

InterDisciplines

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Work in a Globalizing World: Gender, Mobility, Markets

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**Work in a Globalizing World:
Gender, Mobility, Markets**

Issue editors

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On this issue's cover photo:

Andrea Diefenbach: *Land ohne Eltern* (Country without Parents)

The cover photo of the current *InterDisciplines* is one of a series within the photographic project entitled *Land ohne Eltern* (Country without Parents) by the German photographer Andrea Diefenbach.

Andrea Diefenbach's project describes the life choices faced by migrant workers from the Republic of Moldova, one of the poorest countries in Europe. In her photographs, the distance between the completely divergent worlds of the children, left at home, and the parents, working in far-off lands, becomes almost painfully tangible. Diefenbach recalled an event from her first visit to a small village in the southeast of the Republic of Moldova in April 2008:

»I was standing in a first-grade classroom when the teacher asked, »Whose parents are living in Italy?« Around two-thirds of the children raised their hands, displaying a mixture of pride and embarrassment. I was shocked. It's one thing to read all the statistics on migrant workers and their remittances for relatives back home, but it's another matter to stand in a cold classroom before 30 six-year-olds in wool caps and to realize that some of them haven't seen their parents in years...«

Andrea Diefenbach (born 1974) is a German photographer who works on independent long-term projects and freelances for national and international magazines. She finished her photography studies at the University of Applied sciences in Bielefeld, Germany in 2006 with the project *[spid]-AIDS in Odessa*, which was chosen for *Plat(t)form 2007* by Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland, won the *Wüstenrot Foundation Documentary Photography Award 2007/2008*, and was published as a book in 2008 by Hatje Cantz.

Her second book, *Land ohne Eltern* (Country without parents), about labor migration from Moldova was published in November 2012 by Kehrer. The work received honorable mention in the 2012 UNICEF photo awards, received the *Kindernothilfe Medienpreis 2013*, and also won the second prize from the Photographic Museum of Humanity Grant 2014, as well as the *n-ost Reportagepreis 2012* and the *Abisag-Tüllmann-Preis 2013*.

For further information see:

www.andreadiefenbach.com

www.artbooksheidelberg.com/html/en/program/detail.html?ID=633

Editorial

Ursula Mense-Petermann, Sabine Schäfer, and Thomas Welskopp

The concept of work has been a key topic in both history and sociology since the early days of these disciplines. Up to the end of the 20th century, the sociology of work, as well as social history and the history of labor, analyzed work within the framework of the nation-state and national institutional settings. During the last decade, however, it has become clear that this perspective is too narrow. Therefore, the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS) dedicated its 5th Annual Seminar in 2013 to the topic of »Work in a Globalizing World.«

Four of this issue's five articles originated from papers put to discussion at this Annual Seminar, which explored the many contemporary and historical facets of »Work in a Globalizing World: Gender, Mobility, Markets.« The doctoral conference charted much new territory, with numerous presentations of dissertation and postdoctoral projects.

First of all, work as a transregional phenomenon, gender, migration, and emerging markets appeared in most projects as an intricate entanglement that can only be understood properly in its manifestations across space and time. Thus, whereas it appears inadequate to speak of a truly »globalizing« labor market, one can find regional labor market and labor migration regimes all over the world. These are perhaps not global, but cover transnational and even transcontinental distances, and very often have a considerable history dating back to colonial and even pre-colonial times. Second, labor migration nowadays seems to be a phenomenon found predominantly at the highest and at the lowest occupational levels. At the high level of experts and executives, processes of relocation are not symptoms of an emerging new global labor market, since their deployment in foreign countries is frequently temporary, often part of an intra-firm qualification process, and represents a pattern of delegation

rather than competition for employment. A »global management elite,« ready to take on jobs wherever an opening materializes around the globe, is still a fiction. At the other end of the employment hierarchy, the role of institutionalized labor migration, often bordering on forced migration, has been emphasized in multiple projects. Here the role of professional agencies as intermediaries seems to have been and be especially important. From an historical perspective, junctures and, not rarely, continuities with varying forms of unfree labor are of special interest. This, finally, leads to the continuing importance of the gendering of work. The enduring inequality which separates male and female labor, and is also made responsible for different levels of push to migrate, seems to have its historical roots in the tradition of considering female labor not as work proper, but as some temporary extension of domesticity. The interface with discourses on forms of unfree labor, also not recognized as work but as extensions of servitude, are obvious. All three aspects can lead us towards a deeper understanding of the history of and of current trends of capitalism.

The five contributions to this issue of *InterDisciplines* provide glimpses into the abovementioned fields of debate which made the Annual Seminar of 2013 so lively and productive.

Philipp Reick explores the struggle for a shorter workday for women in the 1860s and 1870s in Germany. Taking Karl Polanyi's concept of »fictitious commodities« as his theoretical starting point, Reick juxtaposes discourses that oppose the thorough commodification of male labor on the one side and demand the limitation of working hours for women on the other. He demonstrates that both discourses followed diverging trajectories. While demands aimed at the improved status of male labor argued with the necessity to defend political citizenship and economic and social rights, debates on female wage labor fell back on either traditional paternalistic ideas of women's role in family care and reproduction or transported concerns about unfair competition from cheap female labor, which additionally seemed to threaten the status of males. Applying Nancy Fraser's concept of recognition, Reick concludes

that early social democrats and social reformers did not promote emancipation, but in fact challenged the participation of women in the labor market as such.

The invisibility of women's paid work in the informal labor sector is the topic of **Funda Ustek's** contribution. Starting from the observation that official data on the labor force often underestimates women's participation in the labor market, Ustek presents results from her field work in Istanbul, Turkey, where she asked women working in the informal sector about their concept of work. Her analysis shows that these women often conceptualize themselves as »not working« because their work is badly paid and resembles the unpaid household work they are used to doing at home. They only start realizing that what they do is »work« when they meet others in the same situation. Conceptualizing work as a social construct, Ustek is able to show that concepts of gendered work and informality are tightly interwoven. This leads to a disregard of women's labor in the informal sector. It is considered non-work not only by the women themselves, but also by official statistics and thus by the society as a whole.

The intersection of gendered power relations, labor markets, and mobility is addressed by **Paula Pustulka**, who conducted qualitative interviews with Polish women who migrated to Germany or the United Kingdom some years ago. In contrast to other findings, which identify economic reasons as the main push to migration, Pustulka finds that women still face a high degree of labor market discrimination in Poland. This motivates migration in search of more gender equality and self-determination. Thus job satisfaction in the host countries is surprisingly high, although women regularly have to take on work beneath their formal educational level. She advocates a research perspective on labor mobility that both takes into account both the socially unequal positions occupied by women and men in the labor market, and allows scrutiny of the impact of mobility on enhancing the agency and subjective achievements of women.

Heidi Bludau's contribution leads to a change of perspective, away from individual motives for mobility and towards the creation of a transnational labor chain by for-profit recruitment firms in healthcare in the Czech Republic. Bludau conducted ethnographic research at two Czech recruitment firms in Prague that are establishing a healthcare labor chain to Middle Eastern countries, especially Saudi Arabia. Analyzing the impact of the recruiters on migration processes, she identifies three steps: At the first step, recruiters create the labor chain by establishing relations between their own country and the partner country on the economic as well as the cultural level. Second, they have to instill the wish to join this chain in potential workers, in this case nurses. And finally, they have to implement structures to facilitate the flow of migrant workers. In her conclusion, Bludau shows that migration processes do not follow a random pattern, but are often purposefully shaped by institutions such as recruitment firms. In this case, they are able to benefit from specific human capital that is available in abundance in one country while in scarce supply in another.

Edgar Burns did not participate in the BGHS Annual Seminar in 2013. And his article seems perhaps misplaced in this issue, as it does not focus on the interplay of gender, mobility, and markets. Yet he provides a highly welcome and thorough analysis on the development of the veterinarian profession in six Anglo-American settler societies in the 19th and 20th century, providing insight into the roles governments have played and still play in processes of professionalization. Taking Harold L. Wilensky's functionalist approach towards the sociology of professions as his point of departure, Burns, by comparing historical veterinary professionalization processes in the UK, US, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand, is able to show the different courses the profession took regarding its development as a full-time occupation, its professional training and its professional associations in different settler nations. His case study counters harmful biases the almost hegemonic functionalist approach has imposed on analyses of professions in general by both neglecting the discipline's own historical and geographical situatedness in the US of the 1970s and claiming to be a Universalist

approach. Taking a comparative perspective, Burns concludes that the case of the Anglo-Saxon veterinary professionalization can best be explained as an interplay of »globalized information networks« which changed in their interaction among settler nations.

In sum, the articles assembled in this special issue of *InterDisciplines* deliver innovative perspectives on and fresh, empirically grounded insights into historic and newly emerging structural features of »work in a globalizing world.«

And protect us from the market

Organized labor and the demand to shorten the workday of women in the 1860s and 1870s¹

Philipp Reick

»As a feminist, I grow instinctively
wary when someone tells me he
wants to ›protect‹ me.«²

As this statement by Nancy Fraser epitomizes, the ambivalence of protection occupies a central place in contemporary feminist thought. Socio-historical research likewise displays a keen interest in the complex dynamics of female labor and protective legislation. In particular, labor historians have debated whether women's protection from market pressures promoted the emancipation of women or, on the contrary, fostered their further domination. According to Kathryn Kish Sklar, controversies over the ambiguity of female labor protection began as early as the 1920s, when Elizabeth Faulkner Baker argued that gendered labor legislation tended to protect women and men equally only in those trades where women constituted the majority of workers, while it regularly undermined their equal status in trades where men outnumbered women (Sklar 1988, 126–27; Baker 1925). This view was soon challenged by Clara M. Beyer and Elizabeth Brandeis who highlighted the positive impact of labor legislation for working women (Beyer 1929; Brandeis 1935). Fronts hardened over the course of the twentieth century. Following the rise of gender as a crucial category for

1 I wish to thank Thomas Welskopp and the anonymous reviewer for comments to an earlier version of this article.

2 Fraser 2011a, all translations by the author unless otherwise noted.

historical investigation in the 1970s and 1980s, labor historians increasingly interpreted special legislation for women as an essentialization of difference that undermined the equal position of men and women both in the labor market as well as in society at large. In their view, early instances of labor legislation for working women reflected the ambition of the state to restrict gendered groups to their supposedly natural spheres and tasks (Kessler-Harris 2003, 180–216; Lehrer 1987, 227–40). Other historians, however, pointed out that not only did nineteenth-century labor legislation end some of the most exploitative working conditions, it also paved the way for laws protecting women and men alike (Dye 1980; Sklar 1988). According to their interpretation, the protection of working women had the effect of an *opening wedge* towards the universal or gender-neutral protection of labor.³

Interestingly, the concept of an *opening wedge* already informed one of the earliest protective demands of organized workers, that is, the reduction of the daily working hours for women (Robertson 2000, 46). Characteristic for later discussions in other fields of labor protection, working-class activists linked the demand to shorten the female workday to hopes for a general reduction of working hours. The normal workday for men, they argued, would automatically follow legislative intervention for the sake of working women. Yet to what extent legislation to shorten women's hours actually caused or contributed to a reduction of working hours for men is difficult to assess. After all, many factors, including the professionalization of trade unions, the emergence of scientific management, the ups and downs of migration, the global rhythms of production relocations and capital flows, and the outbreak of wars had a decisive impact on the development of female labor and protective legislation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Thus instead of investigating the causal relationship between female labor legislation and the length of male workdays, the following pages explore the ideas that

3 For a short overview of this debate, see also Kessler-Harris et al. 1995, 3–5. For a critical analysis of the *opening wedge* argument, see also Boxer 1986, 55–56; Kessler-Harris 2003, 211–13.

were put forward by early trade unions and social-democratic parties in Europe and the U.S. in the 1860s and 1870s. Juxtaposing the arguments that were presented in favor of shorter hours for women and men respectively, this article argues that the rationale behind demands for shorter hours for women has obstructed rather than promoted female emancipation and gender equality. Socio-historical research on protective labor legislation has long tended to concentrate on the four decades or so that spanned from the mid-1880s to the aftermath of World War I. The growing acceptance of protective legislation and the increasing international co-operation of labor reformers make the fin-de-siècle a natural starting point for analyses. This does not mean, however, that conflicts about the desirability or harmfulness of protective labor laws for women were nonexistent prior to the 1880s. In the U.S. as in Europe, debates about special labor legislation were in fact particularly virulent in the 1860s and 1870s, long before the dawn of the Progressive Era in America's Gilded Age or the *Neuer Kurs* in Wilhelmine Germany.

The movement for a shorter workday

If there was one demand that unified early organized labor across the Western hemisphere, it was the shorter workday.⁴ From Australia to England, from Germany to the U.S., from the Netherlands to France, labor reformers, nascent socialist parties, and the young trade union movement struggled fiercely for a legislative reduction of daily hours (Cross 1989; Deutschmann 1985; Roediger and Foner 1989; Karsten 1990; Kimber and Love 2007). These movements therefore not only addressed their respective national arenas, they also pushed for transnational co-operation. As a result, the newly established First International raised the demand for shorter hours to, as the association put it at its Geneva congress in 1866, »the common platform of the working classes all over the world« (IWA 1868, 5). Transnational co-operation fostered a

4 Although historical research increasingly acknowledges the transnational character of nineteenth-century struggles for shorter hours, non-Western societies have thus far received little attention in this respect.

lively exchange about the rationale that helped legitimize this demand. It was comprised of a diverse set of arguments that simultaneously addressed the respective national polities, economies, and societies (Reick 2015). With respect to the political realm, the universal reduction of hours was regularly interpreted as a precondition for democratic participation. Within the system of wage labor, workers could be distinguished from slaves because they had political liberties and civil rights. In order to become educated and responsible citizens of the republic—whether the latter actually existed as in the U.S. or was hoped for as in Prussia—wage laborers needed to be protected from a free labor market (Montgomery 1993; Roediger and Foner 1989, 81–122; Weaver 1988, 77–102). Legislative market intervention thus not only promised to secure democratic sovereignty and political equality, it also resonated with the prevalent concept of *producerism*. Emphasizing the role of the laborer as an independent producer of value, the shorter-hour movement drew upon the conviction that workers should enjoy the omnipresent full fruits of their labor and benefit from the increase in productivity which they had, after all, made possible (Rock 1988, 21–39; Welskopp 2000, 566–667).⁵ The various concepts of productive co-operation that traveled back and forth across the Atlantic in the 1860s were vivid expressions of this quest for autonomy and control. In more pragmatic terms, shorter hours were also seen as a remedy against unemployment and a means to increase wages by accustoming workers to more refined lifestyles (Montgomery 1967, 249–60). At the same time, demands for shorter hours were regarded as a wedge that could be driven into the paradigm of *laissez-faire* economics. Resistance against unregulated labor markets were thus also expressions of a struggle against hegemonic political-economic theory (Cross 1989, 21–51). In addition to political rights and economic demands, arguments for shorter hours drew upon a broad field of social or cultural considerations. Among other things, the demand featured as a precondition for education, cultural refinement,

5 For the decline of the concept of producerism in late nineteenth-century America, see Hallgrimsdottir and Benoit 2007, 1393–1411.

the observance of religious obligations or the deserved enjoyment of leisure and free time »for what we will« (Rosenzweig 1985, Murphy 1988, 59–76).

These political, economic, and social arguments were embedded in a rhetoric that, at its heart, opposed the commodification of labor which followed from the proliferation of wage work. In his classic study, *The Great Transformation*, the political economist Karl Polanyi described the transformation of natural phenomena (such as land) or human activities (such as labor) into marketable entities as *fictitious commodification* (Polanyi 2001, 71–80). According to Polanyi, this transformation was facilitated as well as opposed by a *double movement* that determined the socio-economic dynamics of the nineteenth century. On the one side, reformers and employers promoted the liberalization of markets for actual as well as fictitious commodities in order to boost economic growth and end the specter of pauperism that haunted Europe and urban America. On the other side, a movement emerged that struggled to protect society from the unregulated access of this very market. In the eyes of the latter, human work could not be degraded to the status of a commodity (Polanyi 2001, 223–28). The transnational movement to shorten the workday by legislative intervention in the free market provides a prime example of what Polanyi has called a *movement for social protection*. As suggested above, early social-democrats and trade unionists opposed the unfettered commodification of labor as a violation of their political rights as free and equal citizens, of their economic rights as independent producers of value, and of their social or cultural rights as autonomous human beings or precious divine creations. The notion of de-commodification also featured prominently in discussions about the legal reduction of the female workday. When it came to women, however, opposition to the commodification of labor drew upon a very different rationale. The following pages analyze this distinction by addressing three elements in popular working-class discussions on the need to protect women from the commodifying pressures of the labor market. These elements were: (a) widespread male opposition to and delegitimization of female wage labor; (b) adherence to the concept of a

family wage provided by working men, and (c) androcentric anxieties about the impact of women's mobility on female sexuality.

Working men's perspectives on shorter hours for women

With the notable exception of Switzerland, most workers' movements in mid nineteenth-century Western Europe expressed approval for special legislation restricting the working hours of women.⁶ In England, the demand for special legislation was already well established by that time. When the first round of normal workday agitation hit the country in the 1830s, labor reformers had initially struggled for a gender-neutral introduction of shorter hours. Yet given the persistent laissez-faire hegemony in political economics, England's Ten Hour Movement increasingly realized that any comprehensive bill addressing the working hours of all adults irrespective of their sex would be rejected by parliament due to the supposed violation of the freedom of the worker to sell his labor power under whatever conditions he might choose. The Ten Hour Men thus joined England's Chartists in the early 1840s and focused on the passage of shorter-hour legislation for children and women only. Clearly, the reformers were confident that shorter hours for women would result in shorter hours for men, too. After all, men could not simply continue to work when women, who performed a particular auxiliary task in the production process, left the shop floor.⁷ Yet the closer the once gender-neutral agitation moved towards gender-conscious legislation, the more the rationale for cutting hours revealed its discriminatory bias. It was in this context of differentiation that restrictions of working hours for women were openly justified as a means to stop and reverse the spread of female wage labor (Lewis and Rose

6 Switzerland had already introduced gender-neutral working hour legislation in the first half of the nineteenth century. According to Regina Wecker, however, this universalistic approach increasingly eroded in the second half of the century (Wecker 1995, 63–64).

7 Sklar makes a similar point with respect to the early American movement (Sklar 1988, 109–12).

1995, 95–101). Over the coming decades, the demand to de-commodify female labor became a crucial element in the argumentation of shorter-hour activists across Western Europe.

In Germany, this argumentation was readily taken up by members of the nascent socialist movement in the 1860s. Many of the male activists voiced deep concern over the market-mediated allocation of female labor. In a letter to the editors of the newly established party paper *Social-Demokrat*, a typesetter from Berlin argued that the current system of wage labor was based, as he put it, on »the law of supply and demand that equated the propertyless worker with a commodity that capital could exploit« (Einsendung von Arbeitern). What capital required was a constant supply of cheap labor to which it had unrestricted access thanks to a free market. The progressing commodification of new segments of society—such as women or children—was not a movement for emancipation, but an effort to increase the pool of available labor and, as the author feared, to tighten competition among those who offered their labor for sale. Working men were deeply disturbed by the commodification of female labor and the resulting increase in the formal employment of women. Yet it was not the fact that women performed work in general that offended these men—after all, they were accustomed to women working in home production, agriculture or domestic services, where the latter faced both physically challenging tasks and devilishly long workdays. What had changed over the course of the century, however, was the growing separation of the spheres of waged and non-waged work (Kocka 1990, 467–68). While the sight of women working tirelessly on the field or in the kitchen failed to produce public outcries, the sight of women engaged in wage labor violated the moral senses of commentators as diverse as Baron Carl Ferdinand von Stumm-Hallberg on the one side and Marx on the other.⁸ In a letter to Wilhelm Liebknecht's *Volk-*

8 The notorious employer »King« Stumm had replaced all working women in his factories by mid-century. Over the course of the second half of the century, he actively supported parliamentary measures to restrict female wage labor (see Braun 1993, 89–90). While Marx, on the other hand, welcomed the alleged universalizing tendency of capital that would

staat, one reader exclaimed angrily that the liberal myth of female emancipation through commodification was nothing less than

the »legal« expression of economic circumstances which restrict the ability of male workers to sell their labor power [...]. Like men women are thrown on the labor market; and like men they are vested with »civil liberties« only to be forced into a competition with men compared to whom they are much more vulnerable. Men are at least protected by their stronger mental and physical constitution; women however, bereft of their male protectors, are forced to leave their natural sphere of activity and, alienated from their very nature, are left to enjoy these »liberties.« (Roßbach)

Characteristic of working-class conceptions of female labor, the author implied that although the free labor market was indeed a sphere of contractual freedom, it was also a sphere of social struggle and industrial conflict. Neither women nor the work women performed belonged here. Opposition to the commodification of female labor therewith reflected a widespread conviction among male workers that the work of women constituted a primordial duty rather than a free producer's activity. When early German social-democrats struggled to introduce a normal workday especially for women, many of them were driven by the hope that shorter hours would contribute to the eventual abolition of female wage labor. In their eyes, the restriction of female labor would push women

eventually transform all labor, irrespective of gender, age or ethnicity, into one powerful international proletariat, he shared the moral conviction that female labor jeopardized the essence of true womanhood. Quoting excessively from reports by English factory inspectors, Marx analyzed the situation of working children and women. One of the investigators lamented the fact that young women were working side by side with men: »These females employed with the men, hardly distinguished from them in their dress, and begrimed with dirt and smoke, are exposed to the deterioration of character, arising from the loss of self-respect, which can hardly fail to follow from their unfeminine occupation.« It is the same in glasswork,« Marx added affirmatively (Marx 1974, 260, footnote 2).

out of a sphere in which they did not belong and ease the wage competition that burdened male workers.

