

Chapter 5

The Gender Perspective in Ukrainian Migration

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5.1 Introducing Gender

Literature on feminization of migration not only flagged a shift in academic research towards a more gender-sensitive approach to researching migration but also opened a wide array of research agendas rooted in understanding mobility as gendered practice and experience. It also in part marked a response to the changing nature of global labour markets, the rise of the demand for a more flexible and cheaper labour force, growing market segments (such as care and domestic work)¹ and the changing patterns and practices of migration. It not only introduced gender-sensitive analysis of male and female migratory trajectories but opened up a number of analytical debates that were mostly ignored in literature prioritizing the “male breadwinner” perspective. These included: gender-differentiated wages and working conditions during migration (see Ehrenreich and Fuentes 1983; Andall 1998; Anderson 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997); transnational motherhood and uneven distribution of care responsibilities between men and women (Gamburd 2000; Andall 1998; Hochschild 2001); and the relation between care work, citizenship and family rights (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg 2012; Anderson and Shutes 2014). The debates on changing gender roles triggered by migration in both sending and receiving countries resulted in a number of analytical concepts, such as care chains (Orozco 2009), care diamonds (Razavi 2007) and transnational welfare

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¹Categories of care and domestic work often overlap, especially if care is provided within the privacy of the home and the tasks related to providing care for a child or an elderly person overlap with tasks related to cooking and cleaning. However, I keep the two categories separate as care can be provided by migrants in institutionalized spaces such as hospitals or retirement homes.

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(Piperno and Tognetti Bordogna 2012). This growing range of analytical approaches, however, only marginally stirred the analysis of Ukrainian migration to the EU.

As discussed in detail in other chapters in this volume (in particular see Chaps. 8 and 10), labour migration from Ukraine is strongly determined by the work sector–gender–destination country paradigm. Information on the unbalanced sex ratio of Ukrainian citizens can therefore be found in research literature dealing with migration to particular countries and from particular regions in Ukraine (to name a few Ukrainian sources, Pirozhkov et al. 2003; Boyko 2010; Shybko et al. 2006; Kys 2010; Markov 2005; Parkhomenko and Starodub 2005; Malynovska 2009; Tegeler and Cherkez 2011; Susak 2002; Leontiyeva 2011). Though these few examples do not specifically operationalize gender as an analytical category, they offer an overview of the situation of Ukrainian migrants in the receiving countries according to the gendered segmentation of the labour market and migration patterns.

This chapter will address the ways in which gender features in studies of Ukrainian migration to the EU and the implications of such approaches for research, political and public debates. In Ukraine, where the political, economic and public spheres are characterized by an unprecedented curtailing of gender equality even in comparison with the Soviet triple burden (Wanner 2005; Utrata 2008), gendered analysis bears a narrow interpretation, in which *gendered* stands for *female*, while *female* stands for *familial* or *emotional*. Thus, Ukrainian nationalist state-building discourse substituted the Soviet ideal of a woman-worker with the neo-traditionalist mythological figure of Berehynia (Rubchak 2011; Solari 2008; Hrycak 2011; Haydenko 2011) – a “representation of a nurturing woman, guardian of non-symbolic domestic hearth and embodiment of moral principles” (Haydenko 2011: 114). This imagery constitutes a powerful mechanism that generates solid gender-specific roles, furthermore replacing “woman” with “mother” and “mother” with “Ukraine”, representing “all maternal functions as natural women’s duties” (Haydenko 2011: 12–13) and ignoring the diversity of women’s experiences.

