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Rethinking gender, rethinking migration. Mutual interdependence

Recent months have witnessed a profound increase in the use of the word 'refugee' in the public discourse. We have heard of refugees linked to 'crisis', '(in)tolerance', 'assimilation', 'migration', 'identity', as well as 'terrorism', 'Islamization', 'the decline of the Western values', and so on. The recent influx of refugees to Europe can be analyzed not only by means of humanitarian values, willingness to help or acts of compassion and empathy. It soon appeared that this abrupt process opened floor to discussions about the potential shape of nowadays Europe, as well as strategies of how to deal with the demographic collapse and the necessity to accommodate citizens from alien cultures as future employees on the local labor market.

First and foremost, what might be of utmost importance for a sociologist, is that the influx of refugees has made all: journalists, scientists, politicians and citizens, reinforce the search for answers to the questions about what is the projected shape of Europe and what it means to be a European. What has to be taken into account is that the ongoing crisis is a symptom of structural changes taking place all over Europe and, at the same time, has to be seen in relation to the dominating system of values. As stated by Rupp: "The values of individualism developed in the post-Enlightenment West are at the core of the contemporary refugee protection system. While enormously powerful, this tradition assigns priority to the individual as distinguished from the community" (2016: 76).

Therefore, the change Europeans need has to be based on "examining how best to address the needs of communities that are uprooted, as well as the needs of communities into which displaced persons are received, rather than only focusing on individuals who cross a border and seek refugee status" (Rupp 2016: 76). This works as a proof that migration is a multifaceted issue that has to do not only with economic determinants, but also cultural factors such as family life, religion, tradition, culture and gender.

The Syrian conflict started in 2011 not only resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians in the Middle East. It also gave rise to the current refugee crisis in several other countries. At the end of 2014, more than 3.5 million Syrians lived outside their homeland (Ostrand 2015: 255). It is worth noticing that refugees leave Syria predominantly for other Middle East countries. "More than 20 million

citizens from Arab countries live abroad. The biggest rates of migration (with 5% to 20% citizens relocating) are to be seen in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. Several diasporas (i.e. Moroccan and Tunisian) have doubled within the last 15 years" (Pędziwiatr 2011: 2).

Forecasting the migration patterns from Africa to Europe, Pędziwiatr points out that "the future will be decided on whether the already originated democratization project ends up successfully and economic growth can be witnessed. Only provided democratization comes along with economic development changes, migration trends would evolve. Its initial results might not come up until at least a few years" (Pędziwiatr 2011: 2). In 2016 we know it would eventually take even longer, as the modernization processes in Africa do not serve as a sufficient argument for thousands of people to stay in their countries of origin. On the contrary, they risk their lives sitting on rustbucket boats, hoping to reach the promised land and fulfill dreams about stability and welfare.

Assimilation and acculturation

The debate on accommodating refugees in Europe has to tackle the political threats of extremism and populism that picture outlanders as the source of all evil. Moreover, this discussion involves key terms in the understanding of social processes such as 'assimilation' and 'acculturation'. Their significance is on the rise due to the increase in migration levels of people entering cultures they themselves are not familiar with. Taking that into consideration, it might be worth to recall the definition coined by Redfield, Linton and Herskovits: "Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (1936: 149).

This general way of understanding acculturation needs to be further developed in order to fully address its multifacetedness. By this token, acculturation is often seen through the lens of language, i.e. second-language acquisition by migrants in their target countries (Schumann 1978). The limitations that result from poor knowledge of the language vastly inhibit acculturation opportunities. Apart from language, acculturation processes are analyzed in the context of health and hygiene (Lara *et al.* 2005), stress, psychosomatic disorders, fear and anxiety (Berry 2006), as well as sexuality and gender (see e.g. Ford, Norris 1993).

Two acculturation models deserve particular attention in the context of migration. Berry (1997) distinguished four models of acculturation: (1) assimilation (an immigrant adapts to host culture but is not keen on cultivating home culture values), (2) integration (an immigrant both adapts to host culture and is keen on cultivating home culture values [*biculturalism*]), (3) separation (an immigrant does not adapt to host culture but is keen on cultivating home culture values [*ethnic enclaves*]), and (4) marginalization (an immigrant neither adapts to host culture

nor is keen on cultivating home culture values). However, as stated by Mucha: "various migrant groups prefer different acculturation options, and these migrant groups are rarely homogenous in their disposition to acculturation. The follow-up theoretical and empirical research proved that it was necessary to analyse not only the migrants' perspective, but the one of the host society as well. New models stressed the idea that the receiving country population usually has different approaches to migrants' acculturation, depending on their characteristics, and that both immigrants and host society's groups strategies can change from generation to generation" (2016: 7–8).

Compared to Barry's model of acculturation, Navas, Garcia, Sánchez, Rojas, Pumares and Fernández extend the perspective on acculturation in their Relative Acculturation Extended Model. In the model, they emphasize the multidimensional nature of acculturation process and ask for "joint consideration of the acculturation strategies of the immigrant group and of the native population" (2005: 26). The Relative Acculturation Extended Model allows to create a link between acculturation and other social processes and situations, eg. the physical activity and sport. This was traced by Kossakowski, Herzberg and Żadkowska in the analysis of assimilation processes of Polish citizens in Norway (see Kossakowski, Herzberg, Żadkowska 2016).

Gender and migration

There is no doubt acculturation is a complex and diverse process. In many instances it presents itself as difficult for migrants who have to deal with juxtaposing contradictory cultural values and norms. Acculturation processes influence various patterns of everyday life, including values relations and gender roles. Gender is hence strongly linked to the modes of assimilation, and as such can be considered an intriguing factor in studying lives of immigrants and refugees.

Only recently (in the last few decades) has this interest in gender been a vital part of migration studies. Boyd and Grieco explain this specific surge of interest: "Since the 1960s, international migration theory has indeed become more gender sensitive, moving from the predominant view of female migrants as simply the wives and children of male migrants to incorporating explanations of the unique experiences of women migrants themselves. However, in an effort to correct the 'invisibility' of women in migration theory, there is a chance that researchers will begin to over-emphasize the migration experience of women, paying less attention to that of men" (2003: 3).

