest in women and the private domain, which were both neglected for a long time in research. Like private service and care related work migration, marriage migration also urges us to explore further other kinds of intimacies in the “New Europe”. (Also Passerinini et al. 2007.) It is a challenge not only to politics and economics but also to inter-gender and intergenerational relations from a new angle: the intercultural problematic is one of the central features in the book as well as feminist scholarship in general.

Secondly, in North and South alike, the agency of migrants has to be analysed from cultural angles as well. Eastern European women have to confront cultural prejudices and stigmatizations. They are not always welcomed, even though they redress generational and gendered gaps especially in peripheral areas such as the depopulating Barents (Saarinen 2009). Lack of respect and recognition harms migrant women as spouses, workers and of course as welfare recipients. The obstacles and hindrances are undeniable and many, but contrary to dominant stereotypical representations, which often describe migrant women as passive victims, feminist scholars emphasise the agency and autonomy of these social actors. In this volume as well, leaving one’s home is a sign of independence, empowerment, and capability to outline long term life plans. These women are resilient and resourceful - they do not stand still but move, against all odds.

Thirdly, recently another and intertwined challenge has been formulated by questioning the silencing of the voices of migrant people and more generally the one-dimensional, Western-centred approach. The lack of recognition for the “language of the oppressed” has been emphasised especially by post-colonial criticism. In its footsteps post-socialist criticism has evolved to analyse critically the presumed division between the “advanced” Western European women and the “backwards” Eastern European women (Jäppinen, Kulmala and Saarinen 2011). A few chapters in this book are part of this endeavour that has come to the fore only in the 2000s. This leads us to the major question about what being “equal” means in a Europeanised and globalised world. New criticism has forced feminist scholars to revisit even the idea of “Europeanness” as an unquestioned norm for gender relations (Keskinen et al. 2009). This also prompts the question in regard to “Nordicness” and why, for instance, well-educated and professionally competent Eastern European women do not “qualify” in the Nordic labour market. (Saarinen 2009.) The issues are relevant in South Europe as well but in essentially different ways.

Lastly, after the beginning of the 1990s, from the dissolution of the East-West divide onwards, the number of workers arriving not only from the third world but also Eastern Europe has increased exponentially. The special call for women immigrants is a response to the increasing public employment of local women and the deficiencies of the Italian welfare state, one of the key concerns of this book. This trend cannot be analysed without critical attention to the ethics of politics, a problematic that is perhaps especially characteristic of feminist studies. Feminised cross-border “traffic” demonstrates an overall transition away from previous agrarian and industrial societies. Knowledge and service societies have permanently increased the demand for female labour force

in particular, and redefined relations between native and foreign women, men, children and the elderly in a new transnational and intergenerational pact. This situation creates an imbalance between Western people and immigrants and leads to fresh reflections on work, its significance and qualifications.

In the Southern transregion the question of who sees to care work in the East when women come to EU countries has been formulated already. The recent East-West imbalance inside Europe brings up a most fundamental challenge – the need for critical and alternative research analyses and policies where ethical issues are addressed from the perspective of migrant women and of their countries of origin, the present “East of Europe”. To summarise, the issue of social justice must be discussed at the macro level as well, as an East-West and intra-European problem. This is also one of the challenges that this volume wants to bring to the fore, to join the debates which will be more and more central in the years to come (see Hrženjak 2011).

## Quest for Innovative Methodologies

Methodological approaches must also be reframed and redefined. Both quantitative and qualitative methods have to be approached critically (Passerini et al. 2007; Slany, Kontos and Liapi 2010; Pajnik and Campani 2011) in order to describe and understand new phenomena. In this volume fieldwork, focus groups, interviews, narratives, and media and policy analysis overlap and contribute to conceptual reflections. At the macro level, statistics are employed together with normative frameworks and legislative issues.

Criticism against gender-blind statistics has been a central issue in feminist debates for some time already. Migration studies responding to demands concerning gender, intersectionality and fundamental cultural issues must present even more complex criticism than those involved in single-national and -cultural investigations. In recent years researchers in gender studies have indeed been committed to developing new approaches to the history and sociology of migration, reinterpreting data and statistics, and challenging the multiple stereotypes of migrants and the fears of Western citizens towards the “others” (Hárs 2001). Illegal migration and work make statistical comparisons across time and space demanding. In a country of arrival, it may be impossible to analyse trends of women’s employment under these kinds of changing circumstances. Due to the breaking up of previous borders and divides, even obtaining statistics on the number of residents in the country of origin (as well as of arrival) is a problem, not to mention the commuters on daily, weekly or even annual basis. Those involved in illegal private work are not included in the economic figures in the country of arrival. The composition of families and households is of course unclear as well. The number of women who have become stateless in the process of East-West dissolution has created sections of people who have simply disappeared. The list can be continued almost endlessly.

Yet numbers do not always bring up essential gendered issues. For example, it is not easy to make gender-based work in private homes visible without courageous scholars entering these shadowy “fields”. The same applies to gendered violence. It acquires different forms

in different spaces and situations, being direct and indirect, physical, psychological and sexual; it takes place in public spaces, at the workplace, in the private sphere, in intimate and trusting relationships. It is a difficult task to gather empirical data and evidence about the spread of hidden phenomena, including sexual exploitation in the trafficking in human beings tied up with organised crime.

The vulnerability of migrant women – both as exploited workers, dependent wives or partners, and trafficked human beings – deserves special attention.<sup>4</sup> The main reason for difficulties in gathering information about these phenomena is that exploitation and violence happen in families and situations of intimacy, i.e. in the silence of the household and the private sphere, without witnesses. East-West migration in the EU thus represents a social and methodological challenge because of the need to represent and understand in depth the real situation of women migrants, which would otherwise remain in the dark. A challenge of its own is approaching traumatised women, i.e. refugees, who were victims of new forms of warfare, as in the ethnic wars in the former Yugoslavia (Cappussotti 2001; Calloni 2009). To be sensitive to the possible consequences of these encounters, researchers must collaborate with “help actors” in order to protect women from being pained by painful memories. This relates closely to another major challenge for qualitative research, the practice of interviewing immigrants, which has been high on feminist agendas for some time. It is important to hear the voice of migrating actors directly, yet it is also crucial to be responsive and receptive to the sensitivity of the interviewed people and their stories without being intrusive in their life. Making contacts with migrants in public and civic institutions as well as in their neighbourhoods is important as it helps us consider them in a proactive way, as actors and members of their new home community, and respect their agency.

At its best this praxis brings up a most central issue in migration research and in this book: identity is not an ontological matter but a question of interaction over space and time – it is a “mobile” and “flexible” construct in relation to the experiences that a subject has gone through her/his own existence. In this way, it is also possible to investigate the changing dynamic of life perspectives: how biographical narratives change over time in regard to living conditions in different socio-economic regimes, the public sphere, the private domain and last but not least changing linguistic capacities. For instance, oral histories in both post-socialist countries of origin and host EU states indicate a complex dynamics between the past, the transition period and future perspectives in terms of better individual and family wellbeing. This stratified process – related to a pluri-dimensional and intersectional approach to the analysis of life cycles and life lines (Yuval-Davis 1997) – can be found in cross-divide and inter-European migration studies in the 2000s. (Petó 2007.)

Worth keeping in mind is also that interviews and narratives of emigrated women are not

4 This is the reason why the European Commission – on the basis of decisions taken by the European Parliament – has developed a programme addressed to the NGOs in civil society as a vehicle to combat gender based violence in all its forms and in all societal spheres and to raise general awareness campaigns. The Daphne programme has been committed to developing criteria, methods and ethics for analysing of violence against these vulnerable people since the late 1990s already.

as uniform as we in the West like to believe. Recent ethnographic insights have spread new and more nuanced light on the understanding of present times as well as on the reconstruction of the past. The socialist tradition and the post-socialist transition can be opened up only by avoiding polarities between different interpretations of what has happened. In all East-West research, special attention should be given to seeing life in socialist regimes critically but not as mere misery as happens easily when analysing the reasons and motivations for leaving countries where social networks, for instance, have been badly damaged. (Passerini et al. 2007.)

The complex process of de- and reconstruction of both individual and collective Identities can be better understood in the ambivalent and interactive encounter, which is created between the interviewed person and the researcher in the field works. For this reason, the reader can feel the rising of a specific empathy between the migrant and the scholar, when both can share a similar past or cultural background (Passerini et al. 2007). A dialogic and dialectic interaction between the interested people, the researcher and the reader become thus crucial for both cross-cultural investigations and the dissemination of their results in order to understand the different viewpoints of the involved social actors and the complexity of the phenomenon at stake. Memoirs, narratives, different languages, transcriptions, translations and hermeneutic interpretations overlap thus each others in the book, contributing to elaborate new approaches to the study of gender-based migration in a changed world scenario and in the constitution of a “new cross-borders Europe”. The development of processional and interactive methodologies, which imply a continuous epistemological exchange of positions between speaker and listener and most importantly trust and mutual respect, has thus replaced previous qualitative and “pseudo-neutral” approaches in biographical research.

To conclude, there is a call for innovative inter- and trans-cultural approaches in the study on migration in the larger “New Europe”. In our view, transversal methodologies (Yuval-Davis 1997), for instance, help question many definitions that have been taken for granted: who are “we” and the multiple “others”, the “insiders” or “outsiders”, in the midst of various borders and blocks? Dialogue and the changing viewpoints between the native and the immigrant, the interviewer and the interviewed person, lies thus at the core of an innovative research praxis that can tackle the issue of migration and gender relations as more complex than thus far. It has inspired us to look for practices that are sensitive toward differences, hierarchies and exclusions, in the last instance leading us to find not only differences but similarities as well. At best the teams investigating migration are multi-positional in more than one respect and may debate and disagree between themselves. This encourages intersubjectivity in scholars, critical reflection upon their own positions, motivations, and research practices.

## The Issues in this Book

By bearing in mind these epistemological and methodological challenges, this book discusses both the economic and the welfare domains and the private sphere of the

household, not to forget the intimate domain of marriage and sexuality, and the public realm of politics.

## **Work and Welfare Models**

One of the motivations that encourage women's migration is the erosion of their positions in their native countries, which is due to increasing poverty and the dismantling of the state and public welfare nets, all processes that characterised the first years of post-socialist transition in Eastern Europe. A focus on social welfare must be central in all analyses of feminised migration, in the countries of origin as well in the countries of arrival. In the "New Europe" welfare gaps form a central dynamic in two interrelated ways. In Eastern states the push factors are linked to unemployment, the breakdown of welfare structures and disruption of social-economic equality; in Western states the pull factors are linked to risks caused by the aging of the population and consequent decrease of the workforce, both of which erode the local welfare structures (Jäppinen, Kulmala and Saarinen 2011). At the sub-regional level this relates to the reconstruction of existing welfare regimes and the simultaneously changing dynamic in gender and generational relations. At present, these changes in various parts of the EU cannot be approached as separate developments alone but as intertwined with EU regulation.

Surprisingly little attention has been given thus far to the issue of migration in this respect. The outlines of "Social Europe" (Lehning 1997) in the 1990s did not touch on the "others", non-EU citizens and internal EU migrants; as to the Nordic model, this issue seems not to have been taken to the fore before the 2010s (Kvist et al. 2012). Considering the problems in migrants' access to the labour market and the increasing number of their family members who are outside the workforce, it has become an urgent matter to guarantee satisfactory or at least minimum welfare. The EU regulations have set the overall limits to immigrants' conditions of entering and staying: the Charter of Fundamental Rights from the Lisbon meeting in 2009 applies normatively to all member states and guarantees all residents' basic rights to work, welfare, and political participation, not to forget human rights. Importantly, however, more concrete legislations and policies on migration and residency are formulated by each nation state itself. The principle of subsidiarity allows them to continue on their own paths. Migrants' access to welfare in their new lives therefore depends greatly on national histories and cultures.

Therefore, at present there are (still) multiple variations of the welfare state within the union and all of them imply different approaches to migration and gender. In the Nordic countries, for instance, the welfare state model was built to guarantee universalism in which economic and social rights and services concern the citizens and (mere) residents alike, as individuals. The South European countries have also continued relying on historical foundations. However, they are principally family-centred and not inclusive in the same way as in the Nordic countries. (Esping-Andersen 2002; Kvist et al. 2012). The essentially different trends in the North and the South lie at the core of this book, naturally in view of women.

It has become evident that the previous debates on Western European welfare models - i.e. the social-democratic regime in Northern Europe, communitarian/conservative regime in Central and Southern Europe, and the liberal regime in the British Isles – that stimulated multiple theoretical and public confrontations in the 1990s need to be revisited (Esping-Andersen 1990; 2002). As to the Nordic countries, excluding the Denmark of the 2000s (Mipex 2010–2011), the previously mentioned social universality is without question one of the key principles of the Nordic model, which is extremely significant in view of gender. The inclusion of women in public life has been the model's corner stone: thanks to various state-centred and "women-friendly" arrangements, native women have been firmly integrated in the labour force. In detail, by constructing the "two wage-earner family" the Nordic states have accepted extensive responsibilities over the care of children and elderly people. Therefore calling for women from abroad to deal with care and other work in the household has not been a structural precondition for native women's access to paid work.

Yet the realities are complex. Eastern European, well-educated and professionally competent women arriving for marriage and with high hopes of success in the labour market are not easily integrated in work life. Even these "culturally close" (Jaakkola and Reuter 2007) and legal migrants confront serious labour discrimination and can be excluded from individual welfare rights as "non-active" persons. This is most harmful as in the Nordic countries where paid employment even for women with small children is the norm, many migrant women, even from Eastern Europe, have become economically dependent and a "weak male wage-earner model" has evolved amongst migrant minorities (Latvala 2008; Lotherington and Stuvøy 2006; Saarinen 2009). Individualised welfare universalism is not fully realised.

As for the Southern regime a high quantity of immigrants are undocumented and therefore illegal. In Italy, they fall under criminal law, and the rights of "clandestines" are minimal, even non-existent. This trend is deeply gendered and linked to welfare structures as in the South women do not arrive as marriage migrants as often as in the North (relatively speaking) but come to private homes all the same, to earn their living by working as private caregivers without legal status and adequate rights. Trafficking for work is, occasionally at least, the correct term for this kind of migration. Worth noting is that this is not done on a voluntary basis by individual families but as something they are forced to do by social structures.

As great numbers of movers have been semi-legal and illegal migrants who work in the numerous grey economies, the protection of their wellbeing and rights has proved difficult to say the least. The women among them, *badantis* (caregivers to the elderly), *collaboratrici domestiche* (housekeepers), and babysitters (maids for children), who have been arriving since the early 1990s from post-socialist states, have helped to restore Italian "two breadwinner families" while often being themselves transnational mothers. As non-EU citizens, women workers are frequently forced to live in extremely vulnerable situations, especially those who are employed by private families as caregivers and housekeepers.

However, women migrants often live in isolation from each other, in conditions of deprivation or even of sexual harassment within the private and intimate sphere of the household. Pathologies of migration – homesickness, nostalgia and depression – are affecting them due to the emotional strain they endure because of the distance from their families. Due to the feminist research of the 1990s–2000s, we have now learned that many children of migrants who have been left behind are cared for by family members, grandmothers, aunts, elder sisters. Normatively this is problematic: to create two-generation families with mothers in paid work, EU countries depend on families outside their own territories, even child labour as elder children are made responsible for their younger siblings. Irrespective of European and global declarations of the rights of children their access to school is jeopardised, but it is not “our” responsibility. All in all, the issue of transnational motherhood is indeed a prism through which the political and ethical harshness of the union and its affluent member states becomes visible.

Future prospects are not encouraging. The Italian migration law from 2002, the so-called “league Bossi-Fini” and the following decree from 2008, the “paccetto sicureza” establish a strict distinction between “regular” and “irregular” migrants, and the latter can be sent to the “camps of identification and expulsion”. To conclude, the results and effects of the continuous changes of migration laws are often unpredictable because they depend on the changing compositions of national governments. From the gender view, new legislations are often signs of backlashes, nullifying advancements made in better forms of integration and individual wellbeing. The Charter of Fundamental Rights is in fact often counteracted by national immigration acts, a topic discussed more or less directly in all chapters of this book.

## **Intercultural Families and Intimacies**

Women do not migrate only for economic reasons and due to private or political, e.g. war-related, violence (Calloni 2009). Women immigrants from Eastern Europe also arrive in EU countries for marriage and family reunion. Interestingly, in spite of many differences in mentalities and the structures of the public welfare state, when looking more closely at the spheres of privacy and intimacy and analysing current processes and trends it is possible to argue that there are similarities between Northern and Southern models: dividing women into “us” and “them” is familiar throughout the EU region. In many respects, women migrants from Eastern Europe are not “us”; this applies to the intimate sphere as well.

Along with the growth of the marriage and sex markets at the global and European level, sexualities and intimacies (Oleksy 2009) as well as traditional conceptions of the institution of marriage and family have come to the fore. In recent years love as a primary basis for intimate relationships and human reproduction has been discussed both in Northern and Southern Europe. Distinctions between women who marry for “love” and women who marry because of the necessities of economic survival, in order to gain access to a new life, or due to being encouraged or forced by their families to

find a husband in the West, are common everywhere. Present legislations at the national and EU levels do not contribute to improving the life conditions of these newcomers.

Very much like in the union itself that has justified control over external borders due to internal “free movement”, all receiving countries seem to be interested in sorting out “pro forma” and “fake” marriages. Some, such as Denmark, have outlined ruthless measures that are a sort of collective punishment. The notorious “24 years rule” is an extreme case. The age limit is a precondition of entry and residence concerning people living in a close relationship, added to the criteria concerning the permission to stay. The rights of young adults between 18–24 years have thus been limited in regard to marriage and family reunification across the borders; normatively said, a double standard between local and transnational marriages has been established. This rule, which was formulated as a measure against the arranged and forced marriages of young or underage spouses of non-Danish or non-EU European origin, has targeted only third-country nationals in need of a residence permit. Due to this, the image of the Nordic countries as tolerant has been badly damaged and post-colonial criticism of the celebrated Nordic equalitarian regime. The same criticism seems to apply to violence in relationships. “Traditionalism” and “women’s dependence” are the terms that characterise migrants from Eastern Europe and from the third world, at least in the media, whereas native women and men represent “modern Nordic values” (Keskinen 2009; Sverdljuk 2009).

The search for a “proper marriage” is not the only possibility for women migrants because cohabiting has become a kind of “probation time” among local populations. The new challenge to lawmakers is now to define the consistency of “love”: who is a *kæreste*, i.e. an unwed sweetheart who should be allowed to settle down and start a common life with a native or a foreigner with a permanent permit of residence. In all Nordic legislations, cohabitation, including same-sex partnership, is equal to marriage, and immigration laws have been reformed to be in line with the family legislation. But this option does of course not work for couples from cultures where cohabitation is strictly forbidden.

Exploring “decisive purposes” and “true love” has contributed to making the state and immigration authorities a third partner in intimate relationships, and at worst the marriage law has been “reduced to an appendix to immigration law” (Condradsen and Kronborg 2007). No wonder that deep tensions between these national regulations and the human rights regime have increased: both at the EU and UN levels the fundamental declarations have asserted the right of individuals to choose their partner freely. Women from Eastern Europe are among the major groups which now are being profiled. The establishment of the Frontex at the end of the 1990s, the integrated European border management that controls entrance to the union, is a prime example of these kinds of measures. Studies of encounters between women and authorities produce vivid narratives about this process (Davydova 2009).

Yet the sexuality and intimacy related to foreign women does not only refer to marriage and cohabitation but to the sex market as well. Trafficking in human beings is a profitable global business along with selling drugs or weapons (Penttinen 2008.) It has



been estimated that from Russia alone tens of thousands women have been trafficked to Western Europe since the early 1990s (Johnson 2012). In order to face this tragic phenomenon, supra-national institutions, the EU among them, have amended special protective laws and provisions for women trafficked for sex. At the same time, analyses of these legislations and policies reveal deep disagreements and cleavages within the EU-West: in the Netherlands, prostitution is recognised as a means for living if not as a profession, whereas in Sweden buying sex is criminalised. No wonder that male sex clients now make use of new transregional avenues, both in the South, the Alps-Adriatic region, and the North, the Barents region (Pajnik 2009; Ihamäki 2004; Penttinen 2008; Skaffari 2010). These variations complicate regulations and policies for the good of the women in question. Again, criticism of the ethics of politics should be on research agendas.

## **Political Empowerment**

However, migration is not only a matter of discrimination and poverty. It creates new forms of interaction, liberty and solidarity and new forms of aggregation and mobilisation. New spaces and avenues for agency evolve: channels for autonomy, mutual trust and networking; innovative ways of interacting with natives, other migrants, institutions and informal structures. These opportunities are important for the empowerment of immigrants. Yet exclusion from political citizenship is the direct cause of exclusion from formal and substantial representation in the bodies of power. Without the right to elect and be elected migrants remain on the margins of public life, a significant problem in state-centred countries in particular. From this angle, the Nordic countries are not as exemplary as suggested. As the term “gender paradox” (Siim and Skjeie 2008) hints, when compared to native women who are well represented in high politics, migrant women are badly disadvantaged (Saarinen 2009). The problems and issues discussed above confirm that opening access to institutional politics and political activities at large to newcomers is a major and urgent challenge.

This new step is important also as it would make possible a normative move from a mere multi-cultural position toward new forms of inter- and trans-culturalism, the inclusion of migrant minorities with full rights in the local populations, and the creation of “immigrant-friendly” forms of integration and belonging. From an ideal angle, migrants and natives should collaborate and ultimately identify themselves as different but equal. Here again the application of intersectionality, the multitude of social and cultural positions and identities, is the theoretical precondition of developing fruitful perspectives and promoting these two-way processes. It can guide actors in developing mutual political ties and spaces.

The social and ideological construction of migrants’ “otherness” stresses the necessity to develop new dialogue and collaboration between native citizens and immigrant individuals and communities. Starting from the daily experience of European transregional women workers and marriage migrants, the perspective could be the constitution of societies where migrant individuals/minorities are treated as valuable human resources rather than a burden; where local majorities are alarmed by forms of social and cultural

marginalisation; and lastly, where policy-makers are sincerely committed to developing immigrant-friendly societies where they can factually enjoy equal opportunities although not fully equal in political rights. The practices of women migrants can be pivotal in this regard.

Thus the transformation of the welfare state and the labour conditions of native women lies at the core of the migration phenomenon and the changing dynamics between EU, new EU and non-EU citizens. Yet despite cultural and political differences, in all cases and in all parts of the European Union the lack of EU citizenship is the basic cause and instrument for the differing treatment of workers. While the internal mobility of EU citizens is encouraged in the name of freedom to travel and work in all member states, the mobility of non-EU citizens is limited by permits for residence and labour, allowing an increasing discrimination toward migrants.

Here we have to return to the idea of Europeanness, the construction of new identities individually and collectively. Hostilities toward "others" have increased due to growing "migration criticism" and xenophobia all over the union, even in the Nordic countries (Saarinen and Jäppinen 2010). This problematic trend also calls for political empowerment – participation, influence and power and, simultaneously, the opening up of transnational spaces and channels to migrants. (Pajnik 2009). The issue of political justice is more central than ever: in the increasingly multi-levelled democracy people on the move must also have a voice where ever they live.

## Structure of the Book

In conclusion, the principles of pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men (which lie at the heart of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Maastricht Treaty, Amsterdam Treaty, and the Lisbon Treaty signed in 2009) do not always apply to new and non-EU citizens irrespective of all the international conventions and resolutions issued by the European Union itself, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations. It has been our hope that this book will inspire the empowering of Eastern European migrant women and the recognition of their role in public life as well as in the households. To highlight the main concerns, the book has been divided into five parts.

**Part 1: Rethinking Gender, Migration and Work** is comprised of *Marina Calloni's Displaced Love and Situated Care. Gender and Migration from a Socio-Philosophical Perspective*. The chapter emphasises the necessity to rethink the significance of women's migration, starting from the following questions: what do they contribute with their work? And what is the plus value of this work which cannot be paid for with money alone? Working mainly as housekeepers and caregivers in the informal space of the household, the resources that women migrants bring with themselves are not merely material but emotional as well. This reveals a deep and contradictory transformation of intimacy, gender relations, and the socio-political order in Western families where emotional support and care have become rare resources.

**Part 2: Changing Welfare State and the Everyday Life** is opened by *Mara Bordogna Tognetti*. The chapter titled *Badanti and the Changing Role of the Italian Welfare Regime* presents a statistical overview of immigration in Italy and shows that since the early 1990s informal caregivers, the *badantis* who previously came mainly from Catholic third world countries now arrive from the former socialist regions, both legally and illegally. Turning to the micro level, migrants' interviews clarify the migration paths and the complexities both in the system and in personal relationships. The Italian welfare state is characterised by a scarcity of social services, which forces native women to make private contracts with migrant women for the care of elderly people and children in private homes. These contracts are seldom evenly beneficial to both parties. Paradoxically there are many gaps in immigrants' own welfare rights, especially in relation to healthcare.

*Lena Näre* leans on fieldwork and interviews and concentrates on the experiences of Eastern European women in South Italy. Agency is a key angle in *Empowerment, Survival and Everyday Life Strategies: Ukrainian and Polish Care Workers in Naples*. In spite of many kinds of misuse, women are not victims only but consciously seek to improve their life in their country of origin, where their children often live, because the collapse of the former regime has resulted in lack of work and social security; often women have become the main or sole breadwinners of the family. Näre concludes by criticising Italian regularisations and amnesties as they tie immigrants' legal status to an existing work contract, making migrants dependent on their present family employers.

**Part 3: Love and Marriage on Move** is started by *Hanne Petersen* who goes back to the 18th century and the European Enlightenment to discuss the formation of the modern Western ideal of marriage and partnership. *Love in Times of Globalization. Local Legal Cultures under Stress* introduces a Danish legal scholar and playwright of this period, Ludvig Holberg, whose comedies address his ideal of individual love and freedom. Petersen continues on to the analysis of present Danish legislation and cultural attitudes towards marriages across the borders, showing that in the stereotypical pictures of Muslim as well as Russian women these women are considered different from the "free" and "independent" Nordic women. It is assumed that local women are guided by ideals of individual love and marriage whereas women arriving from outside the Nordic countries are considered oppressed and/or overtly sexualised or domesticated.

*Jana Sverdljuk* focuses on Russian marriage migrants and their encounters with social service institutions in *Traditional Foreign Femininities? Experts' Stories about Helping Russian Migrant Women-Victims of Domestic Violence*. In order to show the construction of the others as "different", she discusses the issue of domestic violence and the images of Russian women outlined by experts working in crisis centres and the police through interviews carried out in northern Norway. Sverdljuk claims that migrant women are often victimised by native social actors as they approach women from Russia as representing non-Western and more traditional cultures. Her analysis also shows that the negative portrayal cannot be constructed without presenting assumptions about Norwegian relationships as "gender equal".

**Part 4: Forced Migration and Cultural Diversities** includes *Gender Relations in Times of Migration. Bosnian Refugees in Sweden* by Åsa Gustafson who has researched Bosnian refugees in Sweden. The interviews of female and male partners were carried out in Malmö and Umeå, in South and North Sweden, and deal with gender relationships in everyday life, both at work and during free time, and participation in social life and organisations. Gustafson emphasises that women are capable of adapting to the new home society but at the same time they have to be wary of endangering the identities of men as breadwinners and heads of families. In other words, in the Nordic countries spaces are differently gendered than in refugee communities, let alone the countries of their origin. If women get more opportunities to work than their husbands and participate in the public sphere, tensions within the families are unavoidable.

*Mojca Pajnik* is interested in gender relationships in a very different context, prostitution and trafficking. *The Demand Behind Trafficking in Women. Perspectives from Central-Eastern Europe* is drawn from interviews with male clients of migrant prostitutes in Slovenia. They reveal a hidden side of the demand, often neglected in studies of the sex market. Due to a complex interaction between gender representations, sexuality, ethnicity and national origins, the legal control system must pay attention to multiple causes and motivations for both demand and supply. As to trafficking, Pajnik recommends awareness raising campaigns that focus on clients across the borders because in transregional areas they often come from abroad.

**Part 5: Political Agency and Citizenship** draws attention to the realm of politics. *Ursula Apitzsch*, starting with a quotation from Thomas More's "Utopia" in the early modern times of the 16th century, concentrates on the issue of political inclusion. *Transnational Migration, Gender and European Citizenship* presents the "success story" that she discusses actions outside institutional politics, mobilisation and organisation of home workers in civil society in the United Kingdom in the 1980s. In her view, however, critical reflections of the vulnerabilities of illegal migrants, especially in Central and South Europe, indicate that the position of women migrants is still precarious. She states that as long as care work is attached to the "female nature" and mainly provided in the private sphere of a single family, this work is not recognised as professional work.

In *Migrants and Political Agency: Russian Women in the Nordic Countries*, *Aino Saarinen* focuses on Russian women in the North of Finland, Norway and Sweden, in the sparsely populated transregion of the Barents. Interviews and group discussions outline avenues for political agency in "weak communities" in the civic sphere, and also bring up obstacles to integration in "strong communities" in institutional politics. Saarinen stresses the importance of the lifeline perspective: we have to analyse the political regime in the country of origin as well in order to understand women's mistrust and disinterest of politics. In the end she formulates a triple challenge: "active citizenship" in the Nordic state-centred regime calls for women's political empowerment in addition to extending their economic-social and cultural rights, the latter of which has been on the agenda for some time already.

# PART 1. RETHINKING GENDER, MIGRATION AND WORK

# Chapter 1. Marina Calloni: Displaced Love and Situated Care. Gender and Migration from a Socio-Philosophical Perspective

## Introduction

Migration is usually meant as the mobility of human beings, who cross borders in the search of better life conditions. However, migration is related to boundaries continuously created by nation States, which prevent the free circulation of citizens. This is also the case of a super-national entity like the European Union, which is enlarging towards the East while marking new political borders. This geo-political dialectic between territorial widening and restrictive borders has determined new forms of migration and redefined who the migrant is. He/ she is a citizen belonging to a non-European Union member state. This means that a “legal” migrant has the same socio-economic duties/ rights that local citizens have but not the same political privileges, starting from the faculty to elect and to be elected.

Beside the socio-political definition of who is the migrant and what are the rights she/ he has, a significant question that has to be considered concerns the “value” of the work she/ he performs in the European and international context. More specifically, the issue that should be raised is whether the “value” of globalised migration can be described only in “material” terms as a mere circulation of goods and citizens, or whether, because of the multiplicity and overlapping variety of human factors at stake, a deeper understanding of this phenomenon is necessary in the form of a complex exchange of individual and socio-cultural resources.

In the following paper I will argue that migration should be conceived of within a more complex geo-political frame related to a changing idea of material resources and the mobility of human capital. This phenomenon determines the transformation of the previous conception of “productive” labor in the industrial age and the modification of inter-personal relations in the public sphere as well as in the private domain. In particular, I will mainly focus on the analysis of inter-cultural dynamics and inter-gender relationships, which characterise the interaction between foreign immigrants (i.e. maids and caregivers) and local women (i.e. employers and people who need to be cared for) within the household. These kinds of relationships between immigrant caregivers and members of the employers’ families together with related socio-economic and psychological ramifications will permit to understand the changing structure of the mononuclear family,

the transformation of gender relations and the crisis of the welfare State in a complex global context. The main point I would like to consider is the changing “consistency” and “value” of labor, which cannot merely be considered as an action remunerated by money. Labor has become a means which transfers and exchanges emotional and cultural resources. These “properties” have become necessary to the functioning of Western societies and the reproduction of daily family life in the context of the crisis of the industrialisation system.

However, asymmetric power relations and forms of servitude have been created between local (mainly women) employers and foreign employees (mostly maids and caregivers). Namely, new kinds of subjection and mutual dependency have been established, together with the emergence of innovative forms of cross-borders subjectivities and inventive representations of agency.

In the end, I will argue that forms of “situated” care performed by immigrant women workers in Western families have both a material and an intangible significance because they reveal a deep and contradictory transformation of intimacy, intercultural relations and the global socio-political order. As an example, I will use the case of women migrants from Eastern trans-regions to Italy in the last decade, focusing on some interviews which stress the multifaceted interactions towards the “otherness”.

## From Slavery in Antiquity to Servitude in Modernity

In general terms, immigration refers to the presence in host countries of foreign individuals and human groups, who in some cases can live in a situation of political and socio-economic subalternity due to the lack of citizenship rights and related opportunities. Could this condition be defined as a form of servitude? In the following section, I will summarise the shift from a condition of slavery in antiquity to a more differentiated connotation of servitude in European modernity, when autonomous and gendered subjectivities became more manifest in both the private sphere and public spaces.

In antiquity servitude was based on two different connotations: a slave was a person who was born a slave or who had become such during his/ her life. In the first case there was a human group who “did not belong to itself but to another” (Aristotle: *Politica*, 1254a 8–1255a 2; 1255a 5–12; 1255b 5–15). In the second case there were human beings who became the subjects of the victors in the exercise of their power over the losers. For instance, even a queen could become a slave to the foreign conqueror, as narrated in Greek tragedies. Both *born and made slaves* were property of the master, subject to his commands and bound to obey. They were forced to provide work without any access to freedoms that were recognised in ancient Athens to male citizens. However, “the naturally ruling and ruled [are] on account of preservation” (Aristotle, 1252a30). According to Aristotle, the naturally governing master and the naturally governed slave are thus interlinked by a reciprocal need because of the necessity to preserve their own life: without the support provided by the slave the master is not able to deal with his daily necessities and at the same time without the occupation given by the master the slave

cannot survive. Slavery is thus paradoxically functional to both social actors in the form of an asymmetric partnership.

However, in antiquity there were different forms of slavery. For example, republican Roman culture differed from the Greek civilisation in respect to the possible liberation of a slave. A master (*patronus*) had in fact the right to release a slave who had served him loyally for years. However, the former slave, called *libertus* (*servus post manumissionem*), kept in this designation the origin of his previous status as a non-free citizen who was emancipated thanks to the master's will. After this decision, he could no longer be described as a material good or a "thing" but a person or a citizen. As a matter of fact, *res mancipi* referred to those objects, which were considered patrimonial parts of the family's property. The idea of emancipation (*ex mancipium* – taken from dependency/ex-slave) as well as the reality of liberty thus contained the trace of its intrinsic negation, which indicated a prior condition of servitude.

Historically, the Athenian and Roman examples indicate that: firstly, in antiquity human beings were not considered equal and free but "diverse" because of a supposed different "nature" in origin or due to a tragic fortune which led them to slavery. Secondly, citizenship was a political dimension that denoted the practice of freedom and the possibility of being politically represented in the public space as a member of a defined community surrounded by borders. Thirdly, a person – if a foreigner or a former slave – could become a citizen only when a local human group decided to include him (or almost 1500 years later, her) in the political and moral domain of the community in power, thus leading to his acquisition of rights and recognition as a "person". Fourthly, emotional and cultural resources were conceived of as purely material, deprived of any public recognition and socio-cultural value.

The Enlightenment subverts in a radical way the socio-political order of antiquity, secularising the principles of the Jewish-Christian tradition and stressing that firstly, inequalities are caused by society and not predetermined by nature, as Rousseau argued in the *Discourse on Inequality* and in *The Social Contract*. Secondly, the right of nature (*jus naturalis*) forms the basis of both formal and substantial rights as a legal recognition of the right of equality and freedom for all human beings as something due to them by nature. Quite apart from unlike theories put forward by Hobbes, in the *Second Treaty on Government* (1690) Locke argued that there is a *continuum* between the state of nature and the human consortium. This meaning of right of nature is also present in Article 1 of the revolutionary *Declaration of the Rights of the Man and the Citizen* (1789), which affirms that "men are born equal and free". However, there were two aspects that remained problematic and exclusive during the Enlightenment: women could not have access to citizenship and the importance of care remained confined to the household.

Beginning from early modernity, due to religious motivations and thanks to political arguments, slavery disappeared gradually in the West while it reappeared on other continents. The trafficking of slaves between Africa and the Eastern coast of America increased between the 16th and early 19th century. Slavery became extinct in Europe



while servants re-emerged in the household in the era of the increasing socio-economic power of the bourgeois class, as in the case of Britain (Meldrum 2000).

In particular, by the middle of the 19th century, the presence of female servants and nannies (mostly former peasants) in both noble and emerging bourgeois families started to be not only a social construct but mainly an aesthetic *topos*, becoming both a literary image and an ideological stereotype portraying different social *status* and political views, from anti-modern reactionarism to patriotic perspectives or subversive tendencies. The works of Russian writers depicting aristocratic families, and in particular the novels by Pushkin (Figes 2003), indicate this cultural trend. Nowadays, this tradition has re-emerged in a post-socialist society where the presence of *nyanyast* – who have become a status symbol in wealthy neo-bourgeois Russian families – stresses the increasing economic divide between upper and lower classes in the dominant logic of the neo-liberal market.

Since the 18th century, novels, comedies and paintings portray thus the transition to the age of bourgeois. With the end of the public personification of slaves in Europe as a cohort of non-persons, the presence of male and female servants started to be visualised in literature and situated in the interior domain of the household. Despite their inferior social status and subalternity to the class in power, servants were pictured as proactive.

Re-elaborating on the tradition of the masks of the *commedia dell'arte*, the Venetian playwright Carlo Goldoni (1707–1793) represented in his comedies the ambivalences of the new era, focusing on servant characters. Goldoni wrote significant comedies, stressing the changing dynamic of gender, inter-generational and inter-classist relations, and the importance of a free self-representation by the characters. The “intangible” value of negotiations performed by male and female servants, who are mediators of opposite interests and able to cope with conflicts, becomes the focus of many plots. This is the case of two well-known comedies, written in the Venetian dialect: the *Servant of Two Masters* (1745) and *The amorous servant* (known also as *The Loving Maid*, 1752).

The protagonist of the first comedy is Truffaldino, wearing the mask of Harlequin. He is always hungry and petulant about his unfilled appetite. When he has the opportunity to be the servant of another master, he accepts this new job because of his need to eat to satisfy his hunger. “Our supper? Why? Thank you. I am often hungry, usually starving. But today I am utterly famished” (Goldoni 2003, 19). This “material” explanation of Truffaldino’s non-loyalty becomes the legitimation for serving two female and male masters (Beatrice and Florindo). However, this decision leads to a series of mistakes and troubles. There is a memorable scene when Truffaldino has to serve both his masters in a common banquet. Neither group is aware of the presence of the other and the servant is engaged in satisfying his permanent hunger. The comedy finishes with a happy ending: Beatrice and Florindo as well as Truffaldino and Smeraldina (another servant) get married and the chaotic servant is forgiven by his two masters. And by kissing Smeraldina, Truffaldino shows that what he was really hungry for was love. This comedy was interpreted as the egoistic expression of the “politics of self-interest”, although the happy ending stresses the triumph of love over selfishness and betrayal. *De facto*, this comedy represents the interiors of the emerging

bourgeois. That is, it symbolises new forms of private life, supporting new mentalities, imaginaries and a different representation of subordinated peoples. Truffaldino's "perpetual hunger" is not only a metaphor for unequal class relationships but also the manifestation of the ambivalences of human feelings and the necessity to attribute a public meaning to sentiments and empathy in asymmetric interactions.

Goldoni's second comedy is called *The Amorous Servant*. The main character is Corallina, a beautiful young maid. She is split between devotion towards her master (Ottavio, an elderly widower who has remarried) and the attraction towards his handsome son (Florindo, who had to leave home because of conflicts with his stepmother). Differently from Truffaldino, Corallina serves voluntarily two male masters she respects not only because of material interests but also due to the affection and loyalty she feels for both of them. As she argues: "What do you think? That I can buy bread with the money you are offering me? I wonder about you. At home with my master, we have all we need." (Goldoni 2007, 109) Because of the difficulty in getting an allowance, Corallina decides to join Florindo, who is the same age and whom she regards as a brother (her mother nursed both). However, this decision could compromise her honour. Florindo is troubled: he feels a growing affection towards Corallina, a servant, but at the same time he loves Rosaura, the daughter of a rich colleague of his father. Corallina is a combination of generosity (helping her young master in economic difficulties), strategic abilities (favouring his marriage with Rosaura) and sufferance (repressing her sentiments for Florindo because of their different social *status*). Corallina is wise, autonomous and powerful over her masters, challenging gender prejudices:

*What could a loving maid do more than what I'm doing? Let come those know-it-all men who vilify women. (...) I'll let crimson them. Noble virtuous women, who overcome men in virtues and never are comparable to them in vices, will do it better. Long life to our sex and death to those who/whom denigrate it. (Goldoni 2007, 176)*

A proto-feminist argument supports the agency of a subordinated female servant in the age of Enlightenment, which excluded women from the enunciation of human rights.

## **Emotional Surplus in Labor**

As emphasised in the previous part, the characters of active male and female servants are central to Goldoni's theatrical pieces. They show independence and agency, although their way of thinking and acting is very much gendered and differs in terms of values, strategies and rationality. For instance, contrary to Truffaldino, Corallina is moved by sentiments of care and interest for the wellbeing of her enlarged family. Goldoni portrays her as a conflicting modern identity whose autonomy is interactively achieved thanks to the evaluation of others' needs. However, Corallina remains master over herself. She does not need to be a "mask" such as used in the *commedia dell'arte*: Corallina has become a person (although the name "person" means in Latin "mask") in the narrative of her story in terms of self-recognition and empowerment. She becomes aware of the value of her intangible work in negotiating intergenerational issues, improving family relations and

transcending the walls of the household as a symbol of hope for a generalizable sense of care.

This gender and emotional dynamic between gendered both servants and masters is not present in a masterpiece which lies at the basis of modern philosophy and represents the *topos* for a cotemporary theory of emancipation and the recognition of subjected people. In Hegel's *Phenomenologie des Geistes* (1807) the characters of the master and the servant are in fact male-oriented. On the basis of this consideration, in the following section I will try to reconstruct the ambivalent significance of the servant/ lord relationship in the context of a post-industrial society. My aim is to question whether the notion of surplus-value – influenced by Hegel's idealism and systematically re-elaborated by Marx in *The Capital* in a critical perspective - can be useful for the present public debate on migration and suitable for a more multifaceted understanding of care-work, now mostly performed by female immigrant workers.

In the section devoted to *Independence and dependence of self-consciousness: Lordship and Bondage*, Hegel recognises the interdependence and a reciprocal functionality – as Aristotle also argued – between the landlord and the servant in the constitution of asymmetric power relations. The subjectification of the servant to the landlord's dominion becomes the basis for a dialectical process of individualisation. A subject becomes autonomous after an experience of dominion (Butler, 1997), which leads him to liberation. Therefore, power over things and individuals is based on a reciprocal influence and becomes a decisive factor in the constitution of both personal and collective identities.