5.2 What’s Out There? An Overview of Correlation Between Migrants’ Gender, Sector of Employment and Choice of Destination Country

Using statistical data from various sources that contain gender information, Markov et al. in *At the Crossroads* (2009) provide a comparative gender profile of Ukrainian migration to eight countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Ireland, the UK, Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece. The greatest imbalance can be seen in migration to Italy (16.8% men and 83.2% women), which corresponds almost exactly with the 80% of all Ukrainian migrants to Italy being employed in the domestic and care sector. Another country characterized by a significant labour imbalance, Russia, with 80% male and 20% female migrants, also follows the gendered labour division with the biggest sectors of employment for all migrants being construction, mining and city transportation (Markov et al. 2009, see also Chap. 10). However, not all

countries follow gender-determined professional paths. Ireland, which has about 45% female and 55% male migration, shows that 80% of all migrants are involved in construction. This discrepancy challenges us to consider how gender features in employment opportunities for migrants, and what connection there is between labour demand, dissemination of information and the ability of migrants to respond to this demand across borders and despite visa regimes. Similarly, Molodikova (2008) identifies an important link between the percentage of female migrants and the employment opportunities available to women in Ukraine, remarking that while the levels of unemployment for male and female are rather similar, it is more complicated for a female to get a job. Periods of unemployment are longer for women (15 months as opposed to 13 for men) while according to statistical data in 2006, women's salaries were 72.8% of men's.

Ukrainian labour migration research is marked by the politicizing of female migration, and while this releases a wealth of important new questions, it can reduce its potential by remaining permanently in the "women's domain". Thus, among the issues that have received much-needed attention are those linked to employment in the care sector, care drain from Ukraine and care chains, migrants' children, identifications and gender roles linked to female migration, transnational families and the experiences not only of migrants but also of those who indirectly participate in migration, benefit from it and carry out their own tasks in transnational enterprises. The following section identifies and reviews the scope of questions in the literature that adopts a gender-sensitive approach to migration from Ukraine to the EU.

5.3 The State of the Art and Identifying Trends

5.3.1 At the Intersection of Gender, Family and Generation

In the discussion of Ukrainian migration both in scholarly texts and in public and media discourses in Ukraine and abroad, women, children and the familial sphere remain within the domain of "gendered questions", while men and women outside families seem to be persistently untouched by the gender discussion of Ukrainian migration.

Gender as a category that can help untangle the migration situation should not be regarded as an independent factor but should be analyzed and constructed at the juncture of sex, age, family status and social class, together with an understanding of the path contingency derived from gendered normative expectations. A notable exception is the work of Lutz and Palenga-Möllenbeck (2012), who draw on examples of Ukrainian migrants and consider a generation of caregivers with a special focus on fathers, whether or not they take over the caring roles of mothers in families with migrant breadwinner mothers. The authors argue that migration studies started to speak about the fragmentation of the family as a problem only when mothers started to migrate in larger numbers (2012: 22). They warn against a simplistic expectation of the reversal of gender hierarchies where migration has caused

breadwinner role reversal: reversal of “traditional” male-favouring earning capacities can lead to a backlash of gendered expectations and conformism, and extra pressures within families. Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg’s research succeeds in identifying these tangible normative gendered stereotypes and analyzes them by specifically examining men’s gendered citizenship obligations as “citizen-the-wage-earner” and women, particularly mothers, as “citizen-the-carer” (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg 2012). The former, the authors suggest, are privileged over the latter; in their research conducted in Ukrainian families they found that fathers who performed care duties single-handed were rarest, with the majority delegating child care to female relatives, especially grandmothers, who, in addition to their caring responsibilities often “looked after” young fathers themselves, thus prioritizing gender over nuclear family connections and keeping care work solely within the women’s domain (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg 2012). This arrangement calls for a better analysis of the impact of mothers’ absence not only on children, but rather on the extended family network, which acquires new importance, requiring new forms of reciprocity and obligation not only across nuclear families but also across generations. Thus, not only the role of motherhood, but also grandmotherhood is reinvented in the context of female migration (Vianello 2009a, 2009b; Fedjuk 2011; Solari 2008; Volodko 2011a, b; Tyldum 2015), and so are the cross-generational, gendered expectations among siblings and relatives in extended families.

Introducing the generational dimension to the understanding of changing care patterns in families remains one of the few areas in which time and temporality, as a concept that allows an understanding of the transformations of migratory patterns and practices in time, is present in the discussion of Ukrainian migration. However, such texts are often limited to a discussion of the clash of women’s roles as earners and carers and the inter-generational practices that have evolved as a solution to this contradiction in migrant families. Furthermore, generational family roles often remain static, like snapshots of the situation at a given time, with little reference to change in the families as the cause of migration or change in generational roles and statuses.