Working-class resistance against the unchecked commodification of female labor tied in, secondly, with the dominant idea of a family wage provided by the male head of household. Shortly before emigrating to the U.S., where he would become an important working-class voice in labor politics, the prominent social-democrat and trade unionist Paul Grottkau addressed a meeting of cigar workers who had convened at the pub *Zum Deutschen Kaiser* in Berlin. Grottkau argued that child, female, and convict labor all qualified as unfree work that lacked the autonomy of a free producer. Yet while all three forms of work increased wage competition for working men, child and female labor also destabilized social and familial cohesion (Berlin, 3–4). In a similar vein, the Austrian workers' newspaper *Arbeiter-Blatt* declared that it did not oppose female labor per se. Women were indeed qualified for many jobs especially in the service sector. What it did oppose, however, was any kind of female labor that kept women away from their duties at home. According to the paper, the evil of female wage labor was revealed in the mobility of working women. No woman who was forced to leave the house early in the morning and return late at night could provide the comfort and care that were the pillars of family life. »Female labor outside of the home,« the article concluded, »destroys the family environment and is thus a social malady that needs to be abolished wherever it exists« (Frauen und Kinderarbeit). At first sight, labor reform and trade union movements in post-bellum America appeared less hostile towards free female labor. In the summer of 1866, delegates from various unions, city trade assemblies, and eight-hour leagues convened in Baltimore where they founded the *National Labor Union* (NLU). The NLU reflected the growing conviction among unionists that only concerted action could enforce substantial improvements for the nation's working classes (Foner 1949, 370–88). As the NLU declared in its 1867 *Address to the Workingmen*, it generally welcomed female labor. Yet there were instances when opposition was legitimate. According to the NLU, the working men of America objected

to the introduction of female labor when used as a means to depreciate the value of their own, and accomplish the selfish ends of an employer, when under the specious plea of disinterested philanthropy, the ulterior object has not been the evaluation of women, but the degradation of man, or, as has been the case in almost every instance, where the labor of one has been brought into competition with the other. (Commons et al. 1958, 156)

The NLU could not have been vaguer. In a system of free wage labor, the opening of the labor market to new social groups necessarily transformed the latter into competitors vis-à-vis the already existing labor force. To welcome unrestricted female labor only as long as it did not intensify labor competition was either carelessly naïve or deliberately dishonest. Despite its theoretically female-friendly approach, the NLU's ambiguity did little to help dispel reservations that existed among many male reformers and trade unionists. Even prominent NLU leaders such as William H. Sylvis, an outspoken defender of women's rights, believed »that once relations between capital and labor had been revolutionized, women would leave wage labor and return to their »naturak place in the home« (DuBois 1978, 120). And many of the rank and file did not want to wait that long. Several of the local groups that together made up the NLU openly embraced the demand for shorter hours for women as a means to re-enforce the hegemony of the male provider. Discussing the deteriorating effects of unchecked female workdays on male wages and family life, the prominent labor analyst P. M. McGill argued that heavily overworked women, »tender, gentle, patient, weak, and delicate woman—the linking spirit between man and angel in every sphere—mothers, sisters, daughters,« were particularly worthy of protective legislation (McGill 1867, 17). New York's *National Workman* agreed. There was no doubt that »women needed, much more than men, protection for their labor« (Labor Movements). The increase of female wage labor posed a serious threat to proletarian family wage concepts on both sides of the Atlantic. The powerful German immigrant groups that mushroomed in cities like Chicago or New York during the 1860s and 1870 thereby functioned as a bridge that transported this notion back

and forth across the ocean. Characteristic for this transfer of ideas, New York's *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, one of several German-speaking papers addressing the highly politicized working-class community of Manhattan's *Little Germany*, published an article in the summer of 1873 that had appeared several weeks before in the Leipzig-based *Volksstaat*. As the article declared, employers naturally rejoiced over the commodification of female labor. After all, the weaker sex was much more submissive and was usually willing to accept a wage much lower than that of men. In so doing, working women depressed male wages and brought misery to working-class households. And, readers in Germany and the U.S. were informed, this was in fact exactly what capital wanted from the proletarian family:

To the bourgeoisie, the proletarian »family« is nothing more than an institution that serves to breed new workers for the exploitative passion of the capitalist lords, providing the labor market with as much human meat as possible. (Die Arbeiterbewegung und die Frauen (a and b))

Against this capitalist attack on male authority in the family as well as on the payroll, organized labor struggled to enforce protective measures that they hoped would reduce the unchecked availability of female labor. The normal workday for women was such a protective measure. The less women were allowed to compete with men on the labor market, the more men would be able to reclaim control over the family wage.

Both the delegitimization of female labor as well as the working-class concept of a male family breadwinner were closely linked to proletarian anxieties about the unchecked mobility of women and uncontrolled female sexuality. Here, too, opposition to the commodification of female labor played a crucial role. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, social-democrats and labor reformers followed very closely discussions about female wage labor in neighboring countries. The Austrian workers' paper *Gleichheit*, for instance, was markedly shocked by the spread of female labor in Berlin, where each year more and more women were forced into the labor market (Sozialpolitische Rundschau). No wonder the question of female labor featured so highly on the agenda of organized labor in

the German capital. Early in 1872, Wilhelm Hasselmann, a prominent member of the Lassallean *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* (ADAV) and the rather aggressive editor of the *Neuer Social-Demokrat*, delivered a speech about the situation of working women. Having rejected the proliferation of female wage labor for some time, Hasselmann eventually came to the conclusion that the »saddest aspect of the women's question is that women and girls are treated as commodities not only on the labor market, but in general« (Vereins-Theil a). Hasselmann here introduced a striking twist to the anti-commodification discussion. Women not only needed special protection vis-à-vis the commodification of their labor power, they also needed special protection vis-à-vis the commodification of their *bodies*. According to social-democratic analysis, the female proletariat was subject to two-fold abuse by the bourgeoisie. As if it were not enough that the ruling class kept their fathers, brothers, and husbands in constant misery and poverty, it also exploited their destitute and defenseless daughters for the pleasures of its rich and idle sons. In order to de-commodify both female labor and female bodies, Hasselmann suggested that if women were protected from the labor market, protection from the sex market would follow automatically. If women were, in other words, spared the demeaning experience of wage labor, they could return to the protected sphere of the home:

Legislation has to attend first to the protection of female factory workers [...]. Only if women are given back their proper role can we speak of emancipation. And this requires an end to the current system of production in which the female worker is a commodity. (Vereins-Theil b)

End the commodification of female labor and you will end the commodification of female sexuality. The two forms of commodification were presented here as equally immoral practices that needed to be addressed not by the socialist state of the future, but by the capitalist state of the present. Most of the speakers who followed Hasselmann emphatically endorsed his talk. Yet there was one solitary voice of opposition. A certain Mr. Jörrissen, who was introduced as a »writer« in order to

emphasize his non-worker status, argued that women were the true slaves of the present day. Hasslemann's demand to push women back to the home where they would enjoy the fruits of their husbands' labor was in fact the best way to maintain the dependency and suppression of the female sex. Even if women were not made for wage labor, the ability to offer their labor power in exchange for a wage not only spared them the experience of prostitution, it also fostered their emancipation from dependency on men. As long as the current system of wage labor was in place, the commodification of labor offered women an avenue towards greater equality and emancipation (Vereins-Theil b). Jörrissen's response was fiercely opposed by the assembled working-class Berliners. To them, the commodification of female labor was just as morally compromising as prostitution.⁹ This logic rested on a well-established legacy. As early as the 1830s, activists for shorter hours in England had put female wage labor in the vicinity of promiscuity and prostitution. Michael Thomas Sadler, one of the leading supporters of factory reform at the dusk of the Georgian Era, argued that mills were in »fact little better than brothels« (Lewis and Rose 1995, 96). The equation of female labor commodification with the commodification of the female body was based on a growing concern about the mobility of working women. In this respect, working-class voices were in full agreement with the conservative movement that likewise deplored female mobility and the resulting disruption of notions of domesticity. Female wage labor pulled women out of their proper place and pushed them into the mines and workshops, where they often worked on par with male workers (though usually for lower pay). The unchecked commodification of female labor thus not only undermined male authority at the workplace, but also at home. English observers were shocked by the sight of women »drinking, talking, and smoking in pubs,« unwilling to perform their familial duties (Lewis and Rose 1995, 99). Threats to male authority and the concept of female domesticity thus constitute a third element in nineteenth-century rhetoric in favor of shorter hour for women.

9 Kathrin Braun reaches a similar conclusion; see Braun 1993, 67–74.

Conclusion

This article has hopefully shown two things. First, it testified to the usefulness of the Polanyian framework which is currently enjoying a great revival in the social sciences.¹⁰ As Polanyi has suggested, the phenomenon of commodification indeed constitutes one of the fundamental—and yet strikingly understudied—elements in the repertoire of organized labor in the second half of the nineteenth century. Early social-democratic and labor reform discussions were heavily influenced by wide-spread opposition to the idea that human work was a commodity like any other. The transnational movement to shorten the workday that emerged in the 1860s represents a movement for market protection par excellence. The Polanyian notion of anti-commodification thus contributes greatly to a better understanding of the diversity of past social struggles. Pushing the historiographical focus on protective legislation from the decades around the turn of the century back to the 1860s and 1870s, this article, secondly, illustrated the ambiguity of protection, which escaped Polanyi's attention. As the introductory statement by Nancy Fraser indicates, protection can be both promise and menace to those to be protected. In a current re-evaluation of Polanyi's *Great Transformation*, Fraser emphasizes a third category that emerged out of the free market vs. social protection struggle, that is, the movement for emancipation. According to Fraser, the commodification of society not only provoked responses by movements for social protection, it also gave rise to new claims to justice and recognition. Such demands were neither necessarily congruent with those of social protection nor with those of the free market. Rather, they built a movement in its own right, at times pairing with social protection against the market, at times joining the market against social protection's flip side—domination—at times

10 The past decade has witnessed a tremendous increase in studies on Polanyi; see among many others Block and Somers 2014; Bugra and Agartan 2007; Brie 2015; Dale 2010; Hann and Hart 2009; Harvey, Ramlogan, and Randles 2007. On the Polanyian revival, see Mendell 2001.

striving against both. Though movements for emancipation struggle against a wide array of injustices, they are united, Fraser suggests, in their desire to »remove obstacles that prevent some people from participating fully, or on par with others, in social life« (Fraser 2011b, 149). This definition points to Fraser's idea of participatory parity which, in turn, rests on her notion of recognition (Fraser and Gordon 1992; Fraser 1995; Fraser 1998). Unlike Charles Taylor or Axel Honneth, Fraser does not understand recognition primarily as an act of self-realization but as a question of justice. In her eyes, it is first and foremost

unjust that some individuals and groups are denied the status of full partners in social interaction simply as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of interpretation and evaluation in whose construction they have not equally participated and that disparage their distinctive characteristics or the distinctive characteristics assigned to them. (Fraser 1998, 3)

Movements for emancipation are thus struggles for justice through recognition as equal partners. Fraser has shown that Polanyi remained blind to the central distinction between emancipation and protection because he disregarded what Fraser calls the *ethical substance*, the *normative stuff* or *Sittlichkeit* that legitimized any form of embedding and protection (Fraser 2011b, 147). Societies did not react as homogenous entities to threats triggered by marketization. Instead, states institutionalized only certain protective provisions which were signified and substantiated by societal actors – actors among whom the nascent workers' movement featured prominently. Such selective protection helped establish social hierarchies rather than promote the equal protection of *all* members of society. Drawing attention to the distinct rationale of the struggles for normal male and female workdays, this article revealed that arguments put forward in defense of gender-neutral workday legislation seldom reappeared in labor reform debates pushing for special legislation for women. In the eyes of early social-democrats and labor reformers, women required protection from the free market not because the latter jeopardized women's status as citizens, as producers of value or as equal

human beings. Rather, working women were in need for protection from the laws of supply and demand because these very laws challenged male authority both at the workplace as well as in the family. In so doing, the free labor market threatened to undermine the alleged essence of womanhood. From the commodification of female labor, it was but a short way to the commodification of the female body. While gender-neutral arguments devised by and for men drew upon an emancipatory rhetoric of equality and participation, arguments for shorter hours for women rested on an essentializing logic of reproductive duty, moral vulnerability, and economic marginality—a set of arguments that was eventually expanded by the imperialist-racist concern for the health of *the mothers of the race* (Braun 1993, 68; Jansz 1995; Kessler-Harris 2003, 191 and 201–2). Rather than acting as an *opening wedge* towards greater equality, dominant working-class rhetoric in support of protective labor legislation for women facilitated the emergence of separate argumentations for men and for women. While arguments for the de-commodification of male labor were in fact meant to promote the emancipation of working men, arguments pushing for the a de-commodification of female labor were hardly able to conceal their underlying discriminatory agenda.

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What is work? On the invisibility of women's paid work in the informal sector¹

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The invisibility of women's paid work in the informal sector in official labor force data in both the global South and North has been widely acknowledged since the 1990s (Downing 1988; Rakodi 1995; Rocha and Latapí 2008; Pellissery and Walker 2007; Carr, Chen, and Jhabvala 1996; Kantor 2009). As Franck and Olsson (2014) noted, this shortcoming often stems from the way in which the concept of »work« is defined and operationalized for data collection (also see Standing 1999). Perceptions about what counts as work for statisticians, enumerators and survey respondents have important implications for understanding women's paid work in the informal sector, as these perceptions are shaped and reinforced by women's roles in the family and in society in general (Tzannatos 1999; Elson 1999).

This article explores the paradoxical fact that although women in the informal sector work full hours and get paid, they subjectively perceive of such activities as »non-work«, and hence do not report their remunerative activities as work. Previous studies have indeed appropriately emphasized how cultural norms about women's place and role in family and in society shape perceptions of women's participation in the

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labor market (Benería 1995; Elson 1999; Mies 1998; Wichterich 2000). Research conducted on women in informal employment in Turkey has also adopted a similar line of argument: that the global »race to the bottom« to decreasing production prices together with the impossibility of sustaining a household on one earner's wages has pushed many women into finding flexible work arrangements in the labor market that do not hinder them from fulfilling their culturally assigned roles as mother and housewife while yielding extra income for the household (White 2004; Dedeoglu 2004; Akalin 2007; Bora 2008; Cinar 1994; Erdogan 2012; Erman 1997; Erman, Kalaycıoğlu, and Rittersberger-Tiliç 2002).

The objective of this paper is not to argue with these findings, but rather to investigate women's subjective definitions of work to understand why they define their paid economic activities as non-work. Such discrepancies present important clues for comprehending ambivalent patterns of female identities within the gendered economy of the informal sector. These discrepancies also indicate that under-reporting or non-reporting of paid employment in the informal sector could be a deliberate choice (motivated by practical ends) for some women, or may result from the interaction between women's unpaid domestic duties at home and the qualities of informal sector work; i.e. irregular, low-paid, and invisible to public scrutiny.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Istanbul, Turkey, where women's informal employment has dramatically increased since the 1960s as a result of migration flows to the city from rural areas, and of labor market restructuring during the country's transition from an agricultural to an industrial and service economy (Gündüz-Hoşgör and Smits 2008; İlkaracan 2012). It is currently estimated that 66 percent of women in Turkey are engaged in paid work in the informal sector (Özar 1998), despite the Turkish Statistical Institute's calculation that only 33 percent of women participate in the labor market (TurkStat 2014 Household Labor Force Survey). On the one hand, official female labor force participation (FLFP) rates situate Turkey at the bottom of all OECD and EU-member countries (Turkey is a member and a candidate respec-

tively), with an average FLFP of around 63 percent (OECD Labor Force Statistics 2013). On the other hand, estimations of the size of women's paid informal work situate Turkey as the 6th largest female informal economy in non-agricultural activities in the world, after Pakistan (73 percent), Philippines (72.5 percent), Mali (71.4 percent), Cote d'Ivoire (69.7 percent) and India (67.5 percent) (ILO 2012). Fifty-eight percent of women who are »outside the labor force«, i.e. »not classified as employed or unemployed« stated housework and family as their main reason for not participating in the labor force (TurkStat 2014 Household Labor Force Survey).² The percentage of men who gave the same answer was 0 percent. More specifically, while 1.1 million women noted housework as their primary reason (out of 2 million women surveyed), only 6 men gave the same reason (out of 8 million men) (ibid.).

It is highly unlikely however, that such a large proportion of women in Turkey would be »housewives« with no financial contribution to their households. Rather, as suggested by Dedeoğlu (2008) and Kümbetoğlu, User, and Akpınar (2012), a large number of women registered as housewives in official labor statistics can be found in the informal sector. This was also acknowledged in the recent World Bank report (2009) on female labor participation in Turkey. Despite the recognition of under-reporting among statisticians and enumerators of women's informal employment, more studies are needed to address the question of why women workers do not consider themselves as working when they engage in remunerative work in the informal sector. This article aims to contribute to this gap in the literature.

The main argument of this paper is that women in informal employment view themselves as contributing only to the household budget and consequently de-value their labor so as not to challenge traditional gender role dynamics in their households. The low skill level of the jobs they are engaged in, the irregularity of their job arrangements and the low pay they receive in return for their work contribute to their devaluation of

2 All translations from the Turkish by the author.

their labor. However, I argue that this depreciation can be a pragmatic choice for women who otherwise could not access the labor market due to familial and patriarchal reasons, and not only due to factors specific to informal employment.

In the first part of this paper, I provide a brief introduction into the gendered social construction of meaning of work. I then show how these different meanings are interrelated in women's paid work in the informal sector. The second section explores women's informal work in the case of Turkey, where traditional gender roles and attitudes about women's role and place in society remain dominant in the governance of everyday life and in politics. The third section explains the methodological underpinnings of this study. The fourth section presents the main discussion of what counts as work and non-work for low-income women in the informal sector. In the fifth and final section of the paper, I summarize the main findings and present a preliminary conclusion.

»Work« as a social construct

Although we all have a common-sense notion of what work is, the boundaries of what counts as work and what does not remain blurry. The traditional understanding of work in the literature focuses on activities you »have to do« in order to get paid (Beechey 1988). Thus seen, work is broadly defined as efforts resulting in some product or service that can be exchanged for payment or in-kind payment (Pahl 1984; Rosenfeld 2000). Not all researchers, however, would agree that the distinction between work and non-work is as simple as receiving payment in return, or the presence of an obligation to perform a certain act. For example, Benería (1995) argued (in connection with the conceptualization and visibility of women's work), that subsistence vs. market production dominated traditional economic analyses, in which women producing for subsistence were categorized as non-working, and men producing for the market as working. To elaborate: »women's economic activities were (and are) unvalued as a result of viewing the market as the central criterion for defining »economic« (ibid., 1843). Elson (1999, 614) similarly rejected the notion that work exists as a gender-

neutral category. For example, the fact that in official statistics »unpaid family labor« is particularly widespread among women might merely show that statisticians and enumerators consider »unpaid family labor in a family business« to be a continuation of women's gender role and hence non-work. In the same vein, previous studies have demonstrated that the reporting of women's work in official statistics is to a great degree subject to the interpretation of statisticians and enumerators; in some cases, even the same questions produced varying results due to gender biases (Chen et al. 1999; Hussmanns, Mehran, and Varmā 1990). The meaning of work is thus socially constructed, enacted, produced, and, accordingly, gendered. As Guba (1990, 89) argued: »All social realities are constructed and shared through well-understood processes. It is this socialized sharing that gives these constructions their apparent reality, for if everyone agrees on something, how can one argue that it does not exist?« In other words, if everyone agrees with the social constructions of what counts as work, and what does not, it is difficult to argue the contrary.

The social construction of the meaning of work has important consequences for understanding the gendered division of labor, the gendered segregation of labor markets, and women's increasing participation in the informal sector. In this regard, constructions of work and non-work can be traced to (1) gendered understandings and arrangements of labor, (2) the organization of the informal sector, and (3) the kinds of jobs available to and taken up by women.

The literature on women's economic activities demonstrates that women's reproductive work at home has been devalued, for it is both unpaid and considered to be done out of love rather than for economic gain (Hochschild 2003; England 2005). Other scholars have drawn attention to the abiding gender segregation of the labor market, where certain jobs are still categorized as women's work (Witkowska 2013; Arumpalam, Booth, and Bryan 2004; Ñopo, Daza, and Ramos 2012), perpetuating the general assumption that women need no additional skills or training for »female jobs,« and that women mainly engage in activities

that are a continuation of what they would do free of charge at home (Rakodi 1995). In other words, the categorization of women's unpaid reproductive work at home influences their productive paid work in the labor market; when the former is not considered to be work, the latter's position also becomes disputed. Accordingly, Rosenfeld (2000) argues for a more inclusive understanding of work:

A full understanding of individuals' lives in the context of social change requires a broad definition of work: effort resulting in some product or service for exchange or domestic consumption. Work can be done in the home (broadly defined) or outside it. It can be done for pay (such as a wage, a salary, or profit) or direct exchange or neither. (51)

In the same vein, Franck and Olsson (2014, 211) noted that the emphasis on *work*, *job*, and *main activity* (stress original) produces greater variations in female relative to male statistics owing to the fact that many women engaged in multiple income-earning activities, in informal and seasonal work, and in activities that were not directly remunerated. In the context of Turkey, Dedeoğlu (2008) emphasized that official surveys were generally conducted by male interviewers in majority-male establishments (e.g. coffee houses), which reinforced the gender biases of male respondents, interviewers, and enumerators. These persons were more likely to hold a preconceived idea of appropriate roles for women in the family (and in society), so they often reported female family members as economically inactive »housewives.«

But the blurry boundaries of gendered understandings of work do not end here. The fact that work in the informal sector is organized informally (or unorganized) further complicates the demarcation of what counts as work and what does not. For instance, Portes and Sassen-Koob (1987, 31) define informal employment as »all work situations characterized by the absence of (1) a clear separation between capital and labor; (2) a contractual relationship between both; and (3) a labor force that is paid wages and whose conditions of work and pay are not legally regulated [...] The informal sector is structurally heterogeneous and

comprises such activities as direct subsistence, small-scale production and trade, and subcontracting to semi-clandestine enterprises and home-workers.« Hence, the factors traditionally associated with »work« or »employment« such as a regulated work place, regular work hours, requirements defined and protected by law, occupational training or worker identity are less applicable or not at all applicable to work in the informal sector, which might take place in the privacy of homes with no carefully defined work contract and no distinct employer and employee relationship (Mayoux 2001). As Benería (1995, 1843) put it, »the problem with the informal sector is not conceptual—given that it consists of paid activities—but is due to its underground and unrecorded character«. Consequently, the »hidden« or »unregistered« nature of informal employment, combined with its irregular and flexible contractual arrangements, may make it difficult for women workers to categorize it as work, or encourage workers who view employment in the informal sector a »temporary refuge« or »contribution to the household budget,« rather than a long-term economic activity.

Moreover, informal employment often exhibits characteristics that are associated (exclusively) with women, further obscuring the boundaries between work and non-work for women workers. Paula Kantor (2009) explains these characteristics in terms of »constrained inclusion« and »adverse inclusion« in the labor market. She defines the former as the limits on the range of options open to women for engaging in various aspects of social and economic life, shaped by the social relations and norms defining women's labor participation (195). In societies where traditional gender norms are prevalent, constrained inclusion in the labor market would be associated with women's domestic and caretaking responsibilities, which should be fulfilled before they embark on paid work. These norms may come to mean that women who (want to) work face considerable resistance from male family members who conform to male breadwinning and female home-making gender ideologies. In such households, home-based work emerge as the only means of participating in the labor market for women (Carr and Chen 2002; Kabeer 2002). Thus often in the informal employment context, women's relationship to

work is shaped by what is considered a culturally *appropriate* job for women (Kantor 2009), as well as the flexibility of work arrangement so that workers can balance their paid economic activities with unpaid domestic responsibilities.

Adverse inclusion broadly refers to women's adverse conditions in the labor market (generally and especially during periods of financial downturn) as a result of receiving lower average earnings than men, and having a higher likelihood of engaging in temporary, ad hoc, and flexible jobs with no long-term job or financial security (see also Homes and Jones 2009). Indeed, Carr, Chen, and Jhabvala's (1996) global cross-sectional analysis of segmentation in the labor market revealed that women are usually engaged in jobs that are at the bottom of the informal employment hierarchy, such as casual day labor, home-based work, low-skill manufacturing, and domestic work. Additionally, even when women manage to enter the same types of work as men, they typically earn much less (Kantor 2009, 195). To the extent that women's occupational choices and their freedom and ability to fully participate in the labor market are influenced by norms concerning women's place and role in family and society, women's interpretations of which of their activities count as »work« and which they view as »non-work« become gendered in the informal sector.