Servitude is, consequently, conceivable only “in relation to lordship”. But while the master is forced to recognise his dependence on the servant, the servant has the possibility to overcome his enslavement. He understands that the objects he produces are forms of alienation from his labor (Jaeggi 2010) and that his human essence is reified during the productive manufacturing process. The understanding of the power dynamics and the explanation of the origin of his subjection produce freedom to the servant. The untrue autonomy of the lord thus becomes the basis for the bondsman's self-consciousness and independence. The dialectic and revolutionary truth is that the lord is a slave and dependent to the servant.

Debating Hegel's arguments, in the *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* (1848) Karl Marx re-elaborates the dialectic of recognition and self-consciousness, focusing his attention on the revolutionary role of class struggle for the liberation of proletarians from capitalist dominion and exploitation. Workers – who are no longer working in the household but in industries – can struggle for their own liberation in the understanding of the capitalistic oppressive logic. In the *Capital* Marx investigates new forms of subjection in the increasing process of industrialisation and the accumulation of capital. He argues that the reason for the enrichment of the new bourgeois class via the capitalist accumulation is in *surplus value*. It is the unpaid labor produced by the worker, which permits the accumulation of profit by the owner. Work does not have a pure material significance but an intrinsic value, which transcends its immanent shape: exchange value

is thus not identical to factual value. Marx's discovery is that capitalism creates new forms of subjection and alienation in human relations due to reification in production and the fetishism of goods.

Hegel's idealism on the dialectic between the master and the slave and Marx's historical materialism about the conflict between the capitalist and the proletarian differs from Goldoni's approach, which emphasised the productive and active role that female characters have in providing inter-generational care and an inter-classist dialogue without being necessarily obedient to the patriarchal conventions of the time. In the analysis of modern forms of servitude, Hegel and Marx's lack of a gender perspective indicates an ambivalent understanding of the nature of interpersonal bondages. The servant is a male worker, identified with the resources he produces in a conflicting antagonism to the lord. No emotions or sentiments are pictured as contradictory interpersonal means, which mediate the relationship between the master and the servant.

As opposed to the material value that a surplus has in the production of industrial goods, the surplus created in daily work in the private sphere is elusive, impalpable, quickly consumable and easily destroyable but valuable in its essence and effects over others. This kind of work transforms itself daily into a sort of *intangible capital*, which is offered or taken in asymmetrically beneficial but functional labor relationships that augment the quality of the family's daily life. Considered from this angle, a re-conceptualisation of the dialectic between the master and the servant from a gender and inter-cultural perspective can permit a better understanding of the non-visible value of the work performed in the household. This perspective permits a clarification of the surplus that labor contains in the form of emotional bonds and contrasting sentiments exchanged in asymmetric work relationships. In particular, the multiple effects produced by the work performed by women migrants thus concern the continuous and functional exchange of the role of the giver and the receiver.

## Globalisation and Lacking Resources

In the previous sections I have tried to consider different models of subalternity, from slavery to servitude in antiquity and modernity, and to introduce the idea of "intangible" surplus in order to mark different modalities of dominion towards women migrants employed in the household. On the basis of this framework, in the following section I aim firstly to reformulate the traditional paradigm of subalternity and functional dependency from a gender perspective; secondly I am interested in explicating the particular kind of surplus-value that women immigrants produce in the household, that is, the resources they create when providing daily care, namely emotions. Therefore, in this section I will consider immigration in socio-philosophical terms in order to later analyse the EU situation and in particular the Italian case.

In addition to the free circulation of goods, globalisation has induced an increasing mobility of human resources as well as the expanding interest of a market-driven neo-libertarianism (Smith 2010), which perpetuates or increases socio-economic gaps among

individuals and populations. In this case, is the traditional paradigm of subalternity as mentioned above applicable to immigrants, and if so to what extent?

New forms of subalternity have incontrovertibly appeared in the global age, although slavery is prohibited, as asserted also in Art. 4 of the UN *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948). Recently the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* (2000) has reaffirmed in Art. 5 the “Prohibition of slavery and forced labor. 1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude. 2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labor. 3. Trafficking in human beings is prohibited.”

However, if slavery is no longer justified as a natural determination as it was in antiquity and if servitude is no longer pictured as a matter of class distinction as it was from an aristocratic viewpoint, new inequalities have been affirmed in the post-socialist and post-colonial countries. Post-modern forms of slavery and servitude have assumed gendered and cultural connotations, as in the case of the trafficking in human beings (sex workers) (Kempadoo et al. 2005; Andrijasevic 2010; Shelley 2010) and domestic labor (caregivers, maids). This phenomenon denotes the transformation of the sphere of sexuality and intimacy (Oleksy 2009), the changing dynamics of the traditional Western family, and the crisis of the welfare State (Daly and Rake 2003). New social inequalities are thus globally determined by different kinds of systemic subalternities (Spivak 1988; Crenshaw Williams 1989; McCall 2005) that interrelate multiple forms of discrimination in terms of gender, race, class, religion, as argued by the post-colonial and intersectional paradigm (Harrington Meyer 2000).

For instance, the European Union does not have a common legislation on immigration (Koser and Lutz 1998; Calloni and Lutz 2000) but a common policy on borders (Dijstelbloem 2007; Odmalm 2005; Rekecewicz 2010; Fortress Europe 2011). Migration policies are determined by each nation State. There are thus many discrepancies among EU member states towards non-EU citizens in terms of work and residency rights. And the traditional struggles for recognition and distribution (Fraser and Honneth 2003) which have characterised workers’ and minorities’ movements in the last century seem not fully applicable to female immigrant workers (only in terms of trade union legislation). Because of the multiple cultural and political differences, which connote foreign workers, immigrants’ social movements and related class actions have been not yet formed. One of the reasons is that women immigrant workers differ from traditional industrial employees. They deal with a variety of different tasks in the care/ domestic work they perform and they have a different socio-political status in relation to the country they live in. Many of them appear as “illegal” or undocumented foreigners in respect to restrictive national policies and legislations, so that they are “inexistent” persons, although daily present in the household.

Beside different socio-political status among foreign workers, the feminisation of migration continues to be historically significant, and particularly so in Europe. A gendered dimension of migration (Palmary 2010) has not only modified a stereotyped image of the immigrant as a male worker employed in hard and physical activities. It

has contributed to the modification of the contents and finalities of migration in itself. In the crisis of the labor society, a Tayloristic organisation of industrial work (meant as serialised and alienating production based on a linear conception of time) has come to an end. The new work dynamic is based on a series of multi-tasking services offered in the public sector as well as in the household, where different forms of pragmatic, emotional and multicultural rationalities are employed.

Indeed, the feminisation of migration has contributed to changing the resources discourse. Resources are no longer only seen, as they were in the industrial age, as pure materials objects and means, like iron, gold and money. Material resources are now conceived of in a broader sense: they are not only conceived as personal property but as a matter of common sharing, which has to do with the respect to the environment and its naturalistic/ cultural valorisation. Resources have become a matter of *common goods* (Rodotà 2010, 1). This approach implies, for instance, the struggle against the interests of financial global companies, which aim at controlling and exploiting universal goods, like the sun and the water, for commercial purposes (as argued by the eco-feminist Vandana Shiva about the water wars, 2002). Next to the necessity to share common goods, there is the claim to respect cultural diversities and different *Weltanschauungen* (visions of the world). This background is meant as “non-substantive” communitarian resources, which can become permeable and transmittable while developing intercultural dialogues and practices against a supposed “clash of civilisations” (Benhabib 2002; Dallmayr 2010) occurring among conflicting cultures.

Reflection upon the scarcity of material resources has thus acquired new dimensions: it is not only gasoline that is lacking because of the crisis with the Emirates or precious stones because of insane excavations. There are interpersonal precious resources that are being diminished: time, (Nowotny 1992) for instance, which would be needed for the family and for oneself has become scarce because of professional commitments. The insufficient time for valued interpersonal and intergenerational relations (with partners, children, and the elderly) has mainly determined the increasing employment of immigrant female workers in Western countries (Calloni 2011). Immigrant women thus fulfil the emotional and organisational gaps connoting Western families in change. However, new forms of subalternity have been affirmed, in this case between host women and female foreigners.

The dynamics of this phenomenon indicates a mutual scarcity: on the one hand migration is related to who is looking for a job because of poverty, the interest in increasing the standard of life, and the necessity to join a partner and a family abroad. On the other hand, migration is connected to who has to pay another worker because the landlady – who has become professionally active – can no longer perform alone in the household activities that women were traditionally used to do in the domestic sphere.

*Prima facie* the reciprocal and functional dynamic between the employers and the woman migrant seems to be an ordinary private transaction between those who offer work and those who buy it, based on parity. However, in the case of immigrants the “contract” is unfair because the prerequisites are different. The issue is more complex:

the interaction includes an element that creates asymmetries due to a lack of political rights, i.e. the citizenship, for one of the contractors. Moreover, this exchange contains a surplus: it is not purely physical work that is requested but the employment of emotional substance related to the caregiving action. Therefore new functional, inter-dependent and intercultural labor relationships have been affirmed in Western family household. These interactions are based on the one hand on subalternity and on the other hand on the agency of the employees who have the power to contribute to the daily functioning of families, children and elderly.

Reframing Marx's class interpretation from a gendered inter-cultural immigrant perspective, we can argue that emotion in caregiving is a kind of surplus whose value is difficult to quantify and incorporate.

Emotions serve in fact a social and cultural function, as underlined by Martha Nussbaum in *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*. They are "a certain sort of vision or recognition, as value-laden ways of understanding the world." (Nussbaum 2001, 88) Although Nussbaum does not refer to the immigration issue, I think that it would be crucial to reflect upon the inter-cultural value that emotions have in caregiving, as these are valuable and precious intangible resources that are scarce in a contemporary family setting.

This question has been deeply analysed by the American sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild, in particular in the papers on *The capacity to feel, Working on feeling, Love and Gold*, now included in the collection about *The Commercialization of Intimate Life*. Commenting on interviews with women from the Philippines, the author argues that "perhaps, then, feelings *are* distributable resources, but they behave somewhat differently from either scarce or renewable material resources" (Russell Hochschild 2003, 191). Moreover, the author thinks that "first world parents welcome and even invite nannies to redirect their love in this manner" (Ibidem). The economic asymmetries between "rich and poor countries" are redefined in terms of quality of care: "The way some employers describe it, a nanny's love of her employer's child is a natural product of her more loving Third World culture, with its warm family ties, strong community life, and long tradition of patient maternal love of children. In hiring a nanny, many such employers implicitly hope to import a poor country's 'native culture' thereby replenishing their own rich country's depleted culture of care." (Ibidem)

Russell Hochschild's paradoxical argument consists in the affirmation that "the First World extracts love from the Third World", revealing the nature of new socio-economic and cultural dynamics of exploitation in a changed global geo-political order. Moreover, the author raises a question: "is an emotion a resource like gold or ivory that can be extracted from one place and taken to another? (...) Today, love and care become the 'new gold'". (Russell Hochschild 2003, 26) But how can these emotional resources be extorted and at what price? How can they be transferred to different national environments and be mobile through private spaces in the context of a sort of global market of "care/ love" in an intercultural transaction between sellers and buyers? The novelty of this new exploitative

phenomenon - this new 'gold' – is that this scarce resource is extracted in the interior rooms of Western family homes, where women had traditionally started to struggle for their own emancipation.

Russell Hochschild stresses thus the intensity of the multifaceted phenomenon of caregiving, in particular the displacement of sentiments, the increasing circulation of money and the redirection of love from both sides (employees and employers) in a functional and interdependent way. On the one hand immigrant women remove love from their children, who often remain in the native countries with members of the extended family. Due to a need to compensate for the love they would ordinarily bestow on their own children, immigrant women reallocate in an often-conflicting way their love to other children or to elderly in their care, who are people from different households and different cultures.

Women immigrants suffer thus from a sense of guilt because of the abandonment of their children, transferring to the host family their distress and sense of displacement. However, this dynamics creates an ambivalent circle of sentiments. On the one hand native women trust female immigrants by delegating care services of children and the elderly to them because of the impossibility of providing these services due to professional obligations, but on the other hand they allocate to immigrant women the stress they are suffering from.

Immigrants' children, who remain in their home country, pay in fact the price. They are removed from their mother's love. However, receiving financial recompense for her absence, they can gain benefits: they get expensive and fashionable gifts that their school mates cannot afford and have the promise of a better life, attending good schools and having better employment prospects. However, when they join their mother abroad, they cannot have the same standard of life, compensative presents or high standard of living they had in their native country as paradoxically privileged children. Their new existence acquires the standard of an ordinary working family with a consequent sense of the decadence of their former social status.

## Caregiving and Controversial Emotions

Emotional resources are becoming limited for both local and immigrant women. In Western countries the intensity of labor has become more and more time consuming and absorbing, corroding step by step the quality of interpersonal relationships. The issue of care services has thus become central to the public agenda and social policies of welfare States because of the difficulty for employed women to deal with labor, family and intergenerational duties. This necessity has permitted that care could be considered a political matter while in the past it was removed from public discourse because it simply referred to the daily praxis of women and thus was considered extraneous to institutional deliberations. Now, *mutatis mutandis*, because of exigent needs Western women have become the main contractors of caring and emotional resources, found mainly in foreign women.



The value of emotional resources cannot be defined as purely commercial. Their price is not fixed by the fluctuation of a financial global market but determined by the needs of local families, which have a contractual superiority.

Together with a sense of loss, immigrant women bring with them various abilities, competences and networks, which became the basis for a new “professionalization”. Their social capital increases in the host country with the development of new links. As argued by Bourdieu, “social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing *a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships* of mutual acquaintance and recognition.” (Bourdieu 1992, 119) Redefining the traditional role of domestic servants (Lutz 2008; Lutz 2011), immigrant women perform in the household a work with a kind of double emotional value because it is related to caring and brings with it a diverse cultural knowledge. *Love is displaced in the new host country, while care is situated in the concrete contexts of daily family life.*

At this point a more complex definition of care is needed. As Bubeck argues “*care* can refer to an emotional state or to an activity or to a combination of the two.” (Bubeck 1995, 127) Care was traditionally conceived of as a form of exploitation and a limitation of women’s liberty because it prevented their self-fulfilment and empowerment. However, in the last three decades the issue of care has become a crucial point for analysing women’s work and the consequences it has in terms of the double burden and responsibilities.

In feminist discourse the question of an ethics of care began in the late 1970s with reflections upon the significance of motherhood (Chodorow 1978; 1989). In the 1980s the debate focused on the opposition between a formal idea of justice and a concrete conception of ethics, conceived of as an interactive recognition of the concrete other (Gilligan 1982). Gilligan’s work opened an intense and controversial discussion about women’s feelings and behaviours (Latrobe 1993; Tronto 1993; 1999; Noddding 2003; Held 2005; Hollway 2006). However, feminists involved in the debate (Held and Oberbrunner 1995) tried to overcome a “gendered” connotation of caring, arguing that it can be generalised and applied to all human beings and different areas of public life, from politics to economics. From a gender perspective social justice became a form of criticism against a purely formal and distributive notion of justice (Okin 1989; Benhabib 1992; Fraser 1997; Nussbaum 2006). Caring cannot be merely understood as a socio-economic and political matter but as a moral, normative and pragmatic question in the new global scenario. The question thus concerned the “nature” of caring. As Bubeck (1995, 160) argues,

*Caring is part of what it is (...) to be a woman: caring supposedly comes naturally to women, hence the care for husband, children, parents, relatives, neighbours, and more generally the need is supposed to be the ultimate fulfilment in women’s lives. Men, by contrast, are supposed to be fighters.*

The double face of care (a combination of labor and emotions) is exemplified by women immigrants because of the variety of work they have to perform in the household, from cleaning to dealing with children, the elderly and the disabled. The connection between gender relations, inter-generational ties, caring practices and domestic work (Sarti 2010) produces new forms of inter-cultural surplus-value. Caring “entails more than just fighting for fair working conditions or professionalization of domestic work. Rather, it interconnects domestic work as affective labor to a cosmopolitan perspective, uncovering it as the main source for the production and maintenance of human vitality.” (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2010, 164)

Therefore a “decolonial ethics of responsibility” and a “politics of affects” refers to domestic work as “the neuralgic point of affective labor. The value inherent in domestic work is affective value that cannot be just translated into an equivalent monetary form. Affective value transcends the logic of capital. (Migration) reveals more than just the reproductive and emotional reproduction of society; it leads us to the neuralgic point of our lives, our affects.” (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2010, 165, 168)

Different kinds of sentiments overlap in migration, starting from the “reconfiguration” of personal identity. As Rosińska (2011, 31) writes,

*when we speak of personal identity, we have in mind not just its end form but also the process of its development. (...) It seems that a necessary condition for complete migratory experience is the loss of the object of identification (...). We must keep in mind, however, that (...) [it] is not an actual physical object but rather a bundle of varied experiences and impressions. It is the smells, the views, the sounds, the intonations, warmth and cold, desires, hopes, disappointments, and, finally, safety: home in the broad sense of the word.*

Care-work brings with itself all these ambivalent emotions, opening new horizons for both immigrant women and host families.

## Migration: a Mutual Condition of Necessity

Migration is *de facto* an integrated mix of socio-economic, cultural, political and emotional demands and an ambiguous “need for otherness”. It stresses a reciprocal status of necessity and dependency based on asymmetrical relationships, as indicated in the previous sections. This controversial dynamic between necessity and repulsion can be seen, for instance, in Italy, as also described by Mara Bordogna Tognetti and Lena Näre in this book.

Until recent years Italy was traditionally a country of migrants. Starting from the 1970s Italy has become a place of immigration due to both the labor necessity of local communities and the strategic geo-political position that the Italian peninsula has connecting three different continents through the Mediterranean Sea: Europe, Africa and Asia. As the

OECD has noticed: “Permanent immigration to Italy remains at high levels, making it the leading immigration destination among European OECD countries.” (OECD 2011a, 292)

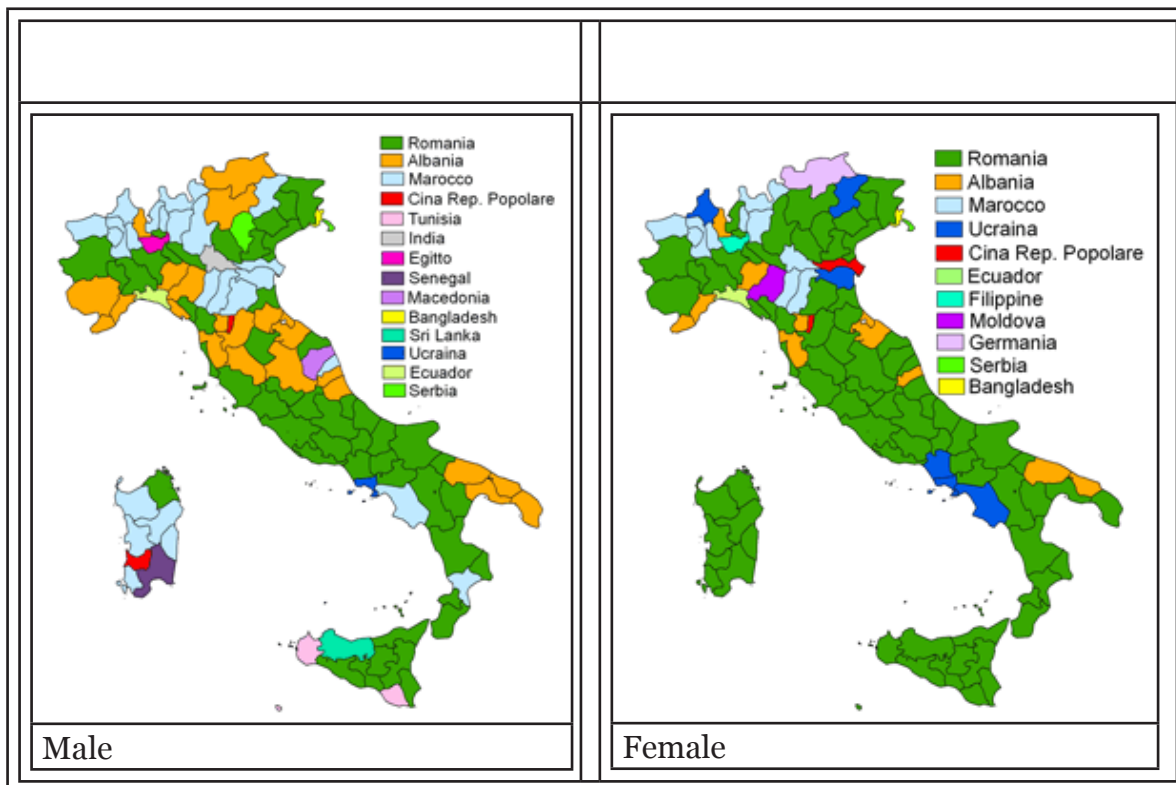
Statistics can help to summarise the deep transformation of Italian society (ISMU, 2011) in order to understand the significance of the care-work, which is provided by female immigrants (Calloni 2009). Italy has a population of 61 016804 (July 2011) inhabitants and on 1 January 2011 foreigners accounted for 4.8 million. The life expectancy at birth is 79.16 for men and 84.53 for women. The birth rate is 1.4 percent, one of the lowest in the world, while the birth rate among foreign women has increased: 13.9 percent of the total amount of children born in Italy are born to non-Italians (ISTAT 2011). Regarding the social position of Italian women, the *Global Gender Gap Report*, edited by the World Economic Forum in 2010 (WEF 2010), stresses that in comparison to other countries Italy is 87th worldwide in terms of female labor participation; 121st in wage parity; 74th for the treatment of women (one of the lowest rankings in the European Union), indicating that women do not have equal opportunities with men. In the first trimester of 2012 the percentage of women’s employment – which is constantly decreasing – has been calculated as being 46.7 percent, while the male one is 67.2 percent. In South Italy women’s unemployment is 49.2 percent. Moreover, in February 2012, 31.9 percent of young people between 15 and 24 are unemployed and among them 47 percent are South Italian women. After Malta and Hungary, Italian women have the highest EU rate of unemployment. 37.5 percent of employed mothers stop working after the birth of their child. Occupation among foreign workers has increased in 2011 by 276.000 units.

This data provides a very confused picture of what is going on in Italy. There is rising unemployment among native women and young people next to an increased presence in the labour market of female migrants, mainly employed by Italian women. The birth rate among Italian women is declining while it increases among foreigners. These factors seem to be contradictory, although they reflect *de facto* the crisis of traditional Italian familistic welfare, based on unpaid work performed by women with the consequence of a lack of public services devoted to the care of children and the elderly.

In Italy, a law – called Bossi-Fini (Law no. 189) – regulates immigration since 2002. A subsequent law – concerning measures aimed “to contrast phenomena of diffuse illegality related to illegal immigration and organised criminality” (Law no. 94, issued on 15th July 2009, known as *pacchetto sulla sicurezza*) – has introduced the crime of clandestine immigration, restricting access to public services for undocumented immigrants. The condition of illegality also affects women employed as maids or caregivers (*badanti*) in the private sector (Da Riot and Facchini 2010), although it is difficult to calculate the quantity of illegal and undeclared workers (Caritas Migrantes 2009; FRA 2010). However, even documented workers have difficulties gaining access to political rights. Italian citizenship is based on *ius sanguinis*. This means – as already stated in antiquity by Aristotle in the *Politeia* – that irrespective of their place of birth, children keep the citizenship of their parents. In Italy (but also in Germany) citizenship is based on the substantial and invariable principle of the “blood” origin. Foreign citizens can become Italian citizens but only after many years and through complicated legal proceedings. Consequently there

are migrants who live in Italy for decades, whose children are born in Italy (and who are *de facto* culturally Italians), but who legally and politically remain “strangers” (OECD 2011a, 292). Although with legal permission to work and have residency, they cannot even vote in local elections, which differs from other European states, such as Finland. Italian citizenship therefore differs from other countries, like France, which recognises citizenship after a few years and on the basis of work permits and residency. The debate on the necessity to attribute equal rights to children born in Italy is at the heart of present political debate, as stressed by the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, in several public speeches (15th and 22 November 2011). This recognition is also due to the increasing presence of “young foreigners” in demographic, educational and socio-economic terms.

Considering the statistics, we can argue that Italy has become a country more and more dependent on foreign workers’ work, although an overwhelming socio-economic crisis, which implicates an increasing number of Italian unemployed workers. The map below indicates this ambivalent trend.



*Information of the countries of origin of foreign documented workers resident in Italy regions, on the basis of sex and province (1st January 2010) (ISTAT 2011b).*

The map shown above indicates the presence of male and female immigrants in Italy. In both cases, the majority of foreign citizens come from former socialist countries. The most numerous foreign community is the Rumanian one, due to family reunification and labor networks, followed by Albanian and Moroccan citizens. The main difference

between male and female immigrants is made evident by the presence of women from the former Soviet Union and in particular from Ukraine and Moldova, who often come alone as maids and caregivers.

One of the reasons that can explain the significant presence of female migrants in Italian families is the fatigue and the burdens of cultural traditions that primarily induce native women to care for children and the elderly. In Italy a professional career woman working full time, with an employed husband but with intergenerational duties, becomes, in many cases, employer to three women: a nanny to her children, a care-giver for her parents and a cleaner in order to keep the house in good shape. The intensity of this routine is often a matter of an interactive combination between cultural inheritance and the lack of social services for children and the elderly.

Italian women's participation in labor seems to have become a luxury, considering the consequences it has in terms of costs incurred by the family. The condition of both local and migrant women in Italy in the private sphere as well as in the public domain is thus peculiar if considered within an EU context, differing from other countries in many aspects: the high unemployment rate, the intergenerational duties at home, the scarcity of social facilities.

Unlike other European populations, Italian women spend more hours daily preparing good and healthy food (buying, cooking, washing and spending time with the family eating) because of its nutritional and communitarian value. A British study published by *Datamonitor* (2007), has indicated that Italian women are among those in Europe who dedicate more time to housecleaning. In addition, a survey issued by OECD reports that, "Italian women spend 3 hours 40 minutes per day more on unpaid work (cooking, cleaning, caring, etc.) than Italian men (...). On average, across the OECD, women spend 2 and a half hours per day more than men on unpaid work." (OECD, 2011b. 2) The working day of an Italian woman is more than 12 hours. Recently a female blog, edited by the newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, has been created with the name of *La ventisettesima ora*, (The 27th hour). A survey has indicated that if put on a consecutive line Italian women would work 27 hours a day, in the attempt to reach a fragile equilibrium between work (at office and home), family and themselves, in an undefined boundary between the private sphere and the public domain.

This example shows that Italian society is very dilemmatic and contradictory: women work more and more at home and at the workplace but at the same time their unemployment is increasing. At the same time the lack of social services and facilities forces Italian women to be helped by foreign workers, who are in some cases illegal and under-paid due to the economic crisis. The value of care, that is unpaid work, is now partly monetised and transferred to migrant workers, determining a complex and often conflicting relationship between the master/ local woman and the nanny-maid-caregiver/ foreign women.

Since the early 1990s the condition of women migrants has thus become a key issue in Italian public debate (Matteucci 1991; Crisantino 1992; Tognetti Bordogna 2011) as

well as a *topos* in scientific discourse. A Report issued by Censis on *The solid society of “invisibles”* (2009) indicates that 2 451 000 or 10.5 percent of Italian families need a “domestic collaborator” for cleaning, managing various occupations, assisting children, the elderly, and the disabled, and almost 72 percent of collaborators are foreigners. Domestic work has thus become fundamental for the working of a welfare State in crisis, connoted by the decrease in public services and the need to cope with daily necessities.

However, as I have previously argued, domestic services do not only have a value purely in terms of family organisation and common wellbeing (Cospe 2007). They are valuable in respect to micro-welfare services offered by maids and caregivers. They go alongside professional activities, deal with emotional expectations and permit the functioning of human capabilities.

Women migrants use and produce in their various activities “intangible” resources, which are easily destroyed but endure in the long run in the form of experiences of feelings, emotions (Harré 1986) and different cultural viewpoints. These dynamics enrich the host society in addition to producing inter-cultural and inter-gender conflicts. Reconsidering Marx’s ideas, we can argue that the work carried out by women migrants is not a pure exchange of labor and money but a performance which includes a “surplus-value” related to the improvement of both the individual and the collective quality of life. Therefore, the conflicts that arise cannot be understood merely as a matter of class conflicts. The issue of care thus symbolises different social conditions and ambivalent feelings. The need for caring refers to scarcity, fear and privation, and is united to richness, responsibility and hope.

## Dependency and the Need for the Otherness

In order to make evident the chain of reciprocal overlapping needs in migration process, I will refer to some interviews with female workers from Eastern Europe. These interviews are part of projects and programmes (mainly supported by Italian public bodies) devoted to the development of fair social policies and the integration of migrants. The following interviews evidence the constitution of new forms of trans-national and cross-regional identities (Zontini 2010) in search of a new personal autonomy and opportunities. The women interviewed focused their attention on two key issues: firstly, the significance of the monetary value of their work in relation to long-term life plans; secondly, the emotional cost that the care-work has in relation to both their family of origin abroad and the host family in the new country.

From the viewpoint of the foreign female workers the prospect of a better life is the motor that drives them to migrate, as Joana M. from Romania remembers about coming to Italy as a non-EU citizen (Romania joined the European Union in 2007):

*When I choose to come to Italy I decided to perform any job I would have found because I needed it. I hoped to get a salary, which would have allowed me to change my life, to have an easier existence: with money I could have had the possibility not*

*only to get food but also to buy a cloth. I did not know how people work in Italy but I learned it over time. (...) When I'll go back to Rumania I don't want to work any longer, I'm tired. I'll work here still three or four years and then but when I'll go back, I'll retire. (Associazione Parsec e Provincia di Livorno 2008, 46.)*

However, the possibility of finding an appropriate job is not easy, as Serena M. from Romania argues:

*I arrived in Italy in 2005 to work. Before I worked as a peasant (...). I came here in order to help my children. My husband remained in Rumania. I've not yet heard about the existence of services devoted to the search of work for free. There are people, who help us but then they want to be paid. Once it was tragic for a friend of mine: instead to find for her a job as badante, mediators sent her to be a prostitute. (...) My children are here and want to stay in Italy a little bit more, about four or five years but then they want to go back to Rumania, to get a family, to buy a house. (Associazione Parsec e Provincia di Livorno 2008, 49.)*

The feelings of guilt over the abandonment of their children are a source of incredible pain, as the *badante* Ana B. (born in the Moldova Republic and former border services officer) remembers:

*My oldest son died three years ago of leukaemia, (...) probably due to Chernobyl. By us all in contaminated. (...) I left my job and I went to the capital. But prices doubled. I could not live with my salary. (...) I came to Italy. (...) My youngest son has remained in my country. He is very sensitive. A friend of mine, who went to his birthday party, told me: 'you have not an idea how much he is suffering. I see it in his face. (...) All have abandoned him: his father and brother died. (...) I worked for an old lady on pram. (...) Here I have a friend from Moldova, who is a journalist. (...) I do not use to go to parks, where Moldovian women use to meet. I'm different; I do not like chatting, drink (...). I like intelligent people, just to meet them, to talk in a quite way. (Lobina 2006, 1.)*

A Ukrainian woman expressed the same feelings of guilt:

*I have two children: a son of six yeas and a girl sixteen years old. (...) They live actually alone. They go to school and then they stay with their friends. At home there is my mother, who deal with them a little bit. My husband is absent. When I'll go back and I'll have enough saving money, I'll divorce and I'll go far from my home place together with my children, I'll buy a home. (Rossini 2010, 5)*

Because of economic reasons and the necessity to accommodate others' needs, women migrants are very flexible in the labor market, as Monica S. from Romania remembers:

*In Rumania there was only one thing, which I did not have: money. At the moment I'm retired. I have a degree in atomic physic. I've also worked in Chernobyl from*

*1982 to 1984, before the explosion of the reactor in 1986. Nevertheless I have been affected by nuclear radiations. Among fifty female colleagues, who were employed, I'm the only one who has survived. Every seven years I've to replace my blood. In Rumania I'm retired but my pension is monthly 150 euros. But what is the most import? Health or money? I prefer to work in Italy as a caregiver than to be an employee working close to uranium, pluton. (Associazione Parsec e Provincia di Livorno 2008, 47.)*

Immigrants continue to live on the borders, understanding the limits of both the host and the native country. The dream of a better future seems to be difficult to achieve and frustration can increase due to relationship expectations not being met by the host family. Immigrants' stories are narratives of resilience in the attempt to overcome traumas: leaving home, approaching new realities, and facing disappointment. They seem to desire an "emotional feedback" but at the same time they refuse it. The "other" is attractive but also "dangerous". The pain remains in their bodies and souls (Maragnani and Aikpitanyi 2007), as Keti, a forced sex worker from Albania, remembers:

*When I was working there wasn't anyone with whom I could talk. I wish I had a friend, but it was not possible with my situation. (...) I did not have friends. I mean, real friends. I knew people in the 'street' environment, but they were not real friends. (...) Now my body does not feel the pain any more but I can feel the pain in my heart as if it is happening now. The bad memory sometimes comes back to me very clearly. I still remember the feeling of pain, and the picture of myself being raped by those clients still remains. (Zimmerman et al. 2003, 57, 58, 59.)*

The sexual "needs" of Italian clients indicate that the market for prostitution and sexual exploitation is expanding and diversifying in unprecedented levels. This is largely due to the use of new media sources (such as the internet), which increases access to male, female and transsexual prostitutes. Recent studies have shows that clients are in search of new "intimate emotions" (Serughetti 2012), quite apart from those private sentiments requested in the household on a daily basis: to clean, to cook, to administer medication, to do all that is necessary.

Labor is not paid in relation to the working time but at the request of the employer: *badanti* work as much as is required, night and day: "I clean the flat, help the lady and I do all what she needs. (...) I take her from the bed day and night; I put her on the pram (...). How many hours do I work in a day? When there is work to do, I do it." (Cossentino and Mottura 2005, 74)

However, inter-cultural talks are full of stereotypes, as remembered by Lucyna, who came from Poland before it was a EU country in 2004. The lady she assisted used to ask her:

*Do you have in Poland fridges, cars, televisions? (...) Do you use computers in your country? Do you know what they are? (...) Are you able to write and read? So, it*



*means that you also have universities, isn't it? But how many people do you have in Poland with a university degree? (Samolyk 2009.)*

In the interviews an emerging aspect is that migrant women who are sex workers, caregivers, maids and nannies do not necessarily expect a reciprocal “emotional recognition” by the people they work for, although they spend the majority of their time with them in private spaces. Nevertheless the questions they raise are radical and critical towards the crisis of gender relations and the welfare states (Esping-Andersen 1990; 2002) in host countries and as such they have to be taken seriously. However, in comparison with their condition in the new country, immigrant women evoke a sense of loss regarding their “former life” and often suffer from homesickness. Although it has become easier to move and communicate, nostalgia and depression seem to have become new pathologies of globalisation (Rampini 2012).

## Conclusions

In the conclusion to my paper I have to raise a crucial point, which continues to be at stake in the analysis of migration. Although sensitive and inter-cultural methodologies have been developed in the field under consideration, nevertheless an “asymmetric power” in reporting the “voices” of migrants, who do not have the same political rights and scientific knowledge of the interviewers, remains still evident. When interviewed, in some cases immigrant women feel damned and damaged because of the improper “use” of their biographies and stories by researchers, wasting their time without any compensation. They feel they have been treated like a “reified object” or an “inferior individual” without the possibility to check how their work and experience will be utilised, the correctness of the research, or whether they can participate in the results.

However, for years migrants have expressed their voices directly in associations, businesses – about 20.000 companies in Italy (Fondazione Leone Moressa 2011) –, political arenas, civil society, art and literature, as in the case of transnational, Italophone, postcolonial writing by non-native speakers.

The interaction between different needs, identities and social roles hybridises cultures. This process, however, is porous and ambivalent because it creates bridges for a creative dialogue as well as new borders that limit a fruitful cooperation between people of different origins. Political status remains asymmetric. The concrete other, that is the “stranger”, is not simply a projection of our material and emotional interests, fears, expectations, aspirations and frustrations but the true representation of existing power relations and the rights she/ he has to live in dignity (Benhabib 2011). The “inclusion of the other” (Habermas 2000; Benhabib 2004) and the recognition of the surplus-value she/he produces points out our limits, weaknesses, but also shared potential.

In the reconstruction of different models of subordination over time, I have tried to detail the significance of gendered immigration in EU countries. Overlapping forms of gender relations, inter-generational bonds and inter-cultural practices induce the creation of new

spheres of labor at the intersection between private space and the public arena (Pristed 2009; Siim 2009). This trend produces new forms of subordination and power relations between women as employees and employers, allowing at the same time the formation of innovative intercultural dynamics and cross-border subjectivities.

However, this situation causes three interacting typologies of conflicts. The first is political and is related to a general struggle for the recognition of social and/ or political citizenship by the host nation state (Apitzsch and Kontos 2008; Calder et al. 2010). The second is socio-economic and is related to the acquisition of rights, dependent on work contracts and residence permits, made possible by a legal agreement, certificated by the employer. The third is cultural and connected to disagreements, which often occur between local and foreign women. The traditional theory of political-economic “emancipation” of disadvantaged social actors – in this case the immigrants, that is citizens belonging to other nation states – should thus be reframed because it does not only have to do with the public sphere of politics and the work place but with the household spaces and the changing gender relations from an inter-cultural viewpoint.

Therefore, I have considered the socio-philosophical (and cultural-psychological) significance of the notions of care and emotion that characterize the labor carried out in the household, stressing the mobility, dislocation and displacement of sentiments in space and time. During the time of imperialism (founded on the exploitation of goods in other countries) and the era of industrialisation (based on the production of manufactured goods), “resources” were mainly seen as material entities. Nowadays they relate to “intangible” things, such feelings and emotions, referring to human capabilities and the cultural/ social capital brought to the “new world” by mobile citizens.

To conclude my paper, my argument is that if conceived from a global, intercultural and gender perspective, migration can no longer be seen as a pure transaction of “material” work. It is a vehicle that carries impalpable and scarce goods, that is emotions and care, determining the transformation of families in the host countries and abroad, hybridising collective identities, reframing the dynamics of the private sphere. Next to the economic crisis, which prevents access to full employment for female workers, there is an increasing scarcity of “impalpable resources”, i.e. emotional reserves for western women, so that this lack produces new conflicts towards those who require care as well as those who provide it.

# PART 2. CHANGING WELFARE STATE AND THE EVERYDAY LIFE

# Chapter 2. Mara Bordogna Tognetti: “Badanti” and the Changing Role of the Italian Welfare Regime <sup>5</sup>

## Introduction

This paper begins with an analysis of the dynamics of female migration flows to Italy and will focus on the growing presence of immigrant caregivers – referred to as *badanti* – doing care work in private homes and the impact it has on welfare. The emphasis is mainly on those factors that contribute to the increase in the number of caregivers, both in Italy and in some European countries. For example, these factors include the aging of the population, which is particularly marked in Italy, women’s inclusion in the labour market, and the globalization of domestic work (Sassen 2002; 2007). The women who arrive from other countries do not conform to any one stereotype. For this reason it is important that we address a variety of situations; overall, the role of women in migration flows is significant and steadily increasing. Moreover, it is interesting to analyse how it is linked to the specific characteristics and workloads of care work and the reasons behind the common employment of *badanti*.

Firstly, we will describe briefly the breadth of the phenomenon statistically. Then we will turn to secondary materials discuss individual migration strategies. Finally, on the basis of our own qualitative interview materials from the PRIN research project<sup>6</sup> on nationality, gender and class of new home workers, which was carried out in the mid-2000s (Bordogna Tognetti 2009), we discuss how significant immigrant women are in care work, as well as their working conditions and how these women contribute to the changing of welfare provisions particularly in relation to healthcare. In the conclusion, we analyse the impact that women of migration have on policies regarding elderly citizens and, more generally, on local models of welfare and family.

## Dimension and Characteristics of Migration in Italy

One of the specific features of migration flows towards Italy is the substantial proportion of women. They have had an active role and played an important part from the 1970s onwards when migration to this country began. In some geo-cultural groups that arrive

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<sup>5</sup> Special thanks to the editors and Stefano Marras for their useful suggestions.

<sup>6</sup> Nazionalità, genere e classe nel nuovo lavoro domestico. Cambiamenti nella famiglia italiana e evoluzione dei sistemi migratori, University of Bari, Bologna, Milano Bicocca, Milano Statale, Trento, 2004–2006. <<http://www.lacuocadilenin.it>> (20.12.2010) (See also Tognetti Bordogna 2009)

from outside Europe women have represented the great majority, such as those from Cape Verde, Eritrea, Somalia and the Philippines.

These trends challenge the four-phased Böhning migration model (1984; also Tognetti 2007a). According to Böhning, in the first phase young and more competitive males leave whereas in the second phase slightly older men migrate, leaving their wives at home. In the third phase migrants are older and include more women and dependent family members, and finally in the fourth phase the number of women as well as dependent family members increases even more. However, seen in view of different countries of arrival, this model is being challenged because women leave before men. As for Italy, according to the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), in the early 1970s and 1980s women made up more than half of the resident foreign population (55 percent, 53 percent); in the 1990s the proportion went down (40–45 percent) to rose again to over half the total in the 2000s (52 percent). All in all, female migration to Italy is substantial and important: it concerns all regions of the country, and it has acquired specific forms over the decades.