Sex-differentiated information can be found in country reports and texts that examine general migratory patterns from Ukraine, destination countries and their labour market sectors (Shybko et al. 2006; Kys 2010; Markov 2005; Parkhomenko and Starodub 2005; Igllicka et al. 2011; Marques and Góis 2007; Leontiyeva and Tollarová 2011). Such research, though it fails overall to use gender as an analytical category, can be a source of quantitative information useful for more critical analysis. The data from the 2008 Modular Population Survey of Labour Migration Issues shows that unlike men, whose migration sharply drops after the age of 50, women remain active in migration up to retirement age (Fargus 2013). Molodikova (2008), in operationalizing sex-differentiated information in her work on Ukrainian migration, concludes that women labour migrants are generally slightly older than men (average age 20–39 for men and 30–44 for women), that married women migrate more often than single ones and the percentage of divorced and widowed migrants is also very high.

Molodikova also indicates that women tend to return less frequently – 1.6 times per year as compared to 2 times for men (Molodikova 2008: 20). This is an important observation in relation to both the nature of female employment and the temporality of female and male migratory patterns. However, Molodikova's text does not offer critical analysis as to how such quantitative data can be linked either to the level of female migrant status irregularity or to the type of employment that does not allow women to take breaks as often as men, or even the level of pay that allows men to “afford” to stay out of work more often than women. Similarly, there is little information on gender in studies of remittances; for example, Leontiyeva and Tollarová (2011), in their text on incomes, expenditures and remittances of Ukrainians in the Czech Republic (see Chap. 8), mention the importance of dependent children for remittances but give no further information as to the gender of the remitters. In another example of the gender-differentiated approach to data collection, a study focusing on circular migration by Iglicka et al. for the METOIKOS project (2011) addresses types of Ukrainian male and female migrant circularity patterns and links these patterns to gendered labour market sectors.

Due to the fairly rigid employment sector segmentation in receiving countries and the consequent formation of gendered migration to specific countries (e.g. Greece and Italy predominantly female migration, Spain and Portugal family-type migration), some gender-specific information can be gained from qualitative and quantitative research focusing on specific destination countries (see respective literature reviews in Part II). This literature, however, remains highly unbalanced and patchy in terms of the themes, type of research and geographical area covered. Thus, female migrations have received much more scholarly attention, as the quantity of research on migration to Italy and Greece has increased in the last decade (to name a few Vianello 2006, 2008, 2009a, b, 2011; Fedyuk 2009, 2011, 2012; Volodko 2011a, b; Rovenchak 2011a, b; Solari 2008, 2010; Hrycak 2011; Tyldum 2015; Mudrak 2011). Even in countries with a more gender-balanced migrant structure like Poland, the majority of the qualitative research focuses on female aspects of migration (Kindler 2009, 2011; Rovenchak 2011a; Volodko 2011a, b). Ukrainian literature on the migration of women addresses a wide range of topics and geographical areas though it does remain focused on particular issues such as transnational motherhood, family and care chains, care work and conditions of employment, transnational welfare and its gaps, and identity shifts and challenges to normative gender roles.

Contemporary labour migration from Ukraine, then, can only be understood with an intersecting transnational, gendered and cross-generational approach. Middle-aged women (as with migration to Italy) often choose to migrate to allow their adult daughters to pursue full-time child rearing (also see Utrata 2008; Solari 2008). The older generation's reluctance to return has to be explored from the perspective of the very limited opportunities available in Ukraine. They are unlikely to find employment and an income in Italy, and after years of being a breadwinner many find it very disturbing to fall back into dependency on the family, with whom contacts may have been damaged by years of separation. Therefore, for the older generation, their mobility is “a way to stay at home” (Morokvasic 2004:7) and a way of “preserving

home”, preventing the scattering of other family members throughout the world in migration. This approach is just one example of how time in migration flows differently for families back at home and for migrants, while time spent away both opens up and closes different opportunities for men and women.