In sum, women's subjective perceptions of what counts as work (and non-work) can be traced to the socio-cultural settings in which they live and the labor market context in which they seek work. In the next section, I shall look at the Turkish context in order to determine the underpinning norms and socio-cultural framework.

Turkish women as »mothers« or »mothers to be«

In November 2014, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan noted that women are not equal to men, and that the primary position for women in Turkish society should be motherhood. The president's stance on gender equality resonates with the imminent contradiction related to women's labor market status in Turkey: an attempt to increase female

employment rates while strengthening women's traditional gender roles as mothers and home-makers. In order to understand the underpinnings of this contradiction, an overview of the country's recent political and socio-economic transformation is necessary.

The Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 based on the ideals of the Kemalist modernization project. Kemalism aimed at curbing the influence of Islam in politics and society, and re-structuring the newly founded state on ideas imported from European liberalism and modernization. In this period, the state's role in regulating both economic and social life was acknowledged, especially concerning gender relations and private life (Kandiyoti 1997). Between 1923 and 1950, the single party rule of Mustafa Kemal's founding party, the Republican People's Party (CHP), took various measures to improve the status of women in society including universal suffrage, equal educational opportunities, and abolishment of *sharia*-based practices. However, this process of what I call »top-down secularism« began to change when Turkey entered its multi-party political era in 1945. Turkey's first opposition party, the Democrat Party (DP) was supported by a prevalently rural population that sought to restore the influence of Islam in the everyday life of citizens and in politics. Until the 1980s, the influence of Islam in politics continued to grow. After the military coup of 1980, however, Islam became an ever more important factor in politics and in the governance of gender relations and private life.

The military coup of 1980 was initiated in reaction to the growing power of the left. As a result, between 1980 and 1983, all trade unions were outlawed, wages were frozen, and the rights to strike, engage in collective action, and demonstrate were rescinded. Islam was introduced as a unifying factor in a society strongly divided into the right and left sides of the political spectrum (Sakallioğlu 1996; Onis 1997; Yavuz 1997). Although some attempts were made (by the military) to curb the growing influence of Islam in party politics and social life, after the 1980s Islam became a powerful factor in governance of the country. Since the mildly Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002, the influ-

ence of patriarchy on policy-making—in line with the party's conservative worldview—has become stronger (Kandiyoti 2003).

At the same time, during this period Turkish female labor force participation (FLFP) decreased from 55 percent (1955) to 22 percent (2008), rising only to reach the current level of 30 percent (2014) (Turk-Stat Household Labor Force Surveys). Against the global trend of increasing FLFP rates, the declining labor participation of women in Turkey posed an important puzzle (Dayıoğlu and Kırdar 2009; Dayıoğlu 2000). Two structural explanations have been put forth in the literature to account for this puzzling trend: (1) the transition from an agricultural to a service economy, (2) mass migration to urban areas following the erosion of work opportunities in the agricultural sector. The main argument stemming from these two interrelated explanations is that women who were previously employed in the agricultural sector as unpaid family workers found themselves unqualified for jobs in the urban labor market and hence left the labor market altogether to become housewives (*ibid.*). However, it is unlikely that all »discouraged« women workers left the labor market. Instead, a high rate of informalization has been estimated for the period during which economic liberalization of the Turkish economy took place (World Bank 2009; Başlevent and Onaran 2004; Ilkkaracan and Tunalı 2010; Karakoyun 2007). Reasons given are that women workers are more easily hired and fired (Temiz 2004) and accept lower levels of pay than men (Sapançalı 2005), since they are considered contributors to the household budget rather than main income earners. It has also been noted that women workers seek access to social security benefits less than men, as they are able to benefit from these rights through their husbands and fathers (Kumbetoglu, User, and Akpınar 2012).

Nevertheless, the invisibility of women in official labor statistics became a major concern for subsequent governments, and increasing female employment now constitutes one of the most important areas of policy making for the current majoritarian AKP government. However, government discourse on women's gender roles has so far demonstrated

a strong patriarchal stance. The following quotes from prominent AKP ministers demonstrate this point.

Why would women want to work? Do they not have enough to do at home? (Veysel Eroglu, Minister of Forest and Water Management, 2009)

The unemployment rate is increasing in Turkey because women also look for jobs (Mehmet Simsek, Minister of Economy, 2010).

The [economic] crisis is over. Women can stop working and go back to their homes (Ali Babacan, Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, 2012).

This is my word to you young women. Get married immediately when you can, do not be too indecisive, and then have five children (Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, 2014).

Recent social policy developments related to women's labor market participation perpetuate similarly gendered thinking on women's appropriate role in society. Four recent policies are particularly important. First, the AKP government introduced a policy in which the government would pay the social security premiums of female workers for up to five years if employers were willing to employ them. Women's training expenses were subsidized by the government in order to take the burden off employers' shoulders, and successful completion of these programs guaranteed a position (Öksüz 2007). Although the policy aimed at making it more »attractive« for employers to hire women workers (Labor Code-Article 5763³), in fact it gave mixed signals. Various women's rights organizations noted that the policy implied it was disadvantageous to employ women (hence the need for subsidies) and that women's labor was not as valuable as men's (TEPAV 2011, 47).

3 The policy grants that the social security costs of the female employee will be covered by the state: 100% in the first year, 80% in the second year, 60% in the third year, 40% in the fourth year and 20% in the fifth and final year.

The second important policy change during the AKP period aimed at supporting women's part-time employment through the reconciliation of family and work life. Also known as the »Birth and Three Child Policy Package,« a new policy in 2013 proposed to extend the 16 weeks of paid maternity leave to 24 weeks and, for up to six months after this period, give women the right to work »flexible« hours or »part-time« with full-time payment.⁴ Because the policy mainly targeted women, it was heavily criticized for reproducing patriarchal ideologies and cementing women's domestic roles in society, for it was only women who were assumed to need to balance their work and family life, an option for »paternity leave« did not even make it onto the government's agenda (KAGIDER 2013⁵). It was also noted that flexibilization of women's employment would only reinforce women's dependency on men, since the wages from part-time work would not be sufficient to afford a life on their own (ibid.).

The third policy related to women's labor market participation gave women the right to quit working in the first year of their marriages and seek severance payment if their husbands did not want them to work, or if they had difficulty balancing work and family life (Labor Code 1475-Article 14). The same entitlement, however, was not made available to men. This policy was evidently contradictory to the government's intentions to increase female employment, since it financially encouraged women to leave the labor force after marriage and become housewives instead.

The fourth policy allowed women to seek financial assistance from the government if they were the full-time caretakers of their disabled child or other relative in need of full-time care. The same policy also granted the right to early retirement in order to »enable women to devote their time to taking care of their disabled child or relative, rather than divide it

4 Full-time payment is only for the first two months, afterwards the pay decreases according to the hours worked.

5 <http://www.kagider.org/?Dil=0&SID=1&HID=527>, accessed October 26, 2013.

between paid work and care responsibilities« (Labor Code 5510). Recently, this policy has been expanded to provide all women up to 4 years of early retirement, provided that they have at least two children. Currently it has been proposed to extend this policy to »two years early retirement per child, with no upper limit« meaning that a woman who had five children could seek 10 years of early retirement. These policies should be considered together with the fact that so far no attempt has been made to provide free or affordable care services (KEIG 2014⁶).

In sum, it can be argued that though the AKP government has taken up female employment as an issue that needs improvement, its discourse and recent policies seem rather to reinforce patriarchal family structures and view women as mothers and mothers-to-be. It is fair to assume that this view might influence women's subjective perceptions of work and non-work. Faced with structural constraints (e.g. lack of affordable care services and the welfare state structure) and the gender roles ascribed by the patriarchal norms and values embedded in society, it should come as no surprise that women are oriented towards alternative forms of participation in Turkey's economic life: informal employment.

Methodology

This article is based on my ethnographic fieldwork for my doctoral dissertation at Oxford University, which included in-depth interviews, participant observations, and focus groups with 90 women in two neighborhoods of Istanbul, Turkey in 2012: Kağıthane and Esenyurt. The focus of this study is on low-income and low-educated women, as these women typically engage in work in the informal sector (Dedeoğlu 2008; Dayioğlu 2000; İlkkaracan 2012; Kardam and Yuksel 2004). The respondents included women working as home-based workers (both own-account and for the manufacturing sector), domestic workers, subcontracted cleaning workers, casual day laborers, and informal employees in the manufacturing sector. All of the women interviewed

6 <http://www.keig.org/content/ebulten/subat%202014%20web.pdf>, accessed on May 6, 2014.

were informal workers to the extent that their jobs had informal elements; either their work was completely unreported, or their income was underreported for tax purposes by their employers. I was not looking for a representative sample from which generalizations about women in informal employment could be made. Rather, I intended to give voice to different groups of women in the informal sector engaged in different sectors and jobs (Glaser, Strauss, and Strutzel 1968). At the same time I did not seek *especially* unrepresentative or unusual cases of women in informal employment. Each case was chosen as a lens through which women's invisibility in Istanbul in particular, and in the informal labor market in general, could be understood.

I aimed at tracing the everyday meaning of work for women workers engaged in informal labor, so the interview guide included both semi and unstructured questions about women's subjective perceptions of their paid-work in the informal sector. In addition to recording information about socio-economic and educational characteristics of women workers, I aimed at collecting as much information as possible about women's labor market and family histories, in order to understand the link between women's entry into the informal labor market and assigned gender roles/obligations.

I found my respondents through a variety of methods. I chose neighborhoods in which there is a high concentration of informal sector work to reach respondents in different types of informal work arrangements. I also visited factories and workplaces to reach women who had both formal and informal elements in their work contracts. Additionally, I reached some of my respondents via women's associations, unions for informal workers, municipalities and informal and formal employment bureaus. After making a few contracts through such channels, I used a snowball approach (Atkinson and Flint 2001; Sifaneck and Neaigus 2001), generating a unique type of social knowledge: »knowledge which is emergent, political and interactional« (Noy 2008, 327).

Fig. 1: Respondents' employment status by age group
(Source: Author's own interview data)

	17–25	26–35	35–45	45+	Total
Home-based work	0	7	2	3	12
Domestic work and caretaking	1	5	6	4	16
Subcontracted and other cleaning jobs	2	3	14	1	20
Production sector (textile, food)	11	10	2	5	28
Other jobs	1	6	2	2	11
Housewife	1	2	0	0	3
Total	16	33	26	15	90

The ethnographic method, including work-life histories and participant observations with women at their workplaces or doing their work together with them at home helped me gather information on the subjective meaning of work for women and on how they constructed this meaning in their everyday lives. Such observations provided me a base which helped me to understand why some women in informal employment do not see themselves as working (or as housewives), despite receiving payment in return for their economic activities.

»Work« and »non-work« for women workers in the informal sector

All respondents were asked to state the title they would use to describe themselves to understand how they categorized their own work. While

this question differs slightly from those asked in the Turkish Household Labor Force Surveys (2014) (i.e. »Did you work one hour or more during the reference week or had a job but did not actually work during the reference week for some reason?«), 40 percent referred to themselves as »housewives« and another 25 percent stated that they were »both housewives and working.« It should be noted that this group of women included women of all ages, marital statuses and employment types. Regarding the latter, home-based workers tended to categorize themselves as »housewives«, although this categorization was also common among domestic workers and casual day laborers. Married women (with children) generally reported themselves as housewives, whereas unmarried women were more likely to report themselves as working.

Here the use of »work« in the Turkish language provides an interesting demarcation between work and non-work. The word for work in the Turkish language, *iş*, denotes not only employment and job, but also being engaged in some activity. For instance, you would say »işim yok« to mean »I am not occupied« although it more literally means »I don't have a job.« However, it is not possible to use *iş* as a verb, as you do in English. Instead, you would use another verb, *çalışmak*, which literally means to work, to labor (or to study). Interestingly, whereas *iş* might be used to describe any kind of activity that keeps one busy, or engaged in; *çalışmak* would only be used for work-related activities. Hence, this subtle difference between *iş* and *çalışmak* marks an intricate but paradoxical reason as to why women in informal employment do not consider themselves to be »working.« Accordingly, women who referred to themselves as working generally used *çalışmak* when referring to their paid labor in the informal sector, other women stressed that they did not have a job (*işim yok*).

Women's paradoxical categorization of themselves as »housewives« can be analyzed through (1) gender-reinforced definitions of work, (2) definitions of work reinforced by informality and (3) gender-specific notions of informality. I argue that a complex mix of these three types of social constructions of the meaning of work shapes many women's perception of their paid work in the informal sector as non-work.

Gender-reinforced definitions of why informal employment is not work

As Franck and Olsson (2014, 217) noted, women express a wide variety of reasons for why they use the title »housewife« when they are engaged in paid economic activities in the informal sector. Some of these reasons reflected women's own perceptions of their gender roles and obligations, and of their »main purpose« for taking up employment. For low-income women, »economic survival« is the main reason for participating in any money-earning activity. In this regard, their labor participation is shaped by how much »additional« income is needed in their household, and whether working for this additional income *makes sense* economically if caretaking and housework services needed to be bought on the market and other hidden costs of employment (such as cost of transportation or professional clothing) were factored in. In this regard, a gainfully employed husband would decrease women's need to engage in paid work. Consequently, when women take up informal employment, initially (or longer) they tend to perceive it as a temporary measure to make ends meet and see their income as »additional« or merely »supplementary« to that of their husband or father even when their contribution is key for the survival of the household. Such social constructions of women's paid labor as a necessary continuation of their gender role as mothers and wives (or daughters) marks one of the ways in which women demarcate their informal employment as »non-work« as opposed to their husband's (or other male earner in the household) »work.« In other words, by perceiving their economic activities as »subsistence« and their male kin's as »market production« (Benería 1995), women shift the understanding of activities done in return for payment from »work« to »contribution to the family budget« or non-work. One way of exercising this practice is to spend the husband's income on rent, bills, and food—the so-called necessities for survival—and their additional income on »trivial« items such as new clothes for the children or new cookware for the kitchen. As Tayyibe, a 34 year-old mother of three, stated:

I do piecework whenever I can (pointing to the piecework on her knees). But my husband works. I am a housewife. I do piecework when he is unemployed, or when we have bills to pay.

Definitions of informal employment as »not work« related to informality

For the majority of women workers, however, characteristics peculiar to informality also made it difficult to perceive their employment as work. More specifically, poor working conditions, temporary and ad hoc job arrangements, and lack of public scrutiny influenced their perception of their employment as non-work. As Derin, an 18-year old helper in a small shoemaking atelier explained:

Even if I work from 8:00 am in the morning to 9:00 pm at night, or if there is overtime, to midnight, or even until the morning comes, I do not think of my work as [proper] work. You see, I get 500 lira a month [approximately 170 GBP], but I give it all to my parents. When I do overtime, they [her employers] say you're an apprentice and do not pay my overtime. I work overtime, I work on Saturdays and Sundays, yet I never get anything for it. There is this idea that once I establish myself in the workplace, they will give it to me. But then I look around, who has established herself in this godforsaken hole? In my atelier, there is no running water; we carry water from the employer's husband's other atelier, which is 250 meters away from ours. If we want to have tea, or go to the toilet, we have to carry this water [...] There are 10 people in my atelier, two of them under the age of 18, all of them work informally. Informality has become ingrained in us to such an extent that not even the atelier itself exists on paper. When we hear inspectors or auditors will come from the neighborhood, we close the curtains, turn off the lights. Our atelier is on the ground floor of an apartment (*merdivenaltı*) you see, so from outside when you draw the curtains it looks like an ordinary house. Nobody would think it is a workplace. Nobody would have a clue that there is work going on inside. Our boss appears like a housewife on paper.

So, when you look at it, there is no workplace, there is no employer. What do I get, 1 lira (35 pence) daily as pocket money from my parents, I do not see the money I earn otherwise. How am I supposed to see this as work? I am just passing time.

Job benefits, regularity of employment, stable income, and a written contractual relationship between the employer and the employee are among the characteristics several women enumerated when defining what would count as [proper] work, adding that these features were all absent from their paid work in the informal sector. As Hayriye, a 29 year-old home-based worker put it:

This is not work. This is just to pass the time. And maybe make a little bit of money on the side, if I can. You cannot survive on this money. So, it is like, while I am watching over the kids, you know. It is nothing. This cannot be called work. Today we have it, tomorrow we don't. And even when we have it, nobody can tell whether there they will give us the money they promised us they would give [...]

Whereas some women argued that these job attributes were achievable only with a high school (or university) diploma, others challenged the notion that education would be sufficient for accessing stable employment in the formal sector. Zero-hour contracts, that is jobs in the formal sector with no stability of employment and limited access to benefits were frequently mentioned to stress that informality was spreading to the formal sector as well, and without work security and income stability, it was difficult to perceive one's job as work.

Gender-specific notions of informality

So far I have tried to demonstrate the social construction, reinforced by gender and informality, of paid informal employment as »non-work« among women workers in the informal sector. However, the »interaction effect« between gender and informality also emerges as an important reason why a majority of women consider themselves as »housewives« in the informal sector, even when they engage in paid economic activities.

For some women who migrated to Istanbul from rural parts of Turkey, physical mobility outside the home was not possible or severely restricted by male members of the household. Consequently, traditional patriarchal values separating the public and private sphere, and limiting women's existence to the latter, combined with conservative religious beliefs about the appropriate role of women in family and in society played a large role in whether women participated in money-earning activities, and if they did, which activities would be considered suitable. Accordingly, women who faced particular resistance from their male kin chose physically invisible forms of economic activities, or activities they could hide from their male kin if need be. These activities were generally found in the informal sector. For instance, home-based work, ad hoc cleaning work or piecework emerged as possible options for these women to earn an income without directly challenging their male kin. However, because their work was often hidden, these women (perhaps strategically) referred to their paid labor as non-work in order to sustain their access to the informal sector.

Furthermore, to the extent that men's »breadwinner« status was not challenged, men tended to turn a blind-eye to women's money-earning activities in the informal sector, often calling it »distaff« or »women's activities to pass the time«. As Beşpınar (2010) has noted, the traditional gender role division in the family (husband as breadwinner and wife as caretaker) has two meanings: »his shouldering economic responsibilities and his being the authoritative figure that controls his wife's behavior« (525). Seen in this light, the irregular, ad hoc, and hidden nature of women's informal labor enabled some women to overcome patriarchal barriers to engaging in paid work, although this entailed that they indirectly agreed to socially construct their employment as non-work. Alev, a 38-year old subcontracted cleaning worker explained how the characteristics of her employment in the informal sector helped her relieve some of the gender-specific pressures she faced:

I was staying at home. I was staying at home with nothing to do for instance. I was doing bead-work [embroidery]. My husband

was against it, he was saying »don't bring this home, I'll burn it if you do.« I was doing it secretly, unbeknownst to him. [...] So, I was putting it away when he came home, and hiding it. I was thinking at least I get something we need with the money, a loaf of bread, if nothing. My husband thought that we were spending his money. He didn't realize, because he was giving me money for groceries. I was just adding what I made to that (*Ben de onun arasına kaynaştırıyordum işte*).

Several other women noted that home-based work made it easy for them to physically hide their employment from their husbands, due to the fact that they could do it »in the comfort of their homes.« But other women, who engaged in *ad hoc* cleaning jobs, casual textile work or domestic work, also mentioned that »if needed,« they could hide their employment thanks to its irregular and temporary nature.

Even when physically hiding their employment was not necessary, many women workers needed to hide it discursively or present it in a way that did not challenge their male kin's status as family breadwinner. One way of doing that was referring to informal employment as non-work; as a hobby, or an activity to pass the time (whilst making money on the side). To this end, some women presented their paid work as a continuation of their domestic roles. Gulin, a 32 year-old domestic worker, for instance, noted that as a woman, one is born with the skill to do domestic work and caretaking, and so she believed that domestic work was appropriate for women and could not be called work per se:

Domestic work is a good job (*temiz iş*). You are inside [the house] like you would be in your home. Your workplace is clean, and you are doing cleaning like you would do at home. So, it is a perfectly good job. It is just the right job for me as a woman.

Some women also underlined that much of women's informal work could not be considered to be [proper] work because women would not need any additional education, training or skills to be able to do them, but instead had these skills as part of their womanhood. Just like the domestic workers Cox (1997) interviewed for her study in London, the

participants of this study also emphasized that women do not need any other knowledge than common sense to undertake informal employment, as all women should have an understanding of basic hygiene, cleaning, tidying up around the house, childcare, and elderly care, but also of sewing, handicrafts or food preparation.

In addition to needing permission from husbands and fathers, for many women maintaining their »honor« or »reputation« in the general community played a pivotal role in gaining access to and retaining paid work. They emphasized the »very high« consequences of »dishonoring the family« including but not limited to domestic violence and a loss of family support, leading to social isolation. Consequently, women not only felt pressure to conform to the »appropriate« behaviors that were expected of them, but were also pushed to accept a heightened level of control in their neighborhoods and workplaces during their paid work time. Ensuring a »safe« (*temiz ortam*) workplace environment which would not harm their reputation emerged as the most important concern, and also as a strategy to enter and continue paid work. This was achieved through working together with kin (i.e. family members, friends, and neighbors) in order to have a shield against gossip and slander, as this provided them with a witness who could tell their side of the story. Women noted that working with kin ensured that they were not easily approachable for men, and hence their honor would be protected. Such »assurances« to the family often enabled women access to the labor market, albeit with varying levels of control exercised by the family members and friends with whom they worked together.

The number of gender-specific requirements limited many women's economic activities to the informal sector, where they could engage in ad hoc, temporary activities that could be considered a continuation of their unpaid domestic roles and would also allow them to work with people of their own (family's) choosing in places that were deemed appropriate for them. However, this interaction between the informal characteristics of their labor (i.e. temporary, ad hoc, unorganized) and their gendered access to the labor market meant that women often came to de-value

their labor as non-work so as not to challenge traditional gender role dynamics in their households.

Concluding remarks

Women's labor force participation often remains under-reported in official statistics, especially in countries with large informal sectors. Based on fieldwork in Istanbul, Turkey, this article has explored why women engaged in paid work in the informal sector refer to themselves as »housewives« and »non-working«. In doing so, the paper has attempted to shed light on women's everyday subjective perceptions of the meaning of work. On the one hand, the findings presented in the paper illustrated the gender-specific, informality-specific reasons why women refer to their paid work in the informal sector as non-work. On the other hand, the paper also presented the theory that the interaction between gender-specific and informality-specific constraints (which I called gender-specific informality) was actually pragmatically utilized by many women to access the labor market. In so doing, the paper demonstrated that the discrepancies between women's paid work in the informal sector and their subjective interpretations of the same as non-work might be a deliberate choice (motivated by practical ends) for some women. Future research could further this theoretical understanding of women's work in the informal sector as a strategic choice in order to further develop theories of women's everyday definitions of »work« from a social constructivist perspective.