Understanding gender in migration makes it possible to grasp the non-self-evident conditions of migration processes and depict its characteristics, i.e. reasons and consequences of migration, migration time differences or constructing gender roles in migration processes. The lack of gender perspective has been noticed by researchers (see e.g. Hondagneu-Sotelo, Cranford 2006) and subsequent-

ly a considered problem in migration studies. "Global estimates by sex confirm that for more than 40 years since 1960, female migrants reached almost the same numbers as male migrants. By 1960, female migrants accounted for nearly 47 out of every 100 migrants living outside their countries of birth. Since then, the share of female emigrants among all international migrants has been rising steadily, to reach 48 percent in 1990 and nearly 49 percent in 2000. By 2000, female migrants constituted nearly 51 percent of all migrants in the developed world and about 46 percent of all migrants in the developing countries" (Piper 2005: 3).

Considering the topic of this edition of "Miscellanea Anthropologica et Sociologica", it is worth to note that the migration crisis has the face of a man (which might be most often captured by mainstream media), a child[1] (just to mention the story of the drowned migrant baby on the Turkish shore in September 2015), and women too. The female side of being a refugee is reinforced by the women's need to look after (their) children, and serious problems they face trying to reach their new home. These include physical assault, exploitation, and sexual harassment[2]. To add insults to the injuries, "[p]regnant women are more prone to dehydration and women were more likely to be placed at the most vulnerable position on the boat to the EU. (…) Sexual violence or the provision of sexual services was often the border toll paid by many women to negotiate their crossing" (Gerard, Pickering 2013: 354).

The perspective of taking part in a dangerous and precarious travel discourages women (who are often mothers) from risking their lives and the lives of their families. The more tense the social situation in home countries, the bigger the probability women would eventually end up trying to leave. "[T]he increasing numbers of female migrants risking the journey across the Mediterranean to reach Europe could be attributed to the worsening conditions in Syria, and for Syrian refugees in Turkey, as well as a realization that the Syrian conflict is not likely to end soon, which means that these women are taking the choice of last resort" (Freedman 2016: 7). The patriarchal structure of the Middle East Muslim societies is another factor for a deprived social position of females. It is no wonder women play the role of one of several wives a man is allowed to live with.

Tradition, religion and sexual norms all play an essential role in understanding the factors of efficient acculturation. Meston and Ahrold draw a comparison between Euro-American, Asian and Hispanic populations in the USA. As a conclusion, they present the differences between patterns of sexual behavior, stating a more (Asian) or less (Hispanic) conservative attitude towards sexuality within

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[1] Rachel Kronick and Cécile Rousseau comment on Canadian law regulations considering migrant children: "[T]hey [children – ed. RK, KS] are constituted as other than Other, or as non-subjects within the legislation. Again and again, children are rendered voice-less, invisible or as merely collateral. Further, the boundary between child as victim and child as threat becomes porous: children's innocence reifies their parents' culpability creating a hierarchy of threat" (2015: 566).

[2] Amnesty International, *Female refugees face physical assault, exploitation and sexual harassment on their journey through Europe*, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/01/female-refugees-face-physical-assault-exploitation-and-sexual-harassment-on-their-journey-through-europe/ (accessed: 11.11.2016).

cultures. And what is interesting is that Asian women are more prone to adapt to the new cultural standards of the governing of sexuality (Meston, Ahrold 2010). This body of research shows gender might be the key factor in distinguishing how social actors undergo the acculturation process. It is a nuanced field within which issues such as 'transnational family life', 'mail-order bride' or 'marriage migration' come into play (Palriwala, Uberoi 2008). At the same time, it should not be neglected that the global transformation that takes place in late modernity, including the increased need for mobility, has contributed to the rise of new types of relationships – Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim and Ulrich Beck named them the 'world families' (2016).

From Poland to Norway. And even further

The diversity that marks the significance of gender as an analytical category has become a relevant point of interest within migration studies. It is clearly visible this has had an impact on several research lines in social sciences. In this edition of "Miscellanea Anthropologica et Sociologica" we are bringing the sociological perspective on the intersections between gender and migration. In the eight papers that are included in this edition, the attention is drawn to multiple aspects of migration, with both direct and indirect links to gender.

A few papers characterize the situation of Polish migrants in Norway[3]. The rise of research interest in this field is a consequence of a set of international projects that dealt directly with this issue. One of such papers, authored by Oleksandr Ryndyk, provides an example of the shifting fatherhood roles of Polish men migrating to Norway. Ryndyk emphasized the consequences of migration patterns for individual life trajectories in relations to family life. Using the concepts of 'work-life balance' and 'reconquering manhood', the author develops ideas for re-evaluating family life, and provides insightful reflections on how moving from Poland to Norway changes not only the economic situation of individuals, but also, how it influences fatherhood patterns.

Gunhild Odden analyses different categories of 'being a mother', using qualitative in-depth interviews with Polish mothers. The paper is an intriguing piece of research in which Odden confronts the Polish and the Norwegian maternity styles, and – in consequence – reflects upon the new experiences of mothers. Furthermore, the author describes the influence of structural and financial background in the process of evolving maternity styles.

Both papers (Ryndyk and Odden) are an important contribution to the contemporary debate on 'national' parenting styles. Magdalena Gajewska, Brita Gejstrad, Svein Nødland, Gunn Vedøy, and Magdalena Żadkowska offer an institu-

[3] Polish citizens make up the biggest ethnic minority in this Scandinavian country. There are currently approximately 100,000 migrants of Polish origin in Norway, i.e. 14% of all migrants living in the country.

tional insight into The Child Welfare Service of Norway called 'Barnevernet'. The authors point that Barnevernet has become an institution that Polish migrants feel anxious about. They fear they might lose custody of their children in case of any irregularities noticed by Norwegian law-makers. Using the existing data, such as press articles and internet forums, the authors picture the conflicting perspectives of Barnevernet and the emotional landscape of raising children in Norway.

In the paper written by Paula Pustułka and Magdalena Ślusarczyk the attention is drawn to the issue of work-life balance and its significance in the lives of Polish migrants in Norway. The authors stress the importance of the role of state and the Norwegian health care system in promoting sustainable lifestyles. Simultaneously, they address the benefits of living in Norway, a country with a high quality of life and efficient social services.

The remaining four papers touch upon issues spread geographically across the world. Using ethnographic data, Hewa Madihage Priyanga Sanjeewanie gives a detailed description of practices of women migrating to Sri Lanka. Although the author does not propose conclusive remarks on the consequences of migration, the attention is focused on the downsides: the left-behind children, failed marriages and problems migrant workers have on the labour market.

Barbara Jelonek introduces the Japanese cultural context of gender and migration, characterizing regional marriage trends. With the use of statistical data, Jelonek illustrates the changes that took place in Japan considering the emancipation of women and the decreasing birth rate. Nonetheless, it is still to be seen that Japanese women relatively frequently quit their jobs and play traditional roles set for women.