Trying to overcome the limitations of the ideological and normative construction of motherhood in migration, a number of authors have turned to the transnational family framework, exploring care chains and care across borders by considering gender, age, life cycle and the ideological imaginations of family shared by family members. Thus, a number of authors examine the importance of informal family networks, kinship and particularly kinship alliances along gender lines, and map out the networks of migrants’ social relations and the power asymmetries within these networks (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenbeck 2011; Vianello 2009a, b; Tymczuk and Leifsen 2012; Volodko 2011b; Solari 2008; Fedyuk 2012; Yarova 2006) in order to understand the mechanisms that trigger and sustain migration.

5.3.2 Feminization of Migration and Care Work

Women’s employment as care and domestic workers is the focus of a number of studies (also see Chaps. 9 and 10), most notably Marta Kindler’s (2011) work on Ukrainian domestic workers in Poland, which considers the consequences of labour market flexibilization and daily labour practices in the privacy of Polish homes, and how legality affects migrants’ choices and shapes their professional identities as migrant labourers, forcing them to negotiate against the insecurities of their legal, social and professional position. Kindler addresses relationships that are defined by the space and conditions of employment hidden away in the private sphere of the home, often resulting in class power asymmetries between employer and employee.

Care work and the uneasy informal negotiations it entails are discussed in Näre’s (2007) comparative study of domestic workers from Poland and Ukraine in Naples, Fedyuk’s PhD thesis (2011) and Vianello’s book (2011) both on Ukrainian migration to Italy. Female employment in the domestic and care sectors is addressed through analysis of the role of skills versus profession in constructing a marketable migrant profile, as well as the transformation of the meaning of migration over time. It also addresses issues of self-identification, professional realization and the role of migration within individual biographies.

In texts addressing the feminization of migration from Ukraine, Tolstokorova (2010a, b) provides a gender-based analysis of the role of remittances in social sustainability in Ukraine and their impact on poverty, health, education, labour issues and gender equality. In other cutting-edge research, Piperno and Tognetti Bordogna’s (2012) text on migration and development perspectives between Italy and Ukraine explores this migration from the unique perspective of Italian-Ukrainian decentralized cooperation initiatives at supranational and local levels, looking at examples of emerging small businesses (especially involving Ukrainian women), transnational NGO initiatives in support of transnational parenting, and migration trajectories

oriented towards the well-being of children and social protection. Vianello (2009a, b, 2011) addresses care chains, looking not only at childcare by migrant parents, but also at the gaps in elderly care in Ukraine resulting from the departure of women who would otherwise be taking care of their ageing parents and in-laws (also see Fedjuk 2009; Chap. 10).

The politicization of female migration in the Ukrainian state and media is reflected in a number of texts addressing the positioning of women vis-à-vis the nationalistic normative model of familial roles, and women's shifting identities and gender roles transformed through their migration experience. Solari's text on human resource drain (2010) provides a particularly insightful analysis into the role of gender in Ukrainian migration and the effect of gendered migration on family structures, the labour market and the Ukrainian state. The author starts by looking into the historic post-Soviet reorganization of work and family and new Ukrainian nationalism. In this transformation, she suggests, the newly independent Ukrainian state intensifies implicit gender inequalities in terms of employment, careers, workloads and pay rates, forcing more and more women into unemployment, underemployment, chronically underpaid state jobs and reproductive unpaid labour. On a national ideology level, Solari concludes, docile, feminine and nurturing women are envisioned as embodying Ukraine's authentic national traits that distance Ukraine both culturally and morally from the "unnatural" values of the Soviet past, and write Ukraine back into European values. Such works provide an opportunity to historicize the present migrations in the context of broader geopolitical changes in Ukraine (also see Chap. 13).