My fieldwork with low-educated, low-income women in Istanbul who were engaged in informal work suggests that women's accounts of what counted as [proper] »work« and »non-work« are marked by the value they attach to the conditions of employment and by the priority of paid work over their unpaid labor at home. In other words, women perceived their informal work as »not worthy of being called work« because it often lacked adequate benefits, did not provide regular and stable income, and there was no contractual relationship between employer and employee. My study also revealed however that such demarcation of work and non-work was shaped by gender ideologies which governed

women's role and status in family and in society. The inherently patriarchal »male breadwinner, female caretaker« family model entailed that men did not want to lose their status as the sole breadwinner in the family, and hence attempted to strictly control women's entry into the public sphere; in these cases, the labor market.

Against this background, constrained by limited labor market opportunities and patriarchal gender roles, women in informal employment tended to undervalue their paid labor as »non-work.« The low social status associated with informal employment, owing to its irregular, low pay and contingent characteristics, had an added effect in this devaluation, especially when combined with »female jobs« in the labor market. Such undervaluation of women's efforts implies their invisibility as financial contributors to their households, and to the labor market in general.

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Escaping workplace gender discrimination through mobility?

Labor-market experiences of Polish female migrants in the West

Paula Pustulka

There is little doubt that migration and employment in the foreign labor market are linked (Piore 1979; Borjas 1991; Pries 2003); and it is the emergence of migrant women in the international labor force that has foregrounded the specifically female experiences of mobility (Sassen 1984, 2007; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003, 4–11). Studies of women leaving Poland for destinations in the West over the last several decades have followed this trend, substantiating both the tensions stemming from women's emotional and financial obligations to their families, and the range of outcomes of mobility projects, from advancement (higher income, career progress, new skills, etc.) to obstacles (deskilling, non-transferability of capital), that are present in multilateral and extra-nation-state labor market trajectories (see e.g. Morokvasic 2004, 2006; Slany 2008; Prasałowicz 2008; Smagacz-Poziemska 2008; Slany and Małek 2005; Fihel and Pietka 2007).

This paper seeks to contribute to the discussion regarding migration as a means to achieve greater gender equality on the labor market by implementing a comparative framework, one that involves examining the nexus of gender and work along a temporal axis, from pre-migration to post-migration (work abroad) experiences, among contemporary Polish female migrants in Western Europe. The arguments here attempt to »link self to society« (May 2011) in reference to the macro-level dimension and economic indicators on the one hand, and to subjective, micro-level experiences and the significance of work for individual biographies

on the other. The relevance of Poland—the sending country where all of the respondents had their first (and sometimes major) employment experiences—is also demonstrated, especially in regard to how it compares to evaluations of foreign work endeavors. Nevertheless, the novel contribution of this paper involves taking the notion of labor-market **discrimination** as its point of departure, a salient issue that emerges in the analysis. From this perspective, the article demonstrates that notions of escape, empowerment, and agency are very much present in the migration stories of intra-European female migrants. The evidence encompasses a discussion of factors in migratory decisions that while not entirely economic are related to the labor market as well as to the range of migrant career paths and workplace experiences abroad. More specifically, individual agency in response to social change stemming from post-1989 democratization and neoliberal marketization is examined. The article aims to show how a qualitative and respondents-driven methodological approach can aid in challenging certain assumptions about gender and ethnicity in discourses on women’s mobility in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly with regard to highly-educated migrants.

Methodology

The results presented here stem from data collected as part of a Ph.D. research project,¹ including biographical and semi-structured interviews, with respondents chosen by means of a non-probabilistic deliberate recruitment process. Overall, the study comprised a total of 37 biographical/semi-structured interviews conducted with Polish women parenting abroad between 2011 and 2013. All study participants were female, married, aged between 23 and 64 (average age was 37.9), and had arrived in

1 The project was funded from the 125th Anniversary Research Scholarship (2010–2013) awarded by Bangor University. The fieldwork in Germany was partially supported by a DAAD short-term visiting fellow grant (2011). The Ph.D. thesis *Polish Mothers on the Move: Gendering Migratory Experiences of Polish Women Parenting in Germany and the United Kingdom* was defended in 2014.

their destination countries between 1980 and 2010, with an average length of stay amounting to just under nine years. They resided outside of metropolitan urban centers (in villages, small towns, and suburbs) together with their immediate families (partners and children).² The women mostly led middle-class lives, though there was a purposeful diversity in relation to their education level (with a rather high education level prevalent), which translated into a diversity of occupational statuses.

The aim of the study is not to generalize its findings, but rather to draw attention to the multidimensional and often subtle factors at play in the detailed narratives women provide about the intersections of mobility and motherhood. This small-scale qualitative feminist inquiry has been guided by a transnational lens, and it engages the experiences of migrant mothering among Polish women, addressing in particular changes in family and parenting practices, constructions of belonging, and gender issues in everyday lives led in a transnational space. Without being directly solicited for data on discrimination, and barely prompted for information about the labor market, every single respondent nevertheless provided extensive data on the topic of work life. The multitude of narratives featuring work was linked to broader gender dilemmas: work-life balance, household division of labor, values to be transferred to children, and so on. All together, the narratives illuminate the significance of employment in the individual biographies of women and in the general context of migrant trajectories.

Polish women and the labor market: A complicated affair

Despite the qualitatively small-scale focus on »selves,« it is vital to acknowledge the critical characteristics of the wider social surroundings

2 This signifies that even if a circulatory/temporary migration pattern was a feature of the respondent's biography at an earlier stage, the family reunification at the post-transnational stage occurred at least one year prior to the interview, and the women were more or less settlement-orientated.

(May 2011), which here pertain to the Polish labor market. Broad feminist critiques of neoliberalism notwithstanding (e.g. Federici 2012; Dijkstra and Plantega 2003; Perrons et al. 2007), the arguments here are presented as contingent upon the specificity of Polish female employment. Together with feminized international mobility flows, which will be discussed in the next section, these kinds of macro-factors contextualize women's multi-local experiences of work.

Historically speaking, although at first glance a socialist state might have appeared beneficial to women—by encouraging a high ratio of working women, for example, or providing affordable institutional childcare—gender relations remained inherently patriarchal, while imposing on women a *double burden* of work in both private and public spheres (Zembrzuska 2000, 9–10; see also Dunn 2008, 157–81). Taking a broad, post-1989 perspective, Burrell (2008, 65–66) points out that as democratization began, the social and, especially, economic consequences of the transition were much greater for women (e.g. Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz 2010; Sztanderska and Grotkowska 2009). Although men also experienced factory close-downs and subsequent sky-high unemployment levels, leading to significant drops in the standard of living in Poland in the early nineties, it was women who bore the most noticeable consequences. They experienced all of the above macro-economic factors, compounded by discrimination and the gender gap in the labor market (see Dunn 2004; Titkow, Duch-Krzysztozek, and Budrowska 2003, 2004; Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz 2010). With the collapse of the state industries, job positions were cut, and the private business sector did not offer women alternative employment. The experiences of those individuals, who were highly disappointed and scared of not succeeding in the new capitalist economy, were later described in the EC (2009) and World Bank (2004, 2012) reports, which stated that the new private sector in Poland was marked by an extremely high degree of gender segregation and visible differences between the incomes of men and women holding similar job positions and qualifications (see also Sztanderska and Grotkowska 2009).

Discriminatory practices were, and still are, widespread and illegal in Poland, yet they remain uncontested. A recent study attempting to diagnose the complexities of the labor market for Polish women found that one in four of the participating companies demonstrated discriminatory practices³ and behaviors towards women, ranging from the gender pay gap to glass ceilings, sticky floors, and glass escalators (Auleytner 2007, 85; see also the CBOS 2006). Women earn 17% less than their male counterparts (Eurostat 2008; WB 2012), a phenomenon that is even more apparent in leadership roles, where salaried women earn only 63.9% of their male colleagues' salaries (GUS 2010). Within the workforce, women are largely situated in the lower wage segments, with 21% of women earning the lowest income as compared with 16.2% of men. They find themselves in more precarious positions as holders of temporary employment contracts and they lack the tools for building solidarity through unionization (Maciejewska 2012). The research also demonstrates that gender is the third most important factor taken into consideration during the hiring process, in clear violation of the law (Auleytner 2007, 80–96). In many professions, women have little chance of being hired for higher-level, better compensated posts, circumstances that have been described by the terms »glass ceiling« and »sticky floor« (World Bank 2004; Titkow, Duch-Krzysztozek, and Budrowska 2003; Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz 2010). Furthermore, on-the-job sexual harassment is not uncommon (UNICEF 1999, 24).

As mentioned above, this situation had not improved by the time of EU accession in May 2004. General employment rates fell in all countries accessing the European Union; but in Poland, the largest country of the group, the decline was the highest (GUS 2010, 7). Female labor market activity indicators fell from 52.2% in 1994 to 47.9% in 2003; and

3 Certain discrepancies in the measurements across studies can be attributed either to what is defined as a discriminatory practice in various projects or, when definitions are absent, to what respondents understand as discrimination. For these conceptual reasons, it is useful to pair statistical data with in-depth qualitative understandings.

unemployment among women was 20% at that time (by comparison, male unemployment was 18%). Additionally, the generation of recent college graduates proved particularly vulnerable (Drela 2012), with 40% of the youngest alumni being unemployed as of the 2004 accession, the percentage being even higher for female graduates at 47.4% (Auleytner et al. 2007, 9). Women are generally more likely to succumb to long-term unemployment, especially if they are between the ages of 18 and 34 and believed likely to become pregnant (Titkow, Duch-Krzyszczoszek, and Budrowska 2003, CBOS 2006). Unsurprisingly, as the work of Auleytner et al. (2007) has shown, employers have used various strategies to force women to declare that they will put their procreative decisions on hold. Consequently, since young women who have taken time out for motherhood often face lower salaries upon returning to the workforce, respondents tended to view taking maternity leave as a negative factor for their professional career; and almost 40% of women claimed that pregnancy had a negative effect on their standing with employers (see also Plomien 2009). Furthermore, as many as 40.5% of the respondents agreed with the statement that childlessness signified better career prospects (Kotowska 2007). Women aged 50 and over were also excluded from the job market, so much so that they were practically non-existent (World Bank 2004, Auleytner et al. 2007). The precariousness of career paths for Polish women is generally unrelated to their increasingly high education levels, qualifications or highly-mobile attitude, and is viewed as attributable to the perception of female employees through the lenses of familial and gendered trajectories (Auleytner 2007, 11; Titkow, Duch-Krzyszczoszek, and Budrowska 2003; Choluj 2007; World Bank 2004). According to Kotowska, the criteria for evaluating the work of men and women are not the same; in comparison to men, a larger »body of proof« is required of women in order to show that they are good workers. Positive judgments about the quality of a man's work are based solely on the job having been done by a man; while claims that a woman's work is acceptable must be supported by references to specific traits or skills (2007, 46).

Similar arguments have been raised by Sztanderska and Grotowska (2009) and come up as well in Coyle's political analysis, in which she

justifiably argues that accepted perceptions of contemporary gender relations contribute to the country's economic problems:

The idea that women should not be taking up the available jobs has taken a strong hold in conservative Poland. Successive governments have adopted neoconservative and pro-family social policies that attempt to reconstruct anew a traditional gender regime in which men are the sole earners in the family and women their dependents. Many childcare and reproductive health services have been withdrawn, access to contraception can be restricted, and legal abortion is rarely attainable even within the very narrow scope that the law permits. (Coyle 2007, 41)

While the EU15 has been criticized for not fully eliminating workplace discrimination in accordance with policy prescriptions (Dijkstra and Plantega 2003), the differences between those countries and their Central and Eastern European (CEE) counterparts remain enormous. Western policies are effective in diminishing gender-based workplace discrimination. Polish women, however, remain highly vulnerable, as the data from the Global Gender Gap Index Report 2014 clearly illustrate. Poland has been falling behind other European, including other CEE, countries; and generalized national scores show developmental differences between the three countries used for comparison in this study. Poland placed 57th, while Germany and United Kingdom are ranked 26th and 12th respectively (GGGR 2014, 8–9). With regard to the most relevant aspect—labor market engagement—Poland ranks 72nd worldwide (2012, 12), with the authors commenting that compared to 2011 it »loses eleven places due to a drop in categories of wage equality, the education sub-index, and women holding ministerial positions.« While the female labor-market presence reached 71% and 69% in Germany and the UK respectively, only 56% of women participated in Poland's workforce (2012, 44), a result that has been further supported by the enormous pay gap documented by the corresponding wages' survey. This should make it clear that the presence of Polish women on the labor market is in fact vastly affected by the notions of gender and reproduction which, in brief,

frame female employment and income as secondary to male breadwinning.

Gender and mobility entanglements

Contemporary thematizations of gender and mobility revolve around seeing migration as a *gendered and gendering process* (Szczepanikova 2006; Parennas 2010; Smagacz-Poziemska 2008). The main areas of studies can be categorized into (1) dedicated to transformational societies, (2) institutional welfare critiques, and (3) individual biographic focus.

Current research on female migrants points to the urgency of critically canvassing the »structural conditions and the transformations of societies« (Szczepanikova 2006) as well as their gendered consequences. Thus a group category for ethnicity-bound migrant women may reflect relevant themes within the broader global flows of care and paid employment (Sassen 1984, 2007; Lutz and Palenga 2010; Sørensen and Olwig 2002), as well as in the specific context of geopolitical transitions of the late 1980s—the end of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union—which conditioned gendered currents with a specific directionality (Morokvasic 2004). In order to counter exclusively economy-driven approaches, »power relations enmeshed in the changing migration patterns and processes associated with post-1989 economic globalization« must be explored through an intersectional and gender-centered lens (Nagar et al. 2002, 260; Silvey 2004) that locates the respondents' trajectories in reference to the timeline of historical processes.

With regard to labor, the targeted recruitment of foreigners for home and care sectors has been addressed; and the earlier economic explanations offered by theories of market dualism and labor-market segmentation (Doeringer and Piore 1971; Piore 1979; Kaczmarczyk 2007; Górny and Kaczmarczyk 2003) have been supplemented by several care economy studies (Anderson 2000; Charkiewicz and Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz 2009; Sørensen and Olwig 2002). Analyses of female migrant labor have resulted in a thoroughly feminist critique that sees

»global women« as inadvertently assisting Western women in avoiding gender issues at home by serving as cheap foreign domestic help (Lutz and Palenga 2010; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Bradley 2008, 226; Szczepanikova 2006; Kofman et al. 2000, 136–46). In other words, migration has helped to sustain the »hegemony of the white male breadwinner model,« as female migrants »filled a gap in the labor market that indigenous women might otherwise have been expected to fill« (Tacoli 1999; Kofman et al. 2000, 144). So-called »global women« from migratory backgrounds (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003) have been grouped together with local working-class women in order to constitute a labor force that allows affluent and middle-class mothers to become »mother-managers« instead (Nakano Glenn 1994, 7). It is worth pointing out that this situation results in a phenomenon that Hochschild calls the »emotional surplus value« of imported maternal love and the »exploitation of care« in a global context of varied levels of development (2000, 133).

Advancing the question of mobility, the scholarly conversation has moved beyond the above outlines to cover broader or cross-sectional topics, as in Chant's suggestion that the political dimension that governs gender orders at home be taken into account when patterns of female and male migration are compared. This is due to the level of female autonomy and societal views on reproduction and domestic labor, as well as to the impact of labor-market opportunities on ideas of mobility (1992, 197–98).

Focusing on Central and Eastern Europe, Morokvasic claims that the post-communist transition period induced significant growth in mobility, especially among the Polish women she interviewed (Morokvasic 2006, 5), as they were the ones who searched for the new opportunities abroad in hopes of managing the reality of the emerging market economy. Coyle observes that »Polish women have very much been at the forefront of the new paradigm of cross-border working and transnational lives« (Coyle 2007, 7). Indeed, roughly 50% of the female population of recent graduates indicated readiness for a temporary relocation abroad for work

reasons and many consider a permanent job move (Auleytner 2007, 16–17). Moreover, as Morokvasic (2006) argues, for decades Polish women successfully created and made use of informal, pre-1989 migratory channels from East to West, while clandestine irregular and undocumented flows of cheap labor corresponded to the unemployment pushing Polish women to search for income elsewhere (Morokvasic 2003, 38–39). At one point, women dominated migration flows from and within CEE,⁴ yet many of these flows remained unnoticed due to the gendered character of the labor-market positions that women had taken on. Two examples of this phenomenon can be drawn from a study of nurses and domestic workers. Organized groups use legal three-month visas to allow nurses to travel abroad on a circular and rotational basis (Morokvasic 2006, 6). This strategy allows them both to keep their jobs in Poland, and thereby maintain health insurance and pensions, and to supplement their regular income with foreign-currency earnings. Domestic care workers⁵ have proven harder to capture, prompting Lutz and Palenga to coin the term »twilight zone« or »open secret« to describe the gap between large numbers of CEE female employees in domestic

4 I am intentionally excluding statistical data on Polish migration; sources not only vary drastically, but many of them are gender-blind, assuming that male or »genderless« persons cross borders solely for economic reasons and obfuscating the numerous family-related or non-monetary reasons that are major factors in female mobility (see e.g. Szczepanikova 2006; Parreñas 2010). Instead, I provide illustrative examples that provide evidence of the gendered character and elusiveness of these particular migratory currents. Readers may consult studies by Kaczmarczyk and Lukowski (2005) or Fihel and Pietka (2007) for overviews of quantitative currents.

5 Broader debates involved in definitions of care/domestic work have had to be left out; care economy terms are used in their critical social meaning. A more complex discussion about the care work and domestic services sector can be found in England 2008, about migrants in Lutz (2011), and for the Polish case, in Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz and Charkiewicz (2009).

service and their complete invisibility in state policies (2010), a situation that obscures the female presence within the labor market.⁶

There are relatively few studies that adopt a transnational perspective and a qualitative approach, and in which women speak about their own work experiences. Slany and Małek (2005), however, drawing on the long history of studying migratory orientations and rationales, have delineated four categories of Polish female migrants to Italy and the USA: those leaving as a consequence of the »new trauma« of economic destabilization in Poland (the largest group); the »individualists/seekers/romantics,« who hope to fulfill their life goals through mobility; the »escapists,« for whom migration neither enhances their status in life nor serves as an investment in it; and the »family« migrants, who leave under the auspices of reunification.⁷ Outlining the three major reasons for migration among unmarried women from the Podlasie region in northeastern Poland, Cieslińska (2008) has mapped out the family-related grounds for mobility, two kinds of economic causes (unemployment risk/low salaries and earning money for university studies), as well as a class of autotelic causes that includes adventure, challenge, and self-actualization (267–77). In accord with the autotelic and romantic categories mentioned above, Kindler and Napierała argue that contemporary women often narrate their journeys as stories of gaining independence and integrating into modern, cosmopolitan Europe (2010, 25). This resonates somewhat with earlier studies, in which young women were seen as migrating for »the new life« (Praszałowicz 2008, 59;

6 Also, in Poland women are much more likely to work in the shadow economy; see e.g. Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz (2010).

7 Importantly, despite a shift towards allowing more multi-faceted explanations of mobility, the economic activity of women is qualitatively different, given their need to move back and forth in order to reconcile work and family obligations (Morokvasic 2006; Judd 2011) and to delegate care. Gendered expectations of Polish women nevertheless remain stable, with the notion of the »good mother« (Titkow, Duch-Krzysztosek, and Budrowska 2003; Titkow 2007), for instance, continuing to stigmatize migrant mothers.

Cieślińska 2008). Thus, comparatively speaking, while Polish women of earlier decades were said to migrate primarily for economic reasons, the new female mobility, as enriched by a gender studies perspective, now allows for the inclusion of other migratory goals—be they political, social, cultural or cognitive—and for the expression of individual perspectives and experience (Kindler and Napierała 2010, 25).

Some qualitatively positioned studies of Polish female migrants and employment include, among others, studies by Kalwa (2007), Slany and Malek (2005), Cieślińska (2008), and Judd (2011). Recalling her research on social care providers in Britain after 2004, Judd states that her respondents described migration as an »escape« or the »only choice« and referred to parochialism, social deprivation, and unemployment as being key features of their existence in their home country (Judd 2011, 190). She argues that economic gain has never been the sole reason for migration, pointing to a multiplicity of motivations, with »being in control« and »agency« at the forefront (Judd 2011, 194). Finally, following studies of the Polish labor market (e.g. Dunn 2004; World Bank 2004) and Chant's line of argument (1992), Coyle's work on migration as resistance (2007) engages the often-overlooked fact that the political transition initiated systemic political change, leading those women formerly employed in state-run industries on Poland's peripheries to decide to migrate to Britain. Her respondents often described typical struggles that can be ascribed to the labor-market gender inequalities discussed above, framing migration from Poland as a form of resistance to the situation of women in Poland in general (Coyle 2007, 39; see also Titkow 2007). The hypothesis that women's human rights have been eroded is in line with the mass-migration of highly educated, experienced women who often go on to work illegally as low-paid, low-skilled workers, such as domestic help, nannies, and elderly care providers. Coyle aimed to assess EU accession, wondering about the effect on Poland of EU directives pertaining to employment and mobility; but she concluded that Polish governments so far have shown a degree of resistance to gender equality and mainstreaming policies in the labor market. This led Coyle (2007) to conclude that much time will need to pass before Polish women will be

willing to return or to settle permanently in Poland. This final point provides the backdrop for stories related by respondents in this study.

Gendering labor mobility

Having graduated top of my class from the University of Silesia, I could never have anticipated the job problems that I would encounter. I quickly learned that [...] being a young woman predestines you not to have a job, and that once you get one, you had better get used to sexual innuendos and constant stereotypical maltreatment simply because you are a woman and happen to have a kid [...] I worked hard and ignored it. I never took a day off when my daughter was sick; I let one scary incident pass when a drunk client tried to force me into his room during business negotiations. And then the day came when they let me go, making no secret of the reasons why: It was either me or a much lower-performing male colleague, who, however, was a son of somebody important [...] At that moment, I felt I had to run away. (Ola, 26, DE, m: 2007, int. 2011)⁸

The above quote arguably evokes the difficult times of the early nineties and the devastating effects of Poland's post-transition economy for educated young women. However, it was made only a few years ago by Ola, a young woman who was born in an urban and rather prosperous Polish region in 1982 and received a university education under the blossoming democracy and the new neoliberal economy that came with it. Shortly after becoming unemployed in 2009, Ola moved abroad and currently resides in Germany, where she enjoys a promising career in an international finance venture. Ola's narrative echoes those shared by many respondents, although varying degrees of discrimination are indicated.

8 To inform the readers about the basic background of our respondents, annotation to the interview quotes is provided in the following format: /Pseudonym, age of the respondent, destination country (DE-Germany, UK—United Kingdom, US-United States), m: year of migration, int. date—year of the interview/.

Tracking discrimination as a theme across the narratives yields evaluations of several salient stages in women's career lives. These include hardship and struggles in the Polish workplace, followed by the experience of agency in conjunction with the decision to emigrate, and references to characteristics of employment abroad.