In the paper by Solvita Pošeiko the main focus is on the images of women in the semiotic landscapes of nine cities from Baltic States. The author decodes the advertising content related to physical appearance and women's 'duties'. The analysis can be seen as a proof that objectifying women's bodies is ubiquitous and may as well be a universal tendency, not limited to the liberal countries of Western Europe.

Marzena Anna Adamiak sheds light on the issue of identity after the postmodern turn, and as a result goes in search of new analytical categories to develop feminist social theory. The author makes use of the category of nomad identity, elaborating on the figure introduced by Rosi Braidotti. This theoretical framework works well to explain the context of migration and the relation with 'Other'. To realize the consequences of such a meeting means to reinforce the identity meanings for both social actors and groups.

We believe the topics covered in this edition of "Miscellanea Anthropologica et Sociologica" are a valuable contribution to the debate on the intersections between gender and migration. The ideas and research cases raised in the papers can undoubtedly serve as an inspiration for further reflection and research ideas.

Radosław Kossakowski
Krzysztof Stachura

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Articles

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Oleksandr Ryndyk[1]

Re-thinking Fatherhood and Manhood among Polish Migrant Fathers in Norway

Being the biggest ethnic minority group in Norway, Poles not only dominate in the labour immigration, but also rank first on the list of family immigration to the country. At the same time, the lack of research on parenting and gender roles among intra-European migrant families may reflect that the Polish migrant families, who have migrated to Western Europe after 2004, are culturally assumed to be more similar to the host countries' populations. This article therefore aims at filling that gap by exploring the Polish migrant fathers' conceptualisations of fatherhood and manhood in the migratory context. This article scrutinises the ways Polish migrant fathers interpret the perceived changes in their parenting styles and practices after the emigration from Poland and settling with their families in Norway. It identifies and discusses three main theoretical categories, developed with the content analysis method: encountering work-life balance, re-evaluating family life, child and parenting, and reconquering manhood.

Key words: work-life balance, fatherhood, manhood, Polish migrants, Norway

Introduction

With nearly 96,000 Polish immigrants residing in Norway as of 1 January 2016, Poles constitute the biggest national minority in the country, amounting to nearly 2% of the country's total population (SSB 2016). Similarly to other migrant groups, many Poles who migrated to Norway for work have eventually brought their families there and settled together. Thus, the Polish migrants do not only dominate in the labour migration flows to Norway, but they also do so with regard to the family immigration to the country. Hence, in 2014, the Polish migrant accounted for 16% (2,600 out of 16,200) of all family-related arrivals to Norway (SSB 2015).

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The UK being the key destination for Polish migrants after 2004, studies from there constitute the core of the research body on new Polish migrations. Generally, on the role of family in migration processes, Botterill (2013) argues that family plays ideological, affective and practical roles in shaping and supporting the Polish migrants' movements. By highlighting the multitude of ways in which families may be split, reunited, and reshaped as a result of migration, Ryan (2011) explores what is meants by 'a family' and how it may operate transnationally in the British-Polish context. Kilkey, Plomien, Perrons (2013) emphasize the importance of situated transnational analyses and find that the migrant men's fathering narratives, practices and projects are deeply embedded within the dominant framework of the gendered division of labour. White (2011) explores why so many Poles have emigrated since 2004, why more children migrate together with their families and how working-class migrant families in the West of England make decisions whether to stay or return to Poland. British schools and kindergartens, being important arenas where differences in the parenting styles of migrants come into light, have been studied in relation to the processes of adaptation, accommodation, negotiation and identity formation among the Polish migrant families in the UK (D'Angelo, Ryan, 2011).

Despite the steadily growing body of literature on the Polish migrations to the UK, the issue of parenting and childrearing in the immigration context has rarely been the focus of it. We argue that the Polish migrant families throughout Western Europe may in fact be positively discriminated for their noticeable 'whiteness', and, therefore, assumed to be culturally 'more similar' to the host country's native population. However, with about two million Polish migrants residing in other EU/EEA countries (Vargas-Silva 2012), most of whom have migrated and settled abroad only after the EU enlargement in 2004, the issue of parenting and integration among Polish migrants deserves to be studied in more detail.

Aim

The aim of this article is to analyse the Polish fathers' conceptualisations of fatherhood and manhood after their emigration from Poland and settling with their families in Norway.

Methods

Setting

For the purposes of this research, fifteen individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with Polish fathers residing with their families in four different municipalities in Rogaland, a country in the Western region of Norway. Five

families resided in Stavanger, an urban municipality with a population of about 130,000 people and the fourth most populous municipality in Norway. Seven families lived in two, mainly rural, municipalities with the population between 11,000 and 25,000 inhabitants, in a close vicinity of a bigger city. Finally, the remaining three families resided in a mountainous municipality with a highly dispersed population of 9,000 inhabitants.

Participants

A total of fifteen men were interviewed between May 2014 and February 2015. The main criteria for the informants' selection were: (1) to have both a Polish spouse and a child or children, and (2) to reside with their family in Norway. Given its qualitative approach, this study did not aim at making generalized conclusions, but rather at exploring different varieties of migrant men's conceptualisations of their parenting styles, manhood, and in general their experiences of integration in the new country. Therefore, the selection of informants aimed at creating a sample as diverse as possible.

Informants' age and family composition

The informants' age varied from between 30 to 46 years of age, the average being 37 years. Six informants were in the group between 30–35 years of age, five between 36–41 years of age, and four aged 42 or older. All of the men were married. With regard to their spouses' age, it varied from between 23 to 45 years of age, the average being 34 years. The informants had on average 1.8 children. Thus, nine informants had two children, five had one child, and one had three children. As for their children's age, one informant had a baby younger than 1-year-old, six informants had kindergarten age children (1–5 years old), nine informants had school age children (6–18 years old), and one informant had a 19-years-old child. With regard to where their children were born, only five informants became fathers in Norway, whereas ten informants had their children born before the immigration to Norway.

Length of stay in Norway and family migration

All informants came to Norway for work. As for the length of their stay in the country, five informants had lived in Norway for up to three years, six informants – between four and seven years, and four informants – for more than eight years. Four couples did not have children when moving to Norway. All of them came to Norway either together or with a difference of between 2 and 12 months. In addition, one couple was established in Norway, this is to say, the spouses met each other only after having migrated to Norway. Finally, ten couples moved to Norway together with the children. In three cases, the spouses came to Norway

at the same time, in other three – with a difference of between 6 and 12 months, and in four – with a log of between 2 and 4 years. In all the cases where there was a delay, it was the wife with the children who later joined the husband in Norway.