These conclusions are echoed in Solari's other text "Between 'Europe' and 'Africa'", in which the author takes a close look at women's ideological concern with Ukraine's modernity, the link between their professional positioning in the former USSR and in the independent Ukraine, and the misplaced sense of identity which makes them feel simultaneously at home and out of place in both Ukraine and Italy (Solari 2008). Addressing similar issues of ideological reframing of the Ukrainian position in Europe through Ukrainian female migration, Hrycak, in her text "Women as Migrants on the Margins of the European Union", looks further into the ideological construction of migration to Italy by the Ukrainian state. Such discourses view women migrants as deviant in contrast to male migrants, to whom the breadwinning function is assigned by default (Hrycak 2011). Women's migration for paid labour, states the author, is presented as abandoning their domestic roles, their families and Ukraine as such.

In relation to women's emancipatory experience of earning a living for themselves and their families in another country, a legitimate question has been raised, particularly by feminist researchers: how does this emancipatory experience affect women's positioning within their families, and does it add up to a concrete gender role shift in migrants' families? Thus Volodko, in her PhD thesis on the influence of labour migration on family roles (2011b), examines migrant women's experience in Greece and Poland and concludes that such migration hardly results in any significant change in Ukrainian families' gender roles. The most significant, though temporary, changes take place during women's migration. However, in the post-migration

period, most women in the research sample return to the pre-migration gender-defined family roles. Among the migrants to Poland and Greece, families are typically transnational (see Chaps. 8 and 9). Vianello (2013), in her paper on social remittances in female migration to Italy, observes only a modest shift in gender roles, which she attributes to women increasingly striving for the right to self-care and self-realization and the recognition of different and more women-friendly life patterns, rather than to shifts of the gendered responsibilities and ideals in Ukraine. Both works can be seen as touching upon the issue of time in migration, i.e. the changing of identities and identifications with time, the development of simultaneous attachments in the places of migration and home, and the differentiated flow of time in the place of migration and at home (characterized by the different paces of value and role change).

Vianello's article on migrant returnees (2009b) and Solari's (2010) article represent a departure from the view of migrant women as the only active gender agents, i.e. portraying migrating women as those whose gender awareness has been transformed while the gender awareness at home has remained frozen in time or fallen behind "modern" models. As Vianello convincingly demonstrates in her work, gender understanding has been transforming in Ukraine equally fast, though in a neo-conservative or neo-traditionalist direction (also see Chap. 10). It is a point of paramount importance, especially in the case of returning female migrants, as it allows insight into the difficulties they face not in the gender-backwardness of their homes but as a part of the larger consolidation of normative gender roles in which the migration of women both fuels such neo-conservative zest and triggers a desire for stronger control over the female bodies (also see Fedjuk 2011).

5.3.3 *Transnational Family and Motherhood at a Distance*

A number of texts (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg 2011; Torre and Piperno 2008; Molodikova 2008; Tolstokorova 2010a, b; Volodko 2011a) utilize Arlene Hochschild's (2001) concept of "care drain" or "care gap" created by the departure of Ukrainian women to perform paid care work abroad. The debate is conducted in the context of a highly politicized debate on "Euro-orphans" (also "social" or "national" orphans), also known as the children left behind. As Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg (2012) note, the increase in female migration aroused strong media interest and public debates on absent parents, in particular mothers: "starting in 2000, public national [Ukrainian] discourses switched from relative silence to a very lively interest in children of labour migrants" (2012: 26). The terms "Euro-orphans" or "social orphans" came to mean children orphaned while their parents are alive, a "victim of the parents' hunger for the Euro" (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenberg 2012: 26). A handbook on studying and researching contemporary labour migration from Ukraine published by the Ukrainian Academy of Science includes the following in its glossary of terms: "Distant family – is a family which is characterized by the lasting absence of one or several family members, a family

with defects of upbringing, most typical of which are conflicting relationships between the parents, lack of time spent with the child, mistakes in upbringing, etc.” (Kychak 2009). Though all of the problems listed can be attributed to some degree to any family, the definition uses strong blaming language to portray these problems as arising from migration, and migrant families as inherently flawed.