Unsurprisingly, the respondents' experiences of the labor market were conditioned by age, education, and other factors in a comprehensive, intersectional way. The matrix of multiple disadvantaged positionalities (female gender, foreigner status/ethnic origin, class status, etc.) thus mattered in a way that was much more powerful than the simple sum of these dimensions of underprivilege (Harvey 2002; Reid and Comaz-Diaz 1990). The following discussions of the findings, which progress along a temporal axis from pre-migratory experience to work-life abroad, aim to account for some of these differences.

Pre-migratory work experiences as alternative mobility explanations

Starting with pre-migratory findings, the gender and age axis in the workplace from first entry into the labor market—job applications and recruitment processes—highlighted the relevance of earlier scholarship (Kotowska 2007; Titkow, Duch-Krzysztozek, and Budrowska 2003, 2004). The notions of being either »too young« or »too old« for the Polish labor market were often expressed in these narratives; and a multigenerational and cross-border comparative perspective is already present in the account of one respondent, Matylda:

It seems to me, in retrospect of course, that as a woman you just can't ever be of the right age for the labor market in Poland. Unlike here [UK]. You're not allowed to work when you're still in school. Well, maybe if you are a boy you can help out some place, but not as a girl. And by the time you finish your studies, it is suddenly high time for weddings and babies. That is simply how it goes—in my family and among my friends [...] We had our [2] boys in close succession, and I was never able to earn enough to

pay for child care for them, so I just stayed home. They did not get into kindergarten, so I was home until they were of school age and I was almost 30 myself. This 30–40 age should be good, right? Wrong! In employers' minds, you either have small children that get sick or you will have children, or probably both, so they won't hire you. [...] I saw my mum go through the next phases: She lost her factory job at 43 and could not get rehired [...] She came here to live with us. She never had a job she liked, where people valued her, not until she came here. Women just aren't respected as workers in Poland; they are simply discarded as being somehow less worthy of having an income. (Matylda, 39, UK, m: 2005, int. 2013)

Unfair gender- and age-based recruitment practices were reported especially by women aged 45 and older, who talked about long-term unemployment following the loss of a steady job. This was crucial for Marzena (aged 61, moved in 1992), now a cleaning agency owner in Germany, who lost her position in a feminized garment industry near the Polish town of Łódź. Afterwards, she could not get another position primarily for transition-related structural reasons, but also because she was considered »too old to re-qualify,« hence the forms of governmental support and activation programs were not available to her (see Maciejewska 2012). Similarly, Ewa (aged 57) from the northeast of Poland reported feeling »useless« when she was told at a local council office that she would not get any work without being computer-literate and then, upon expressing her willingness to learn, was met with consternation and laughter from the office staff, with one person telling her that she had better go and take care of her husband and grandchildren, clearly leaving the then-active 40-year-old at a loss.

At the other end of the age continuum, Sylwia and Agnieszka, both highly educated specialists in international business and biochemistry, respectively, talked about how their »young« age at graduation impeded their chances by comparison with their male colleagues. Both in their thirties and living in Germany, they recalled being unable to get hired while male alumni of the same university department received the major-

ity of available jobs despite being less qualified. Furthermore, when one of them did manage to get a job interview, a large array of personal questions was posed illegally. All the other women in the group recalled a similar situation in which they were asked specifically about their family situation and whether they had children. Ola, a degreed accountant, reported being questioned about issues such as whether one child was enough for her and if she planned to refrain from having more in case the company hired her. Due to job scarcity, or perhaps due to discriminatory practices being ingrained in everyday Polish reality, none of the affected women reported unfair treatment. Often it was only after migration that they understood those behaviors to have been unjust and illegal, especially when they discussed gender-equality ideals with their friends and co-workers abroad.

All of the women respondents who had children in Poland before moving abroad identified the multiple ways in which being a mother had impacted their labor-market experiences. Agata, a 43-year-old psychologist who has lived in Wales for almost five years, raised this concern several times during the interview, asking rhetorically, »Do you really think anyone would hire a 40-year-old mother of two toddlers in Poland?« Surprisingly, educated women, with experience and eagerness to progress in their professions, early on experience forms of ageism. Respondents who were employed while pregnant added another dimension to the discussion, demonstrating that legal solutions had been bypassed. Weronika, for instance, recalled:

Theoretically, they cannot fire you when you're pregnant, but my boss was a master when it came to disobeying this law in a manner that all was still »legal.« As it happens, I was the third one from our team to get pregnant. The first one was let go due to »restructurization« and her position was cut. The second girl went to tell him that she was expecting and left crying—he told her that she had made a crucial mistake in calculations last month and that he had to let her go. She denied having told him about the baby, but we know she did. [...] [With] me, well, it was brutal, he told

me I could either resign or I could stay on, but that he would fire me the first chance he got and make sure I never got a job in this town again. (Weronika, 39, UK, m: 2007, int. 2011)

It appears that education did not mitigate the precarity of labor-market positions ascribed to women on the basis of gender, since they were perceived primarily as mothers and homemakers. The findings support other studies (e.g. Budig, Misra, and Boeckmann 2012), which underscore research results concerning the persistence of the gendered division of domestic labor, with a »partnership penalty« affecting women upon entering a shared household relationship and a »motherhood penalty« leaving them economically in a much worse condition across their life-cycle than men and childless women .

Women from peripheral Polish towns experienced the corrupt nature of local employment politics conducted by means of personal connections and »old boys' club«⁹ rules. Hania, 36 and now based in the UK, talked about the mechanisms of sustaining male privilege in the workplace in her mid-size Polish hometown:

Before leaving, I had a decent job in my field, but I simply could not advance! I think it was largely due to how things were decided during bridge and poker nights, to which men were invited, regardless of their time or position in the firm. After one such late-night buddy event, the guy that I was training suddenly became my boss. (Hania, 36, UK, m: 2004, int. 2012)

Women employed in assistant/support roles in traditionally »feminized« sectors described situations in which »femininity« was a professional

9 Aside from a typical meaning of alumni networks, the term highlights workplace/business disadvantages faced by women, as described in Lana Nino's feminist work. »It is naturally easier for men to socialize with each other after work, such as having drinks, playing golf on weekends, or socializing with clients. A lot of information sharing occurs at such informal events without time pressure of the workplace. Women find it difficult to break into these circles« (Nino 2006, 5).

course and provided examples of sexual harassment (see e.g. Roth 2008). Lidia, a nurse who worked in Polish hospitals and medical practices throughout her twenties and thirties, reported:

I was addressed as »dear child« or with »hey little girl« well into my thirties and often felt like I was looked at more as a pretty-but-stupid girl rather than a professional colleague [...] I remember this one doctor who for six months would say hello by slapping me on the butt, until I could not take it any longer and left [...] My job in a doctor's private practice was not much better. I was both nurse and receptionist, and the doctor in charge practically made me his secretary, having me serve coffee at meetings while wearing a »work-uniform« that included a tight skirt. (Lidia, 35, DE, m: 2001, int. 2011)

This type of patronizing treatment of female subordinates is also reflected in the semi-legal employment that occurs when small business owners use female family members as free unregistered labor. This was demonstrated in Celina's story. She had worked long shifts at her parents' store since her teens, only to be left with no proof of her experience and no entitlement to benefits when the business went bankrupt. Her example additionally illustrates the intergenerational reproduction of gender inequalities within family structures. Significantly, it is not always external conditions that contribute to respondents' poor prospects, as some women have expressed views that can only be interpreted as an internalized agreement with the patriarchal nature of private and public division of gendered spaces. The traditional structure of the male breadwinner, the female homemaker, and the dependent persist in the stories of contemporary relationships. Women born in the postwar socialist reality of the fifties have expressed such convictions just as often as those born and raised in the post-communist era of the late eighties and throughout the nineties (Titkow 2007), a situation that parallels the increasing conservatism of values in contemporary Poland (e.g. Titkow 2013). It is rather striking that in times when dual-career and

dual-income households have become standard, women themselves fail to recognize gender imbalance as potentially disastrous in the long run.

Post-migration work lives: Multifaceted narratives of success

In approaching the topic of the move abroad and its consequences, difficult economic circumstances should be noted as a consistent feature of narrative recollections of migration. Respondents usually referred to job-related mobility at the outset of the interview, often in the form of a shallow »obvious answer« embedded in discussion of the dominant paradigm of labor migration. The framing of financial hardships was very different for this group, a dimension possibly attributable to two aspects, the gender of the respondents and the fact that they had children. Let us turn to a narrative example of this in Ania's account of her family's trajectory:

We had a mortgage on the house, and my husband lost his job, and everyone was saying that Britain was the place to be—all our friends had already gone. So obviously I stayed behind with the little ones, and he [the husband] went and stayed with his high school buddies in Liverpool and found work. For some months everything was fine, but in the end we missed each other too much: me and him, him and the children. He was saying good things about England; he liked it and said it would be good for us. He was working in factories despite having a degree, and he said then and there that English was so important that we should come just for the sake of the children going to school here [...] So I packed our things, stored the rest, and rented out our house. The children were happy to see their dad, and it all worked out in the end. Things are good, we are happy. (Ania, 34, UK, m: 2006, int. 2011)

It is evident that many factors are at play in this one story—from economic distress to personal feelings to children's future lives. This mirrors other stories where migration was never »just about the money,« and where a combination of factors was in place, indicating the complexities of individuals' familial and non-familial engagements.

In general, the narratives provided by respondents support the thesis of migration as a form of resistance (Coyle 2007) involving a political component of liberation or emancipation and termed sometimes simply »escape.« At the same time, many defined their mobility in less negative categories, as »something of an adventure,« which resonates with the findings of studies by Cieślińska (2008), Slany and Malek (2005) and Kindler and Napierała (2010). In general, the women interviewed saw migration as effecting positive changes in many areas of their lives, especially in terms of improved family relationships and labor-market experiences. It is here that this article's methodological value may be found, as many projects that employ simple probing methods for assessing migration motives group the variety of issues involved under a vague umbrella term, »economic reasons,« and thus add bias to the data. However, as has been shown, when women are asked to elaborate or are given time to reflect on their trajectories, they report a plethora of non-economic motives for their decision to leave Poland. It thus stands to reason that the significance of financial/employment factors is overestimated in the literature on the whole, and may operate as a self-fulfilling prophecy or a biased research assumption.

Comparing pre-migratory experiences with labor-market success stories¹⁰ abroad clearly led to the respondents to feel a sense of empowerment. The notion of »agency« was involved in overcoming obstacles stemming from the overlap of gender and ethnicity (as in the status of the »foreign female« worker). Karolina, a 41-year-old French teacher, moved to Britain eight years ago from a large Polish city. Her professional trajectory appears linear: she was a language teacher back home, and continued to work in the same capacity in a British school. However, what she experienced was a »qualitative« change:

Work [in Poland] was not a problem, but with two state jobs [her husband is also a teacher], we could not make ends meet [...] and

10 This article focuses on gendered practices, thus discussions of initial de-skilling are omitted. Generally, over time, women developed a more positive outlook on their jobs abroad by contrast with their Polish past.

could not afford the life we wanted [...] I took time off to have children, which was detrimental to my career—I was unable to get ahead based on merit, I wasn't connected to anyone important, and so I had to work extensive weekly hours, I think eighty or more [...] I ended up having two jobs at two schools and tutoring on the weekends. This is no way to live [...] Here you are valued because of your professional conduct—no one asked me about my age, marital status, or children when I interviewed for this job. It happened just three months after we came here, so you can imagine how unsure I was and how imperfect my English was. No one asked where I came from—it was surreal! They only judged my relevant skills and qualifications. I felt welcome and appreciated from the very start. (Karolina, 41, UK, m: 2006, int. 2012)

Karolina has been steadily advancing in her career abroad and reported »loving her job« (the same one she had hated in Poland), as well as finding a balance between her work and family life.

Having lived in the UK since 2004, 36-year-old Hania had a more complicated trajectory, working her way up from an entry-level office job to an appointment as junior manager just a few months after she received a British university degree. Reflecting back on her experiences, Hania was highly critical of how things were done in Poland compared with the UK, and singled out the treatment of mothers. She was quite clear in saying that as a career-oriented person, she would not have decided to have children if her family had remained in Poland. Despite the difficulties of managing childcare without grandparents being present to help, she reported believing that all her employers had supported her as a mother-to-be and as a parent. It is quite telling that although in terms of policies, Poland appears to be a better place for pregnant employees, as women can request paid medical leave from the early weeks of pregnancy until the birth, and are then legally offered generous maternity and parental leaves. Hania voiced the same view that Polish feminists bring to the table: The solutions implemented in Poland hurt women in the long-run. Namely, the inflexibility of acceptable forms of employment

and the lack of childcare facilities, together with the overuse of pregnancy-related medical certifications, reflect badly on the female population as a whole and deter women from entering the labor market over long periods of time (Kotowska 2007; Choluj 2007; Titkow, Duch-Krzysztozek, and Budrowska 2003). In the UK, on the other hand, Hania never felt that she was treated differently because of her origins; and she reported believing that her knowledge of Polish and Russian had in fact contributed to her being promoted when her company expanded its international operations and began dealing with businesses in Eastern Europe. The language she used to describe her experiences was marked by a sense of empowerment and pride in her own achievements; she used expressions like »I was determined to become a manager« and »I made my husband understand that housework is hard work,« indexing a shift in the internal dynamic of the couple.

What is interesting about Sylwia's accounts is that gender appeared to disappear completely from her story once she began narrating her post-migration experiences. Getting married (a fact that was known in her town and stereotypically associated with the rapid transition to motherhood) had negatively affected her prospects, already hindered by the existing nepotism conditioning the hiring process. By contrast, in Germany she not only had no problem finding a job, she also managed to re-qualify and pursue a career in her field of choice, human relations, which likely contributed to her practice of eliminating gender as a labor-market factor. Sylwia's life was transformed:

I did it—I moved and achieved what I always wanted [...] It felt like I was a broken housewife one day, and a confident manager the next—surreal. (Sylwia 35, DE, m: 1999, int. 2011)

In her line of work, Sylwia had a chance to observe what she referred to as the »pecking order« of ethnic backgrounds, explaining that agency recruitment still discriminated against non-EU nationals. At the same time, she saw Poles as being looked on quite favorably, observing colleagues hiring them for a range of positions—from seasonal farm worker to technology sector CEO. While this claim can by no means be taken at

face value, it does depart from the common preconception of migrants as being universally at a disadvantage. This argument is reflected in discussions of labor-market segmentation (de Beijl 2009; EC Report 2009), but it appears to be mitigated by many Polish women (and men). Poland's proximity in the intra-European context benefits Poles given their classification as EU/European (and sometimes as white/Caucasian, Catholic, educated in Europe, and so on; see also Praszalowicz 2008, 2010) and places them in stark opposition to those excluded as third-country nationals.

Especially since Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, Polish employees abroad have regularly been conceptualized as hard-working and reliable (see Judd 2011; Fihel and Pietka 2007). The assumption is that women who had experienced gender discrimination in the Polish workplace are inclined to perform at the highest level in the foreign workplace. Alina, a dentist in Germany, explained:

I would never have been able to get as far as I am now professionally, to have my own practice, and to have a managerial position, if I had stayed in Poland. The German system promotes people who work hard, regardless of their origins—you can see that in every sector, you can see it in the streets. Yes, your German needs to be perfect, but it is an investment and the state will then help you to be good at what you do and earn a good salary for that work. (Alina, 57, m: 1984, int. 2011)

Amazingly, Alina had been outside the work force for 12 years. A semi-legal immigrant with no knowledge of German and two small children, she experienced considerable isolation. Regardless of a certain naïveté about there being equal access for all, her conviction that she was able to advance further in her career abroad is that much more powerful. Ideas of »loyalty« and »gratitude« for perceived support (be it informal, institutional, or other) received in the destination countries, was commonplace in respondents' stories with reference to the labor market and beyond. The accounts underscore the women's active and self-oriented role in decision-making and in independent career endeavors, even if the initial

migration resulted from a decision made by their husbands (family reunification). While improvements in external circumstances through migration might be relative, the narratives show in-depth shifts in the agency of Polish women migrants, suggesting that migration in fact had emancipatory effects in the area of work.

It would be impossible to overlook gendered discourses in the role of the global care chain in determining certain migration trajectories. Polish women are often employed in this sector and research indicates they are viewed through the lens of their »caring femininity« (Palenga and Lutz 2010). Agata, a psychologist who became a social worker, reported:

We have a lot of compassion, I think. That was how we were raised in Poland. Maybe it's because of the church, or, I don't know: I think it's different here—women and men are ingrained with same values, the same ways of doing things. Maybe when you are a carer, this particularly feminine quality of appearing fragile but being strong helps patients to handle their predicament better. Several clients of our services prefer women and often ask for Polish social workers. They praise our cooking, our efficiency, our smiles [...] (Agata, 43, UK, m: 2006, int. 2012)

By linking the latter three notions from different spheres, namely cooking (for the most part a domestic task), efficiency (associated rather with business language), and smiling (a personal trait), Agata's statement illustrates the degree to which perceptions of caregiving as a form of work are multidimensional and somewhat confused, with the lines between professional and personal engagements blurred for many. Lidia's account of working as a nurse in Germany is reminiscent of the reports of Polish medical personnel in Sweden presented by Wolanik Boström and Ohlander (2011; see also Berdahl and Moore 2006), in which differences in gender-appropriate behaviors were marked. She recalled feeling different in the workplace, where men and women dressed the same way; no unwanted sexual advances occurred, and the nurses were treated as professionals entitled to express opinions and make decisions. Her physique was no longer a topic of conversation, with the sole exception of

one doctor who ascribed her »delicate« approach to patients to her Polish Catholic upbringing and »Virgin Mary-like« empathy. Several respondents had started their careers abroad as caregivers. Those in Germany worked largely in the semi-legal sector and were paid less than certified local personnel, but nevertheless earned enough to support their families. Women employed in the UK drew attention to the flexibility of the shift patterns enjoyed by caregivers and how they facilitated juggling work and family obligations, or, alternatively, studying while working. Issues in caregiving are difficult to tackle from the standpoint of a feminist critique. On the one hand, the discourse indeed positions Polish women in regressive roles inasmuch as they supply care for their Western counterparts who can afford to outsource caregiving/domestic work outside their respective families, thus reinforcing the patriarchal gender order by ignoring the problematic character of caregiving work in a neoliberal economy (Palenga and Lutz 2010; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Nakano Glenn 1994). In addition, the construction of womanhood in terms of femininity involves rhetorically framing caring as »appropriate« and as a (solely) female (primary) responsibility. However, a number of women's narratives suggest that providing care and domestic work can be rewarding and, more importantly, that it continues to be economically crucial for the survival of Eastern European women and their families (Morokvasic 2003, 2006; Lutz 2011). The economic disproportion between Western and Eastern Europe, which is especially evident in the difference in wages, overshadows the struggle for gender equality, and in the process incontrovertibly assists in reproducing injustice globally through the tacit endorsement of lower wages and non-standardized working conditions.

In comparing conditions between the home and destination countries, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that German and British labor markets are also not free of gender-based discriminatory practices. It must be emphasized that various measuring instruments, such as research and legal frameworks, consistently register the uneven treatment of (native) men and women in Western economies (EC 2014 Report; Matysiak and Steinmetz 2006). Likewise, there are feminist critiques that specifically

see migrant women as being victims of discrimination on the one hand (Anderson 2000; Roth 2008; Berdahl and Moore 2006) and, as mentioned earlier, as being enablers of stagnation within gender orders, on the other (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003, Nakano Glenn 1994). While the significance of these broader debates should be kept in mind, the focus here is on the individual accounts of women. Such subjective perceptions tend to reflect a »here vs. there« dichotomy, in which the negative portrayal of Poland stands in opposition to positive experiences abroad. While this might not be useful from a macro-standpoint, it presents an issue that is sociologically vital, which attests to how problematic issues abroad are often overlooked and the relation of perceived and experienced discrimination affects individual narratives.

Contributions and concluding remarks

This article draws attention to several issues that are sometimes sidelined in the gender and migration debates, and it does so in several ways. First, it integrates a long-term perspective, from pre-migration narratives to settled-abroad narratives; it illustrates that although the post-1989 transition logic should have been lifted by the combined factors of Poland's EU accession and its relatively strong economic performance despite the global financial crisis, practices of gender-based labor market discrimination still cause difficulties for women in Poland and equally affect educated women who have recently finished university and those nearing retirement age. Second, inasmuch as the division between East Central and Western Europe still holds, it also helps to frame certain findings about migration as a means for achieving greater gender equality in the various spheres of women's lives (Kay 1988; Morokvasic 1984, 1993, 2004; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003; 1994, 101). While this thesis might be countered with the line of argument on women's re-traditionalizing after migration (Szczepanikova 2006, 2012; Reid and Comas-Diaz 1990; Morokvasic 2007, 71), the discussion is limited here to labor market-related narratives, which consistently demonstrate subjective satisfaction with having contravened or escaped the unfair gendered practices that respondents experienced in their country of origin. It is therefore im-

portant to note that while gender equality might not be a priority or a possibility for women in their domestic lives, such as when they choose traditional framings of their roles as mothers and wives, the role of work in those same subjects' lives cannot be overlooked and should not be restricted to its income-producing function. For example, both deskilling and low income jobs performed by women can be seen as objectively negative outcomes of migration; nevertheless, actual workplace experiences in which unjust gendered practices are absent, the acquired ability to contribute to the domestic budget, and work satisfaction all may be interpreted subjectively in conjunction with individual achievement and female agency.

Finally, although the post-migratory labor market experiences of the women interviewed are not free from certain problems—as women in other studies on Polish female labor abroad have pointed out (Slany and Małek 2005; Małek 2010; Kałwa 2006)—the general conclusion is that even a plethora of factors, that normally would lead to oppression and did in the pre-migration context, were largely overcome thanks to migration. It may thus be argued that a transformation of one's gendered circumstances on the labor market is an indirect result of the move abroad and signifies a hitherto often overlooked dimension of contemporary Polish mobility. This finding is more in line with explanations drawing on theories of political resistance and escape (Małek 2010; Coyle 2007) than with frameworks relying on purely macroeconomic factors. In this regard, it must be noted that the dominant economic paradigm used to explain contemporary Polish mobility says very little about women's experiences, as it usually disregards differences between the respective labor market positions of men and women and their varied entanglement with home realm obligations. It is not that women do not migrate for financial reasons—they often do, even more so than their male counterparts—but their exposure to professional life in Poland makes the process of familiarization and adaptation to the foreign labor market entirely different for them. Likewise, the family situation has a much greater impact on women's work life than it does for

most men. Having been *tied-stayers*¹¹ for a long time, women have now become primary agents in their households' migratory endeavors. Additionally, the generally precarious position of women on the labor market, when paired with sociological knowledge of the feminization of poverty in Poland, could also contribute to the alternative, though sometimes hidden motivations for changing one's residence, as enforced by global regimes of care (Charkiewicz and Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz 2009). Political aspects have contributed as »push factors,«¹² since women's narratives focus on the way mass mobilization is not merely a matter of economic struggle, but also involves willingness to belong to a new, future-oriented, modern, and culturally open European society. The mobility of Polish women in global capitalism is by no means identical with the pursuit of consumption in the world economy; rather, this mobility strongly encourages the creation of alternative empowered identities, both in private and professional life, thereby partially liberating Polish women from gendered, conservative discourses and facilitating new reconciliations between private and public and between work and family as key spheres of women's lives.