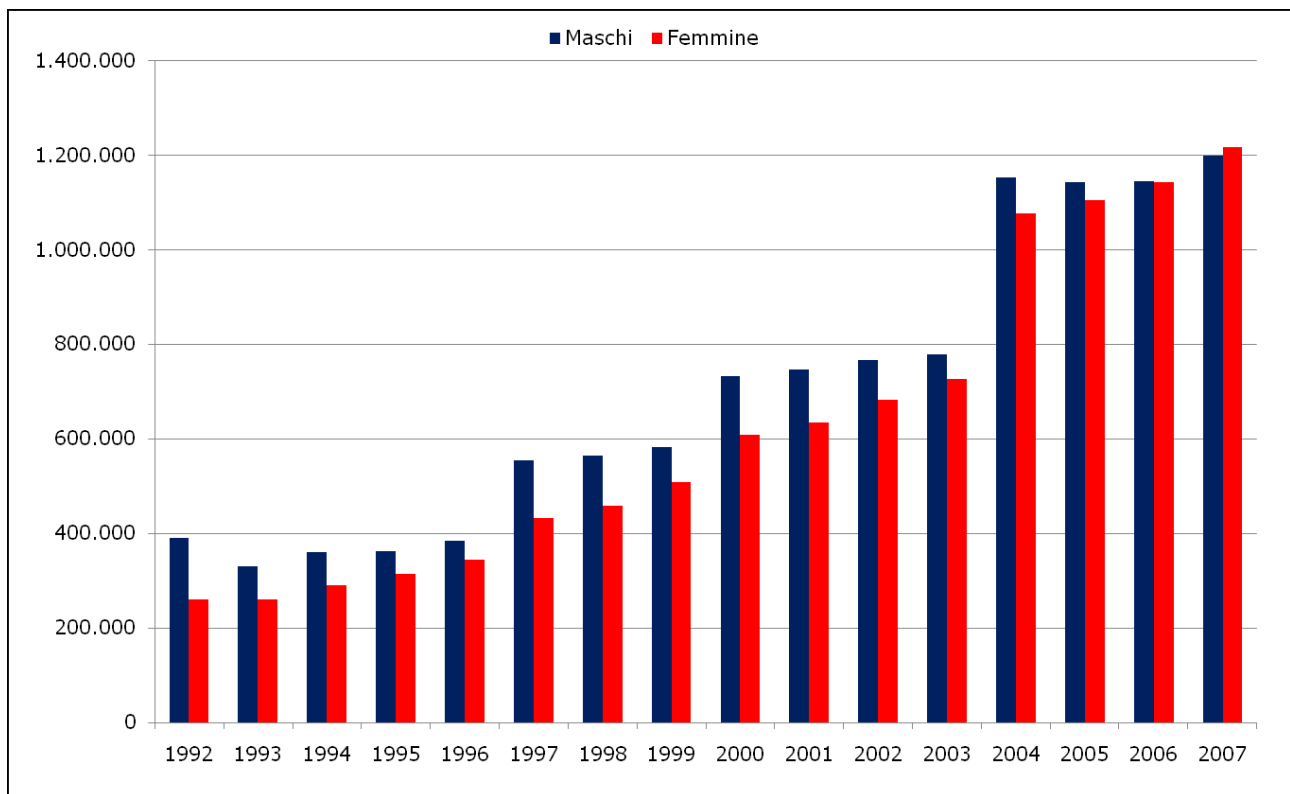


Figure 1: Residence permits by gender in Italy in 1992–2007. Source: ISTAT Data 2007.

Analysing Figure 1, we note an increase of women from 1992 until 2006, when they equalled men, before overtaking them in 2007. Besides the increase of women in general, we can see how different national groups change within the migratory scene in different years. More specifically, Figure 2 shows a significant increase in women from Eastern Europe at the beginning of 2000s, the new millennium.

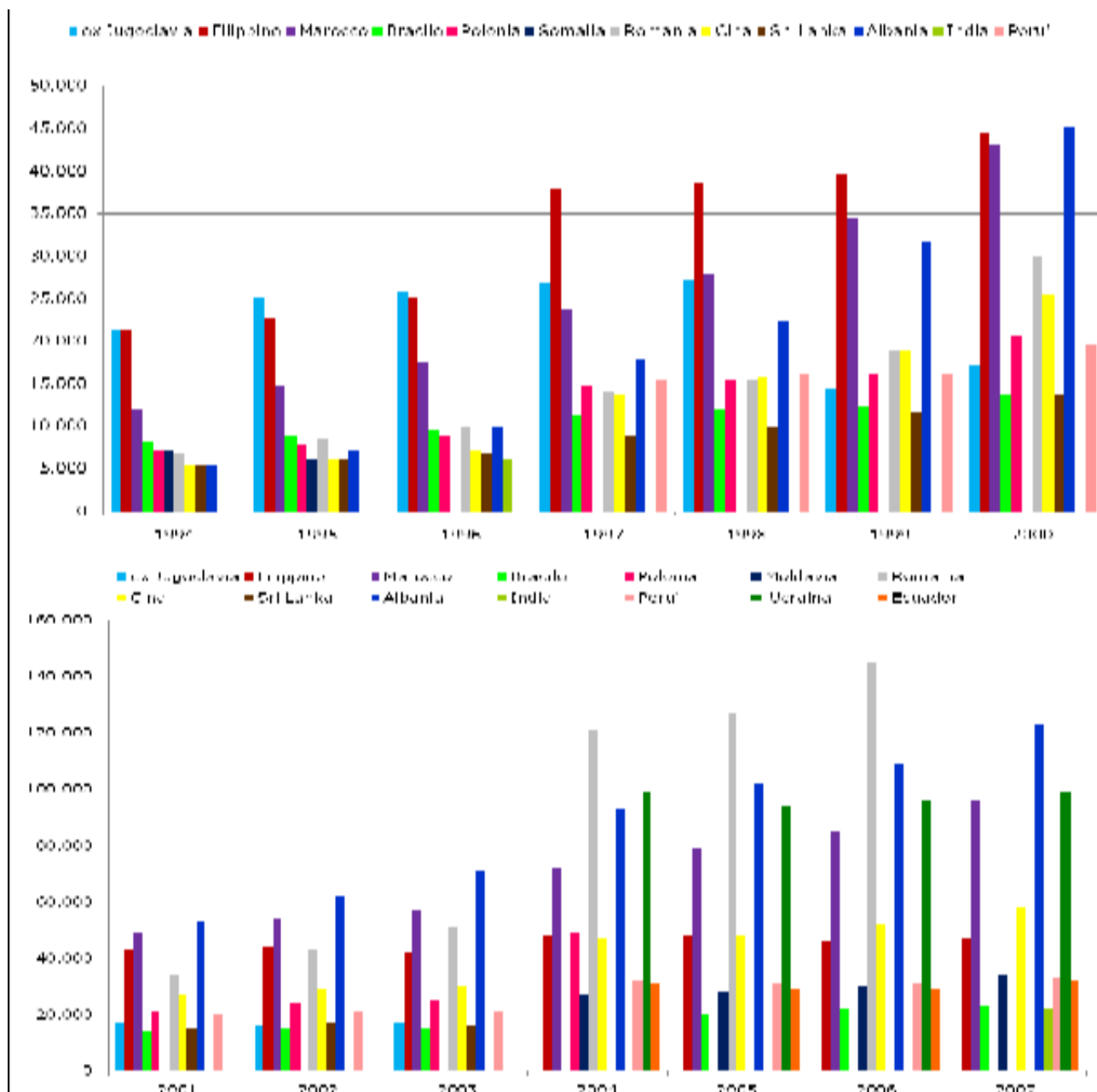


Figure 2. Women, residence permits by country of origin. Top-10 countries in Italy in 1994–2007. Source: ISTAT Data 2007 (our processing).

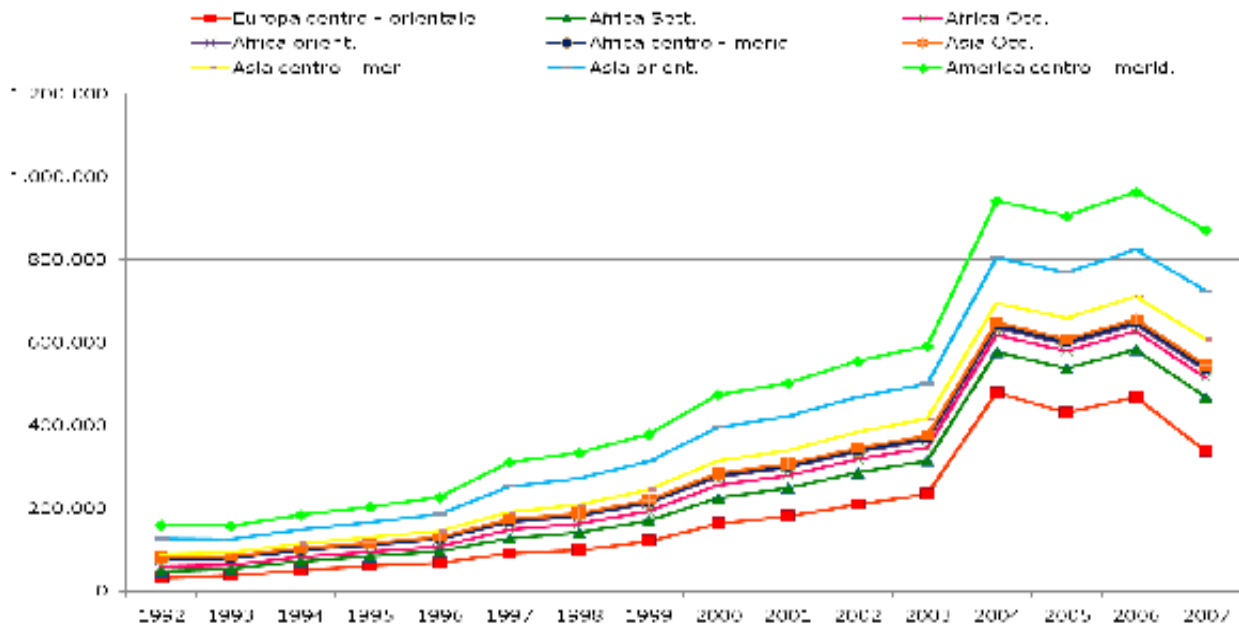


Figure 3. Women, residence permits in Italy in 1992-2007. *Source: ISTAT Data 2007 (our processing)*

Analysing Figure 3 and 4, since 2001, there are a great number of Polish women. Over the period of 2004–2006, the prominent group comes from Albania. From 2004, women from Ukraine began arriving in large numbers, thus placing them among the top 10 countries. It should be noted that while the proportion of women from the furthest East European countries increases, the proportion of women from the former Yugoslavia decreases.

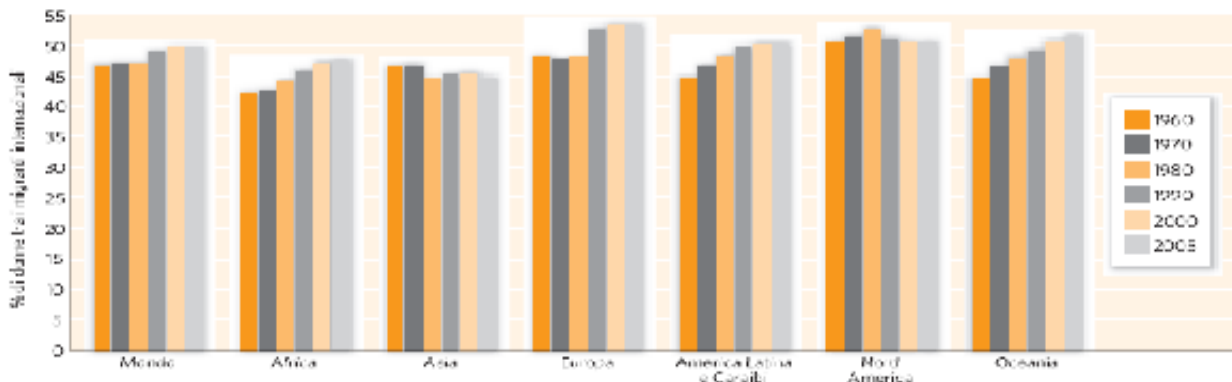


Figure 4. Trend in female immigration by continent/region in Italy in 1960–2005. *Source: UNFPA 2006.*

In sum, female migration to Italy is important firstly because it is numerically significant and secondly because it has shown particular patterns over recent decades. As we shall see, there are many different migration strategies and paths that women follow in their migration to Italy.

## Migration Paths, Migration Strategies and Typologies

In some aspects female migration to Italy has followed the trends of female migration worldwide. It has been linked to family formation and reunification, but it also has showed very important specificities. Since the early 1980s, in addition to family reunification, the main reasons have been economic. These motivations are interwoven with the practices and routes that are common to many immigrant women interviewed by the PRIN project. There are also women who have followed individual routes and have their own individual stories, biographies, projects and experiences. The means of arrival and the different reasons that urge or favour departure strongly condition and shape the ways in which individual women organise their lives in their new context. These are individual stories that do not only depend on the place of origin: they are also conditioned by the framework that each individual person, each individual woman, has developed personally according to her age, education level, and so on, and/or with the contribution from her family, cultural group or class.

Some of the main macro-factors at the basis of women's migration are economic but some stress the search for freedom, tourism, or a desire to escape. There are also forced marriages (the model brought from "there"), chosen marriages (the model adapted "here") or family strategies employed to join a family member and/or to be joined by one. We should also mention a reversal of the rules or cultural model. Some migrations are a temporary project, some aim at settling in the country. Furthermore, these reasons are sometimes combined with attraction and/or expulsion factors that influence the manner in which women move within their new context and relate to it, as well as the individual migratory routes and strategies that guide women in their migration.

In sum, there are many reasons for migration and many migration patterns: they are the result of individual choices, contextual conditioning, and restrictions. There are women who act out their migration project out of individual desire and others who are forced to migrate. The overall migration of women to Italy can be divided into four long periods, starting from the 1970s through the 1980s and 1990s till the 2000s which correspond to specificities of provenance and projects women had.

## Characteristics of Migrant Women in Italy: Care Work, in Two Waves

As has been noted, to understand the features of migrant women in Italy, it is necessary to turn to economic migration and clearly separate care from other domestic work. In this section we aim to describe the evolution and characteristics of the work of non professional caregivers. (Also Näre, in this volume.)

On the basis of recent literature (Andall 2000), we may define domestic work on the whole as a set of practices – preparing meals, cleaning the home, assisting and caring for children and elderly people – that are engaged in as part of everyday life in the domestic



space and which aim at satisfying the needs of family members (Carchedi, Mottura and Pugliese 2003). Such practices constitute and represent a dynamic cultural elaboration that is socially constructed from purely biological events (De Certeau 1990), and strictly correlates to the circulation of values and norms among different generations and social groups. Whereas employing a domestic worker or babysitter is an element of distinction for the employer, employing a caregiver for the care of elderly family members is seen as a sign of the family's fragility. Increased demand for care work is also the result of the breaking of the traditional pact between generations, whereby the younger people would take care of the elderly. The presence of informal caregivers becomes increasingly necessary because there are few services for the elderly. (Boyd 1989; Tognetti Bordogna 2004a; 2004b)

Although the integration of women migrants to domestic work represents a constant feature of migratory fluxes in Italy, it must be emphasized that it has occurred in two culturally distinct moments.

The first phase, 1970s, mostly involved women from Catholic countries and regions in Asia and South America (Tognetti 1991; Favaro and Tognetti 1991) who found domestic employment for an indefinite period of time. They followed migration chains activated by the church, and were attracted to a Catholic country known all over the world due to the presence of the Vatican and the Pope. These women, known as *colf*, family helpers, had an active migration programme with a strong economic purpose which, in many cases, was superimposed onto a quest for freedom and authority: they left their home country to embrace a new world and new cultural values. They were prevalently regular migrants, although there are also significant numbers of illegal female migrants in this category. In addition to sending economic resources back to their home country, these women returned for limited periods, for example for vacation, and kept up a regular correspondence, even if often it was only symbolic, with people in their country of origin. Due to the working conditions of *colf* –working full-time, living with the employer's family and being in close contact with all family members – the work of *colf* has been characterised by situations of great exploitation and suffering. This pattern has resulted in forced socialisation to local habits and styles of family management. From the 1980s on, *colf* slowly worked their way up in a gradual process of emancipation so that they now work for families for an hourly basis. In time, this work was also taken on by women from African countries who have come here (originally) as a result of family reunification policies.

The second phase, which reached its high point after around the end of the 1990s, was characterised by fluxes of women from eastern European countries: Ukraine, Moldavia, and Romania. These women were employed in full-time domestic work, for a finite and often very limited time span, to take care of non-autonomous elderly people; they are called *badanti* in Italian (Catanzaro et al. 2009; Da Roit and Castegnaro 2004; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Lutz 2008) In brief, while the *colf* come from under-developed or undeveloped parts of the world, the *badanti* come from areas of post-communist crisis. Giovanni Mottura (2003) reminds us that different geographic origins have different effects on the immigrants' positioning in the social context upon arrival. To this we have

to add that the work of caregivers is a segmented and segregated form of work that does not allow easy or full social mobility (Ambrosini 2001; Mottura 2003; Parreñas 2001; Simon and Brettell 1986). Indeed, the social capital and relational networks available to different immigrants who are strongly linked with their areas of origin are determining factors both in respect to their social situation and their occupational strategies.

Italian literature has demonstrated that the domestic sector constitutes a segregated work context for migrant women and that the increase of such work may be attributed to a few main factors (Ambrosini 2005; Tognetti Bordogna 2004a; Vicarelli 1994). The *badanti* is legitimated by the great social transformations Italy has undergone over recent decades: industrialisation, the transformation of family models, the entry of native women into the labour market, not to forget the ageing of the population and the increase in the number of elderly people living alone and consequently the need for long-term care. They are workers who are not professionalized or recognised officially, and yet are endorsed on the operative plane due to the simple fact that they are women (Mingione 1997; Reyneri 2005; also Apitzsch, in this volume)

Moreover, to these factors we should add the rigid character of the Italian welfare system and its persistent favouring of monetary transfers, the lack of services, and the absence of market services at accessible prices, especially for small children. All these elements increase the demand for domestic workers (Martinelli 1999; Tognetti Bordogna 2007b).

Increased demand for domestic work is common to most Western European countries. As Bridget Anderson notes (2000), there are other explanations beyond economic and demographic ones. They link the phenomenon to the reproduction of lifestyles and status, the avoidance of gender and generational conflicts within the household over domestic work by transferring it to a hired person (also Bettio, Simonazzi and Villa 2006). Furthermore, immigrant women are flexible: they can devote themselves to the family who employs them without the risk of asserting themselves over their women employers, as they are differentiated from them by their geo-cultural and class origin (Dallay 1996). Unlike the *colf* domestic workers, informal caregivers, *badanti*, are present in families regardless of social class.

*Badanti* come mainly from Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia and Ukraine. Three out of four are married, 15 percent are over forty years of age, 18 percent have an academic degree and 40 percent have finished high-school level education. They earn twenty to thirty times more than they would earn in their own country even if they were working as doctors or engineers. They are found all over Italy, in large, small and very small towns, regardless of their employers' income. (Tognetti Bordogna 2003)

Research has identified three kinds of caregivers among the *badanti*. Firstly, there are women who stay for a short period with the aim of accumulating a given sum of money; secondly, those who work in the hope for of integration in Italy; and thirdly, those who had started off with a more ambitious project of integration or emancipation but, having

failed to achieve it, have become resigned to continuing in care-giving work. (Tognetti Bordogna 2004a.)

Women whose migration project is centred on the amount of money – who need to accumulate for a clearly defined expenditure (Tognetti Bordogna 2004a) – stay only temporarily. Their family has remained in their country of origin and it is for the sake of a family project in their own country that they migrated in the first place. In cases in which the migration project is later modified, work as a caregiver is temporary, limited to the initial period following arrival. Yet we have frequently found women whose migration project has changed after the initial period, in which case they return home briefly and bring their children with them. Others attend training or professional courses in the caring sector and start on a course to emancipation.

These caregivers are also characterised by the constant connections that they maintain with their country of origin, through mobile phones or exchanges of news and information via friends and relatives. They send goods as well as money by means of weekly countries between Italy and their country of origin that are organized by transport agencies, which are found in all urban centres, normally near the railway or bus stations. Due to their work with elderly non-autonomous or disabled patients who are often highly dependent, *badanti* cannot take part in or activate cultural exchanges concerning their line of work or the practices and activities linked to caring; they have no one to turn to in their patient's family or the welfare system. The lack of exchanges is due to the rare or absent opportunities for contact between these women and the welfare system. This shortcoming has blocked any exchange of expertise between care workers operating with the elderly between official services and immigrant women working in the same field. Such contact would favour better care for the elderly, or at least the transmission of some basic technical notions in care, handling and the administration of medicines.

## The Work of *badanti*: both Welfare Consumers and Resource

Having described the context and characteristics linked to the geo-cultural origin of caregivers, we will here turn to the PRIN project (Tognetti Bordogna 2009) to take a look at the relationship the *badanti* have with the Italian welfare system, both as it concerns the person cared for and themselves. The question addressed in this section is how relationships between the caregiver and the welfare system are structured. Many women in these jobs live in conditions of exploitation and isolation, which consequently makes them extremely vulnerable. They may also have poor language skills.

In regard to language skills and the use of services, those with language skills (in relation to comprehension and oral skills) classed as “good” or “excellent” (57 percent) make greater use of services than those with “lesser” or “poor” skills (33 percent). Only a few of those who have poor comprehension and language skills (10 percent) use services. They

are aware that their skills are inadequate and a great hindrance in the care relationship, as well as being a decisive element in the therapeutic relationship with the doctor.

***Have you ever spoken to a doctor about your employer's health?***

*Not yet because I don't understand some words still. So I can't speak to his doctor. This a problem.*

*N., male, 27, Sri Lanka (in Italy since 2004)*

Having good language skills and abilities proves central to inclusion in the Italian welfare system because it has very little or no communication with the outside world (Tognetti Bordogna 2004c). Generally speaking, caregivers would need to interact with services to a greater extent than they currently do: at present, 61 percent use services and only 2 percent use specific services for *badanti*. Yet this is something they should do, given their age and the type of work they do, which is very tiring on both psychological and physical levels. Instead, when they do turn to welfare it is mainly for the sake of the person in care and not merely for their use of services. This data is also confirmed in other research (Dumont 2008).

In fact, access to services is an indicator of immigrant inclusion (Tognetti Bordogna 2006) and a process that structures people's lives (Lynch 2000). In the specific case of caregivers, however, the same cannot be said, as the type of work they carry out limits their ability to make independent choices regarding welfare resources. Research has shown that assisting an elderly person reduces the opportunities for contact and increases isolation (Arber and Gin 1995; Dalley 1996).

***Have you ever had health problems as such?***

*Lots, they helped me with their family doctor. Last year I actually went to hospital because staying at home all the time just isn't nice. Not everyone understands this... and because everyone says "there's nothing that can be done", but from a psychological viewpoint, it's really hard.*

*It's incredibly tough staying at home all the time... and so boring being with the elderly... when the grandmother was ill, I woke up at night, I couldn't sleep, and then did what had to be done during the day. It's really hard*

*(N., female, 28, Romania (2004))*

The caregiver deals with the health problems of the person they look after, without any specific skills or knowledge in the field and without any support from a healthcare worker. They thereby take over responsibility for looking after the elderly person and caring for them properly. According to research data, our interviewees speak to the doctor on their employer's behalf. They take care of everything: medicines, dosages, clinical check-up

requests, rehabilitation treatment. They move with and for their employer through the welfare system in a competent manner. They speak to the family physician and provide psychological support for their charge. They know how to decide when to call a doctor and learn to deal with crisis situations alone.

From our analyses it appears that these women belong to a profession that is not networked with other resources for the care of the elderly and do not take advantage of healthcare services, not even when their work entails health issues such as administering medicines, injections and catheter application. The *badanti*'s role is quite limited, for a task that local policy sees as an integral part of our welfare.

Our empirical analysis also shows that caregivers virtually never use the health system on their own. In particular, they mainly use only the family physician, accident and emergency services, and the hospital. They also turn to clinics, diagnostic centres and healthcare authorities, albeit somewhat reluctantly, but only where there are clear signs of illness. Generally speaking, however, they are satisfied with the treatment received.

***When you went to a hospital for colic, did you encounter any difficulties?  
How did you feel?***

*I got on well. They did everything they were supposed to, without questions and without anything...*

*M., female, 40, Moldova (2000)*

We can therefore see a group of people who use specialised and emergency structures if necessary, as well as services whose mission is very clear and well-defined. They did not act preventatively because this would entail using expensive services, particularly in regard to dentistry. For dental care they tend to return to their country of origin for treatment, since it costs less. What they earn is needed to cope with the lack or failure of welfare in their country of origin.

***You were telling me that medical expenses – are expensive.***

*So every now and then, when, say, the medicine is free on the NHS, I take a lot in my name and send it off.*

***You send medicine?***

*Yes, I send medicines as my mother always needs it, for high blood pressure, but I send, but I take the same, but I instead take half, half of these tablets and instead... so every month I put a box aside to send off.*

*V., female, 51, Philippines (1996)*

In some cases, it is the family of the person cared for who meets all needs, also seeing to any illnesses of the domestic help. In other cases, however, the *badanti* understand the importance of prevention and try to implement it.

***Have you had any problems in accessing the health system, this type of service in Italy?***

*Last year, I had little problem, not too serious, washing powder, an allergy. Taking antihistamine cure in pharmacy without prescription. Measuring pressure, I do it myself, but normal. Also when C. [employer's doctor] comes, always ask "you need something?" But I healthy.*

*V., female, 46, Ukraine (2003)*

Regarding other welfare resources, it would appear that their awareness and use of such is closely linked to the needs of the person they care for and their (female) friends. They therefore take on a very important role of negotiation because it is the caregivers who see to their companions' use of health resources.

In brief, these immigrant women make very limited use of services for themselves and more frequently turn to them for the elderly. They have a general physician if legally employed, but most often turn to the doctor of the person they care for. They then use their savings to buy medicine in their country of origin. To sum up, when caregivers turn to services, they behave in a specific way. They do not feel that they are a part of the welfare system and consequently do not behave as such, although political rhetoric and some choices made by local governments would like to consider them included in it.

## Effects and Implications on the Italian Welfare System

The presence of these women, albeit in difficult conditions, does contribute to change in the Italian welfare system, particularly the system of policies focusing on the elderly (Carchedi, Mottura and Pugliese 2003; Tognetti Bordogna 2006). This has specific implications, namely the reduction in public at-home help services and admissions to rest homes for the elderly that have waiting lists. On the other hand, admission to hospices for very ill elderly people has increased. There are also changes in the relationship of the system of services closely associated with the lack of at-home assistance and the costs that the family would have to pay if using the private service market. Caregivers therefore shape both the care market and social welfare policies and their strategic design.

Thus a welfare system has been created that exploits the presence of migrants and reinforces the segregated circle of care work. In order to survive, the system calls for underpaid and mostly flexible services which in turn are constantly decreasing in view of professionalism due to increased professionalism. In other words, the Italian monetary-type social system often leads to an incorrect use of the financial resources of the welfare

market. Despite this, the availability of *badanti* throughout the whole Italian territory helps to optimise local welfare systems.

We can therefore see how the availability of *badanti* helps produce changes and transform the national welfare system where there is a lack of home assistance, and also reduces the very high expenses that the family would have to sustain if using the private service market. On the one hand, caregivers take on care work duties; on the other hand, they make the management of this issue more complex since they favour home care and take individual preferences into account. Apart from altering and affecting the service system, their presence also gives families a role as employers, something to which most are not accustomed. It is the families that must “construct their care system”: the *badanti*’s presence leads to the use of directly produced resources, each time transforming the role of the family from mere consumer into decision-maker. In sum, in public terms it raises questions about what kind of support should be given to this “new figure”: how to regulate her, qualify her and network her, which forces the welfare system to increase its flexibility.

## Conclusions: the New Reality of Welfare

In the light of PRIN research data, we can also state that the presence of informal caregivers is a situation that alters the Italian welfare system on the whole in both positive and negative ways. It poses questions as to social, health and labour policies and the management of family workloads by their members and individual services. Consequently, it must not be seen by the decision makers as an issue that only remains within the family and concerns migration policies alone. From our empirical viewpoint, we can also see that the situation is one where caregivers are competent at using services but mainly for the person they care for, while they only resort to essential resources or emergency treatment for themselves. These resources are used to get an immediate response and not seen as part of a more complex network of services.

Over the years, these women have contributed to the creation of a new welfare system, outsourcing the task of caring for the elderly from the public system to the family, and helping to shape new decision-making and treatment responsibilities within the home. Apart from highlighting the limits of the welfare system, the presence of these informal caregivers forces public decision-makers to rethink the welfare system from a more modern perspective.

# Chapter 3. Lena Näre: Empowerment, Survival and Everyday Life Struggles. Ukrainian and Polish Care Workers in Naples

## Introduction

In Europe and globally, we are witnessing an increase in demand for migrant workers in care and domestic work sectors. Paid domestic and care work, i.e. labour involving cleaning, cooking and caring for children, old people and the infirm in private households, was said to be an obsolete occupation bound to disappear with economic development (Cosser 1973; Boserup 1970). Yet as the growing research literature shows, quite the opposite has happened (e.g. Andall 2000; Anderson 2000; Constable 1997; Chang 2000; Gamburd 2002; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Lutz 2007; Moya 2007; Parreñas 2001). Increasingly, and due to the recent migration flows, paid domestic and care work has seen a revival not only in the Americas, in the Middle East and Asia but also in many European countries (e.g. Anderson 2000; Lutz 2007). Migrant workers, mostly women but also men, take on domestic and care duties in private households thus freeing “native” women, men and nation states from care obligations. Eastern Europeans are one of the main groups employed in care and domestic work in Western and Southern European countries. Thus care and domestic work is a pivotal site when thinking about migrants’ roles in contemporary Europe. This article will look at one example of this kind of migration: Ukrainian and Polish women’s experiences of working as carers and domestic workers in Naples, South Italy. In what follows, I start by outlining the general context of my research and addressing the question of demand for paid domestic and care work in Italy. I will then discuss Polish and Ukrainian migration to Italy and women’s migration strategies. I will carry on discussing Italian migration legislation and its effects on the everyday lives of the interviewed women, emphasising the political nature of everyday. I will conclude by looking at the everyday struggles of the women in relation to work practices in Naples.

## Research Context

Italy is a country where there has been a significant increase in demand for privately employed domestic and care workers, especially in elder care work (Degiuli 2007). It is thus a telling case of the emerging globalised division of care and domestic work and an interesting case for the study of the relations between state, markets and private



households. The growing demand for paid domestic and care work can be explained with a combination of factors including a rapidly ageing population<sup>7</sup>, familistic welfare state model that comes with feeble public services (Esping-Andersen 1996), increased female labour market participation, a traditional division of labour within households and a centrality given to family as the privileged site of care and high standards regarding the maintenance of a proper “home” (Näre 2009). It can also be argued that the growing availability of relatively cheap migrant labour has induced demand. In fact, in Italy the migration regime is closely connected to the welfare regime (Sciortino 2004). One example of this is the cost of migrant elderly care in Italy: whilst a live-in care worker can be paid as little as 500–600 Euro per month, a place in a private care home costs at least three times as much (Dell’Oste 2007).

Characteristic to the Italian migration regime is its high rate of irregular or undocumented migrants. As a country with long traditions of emigration, it was not prepared for the arrival of immigrants from the mid 1970s onwards and it took several years until laws were passed to respond to the new phenomenon of immigration. Nowadays Italy continues to regulate migration through legal measures that are in practice aimed at regularising migrants who are already working in the vast informal labour markets rather than issuing entry visas for new job-seekers. Domestic and care work is one of the main labour sectors employing migrants in Italy. During the past thirty years the number of migrants employed in domestic service has grown exponentially from mere 36 000 in 1991 to over 100,000 in 1999 and over 460 000 in 2007 (Reyneri 2004, 73; INPS 2010). These figures represent only those domestic workers registered in the National Social Security Institute (INPS). However, in 2009 there were in total 1 538 *million* domestic workers working in Italy (Censis 2010) of which at least 70 percent are of migrant origin. Thus, there are at least one million migrants working in domestic service in Italy. From a migrant population of approximately 4 million it means that one in four migrant in Italy works in this sector. Domestic service has then become one of the leading migrant occupations in Italy (Andall 2000; also Moya 2007).

It is within this framework that I will discuss the experiences of Ukrainian and Polish domestic and care workers in Naples. Much of the literature dealing with domestic labour migration concentrates – and rightly so – on the female migrants’ experiences in the stratified labour markets of the “destination countries”. My perspective in this paper is slightly different. I aim to shed light on the ways in which migration is used *as a strategy for both survival and empowerment transnationally*, thus entailing both the country of origin and destination. In what follows, I will discuss Ukrainian and Polish women’s migration strategies and processes. What comes out of this discussion is the complex nature of interviewed women’s everyday experiences in Italy, the need to balance between personal accomplishments and the responsibilities the women have towards their families as mothers and daughters. These everyday life experiences are affected by structural factors, such as migration policies and citizenship rights. Comparing two migrant groups, Polish and Ukrainian (who are treated differently in terms of visa policies), allows us to consider the meaning of citizenship and citizenship rights for migrant women. It can be

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<sup>7</sup> Italy has the highest rate of over 65-year olds in Europe, 20 percent population (ISTAT 2008).

concluded from this study that freedom of movement, the possibility to cross national borders is the single most important aspect in citizenship rights for these women. Transnational mobility allows women to maintain close relationships with the family left behind and to provide care across nation state borders (Näre 2008b; also Baldassar et al. 2007; Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). It is also a way to preserve a sense of self-worth, an escape from work that is in many ways psychologically and physically demeaning.

My discussion is informed by feminist theories that remind us of the significance of everyday life and its inherently political potential. This does not mean to claim that there would be any homogeneous everyday experience. Instead, one needs to be sensitive to differences between women.<sup>8</sup> Thus, contextualising research questions in the ordinary context of everyday requires an intersectional approach that takes into account gender, national, ethnic/racial, social class, religion etc. differences – differences that structure socio-economic relationships on the private and public level. Focusing on the micro level will also reveal the dynamic and often contradictory nature of Ukrainian and Polish women's experiences in Naples. Feelings of fear, hurt and exclusion, "otherness" and disappointment abound in the accounts of migrant women as well as experiences and sensations of empowerment, moral superiority, relief, fulfilment and pleasure. Thus, everyday life presents itself as a constant struggle for material, psychic and emotional wellbeing and resources.

Important in these accounts of everyday life is that they epitomize a notion of agency that is active and dynamic in complex ways. Lois McNay (2000, 4) offers a useful critique of the notion of agency. She stresses the importance of understanding agency as a generative notion that results in creative forms of action involving "accommodation or adaptation as much as denial" (2000, 3). In a similar vein, the concept of empowerment has been proposed as a more positive, dynamic and transformative way to conceptualise agency. Thus, Kathy Ferguson (1986, 217, cited in Marques-Pereira and Siim 2002, 185) has defined empowerment as follows: "Power could be translated into 'empowerment', the ability to act with others to do together what one could not have done alone."

In this definition empowerment is related to collective action but it can also be understood as an individual process, as suggested by Mirjana Morokvasic. According to Morokvasic (2007, 71) empowerment is a process of "strengthening individual and collective strategies of resistance (but also negotiation, subversion etc) to get rid of social, economic, political pressures or/and try to find valuable alternatives". Polish and Ukrainian migrant women used migration to Italy strategically as a means for personal empowerment and to provide for their families, thus challenging the persisting male breadwinner model.

Moreover, in today's world of global interconnectedness, the political nature of the everyday – the consequences of the choices we make and the actions we take – are no longer limited only to our immediate surroundings but cross national boundaries. As Cynthia Enloe (2000, 196) has stated: "personal is international". Thus, what happens in Neapolitan

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8 On the critique of treating everyday life as automatically subversive see McNay 2000, 3. I draw on the feminist standpoint theory and its Black feminist critiques in my understanding of the political nature of everyday life (Smith 1987; Mohanty 1991; Collins 1990; Crenshaw 1994)

households that employ domestic and care workers, has direct and manifold consequences for Poland and Ukraine and *vice versa*. In the countries of migration, employing migrants in private households is freeing state and individuals from their responsibilities to provide for these services. In the countries of origin, women's autonomous migration has manifold outcomes, both positive and negative. Economically, the Eastern European countries are benefiting from the remittances migrants send back (León-Ledesma and Piracha 2004). At the same time, however, the chain migration of women – often highly educated and with families – causes brain and care drain for these countries. Socially, ideas and practices from the countries of destination to the countries of origin can play an important role in changing family structures, gender relations and class hierarchies. Peggy Levitt (1998) has aptly termed these processes “social remittances”. Yet sometimes these changes, i.e. ruptures in family structures and changed gender relations, are at the root of migratory processes.

This chapter draws on 44 in-depth interviews with Polish and Ukrainian women that form part of a larger ethnographic research I conducted in Naples in 2003–2005. I interviewed in total 20 Polish women, aged between 23 and 60 years, median age being 28; and 24 Ukrainian women from 24 to 58 years of age, median age being 45 years. Most interviewees had arrived in Italy around the year 2000. Many were highly educated or had had long careers in the past. Over a third of the interviewees (17 out of 44) had finished secondary school, corresponding to British O-levels, and had studied in a professional school; a little less than a third (ten) had finished high school and had the equivalent of A-levels and over a third (sixteen) had studied in a university or equivalent higher education institute. Most had had long careers as teachers, factory workers or professionals, including architects, pharmacists or medical doctors. Regardless of these different forms of human capital the women possessed, in Italy all found themselves working primarily as domestic workers and carers. In fact, the profiles of these women challenges the category of high versus low-skilled migrants, as many were highly educated yet worked in what is considered as a low-skilled job and some (three) pursued university studies in Italy.

## Migration Patterns from Poland and Ukraine

Let us first consider the context of emigration from Poland and Ukraine. Both countries have undergone dramatic migration flows after the collapse of Soviet regime and the subsequent economic problems. Both countries are still net emigration countries but Poland has also become a destination for immigrants as well as for return-migrants. Labour Force Survey data<sup>9</sup>, which also reflects seasonal and other temporary migration, shows that in 2006 over 430 000 Poles stayed abroad for more than two months (Kepińska 2007, 38). Germany has been the main destination for Polish short- and long-term migrants from 1990s onwards. Whilst in the 1990s important destination countries were the US and Canada, in recent years these have given way to the UK and Italy. Migration to the UK and Ireland resulted from the opening of labour markets to Polish migrants after Poland joined the EU in May 2004. This shows how reducing legal barriers can significantly induce migration. In 2007, 80 percent of Polish migrants ended

<sup>9</sup> Based on household surveys in Poland.

up in six main destination countries: UK, Germany, Ireland, Italy, United States and Netherlands (Kepińska 2007, 40–41). Regarding Ukrainian migration, the estimations of Ukrainians who have left the country in 1990–2002 vary from 1 million to 7 million (Malynovska 2004, 14). During the first part of the 1990s, migration from Ukraine was characterised by long-term migration to the US, Germany and Israel whereas at the turn of the millennium migration patterns changed to more short-term labour migration and various new destination countries started to attract Ukrainian migrants. These emerging destination countries were Mediterranean countries, other EU-15 countries (especially Germany and UK) and other Central European countries (e.g. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic). Labour demands and established migrant labour niches in destination countries have created gendered labour migration patterns from Ukraine to Southern European countries. Thus for instance the construction boom in Portugal at the turn of the millennium caused Ukrainian men to seek work in Portugal – over 100 000 stay permits were granted to migrants from Eastern European countries between 2001 and 2004 (Marques and Góis 2007) – whilst Ukrainian women left for domestic and care work in Italy. It is estimated that 4 to 6 billion dollars are sent to Ukraine as remittances every year and mostly used for household consumption, children’s education and housing (Malynovska 2006).

Interestingly, manifold migration chains and networks have recently emerged in these European trans-regions especially for seasonal and care labour. For example, while Poles migrate to Germany for seasonal and domestic work, Ukrainians migrate to Poland to do these same jobs. In 2006, Austria facilitated the entry of domestic workers to its labour market, which will probably increase domestic work migration from Poland to Austria (Kepinska 2006, 33). Also from September 2006 onwards, Polish farmers were authorized to employ seasonal workers from countries such as Ukraine, Belarus and Russia without work permits (Kepinska 2006, ii). Thus, the migration movements are not only from Eastern European trans-regions to Western Europe, but from East to Central, North and South Europe, and in the form of East-Central-West/South. Let us now turn to examine the “destination” end of these migration chains, that is to say Italy.

## Polish and Ukrainian Women’s Migration to Italy – Survival and Empowerment

Italy became a major destination country for immigrants in the mid 1980s, after which migration grew rapidly. By the end of 2010, the total number of documented immigrants (those with a *permesso di soggiorno* – stay permit) had risen to 4.3 million (CNEL 2010). Italy’s legislation lagged behind the rapid changes, and the country never developed long-term migration policies. The lack of coherent migration legislation concurrently with large informal labour markets has led to one of the highest numbers of irregular migrants in Europe (Melotti 2004, 69). Italy’s migration policy is based on regularisation campaigns and yearly planning quotas for new stay permits. Amnesties are meant to be exceptional legal measures but with the five amnesties over the last twenty years, they have become a rather regular way to deal with irregular immigration. Yearly quotas are

meant for immigrants not yet in national territory but are in practice used to regularise migrants already working in Italy.

Ukrainian immigration to Italy dates to the turn of the millennium, Polish to some years before in the mid-1990s. Poles have enjoyed a visa-free access to Italy even before the country joined the European Union, whilst Ukrainian migrants have arrived mainly with expensive tourist visas. Both groups are predominantly women and employed in private households as domestic cleaners or carers for the elderly and children. 80 percent of Ukrainian migrants and 70 percent of Poles are women (ISTAT demo). Nowadays, Ukrainians are the fifth biggest group in Italy with over 150,000 stay permits and Poles the eight biggest group with over 99 000 stay permits (ISTAT demo).<sup>10</sup> Migrant labour is clearly stratified and intersected by gender and nationality in Italy. For instance, during the last regularisation campaign in 2002, Ukrainian women were the biggest group to work in domestic service followed by Romanian, Ecuadorian and Polish women. Instead Romanian men were employed in factories.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, domestic work is not only available for women in Italy, but also for some men with certain national backgrounds, mainly from South Asia and East Asia, e.g. Sri Lanka and Philippines (e.g. Näre 2008a; Scrinzi 2007).

Both Ukrainians and Poles have important communities in the region of Campania and in Naples, its principal city. With the latest regularisation campaign of 2002, Ukrainians became the biggest migrant group to be regularly present in Naples, followed by Poles. There were over 32 000 Ukrainians with a stay permit in Campania in 2004 (ISTAT 2005) and over 11 000 in Naples (ISTAT demo). With over 3 500 residents, the regularly present Polish community of Naples makes it the second biggest in Italy after Rome (ISTAT demo). However, we need to be wary of these statistics as they only represent regular migration. Especially in South Italy, migrants are able to live for long periods without regular stay permits and without encountering great risk of deportation. All this has facilitated Ukrainian migration to Naples. As 33-year-old Katya explained the reasons for choosing Naples of all the cities in Italy: “(T)his as a city that is much freer. Here you can move around. In the north [of Italy] you cannot.” (Katya, 33, Ukraine, 10.2.2005). Moreover, as my study showed, as EU members and with a visa-free access to Italy many Poles did not apply for a residence permit and are thus missing from the statistics. Hence we need to consider these figures as indicative only.