Actual research into the effect of migration on various aspects of migrants’ children’s lives calls into question both results and ethical principles. Thus, according to a survey conducted in 2006 by La Strada Ukraine in several regions of Ukraine and discussed in greater detail in Molodikova’s (2008) report, in Ternopol (one of the regional centers in the west of Ukraine) one in four school children (25.5%) had a parent abroad, and 4.2% had neither parent at home. The 103 children of labour migrants who were surveyed provide some data as to the length of separation: 36% of fathers and 30% of mothers worked abroad for up to 3 years, with 14% of fathers and 11% of mothers abroad for more than 5 years (quoted in Molodikova 2008: 25). The report suggests there are negative behavioural changes among children whose parents work abroad: children of migrants are reported to leave school, study badly and generally lack discipline. They become angry and aggressive, and make the wrong friends. Among other problems, Molodikova identifies drug abuse, prostitution and suicide. The author suggests “the situation is especially dangerous when the mother migrates. It is also noticed that children brought up by fathers sometimes can’t identify themselves [*sic*] and tend to homosexual relationships” (Molodikova 2008: 25).

Such conclusions, lumping together drug abuse, prostitution and homosexuality, speak of the demonization of migration and place the main responsibility for families’ well-being on women’s shoulders. They lack both social and economic contextualization of the children’s background and comparison with the results of similar research conducted among the children of non-migrants in the same area. The lack of similar research in the Ukrainian context paves the way for harmful policy recommendations. Thus, Molodikova (2008) suggests an institution of state guardianship should be developed where care for migrants’ children is provided by state, NGO and religious institutions but sponsored (conveniently so) by migrating parents: “It is necessary also to promote sports, tourism and other activities. Taking into consideration the state’s financial deficit, such events could be fee paid as migrants’ children have enough money to pay for themselves” (2008:29).

Similar conclusions and ideological connotations are found in research by some Ukrainian scholars. Levchenko’s text (2006) on problems facing labour migrants’ children attempts to explore the effect of parents’ migration on children’s psycho-emotional state and behaviour and seeks the roots of deviant behaviour in the children. Kluchkovska and Hlumnytska’s (2010) edited volume, which uses the term “social and national orphans” as a neutral, non-problematized term in the title of the collection, provides a selection of texts addressing a range of problems from the perspectives of psychologists, teachers, policy makers and civil servants, making a number of policy recommendations as to how to reduce the negative effects of migration on migrants and their families. Ihnatolya and Rul’ (2011) based their analysis on surveys of high-school students, providing a more organized methodological

and critical approach to this issue as they compared the life challenges faced by migrant and non-migrant children. The authors analyze the specific features of migrant children's socialization and recommend social integration measures. Rul' (2010), in her survey of high-school children (223 respondents) in the Zakarpattya region, singles out psychological stress, hard physical labour, difficulties at school and lack of daily routine as problems typically described by migrants' children. The author concludes that migrants' children are readier to solve their problems themselves, relying on their parents' money, than children of non-migrants.

Lutz and Palenga-Möllnbeck (2012) suggest that the terms "Euro-orphan" or "social orphan" became buzzwords in academia and the media without being clearly identified or critically reflected upon (2012: 26). The press used "so-called statistical references for emphasis in this debate: most articles mention large numbers and suggest that they can be seen as indicators of an as yet undiscovered and underestimated mass phenomenon. ... In Ukraine, the figure has been circulating of 7.5 to 9 million children left behind, and to trace the source of these numbers, we refer to a survey estimating the numbers of Ukrainians working abroad at 7 million, of whom only 6% are said to be childless" (Lutz and Palenga-Möllnbeck 2012: 27). The authors point out that such debates "of blame, primarily women, are seen as being responsible for the neglect of their children.... Male migration from Eastern and Central Ukraine to Russia gets more attention in the national media without being scandalized as a loss of care resources" (2010: 14). Similarly, Solari (2010) notes that during her research in Italy among Ukrainian migrants, respondents often expressed pride at being able to help their children (also see Chap. 13). However, when speaking of other people's children, remittances were often discussed with a negative connotation, and other children regarded as being corrupted by easy money (Solari 2010). These ambiguous discourses clearly show that remittances trigger economic inequalities, which make migrants' children more visible, enhance consumerist competition and put more pressure on migrants.