11 *Tied-stayers* are featured in New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM) theory, which moves away from individualist reductionism and assigns the power in deciding »who migrates« to the household/family unit. It explains how women were assigned to mobility or immobility for historical reasons and reasons related to gender and reproduction (see Stark 1985; for the Polish example, Górny and Kaczmarczyk 2003; for a critique of it, see Faist 2004, 41–42).

12 I am referring to a broad interpretation of push-and-pull theory (Lee 1966) that focuses on all types of factors (economic, political, personal) acting as an encouragement for people to leave one country and stimulating them to settle in another state (i.e. workplace gender discrimination present in Poland—a push factor—versus equality abroad, which is understood as a pull factor).

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Creating a transnational labor chain between Eastern Europe and the Middle East

A case study in healthcare¹

Heidi Bludau

Introduction

With healthcare worker shortages increasing globally, a need for a migratory healthcare workforce has arisen (Buchan 2006; Kingma 2006; Ross, Polsky, and Sochalski 2005; Zulauf 2001). Countries such as India and the Philippines have long been involved in this practice and even operate state-run employment services to place nurses in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia. In the last decade, healthcare workers from Central and Eastern Europe have also been recruited for this work, and are increasingly discovering the opportunities available to them as in-demand, mobile professionals. Since 2000, Czech recruiters have created a niche for themselves built upon interdependencies with the clients in their migration chain. This particular chain connects Czech recruiters and healthcare workers and Middle Eastern healthcare facilities. Currently, two Czech firms, Care4U and Nursematch, operate in this chain.²

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2 Care4U and Nursematch are pseudonyms as are the names of all individuals.

This article uses Care4U and Nursematch as case studies to examine the role of recruiters in healthcare labor migration. Looking at the development and maintenance of the firms as migration channels, I argue that patterns of global labor migration are not merely random networks of »global circuits of labor« (Guevarra 2010, 89), but negotiated chains of transnational labor capital that recruitment firms create, manage, and maintain. I define recruiters as culture brokers who create, foster, and preserve migration chains that provide them with lucrative business opportunities. The migration chains they create are transnational, anchored both in the origin and in the receiving countries, and are dependent upon the cultural-political projects of each nation (Kearney 1995). Using ethnographic data, I illustrate how recruiters influence migration trends in three primary ways: First, they create the migration chain, then they create the desire to be part of that chain, and, thirdly, they facilitate movement along the chain. Each stage is brokered and negotiated through the use of first and second order resources.

Recruiters: Migration channels and culture brokers

Recruiters are literally and figuratively at the center of healthcare migration. Although most international migrants depend on some type of intermediary (e.g., recruiter, family member or trafficker) to help them find employment and housing abroad (Findlay and Li 1998, 682), in the past few decades, for-profit mediation has become the main channel of healthcare migration (Ball 2004). However, fully functioning migration chains do not simply appear. Recruiters generate them through a series of activities that involve creating the chain, creating the desire to be part of this chain and facilitating movement along the chain. Every step of the way, a variety of resources are continually brokered and negotiated. Moreover, recruiters shape the flow of international migration. They not only introduce the idea of migration to potential migrants, but also affect how and where they go. For example, when European markets are unavailable to Czech nurses, recruiters direct migrants to the Middle East.

Acting as channels, recruitment firms construct and shape a number of elements, including information systems between source and destination countries, entry points to foreign labor markets, and even motivations (Findlay and Li 1998, 685). Migration channels are social institutions that not only reflect the existence of a system of migration processes, but are responsible for structuring and defining that system (Guevarra 2010; Findlay and Li 1998).³

These firms are the key to »seeming paradoxes« regarding timing and routes of migration (Piore 1979, 24)—such as why Czech nurses go to Saudi Arabia. Channels operate selectively, as each affects specific regions of origin and destinations (Findlay and Li 1998, 683). Using Umut Erel’s concept of migration-specific cultural capital (Erel 2010), I suggest that recruitment firms are a form of migration-specific *social* capital that is articulated transnationally through the creation and maintenance of migration chains.

Recruiters create and manipulate migration chains by brokering cultural, social, and financial capital between migrants and foreign employers, offering themselves as intermediaries. As channels, recruitment firms do not merely connect two ends, or points, of a system, but often serve as central hubs connecting multiple points to one another, and aim to convince each side that they have common interests (Bailey 1969, 167). Healthcare brokering reproduces the gendered and racialized processes embedded within it by shaping and creating a competitive advantage for a particular migrant population (Guevarra 2010), whereby producing care workers for a specific locale (Bludau 2011). Each migration channel operates according to different cultural meanings, which vary depending on destination and desired job. These meanings are both reflected in company recruitment and deployment policies, as well as in the individual ways in which migrants use these channels (Findlay and Li 1998, 700; Constable 2007).

3 While the channels in this study are private recruitment firms, other channels include family or social networks, traffickers, and general employment agencies.

Recruitment firms are the primary gateways for individuals who want to work in the international healthcare market. Because healthcare workers must be skilled and licensed, their recruitment is more complex and orderly than that of their unskilled counterparts. Recruitment firms serve as initial clearinghouses for hospitals by verifying that candidates meet the minimum requirements of employment. This process involves a variety of steps, including certifying educational and professional licenses, training candidates to become »global nurses,« and coordinating interviews between candidates and employers. Each hospital system has specific hiring procedures that firms learn to navigate. Once procedures for processing a candidate for one hospital are in place, they are easily replicated with only slight adjustments for each hospital system, making it more cost efficient for hospitals to work through recruitment firms and pay finders' fees rather than work with thousands of individuals. Recruitment firms negotiate placement fees and supplement their income by selling other services necessary for candidate preparation.

Through the activities described above, the recruiters' roles as culture brokers and for-profit intermediaries intersect, and are constantly re/negotiated in their firm's best interest. Culture brokers are intermediaries who control resources while communicating the values of two different societies to members of both. This definition holds true whether the migration process is informal, as in trafficking or personal networks, or official, as in recruitment firms. In migration, cultural knowledge aids in both the pre-migration and integration processes. Recruiters help actors on opposing ends of the channel negotiate divergent meanings and behaviors. For instance, firms may offer interview training, including mock interviews that both evaluate the candidate's readiness and provide an opportunity to practice and more fully understand culturally appropriate behavior.

Culture brokering is based on typical patronage relationships that negotiate the allocation of resources. The roles of broker and patron can be united in one individual or firm. One example is the »ethnic entrepreneur« who accentuates shared ethnic symbolism in order to bolster his or

her position (Brettell 2003, 128). Recruiters act as patrons by directly controlling first-order resources such as jobs, money, and specialized knowledge. They act as brokers when dispensing second-order resources or strategic contacts with patrons (Boissevain 1974, 147). While there is no archetype of a recruiter, successful recruiters are good salespeople and have some sort of global experience. Recruiters are primarily entrepreneurs who build and manage »an enterprise for the pursuit of profit« (Boissevain 1974, 147). In the course of this pursuit, they must be innovative and take risks in order to stay ahead of the competition. Similar to recruiters, consultants and teachers at recruitment firms are also brokers of sorts. »Recruitment agencies typically hire brokers with overseas work experience as a way of connecting with prospective applicants and responding to myriad concerns that can be best addressed by those who share similar experiences (Guevarra 2010, 116).«

Embedded in this process are three basic conditions that must be met if recruitment brokering is to be financially feasible as a career and as a business: centrality, time, and power (Boissevain 1974). The centrality of the broker is fundamental to creating, and maintaining, a migration chain. Migration depends upon dynamic social networks in which recruiters hold a fixed position and therefore act as a central node of transaction. In healthcare migration, the chain can be relatively short with only three nodes—migrants and employers at either end and recruiters in the middle. However, migration is not a linear process. Positioned in the center, recruiters control resources that move in multiple directions. Their power arises from their ability to manipulate various networks and maintain their positions at the center of migration activity. In the pursuit of power and prestige, individuals must employ social capital to achieve objectives, which in turn creates new (or strengthens previous) coalitions (Boissevain 1974, 8). Recruiters must also have the time to devote themselves to the management of social relations and of the other resources under their control. Having more time to spend on these activities enables a recruiter to increase his or her assets. Therefore, we can define recruitment brokerage as the acquisition of power, pres-

tige, and wealth by means of transactions and the exchange of resources between various parties.

As intermediaries, recruiters are in a vulnerable position, dependent on both sides of the supply and demand chain. They have to ensure that their »products«—the migrants—are of sufficient quality to satisfy the demands of the foreign employers. Findlay and Li's (1998) migration channel framework allows us to define the roles of recruiters: their motivations and practices, how their firms operate and function as migration channels, and why they are necessary to the operation thereof. This can help us to understand how recruiters influence the migration chain through their multiple positions in the migration process and through their maintenance of those positions as legitimate members of the migration chain. Their tremendous influence on and power over migrants' movements has been a popular subject of migration scholarship and policy (Guevarra 2010; Buchan, Parkin, and Sochaiski 2003; Findlay and International Labour Organization 2002; Abella 2004; Xiang 2006).

Methodology

This article emerged from a larger project that focused on the ways in which migration activities of female Czech healthcare professionals foster respect and professional belonging. I used ethnographic methods, chiefly interviews and participant observation, including electronic correspondence, to collect the majority of data. Data collection took place during fieldwork I conducted in Prague, Czech Republic from 2008 to 2009, with a follow-up period in 2011. During the span of my fieldwork, I met and interviewed nurses at different phases of their migration cycles. I stayed in contact with those I met prior to migration via email and on-line chats. I also maintained communication with key informants, who continue to inform my research. The primary project included 55 individuals who represent a range of migration roles; including first-time migrants, return migrants, repeat migrants, recruiters, and educators.

Participant observation provided the bulk of data for this article. For nine months, I worked as the Education Coordinator at Care4U, preparing rooms for presentations, training, and interviews, and the necessary materials for each. Although I was unable to observe the operations of Nursematch, I was able to confirm that general operating procedures are the same at both companies through interviews with Nursematch staff and migrants. In addition, I conducted a media analysis of both firms' websites. As an employee at Care4U, I observed daily activities and routines, as well as interactions among staff and between staff and clients. During my year in the field, I also observed office interactions at monthly information sessions and trainings. I helped conduct mock interviews, evaluating migrant readiness for employment, and observed hospital recruitment visits during which employer representatives interviewed potential employees at the firm. In addition to attending all activities related to recruitment and training, I was able to observe the organizational strategies utilized by recruiters in practice at weekly staff meetings and in daily interactions with migrant clients. I also had the privilege of seeing Care4U develop from its early stages. I attended its first infosession in 2006, and conducted research in their offices for the six weeks following. Observing the business develop from a fledgling firm to a successful enterprise provided me with unique insight on which to base my analysis.

Research context

The phenomenon of nurse migrants from the Czech Republic provides a useful site of inquiry into transnational labor migration and recruitment for a number of reasons. First is the recent emergence of emigrant opportunities. Almost two decades after the fall of communism, a new generation of East Europeans are now able to imagine migration as a temporary and autonomous state (Morokvasic 2004), and to envision and recognize themselves as possessing global possibilities. Kofman (2005, 152) has shown how skilled women often depend on their social and cultural capital in order to enter the labor market. Yet, despite the real or perceived gender equity achieved during and after socialism, post-

socialist women often still lack the transnational social capital necessary for participation in a global market. This capital was absent in the Soviet bloc during and immediately following communism (Berdahl 1999; Ghodsee 2005) and is still a barrier to migration for many. At the same time, with the spread of technologies and increasingly open borders, both virtual and physical, individuals who formerly lived in limited landscapes controlled by socialist governments now increasingly act within and are acted upon by multiple and interrelated flows of people, images, and ideas. Recruiters are among those actors who capitalize on these freedoms.

Second, nurses are one of the largest groups of migrant professionals worldwide. Saudi Arabia, as one of the world's biggest recruiters of healthcare professionals, provides a rich case study for research on labor recruitment. Understanding how healthcare recruitment works can give us insight into other forms of professional labor recruitment, on which there is limited research. Additionally, exploring practices of professional labor migration out of rather than into Europe also challenges assumptions about the directional flow of migration. Finally, comparison of newly emerging recruitment chains and established channels in such places as the Philippines indicates that the theory driving recruitment is not unique, but operates in the form of global assemblages in which employers, recruiters, and migrants create meaning and significance within the infrastructure of migration (Ong and Collier 2005).

Finally, feminization of the labor market not only means an increase in women in that market, but also the increased commodification of reproductive labor (Parrenas 2012). The globalization of labor, specifically wage and reproductive labor, has given rise to a »global care chain« (Hochschild 2000). Yeates (2004) has suggested that we expand this analysis to recognize the broader context of care work. We need to examine a variety of skill and occupational levels if we are to reflect upon the increase in skilled care migration. Not all care migrants are mothers, the focus of Hochschild's research, and were consequently left out of the original framework of the global care chain. Newer analysis must include

a wider range of spheres of care, as well as more historical context. Most research on the global care chain to date has focused on domestic settings and should be widened to include institutional venues. Nursing is a fitting candidate for this endeavor.

Czech firms

Healthcare recruitment firms were first founded in the Czech Republic in 2000. Previously, Czechs healthcare workers who wanted to go abroad used non-specialized placement firms such as Student Agency, or foreign companies such as East-West, formerly based in Germany. Czech firms quickly learned to provide competitive innovations. Care4U and Nursematch can communicate with their candidates in Czech, widening the population with whom they can work—potential migrants do not need to have a minimum level of English to start the migration process.⁴ Czech migrants who have access to channels to other parts of Europe are typically more successful in their search for some sort of employment there, although using a migration channel cannot always overcome barriers such as language or discrimination. Understanding this, recruiters like Nursematch develop chains that work within the system by placing nurses as care assistants in the UK in order to develop English skills before sending them to Saudi Arabia. Care4U and Nursematch also offer specialized medical and cultural training courses that other agencies do not.

On the other end of the chain, Care4U and Nursematch work to build a professional reputation for Czech nurses in the Middle East to increase their attractiveness compared to nurses from other regions. To do so, they work to produce migrants who will meet the needs of the destination (Bludau 2011). For example, Saudi Arabian hospitals seek flexible, hardworking employees docile enough to follow the country's strict rules. Filipino recruitment firms, as well as the migrants themselves, perpetuate the perception of Filipinos as inherently docile and hardwork-

4 English is the common language used in Saudi healthcare.

ing (Guevarra 2010). In contrast, Czech firms try to build confidence in their candidates in order to ensure their success abroad. The opposite of docile, Czech recruiters market their candidates on professional strengths such as flexibility and adaptability.

During the time in which I collected data, Care4U had a large staff, including three directors (one of whom is an American and one of whom had lived in the USA) and three to five consultants who had spent time in such places as Germany, Finland, Central America or Ireland. Their instructors had also worked abroad, often in the Middle East, and were usually former clients. The director of Nursematch lived in the United States for over a year. Their experiences abroad demonstrate the success of Czech migrants in a variety of places, helping to alleviate feelings of global isolation.

Creating the chain

Recruitment firms create a transnational chain by building connections between the source population and foreign employers. During this initial period, they must focus on the employers and follow market demands. Currently, Saudi Arabia, like much of the Middle East, imports almost 80% of its nursing workforce (Aldossary, While, and Barriball 2008). Not an obvious partner for the Czech Republic, Saudi Arabia has a high demand for workers. In order to facilitate the ease of movement between the two countries, the Saudi Ministry of Health has approved recognition of Czech nursing licenses. While following market demand, recruiters must also take supply into consideration. When Care4U was starting up in 2006, their original goal was to send nurses to the USA. They soon discovered that few Czech nurses had the English skills and ability to pass the NCLEX, the exam required for a US license. With only one or two viable candidates at most per year, Care4U had difficulty finding hospitals that would contract with them. US visa restrictions added further difficulties. Nursematch had been sending Czech nurses to the Middle East since 2000. Care4U followed their lead, changed markets, and started building their own connections to the Middle East.

To help solidify their central position, recruiters offer first-order resources including specialized knowledge and documentation processing. Candidates pay recruiters for access to these resources. Care4U charges for documentation and legalization, and requires training and visa processing payments totalling a minimum of Kč 11,900 (approximately €465).⁵ Although Care4U only has a small profit margin on these services, since they must pay translators, instructors, and documentation fees, offering access to these resources is vital to the operation of recruitment firms. Not only does it further legitimize their positions as central members of the migration chain by demonstrating their specialized knowledge, it also increases the recruiters' power over candidates and unites the two more closely, strengthening the chain. Care4U candidates must pay an initial installment of Kč 2,900 (€113) before they can attend their first training class. An additional Kč 3,000 (€117) is due before the last course. All of this takes place before a nurse is even offered to an employer. At this point, she is deeply invested in the process and has spent the equivalent of approximately one quarter of one month's salary. The final installment (Kč 6,000) can be deferred (for an additional 10%) until after the nurse receives her first foreign paycheck.

One of the more important ways that recruiters broker their cultural knowledge is through training sessions such as Medical English. In these courses, specialized knowledge regarding hospital practices and interview skills are just as important as actual lessons in medical terminology. During this course, Care4U provides a two-page interview preparation handout. This document instructs candidates to learn as much as they can about the position and the hospital with which they are interviewing, as well as to »know themselves,« meaning their résumé. They are instructed to dress conservatively, avoiding flashy jewelry and heavy makeup. The handout also instructs the reader on body posture and language, as well as on how to greet the employer. Self-presentation is a dominant component of the handout. For some candidates, these instructions call for a relatively drastic change from their normal attire. I

5 €1 EUR = Kč 25; based on recruitment firm rates in 2008–2009.

have found, both as a mock interview participant and as an interview observer, that following these instructions can make the difference between a successful or a failed interview.

Vilem, a director at Care4U, further uses the centrality of the firm to cultivate social capital and constantly recreate his chains. He understands the importance of being well-connected to the Saudi embassy in Prague. As each new ambassador takes over the post, the envoy who is leaving introduces his incoming counterpart to Vilem, describing him as »the man to go to« for any needs. Vilem views these relationships not merely as business, but as friendships. He described how he had been in a position to help on a number of occasions, especially when the embassy needed health-related services. On the other side, when Vilem needs quick approval of a visa or other paperwork, he can call on his »friend,« the current ambassador, and more easily secure the necessary authorization.

Cultivating these relationships takes time. Since Care4U has a staff of consultants who work with candidates on a daily basis, directors have more time available to develop relationships with individuals or organizations that control necessary resources. Vilem makes regular trips to the Middle East to visit current clients and to acquire new hospitals and clinics as clients. He has the flexibility to arrange his trips to meet the clients' schedules, because the firm can hold events and work with candidates while he is gone.

Creating a migration chain is not a one-time activity. Recruiters and hospitals must continually recreate the social relationships that are the links of the chain through continued actions of trust and legitimacy. Power over first-order resources helps to legitimize brokers (recruiters) in their strategic relationships with patrons (employers). Understanding how Care4U prepares their candidates in specialized classes gives Care4U legitimacy in the eyes of their hospital partners. By dispensing their specialized knowledge, hospitals can trust that Care4U is producing migrants who have a good chance of being successful in their workplaces. The social relationship of the migration chain is then

strengthened through continued successful transactions. Trust is enhanced when recruiters act in the expected manner and deliver the goods they have promised (Boissevain 1974). Care4U is so well-known and trusted to supply suitable job candidates that one of its clients does not even interview their candidates—they merely hire them based on a résumé and the firm's evaluation of the candidate's English. For example, Helena has over 20 years of experience and a master's degree in the much sought-after field of midwifery, but she was not immediately successful on the job market due to poor English skills. However, she benefited from the power that her recruitment firm wields because of their trust-based relationship with this hospital. She arrived in Riyadh in autumn 2010 without interviewing for the position.

Creating desire

Recruitment firms must also create the desire to be part of their migration chain by spending time using the power of their centrality to influence actions. Even nurses who are considering other migration options may need to be convinced that Saudi Arabia is the right destination for them. In their advertising, recruitment firms frame their services as an opportunity for participants. Care4U asserts that healthcare migrants can become millionaires in one year abroad.⁶ They advertise in trade journals and books on life abroad (Ryšlinková 2009). The general public might even read about recruitment activities in newspapers and popular magazines. In May 2011, *Sedm Plus* (*Seven Plus*), a women's magazine, ran a six-page article about the opportunities for Czech nurses in Saudi Arabia, calling it a »gold mine.« A Care4U flyer describes their »wide selection of vacant positions at prestigious hospitals in attractive royal destinations—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar—where many teams are already using Czech and Slovak healthcare workers.«⁷ Adjectives such as »prestigious,« »attractive,« and even »royal« induce positive perceptions about locations

6 Kč 1,000,000 = € 39,149.

7 All translations by the author.

that may at first evoke negative reactions. Hospital partners are »carefully selected« implying a sense of exclusivity and high quality.

Using a variety of media and other marketing techniques, recruiters must begin selling the destination before they even meet their candidates. Infosessions pick up where advertising leaves off, creating spaces in which candidates can envision themselves in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, etc. The following vignette illustrates how this process begins:

Jana, a Czech nurse, arrives at Care4U a few minutes after noon. She notices a brightly colored flyer on the window declaring HEALTHCARE-MILLIONAIRE IN 1 YEAR.⁸ As she enters, she is greeted and her name is checked off a list of registrants. She proceeds to a modern classroom with long tables and chairs all neatly aligned. Across one side of the room is a row of tables holding refreshments and books on topics such as medical English and NCLEX preparation, a copy of the Koran and photography and travel books about life in the Middle East.⁹ A large poster depicting scenes from Saudi Arabia is propped on an easel. On a small table near the door are stacks of *Sestra (Nurse)*, a Czech nursing magazine and partner of the recruitment firm. She is instructed to help herself to refreshments and to take a seat. At 12:30, Jana and the others start a one-hour written English diagnostic exam. After the hour is up, more people start to arrive. A young woman brings Jana some literature—a CD advertising a hospital in Saudi Arabia and a coupon for a discounted subscription to *Sestra*. She looks around and takes note of the other potential candidates. Some are viewing the ongoing slideshow of pictures from hospital visits to Saudi Arabia. Frank Sinatra's Greatest Hits waft from the speakers attached to the laptop at the front of the room. No one seems to notice when his cover of *O Come All Ye Faithful* plays in the middle of July. Instead, they are reading the magazines, flipping through books, talking to each other, and view-

8 Original text capitalized.

9 NCLEX is the national licensing exam for nursing in the United States, although Care4U does not currently send nurses to the USA.

ing the slideshow. As Frank sings »come fly away with me,« pictures of hospital units, living accommodations, leisure activities, eating establishments, and multicultural hospital staff flash on the screen for a few seconds, one after another. At 2:00 pm, the directors of the firm enter the room and switch to a PowerPoint presentation, and the informational session truly begins.