Ukrainian and Polish migration to Italy is a case of what can be called autonomous female migration, according to which women migrate on their own and challenge the gender role of the male breadwinner model. My research shows that Ukrainian and Polish women’s migration to Italy was a reaction to economic hardship combined with a lack of support from male partners or family members. From the 44 interviewed only two were married, the remaining 42 were either single, separated or widows – already before migrating. In

10 The first four migrant groups before Ukrainians in Italy are: Romanians, Albanians, Moroccans and Chinese. Needless to say that these figures are merely indicative, as they do not take into account undocumented migrants.

11 Interestingly, Sri Lankans also work predominantly in domestic service but the gender balance is the opposite. There were over 5 000 new stay permits granted for domestic work in the regularisation campaign of 2002 of which 73.9 percent were for men (ISTAT 2005; also Näre 2008a).

other words, women could not rely on their partners' and families' help and migration was a means to combat the economic pressure of being the sole provider for women with children or a means to independence for the young, single women.

Obviously differences in lifecycle affect the motivations behind migration. For young unmarried women, migrating was a means to acquire independence. For many young Polish women who had come to Italy straight after finishing high school, working in Italy was a way to gain independence and to pay for university studies. Typically these women came from large families with few economic resources, so work in Italy was at least initially seen as a relatively easy way to save for one's education. The case of 25-year-old Vera, who had moved to Italy directly after finishing high school, is a telling example:

*I knew that if I want to study, I have to see to it myself. I cannot ask money from my parents, because we are six [children]. (...) When I had this possibility, I left to Italy really to earn money on my own in order to begin my studies in Poland.*

*Vera, 25, Poland*

In fact, many young Polish women returned to Poland for their studies after saving enough money. However, after finishing university, finding work often proved to be difficult and even though they were now highly educated many ended up returning to Italy where finding work was easy. Moreover, although young women did save for their own education and thus were using migration as a means to invest in cultural capital, most were concomitantly also helping out their families. This help often took the concrete forms of sending money to buy domestic appliances for their households or saving towards buying property. It is important to acknowledge the economic help the young women offered to their families.

For Ukrainian and Polish women with their own families, migration was seen as the best way to provide for the family's future. The lives of these women were deeply affected by the economic changes caused by the end of the Soviet regime. Many had lost their secure jobs in state-run factories and had had difficulties finding new work. When asking why they had decided to come to Italy, the answer in most cases was: "because there's no work in my country", which was then specified: "there is work but nobody pays for it". As already noted, these women were already lone breadwinners for their families before migrating and migration was a way to fulfil their responsibilities as mothers. Many were disillusioned by the lack of support from men, which could have prevented them from migrating. The case of 32-year-old Ukrainian Irina is telling. Irina has two sons who live with her mother and sister. She and her sister are both divorced and neither of the two fathers has shown any interest in the children. After Irina's father died, it is the women of the family who are taking care of the next generation. In Ukraine Irina worked as a laboratory assistant but this did not pay enough, so Irina, her sister and mother decided to open a bar. Irina left for Italy in order to pay off the debts the three had taken. Having worked for the family's future and paid for the bar, she now works to save up for a house of her own. Irina's decision to leave was not an outcome of straightforward rational

calculation or a unitary family decision, but a process, during which she was expecting some support from her Ukrainian boyfriend at the time:

*I don't know...until now I haven't met any man who would have wanted to help me, take responsibility. If he in that period [when she was thinking about leaving] would have said: don't worry we will take care of it together. Let's do something together. I will help you. A man is always a man. (...) But no, not even then did I found help. There was no willingness to help that would make it possible for us to be together. You have to do everything on your own, everything.*

*Irina, 32, Ukraine*

Moreover, a recurrent theme in interviews with Ukrainian women was the high illness and mortality rate of Ukrainian men and the effect this had on women's lives. Women blamed unemployment that led men to drink and Chernobyl, which continues to cause sudden illnesses and death: "In our country men die. This Chernobyl has had such a bad impact. Now people who today are walking in two years time they aren't anymore." (Silvana, from Ukraine). Thus there seems to be a crisis in Ukrainian masculinity, which deeply affects women's life possibilities and strategies.

However, although economic hardship was the obvious incentive for migration, for married women it was also often mixed with various personal motives, such as the hope to "have a change in one's life" (45-year-old divorced Ukrainian Natasha) or the wish to find a new partner. This is in line with findings from other studies such as Annie Phizacklea's (2003) research on migrant domestic workers in London, where she found that "money and self-respect" were central in migration stories. It demonstrates how migration was used as a complex strategy for both personal empowerment and for the well-being of the family.

Ukrainian and Polish women used the money they earned in Naples mainly for education or housing. They were saving up to buy a house either for themselves or for their children, or their earnings were used to educate their children or themselves. Moreover, they were caring for their families by regularly sending parcels containing money, clothing, different kinds of goods and medicine. These were sent in buses that travelled weekly between the countries. These buses are a concrete example of the transnational ties connecting the countries of origin and Italy. They allow women migrants to be present in the form of concrete remittances in the lives of their families.

## **The Politics of Everyday and the Question of Citizenship**

In Naples, where one can work and live rather freely without a stay permit, the question of legal status and citizenship for the interviewed women was mainly about liberty of movement, the option to cross national borders. For Polish women having a stay permit or not was not a big issue. Having the possibility to come and go without visa restrictions, the women did not see a need to apply for a stay permit and hence regularise their work

contract. This also reflects the fact that most of the Polish women thought their stay in Italy to be only temporary. Thus aspects of social citizenship, such as social security rights or pension, were taken care of in Poland not in Italy. In fact, many told they pay a private pension and take care of all necessary medical check-ups when returning to Poland. Moreover, this liberty of movement had permitted Polish women to create flexible forms of rotating work where two women alter one job in Naples taking three-month turns. Especially for young women, free movement allowed them to try out work in Naples and return to Poland to finish studies or search for work. Rotation work not only permitted them to maintain closer relations with one's family and home but it was important in order to conserve one's self-esteem. As Ewa, 60-year-old retired high school teacher put it: "after three months [of domestic work in Naples] we are tired, we need to restore our psyche". The cases of Ewa and Polish migrants who work on short-term basis in Naples are examples of short-term migration that can be used as a way to create a more or less permanent settlement and a sense of home in the old home country (cf. Morokvasic 2004). Moreover, this mobility was also a way to balance the psychological and physical hardship and the feeling of loss of status that accompanied domestic and care work.

Although freedom of movement is important for Poles, it is not lived only positively. Especially for young women, the constant moving between two places created disorientation and feeling of being uprooted from Poland. With migration something of the sense of home is lost, as explained by 32-year-old Jolanta, who had been living in Naples for four and a half years:

*Now when I return [to Poland] many friends are away. Of all the close people, only my father, mother and sisters are left. My brother is also away. (...) Many of the people I knew have left. Also as far as to the United States where there is another Poland, called the "American Poland". (...) I know I have lost something.*

*Jolanta, 32, Poland*

The liberty of movement of Polish women contrasts with the Ukrainian women who have to pay substantial sums for a tourist visa to get to Italy. The Ukrainians had arrived in Italy legally with a tourist visa but overstayed, remaining irregularly in the country. As there was no possibility to apply for a stay permit apart from during the amnesties or within the yearly quotas, the women I interviewed had to work and live irregularly for many years. The worst aspect of being irregular is not being able to return to Ukraine, as this would mean having to pay for a new passport and visa. "Being stuck" in Italy became especially unbearable when something happened in the family left behind. 32-year-old Irina had to wait for three years before an amnesty got out. During this time, she could not return to visit her small children in Ukraine and even worse her father died and she could not attend his funeral. Thus freedom of movement was regarded as the most important aspect of citizenship rights. This of course means both the freedom to leave Ukraine as well as to return once in Italy. When I asked 45-year-old Tatyana what is the most important issue for Ukrainian migrants, she explained as follows:



*It is only a question of traversing the frontiers, to go and return because there [in Ukraine] you cannot find any work. (...) Now with the last regularisation of Bossi Fini more than 10 000 Ukrainians have had a stay permit. (...) These last two years we have the possibility to return home and return [to Italy] without problems. To know that you go back to find your family, and that they are ok because you are helping them. (...) That's very very important.*

*Tatyana, 45, Ukraine*

Traversing borders is important in order for the women to fulfil their responsibilities towards their families and to care for their families from a distance, trans-nationally (Baldassar et. al. 2007; Bryceson and Vuorela 2002; Näre 2008b).

However, in order to apply for a stay permit, the migrant needs a regular work contract. Domestic and care work is characterised by highly personal work relationships. Tying residence rights to a regular work contract implies that the immigrant is not considered a sovereign subject but is dependent on their employer. Many of the Ukrainian women I interviewed had had serious problems in convincing their employers to apply for the regularisation within the two months' time of the last amnesty of 2002. In some cases they were forced to change jobs because the employer was not willing to regularise the worker. In other cases they had to resort to boyfriends' or other friends' help and come up with fake work contracts due to their real employer's reluctance to pay for social security taxes.

There were few options left for the workers whose employers refused to go through regularisation. The story of 53-year-old Ludmila is a telling case of how vulnerable and dependent irregular migrants are on their employers' goodwill in applying for a stay permit. A former medical doctor in Ukraine, Ludmila had worked for almost two years taking care of a 94-year-old man who was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. When the amnesty in 2002 got out, her employer refused to legalise Ludmila saying that the social security taxes were too expensive for her to bear. During the same period, Ludmila was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her employer got worried that her going to the hospital would reveal that she was illegally employing a worker, so she stopped paying Ludmila and told her to find a new job. Finding a new job without a stay permit proved much more difficult after the regularisation. At the time of the interview, Ludmila was without work and home. She was about to start chemotherapy and was living in a free accommodation run by nuns. In the end, she had to renounce her migration project and return to Ukraine.

These practices of exclusion and the way the state controls its borders are linked to racialised and gendered notions of nation (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989). This racialisation is clearly shown in the yearly quotas that differ according to national origins, as well as in the labour classifications under which immigrants are able to apply for stay permits (cf. Enloe 2000, 190). Racialisation is intertwined with gender as immigration policies are shaped by gendered assumptions of citizenship. The boundaries and notions of exclusion

and inclusion are not fixed but shifting with global political and economic changes, as when the enlargement process of the EU changes the list of excluded countries.

## **Everyday Struggles of Domestic and Care Workers in Naples**

So how did women find work in Naples and how was it to work in households? Ukrainian and Polish women arrived in Naples by bus and most had an idea of where to stay or where to find work. In these situations Polish women were slightly better off, as they often already had some existing social networks in Naples. So many Polish migrants were 'called' while still in Poland to replace their friends or family members who were working as domestic and care workers in Naples. Sometimes they had to pay for the person they were replacing for the job.

Ukrainian women, on the other hand, often arrived literally in the central station in Naples, piazza Garibaldi, where they were approached by people offering jobs and accommodation. Many thus started their migration project by sleeping in overcrowded rooms from where they began looking for work mainly at piazza Garibaldi. Here Neapolitans and other migrants would come to offer and sell them jobs (cf. Mazzacurati 2005). Having only a three-month tourist visa, without any contacts or language skills, Ukrainian women were very vulnerable to being cheated as Tatyana's story shows:

*I bought a job here – I mean – I was sold a work – we call this a “work of wheel” (lavoro di ruota). This means you go to work with an old person and then after two, three days arrive the sons or nephews and they throw you out and you will lose the 300 dollars you paid for your work. Then you have to get another job and pay another 300 dollars.*

*Tatyana, 45, Ukraine*

Tatyana describes a situation where the worker is employed only for the money and then hired on the excuse that she does not speak good enough Italian. Being afraid of deportation, the victims of this kind of fraud do not go to the police. Ukrainian women are especially vulnerable to this kind of exploitation because of their lack of legal status and knowledge about their basic rights.

The reality of the work also turned out to be very hard for the women. Working and living with the family day and night, *lavoro notte e giorno*, as the Italian term for live-in work goes, means that workdays are long and free-time minimum. In day and night work domestic workers have only Thursday afternoons and Sundays free. 27-year-old Monica described her first work experience as follows:

*Work (...) was a total shock for me. I thought I would have a little bit time for me. That you would return home from work like everyone. Here I was all the time closed inside. My first work was a babysitter. Two terrible children: 5- and 3 and half-years old. (...) I had a friend I was suppose to substitute for three months so I more*

*or less knew what the work would be like. (...) I worked without hours, started at seven o'clock in the morning and continued until midnight."*

*Monica, 27, Poland*

Long hours, lack of free time and often highly heterogeneous work tasks makes domestic work highly stressful. Moreover, in many cases domestic chores are only part of the work. Most Ukrainians and Poles are also caring for children and the elderly as was Monica. When I inquired about work duties, the most common answer was: "I do everything" (*faccio tutto*). For instance, Ukrainian Svitlana who otherwise spoke Italian with difficulty proved to have a vast vocabulary when we started to talk about household work: "I clean the four rooms and the kitchen. Clean. Iron. Cook. Do the shopping. Cook again. Do all the things you need to do in a home. I do everything." Svitlana's work also included duties that would require training as a nurse. She would administer his employer's 95-year-old father's medication and give his regularly injections.

Domestic and care work involves highly personalised relationships and many of the interviewed women complained about being treated badly by the employers' family or by the persons they were caring for. 42-year-old Polish Dora felt she was treated as a non-human, only a "being" in one of the houses where she worked. This was clearly demonstrated in that "they [the employers] did not speak to me. They would only command me" (Dora from Poland). However, women did not put up with such treatment or bad working conditions but actively sought ways to improve their situation. Many decided to move on to cleaning jobs done on an hourly basis, renting an apartment together with other migrants. Women could also be very strong-minded about their rights and would fight their employers if needed, as the story of Ukrainian Elina shows:

*I went to work in one family of three people and ended up working for ten people. For 550 euros a month. Already in the morning I cleaned the garden and so on. So one day, it wasn't a holiday but a "red day" in the calendar [a bank holiday]. I said to the signora: "I'll go now".*

*She asked me "why?" I said: "Today is holiday. All my friends have a free day." She said: "Your friends! I am the head in this house. Who are you? You are nothing." And continued shouting: "What do you do? You don't do anything in this house."*

*You know what I said to her? "I don't feel like being nobody! Signora, I am yours? Have you bought me on the marketplace? No, what I feel, I will tell you and I don't feel like nobody – goodbye." And so I went."*

*Elina, Ukraine*

Being treated with respect and not like a "slave", like many of the interviewed described their worst experiences, was the most important prerequisite. The reasons why the women quit their jobs were not related to money or work tasks but to being treated in a

humane way. When the women were lucky enough to find *brava famiglie* – “good, decent families” – they preferred to stay for longer and even accept less pay if the workload was bearable and the treatment good. To sum up, although everyday life in Naples in most cases proved to be a constant struggle for finding the best working conditions, the women were by no means victims that just took the hardships but active in looking for ways to better their situation.

## Conclusions

In this article I have discussed the case of Polish and Ukrainian domestic and care work migration to Italy and specifically to Naples. What can be concluded from my ethnographic research is that freedom of movement, the possibility of crossing borders and pursuing a truly transnational life here and there, is the most important matter for Ukrainian and Polish migrants. Contemporary Italian migration legislation puts migrants in a very vulnerable position for two reasons. Firstly, it stimulates irregularity as regularisation of these work contracts is allowed only occasionally during amnesties or within yearly quotas that often do not correspond to real demands. Moreover, tying migrants' legal status to an existing work contract makes migrant workers dependent on their employers. This is especially the case with domestic workers, where worker-employer relationships are highly personal.

I have also considered the reasons behind Ukrainian and Polish women's migration to Italy. I have summed up these motivations as strategies of survival and empowerment. Contrary to existing literature on migration these women were already lone breadwinners for their families. Thus migration for them was a response to lack of support from male partners or other members of the family. Especially striking were the high rates of mortality and sickness for Ukrainian men that came up in the interviews. This crisis in Ukrainian masculinity deeply affected the women for whom migration meant the availability of an option to care for their families. I also highlighted how women's caring for their families was not only about sending money but also diverse goods on a regular basis.

Finally, I discussed the work situation of Ukrainian and Polish women in Naples. Here I wanted to bring forth the everyday struggles and problems the women confront especially in the beginning when they have just arrived. However, I also wanted to point out that migrant women do not accept bad working conditions but actively seek ways to better their situation. Ukrainian and Polish migrants are thus by no means victims but have courageously taken decisions in finding ways to secure a better future for themselves and for their families.

# PART 3. LOVE AND MARRIAGE ON MOVE

## Chapter 4. Hanne Petersen: Love in Times of Globalization. Local Legal Cultures under Stress

*He (Juvenal Urbino) would not admit that the difficulties with his wife had their origin in the rarefied air of the house, but blamed them on the very nature of matrimony: an absurd invention that could exist only by the infinite grace of God. It was against all scientific reason for two people who hardly knew each other, with no ties at all between them, with different characters, different upbringings, and even different genders, to suddenly find themselves committed to living together, to sleeping in the same bed, to sharing two destinies that perhaps were fated to go in opposite directions. He would say: "The problem with marriage is that it ends every night after making love, and it must be rebuilt every morning before breakfast." And worst of all was theirs, arising out of two opposing classes, in a city that still dreamed of the return of the Viceroy. The only possible bond was something as improbable and fickle as love, if there was any, and in their case there was none when they married, and when they were on the verge of inventing it, fate had done nothing more than confront them with reality.*

*Márquez, 1988, 209.*

The film *Love in the Time of Cholera* (released in 2008) is based on the novel by Garcia Marquez (1988) from 1985. It deals with the conflict in the rational "marriage of convenience" of the man representing modernity, Juvenal Urbino, a Columbian doctor, who marries the beautiful Fermina Daza, daughter of a *parvenu* – a social upstart involved in a number of questionable economic businesses, who is very keen on marrying his daughter into the bourgeoisie. Urbino has studied abroad and is involved in the improvement of health and cultural conditions in his Latin American hometown, Cartagena, where the film has been screened – through the intervention of the vice president of Columbia (Lakshmanan 2006). Urbino, the city man, transgresses colonial and class norms and expectations about marriage, which require that he marries in accordance with his rank. What he needs is a marriage, and a wife, who may support him in the modern life he intends to live. And at some point early in the marriage he tells her always to remember that most important in a good marriage is not happiness but stability.

*He was aware that he did not love her. He had married her because he liked her haughtiness, her seriousness, her strength, and also because of some vanity on his part, but as she kissed him for the first time he was sure there would be no obstacle to their inventing true love. They did not speak of it that first night, when they spoke*

*of everything until dawn, nor would they ever speak of it. But in the long run, neither of them had made a mistake. (Ibid., 159.)*

The romantic and poor telegraph operator Florentino Ariza has been in love with Fermina and proposed to her before her marriage to Urbino, but he did not make a proper match for the ambitious father nor for Fermina herself. The “marriage of convenience” between Urbino and Fermina seems to work well for both parties during the half-century it lasts. It gives Fermina a good economic basis for maintenance, a good relationship, and a good family. Her rational considerations are expressed very clearly in the text:

*In those days being rich had many advantages, and many disadvantages as well, of course, but half the world longed for it as the most probable way to live forever. Fermina Daza had rejected Florentino Ariza in a lightning flash of maturity which she paid for immediately with a crisis of pity, but she never doubted that her decision had been correct. (Ibid., 203.)*

Meanwhile Florentino Ariza, the faithful admirer, waits for her for 51 years. He fights and becomes rich in order to deserve Fermina. When Juvenal Urbino dies at the age of eighty, Florentino’s patience is rewarded. Gradually the two old people begin a relationship, which for Florentino Ariza has been a love relationship for half a century.

There are different ways to interpret the novel – as a celebration of romantic love that overcomes all obstacles. But one might perhaps also say that Garcia Marquez with his novel creates a tribute to both reason and emotion, and does not divide them. Fermina’s life is characterized by stability and (economic) security, something which is valued as highly at the turn of the 20th century as it was at the turn of the 19th century.

Social and legal conflicts regarding marriage are of course nothing new, and “old” stories make good contemporary films – the main normative media of the 20th century. The relationship between “reality”, law and art in the area of marriage is often presented in the form of comedy. In a Nordic context this is demonstrated in an interesting and illuminating way by the Danish-Norwegian professor of law and writer of comedies, Ludvig Holberg (1741). His writings have a renewed relevance in times of globalization when the modern Nordic legal culture of marriage is under pressure. This time, however, migration and globalization challenge the dominant Nordic view of marriage as based upon love.

## Ludvig Holberg and Marriage in Nordic Literature and Law

Ludvig Holberg (1684–1756) was a European academic and writer who was born in the important harbour and commercial city of Bergen, then part of the absolutist Double-Monarchy Denmark-Norway. During the two decades from 1704 to 1726 he went on a long series of trips to European centres of learning and intellectual life. He first went to

Copenhagen, later to Amsterdam and stayed at Oxford University for almost two years from 1706–1708. He also went on trips to Dresden, Leipzig and Halle. From 1714–1716 he travelled - to a large degree on foot, being relatively poor – without passport from the Netherlands to Paris and on to Rome via Marseille and Genoa, and then returned to Copenhagen where he lived until his death. He never married or returned to Bergen.

Almost three hundred years ago – in 1716 – Holberg published a very influential book. It was written in Danish as an introduction to natural and international law, and it had a very long title (Holberg 1741). It largely copied then very famous legal scholars, Hugo Grotius, Samuel Pufendorf (who had been a professor of international law at the University of Lund) and Thomasius, who was a pupil of Pufendorf. The book was reedited and republished six times in the period from 1728 to 1763, and was translated into German in 1748 and Swedish in 1789. It was used at Danish (and perhaps Norwegian) universities into the 19th century.

During the 20th century natural law fell in to disrepute especially among Scandinavian legal philosophers, as Scandinavian realism, a local version of positivism, came to dominate the 20th century. Holberg's work *as a natural lawyer* was forgotten and repressed, and he was to some extent considered a political reactionary and supporter of absolutism. But his literary work was not forgotten. In the nine years from 1718 to 1727 Holberg had written a large number of satirical and critical pieces of literature, and during the last five years of this period he wrote 25 comedies which have been played and replayed in Danish and Nordic theatres for countless school classes and adult audiences. They were written during absolutism, when neither freedom of religion nor freedom of speech was guaranteed, but they were also written during the Enlightenment and by a writer strongly inspired by this movement. And they were inspired by his travelling life in Europe as well as by his work as a judge in cases concerning marriage, which at that time were under the jurisdiction of the University of Copenhagen, where he was a professor.

They deal with issues of importance in the status societies of his time, where one's legal and social position was largely defined by both birth and gender. Many of them were concerned with everyday life – and with topics of interest for the local audience. They deal with issues of status, class and gender, and the arrangement of marriage plays an import role in these comedies, as it did in his treatise on natural law. The comedy "*Jean de France*" focuses on the arranged marriage between the ridiculous Hans Frandsen, who has renamed himself after having studied in France, and Elsebet, to whom he is engaged to because of parental and patriarchal interests. Elsebet is in love with Antonius and has her smart female servant, Marthe, involved in securing her love marriage. (Petersen 2004 for this example.)

Holberg's view on marriage and issues concerning the freedom of women to marry without intervention from fathers and family became gradually more liberal during his period of comedy writing, and this was reflected in the revised versions of his Natural Law treatise (Billeskov Jansen 1999). His legal philosophical ideas – presented on the stage – pointed



towards the ideas of equality of the French Revolution that would take place more than 60 years later.

Holberg was one of the first writers to write in Danish about Mohammed and Islam. One of the most knowledgeable contemporary Danish academics on Islam has recently drawn attention to that aspect of his work (Simonsen 2004). In his book on *Comparative histories of Heroes* Holberg gives a relatively comprehensive account about Mohammed.

It is sometimes discussed whether Holberg is Danish or Norwegian – with his claim to fame both countries want to be associated with him, not least in a period of image politics. The University of Bergen in 2004 established a “small Nobel prize” called the Holberg Prize, which was for the first time offered to another European academic, the Bulgarian-French professor Julia Kristeva (2004), who spoke about *Thinking about liberty in dark times* when she received the prize in December 2004. She writes that Holberg is considered as “the first Scandinavian feminist.”

During a period dominated by legal positivism, liberal human rights oriented thinking – especially thinking about the close relation between law and justice – has been influenced and perhaps even preserved in Denmark (and maybe also in Norway) through the performance of Holberg’s comedies, which relied so strongly on a European heritage.

## Migration, Globalization and Emergence of the Global Marriage Market

Where Holberg was a mobile European describing intimate relations in a society in transition from feudalism to modernity, Márquez describes marriage under conditions of a heritage of colonialism and on the verge to modernity. The European director of the film *Love in the Time of Cholera*, Mike Newell, has gone through many difficulties in his work on the film, from acquiring the rights to the manuscript to filming it in Cartagena, Colombia where the novel is set – under very complicated conditions (Lakshmanan 2006).

The relevance and attraction of the theme of marriage under changing social conditions is in a way eternal, but perhaps it has a specific relevance to this contemporary period of history. In today’s world we live with a heritage of modernity on the verge of late or post- modernity – or modernities – and globalization, and we have been witnessing a “transformation of intimacy” (Giddens 1992) for quite some time now. Values, norms, customs and legislations concerned with intimate relationships are again under pressure due to societal changes, such as global migration (especially by women), the move from an industrial to an information and service society, and the establishment and expansion of new regional legal communities, such as the European Union, and the collapse of ‘old’ social and economic empires, such as the Soviet Union. The marriage market is becoming globalized, the demand for service is also growing in the intimate sphere, the legal possibility of personal movement has expanded in Europe, and the living conditions

of women, especially in Eastern Europe, have deteriorated considerably during the last decades.

In a world dominated by the liberal values of freedom and individualism, local customs and marriage regimes have to adapt to “new” realities. In the 20th century Nordic legal culture where “*equality between the sexes*” is presented as an important value this seems to be a specific challenge.

The obstacles to love relations and marriage, which were earlier constituted through birth status, and which Holberg discussed in his plays and legal treatise in the 18th century and before the French Revolution, today seem to be reappearing by way of citizenship, which is becoming one of the most important status categories in a globalized world. In spite of Marquez’ rational approach to the modern marriage, it is a dominant Western and Nordic understanding, that modern marriages are based upon love. It may have been less dominant in Eastern Europe, where pragmatic concerns were often valued over love. (Beitners 1998) In Nordic countries spouses are expected to love each other and not marry for reasons of convenience.

Marriage in Europe – and perhaps especially Western Europe – seems to be an institution which is still influenced by Christian values of love, aristocratic interests and values of dynasty and property, as well as by modern values of equality. The introduction of a joint reform of Nordic marriage law from 1909–1929 also introduced a process of the secularization of marriage relations. Now everyone could be married by a civil contract and the number of church marriages has fallen considerably since (Larsen 2007). We have moved from a period where women were subjected to men – also within the institution of marriage – in the nation states to a period at the end of the 20th century where (some) women are (again) becoming privileged. In this process the institution of marriage has lost the legally privileged status it had. In the relatively few cases of transnational marriages during most of the early part of the 20th century, a spouse would enjoy privileged access both to the country and to citizenship – based on the assumption that the marriage was established on the basis of modern legal values of love and freedom and that the husband would provide economic maintenance. Other foundations of privileges are now appearing, such as citizenship, religion, education and economic income (Petersen 2007). The late modern European emotional and legal cultures are confronted in their diversity and unity with other cultures of emotion, reason and law. The legal access of so called third country nationals to the territory of the EU (to which all the Nordic countries except Norway and Iceland and the homeruled territories of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) is very restricted. One of the few exceptions is access to a family community via family reunification with European and national spouses. However, if both of the spouses belong to a legal and emotional culture where the rationale of marriage is for instance understood to be collective material security more than love and where full “individual freedom” is not necessarily a precondition for marriage, this is met with cultural suspicion and legal restrictions. There is probably a fear of undermining some of these dominant values of Nordic legal cultures, as well as of exploitation of public welfare systems, which are based on a Protestant work ethic. Within the framework of the Protestant ethic people

have resorted to public support with hesitation due to the stigmatizing effects and social control linked to it.

Over the last decades, *access* to Denmark has been restricted considerably through the introduction in Danish (and other European) migration laws of stricter conditions required for family reunification in a marriage with a non-Danish partner. In practice, conditions for the joint marriage life of migrating spouses are being changed not in marriage law, but in migration law (Conradsen and Kronborg 2007). These restrictions target especially young Muslim immigrants who want to marry spouses from their country of origin. Marriage and family reunifications between “ethnic” Danish or Nordic (older) *men* and Eastern European or Asian women have not been the focus of these restrictions and they are not influenced by the changes of regulation to the same degree. The assumption here still seems to be that these marriages are based upon love between individuals, who are also demonstrating freedom of choice in the establishment of marriage, even if these assumptions are in practice often fictitious. In practice there is probably also an expectation of men being the – traditional – breadwinners in these marriages.

Modernity has led to a decreased importance of formal marriages in Nordic legal cultures and to a focus upon individuals maintaining themselves through paid work. Paradoxically the emergence of a “global marriage market” and marriage migration once again underlines the “old-fashioned” traditional duties of mutual but/and gender specific maintenance in marriage relations, since the welfare states want to make sure that they will not bear the economic burden of marriage relations gone sour.

The re-emergence of non-love based marriages and/or marriages based upon traditional gender divided labour contradicts modern values. However, globalized marriage markets seem to produce marriage relations which may re-establish “old-fashioned” gender divisions both in presumably love based relationships as well as in “arranged” marriages. This may be the reason for the very critical approach to this development in influential parts of contemporary Nordic countries.

## Marriage Regimes and Gender Stereotypes on the Nordic Legal Scene

*The legal right to difference, to a juridically protected sphere of autonomous feminine differences, would require a considerable re-writing both of law and legal method (Goodrich 1993, 300).*

Women have entered the legal and political scenes of the Nordic countries over the last century. They have won the vote and taken up occupations as workers, ministers, priests, politicians, queens, doctors, judges, advocates as well as other roles, which Holberg imagined and wrote about in his utopian political writing on the subterranean travels of Niels Klim. In this play, written in Latin for the European audience and to circumvent

local censorship, women occupied imaginary roles that were to become reality many years later. The repertoire is, however, still limited, and in the beginning of the millennium one of the more experimental Danish theatres presented a play by Molière, *Le Misanthrope*, played only by women – and by all the best female actresses. Similarly a presentation of Holberg's *The Fussy Man* was presented by two female directors (one of them a Swedish woman of immigrant descent) in a version where the restless main character was an overstressed contemporary woman. An actress of about sixty told me that the only roles she could play on the stage was that of the neurotic mother.

This development and “modernization” of women's roles is very similar to the developments in the former socialist Eastern European countries. But it is still different from the gender relations and developments of gender roles in Muslim societies, where more “traditional” gender roles prevail.

In comedies the roles played by actors are representations of *stereotypes* – normative categories which we also encounter in law. On Holberg's stage we find the female and male servant, the unmarried young woman, the bourgeois mother, the widow, the patriarchal father, the first born son in a system of *primogeniture*. On the modern scene *local women*, mostly from the middle classes, are performing as the working woman, the working mother, the career woman and the single one. A number of “foreign” female characters are now entering the scene – playing both “modern” and “traditional” characters.

The challenge of gender stereotypes has been an issue in different fields and relations time and again in Western history. Around the turn of the 19th century, gender roles among Nordic artists were challenged as the following quote (reference) demonstrates:

*The women active in the field of art assumed and were given a great deal of space in public art life. In this, they undermined the customary division of power between the sexes, whereby the norms for the male artist were overturned... artists tried to portray this problem of identity in which both “femininity” and “masculinity” were in crisis. Among other things, we meet it in motifs representing the “new woman” and the bohemian artist...*

During the 1890s there was a strong reaction against the gains achieved by the women's movement, writes Gynning (2006) who refers to the Mareicen scholar Susan Faludi's (1991) discussion of a “backlash”. There are several examples in the exhibition of how the “new woman” was demonised at the turn of the century. An attempt was made again to place the middle-class woman in the private sphere. Women were presented as tender, fragile creatures, who were not capable of participating in working life outside the home. Most striking are the paintings of convalescents, who acted as symbols of “the weaker sex”. To the symbolists, woman came to represent the timeless. There were countless paintings of the new female stereotypes of the time, “Madonna – muse – harlot”. According to the polarised gender norms of the age, “woman” was seen either as a primal maternal force or a dangerous creature of nature that tempted men to their doom. The “new woman” was seen as a threat, as she demanded the right to her own sexuality and her independence in

public life. Burgeoning nationalism was a further factor in the “backlash” of the turn of the century.

Nationalism viewed the middle-class male as the protector of the family and the nation, again placing women in the private sphere. Nationalism considered woman first and foremost as wife and mother. So it was not only a national ideal of interior design that was launched from Sundborg, but also a new female ideal. Karin and Carl Larsson are today marketed as national, Swedish icons”. (Gynning 2006, 8–10)

With the emergence of the global marriage market at the turn of the 20th century, other female characters are (re)entering the scene. There seem to be a number of characters or stereotypes, which I will try to sketch briefly in order to reflect on their normative impact and importance for the legal marriage regime. More investigation and research is needed to consolidate this sketch. My superficial suggestions about gender stereotypes in social comedy is partly based upon an analysis of comments on the website of the Danish Broadcast (2006), which in June 2006 had a news story entitled *Flere danske mænd ønsker en russisk kvinde som kone* (More Danish men want a Russian woman as wife). I have looked through all of the comments to the first question by a man, who asks: “Are Danish women not good enough or is there something wrong with the men?”<sup>12</sup>

The public and popular characters I will present are the “Nordic woman”, the “Russian woman”, and the “Muslim woman”.

## The Nordic Woman’s Stereotype – the Bitch and the Female Bad Guy

The Nordic marriage regime of the 20th century has contributed to the “constitution” of the “Nordic woman”. “The Nordic woman” is perhaps becoming a stereotype – or a character – on the Nordic social and legal scene, which are beginning to adjust to this change in gender roles. She is independent, self-sufficient, relatively well-educated, and, not the least, expected to perform paid work and maintain herself and her children – with some help from the state. In the more globalized versions she may also be presented as a “career slave” or “shopaholic” as in the descriptions of modern Western women by Sophie Kinsella (2005)<sup>13</sup>.

Based upon comments in the debate on the news story, the contemporary Nordic female stereotype could however also be viewed as:

*Arrogant, Boring, Condescending, Confined, Educated but not compassionate, Fat, Intolerant, Manipulating, Perfectionist, Selective, Self-sufficient, Self-centred, Snobbish, Superficial, Status-oriented, Stubborn, Uncharming, Unfeminine.*

<sup>12</sup> I have copied and gone through 44 comments, most of them given immediately after the news story, but a few about a year later.

<sup>13</sup> In the novel *The Undomestic Goddess* Kinsella gives a satirical picture of the modern female corporate lawyer who recognizes that she is a “career slave”.

This is not a presentation of “tender, fragile creatures” but rather of threatening, arrogant bitches, whose expectations are far too high towards intimidated local men, whose educational and salary level is not high enough. This female bad guy opens up for demand for new/old characters of the Madonna-housewife, who may enter the scene and compete with the local “independent” Xanthippe-types.

The emergence of the relatively economically self-maintained woman has led to the dissolution of *marriage* as the most important cultural legal frame for gendered and inter-generational relationships in Nordic countries. Marriage is still an important tradition, but not an important legal *institution* for Nordic women. Relations between adult humans are considered to be based upon contracts and are of diminishing interest to the state. The important roles to be played are the parental roles. Parenthood and especially good parenthood is an important moral role to play. (Also Kronborg 2007)

## The Russian Woman’s Stereotype – the Seducer and Trickster

The Russian stereotype emerging from my limited empirical material could play the role of both new and old as well as good and bad guy/woman. On the “positive” side she is described as a true, feminine woman from a nostalgic, golden past – and/or perhaps as a contemporary female seducer. This somewhat ambivalent character is:

*Adventurous, Family loving, Feminine (more than Danish women), Good looking (tall & slim), Good housewife, Hardworking, Home caring, Independent, Lovely, Made up (highly), Romantic, Sweet, With temperament, Warm, Well educated, Well dressed, Wonderful.*

On the more “neutral” or “negative” side, she is described as what could perhaps be called the “fighting victim”, “gold-digger” or “trickster”, who is

*Almost similar to Danish women, Ambitious, Business-minded, Competing with Danish women, Expecting Gentleman Behaviour, Experienced with socio-economic and gender inequality, Faking love, Gold-digging, Lacking financial and emotional support, Manipulating, Miserable, Poor, Pitiable, Prostituted, Security seeking (looking for good economy and no alcoholism), Sex and housewife slave, “Stealing ‘our boys’”, Stubborn, Stuck, Traditional, Trafficked, Unsecured.*

These ambivalent and mixed characters – seducer and trickster – also seem to present a ‘threat’ to the Nordic marriage regimes, although of a different nature than the one presented by the Muslim stereotype. The Russian stereotypes are actually described as modern and similar to local Nordic women, and thus in principle less in need of marriage as an institution. Due to global economic inequality, however, it seems that they “exploit” marriage as a tradition, and the expectations of “traditional” gender roles related to this perception of marriage. They play the “traditional feminine role” in order

to secure economic and other security for themselves – and perhaps for their families. And in playing this role – and based perhaps on pragmatic concerns – they seem to “over-identify” with the traditional feminine role, to a degree certainly not liked by many Nordic women. Their strategy of over-identification is seen by some actors as threatening to the Nordic institution of marriage which is presumed to be based on equality, love and “modern” gender roles, and leads to warnings against greedy and calculating females by other interested actors. (Frost 16.07.2007) These smart actors may outmanoeuvre the irrational, naïve, love-sick and love-seeking, isolated and lonely Nordic men.

To a certain extent what is at play here is perhaps a strategy that has been used and described in Eastern European art and elsewhere as “the tactics of explicit consent” or “subversive affirmation” and “over-identification”. This is described by Inke Arns (2004):

*Subversive affirmation and over-identification are tactics... that allow artists to take part in a certain social, ideological, political, or economic discourse and affirm, appropriate, or consume it while simultaneously undermining it...*

*Subversive affirmation and over-identification are forms of critique which through techniques of affirmation, involvement and identification put the viewer/listener precisely in such a state or situation which s/he would or will criticise later.*

By using the tactics of over-identifying with the role of seducer and docile housewife, the Russian stereotype seems to threaten or undermine the already weakened Nordic marriage regime. By entering marriage instrumentally – as in Holberg’s times – the anachronistic character of the modern love-based marriage is demonstrated by this “modern”, pragmatic and competitive over-feminine character.

The legal conclusion of the story seems to be that a (Nordic) marriage regime based on 20th century understandings of equality and romantic love has become very idealistic, and in practice has difficulties handling growing actual global economic inequality and attempts to counteract this equality on the global marriage market. “A regulation as the one that is valid, which has an idealized character, in practice favours the strong,” Annette Kronborg (2007, 12) writes about the Danish regulation on parental custody. This argument is valid in relation to marriage law as well. The present regime protects the Nordic stereotype, but not the other emerging female characters on the scene.

## The Muslim Woman’s Stereotype – the “Subjected Spouse”, Female Believer or Religious Fanatic

It is the fear of “unsuitable immigration” by people from Muslim countries and third world cultures that has over the last decade led to considerable changes and restrictions in legal access to marriage and especially to the right to live together with one’s spouse in Denmark. (Conradsen and Kronborg 2007) These restrictions have been legitimized by reference to the need to fight the figure that might be called “the subjected spouse”. This is

a person from a Muslim country and third world culture brought to the Nordic countries, and especially Denmark, by way of family unification to marry a young second generation immigrant man or woman. This character is often presented as a direct threat to the modern marriage regime between equal marriage partners. The legal restrictions aimed at preventing these “forced”, “arranged”, or “traditional” marriages have had widespread support from nationalists, modernists and feminists alike.

However, one of the problems of the legal scene in Nordic countries may be that it has not really been updated to post-modern times and repertoire, where people arrange their intimate relations and marriages *themselves* not only in “traditional cultures”, but also increasingly in post-modern cultures via internet-dating in particular.

The Danish anthropologist, Mikael Rytter (2003) (also Hervik and Rytter 2004), who has researched on arranged marriages in Denmark, writes that

*...the marriage norm of the majority population... is presented as unproblematic and as an expression of the dominant individuality and modernity in the Danish/Scandinavian/Western society.*

In the same vein Turkish sociologist and feminist, Nilufer Göle (2006, 21), describes how young Muslim women contest the Western feminine role and use the Islamic headscarf as readopted:

*Veiling is usually taken as a sign of the debasement of women's identity, as a sign of their inferiority to men. Now, this sign of passivity and seclusion in interior domestic spaces is being readopted by those Muslim women no longer confined to a traditional role and to enclosed space.*

*Islamism provides us with clues in uncovering the process through which Western definitions of self and public, customs and manners appear natural and superior, not only to Westerners themselves, but also to a majority of Muslims. The secular and liberal model of self, which claims to be Universal, is challenged by religious and non-liberal performances of Islam, with an equal claim to Universality. The monistic definition of Civilization equated with Western culture is contested.*

This challenge to the Western understanding of the modern female role is mostly understood as a backlash to a patriarchal tradition, and this explains the strong reactions not least by Danish women (perhaps specifically of a certain generation and status). However, these female roles may also be understood as a way of seeking to gain or regain normative authority and legitimacy not only on the modern scene but perhaps on local and global scenes. (Petersen 2010)

The female characters are also forced to take advantage of globalization and make use of the global marriage market. They are using institutions and traditions which are undergoing transitions to counter the difficulties produced by the same processes.



Reviews more nuanced than the ones which are dominating at present would be useful for understanding the performances that are taking place.

The transitions and reversals are taking place on all scenes, and some of the challenges of former stereotypes perhaps take place on the art scene, as was the case a century ago.