Informants' education, profession and employment status

What concerns the informants' formal education, most of them had a vocational training relevant for the construction industry (e.g. carpenter, electrician, etc.). Five informants had a background in mechanical engineering and one had a higher education in engineering. With regard to their employment status in Norway, all but two informants worked as employees and held full-time permanent contracts. One informant ran his business in which he owned 50% of the joint venture, whereas another one was temporally laid off and received unemployment benefits. As for the informants' current profession, nine out of fifteen men worked in the construction industry, most of them in less qualified positions (e.g. brick layer, carpenter), but others doing more qualified work (e.g. crane operator). Three informants held high-skilled positions: an engineer, IT specialist, and a quality inspector in a shipyard. The remaining three informants worked in the car industry, specializing in car mechanics and automotive painting.

Data collection

In order to gain the knowledge about informants' reflections on the studied topic, individual semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method of collecting qualitative data for this study. In comparison to other methods of qualitative research, individual interviews offer several advantages. Firstly, the effect of opinion formation may be less significant than in the case of focus-group interviews (Albrecht, Johnson, Walther 1993). Secondly, the interview setting can be more flexible compared to focus-group interviews. Thus, ten out of fifteen interviews in this study were conducted at the informants' homes, and the remaining five took place in public spaces, such as a kindergarten, a city's library, a shopping mall, and a children playground. We argue that having the possibility to be interviewed at one's home could provide an informant with a higher degree of comfort and confidence. Thirdly, a face-to-face conversation with a sole researcher could be experienced by the informants as more secure with regard to their private direct and indirect information safety. Hence, a higher degree of trust and honesty could be expected. Finally, if the interviewed informant is at the same time a subject in the given researched topic, as was the case in this research on fatherhood, the role of social cues is undisputedly crucial. Given that face-to-face interviews are characterized by synchronous communication in time and place, the informants' voice, intonation, and body language can provide the researcher with much more additional information on the studied topic. It was in particular useful and visible in the two interviews where the informants used jokes and

laughed when trying to answer the questions which, in the researcher's opinion, they did not have concrete answers to.

The interview guide

The semi-structured interview guide contained twenty-six questions, grouped into seven sections: (1) basic information (name, age, profession, number and age of children), (2) introduction (questions related to weekday and weekend activities in his family), (3) the migration story (individual and family-related challenges faced upon immigration to Norway), (4) cherishing Polish identity (the use of mother tongue at home, maintaining contacts with family and friends in Poland, etc.), (5) observed differences (with regard to being a father, husband, and a man in Norway and in Poland), (6) parenting, and (7) future plans (individual and family-related). The interviews were conducted in Polish, the informants' first language. The length of the interviews varied between 16 and 46 minutes, lasting on average 30 minutes.

Data analysis

Content analysis method (Burnard 1991) was suggested as the most suitable for the analysis of the interviews. The rationale behind it was to identify the main recurring topics in the informants' talks and analyse the qualitative data in a language (English) other than the one used for the interviews (Polish).

Initially, the interviews were simultaneously transcribed and translated from Polish to English in order to allow the project's non-Polish speaking researchers to participate in the data analysis. The translations were performed in a consistent manner by the same person who had conducted the interview (the author of this paper). Hence, it allowed the English translations to follow the original interviews in the most precise way. Thus, the translator wrote comments regarding the voice, intonation, and body language of the informants in the situations where it was crucial for keeping the English translations as close as possible to the original versions.

Next, three series of coding were performed in order to define codes, analytical subcategories, and categories. Firstly, initial coding was done on a sentence-by-sentence basis in a manner to ensure that the codes reflected the quotes most closely. Sentence-by-sentence coding was more desirable than line-by-line coding due to the peculiarities of the Polish language, where long complex sentences are more common than in English. In some cases complex sentences had to be split into two or more in order to keep the English translations explicitly comprehensive. Further, the initial codes were analysed and further coded with the focus on particular relations among the codes. Finally, the analysis of the focused codes helped identify a series of analytical categories with their corresponding sets of subcategories. The following section discusses the identified analytical categories.

Findings

The analysis of qualitative data by means of the content analysis method yielded a series of analytical categories which characterize the transformations in family life and masculine identities experienced by this study's informants as a result of emigration to Norway. The key analytical categories comprise (1) *Encountering work-life balance* (with sub-categories such as *Having more free time*, *Earning enough*, and *Finding peace of mind*), (2) *Re-evaluating family life and parenting* (with sub-categories such as *Having more time for the family and children*, *Re-inventing fatherhood*, *Worries with regard to children's future identities and motivations*, and *Acknowledging children's right to choose*), and (3) *Reconquering manhood* (and related to it sub-categories, *Being able to support one's family*, *Reported job satisfaction*, and *Reluctance to changing jobs*). These analytical categories are discussed below.

Encountering work-life balance

The three sub-categories discussed below, namely *Having more free time*, *Earning enough*, and *Finding peace of mind*, have been grouped under the analytical category of *Encountering work-life balance* as one of the outcomes of the informants' migration from Poland to Norway.

Having more free time

Having gained more leisure time as a result of migration from Poland to Norway seems to be a red thread present in all the interviews and, as can be seen further in this section, may account for many changes in the informants' family life. For example, Kris (in his early thirties, a father of one, two years in Norway) said he now has more free time for leisure:

> Well, back in Poland I worked a lot. In Poland, for instance, I worked from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. In addition, I worked on Saturdays. Whereas here that [working] time is shorter, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. So I have more time for leisure – Kris.

Earning enough

Having more time for one's leisure can be explained in terms of, firstly, being subject to a stricter legal regulations of one's working hours in Norway, and, secondly, one's ability to earn sufficient money during normal working hours. Thus, almost all the informants reported working normal hours and not having the need to work overtime.

> I don't have to rush [to run from one place to another]. I have peace at work. I know that it's such a security, you see. I don't have to work overtime at all in order

> to support my family. So it is much better to have more time for the family – Jarek (in his early thirties, a father of one, seven years in Norway).