The info-session setting can be a very powerful element of creating desire for a destination or lifestyle. Now a nurse is no longer an individual interested in migration, but a member of a community interested in migration. Czech hospitality is extended to candidates through an array of refreshments. Medical texts and books about Saudi Arabia demonstrate connections to a non-Czech environment. The partnership with *Sestra (Nurse)*, a leading trade journal, adds legitimacy to the firm. More importantly, before the info-session even starts, potential candidates are inundated with imagery that reflects a future reality. Photos of real, live Czech nurses living and working in Saudi Arabia, of actual living accommodations, and of tangible work environments compel potential candidates to picture themselves in those very scenes. Even the typically American soundtrack subtly creates a global atmosphere. Simply by attending the info-session, not only their professional careers, but they, themselves, have suddenly become part of something greater.

Without the pull factors mentioned above, few foreign nurses, Czech or otherwise, would venture to the Middle East. However, convinced by recruiters, they decide to try. Recruiters direct candidates to locations they would not have thought of on their own, planting the seed of appealing destinations through their marketing campaigns. Saudi Arabia is a tough sell for recruiters in any country. Religious differences and gender norms and practices make Saudi Arabia an undesirable destination (Guevarra 2010, 109). I observed that in most info-sessions with either Care4U or hospital recruiters, candidates who were planning to work in Saudi Arabia often asked about laws or cultural norms that impose mandates on women's appearance and restrictions on their public conduct. Informants often stated that their parents were worried about

the dangers of Saudi Arabia, referencing terrorism and a particular public discourse as regards to the region.

In order to get past personal obstacles to migration, recruiters must use their centrality as cultural brokers and manipulate the rhetoric of migration. Primarily, they use their »ethnic« knowledge of nurse motivations and anxieties, and the local context, to legitimize an atypical act for Czechs—labor migration. Their advertisements speak to the motivations of economic wealth and adventure, stating that migrants can earn a million Czech crowns by working in an exotic location for only one year, in legitimate employment. However, Czechs do not have a large diaspora on which to draw, nor are they known for having a culture of migration such as that witnessed in other national groups, for example the neighboring Poles or Ukrainians, or other careworker populations, such as Filipinos. According to a 2005 Eurobarometer survey on labor mobility in Europe, Czechs ranked lowest for intention to migrate to another country, EU or otherwise (Fourage and Ester 2008). I often asked whether working abroad is typical for Czechs. Most respondents answered that it is not. Sandra's answer is representative:

Most Czechs like to stay here. Many people travel for holidays but they come back and I think ordinary, normal, typical people don't like to change their place for work and maybe it's a problem especially in smaller towns. They don't have work and they don't move to where there is work.

Many added that working abroad is becoming more common in the younger generation. Contracts for Czech workers reflect this characteristic. Vilem explained that they were able to get their hospital clients to agree to one-year contracts for nurses instead of the standard two. He claimed that their nurses do not want to go for two years and would not be willing to accept employment for such a long period. Consequently, recruiters have learned which tactics work best.

More problematic for recruiters is the long history of migration within Czech nationalist discourse. Grounded in the notion of motherland, emigration has often been framed as a moral issue—as a betrayal or as

abandonment of one's nation and consequently one's family (Holy 1996, 65–66).¹⁰ Jarka emigrated in the 1970s, essentially escaping the »gray world« of communism. She returned to stay in 1996, but her reintegration did not go smoothly. She says, »I always feel like I am from the outside. They lived here, their lives, and I lived my life somewhere else and there is a gap in between which you cannot fill. And you can't fill it. It's just the way it is.« She often implied that her family and friends resented her for leaving them and living a different life. At the same time, she constantly criticized »the Czechs,« excluding herself from that identity in an attempt to convince herself that she was justified in her act of »betrayal.« Better known is the heroes' welcome given emigrants who returned soon after the end of communism. However, those who chose loyalty to their adopted countries or criticized Czech attitudes and practices became suspect in their national pride and shunned (Holy 1996, 68).

Reflecting this discourse, recruiters use their cultural knowledge to frame the act of migration as benefitting, rather than abandoning, the nation. Once they have the attention of a potential migrant, Czech recruiters de-emphasize the financial benefits of migration and use another approach—they expand the profits to include the larger national arena. Care4U starts their infosessions by outlining the benefits to the nurses as both individuals and as members of a profession. Their vision is to »increase the competitiveness of [Czech] health professionals in the international market« and to increase »the attractiveness and prestige of the medical profession in our region through foreign work sojourns and applying lessons learned abroad at home.« Using this rhetoric, recruiters place the nurse into a position to help her entire professional field and nation. Working abroad is no longer merely an individual action, but part of a communal action that will make their nation a better place. This notion not only bridges the moral ambivalence between the human right to emigrate and betrayal of the motherland (Holy 1996, 66), but also sup-

10 For a more in-depth explanation of the Czech nationalism movement and cultural value; see Holy (1996).

ports neoliberal ideology in which the individual makes the greatest contribution to the general welfare through pursuing her usefulness (Vecerník 1996). Empowering nurses to see themselves as helpers of the whole nation, not merely individuals seeking personal fulfillment, is not only about creating a »specific type of worker and citizen« (Guevarra 2010, 56), but also helps to instill confidence in the candidate.

Facilitating the chain

Recruiters influence migration chains by providing the mechanisms that makes them happen (Guevarra 2010, 89). Firms make it easy to migrate, removing the burden of time and effort needed to research potential employers and destinations. They also guide candidates through complicated application and documentation processes, often providing translations and obtaining stamps of certification from governmental bodies. Finally, they provide instruments of training through which a Czech nurse transforms herself into a »global nurse.«

Power over first-order resources is not only necessary for the re/creation of the migration chain on a daily basis, but is also fundamental to facilitation of the chain. Czech recruitment firms act as links to jobs and hospitals, but they also provide loans and specialized knowledge about success on the global market. Care4U makes a direct offer of delayed payment for expensive items, such as computers or the final payment of processing fees, adding an additional 10% to the total, and indirectly provides contact to foreign employers. As brokers, Czech firms attract clients by establishing themselves as companies able to both sway influential individuals and exploit strategic contacts such as foreign employers (Brettell 2003; Boissevain 1974).

Why migrants use firms

Potential migrants have a number of reasons for using a recruitment firm. Olina, a physical therapist and instructor at Care4U, believes that recruitment firms are beneficial because

they do a lot of work for you. You don't have to look for the hospital, because I had to do quite a lot of work when I wanted to go to Ireland. I had to search for all of the information and so they do this for you. And they also cooperate with the hospitals. I think they cooperate with the good ones with these JCI accredited [facilities].¹¹ That's a good thing.

Although the firm's advertisement may be what first prompts a nurse to consider herself as a potential migrant, the centrality of the recruitment firm is the prime reason candidates employ them. Recruiters offer their clients a kind of one-stop shopping. In one place, a potential migrant can not only learn about foreign jobs and their requirements, but also gain the skills necessary to make her a viable candidate on the job market, all while having her administrative paperwork organized for her. This information and the services are part of the for-profit component of the recruitment business that necessitates time and a central position.

Document processing is the big draw for candidates. Many tell me that doing all of the paperwork takes too much time and that they would rather pay the firm to do it for them. Even some who have been abroad before are happy to pay someone to do this type of work for them. Others complain that they could have saved the money and done the paperwork on their own, but admit that using a firm does ease the process of going to a place like Saudi Arabia. The role of culture broker is essential to meeting this need of the candidates. In addition to saving them the time and confusion of document processing, recruiters hold a wealth of information about the migration process and destination that most individuals do not have; many nurses commented on the cultural knowledge that recruiters were able to share with them. Recruiters gain this information from a variety of sources, including their own experiences and those of their former candidates. Not only does this information help migrants integrate into the new workplace, real knowledge

11 JCI is the international arm of the Joint Commission, an independent, not-for-profit organization that accredits and certifies health care organizations and programs in the USA (Joint Commission 2011).

of and experiences in the foreign destination further legitimize the recruiters. Pavlína discussed how first-person knowledge of the Saudi employers helped her choose between Care4U and Nursematch. She believed that Nursematch was wrong for her because

they are not going to the hospital and checking it, seeing how it looks there and speaking with the manager [...] so I think that is not professional. I like [Care4U] because they know about the hospital, they show photos, and communicate with you when you leave and when you are there and give you help if you need [it].

When I asked nurses whether or not they would still try to go abroad if recruitment firms did not exist, the most common answer was an adamant »no.« This response indicates that they employ recruiters because they are afraid to attempt migration alone. This fear demonstrates a marked lack of transnational social capital due to a deficiency in knowledge of the system or other types of knowledge necessary for going abroad.

Czech healthcare migration patterns demonstrate another reason why recruiters represent a form of social capital essential to full participation in the global migration market. Healthcare workers, especially nurses, have fewer opportunities to develop the social and cultural capital needed to navigate the international labor market while in school. A typical summer activity for young Czech adults is to spend summer holidays working abroad, on brigades or in international camps. Nursing and physiotherapy students must spend their summer holidays in clinical practicums, leaving only a few weeks of break. Olina chose not to use an employment agency when she went to Ireland because she felt comfortable going on her own. During summer holidays as a biology student, before she studied physiotherapy, Olina spent considerable time abroad working in such places as Norway, Germany, and Spain. During this time, she dealt with a variety of experiences that gave her confidence in herself. Individuals who do not have the opportunities to go abroad during summer holidays have fewer opportunities to develop travel acumen

that might help them navigate a foreign market during their professional careers or gain the confidence needed.

Why hospitals use firms

Hospitals worldwide have adopted short-term measures to address shortages (Buchan and Sochalski 2004). Instead of focusing on retention, although Saudi hospitals do offer substantial bonuses for staying, hospitals have put equal if not greater effort into recruiting new employees. They need so many workers, they must be efficient. Candidates from a firm must come to a hospital fully formed, so to speak: their paperwork is in order, minimum requirements are vetted, and they have the recommendation of a recruiter. The hospitals save an enormous amount of time dealing with dozens of recruiters rather than thousands of individuals.

Recruitment firms also help nurses gain the skills needed to more quickly adapt to new environments. Not only must migrants negotiate a bureaucratic system that is new to them, this system is embedded in a different cultural framework and often in a different language. Recruiters, as culture brokers, help their candidates navigate the cultural aspects of the process as well. If recruiters can prepare a nurse for the cultural component of her new job in some way, it aids her adaptation to the new workplace and makes her transition easier, also helping the hospital. She then becomes a good investment for the hospital and has a better chance of completing and possibly extending her contract.

Conclusion

The role of Saudi Arabia as a central destination in the global care chain is key to the specific migration channel discussed in this case. It is not a predictable partner for the Czech Republic, but one that has been cultivated because it is a destination with a labor demand. My research on this chain reveals that transnational labor migration chains and channels do not appear randomly or naturally, but are part of managed strategies for taking advantage of transnational labor capital. Recruitment firms

create particular opportunities for migrants and for themselves as part of these strategies.

In the case at hand, newfound mobility and EU membership planted the seed for potential labor opportunities in foreign countries. However, nurses who seek work in Western Europe often meet obstacles such as language barriers, licensing problems, high costs of living or discrimination, inhibiting their ability to find full employment. Standards for working in Western Europe push nurses out of the market and into another employment landscape (Guevarra 2010; Dunn 2005, 184). Czech nurses read advertisements and magazine articles about working in the Middle East, but see very little about working in other parts of Europe.¹² Instead of entering the informal underemployment market, nurses who want to work as professionals seek another destination, »one that is more ready to consume their labor and better equipped to accommodate their financial, professional, and personal aspirations« (Guevarra 2010, 106).¹³ Saudi Arabia has become both the symbol of acceptance and its reality. It is not difficult to see why Czech nurses, if they have an interest in working abroad, are choosing to explore options in non-European destinations.

Recruiters recognize and manipulate these realities through their roles as brokers by creating new transnational chains and markets. Czech recruitment firms advertise job opportunities in the Middle East that contrast with the limited EU markets. They specifically build upon their cultural knowledge to strongly influence the migration chain by first creating it, then building the desire to be a part of it, and finally by facilitating movement along it. Each stage relies on recruiters who spend time maintaining centrality through power over resources.

12 Based on a media analysis of advertisements in *Sestra (Nurse)* magazine from November 2008 to October 2009.

13 Underemployment is employment in areas that do not reflect their skills or experience. Nurses who work as care assistants are underemployed.

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Reading theory or reading historical evidence

The case of Anglo-settler veterinary professionalization

Edgar A. Burns

Introduction

In recent years, methodological shifts in considering colonization, beyond distinguishing different experiences of settler societies like Australia and New Zealand (Beilharz and Cox, 2007) in contrast to Asian or African nations (Spivak 1994), have analyzed multiple settler societies comparatively; thereby increasing focus on settler society as a species, with both commonalities of origin, and variations in historical sequence. This article continues that testing of claims from internalist, or exceptionalist, national explanations of social and economic development. The downside for historical scholars is, however, that using such a large canvas demands tranches of evidence from a wide range of sources, stretching expertise in achieving a synthetic approach to the data. This may lead to interpretive or methodological critique, although this, in turn, is open to counter-challenges about preferring »neater« albeit inadequate national narratives.

Two examples of this contemporary work illustrate the intention to see a bigger historical picture in the development of the modern Anglo-American world. Instead of interpreting modernity through primarily the unit of the nation-state, Weaver (2006) and Belich (2009) outline broader settlement formations in which indigenous populations were subjugated and white European-sourced populations established. They do so as a useful category in which to think about commonalities and patterns in the development of the forms of western modernity that predominate

today. Theorists of unitary-versus-multiple modernity/ies, such as Wagner (2010) or Ascione (2013), reflect on the contexts of this modernization, as well as provide additional evidence and arguments for deconstructing European pre-modern-to-modern dichotomies.

Such critique is necessary against pervasive, western-centric perspectives found in a variety of guises—from Marx and Engels (1976) seeing socialism finally supplanting the dialectics of previous historical periods, to Fukuyama's (2006) end of history assertions. Occupations developing as professions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were, by the mid-twentieth century in the United States, more assertively than elsewhere, conceived of as arriving at, or evolving towards, a state of full professionalization. Further, and more generally, the process of professionalization was seen as central and naturalized in the development of modern society. Weaver and Belich, respectively, use terms »neo-Europes« and »Anglo-worlds« to capture some of this European settler commonality from their research. Weaver emphasizes land as the fundamental productive resource, where the economic worth of the continent is expropriated, funding the settler revolution through a vast transfer of wealth. Belich stresses the peopling of this new settler world, comparing for instance, the population explosion of Chicago and Melbourne, explicable via Anglo-settler-comparative contexts, otherwise merely curious or disconnected. Presenting supra-national variations like this helps deconstruct singular, linear, and teleological conceptions of modernity.

From functionalist theory to comparative history

This study co-opts Wilensky's (1964) methodology in *The Professionalization of Everyone?*—which has long-held iconic status in the sociology of professions literature, whether being critiqued or approved. It was produced at the high point of mid-twentieth century functionalist sociology between the 1963 *Daedalus* issue of *The Professions*, edited by Everett Hughes, and the 1966 Vollmer and Mills' text, *Professionalization*. The time period Wilensky, Vollmer, and Mills incorporated into their work prefabricated, though inadequately, the historical turn in sociological inquiry in

the following decade—a return merely correcting the previous »retreat into the present« (Elias in Mennell 2010, 112) of the trait approach.

Vollmer and Mills differed little from Wilensky in failing to see other historically contingent events in the emergence of individual professions, differences between countries, or indeed, among professions collectively. Until adequate historical accounts challenged mainstream storylines, the continued emphasis on traits created a largely internalist explanation of professionalization (Larson 1977).

Around 1970, books and articles on both sides of the Atlantic challenged the functionalist sociology of professions. Freidson (1970a, 1970b) provided an historical and critical evaluation of professional control and autonomy over work. Johnson's (1972) monograph identified occupational autonomy through a collegial system as one distinct type of occupational power and control; he too drew on historical material and labor-market considerations and incorporated comparative British imperial historical data.

In spite of this paradigm shift inspired by Freidson and Johnson, Wilensky's article enjoyed continuing currency—he was, for example, cited in Macdonald (1995), Krause (1996) and Perkin (1996). His work fitted an era in which increasing professionalization seemed a basic social change process within a linear model of modernizing society, along with trends like bureaucratization and industrialization (Abbott 1983; 1991). By contrast, Mennell (2010, 132) voices a middle range historical-comparative frame: »America has continually become more powerful,« inviting practical theorizing. Naming this geo-political power that would allow the varied historico-political contexts of professions in different countries to be addressed, including the United States' own difficulty acknowledging governmental roles in professionalization.

Wilensky (1964, 142) proposed a five-stage sequence of professionalization: »While the sequence is by no means invariant,« he claimed, »the table shows that only 32 out of 126 dates for crucial events in the push towards professionalization deviate from the following order«:

1. A substantial body of people begin doing full-time, some activity that needs doing.
2. A training school is established.
3. A professional association is formed.
4. The association engages in public agitation to win the support of the law for the protection of the group.
5. A code of professional ethics is developed. (1964, 142)

Wilensky based his discussion solely on eighteen professions in the United States, globally projecting his reading of the data as confirming universalist conceptions of professional development. In contrast, the present study of a single occupation—veterinarians—assesses six English-speaking metropolitan and settler societies. This allows measurement of similarities and differences in professionalization sequences amongst these countries.

A limited comparative method

Today, Wilensky's model reads as naively modernist in outlook. In 1964, it was the most systematic attempt to empirically enumerate a natural history of professionalization following mid-century logics. Here, its comparative application subverts Wilensky's original intention, allowing more nuanced problematizing of modernization processes; professionalization is just one-away from what Ascione (2013) calls »unthinking modernity.«

Figure 1 shows veterinary profession data collected for six English-speaking Anglo-American settler nations. The term »settler« is used here to refer to out-migration from the United Kingdom. This settler colonization went beyond controlling indigenous populations, leading in time to the larger proportion of these societies being derived from white settlers from Europe, particularly the United Kingdom and Ireland (Weaver 2006; Belich 2009). In Figure 1, the United States's row comes from Wilensky's table, although, as indicated in the notes, three dates needed amending.

Considering evidence gathered

The expanded description below, using Elliott (1972), reveals that functionalist explanations are inadequate in interpreting the process of professionalization; the evidence is better interpreted as a western-centric, Anglo-American, or even Amero-centric gaze.

Fig. 1: Veterinary professionalization in Anglo-settler societies

Country	Became full-time occupation	First training school	First university school	First local professional association	First national professional association	First state license law	Formal code of ethic adopted
United Kingdom ¹	18th Cent	1791*	1791*	1858 ²	1844 1882	1881	?
United States ³	Early-mid 19th Cent	1852	1879 ⁴	1854	1861 ⁵	1886	1886
Canada ⁶	Mid-19th Cent	1862 ^{*7}	1862*	1874	1948*	1890	1948*
Australia ⁸	Mid-late 19th Cent	1888	1908	1912	1921	1923	1956
South Africa ⁹	Late 19th Cent	1920*	1920*	1903	1920	1933*	1933*
New Zealand	Late 19th Cent	1904 1964 ^{*10}	1964 ^{*11}	1923*	1923*	1926	1956 ¹²

Notes: Same dates in any row marked by asterisks indicate same event.

1. *Veterinary Record* (1945); and personal correspondence with B. Horder, Librarian, Wellcome library.
2. Barber-Lomax (1963).
3. Wilensky's date of 1875 is replaced by Ho's 2005 date (1879), 7.
4. *Veterinary Record* (1945), 624. Alexander Liautard, an alumnus from Toulouse, is recorded as founding the first viable veterinary college.
5. *Veterinary Record* (1945), 624. June 1861 is given as the foundation date of the United States Veterinary Medical Association (USVMA), renamed in 1895. However, the first meeting was held in New York, June 9, 1963.
6. Personal correspondence with C.A.V. Barker, University of Guelph, Ontario.
7. Cameron (1953). However, a different source gives both these dates as 1864.
8. Hindmarsh (1962). Also personal correspondence with J. C. Beardwood, Australian Veterinary Association Archivist.
9. Diesel (1963). Also, Gilfoyle and Brown (2010).
10. Burns (2009).
11. Shortridge, Smith and Gardner (1998). Also, Thompson (1919).
12. Inferred from Laing (1974).

Development of full-time occupation

In the professionalization process, according to Elliott, first:

[A]n occupational group must emerge, engaged in full-time work on a particular set of problems. This may be the result of a switch from amateurism to professionalism, or it may follow from the specialization of knowledge within an existing occupation made possible by institutional change. In all cases a new occupational group is likely to have to demarcate its own position and face competition from overlapping occupations and professions. (1972, 113–15)

In the case of the professionalization of veterinarians, like other professionalizing occupations, it is almost impossible to give an exact date when a new occupation can be said to exist where it did not exist previously. There seems to be, invariably, a liminal period, not precisely definable, between non-emergence and emergence of a full-time workforce. It is curious Wilensky named 1803 as the year when veterinary medicine became a full-time occupation in the United States. A more general designation for the start of the American veterinary profession, comparable to other entries in his table, would have been »early nineteenth century,« or »circa 1800.« Wilensky's evidence for this date is unknown; the first United States graduate from the London Veterinary School, John Haslam, returned to his home region and set up practice in Baltimore in 1803 (Smithcors 1964).

Veterinary medicine developed as one of the modern professions between one and two centuries ago, at approximately the same time as other professions were emerging in newly industrializing and urbanizing societies. At the end of the eighteenth century, most veterinary activities in Europe were performed by two general occupational groups, the farrier and the cow-leech. In the same way that important differences between physicians and surgeons was rooted in their social status, the differences between farrier and cow-leech were reflected in their social standing and the objects of their attention. Such differences were no less

marked, although animal practitioners generally had a lower social status than either physicians or surgeons.

Farriers had little education and limited skill, although, they considered themselves above cow-leeches and cattle doctors since they treated the more important animal—the horse. A male occupation, farriers usually served an apprenticeship with their fathers; practitioners called »leeches« were often self-taught. Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1964) note that if veterinary professionalization had followed the more typical course, the farrier might have absorbed the new knowledge, built up standards of training, and developed into a profession, but in fact the process went another route. While sick and injured animals have always been attended to, it remained for technical, social, and organizational developments to create veterinary medicine as a modern occupation (Smithcors 1957, 247; Bierer 1955).

The change from farriery to veterinary medicine marked an important change in the degree to which animal treatment was considered a subject amenable to scientific observation and reflection rather than a simple means of livelihood. At first, the actual difference was small, but the decisive shift in the underlying approach had, consequently, elevated the ability of veterinarians. The term »veterinary« was revived from Latin in the eighteenth century to help establish this demarcation. The veterinary acted as a consultant and medical expert, conforming to some degree to the role of non-manual expert. However, the greater association with animal and earthier contexts was a barrier to recognition and acceptance as a professional person. Large animal work has, in the past (though much less so today with the advent of drugs, sophisticated medicines, and other technologies), required considerable physical exertion which had a negative impact on the move of veterinarians toward a professional status.

The veterinary profession is fundamentally similar to human medicine in its basic technologies and bio-medical knowledge. However, Freidson argues that because veterinary medicine as an occupation, along with dentistry, did not emerge in connection with human medicine, this orga-

nizational reality has allowed it to professionalize to the extent it has, rather than be incorporated within the formalized medical division of labor (Freidson 1970, 52).