## “Hip, Hip Today”

At the turn of the 19th century many Nordic painters met in an artist’s colony in the small fishing hamlet of Skagen, which has now become an increasingly highbrow summer holiday resort. In May 2007, a new group of artists visited Skagen to restage the old famous painting of the lunch of Nordic artists, a painting called “Hip, hip hurra” (Hip, Hip Hurray) which is now owned by the Art Museum of Göteborg in Sweden. In the original painting one sees eleven persons, seven men standing, three women sitting and a little girl in red stockings. This group of artists reversed the painting in several respects: There were now seven female artists standing and cheering, three men sitting in front and with their back to the viewers, one of them taking care of a little girl with red stockings. The majority of the artists were brown-skinned immigrants or refugees, adopted children from Asian countries, and a woman with a perfectly Danish name wearing a veil – a converted artist perhaps? Some of them were couples as in the earlier painting. The group of artists named the video and big photo with a golden frame imitating the earlier picture “Hip, hip today”. Skagen museum’s homepage<sup>14</sup> informs that

14 [http://www.skagensmuseum.dk/index.php?id=233\\_120807](http://www.skagensmuseum.dk/index.php?id=233_120807). The participants in the project were: Aida Nadeem (musician), Tisha Mukharji (artis/musician), Larissa Sansour (artist), Ellen Nyman (actor/artist), Jane Jin Kaisen (artist), Trine Gleerup Poulsen (artist), Stine Høxbroe (graphic designer/artist), Khaled Ramadan (artist/curator), Rasmus Nielsen (artist), Søren Lind (author/artist) and Malaika Nyman (daughter of Ellen Nyman and Rasmus Nielsen). Photographer: Thomas Brolyng Steen. Permission to use this image has been received by artist Larissa Sansour and Søren Lind and by phographer Tohmas Brolyng Steen.

*...the women are all in one way or another defying the prototype of a woman in Denmark. Dominated by these women "Hip Hip Today" discusses and reflects on concepts such as ethnicity, gender roles and politics.*

Old institutions and traditions have to be used and transformed to survive. This is also the case with marriage. With the entrance of new female actors on the scene, this institution may change in ways that cannot be predicted at the moment. Marriage cannot be expected to be the sole guarantee of love, economic security, or social stability in the near or distant future. But with weakening welfare states and volatile economies, intimate and expanded marriage and family relations may again have to be relied on to a higher degree by women and men. In this process, the relations of today may transgress the norms, ideals and expectations of yesterday, and perhaps return to earlier, even much earlier, stages and traditions – turning modern traditions upside down in unexpected ways. Maybe marriage will be a field where it becomes clear that Nordic legal cultures are forced to move beyond legal modernity by the presence and practices of new and different actors, stereotypes and characters on the Nordic stage, and the trials and tribulations they encounter.

# Chapter 5. Jana Sverdljuk: Traditional Foreign Femininities? Experts' Stories about Helping Russian Migrant Women-Victims of Domestic Violence

In Norway there is a common perception that gender egalitarianism, the goal of the equality of the sexes is achieved (Morgenbladet 2006). Evidently, women occupy high status positions in the Norwegian society. Women influence social and economic life in the country, which is known for its liberalism in gender relations. Nordic Countries in general and Norway in particular are characterised as social-democratic 'women friendly' welfare states, or even 'paradises' for women and children (Esping-Andersen 2002; Hernes 1987). Women are actively participating in paid labour, politics and decision-making. The organisation of family life is based on the two bread-winner principle. Men are encouraged by the state to take equal share in domestic labour and childcare (Bergqvist et. al. 1999, 278; Hernes 1987).

However, as post-colonial Nordic gender researchers point out, associating gender equality with the majority population, results in the marginalization of certain groups of people. Division lines are drawn between included, 'natives' on the one hand and excluded, foreigners on the other hand (Mulinari et al. 2009, 7) Women's freedom is being perceived as a part of the life style characteristic for the 'civilized' and 'advanced' majority. Feminist authors, who are inquiring into the intersections between gender and ethnicity within different spheres of life in Norway, introduce the concept of 'gender equal Norwegianness'. The concept is questioning the assumed and taken for granted connection of gender equality with ethnic Norwegian population (Berg, Flemmen and Gullikstad 2010, 12–13). According to this criticism, majority middle class women and men are considered to be the exclusive 'owners' or exclusive practitioners of gender equality, whereas representatives of ethnic minorities and migrants are being perceived as non-liberated social subjects. There is a symbolic production of minoritized femininities. Migrant and ethnic minority women are being defined in terms of traditional femininity and are said to need help and education in gender equality.

Feminist post-colonial authors have also inquired into the discourses of welfare state employees. In particular, they have revealed the presence of stigmatizing and victimizing representations of ethnic minority subjects (foreign women) implicit in the functioning of the welfare system. They have drawn attention to the symbolic injustices experienced by the new residents of Nordic/Norwegian welfare state(s) (Keskinen et al. 2009; Mattsson 2010; Otterstad 2008). The ideological background of Nordic welfare system has been criticized for absorbing cultural prejudices practicing of discrimination and migrants as

ethnicized minority subjects. According to this criticism, ethnic minorities are perceived as homogeneous cultural group attached to traditional/patriarchal gender values (Osman 2006). As Jacobsen and Stenvoll point out, approaches towards, and conceptions of help spread among professional personnel of Scandinavian welfare states (Norway) are being one-sidedly interpreted as looking out for victims and supporting them in the efforts of assimilation and integration into majority's way of doing gender (Jacobsen and Stenvoll 2010, 16).

Proceeding from these theoretical observations, the article presents an analysis of the discourses of experts working within different structures of Norwegian welfare state. I would like to find out, whether the idea about 'achieved gender equality in Norway' is present in experts' stories about providing help to migrant women-victims of domestic violence. Prevention of domestic violence which hits women worse, is one of the central measures undertaken by 'women friendly' welfare state. Providing women's freedom and wellbeing is one of the main concerns of Norwegian 'state feminism', and an integral part of the gender equality policies. It is natural to assume, in correspondence with liberal feminist thinking, that being subjected to violence is a part of the larger pattern of male dominance over women (Pateman 1998a; Carmody 2003). My main interest consists in exploring eventual processes of stigmatization/victimisation of migrant women, in the expert's stories about counselling foreign women who experienced domestic violence. I inquire into, how experts construct migrant femininities in the contexts where domestic violence took place. What is the role of the idea about 'gender equal Norwegianness' in the construction of identities of foreign women? And how does the assumed gendered image of Norwegian nation and Norwegian 'liberated' majority modify the image of foreign female subjectivity?

## People's Meetings in Barents Trans-Border Region

In terms of geography and involved ethnicities, I choose to concentrate on studying practices of experts who are living and working in Northern Norway. The region is characterised by multiculturalism and ethnic diversity (Kramvig and Flemmen 2010). Trans-cultural people's meetings became possible due to the dissolution of Soviet Union and the increased migration across the borders with the neighbouring North-West Russia. After softening of border regimes between Russia and Norway in the early 1990ies, people from Russia started to travel to the Northern Norwegian counties. The migration had a 'female face'; the majority of people crossing borders were woman coming to the country through family reunification channels (Saarinen 2006). Some Russian women came to Norway to study or work in joint Russian-Norwegian enterprises (Sverdljuk 2009). Besides, in the Northern Norwegian counties Russian cross-border prostitution was taking place. As Stenvoll observed, there were also extensive overlaps between prostitution, arranged marriages and marriages or 'normal' relationships. The phenomenon of prostitution has attracted a lot of attention in media and among local and national politicians. In the national and local Norwegian media Russian prostitution was discussed in terms of the problem of public order, threat to people's health and moral breakdown (Stenvoll 2002). As Russian women were coming from big cities (Murmansk, Arkhangelsk) to small

sparsely populated Northern Norwegian communities (Størseth 2003), migrants from Russia were well visible in the local societies. As migrant women report themselves, even when walking down the streets in the Northern Norwegian towns, they felt stigmatised and were confronted with derogative public attitudes (Sverdljuk 2009).

In the eyes of the local public Russian migrant women were perceived as impoverished, poor and uncivilised people who came to the rich 'West' to earn money. Russian/post'of lawc and social institutions and traditional culture. experts, executers of welfare policies in Norway Ideas about Russian women's economic dependency may easily emerge, as the welfare gap between Norwegian 'West' and Russian 'East' in the cross-border Barents region is deepest in Europe (Yukina, Saarinen and Kudriashova 2003). Both, prostitutes and women-family migrants were often represented as economically disempowered women who are dependent from their male partners. As in the first period of adaptation, migrant women have to rely on their spouses they might appear as "different", i.e. breaking the ideal of partner's equal economic status in the family. Often, instead of paying attention to the difficult structural circumstances of migrants' lives, politicians and researchers discussed cultural 'differences' between local and migrant women. Russian migrant women marrying Norwegian men appear as representatives of a different, patriarchal tradition of gender relations Kramvig and Stien 2002).

In this context, I am inquiring into trans-cultural meetings between experts, executers of welfare policies in Norway and Russian women who experienced violence in close relations. My analysis is aimed at revealing the presence of cliché-like representations about 'traditional Russian femininities' in expert's stories. I am especially interested in showing the tendencies towards stigmatisation and victimisation of migrant women who suffered from domestic violence. As mentioned above, migrant women's vulnerable position right after arriving provokes constructions of one-sided pictures of 'traditional foreign femininities'. In this connection, it is also interesting to reveal the process of construction of Norwegian gender relations as progressive and 'liberal'. As I argue, inquiries into expert's representations of Russian women's identities show how gender and gender relations are used to create division lines between 'our' civilised and 'other' traditional nation.

Russian-Norwegian cross-border meetings provide a suitable context for approaching expert-client relations from the angle of feminist post-colonial theory. Expert's representations of Russian migrant women-clients represent interest for a social scientist because of the histories of ideological confrontation between Norway and Russia. I agree with Ivar B. Neumann who approaches Norwegian perceptions of Russia from the perspective of post-colonial theory (Neumann 1999). According to Neumann, in Norwegian historiographies and in policy-making during Cold War Russia has been usually represented as the Norwegian "other". Soviet Union and Russia was seen as the "Second World", a country with under-developed democratic and social institutions and "traditional" culture. This imaginative construction helped to see Nordic Countries as a progressive region, which is characterised by the established democracy and the rule of law (Neumann 1999).

## Theory and Analytical Tools

I perceive the popular idea about equality between sexes in Norway as the main ‘narrative context’ (Paley 2009, 18–19), which influences the way how experts construct identities of their clients. ‘Narrative context’ consist of own believes of the story-teller; it implies prejudices and most common ideas, which experts ‘inherited’ from the societies they live in. According to Paley, a description of an event or a ‘story’ never happens in a direct way, but is mediated by a range of ideological and meaning-generating presuppositions and understandings of reality; narrative is a ship, story is a cargo (Paley 2009, 18). Thus, I approach the idea about achieved gender equality in Norway as the main context (the “ship”), which carries expert’s stories about Russian women and violence. How does the idea about ‘gender equal Norwegiannes’ modify expert’s representations of migrant women-victims of domestic violence? Do they stigmatize foreign femininities as women who internalised patriarchal rules of gender relations and can therefore easily become victims of men’s violence? Do episodes of violence serve as a “fuel” to the “fire” of already existing one-sided, “traditional” images of Russian women? And what about other characteristics, such as class and ethnicity, which might shape migrant women’s experiences of violence?

“Gender equal Norwegianness” is a constant motive of everyday representations of gender relations in Norway. Most importantly, this idea presupposes, first, having in mind Western women and second, primary concentration on gender when thematizing the issues of women’s equality. In my analysis, I critically approach the orientation on Western women and on gender exclusively, when trying to highlight disadvantages experienced by migrant women. I show that underlying idea of women’s liberation, i.e. freeing oneself from men’s domination, when used in relation to migrant women, cannot provide a sufficient ideological background for migrant women’s empowerment. First, the scheme tends to essentialize performance of femininity and masculinity, viewing men as aggressive perpetrators and perceiving women as passive sufferers (Carmody 2003). Second and most important, universalization of the category of woman implies prevailing orientation on the Western ideal of liberated femininity, which serves as an example to follow for all women. As Jacobsen and Stenvoll put it, only women’s individual choices are being seen as legitimate, which correspond to the Western standards and visions of women’s freedom and liberation (Jacobsen and Stenvoll 2010, 18).

At the background there is a history of Western women’s liberation movement, when patriarchy was viewed as the major factor of domination over women (Pateman 1988b). Domestic violence was considered to be one of the manifestations of the overall phenomenon of men’s domination over women. As Stenvoll observes, radical feminist conception of violence in intimate relations has been adopted as an ideological underpinning by Norwegian welfare institutions, in particular by the police, the Ministry of Justice and by the range of NGOs working to prevent gender violence (Stenvoll 2002). Crisis centres can be viewed as one of the brightest examples of such organisations. Post-colonial and post-modern feminist scholars have shown limitations of this gender-binary approach for the trials to explain women’s sufferings, including their experiences of being

subordinated to violence. As post-colonial feminists have shown, oppression and violence experienced by ethnic minority and migrant has different background in comparison with vulnerable experiences of women in the West. As e.g. Collins, Crenshaw and many other post-colonial feminist researchers show, class and ethnicity (i.e. experience of racialization) constitute, alongside with gender, a ground for domination over ethnic minority women. When explaining women's vulnerability, the category of gender alone, or criticism of patriarchy, is not sufficient. Migrant women's disadvantages should be explained through a complex interplay of different forms of oppression, including class and racial discrimination (Crenshaw 1991).

Thus, e.g. Crenshaw shows that in the case with ethnic minority and migrant women, the physical assault that leads women to the shelters "is merely the most immediate manifestation of the subordination they experience. Many women who seek protection are unemployed or underemployed, and a good number of them are poor" (Crenshaw 1991, 1242) Using various examples of Black and migrant women's experiences of being subordinated to violence, Crenshaw concludes, that apart from patriarchy and gender based domination, these women confront class and ethnic subordination, which puts them into difficult life situations. Thus, limitations in immigrant legislation in relation to family migrants in the US make migrant women reluctant to leave "even the most abusive of partners in fear of being deported". Crenshaw classifies legislative limitations as 'similarly coercive, yet not easily reducible to economic class' (Crenshaw 1991, 1243). In my materials, Russian women report about difficulties experienced due to the "three years rule". The first period of adaption is difficult not due to "cultural differences", but because of a lacking legislative protection and unemployment, which women from Russian have to deal with (Sverdljuk 2010). Therefore, it is legitimate to speak about double subordination based on the categories of gender and class.

Apart from a lacking economic empowerment, unjust images of ethnic minority and migrant women are among major symbolic or cultural factors of oppression. Often the one-sided focus of Western feminism on gender inequalities experienced by migrant women leads to replication and reinforcement of ethnic subordination (Crenshaw 1991, 1245). The presence of the idea about 'gender equal Norwegianness' in expert's discourses about domestic violence experienced by migrant women witnesses about ethnocentric and Eurocentric attitudes, which become a part of feminist agenda. Hierarchic divisions are being made between different groups of women. I am using ideas of post-colonial feminists that Western policy-making suffers from a systematic misrepresentation of non-Western and migrant women as victims of underdevelopment, oppressive traditions and poverty (Gouws 1996, 71; Mohanty 1988, 56). Similar to these, I am critically approaching Norwegian/"Western" expert's representations of Russian women-clients as traditional housewives, victims of economic hardships in Russia and women who are lacking awareness about own sexuality.

Therefore I am using the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989; Collins 1990) and reveal limitations of mobilising the category of gender when explaining violence experienced by migrant women. The concept of intersectionality implies that patterns of subordination

intersect in ethnic minority and migrant women's experiences of vulnerability. It grasps gender, sexuality, class, race/ethnicity as intersecting and reinforcing each other ways of oppression. The concept is based on the basic idea about difference, in comparison to Western middle class female subject, situated-ness of minority women in social, economic and political world. In addition to gender subordination, migrant women experience oppression based on the category of ethnicity. To meet minority's women's needs for empowerment, a complex approach is necessary, which would take into consideration class or structural disadvantages, which complement and reinforce gender suppression. According to Crenshaw, political strategies aimed at violence prevention in the cases, where ethnic minority and migrant women are involved, should take into consideration intersectional issues. The idea of intersectionality implies that 'gender' is insufficient operational concept as an ideological underpinning for anti-discriminatory approaches to individuals and should be supplemented by the category of ethnicity.

## Materials and Structure

The background materials embraced 12 qualitative semi-structural interviews with experts who met Russian women-migrants in their professional practices. I define expert as a reliable source of technique or skill in the domain of providing professional help to individuals in difficult life situations. Professionals in the presented research were working within Norwegian state and non-governmental organisations: police, crisis centre, health station, i.e. organisations, which are active in providing help to women who experienced situations of domestic abuse. I have chosen experts, who are working in different organisations in order to inquire into the role of everyday prejudices and beliefs about migrants in various professional practices. According to the recent developments towards anti-discrimination in the work of welfare state employees, experts are supposed to approach clients on individual grounds and not stigmatise clients on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, race, age or ability (Heydt and Sherman 2005). At the same time, there are grounds to assume that especially in the areas close to Russia everyday derogative ideas about Russian migrants are wide spread among both, local population and professionals of the welfare state. On the one hand, the history of social relations in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region witnesses about people-to-people contacts and development of cultural ties across the borders of ethnic and cultural divisions. On the other hand, Russian and Norwegian states have been developing anti-Western and anti-Russian ideologies throughout the period of Cold War. That contributed to the emergence of hostile attitudes across the borders the Eastern and Western parts of the Barents Region.

The interviews were taking place in the Norwegian part of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. I gathered materials when travelling in the selected provinces of Norwegian Barents Region during the participation in the collaborative Nordic research project, which was inquiring into the situation of Russian-women-immigrants in the Nordic Countries<sup>15</sup>. The project was conducted in a group of researchers, together with Aino Saarinen and Kerstin

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15 RWN: Russian Women as Immigrants in the Nordic Countries – Finland, Norway, Sweden – Gender Perspective on Everyday Life, Citizenship and Social Justice (2004–2006).



Hägg<sup>16</sup>. Whereas Saarinen and Hägg collected interviews from Finnish and Swedish parts of the Barents Region, I was responsible for gathering materials from Norway. For the RWN-project and for the studies of professional practices of welfare state employees, the Barents Region, as a geo-political entity, represents a special interest. The Barents Euro-Arctic Region is Europe's largest region for interregional cooperation. It symbolically unites localities and multiethnic populations belonging to different states<sup>17</sup>. In this connection, it is especially interesting to inquire into the cultural tensions, which emerge between the population of the former Soviet Union/Russia and Norway. Did experts who work in different organisations of Norwegian welfare state internalise the logic of dividing populations of the Russian "East" and Norwegian 'West' of the Barents Region? Could the thesis of Neumann about Russia as Norwegian "other" be applied also in relation to the studies of professional practices of Norwegian welfare state employees who meet Russian clients in their practices?

On the geographic map of North Calotte there are northernmost areas of Norway, Sweden and Finland as well as Russia with its cities of Murmansk, Severomorsk, Monchegorsk, Kirovsk, Apatity, Kandalaksha. Norway and Russian shares 200 km common border. Distance between Norwegian Kirkenes, the closest city to the Russian border, and Murmansk in Russia is 250 km, which is possible to win with a simple buss-trip. In spite of geographical proximity of 'Eastern' and 'Western' areas of the Barents region, the involved countries diverge historically, politically and culturally. That invites critically approaching cultural processes of creating symbolic divisions between "Western"/Norwegian and Eastern/Russian individual and collective identities. The question is central, whether the negative heritage of ideological confrontation between Russia and the West influences the way of thinking of Norwegian state actors/professionals providing help to migrant women from Russia. Are the old images of enemy/Russia being transformed into the images of gendered and ethnic 'other' as a threat to public order and equality in gender relations? And if that is the case, do the one-sided representations of Russian migrants prevent professionals from taking into consideration the complexity of factors, which intersect, putting migrant women in difficult life situations?

The materials of this article embrace interviews with the experts who were counselling Russian women-victims of violence in close relations. In particular, I show that paying the major attention to cultural and gendered differences in their discourses around domestic violence, the interviewed experts symbolically marginalize migrant women. Whereas in the previous articles, my major concern was to highlight structural difficulties experienced migrant women from Russia (but also to reveal imperfections of the system of integration), the presented analysis is aimed at revealing tendencies of cultural marginalisation of women-victims of violence that are practiced by the co-workers of the welfare state. The interview guide contained questions concerning conditions necessary

16 The research is also a part of my PhD project: "Destabilising Gender and Sexuality in the Practices of Norwegian Welfare State Employees: Majority-Minority Perspective" (2009–2012) which is conducted within overall project: "Experts and minorities in the gender equality country Norway" (together with Trine Annfelt and Berit Gullikstad): [http://www.ntnu.no/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=870baf1a-e3e2-4071-9bb1-7e31cf3622c7&groupId=10234](http://www.ntnu.no/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=870baf1a-e3e2-4071-9bb1-7e31cf3622c7&groupId=10234).

17 The Barents Euro-Arctic Region includes the northernmost parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Northwest Russia.

for securing better social integration of migrant women. However, as the analysis showed, it is more important to reveal one-sided, limited perceptions of migrant women in expert's discourses, showing, how prejudices and stigmatising representations of migrant women penetrate into the practices of the employees of the welfare state. In the following analysis I analyse selected examples of expert's discourses and concentrate: 1) on the media presentation of the expertise of a leader of a regional development project; 2) a semi-structural qualitative interview with a policeman-co-ordinator of the cases of family violence; and 3) with a co-worker of a crisis centre for women. The chosen interviews represent cases, in which tendencies towards stigmatisation of Russian migrants were most visible.

The analysis is divided into three major parts. First, I critically analyse media description of a murder case, where Russian woman was killed by her Norwegian husband. In particular, I analyse utterances which were given to the newspaper by a leader of a regional project aimed at preventing violence against Russian women. The project was supported by the Police and Norwegian Ministry of Justice and was a part of the government's action plan: "Violence against women"<sup>18</sup>. The analysis show, how the project leader mobilises the idea about gender equality in Norway when reflecting around the murder of a Russian woman. Second, I reveal, how the interviewed experts, a police man and a crisis centre co-worker explain violence through the idea of Russian women's economic victimhood. Third, I analyse expert's discourses in relation to the notion of sexuality and show that experts complete the constructed image: "victim of economic transformations" with the notion of women's sexual submissiveness.

## Murder in Finnsnes

In the following I will describe a case of domestic violence, which will serve as an 'ideal-typical' image for the further analysis of expert's discourses and articulations of the problem of violence. Other examples from my materials involve less dramatic cases of physical and psychological violence, such as physical injury, women being 'thrown out of their homes with babies in the middle of the night' and moral and psychological offence. In my materials, a co-worker of a crisis centre share impressions about an incident which happened in the town in winter 2003 when a Russian woman was killed by her Norwegian husband: *There was this Russian lady shot by her Norwegian husband...* The incident took place in Finnsnes, one of the small towns in the Norwegian North. The place with the population of ca. 4 000 people lays at one of the small islands in the Troms county. It is reachable by boat from the county centre Tromsø. The case was reported in the national media in the morning after the murder took place, under the title: "Killed the wife while children were sleeping" (Dagbladet 10.01.2003). The journalist reported about 32 year old man who murdered his 38 years old wife with a rifle in the bedroom in the couple's house. As it is mentioned in the newspaper article, the man gave himself to the police right after the incident, and two children from women's previous marriage in Russia were taken care of by professional personnel. The journalist mentions that the perpetrator faces an accusation in the planned deliberate murder. The reader is informed that an

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.krisesenter.com/materiell/drommen\\_om\\_det\\_gode\\_liv/drommen\\_om\\_det\\_gode\\_liv.pdf](http://www.krisesenter.com/materiell/drommen_om_det_gode_liv/drommen_om_det_gode_liv.pdf)

investigation of the men's mental state is planned. As both, the mother and children were Russian citizens, the authorities have to decide, whether children will stay in Norway or go back to Russia. The article also describes reactions to the incident expressed by the people who had close contact with the victim: "Everybody thinks it is terribly sad. Friends are missing the classmate's mother; she was a lady youth liked. She had a winning nature, says the local priest..." (Dagbladet 10.01.2003)

## Clash of Expectations Concerning Gender Equality?

I am interested in showing the 'gap' or contrast between the given neutral account of the event (in the genre of murder-report), and the politicized expert's descriptions of the incident in national Norwegian media. As an overview of the following media publications shows, Finnsnes murder was written into the context of discussions about gender relations and gender roles in Norway and Russia. Images of a foreign victimized and native, liberated femininities were created. Thus, Finnsnes murder, together with another case where a Russian woman killed her Norwegian husband, was highlighted in a national newspaper under the title: "Different gender ideals" (Dagbladet 10.01.2003). In the article that followed right after the murder, the leader of the development project "Tana in transition" explained the case of violence in trans-national Russian-Norwegian family through the clash of expectations concerning gender equality. According to the expert, Russian women aspire for greater gender liberation, whereas Norwegian men wish to live in accordance with 'traditional' gender norms. In particular, the project leader says:

*Russian women have heard about Norwegian ideal of gender equality where Norwegian men treat women with dignity. At the same time many Norwegian men say that they want a Russian woman because they are not so demanding as Norwegian women.*

*Project leader on violence prevention*

Although the expert supports Russian women, pointing out that they intend to live up to the ideal of gender equality, she indirectly labels them as 'traditional' and 'different' from Norwegian women. At the background there is an uncritical assumption about Norwegian women as liberated and free and a production of meaning about 'non-liberated', 'not demanding' Russian women. The reader gets an idea that in order to become free and liberated, Russian women have to go through a process of self-perfection trying to reach the level of self-consciousness possessed by women in 'gender equal Norway'. The professional presents gender equality as a 'Norwegian' value constructing women with different national background as outsiders of the Norwegian gender equality regime. Belonging to the Norwegian nation becomes a marker, or a symbol of gender equality, whereas Russia and Russian people are being constructed as less civilized and guided by patriarchal ethics of inter-gender relations.

The victimized image of Russian women is being reinforced when, in the next passage, the journalist presents the results of the report written by Crisis centre secretariat, about foreign women married with Norwegian men. The journalist lays out statistics about foreign women-victims of domestic violence: *“In 2001, 237 foreign women (with children) married to Norwegian men searched shelter in the crisis centres”*. The article mentions that the majority of suffered women were Russian. In this regards, the leader of the Tana project expresses concern about “further stigmatization of Russian women because of the occurred cases of violence”. Ironically, in the next sentence the expert subjects Russian women to symbolic marginalization herself. In particular, the project leader points out that Russian women “make a lot of positive contribution”: Russian women “marry men whom Norwegian women opt out”; they “help men, whom the Norwegian society have given up”. Thus, the expert creates difference between successful and liberated Norwegian women who marry progressive men *and* Russian women who connect their lives with men-traditionalists and abusers, who are ‘outsiders’ of the Norwegian system of gender equality. The wide-spread image of a liberated Norwegian woman is being complemented by such connotations and qualities, as moral righteousness and dignity. The mentioned case of the media coverage of an incident of murder of an immigrant woman is an example of politisation of gender violence. The incident is being used to consolidate ethnocentrist moods in the society and create symbolic divisions between “us”, citizens of progressive and gender equal Norwegian nation and “them”, outsiders of the system of welfare and equality. The murder of an immigrant woman could have become an invitation to discuss the situation of family migrants, raising the question about e.g. living conditions and social and legal protection of the new residents of the welfare state. Did the killed woman, as probably other women-family migrant have to continue living with an abusive husband in fear of being deported? Instead of taking up the problems of migrant women’s social and economic empowerment, the expert puts the incident into the context of the discussion of cultural differences. Russian women, the majority of whom have good education and professional skills, are being presented in sexist terms, as housewives, who’s only contribution to the Norwegian society is to take care of the “failed” men. The limited space, given by the newspaper article, is being used to praise the system of gender equality and Norwegian nation, instead of taking up the issues of trans-national justice and women’s solidarity. The expert who is positioned as a public figure who is fighting for women’s rights, by appealing to the values of gender equality, in reality contributes to the creation of distance between Norwegian and Russian women. The speculative discussion about progressive or patriarchal properties of Russian versus Norwegian women overshadows real issues of migrant women’s empowerment.

## Essentialisation of Victimhood: Running from Economic Problems

In the following, I will reveal tendencies towards stigmatization of Russian women as economic victims. Thus, in the gathered materials, migrant women are presented, in line with the most common scholarly descriptions of migrant gendered subjectivities, as contested identities put to the test by processes of social marginalisation and global

economic misbalances (Daugstad and Sandnes 2008). In line with the wide-spread explanations of women's migration in terms of economic push and pull factors, the interviewed experts perceive Russian family migration as a part of the phenomenon of social instability in Russia. Occurred violence is being explained as an intrinsic part of migrants' 'turbulent' biographies. The following judgement of the policeman is one of the average examples of how professionals stigmatize their clients - victims of domestic violence:

*I believe that many Russian women actually know about that danger themselves [to become victims of domestic violence] but that they because of different reasons count on that it will go well.*

### **What reasons?**

*It could be economic reasons, poverty and such things that make them taking a chance. And again, these are only reflections, which I have done myself. It's nothing that can be documented.*

*Police man, coordinator of the team dealing with family violence*

Finding oneself in trouble, being submitted to husband's domination is interpreted as an anticipated element of migrant women's life lines. As it implicitly follows from the told stories, the problems of domestic violence have to do with the forced necessity to pursue mercantile purposes when entering marriage and impossibility to follow the ideal of romantic love.<sup>19</sup> In the centre is a concern for survival, escaping poverty and care for children, rather than personal happiness. The interviewed experts present women as representatives of most vulnerable social groups: divorced women, single mothers, young girls from poor families. When completing the image: 'economic victims from a poor country' with the descriptions about women's dependency, professionals present their clients as traditional femininities. One gets an impression that women are used to live in accordance with patriarchal family structure, where male partner is a bread-winner and a woman is "attached" to the man.

*We have had ladies, Russian ladies who have been married in Russia and have children or have been divorced. And they came here to marry a Norwegian man, got contact and got married. We have had many of them. But there were also those who were not married but were living at home with the family, but in such poverty that they came here, to Norway.*

*Crisis centre co-worker*

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19 In his overview of the history of sexuality and intimate relations in the West Antony Giddens argues that discourse on romantic love have been a dominating Western idea about intimate relations since the appearance of the genre of romantic story telling in the late 18th century (Giddens 1992).

I state that in some expert's discourses, experiences of violence are presented as a "natural" part of migrant women's lives. Some of my interviewees present foreign client's victim position, which is limited to a concrete time- and situation-related context of violence, as an essential quality, characteristic for all migrants. A Western cliché representation about poverty and "traditionalism" of Russian women allows exaggerating general gender binarism, i.e. the representation of women as subjects subordinated to men. The cliché-like representation created on the grounds of gender, i.e. women's patriarchal dependency from men, is being reinforced thorough an image of a 'migrant running from economic problems'. Derogative constructions of clients, as: "coming from a poor country" and "traditional femininities", witness, like in the previous example, of sexism and ethnicizm in professional practices. The crisis centre co-worker robs away women's agency as independent economic actors and stigmatises migrants as "poor" people. The professional cannot assume that battered women could have married because of love, were not 'poor' and were living ordinary lives in Russia. Desires to improve own wellbeing could have been interpreted as a feature common to both, native and migrant population.

## Differences between Russian and Norwegian Women?

The idea about economic victimhood and a higher risk of Russian women to get into trouble, allows pushing "Russian women" to the zone of "others", contrasting them to strong and successful Norwegian women (Longva: 2003). Native women, as some experts point out, although they also experience violence at home, belong to another group of clients; they find themselves in difficult situation because of the bad coincidence of circumstances. The fact that Norwegian women are being exposed to violence is considered to be an 'exception from the rule', rather than a 'natural state of affairs'. Thus, the interviewed police man admits, that although Norwegian women also visit crisis centres, they do not get into the same risk group:

*There are many-many Norwegian ladies who are being abused. But I believe that Russian ladies have a bigger chance to find themselves in such situation.*

*Policeman, coordinator for cases of family violence*

When actively using cliché-like representations about "difficulties in Russia" or challenges caused by the situation of family migration, experts form a subject position of "other", foreign women. Migrant femininities are constructed as "naturally predisposed" to violence in force of their special status as migrants. Professionals make accent not on the accidental character of the occurred incidents and not on the lack of understanding among partners. Rather, client's trans-national identities are problematised. Professionals emphasise factors, which lay outside the concrete situation of violence. The policeman and crisis centre co-worker construct identities of their clients as women who sacrifice their lives, run from poverty, marry wrong men, who are "picking up and delivering" wives from other countries. Alternatively, Norwegian women – although they are not immediately visible in expert's discourses – are represented as successful, marrying because of love and connecting their lives with worthy men. Expert's judgements about cases of violence

where foreign women are involved contribute to the creation of “privileged” and “less advanced” women’s subject positions.

During the last few years, researchers inquiring into women’s cross-border, Russian-Norwegian migration, have been criticising wide-spread tendencies to portray post-Soviet, women as economic victims searching for a better life abroad (Jacobsen and Stenvoll 2010). Definition of migrant women in terms of traditional femininities who have internalised the logic of patriarchy is inaccurate. As post-colonial feminist writers point out, migrant women have heterogeneous identities (different class, status and educational backgrounds) and unique personal life situations (Mohanty 1988; hooks 1997). Often migrants represent citizens of their home-countries who are most resourceful and successful in life. As research on international border-crossing shows, migration is an empowering process for women. According to the last United Nations World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, often women migrate to get rid of patriarchal authority<sup>20</sup>. Eventual economic dependence from spouses and interruptions in self-development towards successful trans-cultural consciousness (Castles and Davidson 2000, 139) are conditioned by structural discrimination and ‘grey zones’ in the Norwegian/Nordic system of integration and equality policies (de los Reyes 2002; Sverdljuk 2011). Migrant women display abilities to take independent decisions, provide own lives and lives of their children and establish harmonious relations with their partners (Sverdljuk 2009).

## Women’s Sexual Submissiveness: Russian Post-Order Bride

In the experts’ stories, women’s passivity or victimhood is also interpreted in terms of sexuality. Professionals use associations, as woman’s submissiveness to men’s dominating sexuality. Sexual submissiveness of women is interpreted as a part of the general system of patriarchal domination. Problems of Russian women are being connected with their positions as “prostitutes” who are “selling own bodies” to rich Norwegian men to get access to the country. Marriage is viewed as a commercial contract, in which woman appears as sexual victim, and man appears as a consumer. Thus, the interviewed policeman and the co-worker of the crisis centre thematize the way, how Russian women get to know their partners, in a context, in which borders between prostitution, internet contact and Norwegian men’s tours to the nearby Murmansk become blurred:

### ***Do you know how Russian women get to know Norwegian men?***

*I am actually in a way missing knowledge about this. In a couple of cases, in which I have been involved myself because I have investigated the cases, it has been in connection with the prostitution. Then they come as prostitutes. But it does not mean that I believe that all Russian women who come here are prostitutes, not at all. It could also be that men who travelled for example to Murmansk and met a lady.*

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.awid.org/eng/Issues-and-Analysis/Library/Global-migration-trends-for-women-A-review-of-the-latest-United-Nations-World-Survey-on-the-Role-of-Women-in-Development> (12.02.2011)

*In addition one certainly has all kinds of internet agencies which provide contacts between Russian women and Norwegian men, and Russian women and all possible foreign men. Thus, I believe that there are many different ways, but most common is certainly through internet.*

*Policemen, coordinator of cases of family violence*

All mentioned types of contacts, both prostitution and acquaintances made through internet imply short time of acquaintance with the partner. As far as there is an obvious tendency stigmatize prostitutes, the policeman transfers the meaning of victimhood from prostitutes to marriage migrants as well. The interviewees create implicit meanings about subordinated sexual position of Russian women who happen to marry 'bad', dominant men and activate this context when explaining cases of violence:

*They know men they marry with very little. And that man they marry could have been married to many other Russian ladies. So, it could be that it's here where the problem lays.*

*Crisis centre co-worker*

The main reason of violence is being defined in terms of women's sexual submissiveness, as a part of the image as a 'post-order bride'. Violence itself is being associated with women's sexual victimhood, which complements the constructed image of a victim of economic instability. The interviewed experts explain troubles in migrant women's lives not through a critical scrutiny of the concrete circumstances of the occurred events, but by constructing images of exotic cultural 'others' who deviate from the established 'norm' of gender relations. In particular, judgements about victimhood of Russian women are being included into the popular Norwegian discourse about 'respectable Norwegian femininity', which, as Annfelt (2007) and Stenvoll (2002) show also underpin ideologies of Norwegian welfare state. As Stenvoll underlines, within Norwegian sexual policies and throughout the history of public approaches towards sexuality, there is a clear tendency to compliment the image of a liberated woman with the quality of being "honourable". Buying/selling of sexual services or "obscure" relations as e.g. marriage to a "post-order bride", all are being constructed as "abnormal" (Stenvoll 2002, 159). Norwegian respectable, civilised women's identity is opposed to a migrant fallen, immoral and self-sacrificing femininity. Dividing lines go between those who manage to assimilate into the politically correct imaginary of gender and intimate relations (not too much promiscuity, not mixing money and intimacy) and those who are being constructed as gendered and sexual 'others'.

## Conclusions

After having studied the discourses of welfare state employees concerning helping Russian women who were subjected to violence, I came to the conclusion, that the interviewed



experts, first, have a limited perception of Russian women's gendered identities and fail to take into consideration women's agency as capacity for autonomous and purposeful action, self-development and ability to make independent choices and impose those choices on the world (Lister 1997, 36–40). The interviewed experts approach the concept of migrant women's agency in relation to the liberal feminist conception of women's choice, as a "conditioned freedom", or freedom to become "like us" (Jacobsen and Stenvoll 2010). There is a lacking awareness of that migrant women's agency emerges from specific cultural and social contexts of women's home societies/Russia. Second, a one-sided perception of Russian women-migrants as victimised gendered "others", who are dependent from their husbands, results in the tendencies of symbolic exclusion of women-migrants. The interviewed experts construct foreign femininities as outsiders of the Western/Norwegian system of gender equality. Values of gender equality which are high on political agenda in Norway and in the Nordic Countries can be misused as rhetoric tools for symbolic oppression of cultural "others". Instead of contributing to a greater inter-class, inter-gender and inter-ethnic solidarity, it can be used to create "us" – 'them' divisions. When becoming migrant women's "friends" or performing paternalistic attitudes towards female migrants, some experts marginalise their clients and construct them as outsiders of the nation and national system of welfare. Gender equality as far as it is being presented as a national value serves as a tool for exclusion of the subjects who do not belong to the nation through ethnic origin. Third, when giving much attention to the discussions of the question about gendered "cultural differences", the interviewed experts neglect other factors, as structural hindrances, imperfections of legislation and integration policies, which cause sufferings in migrant women's lives.

At the background there is the process of ideological and discursive construction of nation with the help of categories of gender and ethnicity. Thus, Keskinen writes: "Gender, sexuality and family relations play a central role in the symbolic formation of the nation and its boundaries, as well as that of "Europe" and its "others" (Keskinen 2009, 258) Ideas about gender can become a symbolic 'glue' to hold together the imagined collectivity of the nation and respectively exclude subjects which belong to other ethnic, cultural or national collectivities (Yuval-Davis 1997). The analysis calls for re-visiting nation-based conceptions of gender equality approaching gender issues on the basis of the principles of trans-versalism and cultural tolerance (Brah 1992). When ethnocentric discourses penetrate in the practices of welfare state employees, central principles of the welfare state as support of each citizen on individual grounds (Rawls 1971) are in danger of being violated. In European context, the constructed negative image of the "other" as "outsider" of European "West" serves for 'epitomizing problems of globalization' (Jacobsen and Stenvoll 2010) and creating symbolic divides between European "West" and "East". Existing social and political structures become reinforced, as e.g. strict immigration policies and related nationalist ideologies (Stenvoll 2002). Differentiations between "us" and "them" robs away the spirit of social solidarity, which is laying on the basis of the welfare state.

# PART 4. FORCED MIGRATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITIES

# Chapter 6. Åsa Gustafson: Gender Relations in Times of Migration. Bosnian Refugees in Sweden

## Introduction

When people migrate within a country, whether between cities, between rural areas or between the two, they face many changes. Adults change workplaces, children change schools or caretakers, both have the opportunity to make new acquaintances and friends, and sometimes they must change their daily routines. Different regions in a country may differ in terms of prevailing cultural norms and traditions as well. Migration always implies changes. When people migrate to other countries, they face even more changes: a new social welfare system, new judicial regulations, but also more or less new cultural norms and traditions. Usually people who migrate are more deeply integrated into their country of origin than the new country, at least in the beginning. The changes involved in migration are not external or separate from gender relations but rather constitute part of and shape women and men's gendered spaces of action. When migration is voluntary, the majority of these changes are often perceived by those migrating as positive. But what happens when the migration is involuntary, when the migration is due to war and/or ethnical cleansing? Newly arrived refugees are affected by various forms of economic and social inclusion, but more obviously by forms of exclusion. There are many cases of involuntary and forced migration in our world, but this text is concerned specifically with migration from former Yugoslavia to Sweden. One interesting aspect is that like Sweden today, former Yugoslavia had formal gender equality but not substantial gender equality. This makes the study of migration and the local contexts in Sweden propitious for understandings of individual refugees' choices of action within their gendered spaces of action in different communities.

New life situations, including refugee situations, often prompt actors to question their habitual ways of organizing everyday life, for example, who should do what. New questions are raised. New thoughts are formed. In times of change, habitual structures, such as gender relations and conceptions of femininity and masculinity, become visible to actors, who may in turn question these. Bosnian refugees, women and men, have felt tensions due to their new living conditions in local contexts in Sweden. Some have felt strong tensions concerning images and conceptions of femininity and masculinity and in many cases question established and taken for granted gender relations. The consequences have been frictions, conflicts and reconsiderations. The naturalness of gender and gender relations have been questioned in a way that would not have occurred in the absence of migration between communities or to another country. When individuals or groups

move from one country or community to another, this raises aspects of voluntary and involuntary changes, and positive and negative changes. In this case, changes related to gender relations and gendered spaces of action.

The aim of this text is to illustrate the dynamics between structural conditions and gendered spaces of action, and how people relate to, manage and make use of these conditions in times of involuntary migration. What changes in gender relations are related to involuntary migration? What changes could be seen as context-specific? Which structural conditions expand or constrain men and women's gendered spaces of action? And consequently, how are gendered spaces of action related to individual experiences of gender relations?

This will be done with findings from a study conducted among Bosnian refugees living in Malmö, a large city in the south of Sweden, and Umeå, a medium-size city in the north of Sweden, during 1996–1997. The study participants had received permanent permission to stay in Sweden during 1992–1995. Qualitative interviews were conducted between 1996–1997 with 38 Bosnian refugees (21 women and 17 men) and with 25 key informants (different professionals working with refugees). The two settings differed in terms of their conditions for integration, but in general they shared similar aspects with regard to gender relations, which became clear during conducting and analysing the interviews. When writing this text, I have analyzed anew my empirical material from my doctoral dissertation, *Fragile Patterns of Life. Integration and normalisation processes among Bosnian refugees*<sup>21</sup> (Gustafson 2004), but with a slightly different focus than before. In the dissertation I examine several dimensions of the experience of Bosnian refugees in Sweden, among these the gender dimension

In this text I will begin with a short background to the subject and thereafter present the concepts of gender and gendered space of action in relation to refugee conditions. Secondly, I will analyze empirical examples from two domains: heterosexual family life and civil society organisations, relating these to other studies of Bosnians primarily in Austria, Holland, Italy and the United States (US) as well as general migration studies and family studies in Sweden. In the final part, I will summarize the findings.