However, the trustworthiness of my informants with regard to this topic was in some cases doubted. Thus, it could be expected that some of them were fully aware of my being a stranger and feared that working overtime could be regarded by the researcher as equal to not having enough time for a family. For example, Karol (in his early thirties, a father of two, three years in Norway), whose wife did not work, said at some point of the interview that he does not have to work overtime:

> (…) I work here as much as I did there [in another Western European country where they lived before]. I am not that greedy to have to work 15–20 hours. We have some work to be done, some assignments, and then we go home. I don't have to work overtime. I try to come home as soon as I can in order to have as much time with the kids as possible. For me, my children and their well-being are the most important – Karol.

However later, when discussing his working conditions, he said:

> At my work, in one month one can work 37 hours overtime. Everything beyond is counted as flexible time [bank of hours] which can be later taken as time off – Karol.

When asked whether it happens that he earns flexitime, he confirmed that he does.

Finding peace of mind

Some of my informants had the experience of running their own businesses when they lived in Poland. They reported feeling stressed most of the time and having very little time for their family and children. Many reported having achieved the so-called 'peace of mind' and reduced the levels of stress and the life pace as a result of moving to Norway:

> Back in Poland, I was very stressed, because I ran my own business. During eight years I used to have my own company. Whereas here I am mentally relaxed when at work. I did not have to think and worry that I won't make the ends meet. Instead, I knew that every two weeks there was money coming to my [bank] account. Living here is less stressful – Kris.

Jan (in his early thirties, a father of three, five years in Norway) mentioned that having a permanent contract provided him with the feeling of peace of mind when living in Norway. In addition, he said that his family, being able to afford basically everything, does not have to worry about paying some unexpected bills:

> (…) I have a permanent contract. And we have peace [of mind]. We can [afford] basically everything, and we don't have to worry that tomorrow we will not have enough to pay some bill. [On the contrary], we can live and function secure – Jan.

Re-evaluating family life and parenting

The interviewed men eagerly discussed several issues related to their family life as well as their understandings of parenting in a new context. Whereas some of the aspects of their migratory experiences were largely perceived by them in a positive light (e.g. *Having more time for the family and children* and *Re-inventing fatherhood*), others seemed to be quite challenging (e.g. *Worries with regards to children's future identities and motivations*, and *Acknowledging children's right to choose*). These sub-categories are grouped under the analytical category *Re-evaluating family life and parenting*, and discussed below.

Having more time for the family and children

The fact of achieving a better work-life balance appeared to have significant implications for the informants' family life in Norway. Thus, many of them reported having more time in Norway for their family, and in particular children, than when they lived in Poland.

For instance, Stefan (in his early thirties, a father of one, six years in Norway) believes that parents in Norway have more time for children. Even though he did not have children when he was in Poland, he said that his friends from Poland often tell him how difficult it is to have a family there, and it seems to be directly related to their working conditions and the opportunity to earn a decent living in Poland:

> (…) I believe that here [in Norway] one has more time for children, because in Poland, what I know from my older friends… they constantly worry about money, money, money. And one knows that in Poland no one works eight hours as one does here [in Norway]. In Poland, unfortunately, one has to work 12–14 hours a day [in order to earn good living] – Stefan.

Jan reported having more time for himself in Norway than when his family lived in Poland. He suggested that it was due to the long working hours required to provide for the family:

> What is good about it? [First and foremost] that we have more time for ourselves. For back in Poland we did not have a lot of such time because I worked long hours. (…) Sometimes I had to work 12 hours a day in order to provide for the family. [My] wife did not work in the meantime. Thus, it was not easy. Here we have more time for this. We have time for everything and, hence, we live much better – Jan.

Having gained more time for one's immediate family may not necessarily be the result of working less hours, but as well the result of losing a daily contact with one's extended family due to migration. Whereas losing the immediate contact with the extended family was regarded by some informants as a negative outcome of their migration to Norway, it appeared to be positively viewed by younger men

in terms of their ability to make independent choices. Such was the case of Jan, who became a father at the age of twenty-one, and who back in Poland used to live with his young wife and a child at his parents' place:

> (…) surely, we have more freedom [now]. We make our plans on our own. No one interferes in it. Thus, the way we make our decisions defines our outcomes. So, we live for ourselves. No one interferes in our life. [No one tells us] what we can and what we cannot do. Thus, it is a positive side – Jan.

Similarly, Michał (in his mid-forties, a father of two, two years in Norway) suggested that his family's experience of migration has brought them closer to each other:

> (…) one positive outcome of our emigration here to Norway, or wherever it would have been to, simply to another place, is that we have become closer to each other in the family. [Pause] in other words, we have more time for each other. More… I think… more… [pause, thinking] more time is dedicated to solving conflicts – Michał.

Interestingly, in Michał's case, the gained extra time for the family is regarded not exclusively in terms of doing some activities together, but rather as an opportunity to solve conflicts and misunderstandings:

> Whereas in Poland many conflicts were ignored, the eyes were closed on them, and [I would simply say:] 'Enough! This is the way it should be!' 'The End. Full stop!' here instead we are able to come to a consensus, [and] discuss [issues] – Michał.

Re-inventing fatherhood

When compared to his experience of being a father in Poland, Jan reported having a better contact with his children now in Norway. He was trying to explain that working so much back in Poland had left him very little time for the family:

> First and foremost, [now] I have better contact with [my] children. For back in Poland, I did not have much of it, when I had to work so much in order to provide for the family, whereas now I have more time for them and they come to me. For example, [the youngest one] wants me to personally drive him/her to the kindergarten. So, yes, there is a difference, and it is very big – Jan.

Fatherhood, in general, seemed to be regarded by the Polish men in terms of responsibilities and obligations it entails. Thus, Karol said that having a family and a wife brings along obligations:

> When one has no family and no wife, one has no obligations. When one gets a family and a wife, one gets obligations as well. One then knows that since one has that joy, one must support the family. So it is sort of a challenge for a person. One cannot have the same easy lifestyle anymore. Maybe later, I don't know… – Karol.

Karol's understanding of a family as a responsibility appeared to be mainly connected to his breadwinning role. Hence, he seemed to be keen on the idea that in order to be a *fulfilled* father, one has to be able to support his family so that the children do not lack anything:

> For me, if you manage to support your family and take care of your children, then you are a fulfilled father. At least, this is how it seems to me. One is a 100% father when the children do not lack anything and have a good life – Karol.

Further, Bartek (in his mid-forties, a father of two, twelve years in Norway), shared that parenthood is difficult and said that he could not understand how some people want to have more children, because for him having two was more than enough. He admitted that he is looking forward towards when his children will become independent. Further, he said that dedicating one's whole life to his children made no sense to him.