The issue of children left behind is almost exclusively explored in relation to migrant mothers and motherhood from a distance. Tolstokorova, in her critical paper based on small-scale research, "Where Have All the Mothers Gone? The Gendered Effect of Labour Migration and Transnationalism on the Institution of Parenthood in Ukraine" (2010b), argues that it is the *mothers* who keep bearing the multiple burdens linked to migration. She argues that Ukrainian transnational mothers "undergo multidimensional exploitation" among which she enumerates exploitation of their labour by the employers, emotional exploitation by the families back home, by middlemen who make money on their efforts to maintain transnational connections (information and communication technologies, phone networks, the public transport industry), and by national economies and financial corporations earning interest on women's cash transfers. Here, the author also includes "the private educational system benefitting from university fees paid with mothers' earnings abroad" (2010b: 204–5). Thus, the author calls on migration scholars to look critically at the price of transnationalism and suggests that transnational motherhood entails a "vignette of women's burdens: overexploitation, multiple penalties

and financial and emotional outsourcing” (2010b: 204). From this exhaustive list of exploitations, the author concludes that the women gain the rather ephemeral reward of hope that their sacrifice will be beneficial for their children, a hope that Tolstokorova points out might not necessarily come to fruition (2010b: 204).

Several authors attempt to address this prominent importance of motherhood and family in Ukrainian female migration, while maintaining a critical approach. Fedyuk’s dissertation “Beyond motherhood” based on a year of research in Bologna and Naples, looks into how motherhood figures at the various levels of migrating women’s lives – employment, transnational connections with their families or sexual and intimate relations established with Italian men outside the transnational family. To provide an alternative to the discourse of motherhood that is so prevalent in all aspects of migrating women’s lives, Fedyuk considers the “migration project” in which migrating and non-migrating family members in extended families are equally affected by migration across generations, whether performing their part in the “migration deal” as migrants and/or care-givers and/or remittance handlers and/or those who keep the door for the migrants’ return open. The author concludes that the nature of the contemporary labour migration project from Ukraine to Italy is that family members rotate in their roles within the project, depending on their age, gender and stage of life. Thus, those who migrate may return home for a while to take their position in the care chains, while a son or a daughter can temporarily join the migration until they decide to marry and have their own children.

5.4 Conclusions

This section identifies seven topics in literature on Ukrainian migration from a gender perspective and proposes further studies in the directions discussed.

Systematic cross-country analysis. There is a need for a systematic gender-sensitive cross-country migratory pattern analysis for several EU countries. Such an analysis would identify employment conditions in terms of age and sex in various destination countries and sectors, and consider how this affects migrants’ working conditions, salaries, legalization opportunities, care chains and care arrangements within transnational families, remittance patterns, length of stay and future plans. A systematic analysis would contextualize migrants’ positions within specific socio-economic conditions, migratory patterns and the changes in migratory practices over time, allowing us to construct a meaningful analytical concept of gender and how it features in Ukrainian labour migration.

Male migration. More research is needed on the combination of gendered labour conditions, age and migrants’ regularity status as well as on the role of competing masculinity norms at play in employer–employee relations. A useful enquiry into the link between paid jobs and unpaid gendered tasks would be research on Ukrainian men employed in “non-traditional” jobs as care workers, gardeners, nurses and domestic workers, and the possible effect on their perception of gender

roles and masculinity. Regrettably, men are largely excluded from analysis of transnational care chains, families, children left behind and identity changes through migration. Significantly, there is also no research that would show how the pattern of male migration shifts and adapts over time and within professional and personal biographies.

Female migration. While female migration remains one of the areas where a thorough qualitative approach has been used in selected destination countries, it is important to examine the transformation of women's migratory patterns over time and explore the effects of status changes and length of stay on women's professional biographies, remittance patterns, care chains and position in transnational families.