## Background

Former Yugoslavia with its six republics had a complex history with different political systems. From 1945–1990, a communist one-party system with leader Tito steered the country until 1980. It was a one-party system but the six republics did at certain times behave like different parties. Even though it was a communist system, small-scale private enterprises were accepted. During this period gender equality was part of the communist program. In Yugoslavia's first post-war constitution in 1945, gender equality and women's rights to economic assistance in times of childbearing were stated. Tito promoted women's rights to work, be economically independent and to organize, but only within the party, not outside. As a consequence of the political system, work aiming at ameliorating gender

<sup>21</sup> Gustafson (2004) *Sköra livsmönster. Om integrations- och normaliseringsprocesser bland bosniska flyktingar.*

equality had to be arranged within the party's limits. As in other countries with formal gender equality, substantial gender equality was less implemented. The labour market was very gender-segregated and women were underrepresented in leadership positions. After Tito's death, formal gender equality questions were less prominent and the number of women in political bodies decreased, but nevertheless gender equality was part of people's consciousness (Ramet 1999; also Djuric 1995).

Today people from former Yugoslavia and principally from Bosnia and Herzegovina live all over the world, many of them in Sweden<sup>22</sup>. Bosnians<sup>23</sup> who came to Sweden lived, at least during the first years, under radically different living conditions compared those that existed in Yugoslavia prior to the war as well as compared to most people living in Sweden. The living conditions of refugees also depended on the various cities and towns where they started their new lives and which offered different kinds of social networks, labour markets and so on. On the one hand, refugees are shaped by the personal experiences of loss and eventual trauma. Yet, it is important to note that the majority of Bosnians came to Sweden in the beginning of the war and were not as traumatised as those who stayed and struggled during the entire war. On the other hand, refugees are affected by policy decisions at national and local levels, by group-relations with the majority population and other immigrant groups who are living in the same communities. The first Yugoslavs immigrated to Sweden as labour migrants in times of prosperity during the 1960s. In the 1990s, Sweden admitted almost solely refugees to the country. When Bosnian refugees arrived in the 1990s, asylum policies were still comparatively generous, but Sweden, as were most European countries, was in an economic recession. Refugees came to a Sweden in an economic "crisis" which structurally affected their living conditions as well as their overall social and cultural integration. The refugees received apartments and economic allowances from their first day in Sweden. They also received introduction to Swedish society and language courses, but the refugees had difficulties getting employment. If they had children, as long as both parents studied or had employment they were offered day care for the children<sup>24</sup>. The recession contributed to a situation where they had to face attitudes among the majority Swedish population that increasingly favoured restrictive asylum policies as well as new government policies that emphasized repatriation.<sup>25</sup> The relations within and between the different ethnic groups from former Yugoslavia were affected and earlier labour migrants and refugees distanced from each other in some cases and made use of each other in others.

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22 Between 1992–1995, 111 160 persons from former Yugoslavia applied for asylum in Sweden. Of these, the Swedish authorities estimate that around 57 000 came from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prior to 1995, statistics of asylum seekers were not disaggregated by sex. The majority of asylum seekers from Bosnia and Herzegovina came before 1995 and therefore the available sex-disaggregated statistics from 1995 and onwards say very little. This hinders the use of a gender perspective because refugees were not categorized as women and men but as gender-neutral. Therefore I have found that no one has been able to follow when and how many women and men have entered Sweden from other countries.

23 In this text the term Bosnians is used for people coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of those interviewed presented themselves as Bosnians or Yugoslavs. The refugees in this study came to Sweden in the beginning of the war and most of them had left because they did not agree with the ethnic differentiation underway and consequently with ethnic cleansing.

24 Occasionally they had to wait some weeks before getting a day care place.

25 For further reading about the refugees' normalisation of everyday life, integration and repatriation see Gustafson (2004) with a summary in English.

Sweden is also a country where official gender equality has been a state priority, and in global frameworks, it is a good country in this respect. Yet real differences in living conditions clearly persist between women and men (Ahrne and Roman 1997, 139; SOU 1998, 6; Bekkengen 2002). The Swedish welfare system has promoted a dual earner system even if women often work part-time (Sundström 2003). In terms of formal rights and obligations, gender equality has almost<sup>26</sup> been achieved, but people's lives show stark differences regarding the daily organisation of work and family life. Who earns the main household income, who takes primary responsibility for domestic and caretaking tasks, and who has greater opportunity for leisure activities or political work, all these explain de facto gender differences despite formal gender equality.

## Gender Relations and Gendered Space of Action

In this text, the point of departure for illustrating the dynamics between structural conditions and how people relate to, manage and make use of these conditions in times of involuntary migration is gender relations and gendered space of action.

The tension between structural conditions and concrete possibilities for personal action and choice is a consequence of how contextual conditions and integration patterns are interwoven in both the former and current society. In a new society, gendered patterns of action evolve in relation to new living conditions, new norms and values, what is seen as knowledge and desired experiences and what gives people status in their new society. Patterns of action are also shaped by, for example, age, education, class and ethnic belonging and sexual orientation. Migrants, and especially refugee migrants, in Sweden often find that their education, professional training and labour experiences are not valued, which in turn may reinforce ethnic belonging while diffusing class belonging.

There are many aspects that contribute to a power structure or to people's privileged or subordinate positions. Access to time, spare time, money and social contacts are central aspects when it comes to individuals' possibilities for negotiation and their positions in society but also in a relation. Gender is something that we continuously negotiate and re-evaluate even if gender structures are often perceived as stable or static.

What is perceived as feminine and masculine and as gender-neutral is partly influenced by political, economical and social structures, as well as social and cultural symbols and traditions, and partly by the negotiations of women and men. This means that sometimes women and men act within symbolic gender frames and sometimes outside them. Women and men live their lives within these frames – as they perceive them – and therefore these perceived frames are everyone's own "reality". It could be said that to be a woman or a man is a practical everyday experience.

It is important to point out that life as a refugee in Sweden consists of specific possibilities and limitations due to existing patriarchal, social and economical structures in each local society. These possibilities and limitations will be illustrated in the next section by

<sup>26</sup> Military service is one area where formal differences between women and men have existed and continue to exist.

concentrating on Malmö and Umeå. At different times and places more specific gendered spaces of action may dominate. This is a question about dominating ideas regarding what is conceived as feminine and masculine in a conventional way or what, in relation to that, is conceived as exceeding the symbolic boundaries. In this text, I use the term gendered space of action to mean that which is created by both official welfare state policies, following the existing political and judicial framework, as well as culturally normative values. The official frameworks of a country or community are not always (or normally not) in accord with culturally normative values. What is counted as an individual's space of action is connected with, for example, gender, ethnic belonging, class, age, and urban/rural residence (cf. Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996; Cockburn 1998; Gustafson 2004; Morokvasic 1991; Thurén 1996; Ålund 1991).

In relation to the conceived space of action, each individual has different expectations for and demands of what actions they can and should take, what occupations they can pursue, what leisure activities they can engage in, what domestic responsibilities they should fulfil and so on. These expectations and demands are based on conceived symbolic gender frames (the conceived gendered space of action) that are arbitrary and changing, as focused on in this text. Factors that facilitate or limit an individual's ability to act are therefore both general political and economical structures and individual skills and social circumstances.

For Bosnian refugees, it is on the one hand a question of the somewhat different framework they encounter in Swedish society and the possibilities and limitations this offers them. On the other hand, it is also a question of how they manage and make use of this partly different space of action. From a gender perspective, this has created tensions within different relations and is a prominent aspect of the change that refugees go through regardless of whether they want to or not.

## Contingencies

In this section, I will discuss two concrete contingencies that emerged in the findings of my study, namely heterosexual family life and civil society organisations.

### **(Un)employment, housework and caring**

Gender and ethnicity interact even if there is no simple relation between them. Some aspects of gender relations differ in relation to ethnic belonging. One example is that there are definitions of what are regarded as "ethnically specific" forms of femininity and masculinity. Examples of this could be parenthood, housework, sexual demands and impediments, and possibilities to negotiate them according to your own wishes (e.g. Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996; Cockburn 1998). Even if these forms are sometimes regarded as stable, there are other aspects, for example class, age, education, religion, whether you belong to the majority or to a minority group, that also influence the way women and men form their lives. Due to power relations in society, dominant conceptions of gender and dominating forms of gender relations affect minority groups' conceptions

of gender and their internal gender relations more than the other way around (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1996, 113). In Sweden the welfare system is one example.

Among the study participants, women and men with university education generally had paid work before the war. Those who had children organised childcare in different ways. It was not unusual for grandparents to take care of children while parents worked. When talking about the period prior to the war, participants often described their couple relationships as reflecting gender equality. Often aspects of a modern city life came up. But, as the interviews progressed, a household organization arose that is frequently found in Sweden as well as in both Eastern and Western European countries (Nordenmark 2004). In this household organization, women have greater responsibilities than men and do more of the routine child and elderly care as well as domestic work. Bosnian refugees in the study generally started a Swedish language course or a complementary educational course when they arrived or when they got their permanent permission to stay. Both women and men seemed very ambitious to recommence work as long as they did not have a severe trauma that prevented this. However, the reality for most Bosnian refugees in both Umeå and Malmö was that many of them had to take several courses before being allowed to work, they lacked necessary official documentation (e.g. diplomas) to obtain employment in their trained occupation, and consequently they did not get employment in their former occupation. Many of them were unemployed for shorter or longer periods. These findings coincide with those in different studies among Bosnian refugees in other countries, which point to the difficulties both men and women with higher education faced in finding work in their professional field. Those with international professions like medical staff or engineers have had fewer difficulties than others professionals (Bulic and Dongieux 1999; Franz 2003a; Korac, 2001). At the same time it is important to note that in both Sweden and Holland refugees received economical assistance to complement their education, which was not the case in the US, Italy or Austria.

In very few of the families interviewed, women had worked full-time in the home before the war. In all of these cases, the women did not have university education. The men had had paid employment and were able to provide economically for the entire family. The women carried out the housework and, where needed, took care of the children or/and elderly. After migrating to Sweden and receiving permanent residence, both women and men were required to take language courses and, following the Swedish welfare system, both were almost necessarily oriented towards getting paid employment. All adults are supposed to work since hardly any newly arrived refugee can find employment with a salary sufficient to sustain an entire family. Yet not everyone in these families was able to get employment.

Many Bosnian refugees arrived in Sweden in the same time period, and they were generally young or middle-aged families. According to the findings of my study, many of the refugees met a partner (often another refugee from Bosnia and Herzegovina) in the beginning of their stay in Sweden and had children during their first years in Sweden. This meant that when the woman used her parental leave, the man could go on with language courses, other courses, paid work or unemployment. As I have understood,



Bosnian fathers were not more interested in taking parental leave than fathers in general in Sweden, which means that they used much less of the parental leave than mothers. Apart from the parental leave, my study shows, as do others, that when there is a shortage of day care, both native and immigrant men and women most often prioritize men's work and educational activities over childcare at home (e.g. Korac 2001)

Britt-Marie Thurén (1996) uses the term "gendering" in order to study and compare different communities/societies and to grasp what, when, and how different forms of gender labelling are used and their consequences. She looks at the relation, situation, symbol or thing and their gendered strength, scope and hierarchical order. This in turn reveals the power of the cultural frame of femininity and masculinity, the extent to which people will be sanctioned if they do not follow the frame, the amount of areas in a given society that are gender-neutral, and the amount of areas that are connected with either women or men. Finally Thurén points out that even if women and men often do different things at different places, it is still likely that a hierarchical order of their positions exists.

A common strategy among families where the woman had work and the man did not was to find an attitude that made the situation alright for both of them. The types of attitudes they chose varied among different women and men. One man "changed his interests" towards cooking and sewing but at the same time talked about the situation as temporary. He was only "in between" his earlier career and his upcoming career. Prior to the war it was common to live close to the extended family (Simić 1999), but as a consequence of war and migration families were separated. After migration there were fewer adults available to take care of children, but limited household budgets also restricted social activities. In some cases, this resulted in fathers having closer contact with their children. They said that before migrating to Sweden they had not taken as much practical responsibility for their children or spent as much time with them as now. Several fathers said that they appreciated this contact with their children. Men handled their un-employment (when their wife had employment) in different ways. Some men by focusing on ethnically-oriented club activities, while others focused on repatriation, and yet others looked for work within the "black market" (under the table). The difference between the official rights and social and cultural normative values that exist in Sweden and within different local communities contributed to the complexity of existing spaces of action but also to the possibilities to develop individual claims when choosing how, when and where to act. A flexible way of handling gender labelling and the perceived gendered space of action, such as the man who changed his interests, could be seen as a functional way of covering up the loss of status associated with being unemployed.

The Swedish historian Yvonne Hirdman (1990) acknowledges two logics that she finds to have been the basis for gender organization in Western society from the end of the 19th century. The first logic is the ways in which women and men, and what is interpreted as feminine and masculine, are kept apart. This could be both spatial and via dichotomies which means that places, objects, tasks, behaviours, qualities and attributes are made into either female or male. The second logic is the standard primacy of the male. Hirdman says that these logics permeate women and men's everyday life as we act in relation to

contracts that maintain these logics. Almost all of the Bosnian women who participated in my study mentioned or suggested that it was a difficult or a tricky situation when they had courses or paid work and their husbands did not. On the one hand, they were happy that they had the opportunity to get paid work, learn Swedish better, develop contacts outside the family and build a wider friendship network. On the other hand, women were worried about their husbands' mental condition. The Bosnian women interviewed, both with or without paid work, clearly expressed their concern for the well-being of their entire family and often referred to extremely difficult periods they had been going through, such as the loss of relatives or friends, a house, a city, or dreams for the future. They often indicated that it was very important, primarily for the children but also for themselves, to have continuity and stability within family life. Most of them considered their own paid work as one factor to ensure this. Yet all of them mentioned the importance of their husbands having paid work as an important aspect of family stability, not only economically but also psychosocially. This same picture was depicted by the men interviewed when they discussed the family situation. They either focused on the importance of both spouses having paid work or on their own need for paid work to be able to take care of their family. They pointed out that if they could economically provide for their family, they would no longer be in a dependent position, which would in turn place the whole family in a different light in relation to the children's day care centre, school, leisure activities and Swedish society in general. It could be said that men felt a duty to provide economically for the family as a part of achieving their masculinity.

One woman interviewed commented that earlier neither her husband nor she considered it a problem that he held the central position in the family. They both knew their duties, their responsibilities and their powers. Now, in contrast, she pointed out that in the new order, which was not self-chosen, she had paid work and responsibilities within the civil society and he did not, and this had negative consequences, and for her was more trying than the former order where the man had had the central position in the family. Her new position in society and the tasks attached to it could have given her self-esteem and a feeling of importance for the family's situation in Sweden. But she did not convey this feeling and instead said she felt responsible for symbolically restoring her husband's earlier position so she acted to hide the degradation of his status. In a sense, the degradation of the man's status becomes the woman's responsibility due to gender structure in society. A similar experience has been found among Bosnian heterosexual couples in Austria (Franz 2003b) and in Norway where Lauritsen (1996) interviewed families of Iranian origin. The women there felt it was difficult to take advantage of their situation when their husbands felt powerless.

In many parts of the world there is still a strong tradition of a male breadwinner, and this is not easy to change. This is evident even among families in Sweden whose circumstances concerning employment and unemployment have changed. Nordenmark (1999) examined the connections between unemployment, family life and well-being within the family in Sweden. His study found that men do not change in terms of taking on housework as much as women do when they are unemployed and that well-being within the family is closely related to a perceived fair division of housework. As discussed earlier, women do

more housework overall, regardless of class, age and ethnic background, but in times of their own unemployment, women do even more housework whereas men do not increase their share of the housework when they are unemployed. One way of understanding this is that due to the gender structure and consequently the gendered spaces of action, women and men find it more natural to take care of the entire family's well-being in different ways: women in terms of practical housework and caring, and men in terms of economical providing.

In sum, when the man and not the woman was unemployed it led to both a limited economical situation and unbalanced gender relation. Among study participants, this appeared to be more easily resolved in Malmö than in Umeå. In Malmö, there was a much larger population of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and from former Yugoslavia than in Umeå, which provided them greater opportunities to work within the "black market". This often meant working with or for persons from former Yugoslavia.

### **Networks and participation in organizations and club activities**

Malmö is a multiethnic and multicultural town. In Sweden, the largest group of persons with some part of their background in former Yugoslavia lives there. To a lesser extent, Umeå could also be described as a multiethnic and a multicultural town. When Bosnian refugees arrived, only a few persons with origins – their own or their parents – in former Yugoslavia lived there.

Networks are extremely important when looking for formal employment but even more so within the black market. In Umeå, study participants indicated that it was important to have a network consisting of both Bosnians and people who were born in Sweden or who had immigrated from elsewhere. Meanwhile, in Malmö, you could manage most if not all day to day concerns with a network consisting only of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and from former Yugoslavia. In Sweden and Holland, getting paid work is not a question of life or death since it is possible to be sustained by the social security system, whereas in Austria, Italy and USA refugees had to find work to be able to stay in the country. Nevertheless, in all these countries, networks were used for economic reasons and these networks often transgress ethnic lines, demonstrating that ethnical conflicts may be subordinated to fostering economic possibilities. But when life in the new country becomes more stable, reliance on networks decreases (Gustafson 2004; Franz 2003b; Korac 2001; Slavnic 2000).

The ethnically-organized club activities differed much between Malmö and Umeå. In Malmö, a large part of civil society is built around ethnic group belonging. Consequently, there are clubs that originated in former Yugoslavia and others that were created shortly after refugees arrived from Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Umeå, the refugee community started a club that was supposed to embrace all refugees' wishes. Of course, that was not possible so the situation became in one way similar to that in Malmö. Refugees chose to take part in ethnically-oriented club activities or they chose not to. In both towns there were international women's organisations. I did not find any international organisations

for men only. In Malmö, there were other international organisations. At the time of my interviews, I received the impression that refugees in Umeå were more likely to rely on non-ethnically oriented organizations for spare time activities than refugees in Malmö.

Of similar interest in the findings of my study is how refugees make use of clubs and organizations. More men than women used ethnically-oriented clubs daily or several times a week. The women used the same clubs only during weekends when there were activities for themselves or for the children. Even Eastmond (1998) who has studied Bosnians in Sweden noted that the clubs could be viewed as “the men’s world”. Both men and women that had chosen not to visit the clubs (anymore) said that they found the clubs too focused on ethnic group belonging and on questions of “the time before the war” or repatriation. Some men who visited the clubs said that it was a place where they could be themselves because there were many others in the same situation as themselves, for example unemployed, with thoughts on repatriation, with bad experiences (traumas) from the war. In Austria, Franz (2003b) found that many men used the clubs to “live in the past” which she found to isolate them from Austrian society. It is also important to note that the clubs were places where the refugees received information about Swedish society, the welfare system, contacts for paid work within both the ordinary labour market as well as the black market. They also got information or help selling, buying, and repairing things in addition to sending money to relatives and so on.

The women I spoke with focused on the social aspect of the clubs and the importance of activities for the children in their parents’ language. The women in Franz’s (2003b) study in Austria consciously chose to focus on language skills, children’s well-being and everyday practicalities as a way of not getting stuck in memories. One difference that I found in both Malmö and Umeå was among women who took part in international women’s organisations. These women described their participation as important for themselves in several ways. Firstly, although it also offered a social platform, they got to know people of different backgrounds, including both women who had lived all or most of their life in Sweden and others that were newly arrived inhabitants. And in these organizations the women often had different tasks so they were in some way responsible for administration or organizing activities. Bosnian women got to know women who had resided most or all of their lives in Sweden and these women became important contacts when they needed information about something in Swedish society. Some of the women interviewed commented that this had given them better contacts within, and a better knowledge about, Swedish society, than their husbands had, which sometimes created a tension when, for example, certain decisions had to be made. These included decisions about children’s activities, priorities concerning labour market participation or education, and how to organize everyday activities and responsibilities.

Thurén (1998) has discussed how the availability of cultural negotiations is a power resource. She points out that everyday conversations and debates which are part of the cultural negotiations, are especially important in times of radical change. Who has access to them and where these are held are part of power relations and this changes over time. Migration can be a prelude to radical changes in the relations between genders, social

arenas that have been gender-segregated may become gender-mixed through that change. Women's and men's abilities to influence accepted notions of feminine and masculine spaces of action depend on where everyday conversations and debates are held. Thurén uses "the bar" as an example. In a Spanish context, "a bar" is a public place where men in particular can go without having a reason or specific goal, and in many ways it resembles the ethnically-oriented clubs in Malmö. A person's possibilities for participating in the cultural negotiations that take place at ethnically-oriented clubs or at international clubs depend on resources such as time, level and degree of other responsibilities, freedom of movement and even cultural expectations referring to who are expected to be where at which times. Cultural negotiations are of great importance in times of change and gendered spaces of action influence women and men's roles and outcomes in these negotiations.

## Harsh Realities and Hampered Equity: What Does All This Add Up to?

Refugees live under the inevitable situation of having to integrate into a new society according to that society's specific local economic opportunities, welfare rights and gendered spaces of action. It means that refugee families have to adapt to a new living situation in a short time. The most central point here is that in a short time span they have to reorganize family life and gender relations in relation to the specific possibilities and limitations set by the existing patriarchal, social and economical structures in the new society they inhabit.

The harsh realities in part due to the overall economic crisis in Sweden during the late 1990s had significant consequences for the living conditions of Bosnian refugees. Most immigrants find integration into a new society very important because the fewer groups they are part of, the fewer economic and social opportunities are available to them. This means that newly arrived immigrants often try to integrate in some way into their new society. It could be into the multiethnic majority society or it could be into a more ethnically homogenous economic and social group or sphere. The more a person integrates into different areas, the greater the possibilities available to him or her. A member of a minority group has more to lose than a member of the majority group if he or she does not try to integrate into areas beyond their own ethnic group. Thus social participation has tremendous importance for person's life-chances. At the same time, the ways individuals or groups are able to participate and integrate within society are highly affected by the society's inclusionary and exclusionary power structures. The Bosnian refugees in my study were to a large extent affected by exclusionary tendencies in Swedish society.

This paper has focused on women and men's gendered spaces of action when integrating into a new society. Structural conditions in the local society in terms of, for example, the employment and labour market, economic resources and social relations set limits for changed or "adapted" gender relations. Men in general spending more time at home due to unemployment and due to more limited economical resources could contribute

to greater flexibility regarding symbolic gender boundaries and therefore gender-related actions and division of labour. More flexible symbolic gender boundaries make women and men freer to choose how to act without risking being an outsider by exceeding existing symbolic gender frames. But what could be seen as “positive” changes concerning, for example, new substantive rights, new or continuing professional careers for women, or fathers having closer contacts with children, could instead result in reverse reactions. These reverse reactions are due to the gender structure and existing gendered spaces of action. One example is that a forced change from paid work to housework and caretaking could increase men’s stress because such a change opposes culturally normative definitions of “feminine” and “masculine” in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sweden. When the changes felt too big and extensive, women did what they could to affirm a gender relation where the man was superior and the women subordinated in order to improve men’s self-esteem because this was viewed as favourable for the whole family. Thus, instead of adopting more open symbolic gender boundaries, actions were taken in a reverse direction.

Gender relations that were more balanced in terms of power were viewed positively by study participants except when the changes became bigger than the family could keep pace with, in which case the original power relation stayed unchanged or even was reinforced. Women’s caretaking responsibilities coupled with the expectation that they not take up too much room or occupy positions too important in society seem to stay intact. The symbolic boundary indicating how much individuals are allowed to deviate from what is regarded as “feminine” and “masculine” is the consequence of the perceived gendered space of action. A way of interpreting this could be that family life “needs” to a certain extent gender relations that are unbalanced in terms of power in favour of men even if the formal rights in Sweden indicate something else. These tendencies could be found in different studies made among families or couples of different class, age and ethnic backgrounds in Sweden (Bekkengen 2002; Bäck-Wiklund and Bergsten 1997; Holmberg 1993; Ahrne and Roman 1997; Nermo 1994) but are stressed in times of migration (Eyrumlu 1998; Darvishpour 2003; Gustafson 2004).

In a comparison of different Western theoretical traditions, Maud Eduards (1997) found that they share at least one common aspect, namely women and men’s different spaces of action. In brief, it could be said that masculinity is characterized by action and femininity by passivity. Eduards is comparing Western theories which means that they should not be generalized to other parts of the world without considering eventual differences, but I do agree that the space of action is central for the understanding of women and men’s daily living conditions. Stereotypical conceptions and expectations of women and men primarily limit women’s space of action and consequently their living conditions, but also the living conditions of men. These conceptions, expectations and sometimes sanctions vary as Thurén (1996) writes in regard to their strength, reach and hierarchical order. This means that the situation for refugees is influenced by both the space of action which existed in the country of origin and that which exists in the new country.

Family life may be more important for a newly arrived refugee family than for a family with a relatively stable living situation because it is a dimension of life that carries on during the migration process while all other dimensions are undergoing changes. At the same time, individual careers in combination with family life may produce conflicting priorities within a refugee family or a family that has lived all or a great part of their life in Sweden. Careers, participation in leisure activities, and a functioning family life require time and commitment. In a society where women and men do not share equal responsibilities for practical housework and childcare, they do not necessarily enjoy the same choices or priorities. Women's concern for the family often implies that they subordinate their wishes to their male partners. Individual choices become a general structure that has been found in former Yugoslavia (Ramet 1999), in Sweden in the late 1990s and among Bosnians in Austria, USA (Franz 2003b), Italy and Holland (Korac 2001). At the same time, informants primarily from Malmö had noticed a great number of divorces among Bosnian couples during their first years in Sweden. This is due to both general reasons and ones specific to refugees. Several informants said that they should have divorced earlier but it did not really work out. Two reasons came up, both of which could be seen as something quite general for all migrants, national or international. First, when couples and families move away from relatives, friends and social networks, some of the links uniting them disappear, making it easier to split up. Second, the negative consequences in terms of local norms and values would have been too great if they had divorced prior to migration. Some women said that they felt socially and economically secure in Sweden which they related both to the welfare system and to local norms and values. Another reason for divorce coincides with the refugee situation. When limited opportunities in Sweden became too trying or traumas experienced during the war influenced everyday life in Sweden, it became too difficult to live together.

A more open space of action means more possibilities to act. The organisations and clubs that refugees used opened up and limited their spaces of action at the same time. Women who had responsibilities within international women's organisations indicated that local activities could strengthen their self-esteem and consequently their possibilities for making use of existing local spaces of action in a positive way. This could also be the case for some men who had responsibilities within ethnically-oriented clubs. In all cases, organisations and clubs constituted important arenas for making useful contacts. At the same time, some of the refugees interviewed indicated that certain men (re)invented<sup>27</sup> ideas about very limited and segregated spaces of action for women and men at ethnically-oriented clubs. They attempted to transmit these ideas within the clubs and in their own families.

A space of action is in part shaped by overall gender structures and in part by the ways in which refugees are integrating into a new society. One central aspect of the overall gender structure is that women in general take more responsibilities for men than vice versa. This becomes crucial when the family is going through radical changes that limit its living conditions economically and socially. Among refugee families, when women get more opportunities than men to work and participate in public life, in civil society and so

<sup>27</sup> I do not know whether they had these ideas before migrating or developed them in the face of a trying situation in Sweden.

on, greater tension may be placed on gender relations than in families that have a more permanent living situation. Women tend to reorganize gender relations so that they give priority to men and their wants. A conclusion to be drawn from this is that women in heterosexual relationships may face heightened difficulties in making use of opportunities in a new society if their male partners do not enjoy similar possibilities. Social exclusion from, for example, the labour market and non-ethnically oriented organizations, imposes limits on refugees and makes integration more difficult. When men are subjected to this kind of social exclusion it limits women's space of action more than the other way around.

Being able to regard a new situation as self-chosen together with being able to maintain a professional identity through studying, temporary work and so on may make acceptance of a greater flexibility concerning gender-related actions more credible to refugees. This in turn could open up more open spaces of action for both women and men and, in the long run, foster change towards more equal gender relations. Those who are well-integrated within both the majority society and an ethnic internal community are also those who are more easily able to see and make use of greater gender flexibility within a new society. This means that both women and men need to have an active role in society if they are to reap the benefits of a greater gender flexibility. To be able to participate and feel integrated into both the majority society and within an ethnic internal community requires not only that formal rights exist which take into account the special situation of newly arrived refugees and the gendered structure of society, but also that refugees are able to manage and make use of the new circumstances.



# Chapter 7. Mojca Pajnik: The Demand behind Trafficking in Women. Perspectives from Central-Eastern Europe

## Introduction<sup>28</sup>

Until recently, the supply side of trafficking in human beings and the conditions in the countries of origin have received substantial attention from researchers, academics, NGOs and policy makers, while little has been done on the demand side. The demand for victims in the sex industry can be divided into at least three components. The first factor that creates demand relates to the customer/client who seeks out women and children for the purpose of purchasing sex acts. The second factor is represented by the profiteers in the sex industry, such as traffickers, pimps and brothel owners, as well as the corrupt officials who make money from sex trafficking. Culture represents the third factor that indirectly creates a demand for victims: i.e. the demand for the “unknown,” as clients report. Here the media also play an important role; media depiction of the phenomenon influences public knowledge and opinion about the sex trade. Although human trafficking is a high priority on the political agendas, the measures to counteract it often have very little to do with protecting women’s human rights. The policy makers seek primarily for solutions involving control of state borders, and protection of the state from “unwelcome” or “illegal” migration and are interested in the regulation of “public order and morality.” This perspective on addressing the issue usually neglects the most vulnerable part of the chain: i.e. the perspective of the victim, who is often excluded from policing priorities.

In contextualizing human trafficking, particularly trafficking in women, as a phenomenon subject to the practices of demand for sexual services, this chapter aims to address an aspect of human trafficking that hasn’t received much research attention. Demand is placed in a larger context of complex relations within the sexual industry, and is debated as an urgent issue that significantly co-shapes the multiple realities of trafficked women. The chapter consults (the sparse) literature on this topic to analyze client aspirations in the sex industry, with the purpose of exploring the connections to trafficking in women.

To provide empirical examples, the chapter refers to the results of a regional study analyzing both the supply and the demand for sexual services. The study was conducted in 2006 in some Central-Eastern European countries: Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and

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<sup>28</sup> Acknowledgement: I express my thanks to **Urša Kavčič** for her assistance in drafting an earlier version of this paper.

Poland.<sup>29</sup> The research placed an emphasis on narration: by relating the personal stories of women working in the sex trade, their clients, the organizers of prostitution (pimps), policy makers and NGO representatives, the study discussed the complex issues of the sex trade, pertaining to both the supply and the demand aspects of human trafficking. Since the argument of this chapter specifically refers to the demand issues, we limit the present analysis to an investigation of client narratives.

In conducting the regional study, we were also interested in how “outside” observers who do not necessarily have direct experience with prostitution or human trafficking perceive the two phenomena. To find out what adult males in general thought about human trafficking and prostitution, a public opinion survey was employed in Hungary and Slovenia.<sup>30</sup> In what follows, therefore, we consult both the client narratives and the opinions obtained by the quantitative survey.

## Conceptualizing Demand

Answers to questions such as who is to be counted as a trafficked person forced to offer sexual services, what does voluntary exposure to offering sex mean, and what is meant by demand are not easy to define, owing to various connections to many other dimensions of the social, economic and political organization of societies. The states’ policies strive to differentiate the debate on trafficking from that on migration, and treat smuggling and trafficking as distinct phenomena, at the same time separating trafficking from prostitution. When discussing forced labour and slave-like working conditions, there is actually no real need to provide clear-cut distinctions between forced labour involving an “illegal” migrant, a smuggled person, or a victim of trafficking. These distinctions may be important to those who attach political priorities to issues of border control and fighting criminal networks, but they are far from obvious to those who are exploring the living situations and experiences of migrant workers in relation to their social position and situation in the labour market, the sex industry included.

One of the most visible changes in the sex industry in the past years has been its rapid extension and massive diversification. Commercial sex services can be obtained both legally and illegally, and the line between commercial sex and other sex-related consumer practices, such as tourism, leisure and entertainment, has become blurred. The question that arises from this is whether the expansion of such a market fuels trafficking. Research findings (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003; Bianchi et al. 2007) show that there is no automatic relationship between consumer demand and any particular form of employment relation in the sex industry. In theory, demand for any commercial sex service can be met by someone who is working independently and freely as well as by those who work in the slave-like conditions. However, in practice it can be expected that the rapid expansion of the sex market, which is stigmatized and criminalized, will be

29 I draw on the IOM research study, *In-Depth Applied Research to Better Understand the Demand Side of Trafficking in Persons*, the results of which are available in Bianchi et al. (2007). When describing data that relate to Slovenia specifically, I also consult the interim national report (Pajnik and Kavčič 2006).

30 The study was based on a random representative sample that included 477 adult male respondents in Hungary and 306 respondents in Slovenia. More is available in Bianchi et al. (2007).

associated with an increase in abusive labour practices. In this sense, growing consumer demand represents one factor contributing to the phenomenon of forced labour in the sex industry. Another is the fact that those who consume services in the sex market often have an interest in a person rather than simply in the product of his/her work. The worker's sex, age, gender, nationality, as well as appearance and linguistic capacities can matter a great deal to those who buy labour, including sex services. It is therefore more likely that consumer demand in this sector is more closely related to the phenomenon of trafficking or forced labour than in other sectors (Pajnik and Kavčič 2006).

## **About the Clients**

The few research studies (Kinsey et al. 1948; Monto 2000; Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2003) that explore the demand issue show that the general demand for prostitution comes in great part from men; this fact does not deny the existence of female demand but just shows the need to explore this side as well. Men who use sexual services are designated by various names: consumers, clients or customers. According to one of the first studies in the area of demand conducted in the US (Kinsey et al. 1948), 69 percent of men seek a sex service from a prostitute at least once in a lifetime. More recent studies dating from the 1990s give lower figures: 16 to 18 percent of men and 2 percent of women seek a prostitute at least once in a lifetime, while 0.6 percent of men regularly use their services (Monto 2000). In Europe this percentage ranges from 7 percent (in the UK) to 39 percent (in Spain) (Hughes 2004: 6). In Asia, the percentage is higher: 37 percent of men in Japan and 73 percent in Thailand (because of sex tourism) (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2002).

It seems that the motivation for purchasing sex services is largely dependent on the social background and education of clients. It has been established (Monto 2000) that men with secondary education are attracted by the idea of forbidden sex as such, while men with lower levels of education are motivated primarily by the difficulties they have in establishing conventional partner relations. Married men are more likely to seek commercial sex services to pursue sexual practices in which they cannot engage with their partners, while unmarried men tend to do it to avoid a "conventional relationship," or because they have difficulty maintaining such a relationship.

Data on the frequency of the use of sex services differ. Some indicators suggest that the group of regular users of sex services creates the majority of the demand in the commercial sex industry (Hughes 2004). A Norwegian study has shown that 10 percent of men purchased sex service 3 times, somewhat more than 50 percent did it 20 to 50 times, while slightly more than 22 percent purchased sex services more than 50 times (Hoigard and Finstad 1986). Some researchers divide male consumers into occasional and regular consumers. The former are familiar with pertinent legislation and more approving of legal restrictions. They attach more importance to potential public condemnation of prostitution use. The latter are more likely to humiliate a prostitute or behave violently. At the same time, they ignore legal restrictions and continue to engage in their practices regardless of the legal consequences (Månsson 2004).

Studies concentrating on the sexual behaviour of male users most often examine the reasons for seeking paid sex services, the motives and desires, and collect data on the age of users and frequency of use. Symptomatically, they leave aside those aspects that do not pertain to the male users exclusively, but also to the prostitutes. In line with this, one will not find discussion of women's attitudes towards men who use prostitution. They do not thematize women's demand for sex services, same-sex or trans-gender prostitution. The studies on the demand for sex services are too often limited to the examination of male consumers' behaviour, while the economic and legal aspects of the sex industry are left out, as are gender relations and the governmental response through policies (Pajnik 2008).

## **On the Sex Trade**

Placing demand in the economic sectors leaves us with the need to thematize not only client behaviour, but that of the profiteers in the sex industry as well, such as traffickers, pimps and brothel owners. The third party organizers of prostitution are not a homogenous group, and not all of them adopt the same approaches. There are men, as well as women and children who are involved in organizing prostitution (Kelly 1999; Zavratinik Zimic et al. 2003; Štulhofer et al. 2000) for a variety of reasons, such as lack of opportunity, education and working (im)possibilities, or a range of exclusionary social practices based on discriminatory beliefs about gender, nationality and sexuality. There are also cases where people involved in recruiting, transporting or exploiting trafficked persons were once themselves victims of trafficking (Zavratinik Zimic et al. 2003).

An important distinction must be noted between those who are involved in organizing prostitution (legal or illegal) and guided by mainstream rules of business practice, and those whose involvement is guided by extortion. Among the first group, there are people who tend not to exploit the labor services of trafficked persons, because of ethical or business reasons. They understand themselves as employers and perceive women working in prostitution as employees who are paid for their work. Other third parties control and exploit women and men in prostitution by using violence, threats, confinement etc.

Recent research (Kempadoo 2005, xiv) also mentions states, national governments and multilateral corporations as those who should share the responsibility for promoting the economic interests that predominantly affect poorer people while at the same time allowing for huge profits. States, for example, derive tax revenue from prostitution, and by regulating it they contribute to a specific framing of the demand, as well. Not to mention that discourses and policies on trafficking and prostitution are initiated by governments and policy officials who should eventually also be held accountable for framing demand. For example, the situation of migrant women who work in the sex business is frequently conditioned upon state migration and employment policies that affect vulnerability and construct dependent relations. An example is the issuing of work permits, a process which often ties workers to employers and makes their legal status dependent on working relationships. In some countries work permits for entertainers are replaced by a system called *carte blanche*, which allows an employer to treat migrants as they will. The employer

is left free to choose whether or not to pay migrants, often forcing them into prostitution in order to survive, or confining them in order to prevent them from moonlighting in prostitution or from being paid at the proper rate. Through a combination of action and inaction, the state can also contribute to a weakening of the bargaining power of sex workers, thus helping to construct an environment in which exploitation for sexual services can occur (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2002).

## Demand in Central-Eastern Europe: Some Perspectives

No matter how we theorize the general demand for commercial sex, it is important to bear in mind that such analysis cannot provide definite answers on the demand for trafficked labour, since demand for sex can be met by both free as well as trafficked persons. There do however exist presumptions that we can find specific consumer demands that are more likely to be met by un-free, trafficked workers: i.e. the demand for commercial sex with people coming from abroad, the so-called “others,” or “foreign” prostitutes.<sup>31</sup> This fact could imply that there is also a significant demand for migrant prostitutes. However, results acquired within the regional study on the supply and demand side of sex services and human trafficking in some Central-Eastern European (CEE) countries (Bianchi et al. 2007) showed that it is difficult to elaborate clearly on such demand. The interviews conducted establish that there is no explicit demand for migrant prostitutes. In Slovenia, for example, none of the interviewed clients expressed interest explicitly in looking for a migrant prostitute. The same holds for clients interviewed in Hungary, Slovakia and Poland, although several respondents reported having experienced sex with migrant prostitutes. The narrations that they provided point both to patterns of “exoticizing” migrant prostitutes and to stereotyping enforcing a strong gender and ethnic bias:

*I knew some prostitutes from the former Soviet republics; they were more pleased, pleasant and receptive.*

*Client, Slovakia*

*I don't like foreign women from the East, Ukraine or Romania; they're simple, undemanding and frustrated. I have a few experiences with them. But I can imagine that being with a foreign woman can stand for something exotic.*

*Client, Hungary*

*I read some articles about women being smuggled to Germany or Turkey, but for me these are women who are completely unaware of what they are doing, not intelligent, they're first promised to get some fortune only to end up as slaves. But in Poland I've never seen that. Here we have Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians,*

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<sup>31</sup> In several countries migrant prostitutes represent a majority of the whole population of people in prostitution. One example is Germany, where foreign prostitutes represent around 50 percent of all prostitutes in the country (Gall 2006, 143).

*who make use of their situation here ... I know such cases. They come to work here, and their passports are not taken away.*

*Client, Poland*

We can identify several reasons explaining the situation. The first reason could be found, for the case of Slovenia, in the fact that the interviews were mostly conducted with those clients who use sexual services offered in private apartments. A widespread belief is that for this type of prostitution the majority of the work is performed by “national,” i.e. Slovene prostitutes, although NGOs<sup>32</sup> report that the opposite situation also holds true. The interest in the prostitute, in the person herself, could represent the second reason why clients rarely seek “foreign” prostitutes. Research findings confirm that clients may prefer prostitutes who have “proper” communication skills; i.e., they speak the clients’ native language. Clients also confirmed that women in prostitution perform the role of a social worker with whom they want to talk in confidence, and also in a common language. Below are some examples of such narratives.

*I was once with a foreigner, with a Russian prostitute. However, you’re not able to speak with her. She understands you, but when she starts to speak in Russian you have to think about it. I’m not going to ask her three times what she said.*

*Client, Slovakia*

*What is important for me in fact is this talk, not only sex, this feeling that you didn’t just pay to empty yourself and leave. You have a good feeling also as a customer. I don’t have illusions that now I’m, I don’t know what. You are like a customer, but in the meantime you forget that you are a customer. You become a partner in the conversation ... and you feel good about this.*

*Client, Slovenia*

*When I need something, when I have a toothache, I go to the dentist. We are still not used to going to a shrink, but gradually we’ll get used to it; it’s usual in the West. In my opinion these girls do socially useful work. You have a feeling that they treat you as a human being.*

*Client, Slovenia*

*There is sometimes this need, to be honest, maybe it’s stupid, to open up and talk to somebody.*

*Client, Poland*

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32 Here we refer to the interview with the president of the NGO, Ključ Society.