Worries with regard to children's future identities and motivations

It seemed that some fathers, in particular those whose children were born in Norway and went to a Norwegian kindergarten, were concerned about their children's identity in the future. This was understood by them in particular in terms of the children's competing Polish and Norwegian identities. Thus, Stefan, a father of a two-year-old boy, appeared confused about his son's identity in the future. On the one hand, he seemed to be sure that his son will have Norwegian friends, and therefore, will 'need to be Norwegian'. On the other hand, having Polish parents and grandparents and other relatives in Poland meant that he should also feel Polish:

> He must feel Polish. He must. He has Polish parents so he must be Polish. But he also needs to be Norwegian, because we count that if he stays here, he will be Norwegian. It does not mean he must only speak Polish and be a Pole, but he must not one day forget that he has a grandma and a grandpa, or an uncle in Poland – Stefan.

Similarly, Jarek seemed to doubt whether he spends enough quality time with the child. He seemed to be concerned that the time he spends with the child may not be enough to prevent his child from becoming more Norwegian than Polish, as the child spends eight hours a day in a Norwegian kindergarten:

> (…) Whether I spend enough time with the child is a question for me. For [the child] spends eight hours a day in the kindergarten. So [I am asking] whether the time I spend with [the child] is enough to… ensure that [the child] does not become more Norwegian than Polish. Hence, I try a lot… – Jarek.

Further, fathers of younger children seemed to have a less clear idea of what they wish for their children and often failed to provide a concrete answer:

> As a father, I'd wish the best for them [my children]. But right now it is difficult to say something [precisely]. When they go to school, then we will see. If we see that after attending the kindergarten they have adapted to Norway, then we will know what to do next. The time will show – Karol.

However, some of them appeared to be more preoccupied with their children's motivations and ambitions in the future. For instance, Stefan said he wished his child to get an education in order to have a good future, either in Norway or in Poland. He seemed, however, to doubt whether the Norwegian lifestyle is sufficiently stimulating for one's ambitions:

> Well, the life here is stress-free. I am worried that it does not necessarily is good for one's future. I don't know what Norwegian friends he [his son] will end up with. Because he will for sure have Norwegian friends – Stefan.

Seeing the Norwegian youth as irresponsible and not serious about life was a theme that often recurred in the interviews with other informants.

One of the issues that seemed to worry Jarek was the level of schooling in Norway, and, according to him, the low expectations towards children. He suggested that low expectations in childhood may lead to low expectations in adulthood as well. Further, he referred to a child's freedom to do what it wants and described it as a lack of discipline. Accordingly, he seemed to believe that Norwegian parents have no control or influence over their children, and children can do anything they want. He elaborates further and mentions helpful parents as one of the domains where he sees differences between the Norwegian and the Polish families:

> (…) one cannot demand [expect] anything from the child. For example, a parent may be working [doing something] whereas the child stands on the side without helping. And if the parent asks for help, the child may say no, because it is playing. As a result, those kids grow into similar adults – Jarek.

He seemed to be worried that such a lack of upbringing may have a serious impact on children when they become adults. He reported having heard that the Norwegian youth does not know what to do with their lives. According to him, it is due to living in an abundance of material things, such as new phones, tablets, and so on. He concluded that the Norwegian parents are too generous towards their children, which in its turn leads to lower ambitions among the youth.

Acknowledging children's right to choose

While the fathers of younger children seemed to be more worried about their children's identity in the future, those with teenage children were more eager to discuss their children's future career choices and the right to decide on their own.

For example, Michał, whose son was seventeen at the time of the interview, said that he considered his son to be smart enough to make smart decisions. Moreover, he allowed for the idea that his son will decide on his own where and what to study. He emphasized that what matters to him as a father, is to have good relations with his son and that both him and his wife will always support their son:

> Well, what concerns [son's name], he wants to finish high school here and begin with higher education. Later, I believe, he will decide on his own where and in which direction he wants to work. We wish to have good relations and we will always be a support for him. He is quite smart and makes wise decisions – Michał.

At the same time, some fathers seemed to hesitate about either allowing their children to decide on their own or decide what they, as parents, considered best for them. For example, Paweł (in his early forties, a father of one, ten years in Norway), on the one hand, declared that he wished for his son what his son wishes for himself. On the other hand, he takes an active role in advising the son on the choice of his future career. While the son likes playing football and would like to go to a sports school, Paweł, as a father, believes, that it will not give him many opportunities. He seemed to wish that his son chose engineering and, with a noticeable satisfaction, reported him to be very ambitious:

I'd wish the best for him, what he wants for himself because he aims very high. I talked to him about his school. Now he goes to an engineering school, whereas he would rather like to go to a sports school. However, I found out that there are not that many opportunities after graduating from that sports school. (…) One can either teach at school or be a masseur after that school, whereas at this school one has many choices. One can continue and become an engineer. As for now, he considers becoming an engineer. So he is aiming high now. So, I am very glad and I support it – Paweł.

Reconquering manhood through work

The interviewed Polish men explicitly referred to *Being able to support one's family*, *Reported job satisfaction*, and *Reluctance to changing jobs* as the key outcomes of their migration to Norway. These sub-categories seem to indicate a significant gain for their perceived manhood and fulfilment of the breadwinning role.

Being able to support one's family

Working, earning the living and supporting one's family appeared to be tightly related to the men's understanding of manhood. Thus, Michał believed that in the Polish families it is the man who has to guarantee the security to his family, even in the cases where a woman has the last word to say. He acknowledged that his idea was based on the people he knew, and those people, in his opinion, have

responsible attitudes towards life. As can be implied from the latter, Michał understands a man's responsibility as a provider for the family.

Moving to Norway made Radek (in his mid-thirties, a father of one, four years in Norway) feel 'a true man', as now he is confident about being able to support his family financially. However, it was not the case in Poland where he was earning the minimum wages in the construction industry. Being a true man, in his understanding, is about ensuring a good financial situation for one's family:

> But as a typically true man, I have become one only here. Because in Poland I earned minimum as a construction worker. (…) Here I am satisfied… as a man – Radek.

Reported job satisfaction

Another interesting finding of the fieldwork was to learn that most of the interviewed men reported being satisfied with their job, and not planning to change it in the nearest future. Many said that they liked their current job and that it brought them satisfaction and security:

> What concerns changing job, as for now, I'd rather not do it. I know that I can get promoted at my work. But as for now I am very satisfied with my position and my work. I don't have such a need to change my job in the near future or get promoted, for I already have quite a high position. I also have many responsibilities related to my functions – Karol.