The social status of early »veterinary surgeons,« was less elevated than their medical or clerical counterparts. All strata in society, including the social elite, had horses that required attention. Solely agricultural animal species, however, because of their rural and farming associations, tended to be correlated with a more humble social status in the kinds of veterinary or other animal care they received. For many practitioners, this influenced their preference for equine medicine.

Inevitably then, the emergence of a definable corps of veterinary practitioners cannot exactly be pinpointed. However, moving down Table 1, we see a succession of events in which this development did take place in these settler countries. Thus, even at this stage in the analysis, distinctions between »old« and »new« professions begin to blur as soon as this comparative perspective is introduced. The historical records show that the rise of the veterinary profession in any one country, region, or state was not an isolated occurrence, but was impacted by, and part of, a much wider series of changes in science, industry, agriculture, establishing nation states, and warfare. Furthermore, where, for various reasons, the development of the profession was delayed in one nation, the changes and developments that had happened earlier elsewhere were not simply re-enacted; instead, a process of transference or diffusion shaped the rise of the practitioner force in the newer setting (not to mention inter-professional emulation). In New Zealand, for instance, farriers sometimes consciously adopted the title »veterinary surgeon« because of what it connoted in the British metropolitan context. This process of cultural feedback occurs in each phase of veterinary professionalization.

Professional training school/university

Another stage in modern professionalization was establishing training and selection procedures through setting up schools and eventually, uni-

versities. Although in Table 1 the United Kingdom is earliest in establishing a veterinary school among this group of English-speaking nations, it was by no means the first country in which such an institution was set up. The experience of animal plagues during the eighteenth century caused repeated decimations of cattle populations, leading European states to implement strong measures against further infiltration of disease from Baltic and Russian areas. An elaborate system of isolation backed up by government inspectors was set up, including, where necessary, armed force to prevent importation of infected animals (Veterinary Record 1945, 610–12).

Government action is seen in Veterinary schools being established in the later eighteenth century as part of this concern with animal health. These schools acted as major landmarks in the emerging modern veterinary profession. The first opened at Lyons, France, in 1762. A second followed at Alfort in 1776; and by the turn of the century, 20 schools were in operation. The third French veterinary school commencement in Toulouse in 1825, was the thirtieth across twelve different countries, and paved the way for scientific and technical research to be directed toward animal health (Veterinary Record 1945, 614).

This veterinary change was part of a broader socio-cultural shift; law, medicine, and the clergy began to alter in this period from what Elliott termed »status professions« into occupational professions. That is, from branches of learning based on classical literature and catering for the sons of the social elite, they began to include a wider range of persons and new empirical ideas influencing other fields of knowledge as well, giving rise to modern professions.

Graduates of the two early veterinary schools established in the United Kingdom played significant roles in all the settler colonies found in Table 1. The London Veterinary College was founded in 1791 under the French principal, Vial de Bel, with the backing of English agriculturalists, particularly, the Odiham Agricultural Society (Pugh 1962; Smithcors 1957). It was originally intended to educate intelligent young men of some social standing to treat all animal species. However, Edward

Coleman, college principal from 1793 to 1839, limited instruction to only the horse and shortened the course to only a few months—negatively, rather than positively, influencing professionalization. The other teaching institution was the Edinburgh Veterinary School, established in 1823 by William Dick, one of the few progressive and highly competent farriers. Instruction was both practical and theoretical and included teaching about all the main farm species; students were examined by the Highland Agricultural Society. Dick's teaching had positive repercussions developing the veterinary profession in both Canada and the United States because of key roles and positions gained in these countries by Edinburgh graduates (Bradley 1923).

By 1844, when the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) was granted its Charter in the United Kingdom, there were roughly 1,000 graduates from the two schools, the majority of which were from the London school. The Royal College held sole power for examining and certifying qualified veterinarians in Britain. This restriction of entry into the profession became known as the «uni-portal» system and continued for a century until 1948. However, since then, a veterinary degree requires registration as a veterinarian. Glasgow Veterinary School was founded in 1860 by James McCall, and was affiliated to the RCVS in 1862. In 1873, the New Veterinary College commenced in Edinburgh, later becoming the School of Veterinary Science at Liverpool University in 1904 (Swann 1975, vol. 1, 161).

The other five settler countries shown in Table 1 were influenced by colonial ties to the United Kingdom. The United States gaining political independence from the United Kingdom at the end of the eighteenth century, and a similar pattern of burgeoning industrialization, means that the United States's veterinary developmental chronological profile is closer in time to Britain than the other countries (Smithcors 1957, 312). On the other hand, the United States and Canada may be grouped as having certain features in common because of their North American situation. Similarly, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand show parallels in their antipodean positioning and relationships.

Veterinary education in the North American continent developed largely under the influence of Edinburgh graduates (Gattinger 1962; Ho 2005; Boyd 2009). The Ontario Veterinary College in Canada, for instance, had Edinburgh graduate Andrew Smith as its founding principal. A later historical perspective on the establishment of the United States Veterinary Medical Association noted: »Our veterinary service did not begin to take form until the coming of Professors John Gamgee and James Law from Scotland in 1868« (Veterinary Record 1945, 624). Other examples might be added. A number of attempts to establish veterinary schools in the United States in the 1850s proved abortive. There were several short-lived faculties set up in the 1860s: New York in 1864, Chicago in 1865, and Cornell in 1868.

Canada is an intermediate example of the variations in veterinary development that Table 1 outlines. It is similar to the United States in its North American contrast to the United Kingdom, the influence of Scottish veterinarians, and the timing of its developmental process. However, it is also a member of the continuing British imperial network to which the three antipodean countries belong. The general effect of this centre-periphery relationship between the United Kingdom and the British colonies seems to have been a major retarding factor in most phases of veterinary development, although not always in exactly the same way. In Australia, for instance, setting up the first veterinary teaching institutions preceded the formation of a national professional association by quite a long period, whereas in South Africa, these events occurred quite closely together; and in New Zealand, it was a half-century *after* the founding of a professional association that the first veterinary school was successfully established (Shortridge, Smith, and Gardner 1998, 73; Burns 2009) after an attempt in 1904 which failed for lack of applicants (Thompson 1919). The Australian veterinary schools at Melbourne and Sydney also all but failed in the early decades of the twentieth century, lacking student enrolments.

It has been suggested that one of the differences between earlier and late professionalizing occupations is that the later ones attempt to link their

teaching institutions to universities at an earlier stage in their developmental cycle. This contention is borne out in the case of veterinary professionalization. The first British and Canadian schools were not at their inception affiliated to universities, although all of them have subsequently become faculties or colleges within recognised universities. Only veterinary schools in South Africa and New Zealand, countries in which the veterinary profession has been the most recent to develop, were initially established as university veterinary faculties (Transvaal University College, now University of Pretoria, and Massey University).

Professional associations

Education is linked to forming professional associations:

[as] part of the continuing process in establishing and defining the occupational function both to set standards and norms within the occupation and to manage its relations with other competing groups. [...] the occupation agitates for public recognition and legal support for its control over entry and modes of practice. [finally] the occupation will elaborate a formal code of ethics. (Elliott 1972, 114)

Veterinary professionalization was part of a much wider phenomenon occurring in British and European societies—not just American society. Prior to 1800, professions were mainly informal groups. Then, according to Reader (1966, 163–64), a new process of occupational organization and association began in the United Kingdom:

the first of the new professional associations was the Royal College of Surgeons chartered in 1800. The Apothecaries got their act with its formidable disciplinary powers in 1815. In 1818 the Institute of Civil Engineers was set up; in 1828 it was chartered. The Institute of British Architecture, founded in 1835 was chartered in 1837 [...] The Law Society founded in 1825 was chartered in 1831, but the charter was surrendered for a new one later on. In 1844 the Pharmaceutical Society was chartered, and in 1844 also the RCVS was chartered. (1966, 163–64)

Thus, as Millerson (1964) noted, the veterinary profession was one of the later occupations in this wave of professional organization to establish professional societies. Johnson (1972) incorporates patronage more generally into his typology of contemporary professionalism. At intervals throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, other professional institutions were set up based on different occupational-organizational logics. One of these later bodies was the National Veterinary Medical Association (since changed to British Veterinary Association) in 1881.

Millerson's definition places the RCVS in the category of »qualifying association« and the British Veterinary Association he termed an »occupational association.« Wilensky's focus is restricted to Millerson's »qualifying associations,« merely one of four types in the professionalization process. However, in the United Kingdom's uni-portal system, the RCVS gate-keeping role in professional entry gave primary control over veterinary professional development. The comparative perspective opened up by Table 1 shows that, in the case of the veterinary profession, the occupational association—*not* the qualifying association—has been the more commonly important organizational form. The federated and settler-colonial nature of the United States, Canada, and Australia, and the lack of population in these countries, acted against the early development of qualifying bodies. What is characteristic of these countries is the establishment of state or national licensing boards under Veterinary Surgeons Acts to determine qualifications to be registered as a veterinarian.

The United Kingdom Royal Charter of 1844 declared that the practice of veterinary medicine and science was a profession, and that members of the College were to be distinguished by the title of »veterinary surgeon.« Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1964, 125–32) observed that this was one of the few examples of an attempt to legislatively define an occupation as a profession. Provision was made for the election of a council and officers. The single most important section of the Charter was that dealing with the examination of all students to gain membership of the RCVS. After a long period of negotiation within the profession, the 1881 Veterinary

Surgeons Act set up a statutory register, prohibiting unqualified practitioners from using any title, addition, or description stating that they were specially qualified in the medical and surgical treatment of animals. The RCVS continued to be the controlling body of entry into the profession. Even after the passage of the British Act in 1881 many persons, not formally veterinarians, continued to practice.

The mid-nineteenth century problem of widespread epizootic disease in European animal herds and flocks stirred various governments to action to protect their populations; just as, a century earlier, similar epidemics had led to the establishment of veterinary schools in the first place. In Britain, the government veterinary service was set up in 1865–1866 (MAF 1965). In the United States, this was the impetus that led to the first meeting of the United States Veterinary Medical Association in June 1863. Other concerns were with veterinary education, obtaining veterinarians, and military veterinarians's status. The new association advocated the founding of the Bureau of Animal Industry, established in 1864.

In 1898, this association was renamed the American Veterinary Medical Association and was extended to include the Dominion of Canada (Veterinary Record 1945). Although Canada had earlier local professional groups meeting, only in 1948 did government legislation constitute the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. Prior to this, a national association was restricted by the 1867 British North America Act giving each province autonomy in certain matters—one being education, and a second being the right of professional groups to have their own governing associations. Many attempts were made to have a national association and one was actually formed in 1923 but failed after two years of action (Pers. Comm. C.A.V. Barker, University of Guelph, Ontario). A Canadian government veterinary department was established in 1884.

In Australia in 1888, a private veterinary school under William Kendall commenced. Before this, in 1880, an Australasian Veterinary Medical Association was formed with a score of members, but lasted only two years (Hindmarsh 1962; Pers. Comm. J. C. Beardwood, Archivist, Australian Veterinary Association). A national association was nearly formed

just prior to the 1914–18 war, but was delayed to 1921, although there had been veterinary congresses since 1907.

It is interesting to note the cross-influence between the antipodean countries, South Africa (Diesel 1963), Australia (Hindmarsh 1962), and New Zealand (Laing 1974), all establishing professional associations in a three-year span in the early 1920s. In all three countries before 1900, only a handful of formally qualified veterinarians had emigrated from the United Kingdom. Farming populations were relatively sparse in these settler societies. Each country had a strong economic dependence on Britain. It was not until government veterinary departments were set up in these countries that veterinary professional expansion and development really began. Individual veterinarian administrators played major roles in this development: Gilruth in New Zealand, Kendall in Australia, McEachran in Canada, and Theiler in South Africa. Indeed, in all of the nations included in this comparative analysis, this role of the government, as a direct consumer of veterinary services and employer of veterinarians, was of major importance for veterinary development. It can be argued that such influence was of greater organizational and developmental significance for veterinary professionalization than the formation of the professional associations themselves.

Discussion and conclusion

From the present survey of veterinary professionalization it is possible to make some observations about the value of the historical-comparative approach and the limitations of Wilensky's model in explaining this process—particularly in light of what Mennell (2010) called »civilizational time,« and what Beilharz and Hogan (2012) refer to as »the civilizational long-run.« The implication that the professionalization sequence is well-defined is not borne out, even in the United States; and less so when the model is applied to other countries where fewer or extra steps are of equal importance for the development of the profession, even in restricting analysis to one occupation. Only Australia showed a veterinary professionalization pattern in full agreement with Wilensky's ordering, and it is hardly the case that these are the only significant events in the profes-

sion's history in Australia. The near-failure of Melbourne and Sydney veterinary schools for lack of student intake in the first three decades of the twentieth century undermines any simple uniformity gained by only using commencement dates of selective events. Similarly, there is more to be learned from the unsuccessful United States veterinary schools in the mid-nineteenth century.

By providing a chronological ordering of important steps in occupational development, Wilensky attempted to progress beyond the reifying effects of a simple trait approach through introducing the notion of time sequence in shifting from occupation to profession. The notion of causality is not, however, particularly developed. The comparative limitations of the model, even in the United States, which shows 36 deviations out of 126 dates means that the idea of causation is no stronger than a predisposition. A variety of comments throughout the discussion of the historical data can be seen as anticipating the three points of critique made below in this section of functionalist notions of professionalization in contrast to an historical comparative approach. These are: the lack of comparative perspective; inattention to cultural iteration; and the historical institution of government veterinary departments.

Ascione (2013, 1) observes that, »modernity remains the privileged theoretical frame and narrative for long term processes at the global scale.« The present discussion contributes to debates about singular or plural forms of modernizing processes but entertains a risk in doing so, since:

multiple modernities is widely accepted as the most comprehensive framework to cope with the challenges to Eurocentric modernity born as a consequence of pressures to recognize non-European historical experience at a global scale as alternatively modern. (Ascione 2013, 5)

The current discussion could be read as simply providing evidence in support of this, no mean achievement in itself. However, as Ascione (2013, 6–7) argues, such an approach to »processes of exchanges among entangled geo-historical locations« inadequately problematizes the notion of »Europe« and Eurocentric socio-history; a key element of which is an

implicit exceptionalism of Europe that historical tracing and re-reading of colonial settler veterinary narratives, opens up.

The proposal here, however, is that this challenge to existing data need not be read in this way. The evidence can indeed be re-read, though that entails stepping outside dominant historical and sociological framings. The problem is, however, that »non-[Euro]centrism is lacking, for the most part, a theory and explanation of European adaptiveness« (Hobson 2012, 25; in Ascione 2013, 8). This argument is that it is the perspectival level not the empirical level of analysis that has been determinative in the earlier readings noted above, revealing a process of »unthinking modernity« (Ascione 2013). Professionalization needs to be read as more than conjunctive with an essentialized concept of Europe. Without pursuing Ascione and Hobson's lines of reasoning further here, their indication of the task to be done is supported by re-inspecting the inadequacy of steps conventionally claimed to explain Anglo-settler veterinary professionalization and re-reading the evidence anew.

Comparative perspective

The chief criticism in the present context is that Wilensky's model lacks compelling relevance outside the country where it was developed, namely, the United States. Millerson's research showed the presence of several types of professional organizations exerting differential amounts of influence on the historical formation of professions in the United Kingdom. It is evident here that the veterinary profession participated in the pattern of Royal Charter patronage, establishing the RCVS in 1844, followed later by a professional association in 1881. The two dates in one cell in Table 1 indicates such a pattern does not readily fit the Wilensky scheme.

Johnson (1972) cautioned against uncritical use of the notion of professionalization that arises from lack of exposure to comparative settings. From detailed historical-comparative examination of professional development in a range of colonies of the former British empire, he concluded there were basic differences in the pattern of their occupational

emergence in contrast to the developmental process that professions followed in the United Kingdom itself. On this point of imperial connection, it is significant that Pocock (2005) describes the United States as Britain's first Atlantic empire. Still using Pocock's terminology, the keys to unlocking historical differences affecting the veterinary profession and other professions in Britain's second empire are the imperial, political, and economic networks of which the United Kingdom was the centre and these colonies the periphery (Johnson 1973, 1978). Largely because of this, but not appearing in internalist accounts of professions, there is a considerable time-lapse before the establishment of professional associations in these countries. Later establishment, in turn, meant a modified professional structure in these countries because of other social changes of modernization such as continuing industrial development, emerging white-collar classes, and the widespread presence of large bureaucratic organizations.

Johnson did not write about the veterinary profession, but he lists (1972, 28–29) a number of contrasts between the United States and United Kingdom professionalization sequences that show the limitation of the model, including for instance, the role of universities in professional education, and the functions of professional associations. »It is clear,« he says, »that the sequence outlined here by Wilensky (and this is true of Caplow [1954] also) is historically specific and culture bound.« While most of Johnson's work involved comparative analysis of professionalization in the United Kingdom and the former British colonies, differences of a similar nature are also found between both the United Kingdom and the United States, and former colonial nations and contemporary underdeveloped countries. Further detailed work in examining the socio-economic developmental pressures in these Anglo societies influencing professions and other institutional forms can be found in broad developmental analyses in Belich (2009) and Weaver (2006). As noted at the start, the colonial experience outside these Anglo-settler societies can be seen as qualitatively different (Davis 2006, 2008; Gill 2012) in Weaver's analysis, chapter one in particular, and also in the specific veterinary histories of other authors.

More recently research in the sociology of professions has highlighted variations across many societies. Krause's (1996) analysis of four professions (medicine, law, engineering, and university teaching) in five countries provides, like Johnson, a challenge to any simple linear professionalization formula, although it does not follow the European occupation-to-profession model. Professional change interacts with actors and interests, including the state, in the particular circumstances different within each society (e.g. Evetts 1998). More recent critique from Henriksson, Wrede, and Burau (2006, 176) for example, continues to document the inadequate comparison. Unfortunately, implicit use of functionalist professionalization assumptions in occupational studies continues.

Cultural iteration

From a post-professional perspective it makes better sense to read the data as having provisional and interactive dimensions as it now sits in summary in Table 1, not making presumptions of individual linear evolution. This form of »cultural traffic,« to use Beilharz and Hogan's (2012) terminology, means not only can Wilensky's model be critiqued for its lack of comparative perspective, but within the multiple paradigms of sociological theory today, even such a comparative difference is not absolute. In key ways, the awareness of, and copying from, other nations is recursive—feeding back into the practices and institutional arrangements around professions by the perceiving and emulating societies. Professionalization changes as it travels. Such a statement is not automatic recapitulation, in fact, »palingenesis« is the biological term Ascione (2013) uses in debating this. The present data, even though dealing with individual historic events, is not discrete and independent; events are interleaved, one event influencing the occurrence of another nationally and internationally through imperial and globalized information networks. Thus, even within this settler-society grouping, these differences go beyond contradicting adaptations to European modernity or the »adaptiveness« of Europe, to start narrating the construction of Euro-modernity in relation to the implicit and invisible non-European »others.«

In the data presented here at least three identifiable cultural-political feedback mechanisms can be discerned: (1) Except for the United States politically (and less so, economically), all the other Anglo-settler societies in the table existed in formal metropolitan-peripheral relationships within the United Kingdom's imperial network over the past two centuries. They fed the need for officials, technical experts, production of raw materials, and governing cadres, ultimately affecting veterinary development, along with other professions and disciplines, as mechanisms of imperial governance. (2) Most societies here have another iterative loop of influence and response in their federal-state hierarchies. Copying or restraining events in one part of society is inherent in the functioning and regulatory arrangements established even before considering the diffusion of ideas and practices in meetings, reports, communications, and policy initiatives. (3) Inter-country interactions are seen in a variety of events and processes noted here: establishing veterinary schools in response to widespread disease; establishing government agricultural departments or veterinary divisions; legislative permission for professional closure and variations in the modes of closure; later willingness to fund training schools; setting up professional associations (or obtaining a Royal charter), all show awareness of (a) the activities of other national societies, and (b) the professionalizing efforts of other groups. In Table 1, the succession of eras within which full-time veterinary work developed (column two), and subsequent patterns across the Table which set out *when* specific events occurred, can be re-read as those societies having had similar responses to similar issues—at least partly because they were each *reading* the actions of others in their own modernizing social and anthro-animal environments.

Government veterinary departments

The single most important factual omission in Wilensky's professionalization sequence of veterinarians in these settler societies is the role of the state in the account. Every national instance witnessed establishing a government organization for core veterinary functions of disease management and control, supervision of animal slaughter, and human hygi-

ene protection. The action of establishing government animal health management agencies is as relevant to English-speaking countries as to European states and nations elsewhere. Conceiving professions as essentially free agents created through a naturalized professionalization process is not evident in the data shown in Table 1. The new Veterinary Medical Association of the United States was key in promoting establishment of the United States Bureau of Animal Health in 1863. The United Kingdom British Veterinary Association was formed nearly twenty years *after* the formation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAF) in 1865; in New Zealand, no professional association existed until 1923, thirty years *after* the government Veterinary Division was formed in 1893. Further, New Zealand shows a significant governmental role in the »Vet Club« system (Burns 2007).

Today, in many respects, the veterinary profession in these countries conforms to the Anglo-American ideal of an independent, self-regulating profession. However, historically, the role of the state in »calling into being« a nascent professional group, and legitimating and promoting veterinary oversight of national animal populations, is a major component in the development of veterinary work. The state agencies acted as substantial employers, allowing veterinarians to investigate, do research, and recommend control and management practices. Such »patronage,« to use Johnson's (1972) term, provided critical impetus to occupational development. Wilensky's sequence of steps, however, ideologically brackets-out the role of the state, and stands in marked contrast to the work of contributing writers like Burrage and Torstendahl (1990a, 1990b), and others in which the role of the state is considered more evenly distributed. Hellberg's (1990) description of veterinary work is the obvious case in point illustrating this.

Continuously, across the entire comparative veterinary history, the state has been central in veterinary services: (1) epizootic border control, late eighteenth century; (2) establishment of eighteenth-nineteenth century veterinary schools; (3) responding to disease out-breaks via government veterinary departments later in the nineteenth century; and (4), in later

stages of Table 1 coverage, major disease eradication programs in Europe and the United States (e.g. tuberculosis) were government-led initiatives (Olmstead and Rhodes 2004).

Data from a restricted comparative group of countries has been gathered here to provide insights undercutting the functionalist model's empirical and theoretical assumptions. Its theoretical inadequacy has come to the surface in this investigation, particularly in the narrow comparative applicability of the model, the explanatory limitations of similarities and differences, and how poorly it reveals the empirical data. Thus, while Wilensky's idea has an attraction in providing a framework to gather specific evidence on occupational professionalization, the inadequacy of the model as a theoretical explanation of professions is apparent in veterinary professionalization. Even viewed as descriptive, rather than analytic, it reflects nationalist, modernist, and cultural discourses selecting steps used in the model to read the data. Interpretations are read out of the model, rather than deriving these from proper attention to the historical data, or from a broader-based empirical or historical-theoretical understanding of modernity (Wagner 2008, 2010). In order to contextualize a more evidence-based view of veterinary professional development, an historical-comparative landscape is necessary.

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