Beside the demand for commercial sex with migrant prostitutes, the demand for cheap and vulnerable sex workers is also presented as one place where consumer demand is more likely to be met by un-free, trafficked sex workers. Research (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson 2002) shows that specific groups of prostitute users, such as sailors, truckers and tourists are more likely to buy sex in settings where commercial sex is cheaper. This kind of demand is therefore connected to occurrences of "sex tourism," where clients from wealthier countries travel across borders in order to buy sex believing they will be able to remain anonymous and be less likely to be caught or arrested (where prostitution use is penalized). For example, there are well known cities in Northwest Russia serving demand from Finnish and Swedish tourists, as well as towns near the Czech border serving the demand from German clients (IOM 2005). The data for Slovenia also confirm the presence of sex tourism (Pajnik and Kavčič 2006). Austrian males are mentioned as users of sexual services in the Štajerska region, and Italians are mentioned in the interviews by several as major users of sexual services in towns at the coast and near the border with Italy.

The analysis of the interviews conducted in the four CEE countries (Bianchi et al. 2007; Pajnik and Kavčič 2006) shows that price plays an important role for sex buyers and that the level of demand may rise when sexual services are supplied more cheaply. It is likely that cheaper sexual services are more frequently connected to exploitative relationships between a prostitute and her "owner". Such findings, however, must not be generalized, as the consumer demand for cheap sex can also be met by voluntary and individual sex workers. However, the demand for cheap sex can also represent a demand for vulnerable sex workers, who are often stigmatized as "non-national" and are at greater risk of violence and abuse. A demand for cheap and vulnerable sex workers has been reported, but it is by no means clear whether this kind of demand acts as a stimulus for trafficking. It could equally be true that a supply of cheap workers stimulates demand.

## **Legal Frameworks Tackling Demand**

In an effort to eliminate sex tourism, especially that for the purposes of sexual abuse of children, several countries around the world have passed laws on the extra-territorial sexual abuse of children. These laws allow prosecution of national citizens for crimes committed abroad, regardless of whether the offence is punishable under the law of the country where it occurred. In addition, some countries have adopted special anti-children sex tourism measures beyond extra-territorial legislation. For example, the Protect Act<sup>33</sup> enhances the US law against American citizens who travel abroad and sexually abuse children. Americans are now subject to domestic child exploitation laws even if they commit an act abroad. The foreseen punishment is up to 30 years of imprisonment, and it criminalizes abusers as well as those who organize, assist or facilitate sex tourism. Another example is the Hawaii Bill against sex tourism (Equality Now 2004), where the bill prohibits the operation of agencies that organize sex tourism for men going abroad.

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33 Prosecuting Remedies and Tools Against the Exploitation of Children Today Act; the US Congress passed it in April 2003.

To address and restrict the demand side of trafficking and prostitution, some countries have passed laws that criminalize users of sexual services; apart from Sweden, such laws have also been introduced in Croatia and Macedonia. Here the laws were legitimized by arguing that countries in the Balkans represent simultaneously sending, transit and also destination countries for victims of human trafficking, and that sexual exploitation should be limited by restricting demand. The other reason can be found in the fact that the presence of peacekeeping forces has created an environment in which prostitution and trafficking have flourished (Hughes 2004; Human Rights Watch 2002). Both the Macedonian<sup>34</sup> and the Croatian<sup>35</sup> law criminalize buyers of sex services if they know the woman has been trafficked. However, such legal provisions are rarely applied in practice, since in order to sentence a client it must be proved that he knows the prostitute to be a victim of trafficking. However, according to research findings, clients rarely make the distinction between a “free” prostitute or a trafficked one. The clients we interviewed stressed that they would hardly recognize a trafficked person.

*I don't know. I think she would be in a bad mood... I don't know. (...) It'd be hard to recognize it. It's not necessary that she is all blue, since this is not in the interest of ... This is a question now, it would be hard ... but I think what I have, the girls [I visit] aren't [forced]. (...) And if I knew a woman would be tortured, I wouldn't return there.*

*Client, Slovenia*

*I think I could recognize [a victim of trafficking]. Well, by the feeling. I mean, it's a tricky thing, but you actually see, when you enter the room, when you see the woman and the room. I think ... well, I don't know, but I would recognize this in 30 percent [of the cases], and I would be wrong in 70 percent. (...) It's hard, in fact. Well, I think I would recognize it.*

*Client, Slovenia*

*If she told me in any way, gave me some sign that she was forced to do that against her will, I would definitely not use her, and I would not even have doubts as to whether inform somebody and help her.*

*Client, Poland*

The legislation in Sweden is unique, as it is the first country to pass a law exclusively criminalizing the buyers of sexual services. With this law,<sup>36</sup> which was introduced in 1998, prostitution was defined as a form of male violence against women. The opposite

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34 The Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia, article 418a states: “A person who uses or procures the sexual services of a person with the knowledge that that person is a victim of trafficking in human beings shall be punished with imprisonment of six months to five years.”

35 The Criminal Code of Croatia, article 175 says: “Whoever uses or makes it possible for another person to use sexual favors, or uses the person known to be trafficking victim for other illicit purposes, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of one to five years.”

36 Act Prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services (Government Offices of Sweden 2009).



situation goes for the Netherlands and Germany, where in 2000 and in 2002 they legalized prostitution and brothels. Although the Swedish law was controversial when it was accepted, the results of a survey performed in Sweden in 2002 (Jacobson 2002, 23; Hughes 2004) showed that 80 percent of people were satisfied with the provisions. The Swedish government has reported a decrease in the number of women in street prostitution as well as in the number of clients. There are also some indications that the law has had positive results as regards human trafficking; i.e., traffickers and pimps no longer consider Sweden as a good marketplace for such activities, since they cannot earn money quickly enough. They have to escort every prostitute to the client and therefore lack time for other activities related to prostitution or trafficking that would bring quick earnings. The other aspect of the law is connected to the fact that clients fear to be discovered, and they therefore demand that the purchases of sexual services take place with great discretion. Consequently, sexual services as well as human trafficking went underground, and women run the risk of being subjected to more abuse. The fact that prostitution and human trafficking are not visible also means that these women enjoy less protection.

The interviewed clients in Slovenia frequently argued that legal regulations should consider the situation of people who work in prostitution, to provide them the highest level of social protection. In this context, it is suggested that laws should make it especially easier for those who work in prostitution, who have chosen it and are not forced to offer sexual services. The majority supported legalization; still, some expressed scepticism towards such legal framing.

*I don't know why it shouldn't be legalized. If she is doing it, why not open up the trade, and health protection would be assured. Indeed, as in any other profession, this should be organized like this in every state.*

*Client, Slovenia*

*I suppose that no restrictions on this issue would be helpful, because the more something is restricted and banned, the more attractive it is.*

*Client, Poland*

*Legalization is needed! I'd legalize it quickly, draw up a law that would protect female and male prostitutes against organized crime and also against users of their services. [I'd ensure] health control and, of course, suitable taxation.*

*Client, Slovenia*

*If you legalize it, then it's everywhere. But, I don't know, it's all around also nowadays. Where it's legalized, there is even more of it. In Germany or in the Netherlands there's a lot of it, and there are many affairs. It also makes sense, more people are*

*there when compared to the two million living in Slovenia. So, I don't know, I can't say anything wise here.*

*Client, Slovenia*

The research conducted in these four CEE countries among others also addressed the issue of responsibility as far as both agents engaged in prostitution as well as in human trafficking are concerned. Attitudes towards the legal situation and practices of regularization of prostitution were measured with indicators to check opinions on punishing persons who work in prostitution and their clients. The public opinion surveys were conducted in Hungary and Slovenia (ref), and in the context of the demand-supply discussion it is appropriate here to briefly compare opinions advocating legal punishment of either clients or sex workers. The percentages of those respondents who disagree with punishing prostitutes are in both countries almost equal: 55 percent in Hungary and 59 percent in Slovenia, while 26 percent in Hungary and 22 percent in Slovenia would opt for punishing prostitutes. In respect to punishing clients of prostitutes, the share of disagreement and agreement is reversed; in Hungary 56 percent of men who participated in the study believe that clients should not be punished, and 25 percent disagree, whilst in Slovenia 37 percent of male respondents believe that clients of prostitutes should not be punished and 46 percent maintain the opposite.

If punishing people who work in prostitution seems less necessary to respondents in Slovenia in comparison to the necessity for punishing the clients, the proportion of those who agree that prostitutes should have mandatory medical checks is greater when compared to those who agree that users of prostitution should be medically checked. 98 percent of respondents agree that prostitutes should have mandatory medical checks, while less, 80 percent of respondents, agree that users of prostitution should be medically checked. It can be observed here that respondents feel greater responsibility for prostitutes, although the proportion of those who agree that clients should be medically checked is also very high.

## Future Challenges

Studying the phenomena of prostitution and human trafficking and specifically exploring their relation to the demand for specific kinds of labour has shown the complexity of relations that need to be treated by taking into account their different forms and contexts of appearance. The phenomena should be discussed in sufficiently diverse contexts, and their multiple dimensions need to be taken into account, thus not only thematizing the problems of women being sexually abused and deceived by middlepersons and criminal networks, but also considering the context of gender relations, discrimination based on ethnicity, patterns of migration, and various types of labour, as well as exploitation in the labour market.

The study of the demand side of prostitution and trafficking in specific countries of Central-Eastern Europe aimed at opening a space for debating the neglected issues of

demand. It aimed to provide space for addressing human trafficking from the point of view of the clients of prostitution, who represent visible subjects co-shaping the realities of the sex trade, and whose practices and status have been sparsely addressed in research on prostitution and trafficking. Client narratives point to the need to address human trafficking beyond the paradigm of criminality, to address processes of victimization, nationalization patterns and stereotyping.

The study also noted the ambivalent attitude towards the legalization as well as the criminalization of prostitution. The majority of public opinion survey respondents believe that decriminalized prostitution would scarcely create a favourable situation for those who offer sexual services. The clients interviewed speak in favour of the legalization of prostitution; they point out that legal mechanisms should primarily consider the situation of people who work in prostitution, in order to ensure them the highest level of protection. In this context, it is suggested that laws should make it easier for those who work in prostitution, who “choose” it, and are not forced to offer sexual services. Supporters of the legalization of prostitution chiefly opt for organized health insurance and other social rights for persons who work in prostitution.

The interviews with clients have confirmed a widespread awareness of the meaning of human trafficking. But when asked about the possibility of recognizing a potential victim of trafficking among women who work in prostitution, the majority of clients would have difficulty. Therefore, several activities should be carried out aiming at improving the chances of such recognition and enhancing levels of knowledge about trafficking and forced prostitution, for example, awareness-raising campaigns that focus on clients. The results of the interview analysis show that sexual services are frequently offered in border regions. Thus, preventive activities should also focus on clients who come from abroad.

Field work experiences show that access to women who work in prostitution and would be willing to meet for interviews is difficult, not to mention access to male, homosexual, and transgender prostitutes. There is also a lack of data on other forms of prostitution, those being practiced in jails, or prostitution for drugs. These observations point to the need for more systematic research to monitor different aspects of the phenomena and provide new data even for their most marginalized aspects, such as male prostitution, child trafficking etc. In the case of human trafficking, the few research attempts have so far explored trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and need to be supplemented by new data on the different types of trafficking, in its relation to other labour sectors, i.e. agriculture, construction, the care sector, or child begging, illegal adoption of children, forced marriages and the like. Research on both prostitution and trafficking should receive more attention in the social sciences, so as not to leave the issues to debate solely within the context of (de)criminalization and prevention measures. Interest in supporting new research initiatives should also come from the state, to overcome the still-frequent attitudes that lie behind pronouncements such as, “trafficking is not really a problem in Slovenia,” and the like.

# PART 5. POLITICAL AGENCY AND CITIZENSHIP

# Chapter 8. Ursula Apitzsch: Transnational Migration, Gender and European Citizenship

## Introduction

An analysis of the history of immigration and integration policies of the EU countries shows that there has been no acknowledgement of the special constraints of women migrants regarding citizenship. However, EU citizenship debates contributed to triggering new social movement demands including migrants. Accordingly, the implementation and political challenge of EU citizenship rights has to be addressed, with a view to establishing whether and how the erstwhile exclusively legal validity of “European” citizenship has been critically interpreted and enhanced by day-to-day practices towards establishing a concrete implementation of a more inclusive social citizenship (Wiener 2003). In my paper, I firstly outline the theoretical concept of European citizenship with special focus on gender. Secondly, I discuss the concept of citizenship in the light of new transnational migratory patterns and the current reconfiguration of the gender order in a global perspective. Thirdly, I want to question what impact different social citizenship policies have on a range of typical coping strategies in informal migration processes and how resources for these strategies are deployed according to gender. Moreover, in a fourth part of my paper I briefly comment on new legalization policies for care workers from the EU and from outside. Finally, I come to some conclusions and an outlook regarding the future of gendered European citizenship.

## European Citizenship and Gender

Citizenship is defined as a status, which accords a bundle of rights and obligations and identity, and as a practice, involving participation of various kinds (Apitzsch et al. 2007). It is a concept that promotes equality and inclusion, while simultaneously constructing boundaries and inherently containing exclusions. Modern citizenship is tightly connected to the development of nation states. The notion of modern citizenship was conceived of in different historical and philosophical backgrounds, reflecting the particular evolution of individual nation states.

Citizenship is also connected to the concept of civil society, to membership in a broader sense of community beyond nation-states. This position has been extended by a growing number of feminist scholars, seeing gender relations as one of the multiple social divisions such as class, race, ethnicity, and immigration status. They are developing an understanding of citizenship both as membership in a community and as modes of inclusion and exclusion

that shape the community. This understanding broadens the concept of citizenship to belongings, identity, and participation, all of which are underpinned by agency.

Many contemporary studies of citizenship start with T.H. Marshall (1950), whose path-breaking work analyzed civil, political, and social rights as representing a historical evolution from eighteenth- to twentieth-century Britain. Following Marshall's socio-historical concept of citizenship as entailing a triad of rights and the universalistic assumption that the concept of citizenship is based on the two tiers of rights and identity, an encompassing conception of citizenship defines it as the set of institutions which determine and reflect the *rights, access and belonging* of individuals to a polity (Wiener 1997).

Feminist scholars in this area revealed that the Marshallian concept of citizenship rests on the gendered division between public and private and between paid work and unpaid care work. In his theorization, the entitlement to social rights was conceived of as the result of labour market activities. Neglected is unpaid reproductive work, which has largely been borne by women, associated with their roles as "wives" and "mothers" *outside* the labour market.

There have long been two opposing strategies for women's inclusion into citizenship. One approach emphasizes women's equality to men as citizens by promoting women's participation in the labour market and politics. In contrast, another strategy celebrates women's particular quality mediated through maternalism and caring, arguing for new conditions of citizenship "with implications for access to social rights" (cf. Lister 1997; Pateman 1988b). There is an inherent tension between these strategies to include women in citizenship. The central question is how to overcome the gendered hierarchical dichotomy in citizenship defined as equal rights and how to valorise care as an element shaping citizenship.

From the conception of the European Economic Community (EEC), equal rights provisions were implemented (EEC-Treaty 1957). The 1970s and 80s witnessed further advancement. However, equal rights provisions have tended to concentrate on employment, and thus lacked valorisation measures for unpaid care work in its own right (Gerhard, Knijn and Weckwert 2003). These cumulative achievements were translated into the first approach toward gender mainstreaming in 1996. This has paved the way for a new legal framework for gender equality in the Treaty of Amsterdam. The gender mainstreaming efforts face a real challenge in recognizing other social divisions along with gender, which shape different social, economic, and political status of women. This aspect becomes increasingly relevant in the face of globalizing, multi-ethnic European societies. An emerging strategy for more inclusive citizenship addresses solidarity in differences and attempts a binary between equality and difference. Pivotal is the recognition of diversity of multiple belongings without freezing people into fixed group identities (Lister 1997; Yuval-Davis 1997).

The ongoing process of "citizenship practice", i.e. the politics and policymaking which contributed to establish the institutional terms and the meaning of citizenship (Wiener

1998) did introduce a “touch of stateness” (Hobe 1993; Shaw and Wiener 2001) to the European Union. Nonetheless, despite the legal stipulation of citizenship the meaning of this new constitutional norm both with a view to “European” state-building and to enhancing the quality of EU citizens’ life remains disputed (La Torre 1998; Kadelbach 2003; Kostakopoulou 2001).

While the stipulation of citizenship of the Union in Article 8a-e of the 1993 Maastricht Treaty meant a radical change in the relationship between the individual and the European Union’s polity (Curtin 1996), that innovation had neither created much praise by citizens and social movements nor was it, indeed, the result of social movement mobilization in Europe (D’Oliveira 1995). Citizenship had been introduced as the result of intergovernmental and inter-institutional debates in the European Community and then European Union which date back to the early 1970s when the EC lacked recognition as an actor on the world political stage. Following modern nation-state experiences, “European” citizenship was perceived as a means to enhance *identity* akin to that of modern states. The last decades of European citizenship policymaking demonstrated the diversity of experiences with and expectations towards citizenship (Shaw 1997) brought to the table by the policymakers’ respective individual experiences. Rather than enhancing “European” identity in a top-down fashion as envisaged by the citizenship policymakers of the first hour, Union citizenship contributed to trigger new social movement demands and raise questions about the quality of governance in the Europolity. Social movements requested citizenship rights based on residence so as to include so-called “third country nationals”, enhanced anti-discrimination legislation, and supporting policies to guarantee access to equal citizenship practice for women and men (Shaw 1999). In addition to the formal bodies of the EU, these social movements, informal groups and networks, civic initiatives, especially NGOs which were characterized as “a key feature of a vital, modern civil society” (Cohen and Arato 1992) play a significant role in the process of strengthening the EU as a democratic project. Politicizing “from below” social movements have constantly – since the 19th century – mobilised around civil rights as participatory rights and claimed human rights in order to change political and social structures as well as cultural values and practices (Gerhard 1999a). Particularly the various women’s movements in Europe have a rich tradition of interference – at different times and with a different timing – that set new standards of justice and functioned as motors of democratization, forming a wide range of discursive communities. There already is a multitude of gender studies and expertise in social movement research that investigated the different sites of citizenship participation as well as the structural barriers to and political preventions of women’s equal citizenship. Feminist theory, used to deal with differences and an intersection of differences, enables to include the whole spectrum of social and political participation and governance in a multilevel system. The challenge for any European citizenship regime is to foster unity for diversity. This equal, just and inclusive citizenship is defined to be founded on respect for diversity (Jenson 1995).

## Citizenship in the Light of New Transnational Migration Processes

My main focus is on the question how modern societies introduce foreign migration in order to deal with the double challenge of the new role of women entering the globalized world of flexible, de-regulated work on the one hand and the supply for family care duties on the other hand. Raewyn Connell (2008) interprets the post-industrial globalized re-enforcement of the gender order as follows: “Yet women are now essential to the global workforce, in the metropole as in the periphery; so another reconstruction occurs. The modern organization is proud of its flexible employment practices that allow employees to vary their hours of work to meet their domestic obligations. By a strange coincidence, the employees who take advantage of the “family-friendly” measures are overwhelmingly women, not men. The flexible neoliberal organization thus turns out to reinforce a patriarchal division of labour in the home. More: As well as doing the bulk of the child care and the domestic labour, women are now held responsible for managing the relationship between the home and the workplace under neoliberal flexibility.” (Connell 2008, 326.)

The newer political authority of women “gained by feminism and expressed in equal-opportunity policies is evaded by the move into transnational space” (ibid., 324).

The current reconfiguration of the gender order (Werbner and Yuval-Davis 1999) evidently implies a marked re-emergence of the traditional social division of labour, due to the transnational redistribution of reproductive labour along borders drawn by prosperity respectively poverty. Since the fall of the socialist regime in CEE countries, freedom of movement was granted to nationals of the then-EU member candidate states for visiting. This change was done in preparation for European “re-integration” and the expansion of the EU. The freedom of movement institutionally facilitated labour migration of CEE nationals (Morokvasic 2003). Among East European women, circular migration has become well established. They work as caregivers and cleaners in West European middle- and upper-class households, while maintaining their familial life back home. Their strategy is gendered in that they have avoided confronting gender roles (Morokvasic 1994).

The management of care work is more and more realized by mostly irregular female migration. Polish women provide care in Germany, for example, whilst still poorer Ukrainian women commute for the same purpose to Poland (Slany and Slusarczyk 2008; Lutz 2008; Lutz and Palenga-Möllenbeck 2010).

Migrant care work is part of a gendered economic restructuring worldwide. Female migrants who work as domestic and care workers in the Western world often delegate the care work for their own children to female kin and other paid helpers back home, and not to their husbands (Parreñas 2001). Identifying “a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring”, Hochschild (2000, 131) termed this phenomenon “care chains”. Thus, Hochschild (2004) captures a relationship between globalization, care, and migration. She highlights the emotional work of these women as



“emotional surplus” (Hochschild 2010). Joan Tronto – by referring to Margaret Urban Walker and Joel Feinberg – defines care ethics in the context of immigration as “ethics of responsibility”. She argues “that the difference between a duty and a responsibility is that duties are specified by the rights to which they are related while responsibility is ambiguously bounded by the relationship to which it is a response.” (Tronto 2008, 187). Illegal or informal immigrants without formal rights and as such without formal duties are following their own interpretations of their relationships to the care takers in order to define their work ethics.

Only the hypothesis of a special “ethics of care” make it understandable that people in the rich Western countries can confidentially trust that their beloved ones –their small children, their old parents- will regularly be treated perfectly well by underpaid foreign workers.

Marginalized persons and groups exercise agency as they draw on a range of biographical resources. The community building process in the new female migration flows follows new rules, as the new migration flows are highly gender unbalanced. Migration that is related to domestic services consists of females only. Here, community building follows different paths than the community building of gender balanced migrations (Harzig 2003). The monadising structure of domestic work and the permanent mobility that is implied in the commuting of new female migrants decouples them from wider ethnic communities and binds them instead within transnational networks (Morokvasic 2003). At the same time, there emerge local and national networks of collective self-help of migrant women in which approaches to improving policy and laws for female migrants may develop (Anderson 2001; Aritzsch 2006;). Networking with other female migrants from their own national or linguistic group becomes a major strategy for regaining the ability for action in the social arena. These networks are the main resource of migrant women, as this form of social capital enables social agency (Campani 1993; 2000; Jimenez Laux 2001; Kontos 2003). Pivotal is to what extent and which groups claim and practice their citizenship rights, using the “de-facto transnationalizing” legal framework (Sassen 1998), such as the EU Charter of Human Rights.

## Social Citizenship Policies and Gendered Coping Strategies in Migration Processes

Historical – especially East-West – divisions as well as the discrimination, exclusion and persecution of many groups of the European population have deeply marked the meaning of citizenship and the relationships among citizens in Europe. Anti-discriminatory action and policies towards social cohesion depend on knowledge about long-term and generational processes of becoming European citizens. Migration scholars have looked into the gendered dimensions of generational social and cultural change (Inowlocki 1993) by analyzing multiple belongings and identity constitution in the host society and immigrant communities (Breckner et al. 2000; Breckner 2003). Also as an outcome of historical processes, multiple belongings remain contested up until today within societies.

Feminist scholars have examined the mode of incorporation of women migrants into the host societies and nation-states. Of particular focus is the intersection of gender, ethnicity, “race”, class, immigration status cast on institutional arrangements, i.e. the labour market, access to social, economic, civic, and political rights. One of the central debates concerns discursive notions of multiculturalism and policy impacts on *immigrants*. Integration of migrants in cultural and social life is seen to enhance Europe’s competitiveness, sustainable economic growth, and greater social cohesion, as the Lisbon Strategy (2000) acknowledges.

Such European policies aim to assist immigrants and women to become “active citizens” (Apitzsch and Kontos 2003). However, in implementation, state support mechanisms for self-employment are mostly subject to a full-time employment history. This precondition is difficult to fulfil particularly for women, immigrants, and second generation young adults. Furthermore, long-term residents, who are accorded access to social rights (“social citizens”, “denizens” (Faist 1995)), could paradoxically endanger their citizenship status by practicing their social rights (Apitzsch 2004). The two concluded EU-projects on “Self employment activities concerning women and minorities (acronym: SEM)” and on “The chances of the second generation in families of ethnic entrepreneurs (acronym: EthnoGeneration)” have evaluated social policies in relation to the self-employment activities of migrant women (Mason 2002; Apitzsch and Kontos 2003). These research projects have been carrying out research on immigrant self employment and informal work from the gender and intergenerational perspective. In these research networks the situation of the new generations of the children of migrants in the countries of former recruitment of guest-workers (UK, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France) as well as the situation of newly arriving informal and illegal migrants have been investigated. One of the outcomes was that the self-employment policies and schemes tend to be drawn on the male “normal biography model”, thus not taking into account discontinuous labour market participation often resulting from women’s life cycle. Moreover the *fragmentation of policies* and, for the case of the undocumented immigrants, the *vacuum on social policies* became visible through this analysis (Apitzsch 2003).

Interesting hypotheses have nevertheless been developed as feminist researchers have formulated critiques of immigration policies, showing that these policies may make female victims of trafficking even more vulnerable, as women are treated as violators of the immigration and residence law rather than as its victims (Joo-Schauen and Najafi 2002; Sassen 2003).

## Legalization Policies for EU and Non EU Care Workers

For women migrants from the new EU member states from Eastern Europe such as Poland who are doing care work in Western European countries the EU follows the strategy of turning care work into “normal” dependent unqualified work. In Germany, only since December 2009 these “unqualified” workers were allowed to perform also simple personal

care services like cleaning, helping to dress and undress etc. They were not allowed to be employed as professional care workers—also if they had these qualifications- but only as household helpers. Of course, in reality they did a lot of medical care services, too, but formally they were not allowed to do it in order to keep their salaries low. Only since May 2011 transnational agencies are allowed to legally send persons to Germany in order to work on a qualified professional level. However, normal households would not be able to pay for their services. “Stiftung Warentest” (an independent foundation for the evaluation of the quality of goods and services) in its Journal “Test” from July 2009 could show that a “professional” 24 hours care service in Germany would cost about 10 000 Euros a month which means that only a very small minority of families in Germany would be able to pay this –for ill persons necessary- work. In reality, these care workers are being paid only for the legal working hours foreseen in their contract, while people expect that they will be available for 24 hours 7 days a week. As Juliane Karakayali (2011) could show, the working conditions of care workers during their legal employment in private German households were not better than before when these women had had the status of tourists and had worked illegally. Thus, it is estimated that the legalized status of Eastern European EU members will lead them finally to better qualified jobs outside the private care sector whereas the supply of home care in German households will be in future provided by undocumented women coming from outside the EU (Frings 2011).

In an article from 2008, Joan Tronto reminds us of a disturbing vision from Thomas More’s Utopia, published in 1516: “Thomas More resolved the question of care work by assigning the “dehumanizing” work of Utopia, such as cleaning up, taking care of children, and slaughtering animals, to slaves.” (Tronto 2008, 189). Indeed, in his Utopia More spoke about the “working class foreigner who, rather than live in wretched poverty at home, volunteers for slavery in Utopia. Such people are treated with respect, and with almost as much kindness as Utopian citizens, except that they are made to work harder, because they are used to it.” (More 1965, 102) We may agree with Tronto that “interestingly enough, there is not so much distance from More’s slaves to our guest workers” (Tronto 2008, 190). In European countries today, migrant men and women are –often illegally- doing the hard work like slaughtering on the one hand and providing 24-hour care for very young, very old and very ill people on the other. What More says about the treatment of these workers and their “volunteering” for this work reminds us a good deal of what is going on in Europe today. More said: “If they want to leave the country, which doesn’t often happen, they’re perfectly free to do so, and receive a small gratuity” (More 1965, 102). Today the question is: What can integration policies do when people live in such conditions in their home countries that they “volunteer” to work hard in foreign countries in order to improve their situation? There can be no doubt that laws against the immigration of such people will not improve but worsen their situation.

In any case, the argument about whether and why foreigners should provide the citizens with these services is conducted very differently for women and men according to the underlying gender order. More regarded dirty work of all kinds done by men as well as women as de-humanizing and therefore to be excluded from the civilized society, but he explicitly mentioned the exception of cooking and nursing as natural duties of women.

In Utopia's dining halls "all the rough and dirty work is done by slaves, but the actual business of preparing and cooking the food, and planning the menus, is left entirely to the women" (More 1965, 82). During the meals, women with small children would retire to the nurseries. "By the nursery I mean a room reserved for nursing mothers and their babies" (ibid.) Thus, special parts of care work are neither regarded as normal work appropriate for citizens, nor as dirty work that should be done by foreign working slaves, but as emanating from the female "nature".

The example of Thomas More's "Utopia" – applied to modern Western societies – is (according to my interpretation) not leading to the conviction that those societies are undergoing a "Re-feudalization", because we see that women from abroad are not working only for some very rich people in the population, but that they are supposed to solve an unsolvable problem of the normal household : the impossibility to deal with the problem of care when women as well as men are supposed to both work full time as dependent wage earners, while reproduction is regarded only as an annex to production and not the other way round. Today, care work is still only in very special professionalized conditions recognized as real work. According to the gender contract underlying modern societies (Pateman 1988b) in bourgeois as well as in working class families, it was understood as a derivate of female nature, provided in the private sphere of the single family. Because care work is still not recognized as normal work, but as emanating from the "domestic" role of women, the patriarchal gender order is being re-inforced through the collective punishment of foreign care workers by the way of their bad working conditions, argues Rhacel Parreñas. "It is the societal resistance against women not doing the reproductive labor in their own family that sets up the difficulties of foreign domestic workers" (see Parreñas 2010). As a counter-strategy, today many scholars like Carol Pateman, Ute Gerhard, Ruth Lister, Birte Siim and others are arguing for new conditions of citizenship for care work "with implications for access to social rights" (cf. Lister 1997; Pateman 1988a). The central question is how to evaluate "care" as an element shaping citizenship also for care workers from outside the EU. Tronto proposes "that we redefine citizenship so that those who make important contributions to public care be eligible for citizenship. One of the great differences faced by immigrant workers is that they are only permitted 'partial citizenship'" – as Parreñas states (Parreñas 2001, 37). "Since care work is often organized informally, paid 'off the books', (...) the legal regulations controlling citizenship should change to reflect the real work that immigrant care workers do." (Tronto 2008, 195.)

## Conclusions and Outlook

T.H. Marshall saw in the middle of the 19th century during the establishment of capitalist markets and the submission of human labour force under market conditions not only a subsequent deep social crisis but also a crisis of the traditional concept of citizenship. This crisis was resolved by a decisive shift from the local, communal definition of social citizenship to the definition of citizenship as directly emerging from national belonging. When writing his book in 1947, Marshall saw for the first time a perspective for a rather parallel development of civil rights, political and social citizenship while these three

elements had had very different developments throughout the previous century. This understanding was very much supported by the national workers' unions and the diverse national Labour Parties in Europe. With the new migrations flows in Europe and the new women's movements, however, it became obvious that citizenship rights cannot be any more conceived of as deriving from and granted by national status only (Castles and Davidson 2000). The recent irregular migrations mark the peak of a development of a loss of citizenship rights for many transnational migrants that started already in the sixties with the "guest worker" migration from Southern to Western and Northern Europe. Union citizenship contributed to trigger new social movement demands and raise questions about the quality of governance in the European Union. Social movements requested citizenship rights based on residence so as to include so-called "third country nationals", enhanced anti-discrimination legislation, and supporting policies to guarantee access to equal citizenship practice for women and men (Shaw 1999; Wobbe 2003).

In this direction there has to be investigated upon the empirical consequences of the Amsterdam Treaty that incorporates race, ethnicity and sexual preference in anti-discrimination law and suggests a more inclusive definition of citizenship rights and protection in the EU on a supra-national level. Here has to be considered the fragmented legal nature of the "European" citizenship legislation (Wiener 2003). Here, women's political mobilisation has led to significant procedural, legal and cultural changes including the adoption of the UN's gender-mainstreaming principle as institutionally binding for EC policy (Locher 2002; Brabant, Locher and Pruegl 2002; Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2001).

In this way, there have to be identified new policies that will emerge in response to this new framing of social citizenship rights. Not any more nationally based social movements have to enhance knowledge about how a new European citizenship can be constructed in ways that leads to more equal participation of men and women in local, national and trans-national politics. It has to counter-act the danger that trans-national politics and new forms of governance may exacerbate the democratic deficit by de-empowerment of women and marginalised social groups. This implies governance as a concept that allows thinking about the chances and risks of governing beyond the various nation states and in various local conditions. This is of special importance in the case of European citizenship practices in the "Non-State" (Wiener) called European Union. The different access to fundamental civil, political and social rights for national citizens, non-national European citizens and Non – European residents in European cities would otherwise affect the concept of sovereignty as "supreme power over a set of people" (Latham 1998, 2) which remains in the era of globalization "key to our understanding the shifting relations between state, market, and society" (Ong 1999, 215).

Crucially, belonging is based on both the legal entitlement to a national passport (Hailbronner 1997) and the cultural experience of belonging to a particular place (Kaplan 1993). The latter has gained in importance as a consequence of "European" citizenship rights to move, work, reside and vote in the EU country of their choice. There have to be reconsidered also the positive –sometimes unintended – consequences generated by

the introduction of citizenship – as a core principle of modern constitutionalism – to a non-state (Wiener 2001). It has to be discussed how the input of social movements, advocacy groups, and interest groups has contributed to forge the meaning of “European” citizenship demanding the implementation and enhancement of citizenship rights.

It might be necessary to give access to social citizenship rights also to irregular migrants in a more inclusive way by the cities: according to local, communal settlement instead of national identity only. This would respect the fact that new citizenship movements are working on a “glocal” level: they try to bind together universal claims for civil rights and their local social implementation (Ruppert 1998). A comparison and analysis of different trajectories of national and trans-national movements in European history and in the new European Union – especially with regard to the different stories and experiences in East and West – would offer a significant contribution, a broader understanding and “a pluralistic notion of citizenship” (Lister 1997; 2003) based on both agency involvement and structural constraints.

# Chapter 9. Aino Saarinen: Migrants and Political Agency. Russian Women in the Nordic Countries

## Introduction

Of key interest in this chapter is political citizenship. Women migrants' political inclusion and agency from below and the margins of the present democratic institutions will be explored in the framework of "active citizenship", by stressing the interdependence of rights and political agency, the option to transform formal rights into real, i.e. substantial rights which offer not only equality but equal opportunities. The duality embedded in the concept is also fruitful from the perspective of the lifeline approach. As to the welfare and political regimes in the Soviet Union and Russia and in the Norden, the five Nordic countries, the concept opens up the macro-level similarities and differences that structure the continuities and breaks in the agency of women moving from East to West.

After outlining the challenges regarding political inclusion and the regime as a whole, the discussion will move to the interviews and concentrate on two particular issues. Firstly, how the political regimes are differently gendered in the countries of origin and arrival and how women migrants construct their identities in view of gender and politics both "there" and "here"; and secondly, what they actually do in the sphere of direct participation open to all new residents from the first years onwards. Throughout the whole of this process attention will also be paid to spatiality, as the majority of the participating women live in the northernmost rural areas or small towns located far from the capitals, in the Nordic part of the Barents transregion that has been evolving since the early 1990s.

The interviews are from the multi-national and multi-disciplinary project entitled *RWN, Russian Women as Immigrants in "Norden": Finland, Norway, Sweden*<sup>37</sup> and were carried out in 2004–2007 in collaboration with Jana Sverdljuk and Kerstin Hägg. In total 64 Russian women who had crossed the border in 1990–2002 were approached individually, in groups, or as experts representing both the migrants and the local institutions in which they work<sup>38</sup>. Half were naturalized citizens. In age, they ranged from early twenties to early sixties and had often – but not always – arrived for marriage. Many had academic education but only a few worked in positions that were in accordance with their expertise;

37 The Nordic project titled *RWN, Russian Women as Immigrants in the "Norden": Finland, Norway, Sweden. Gender Perspectives on Everyday Life, Citizenship and Social Justice* was funded by the all-Nordic NOS-HS for 2004-2007. This chapter was outlined on funding from the Academy of Finland (no. 23123). ([http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/projects/russian\\_women2.htm](http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/projects/russian_women2.htm) /)

38 The term "Russian women" covers migrant women from the Soviet Union and Russia; the majority, but not all of them, were ethnic Russians. In addition to the Russian women, we also interviewed 20 native persons in public and civic organisations and institutions.

the situation of most of the women can be described as precarious. (Saarinen 2007; Saarinen, Hägg and Sverdljuk 2008) In order to give voice to these research participants themselves, the individual interviews were theme interviews; the group discussions were also semi-structured.<sup>39</sup> A third kind of material is comprised of replies to open questions at the end of interviews and group discussions, forming narratives of a sort.

The central problematic thus revolves around the constraints and avenues for political participation and influence, hindrances to migrant women's empowerment and inclusion in present day institutions in the countries that have been celebrated, even worldwide, for universal welfare and democracy. But how do women themselves experience their life in the "women-friendly" Norden (Siim 2000, 17)?

## The priority Challenge: Political Inclusion of Migrants

Building welfare and liberal democracy in post-socialist countries has proved to be a much more painful process than anticipated (Cardigan, Clavero and Calloni 2007, 145–148). The transition from the state-paternalist to the liberal, market-led system was even more drastic in Russia than in other post-socialist countries. Linda J. Cook (2007) has called the first transitional phase of the Russia of the early 1990s "non-negotiated" to stress that there have been only few, if any, prospects for influencing politics from below and for the good of women in particular. Therefore, in order to combat economic turmoil many people, the majority of them women, decided to emigrate. The feminised wave of migration from Eastern Europe is significant in its numbers and adds a new shade to multi-culturalisation on this side of the former Cold War border. All in all, there seem to be good reasons to agree with what Chantal Mouffe (2005a) said in the mid-1990s: instead of claiming that liberal democracy has won and history has ended thanks to the break-up of the socialist regime, it is necessary to face the resultant challenges. It is short-sighted to criticise one-sidedly the state of democracy in post-socialist regions without evaluating, normatively and practically, the situation in the West as well. In the 2000s–2010s, one of the main issues is indeed how Eastern migrants and migrants in general get access to both welfare and decision-making in the established liberal democracies in the "old" Europe (Mipex 2007, 14–15; Castles and Davidson 2000, vii–xii).

Besides Mouffe, Nancy Fraser (1997a; 1997b) belongs to the theoreticians who have posed critical questions in relation to the West itself. When discussing the "postsocialist condition" she claims that the disintegration of the socialist regime has led to a neglect of social concerns and the predominance of neoliberal policies in the West as well. However, we should not concentrate on the issue of redistribution only but figure out how economic, social, and cultural differences intertwine and how claims for cultural recognition and cultural justice could be integrated with claims of redistribution.

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39 Each team member was responsible for the interviews in her own country of residence – Sverdljuk for Norway, Hägg for Sweden and Saarinen for Finland. They were conducted in the three national languages and some in Russian – in SteinarKvale's (1996, 181, 210–228) words, as "InterViews". The analysis has been made more or less gradually, moving from the interviewees' self-understanding and a critical commonsense to a more theoretical understanding (also Saarinen 2007). Much attention has been paid to reflections on meaning.



Fraser's criticises T. M. Marshall's (1950) influential theory of citizenship, which contributed to the theorising of social rights and the post-WW2 welfare state. In Marshall's view, the civic and political rights to which modern citizens were entitled individually had to be followed by extensive "third generation" rights, class-related group level rights designed for economically disadvantaged populations. According to Fraser, we need to battle for a new kind of group rights, cultural rights, in order to empower both the old national minorities and the new migrant minorities so that we may offer them the actual ability to enjoy the civic, political and social rights.

In this much-cited article, Fraser does not yet address the issue of the political rights of migrant minorities. Feminist critique from the same years by e.g. Sylvia Walby(1995) and Ruth Lister (1997)has paid attention to Marshall's idea of the linear chronology as well (also Siim 2000, 13–14). It has proved that an evolutionary approach does not apply to groups that are "different" and are excluded and discriminated on other grounds than the economic ones. But the evolutionary approach makes the least sense in view of migrants as the nation-state related political rights are not among the first but the last rights granted to people arriving in the "Fortress Europe" from the "third-countries" outside the European Union (EU) and European Economic Agreement (EEA) region. This does significant harm to migrants as the welfare regimes have been designed for the natives (well before the main migration flows) and do not offer equal rights let alone equal opportunities to migrants (Qvist, Fritzell, Hvinde and Kangas 2012). The political empowerment of migrant women and migrants in general should therefore be the priority challenge, even, and aim to involve them at least in building work life and the welfare regime in a world that is getting more complex and multi-levelled every year.

In the Norden the issue is especially burning due to what Birte Siim and Hege Skjeie (2007) have described as the "gender paradox": here native women are well represented in established politics whereas migrant women can be found only in the margins. But too little attention has been paid to from where in the world women arrive. Women crossing the border in the Barents can be taken as a challenge to investigate how the past is intertwined with the present. One of the key choices is stepping outside the formal bodies and analysing political activism wherever it takes place– in the words of Engin Fisin and Greg M. Nielsen (2008) viewing citizenship alternatively as agency, acts and deeds, not status alone.

## Migration between the Regimes – Lifeline Approach to Politics

When turning to the experiences of migrants, we need to address the problematic of intersectionality (Verloo 2006) which is high on feminist research agendas today. It is relevant not only in view of the present social and cultural diversities in the country of arrival but also in view of moving itself. To follow Nira Yuval-Davis (1997a; also Esseveld and Davis 1988, 59–60), it is beneficial to stress the lifeline as one key axis of intersectionality and to analyse the home countries of migrants as well. At the macro-

level, the similarities and differences between the regimes of arrival and origin structure the rights and agency of women, influencing the decisions that individual migrants make on staying or leaving and later on coping in the new country of residence.