Reluctance to changing jobs

Changing jobs may often imply living through uncertainty and being temporarily dependent on both the state's support and a wife's income. This could be observed in the family of Kris who at the time of the interview was unemployed and was receiving unemployment benefits. Since his wife works in shifts, and he does not work now, he is the one who prepares dinners. Moreover, he seemed to consider it normal that the one who stays home is responsible for cooking. Being on the social welfare and not working, he first implicitly and then openly says that he had become a housewife:

> Now I have become [a housewife]. I've become a housewife – Kris.

Nevertheless, in order to reaffirm his manhood, he said that he wanted to return to work as soon as possible as, firstly, the amount of social assistance he received was not sufficient, and secondly, he did not like staying home in general.

I argue that the strong attachment to their current job and the reluctance to change it observed among the informants may indicate, among other things, their strong dependence on it with regard to fulfilling their breadwinner role and reconquering their manhood in a new, more gender equal, society.

Discussion

Lack of contact and the actual knowledge about the Norwegian families and gender roles

One of the interesting findings in the course of the fieldwork was a discovery that the interviewed men seemed often unable to see and name the differences between the Polish and the Norwegian societies with regard to being a man, a father, and a husband. Similarly, neither seemed they well aware about the differences between the Norwegian and the Polish women, or in general the Norwegian and the Polish families. Most of the differences reported by the informants referred to superficial aspects such as clothes and make-up. Interestingly enough, most of the men reported having and watching exclusively Polish TV, and some said they did not receive any information about the Norwegian society.

Kris, for example, when asked about the differences between the Polish and the Norwegian men, said it was difficult for him to say anything in this regard, as he did not meet Norwegian men often. He suggested that Norwegian men must be very similar to the Polish ones. Neither seemed he able to comment on the perceived differences between the Norwegian and the Polish women. He assumed that they must be the same. Making a typical macho-like joke to trivialize the topic, he suggested that the Polish women are prettier than the Norwegian ones.

Even Michał, who seemed to be very reflective on his and his family's new experiences in Norway, said that he rather could not observe what differs the Norwegian men from the Polish ones, despite most of his colleagues at work being Norwegian men. In his case, it could be accounted for a relatively short duration of his stay in Norway (a year and a half). Further, he reported not knowing how Norwegian families function and that he had not established such relations with the Norwegian that would allow him to learn more about their families.

Jarek seemed to believe that the father-child contact in Poland is not sufficient due to the fathers' need to work more, which leaves them less time to spend with children. He believed that the Norwegian men, on the contrary, spend more time with their children. When asked about the differences with regard to being a husband in Norway and in Poland, Jarek immediately mentioned gender equality in Norway. According to him, gender equality means sharing duties without differentiating between men and women's work.

However, Jarek's views on the Norwegian family life appeared to be somewhat distorted. Thus, he seemed to picture the Polish society as a patriarchal one, and the Norwegian – as matriarchal. Moreover, he reported women in Norway to rule and decide upon things in a family to a degree that they even manage a family budget. He said that the Norwegian society is too matriarchal and illustrated it by an example of the Norwegian dating. Thus, he seemed to believe that in Norway it is rather a woman who chooses her man, and not the other way round. He re-

ported the Norwegian men to be too shy and at the same time happy and thankful if picked by a woman.

Other fathers seemed to be unable to comment on the differences in being a father in Poland and in Norway, because they had not lived with their families in Poland. This was the case of Karol, whose both children were born outside Poland.

Rather dividing then sharing house chores and family responsibilities

It seemed that most of the informants decide on practical arrangements in their families taking into consideration their and their wives' work schedules and their Norwegian language skills. Thus, no significant gender-related trends in the couples' decisions about who takes children to and picks up from a kindergarten or school could be observed. This could be illustrated by the case of Kris: while his wife worked in shifts, at the time he was still employed, they took turns in delivering and picking up the child from a kindergarten; however, when he became unemployed, he began delivering and picking up the child from school himself.

When asked specifically whether they have different tasks at home, Jan confirmed that they rather divide than share their duties. He reported that while his wife prepares breakfast for the kids on the weekdays, he takes them by car to the nearest bus stop where they catch a bus to school. According to him, his wife picks up the children from school and kindergarten on her way back from work. He justified it by the fact that it is closer to her workplace, whereas he works in a different location and usually arrives home last.

The level of the Norwegian language seemed to play an important role with regard to which of the parents attends parents' meetings at school or in kindergarten. As a result, Polish mothers, and not fathers, in Norway tend to engage more in assisting their children in doing homework, especially in subjects that require a better level of the Norwegian language skills. Some fathers claimed to help their children do homework in subjects like mathematics where a high level of Norwegian is not crucial.

However, not all of the informants seemed to be able to reflect critically on the possible changes that happened in their families since they moved to Norway. Thus, Kris said that nothing had changed in his family after the emigration to Norway. Similarly, some fathers seemed to be less able to reflect on their general experiences of being fathers in the new context. Most of the informants, however, largely seemed to associate having their own family with assuming a greater responsibility in life.

Polish fatherhood in Norwegian vs. British immigration contexts

Parenting styles among Polish immigrants across Western Europe can to a certain extent reflect Poland's historical legacies and their own experiences as children under the communist regime (Ryndyk, Johannessen 2015). Thus, a Polish family

of that era stood at the top of the hierarchy of values in Poland (Bednarski 1987 in Botterill 2013, Buchowski 1996 in Botterill 2013) and is sometimes compared to 'a sanctuary in a hostile sea of social relations' (Buchowski 1996: 84 in Botterill 2013). Furthermore, as the upward social mobility in the communist Poland became unrealistic during one's lifespan, it turned into an aspiration spanning over generations. As a result, the Polish parents in the 1980s tended to be overprotective and highly demanding towards their children (Jerschina 1991), which can partly explain our informants' ambivalent attitudes towards the children's right to make their own choices of career.

However, while the historical legacies can partly explain the migrants' parenting styles, the role of host-country specific settings, including its welfare and labour market structure, should not be underestimated. Thus, drawing on the findings from the interviews with recent migrants from Poland to the UK, Kilkey, Plomien, Perrons (2013) emphasize the importance of situated transnational analyses and find that the migrant men's fathering narratives, practices, and projects are deeply embedded in the dominant framework of the gendered division of labour. Thus, the research has shown that the Polish migrant fathers, subject to high work pressure in the UK, might face obstacles in their attempt to spend enough time with their families, and in particular with their children (Kilkey, Plomien, Perrons 2013). As this paper has shown, it differs greatly from the Norwegian context where the Polish fathers in their great majority seem to have achieved a better work-life balance and improved their relations within the nuclear family.