Migrants' children. This category of research not only needs academic and analytical work, but also ethical revision. Terms like "Euro-/social/national orphans" not only politicize this sensitive issue, adding no analytical value, but stigmatize the children and cause serious social consequences by labelling them "orphans" and damaging their trust in their parents' care. The issues of children's neglect through lack of care, resources, parenting responsibility (of both mother and father) and social sensitivity to their position are of paramount importance and should be researched with appropriate ethical and analytical caution. Thus, it is important to thoroughly contextualize the children in the socio-economic conditions that applied before migration (it often happens that the departure of the primary caregiver, especially the mother, is accompanied by a general crisis of family relations and socio-economic conditions experienced particularly acutely by children after the departure of the most integral family member) and in the wider socio-economic conditions of the specific area (it often happens that the numbers come from quite under-developed rural areas which, migration apart, are affected by various social problems).

There is a need to research the effect of parents' migration on their children not only in terms of the emotional connection, but the socio-economic conditions of parents' departure, children's lives when apart from their parents and the experiences of reunion. It is crucial to contextualize the child's gender, age at separation, the years spent apart and the reunion age (if it took place at all). The temporal aspect of migration plays a key role here; gendered norms and normative expectations are particularly strong in the case of children and young adults, and the length of separation from parents and conditions of transnational connections have a powerful effect on the overall experience of separation. Finally, temporality is significant in researching professional patterns, children's choices and the reproduction of migration as a valid life trajectory, since migrants' children seem to be more likely to join migration for a shorter or longer time, while migrants themselves might choose to rotate migration with non-migration periods, relying on remittances from other migrating kin when at home.

Transnational families. It is important to note here the first attempts to conduct research with multi-transnational families, a pattern which is becoming more and more common in Ukraine and in the larger context of the global gendered labour market. With economic migration practices becoming internalized by the families over many years and decades of labour migration, it is not uncommon for different

family members to respond to the gendered opportunities provided by various national labour markets and split up to work in different countries, e.g. women would go to Italy or Greece to provide domestic and care services, while men would undertake seasonal migration to Russia or the Czech Republic to do construction work. This approach would help understanding of a wide range of family behaviours in the face of migratory opportunities and the lack of opportunities in Ukraine. It would also allow for a cross-generational approach to migration, in which the reasons for, and the consequences of, migration are located over several generations of any family and affect migrating and non-migrating family members in specific ways (often dictated by age, gender and shared gendered familial norms).

Migration both triggers, and is triggered by, the particular social, economic and political structures of the sending country and thus should not be seen only as bringing change to the home country, but also as being changed by various socio-economic dynamics *in* the home country. Thus, Solari demonstrates that it is not the Ukrainian “homeland” that is a static entity and individual migrants or even migration patterns merely “impact” it (2010: 229). “It is not a collision but rather best understood as a process of mutual constitution”, which Solari calls “constitutive circularity” (2010: 229). In Solari’s analysis, migration conceptualizes, on a theoretical macro level, the transformation caused by migration; it cannot be understood by simply adding up a number of push and pull factors, and is a process which sustains, generates and transforms itself within the larger family unit.

Temporality and gender. A whole new approach is needed to understand how temporality overlaps with gender, i.e. how time spent in migration creates different opportunities for men and women. Thus, how time in migration affects opportunities for professional and status mobility for men and women and how time spent away from home affects different opportunities for return to Ukraine, reintegration or re-starting professional and personal lives after their return. Also, it can help us to understand how time spent in gender-dominated work sectors (e.g. care work, construction work) creates very different legal, professional and personal opportunities for men and women that determine their migratory and remittance patterns as well as their decisions to return or re-migrate.

Finally, in Ukraine, where the rigid division of family roles not only praises a normative family model that is unachievable for many in today’s economically challenging times but also condemns transnational migrants’ family arrangements as deviant, dangerous and unwanted, ignoring all those practices that can allow us to understand migrants’ choices, strategies and decisions, and denies the flexibility of the whole family unit, it is important to open up research to the issues of care not only for children, but for other family members, especially migrants’ ageing parents, and to examine more closely the directionality of care flows and power hierarchies within transnational families and all their members. Such research, however, has to be sensitive to the constantly shifting conditions of migration determined by accumulated experience in migration and a migrant’s shifting legal, professional and personal situation.

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