As for third-country nationals, the lifeline approach is even more central than usually. People coming across global economic and cultural divides confront challenges that are more fundamental compared to those caused by moving within the Norden or the EU/EEA area as a whole. In a gender perspective and in view of social rights in particular, arriving in here from a former socialist regime means both a continuation and a break. The Soviet socialist regime and the Nordic social democratic regime were alike in many respects as both were state-centred and offered women extensive economic, social and educational rights and thereby access to the public sphere (Jäppinen, Kulmala and Saarinen 2011). Like the Nordic arrangement, the Soviet mother-worker contract expected women to work outside homes, often within welfare services, which at the same time were the basis for women's opportunities for employment and economic independence and, naturally, the two wage-earner family model (Zdravomyslova 1996). In the course of economic liberalisation, many basic elements of the past contract were discarded. Privatisation and monetarisation led to the halving of GNP, the multiplying and feminisation of unemployment and poverty and the simultaneous withdrawal of the state from the welfare services. A new turn for the worse took place due to the fiscal crisis in 1998 but since the early 2000s the economy has been stabilised. (HDR 1995, 155; Cook 2007, 145–182; 2011.)<sup>40, 41</sup>

No wonder then that Russian women we interviewed view the present welfare regime in their country of origin with mixed feelings that reveal motivations for emigration. Women may refer to the disintegration of the safety nets and say in a bitter tone that Russia “deceived our generation”. At the same time they compare the former home country with the present one and – in spite of often being here in economically marginal positions – speak about “Swedish socialism”, and almost unanimously praise the Norden for safety, the rule of law and particularly the social welfare and stability that reminds them of past Soviet life. These evaluations point to the attraction of the host societies, the idea that the welfare system on this side of the border is “wonderful” or “at the highest level”. This is important to their views of citizenship and belonging: “you feel yourself a citizen of this country (...)you are protected there was not so in Russia”. Whatever the shortages and shortcomings of the socialist rule, prioritising social rights – at the expense of individual and political freedoms – has stayed a key right in the minds of (former) Soviet people even here. Clearly, they associate citizenship first and foremost with social rights, not effective political rights. In the Norden, where social rights are residence-based and immigrants become “half-citizens” in this sense soon after arrival, there seems to be no reason to question this.<sup>42</sup>

40 This approach is inspired by *WGA, the Welfare, Gender and Agency in Russia in the 2000s* umbrella project, which started in 2008 (<http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/projects/wga.htm>).

41 “Stabilisation” does not apply the late 2000s, the period of global recession that included Russia as well.

42 The Nordic countries therefore differ from the countries analysed by Ursula Apitzsch (in this volume). Part of her discussion does not apply to the Norden.

## Gender and “Dirty” and “Pure” High Politics

At the same time it is also necessary to analyse the country of origin in regard to the political regime. In this respect Russian women have entered an entirely new terrain, at least in the 1990s. The situation in the Soviet Union and Russia vs. the Nordic countries was and is strikingly different both in general and in view of gender.

The Nordic countries, generally recognised as well-functioning democracies, have been highly inclusive politically, and today women make up some forty percent of the national MPs and some fifty percent of the MCs (members of cabinet) in the three target countries<sup>43</sup>. Thanks to the quota system applied to the state Duma, Soviet women were formally not far behind with their thirty-forty percent. It guaranteed, however, only a symbolic presence as it was not about real power but pseudo-inclusion. The Soviet Union was a party-state where the formal representative institutions did not play any central role in decision-making (Nechemias 1998; Saarinen, Ekonen and Uspenskaya 2012). In the “New Russia”, during the years the interviews were made, there were only some ten percent women among Duma MPs and no women ministers<sup>44</sup>. This is not surprising as the present rule is in a formal respect democratic but in practice a construction that Vladimir Gel'man and Alfred B. Evans (2004), among numerous other scholars, call a “managed”, “manipulated”, or “vertical” democracy.

Here, since national citizenship is a precondition of full political inclusion, it is clear that in the political sphere migrant women confront special difficulties throughout their whole experience as immigrants. It is easier for them to grasp the world of work life and social security systems than democratic politics. The situation is especially challenging since entering politics presupposes, as the interviews and discussions confirm, a fundamental deconstruction of views and identities regarding gender, politics and political activism.

To understand the difficulties resulting from the past it is necessary to divide the pre-migration part of the political lifeline into two periods according to the past regime change: the Soviet period characterised by the communist rule and the one-party system and the Russian period characterised by the multi-party system formally in line with liberal democracy but in practice carried out without influence from below. As to the socialist period, Berteke Waaldjiik and Andrea Pető (2006) speak even of “enforced forgetting”, which made some experiences into “private knowledge” in order to legitimise communist rule. In the present times, this private knowledge has become public and, perhaps, some openly discussed experiences from the socialist period are now becoming “private”. Both are visible in the interviews and discussion. At the same time it is important to keep in mind that speaking about repressive regimes can be a most problematic task depending on who is speaking, to whom, and from what position.

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43 In addition, in Finland both the president and prime minister were women at the time of writing (autumn 2010).

44 In autumn 2007, the situation changed. The amount of women in the Duma rose, a couple of women ministers were nominated by President Putin to the federal cabinet, but without a democratic mandate from below.

Although memories have been passed from one generation to another – as the stories of political and religious repression in the most severe decades show – recalling political life in the former regime naturally concerned first and foremost the middle-aged and older women. They even had a long history of “activism” as in the Soviet regime young people and children were also mobilised by the party through the Pioneers, the children’s association, and the Komsomol, the youth association. (See also Sperling 2012) On this side of the border it can be appealing to deny any participation in the regime now dissolved and doomed all over the West. None of our interviewees mentioned having any position in the party, the city council or the Duma and the like. On the contrary, many were keen to emphasise that they had had nothing to do with politics and that the change of the regime had offered a welcome opportunity to get rid of “forced” participation for good.

*I did not do it in Russia either. I have never been interested in politics either in Russia, moreover in Norway.*

*MD, 49, Norway (1995)<sup>45</sup>*

*Eee, the pioneer organization, it was a requirement for all, at school. But [part of a youth organization?] No then it was enough for us this... pioneer activity, young communist activity. That’s why people may have forgotten politics then that they didn’t want to have to do with politics.*

*OH, 30, Finland (1995)*

The one exception was a woman in her mid-fifties, who said right away that she had been active in some party-related organisations, in the Soviet women’s council and the trade union, even a deputy. A few others – when we continued the discussion – looked back with nostalgia. They did not refer to holding power but to solidaristic values – being “devoted to people” through the Pioneers or the Komsomol. In distant rural areas, party-related activities had been of key importance to cultural life and participation. The replies to our questions on political activism back there were often elusive, at first anyway.

*... I wasn’t..well, of course we all were politically organized and pioneers... I was a member of the Komsomol. I was quite active, I was a member of the school’s Komsomol committee, and then I was the secretary. (...) and it wasn’t all that bad, as it seemed then. That there’s a lot of positive things about it.*

*GH, 44, Finland (1992)*

*Yes, actually, I was very active. I was a member of several organisations but nowadays they are all gone. They were different. In Komsomol. I was at the top every time..[Politically engaged?], No, but I liked to do activities for all, parties or*

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<sup>45</sup> When citing the interviewee, we refer to the name, age at the time of the interview, the country of arrival and the year of arrival (in parentheses).

*some such.. then, I don't know, I skied, I was in the master class, I sang and danced... [About pioneers?] Yes, and that I was also, very engaged and active.*

*MD, 37, Sweden (1999)*

The youngest generation, now in their early twenties – particularly those who had moved as children or had come of “organising age” only after the system had been dissolved – were confused. They did not know how it was earlier but from what they hear now “it doesn’t work”.

Interestingly, gender came up not so much in relation to the Soviet period but the present rule in Russia showing that women had indeed been resigned to the malist gender order of the party-state, which was characterised by a gendered bifurcation: women were mothers and attached to the nation, men to power, the state (Sevchenko 2007). This was changing now but not necessarily for the better. In principle, the formal institutionalisation of liberal democracy and the multi-party system was appreciated but no one seemed satisfied with the state of affairs or optimistic about the future. Politics was, unanimously, constructed as malist, corrupted and “dirty” meaning that a woman could not even think about interfering without losing her femininity (also Shtyleva 2003).

*Russian politics is very complicated (...) difficult to comprehend. (...) It is a destiny of men, not women.*

*NK, 45, Finland (2003)*

These women had used most of their time and energies on organising emigration, not just their own but often also that of their families, and no one mentioned any new forms of grassroots mobilising and institution-building, which started in the Perestroika period and expanded till the early 2000s when the interviewees were leaving the country (Zdravosmylova 2012; Kulmala 2011). Politics in the “New Russia” was not their business.

On the other hand, it is of interest to analyse the reflections on the country of arrival. The Norden was presented in the interviews and group discussions unanimously as a diametrically opposite, as open, transparent and fair, in other words, “pure”. Consequently, being a woman and successful in high politics was not a contradiction in terms. Nordic women politicians were assessed as active and even powerful, persons who had managed to make the state work for women as well.

*In Finland there is less criminality, big money. (...) It is easier to take root in politics. Here women are very free and active.*

*NK, 45, Finland (2003)*

*I think that it is more open and clear than in Russia. I have a feeling that the political issues, they are very comprehensible to the population... Finland, in my opinion,*

*ranks first when they [the countries] are compared, when they conducted a research on corruption. (...) If I am not mistaken, there is no corruption in Finland. This already speaks about something. In this respect, it is a democratic country.*

*NS, 33, Finland (2004)*

Not a single hostile or openly critical comment was heard but there is a kind of collision or discrepancy to be detected. Although most of immigrants spoke firmly for women's equal rights in principle and regarding the Norden, this was not linked to feminism. A little surprisingly, it seemed easier to accept same-sex marriage and the adoption right for these couples than feminism in its "extreme form". With this expression Russian women referred to conceptions of women's sameness with men or even a "hate against men", of which many Nordic women in the opinion of several interviewees were guilty of in their everyday practices and constructions of femininities (also Hägg 2008).

*I do not know any feminist but there is nothing bad in the movement... if one does not talk about extremities. (...) That is of course not good (...), depressing men.*

*SS, 41, Finland (2000)*

The group discussions made it as clear – no one took stand for feminism directly. It was "not typical for Russia" and is "a little bit extra", and one woman stated shortly, "Feminism. I don't want". Only a few pondered the nuances of the concept but kept it at some length by using the term "them" (Nordic women) when speaking of feminism. Essentialist arguments were heard too when arguing for "our" views in group discussions.

*TR: Well, these are two different creatures, [VN: Of course] created by the God or the nature, I don't know. [VN: Therefore they are different.] And they shouldn't be absolutely the same, they shouldn't be absolutely similar. [VN: A neutral organism] It would be a neutral society, indeed, or a unisexual one. It would be... It is impossible to have an absolute, absolute equality.*

*Discussion group, Polmak, Norway and Finland<sup>46</sup>*

In sum, irrespective of years of residence, age, and present immigration status only very few of the interviewees gave any positive meanings to feminism. It is hard indeed to change the deeply-rooted interpretations, which have been constantly reproduced under the socialist regime and even today (Kulmala 2011).

## The Problem with the Multi-Party System

Intersectionality is relevant also when analysing the situation in the new country in view of the formal immigration status. The concepts presented by Stephen Castles and Alistair

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<sup>46</sup> Two of the group discussion were arranged in the border areas and involved migrants from both sides of the river Tornio (Sweden and Finland, in Övertorneå) and Teno (Norway and Finland, in Polmak).

Davidson (2000, 94–97) outline a formally structured path for third-country immigrants, starting as “margizens” and transforming into “quasi”- or “half-citizens” and, finally, naturalised “full citizens”.

As for political rights, legal residence does include the prospect of gradual political inclusion across the EU. Formal rights vary considerably but the Nordic countries look almost like model countries in this respect (Mipex 2007, 3). The national vote and the right to stand for national office is linked to citizenship, which in the three target countries can be obtained after six to seven years of residency (Mipex 2007, 66, 138, 174). But the first formal political right, the local vote, is already possible after two years of residence, and civic organisations and fora, including political parties, are open to migrants from their first years onwards<sup>47</sup>.

As half of our interviewees were naturalised, they were already included in the national and EU electorates. It would be tempting to assume women who praised the new home country for democracy and the inclusion of women also participate actively. This was, however, not the case. One third reported having voted sometimes at least in local, national, or EU elections. A couple of women had joined some party, and one of them, speaking firmly of migrants’ common interests, had stood for local elections in Norway. Yet no one had been elected to a formal decision-making body in any of the targeted Nordic countries. As for Finland, one of the interviewees was both optimistic and sceptical. Even if she herself was not yet entitled to the national vote, the husband did have the right that symbolically meant much to the whole family.

*But my husband has already voted for the European Parliament for the first time, since he had already got a Finnish citizenship. And we all have discussed this: for whom and why. We went to the elections all together with him. What about the local elections, we have already voted twice. And now we have received an invitation again, it will be in October. (...) My son dreams about that [becoming elected]. (...) He has just applied for the Finnish citizenship. I think that... But we no, perhaps... Because we are hardly to be elected, because we are not Finns, though with the Finnish citizenship.*

*IH, 48, Finland (1996)*

Nonetheless, almost all interviewed women do follow the course of events in formal politics through media and are interested especially in what women politicians do, even viewing battles through their eyes. In Finland, for instance, three female politicians were mentioned more than once, the president, the short-time prime minister and the chair of parliament.

As replies to questions on the reasons for not participating, integration in the labour market in a profession for which the migrant has been trained was the first priority; besides, the interviewees stressed that guaranteeing social rights had already been taken

<sup>47</sup> The Finnish True Finns party, known for being “immigration critical”, is an exception as the membership is restricted to citizens (PerusS 2009).

care of by native women who saw to it that “the state worked for women, too”. A few Russians, however, constructed themselves as “foreigners”, as “immigrants” who should not participate in any kinds of politics here. At worst self-exclusion came down to cultural devaluation and lack of self-respect as women felt that they were despised others, the “Russian prostitutes” invading the West (also Sverdljuk 2009; Saarinen and Sverdljuk 2006). This kind of stigmatisation (Catles and Davidson 2000, 118–119) also had spatial elements. Especially in Norway it was safer to say that you came from the “Urals” instead of Murmansk, the city with a reputation for being the site of origin for mobile prostitution across the border (Sverdljuk 2009). One woman was dually rootless as she felt that she could not reveal the place of her present home either as she now lived in a Norwegian village that in the 1990s had been one of the main destinations of weekly “whore buses”. (For more, Penttinen 2008.)

But one more explanation is directly linked to the political regime. On the route toward full inclusion, the mediating, gate-keeping element between direct participation and civil society and the representative bodies is the multi-party system that is open to marginalized migrants as well. Though somewhat interested and positive in their evaluations, entering party politics marks a drastic change for Russian immigrants. They need to make sense of an entirely different system, comparing - often for the first time in their life - alternative political values, policies and programmes. Regarding the parties, they were in a contradictory situation. Leftist parties were every now and then treated with some sympathy as they spoke for poor and marginalised people like migrants themselves but they were also seen with suspicion as they reminded them of “socialism”. As to participation in established institutions, those who had the most positive views of life in the Nordic countries considered involvement an option but only in some later phase, after becoming more competent.

*But myself for example nowadays what I think and vote for.. I might vote for the Greens. [Why the Greens?] Aa...their values are like closer to my values. Well, the Left alliance... there might be something, but Greens more. The Greens and the Left alliance, there are some shared... can be the rights of people... but somehow the Left alliance reminds me more of the Soviet Union and I don't want that. I know what life is like in socialism... social life. I truly don't want to experience that.*

*OH, 30, Finland (1995)*

In the discussion groups many pointed out that information and getting acquainted with the Nordic type of formal institutions and the party system were preconditions to becoming more deeply involved. Mastering the native language well enough, even close to “perfectly” was also mentioned, showing that cultural rights are not needed only for work and education but for politics too, which was never taken up in policy formulations.

*EL: Of course, this demands knowledge.*



*EJ: It is necessary to have education, to know laws and so on. And the language. It is necessary to be able to speak, agitate, to communicate, first of all.*

*EK: It is necessary to have a wide network...*

*EL: I.e. all these... We are not ready yet, no. No one of us has anything ripe, that one could... No, no. Everybody is in one's own cell...*

*Discussion group, Kajaani, Finland*

All in all, the time-related duality of obstacles was mentioned often. In the first years, immigrant women are exposed to the formal limitations set up by the legislation and need to concentrate on everyday duties in a new country; in the following years, when settling down is mainly over and full rights have been granted, they have got around to being “alienated from politics” already.

## Building Separate “Weak” Publics

Turning to other spaces for free participation in civil society, in general migration brings with it the constellation conceptualized by Nancy Fraser (1997b) as a division between the “weak” and “strong” publics. The former refers to for a and communities that are separated and can attract margizens in particular, whereas the latter is linked to institutions of power and influence obviously suited for women who have settled down as at least half-citizens. Self-evidently, making migrants’ various kinds of participation and agency visible presupposes an alternative and even radical vision of what politics is and how and where it is “done”. In Mouffe’s (2005a) words, the political cannot be restricted to a certain type of institution or a specific sphere or level of society, especially not when it concerns marginalised or excluded groups. To quote Fisin and Nielsen (2008) in search of a similar approach, we have to trace “deeds” and “acts” rather than analyse statuses alone to identify new subjects, “whether citizens, strangers, aliens or outcasts”.

In feminist debates continuous attention has indeed been paid to deconstructing the deeply gendered social structures in order to make visible and recognise multiple ways and means of women’s everyday agency. Especially from an intersectionalist and migrant-centred angle we have to question the standard divisions between the private sphere, civil society and the state. As for excluded or marginalised actors and concerning vulnerable and silenced issues, the private sphere often becomes a dimension of civil society. For instance, in case of emergency, homes function as occasional shelters for women fleeing violence in close relationships.

*And I always say, that my door is always open to all, when... I also have now... And I say to all, that if there's problems... and I've helped. Now there's a young girl, one*

*was here, she has then divorced and moved south, she was many nights with us here in hiding..*

*EH, 57, Finland (1997)*

“My door is always open” can refer to practices in the previous life because in Russia women often relied on personal networks instead of a shelter even if it would have been available (Saarinen, Liapounova and Dracheva 2003; Hemment 2004). But it often also dealt with the precarious status of their first years, being marriage migrants without an individualised permission to stay, dependent on the existence of a stable partnership to a Nordic person (Saarinen 2007). The problem has also been noted by Ann-Therese Lotherington and Kjerstin Fjørtoft (2006) and Jana Sverdljuk (in this volume) in Norway where the term “three-year-rule” is commonplace. However, the most provocative example is Finland, as here the period of getting an individual permit has been prolonged to four years in conjunction with harmonising the legislation with the EU reforms in 2004 (Saarinen 2010). This is in line with general trends as all over the EU/EEA region attention is now being paid to marriage and partnership as a “privatized” migration route (Conradsen and Kronborg 2007; Passerini et al. 2007; Petersen, in this volume). For migrant women themselves this sometimes turns out to be a hazardous choice. Advice from other women in the migrant community sometimes led migrants not to contact authorities for help due to fear of deportation, which was known to have happened to some Russian women. One more factor was lack of relevant information (Saarinen 2007), which also came up in group discussions and interviews of Russian experts working in relevant institutions. An additional hindrance was the space: in these vast rural areas a shelter, especially in Finland, is often hundreds of kilometres away.

But the private domain does not exist solely for the communication of sad and intimate experiences. More positive experiences also happen in private. Traditions centring on home-making (Petö 2007) were talked about in our interviews as in so many investigations of the life of migrant women. Food culture as one of the foundations of Russian identity was continually discussed in the interviews. It seemed to flavour all women’s gatherings - not the least an important women-centred tradition from the Soviet period, the International Women’s Day. The tradition is alive here as well, now voluntarily. However, it does not bring Russian women together with local women as the Women’s Day tradition in the Nordic countries – with its marches, demonstrations etc. – has an openly feminist tone and is therefore different from the Russian tradition. On March 8, women from Russia prefer to stay not directly isolated but “private”.

Mingling with natives might proceed only step by step as experiences of being different and discriminated against do not encourage them to come out into the open. Multiple kinds of “weak” publics are indeed needed by immigrants to discuss and debate in confidence as peers, in the first years at least. Weekly or monthly meetings in cafes are in-between fora, where information, experiences, views and opinions are shared and relationships and networks created so that a process for building at least some kinds of communities is being started.

*Well, in these informal meetings, what shall I call these informal meetings? I.e. the meeting we have with people I know, perhaps from the institute or, e.g. those I got acquainted with.. (..) They became a natural continuation of my former life.. and now they live practically the same way as I do.. This became quite regular. E.g. once a month we meet in a café. We call each other.. talk to each other and have a good time.*

*MD, 39, Norway (1996)*

At best such intimate and informal fora become a basis for reshaping cultural-ethnic identities in the new environment, founding a club for children to keep up their Russian, a chorus for singing, but they can also offer possibilities for starting an association for women themselves and for building communities, recognising their common needs and interests (also Gustafson, in this volume).

## In the Margins of “Strong” Publics – Interventions and Trans-Cultural Steps

As Nancy Fraser (1997b) claims, internal “weak” publics and separate communities should indeed be approached dually to grasp their political potential. They do not exist only for togetherness and the preservation of key elements of traditional identities, as spaces for withdrawal. They can at times be used for building “alternative” or “counter” publics, even interventions into wider publics and mobilising for outwards actions for change. Multiple expressions of indirect and direct criticism did come up in the interviews. Particularly valuable were the group discussions that offered many participants their first opportunity to ponder social issues and problems on their own together with other women of Russian origin. Many expressed hopes for more arenas and channels where the migrants would be taken seriously irrespective of their present immigration status.

But a potential for agency was already visible. There were a few stories of individual and collective acts proving that Russian women are, even if sporadically, getting a voice of their own and are on the move to transform the structures that limit their possibilities (also Lotherington and Fjørtoft 2006). An example of this was an initiative for a EU-funded project which aimed at strengthening immigrants’ economic citizenship by struggling against the employers’ negative attitudes and overall discrimination in the labour market. Another application reached out from the circles of migrants to public institutions to strengthen their social citizenship by organising a series of meetings for information and counselling between the immigrants and various welfare authorities such as public insurance, labour office, social officials etc.

The initiatives are also interesting since they are in line with the principle of active citizenship and refer to the obligations of the state (Siim 2000, 108–113) to contribute to migrants’ possibilities for making proper use of their rights, turning them into real opportunities. This is highly recommended in normative policy-making (Mipex 2007, 14)

but difficult to realise in the Barents. In areas with small migrant populations there are few possibilities for such permanent institutional arrangements as in the capital areas with great numbers of migrants.

But new residents must also enter the publics and communities of the natives. (Also Pyykkönen 2007; Weide 2009.) Friendship societies or international clubs mentioned by a number of interviewees in each target country are worthy of attention. These associations are by definition welcoming towards migrants and bring them together with those natives who have a positive attitude regarding immigrants and are willing to collaborate with and even learn from them. At their best the associations become sites for meeting on an equal ground and encourage discussion, initiatives and interventions. Sometimes natives encountered in these contexts open channels to “strong” publics and help for dealings with authorities. Often the problems mentioned in interviews concerned the visa and the possibility of staying or leaving in the first years of residence.

*For example, when that difficult situation with my son happened, the local politicians, two very lovely and nice women, really tried to help us resolve it positively; they personally called the UDI office [Directorate of Immigration] in Oslo and tried to protect our point of view. It was not their obligation to call this office at all, so they took such initiative of their own will.*

*EB, 34, Norway (2003)*

This is not to be belittled. Two-way communication and dialogue, which in democratic theorising have been called transversal or deliberative politics (Habermas 1984; Yuval-Davis 1997, 125–132), is a key process in transforming multi- and inter-cultural societies toward trans-culturalism, which is characterised by change in the groups of both natives and newcomers (Castles and Davidson 2000, 139). At the same time the interviews suggest that some friendship associations limit their actions to entertainment or predominantly cultural aims and do not enter the political sphere in the sense of formulating and presenting demands in the interest of their members and participants. Again, a spatial hindrance comes up as these kinds of associations exist mainly in towns or they operate in such a large area that they are not within reach of women in remote villages.

A qualitatively new step is without doubt joining a native association. Intersectionally seen it refers to an identification in which similarities, not differences, between migrants and natives are the main thing (Brah 1998, 10–16). Normally this seems to happen in due course, but for once living in a small village might turn into an advantage as contacts with locals can be created almost in no time, perhaps due to new relatives smoothing the way. Making friends within the larger family and the neighbourhood or in the workplace is important to feelings of belonging. At best these bonds are reciprocal as new residents can offer help, for instance with the applications for visas or organising trips for shopping in Russia. Valuable grassroots connections and personal friendships can also be formed in the integration courses for immigrants or courses related to unemployment. It is worth stressing that membership in a trade union would be of special importance but was often

out of reach as it depends on access to paid employment. There were only two-three women who reported being active in a trade union or in developing her work unit.

*Right now we are involved in a project – I don't know whether it is a project but so have the politicians decided. We work at an open family home in Å but have a little different opinion. We are three – three midwives together and we have very different and different views so that we do not always agree. It is self-evident that we discuss who should do and what in the health care as a whole. It has been very very unsecure in the last times, masses of new chefs.*

*KE, 31, Sweden (1991)*

No stories of formally organised resistance and challenge were told but there were a few episodes of direct confrontation and protest (Della Porta and Diani 1999, 167–170). The concept of “acts of citizenship” outlined by Engin Fisin and Greg M. Nielsen (2008) seems apt when it comes to identifying everyday practices that are normally not considered “politics” but nonetheless produce new subjects. Interestingly, these kinds of acts often came up in group discussions or as narratives, replies to the open question at the end of the interview. One of the cases in Finland was especially thought-provoking as it dealt with a mixed public-private institution for the integration of immigrants. According to the narrator, herself a long-term resident with full Finnish language skills, the migrants were made helpmates instead of being offered opportunities to develop their existing capabilities and learn new skills. As a result of personal action, internal practices changed to the better for all “us”.

*... There was a terrible war here, but we have won... And nowadays they have a cleaner. The victory is won, for all immigrants. As I said, have said, that they give the wrong impression of Finnish work culture. I have been to many jobs... I thought about writing an article for the paper: “The place for bullying immigrants”. (...) This matter should be made known to the [organization's] board for example. I'm sorry that I didn't continue with it. (...) It has been tough on the nerves. Health. Well, on the other hand my character has gotten a bit stronger and.. (...) But still what made me the angriest was that this woman has given immigrants the wrong picture of the Finnish work culture.*

*GH, 44, Finland (1992)*

Lastly we have to turn to the issue of cultural rights and citizenship. The discourses on immigration and migrants are often intersectional in the sense that they link gender and national, ethnic or religious background to construct “them” and “us”. Migrant girls and women are presented as innocent victims but they can also be classified as persons who should be chased out of the country as they form a threat to national values and gender order (Sverdljuk 2009). Women from Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe usually belong to the second category. In many of the group discussions, a large amount of the time was used to share experiences in this respect (also Hägg 2008).

Not surprisingly, the toughest criticism was directed at the “general” public (Fraser 1997b), i.e. the media. In each country the interviewees stressed how important it was that some of them had been portrayed in local papers as highly competent persons aspiring to work and even run a business in order to be economically independent. Most passionate were the comments regarding media constructions of Russian women as “prostitutes”. A couple of sporadic examples of individual and group-level confrontations in Sweden were mentioned, again from the perspective of long-term migrants, both now “full” Swedish citizens.

*I'm angry! Angry! There was once a campaign in the newspaper in Haparandabladet [the local paper] and Swedish radio and they said there was a company in Haparanda. (...) and they bought underage women. And in the restaurant there was also a nurse and a teacher – men bought young girls from school, women who were older and a doctor. It's not true... I know that teachers in Russia have much power, they should intervene. I called radio Norrbotten and said: "It's something that isn't true."*

*AK, 57, Sweden (1994)*

*We were so many who felt insulted and so we called VD [local paper], some took the initiative, I was myself rather active and said that we reacted against this (...) and harms the reputation of us who work and act in the Swedish society. We got all the impression that we were all stamped ...that we are all some kinds of prostitutes. (...) We demanded him to apologise but we did not manage in that. Later it became very silent.*

*KE, 31, Sweden (1997)*

But all in all it seemed that in this respect women felt mostly powerless. As mentioned, cultural disrespect produces stigmatised identities and thus is a factor in the political disempowering of Russian women (Sverdljuk 2009). According to testimonies from numerous interviews, it also prevents Russian women coming together in public spaces and is therefore part of the explanation for their political marginalisation and exclusion. Going for a shared “trek” in Norwegian fells is of course refreshing but at the same time it signals separateness, withdrawing to internal “weak” publics.

## Conclusion: a Triple Challenge

Russian women immigrants form a contradictory group compared to other female migrants. As “white”, well-educated and professionally competent women they belong upon arrival to the upper hierarchies of migrants and are already similar to natives and in this sense “at home” in the Nordic, state-centred welfare regime leaning on working mothers and two-wage-earner families. As residents in the Norden, relatively soon they enjoy formally extensive economic rights and in particular social rights, which they value highly – but at the same time they confront significant factual discrimination and may end up economically dependent on their partners, in a “weak male wage-earner” family

model (Latvala 2008) which is not in accordance with the Nordic principles. Marriage migrants, in particular margizens, are vulnerable also because for years their permission to stay depends on a private relationship; in the case of gender violence, this is clearly against their basic human rights (Saarinen 2009). As to cultural rights, even elderly women from Russia may have to struggle against cultural disrespect related to their Russian background and gendered sexualisation. Nancy Fraser's (1997b) thesis for the importance of cultural recognition makes sense in the Nordic countries as well.

As the essence of active citizenship and equality of opportunities is in the interrelatedness of rights and political agency, opening access to politics for migrant women is an urgent matter. In brief, the embedded obstacles and gaps in the Nordic "women-friendly" welfare regime cannot be dissolved without the involvement of migrant women themselves. From an intersectional lifeline perspective, the inheritance of the Soviet period and the "New Russia" is far from empowering. During the first years in here migrants either remember politics as corrupted or lack experience with mobilising from below, confronting political issues and entering "strong" publics linked with formal decision-making. Moreover, they are, by immigration legislation, excluded from formal politics until they are "full citizens". It is no wonder then that they can be content mainly with coping with the help of networking in the separate world of "weak" publics. In sum, the "gender paradox" (Siim and Skjeie 2007) as a whole – economic-social and cultural rights and, urgently, the political rights – must be placed on the agenda. The present contradiction between native women being so well represented in established institutions and migrant women being outsiders is unbearable. In the framework of active citizenship, of praised universalist social citizenship, this is far from satisfactory.

All in all, as for the lifeline approach, it is easy to agree with Daiva Stasiulis and Alice B. Bakan (1997) who claim that migrants' citizenship is not a static and given status but formed in the interplay of structures, culture and agency. Immigrant women are themselves agents who negotiate their citizenship more or less on all levels. Citizenship is subject to change, acted upon individually and collectively within and across the axes of power and domination. Over time, access to power institutions will formally be the migrants' own responsibility: naturalised "full citizens" themselves choose whether to use their new rights or not. Of course political integration is not this simple but depends on feelings of belonging and positive experiences in civil society, and multiple identifications, opportunities for being both Nordic and Russian in a trans-cultural society where deliberation and transversal dialogue are common practices (Yuval-Davis 1997, 125–132). Initially, unlearning forms of submission and detachment, routine-like or forced participation is essential as well. Identifying acts of citizenship wherever they take place is important for encouraging new residents to become political subjects both in their everyday life and in various institutions. In this respect citizenship is more a practice than a mere status (Fisin and Nielsen 2008). More information and even training for political empowerment should be included in the immigration integration programmes, for instance (Saarinen 2009). But the authorities and decision-makers should turn to themselves as well to realise that they have new duties and obligations. For instance, meetings with migrants proposed

by Russian women would give the authorities opportunities to learn about the traps the immigrants have to confront.

However, in addition to integrating migrants in the existing systems it is necessary to analyse their experiences in order to look for systemic changes. As for critically approaching the West itself, we must go beyond individual countries, the Norden and even the EU Europe constellations, opening prospects for multi-level integration. Pressures for creating new spaces and channels within the existing local and national states and EU-centred systems, even globally, are evident.

To conclude, the welfare regimes have been designed for the majority, the natives, well before the new waves of migration, and do not offer equal opportunities to migrant women. Polemically, there is a danger that we are building a group of outsiders who enjoy the services and benefits not as rights but as charities. A triple challenge, then, awaits all liberal Western democracies. In the long term, however, the nation-state as the main framework for citizenship and democracy can be transformed, partially at least (Pajnik 2007; Calloni, in this volume). Much can be learned from global contexts, the new ways of giving a voice and influence to people who are excluded from representative rights but active at the grassroots as transnational and global citizens (also Apitzsch, in this volume). In the 21st century, we cannot speak about a “comprehensive political project” (Fraser 1997c) without addressing the issue of agency in the sphere of politics itself. Being an “active citizen” is one of the hopes and wishes presented by migrants themselves.

*How do you think your life is five – ten years from now?*

*That.. I'll be an active citizen and active in working life and.. do that volunteer organisation work and.. perhaps [I'm] happy on a personal level.*

*GH, 44, Finland (1992)*



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# THE AUTHORS

## Ursula Apitzsch

(D.Soc.Sc.) is since 1993 a Professor for Political Science and Sociology at the Johan Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main. Her habilitation work on migration and biography dealt with intercultural and generational (youth) issues. Since 1998 Apitzsch is member in the board of directors of the Cornelia Goethe Centrum. From 1995 to 1999 she was a chairperson of the section of biography studies of the German Society for Sociology. Moreover, she is involved in the board of the research committee 39 of International Sociological Association (ISA) which is occupied with Sociology and Biography. Apitzsch has been Guest professor in Swansea, California, Florenz, Rome and Bologna. She has coordinated (1997–2001) an EU research project on activities concerning women and of minorities and self employment around the issue of social citizenship. In addition, she has led an international, EU funded research project entitled The Chances of the Second Generation in Families of Ethnic Entrepreneurs at the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt am Main. Her main research interests are in culture analysis, biography research, migration, ethnicity and gender. Her recent publications include:

Apitzsch, U. (2004), Balancing precarious work, entrepreneurship and a new gendered professionalism in migrant self employment. In U. Apitzsch, J. Bornat, J. and P. Chamberlayne (eds.). *Biographical Analysis and Professional Practice*. Bristol: Policy Press, 39–56.

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(Apitzsch@soz.uni-frankfurt.de)

## Marina Calloni

(Ph.D, D.Soc.Sc.) is a Full Professor of Social and Political Philosophy at the national University of Milano-Bicocca in Milan. Calloni has been a Research Fellow at the University of Frankfurt, and senior researcher at the Gender Institute of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). She has also been a Visiting Professor at the universities of Bremen (Germany), Vienna (Austria), Lugano (Switzerland), Hannover (Germany) and Kurume (Japan), and Notre Dame (USA). In 2011, she was a Fulbright Professor at University of Nortre Dame, Illinois, US. Calloni is a member of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights (CIDU), based at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, and from 2007 to 2010, she was a member of the management board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA, based in Vienna) as deputy representative for Italy. Calloni has participated in several national and international researches and cross borders networks. In 2006, Calloni convened with Aino Saarinen the workshop entitled *Eastern European Women as Immigrants in Western European Trans-regions* (ESF, 2006). Calloni's research interests is in social and political philosophy; human rights and justice; gender issues; democracy, cultural conflicts and the critique of violence; European citizenship and the public sphere; politics and science in post-socialist countries; international research networks and cross-border co-operation. Her recent publications include:

M. Calloni (2009), *Umanizzare l'umanitarismo? Limiti e potenzialità della comunità internazionale*. Torino: UTET.

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M. Calloni et al. (2008), *Seminario di Teoria Critica, Che cos'è la politica*. Roma: Meltemi.

(marina.calloni@unimib.it)

## Åsa Gustafson

(Ph.D) is a Lecturer at the Department of Sociology at Umeå University. Her dissertation dealt with Bosnian refugee's normalisation of everyday life and their integration in two major cities, Malmö and Umeå, including questions of re-migration. Issues related to migration, ethnic relations, racism, integration, immigration and gender have been her main interest over the years, and she now intends to focus on ethnic Swedes' participation and social relations within the multiethnic Swedish society. Gustafson is teaching sociology and social psychology within several different courses and programmes in sociology and at the Centre for Women's Studies at Umeå University. She is a board member of the International Migration and Ethnic Relations Society. Her recent publications include:

Å. Gustafson (2004), *Sköra livsmönster*. Om integrations- och normaliseringsprocesser bland bosniska flyktingar. (Fragile life models. On the integration and normalisation processes among osnian refugees). Akademisk avhandling vid Sociologiska institution, Umeå universitet.

(asa.gustafson@soc.umu.se)

## Lena Näre

(Ph.D) is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex and a Post-doctoral Researcher at the Centre for Ethnic Relations and Nationalism (CEREN) at the University of Helsinki. She obtained her D.Phil from University of Sussex in 2009 and D.Soc.Sc. from University of Helsinki in 2012. Her doctoral thesis entitled *Managing Households, Making Homes – A Moral Economy of Migrant Domestic and Care Work in Naples* is an ethnographic study of Sri Lankan, Polish and Ukrainian migrant domestic and care workers and Neapolitan employers; her Finnish doctoral dissertation continued this discussion. Näre's current research interests include globalisation of care labour, moral economy, migrations and intersectional analyses of gender, 'race', ethnicity and class. Her recent publications include:

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(lena.nare@helsinki.fi)

## Mojca Pajnik

(Ph.D) is a Scientific Counsellor at the Peace Institute in Ljubljana and Assistant Professor at the Department of Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. Her expertise lies in migration, media and gender studies. Recently, she coordinated *PRIMTS – Prospects for Integration of Migrants from “Third Countries” and Their Labour Market Situations: Towards Policies and Action* (EC, 2008–2010) and the *Active Citizenship Project* (Slovenian Research Agency, 2007–2009). At the PI, she is Program Director of *East East: Partnership Beyond Borders* Programme of the Open Society Institute, which funds international initiatives on larger issues of social justice. In addition to numerous articles in scholarly journals, her recent publications include:

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(mojca.pajnik@mirovni-institut.si)

## Hanne Petersen

(D.Jur) is from 2009 Professor of Legal Cultures at the Centre for Studies of Legal Culture, University of Copenhagen. She was Jean Monnet Fellow from 1993–1994 at the European University Institute, Florence; from 1995–1999 Professor of Sociology of Law and Jurisprudence at Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland; from 2001–2006 Professor of Greenlandic Sociology of Law at University of Copenhagen; and from 2007–2010, an Adjunct Professor at the University of Tromsø, Norway. She has participated in international, Nordic, interdisciplinary research projects on issues concerning gender and law, legal pluralism and legal culture. From 2001–2004 she was part of an EU project on *GRINE – Gender Relations at the Turn of the Millennium. Women as Subjects in Marriage and Migration*; from 2003–2008, member of the steering committee for the research priority area at Copenhagen University on *Religion in the 21st Century*; and from 2005–2009 co-initiator of and participant in a project on *Nordic Legal Maps in Transition*. From 2010–2013 she will be part of an EU project on religious and secular values in Europe. Her recent publications include:

H. Petersen (2010), Women, Secular and Religious Laws and Traditions. Gendered Secularization, Gendering Shari'a. In J. S. Nielsen and L. Christoffersen (eds.), *Tradition and renewal: Shari'ah as discourse and the encounter with Europe*. Farnham: Ashgate, pp.

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(hanne.petersen@jur.ku.dk)



## Aino Saarinen

(D.Soc.Sc.) is a Senior Researcher at the Aleksanteri Institute - Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies at University of Helsinki and Adjunct Professor at University of Tampere and University of Oulu. She has led the Nordic-NW-Russian project titled *NCRB – A Network for Crisis Centres in the Russian Barents (and the Barents region as a whole)* (EU Interreg, NCM etc, 1999-2005); the Nordic project titled *RWN – Russian Women as Immigrants in Norden project* (NOS-HS, 2004–2007); the *WGA – Welfare, Gender and Agency in Russia in the 2000s* (UH, 2008–2010/2012); and participated European projects e.g. the *PRIMTS – Prospects for Integration of Migrants from Third Countries and Their Labour Market Situations: Towards Policies and Action* (co-ordinated by Peace Institute, Slovenia) (EC, 2008–2010); and the *Speak Out! Empowering Migrant, Refugee and Ethnic Minority Women against Gender Violence* in Europe team (co-ordinated by Padua University) (EC, Daphne, 2011–2012). Saarinen has convened with Marina Calloni the workshop entitled *Eastern European Women as Immigrants in Western European Trans-regions* (ESF, 2006). In late 1990s-early 2000s, Saarinen was the Head of Research at NIKK – Nordic Institute for Women’s Studies and Gender Research (Oslo), and a Nordic Visiting Professor at the Nevsky Institute (St. Petersburg). Saarinen has published on feminist theories, mobilisation against gender violence and organising in transnational settings, and on migration. Her recent publications include:

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(aino.saarinen@helsinki.fi)

## Jana Sverdljuk

M.Ph, is currently a Ph.D Student at the Centre for Gender Research, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies of Culture, University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway. She was a member of the collaborative Nordic research team RWN – Russian *Women as Immigrants in Norden* (NOS-HS, 2004–2007). Her current research on destabilising gender and sexuality in the *Norwegian Education of Welfare State Employees: Majority-Minority Perspective* project inquires into the conceptualisations of gender and sexuality in the process of education of future social workers; specifically, it explores tensions emerging on the crossing between dominant discourses about liberalised Norwegian sexuality and oppressed sexuality of ethnic minorities. Sverdljuk is teaching courses on Nordic feminism and multiculturalism at University of Oslo. Her research interests are in multicultural challenges to Nordic welfare systems, transnational identities, post-colonial theory and gender in post-Soviet societies. Her recent publications include:

A. Saarinen and J. Sverdljuk (2006), Russian Women Immigrants in Grey Zones of the “Women-friendly” Norden. *NIKKmagasin* 2006, 3, 20–23.

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(jana.sverdljuk@nikk.uio.no)

## Mara Tognetti

(Ph.D), is an Associate Professor of Migration Politics and Migration and Ethnic Relationships at the Department of Sociology and Social Research, Faculty of Sociology at the national University of Milan-Bicocca in Milan. Her research topics developed during past years, concern social politics, mostly focused on healthcare, health systems, complementary medicine and medicines, health inequality. Concerning immigration, Tognetti was involved in research mainly focused on woman, families (mixed and reunited), teenagers, health and access to the health services. She is also coordinator for the migration politics series published by Franco Angeli. Her recent publications include:

M. Tognetti Bordogna (ed.) (2007), *Female immigrants and family reunions*. Reggio Emilia.

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(mara.tognetti@unimib.it)

The feminisation of migration in Europe has been intertwined with the restructuring of the East-West borders. This volume focuses on Eastern European women and calls for new analytic and methodological innovations. It participates in the EU debates on the transformation of sub-regional welfare regimes in both the North and South by exploring new forms and spaces of work, changing forms of families, intimacies and sexualities and, lastly, migrant women's political empowerment.

The team is comprised of nine authors located in North, Central and South Europe, from the fields of sociology and political sciences, cultural and legal studies and social anthropology

The editors are *Aino Saarinen* from the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki and *Marina Calloni*, the Faculty of Sociology, Milan University at Bicocca. The other authors include *Ursula Apitzsch*, *Mara Bordogna Tognetti*, *Åsa Gustafson*, *Lena Näre*, *Mojca Pajnik*, *Hanne Petersen*, and *Jana Sverdljuk*.



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