Further, a generous welfare provision, including a wide supply of affordable early childcare facilities, may constitute a strong incentive for dual-income immigrant families. Thus, the affordability of childcare was reported to be a particular challenge for the dual-income Polish families living in London (Kilkey, Plomien, Perrons 2013). On the contrary, the municipalities in Norway are obliged to provide a place in state-subsidized childcare families for every child who reached the age of two. Hence, in our study, the spouses of all the men with the kindergarten age children worked either full- or part-time.

Apart from a few exceptions, the informants in this study reported their wives to be the ones in the family who speak better Norwegian than they do. This situation appears to be at odds with White's (2011) findings concerning the British context. Thus, she reported gender roles among her Polish interviewees to have become even more distinct as the Polish working husbands were more exposed to the British society than their unemployed wives and seemed to have acquired better English language skills (White 2011:153). It may thus hold true that the Polish women in Norway have better chances to be employed, as compared with the Polish women in the UK.

Such considerable discrepancies between the Polish migrant families residing in Norway and in the UK can suggest that the reported retreat to more traditional parenting styles or gender roles among the Polish migrant families in the UK may not necessarily be an indication of conflicting cultures (i.e. the Polish culture, seen

as more conservative, vs. the British culture, regarded as more liberal), but rather a reflection of the Polish migrant families' strategies to fit into the existing host-country's labour and welfare structure.

Conclusions

Most of the men in this study reported their family life and the contact with children to have greatly improved after they had migrated from Poland to Norway. In addition, they seemed to have achieved a better work-life balance, improved the standard of living of their families, especially with regard to how much they could afford in the new country, and, in general, to have reaffirmed their sense of manhood due to better work opportunities.

With regard to their children, two patterns could be observed among the fathers with children in different age groups. Thus, while the fathers of kindergarten or early school age children seemed to be more preoccupied with their children's identity and motivations in the future, those with teenage children appeared to be confused about their attitudes towards the children's right to make independent choices which concerned, in particular, choosing their future careers.

When it comes to the distribution of house chores between the spouses, the interviewed men seemed to actively participate in sharing it with their wives, and many reported to share it equally. As in most cases the informants' wives were reported to speak better Norwegian, the mothers, and not the fathers, tended to both actively support their children in doing homework, and maintain the contact with kindergartens and schools. However, in most of the families, the chores appeared to be divided rather according to gender lines than equally shared. While cooking largely seemed to remain a primarily women's responsibility, men contributed mainly to cleaning, buying groceries, taking children to extracurricular activities, such as sports trainings, and other things. Notwithstanding, some men reported assisting their wives in cooking. Such a more or less equal, in terms of time and effort involved, but still clearly gendered division of household responsibilities among spouses can be accounted for the fact that in most of the families both spouses worked. Thus, the degree to which spouses participated in doing house chores seemed to be dependent on their working hours and being away from home.

Nevertheless, the interviewed men, despite having lived in Norway for many years, gave an impression of knowing very little about the Norwegian society in general, and the Norwegian family life in particular. As most of them reported having and watching mainly the Polish TV, their views on the Norwegian society in general, and the family life in Norway in particular, seemed to be rather anecdotal and influenced by the discussion taking place on the Polish internet forums.

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Gunhild Odden[1]

'They assume dirty kids means happy kids'. Polish female migrants on being a mother in Norway

This article deals with how the Polish in Norway perceive and talk about motherhood in a migratory context. The changes such a context might imply in terms of a parenting style, defined as a set of attitudes that express the parents' behavior towards the child, are the article's main focus. The results presented are based on qualitative interviews conducted with twelve Polish mothers in Norway. The empirical data shows that the mothers interviewed consider the Polish parenting style as rather *demanding* and *intrusive* while the Norwegian parenting style is considered as rather *responsive* and *neglecting*. The article shows, however, that there is no absolute connection between rather stereotyped perceptions of the Norwegian and the Polish parenting styles, and the actual attitudes identified in the analysis of the mothers' narratives. Better economic opportunities are among the most important changes for the mothers, which in turn influences their perceptions and practices of motherhood. Furthermore, the diversity in perceiving, talking about and performing motherhood across borders are stressed, highlighting that the changes in terms of parenting styles are to be seen, above all, in terms of structural opportunities and personal experiences.

Key words: Migration, motherhood, Polish migration, Norway, parenting style, welfare, cultural values

Introduction

Migration and motherhood are both life changing experiences, implying the idea of 'multiple careers'[2]. While there is a huge body of literature focusing on *trans-*

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[2] The concept of career is a classical sociological concept. My use of it here is, additionally, inspired by the work of Martiniello and Rea (2011) who define the concept of migratory career as a concept which "integrates structures of opportunities, individual characteristic and networks to make sense of the migratory experience" (Martiniello, Rea 2011).

national motherhood [here understood as the geographical separation between a mother and her child(ren)], less attention is paid to the experiences and practices of mothering within one national context. Furthermore, in Europe many of the existing studies tend to focus on parenting styles within families with a non-European background (Ryndyk, Johannessen 2015). More recently a switch has nevertheless taken place and the literature on Polish family life across Europe is now growing, especially in the context of the UK (see for example Pustulka 2014; Kilkey, Plomien, Perrons 2013; White 2011).

This article will emphasize the Polish women in Norway and their perceptions and experiences of motherhood within the migration context[3]. The relevance of the article is related to the fact that the Polish migration to Norway has, like elsewhere in Europe, increased significantly since Poland has become a part of the European Union in 2004. Hence, Poles constitute by far the largest migrant group in the country. In 2014, 91,179 Polish migrants were registered in Norway, representing 15% of the total number of migrants in the country (Statistics Norway 2014)[4]. While there exist a certain number of studies dealing with the Polish migrants in Norway (see for example Friberg 2013; Ryndyk 2013a, 2013b), these tend to stress the migrants' link to the job market, whereas the family perspective remains understudied. This empirical article aims at filling the gap by stressing how the Polish mothers in Norway perceive and talk about their double careers as migrants and mothers, stressing the changes they observe in terms of parenting.

The first part of the article will briefly present its methodological, theoretical and contextual framework. The second part presents how the informants perceive and talk about the Polish and the Norwegian parenting styles. The third part stresses particularly the mothers' experiences with leaving their home country and adapting with a child, new economic possibilities, the encounter with new cultural values and the experience of mothering far away from other family members. The fifth and last part of the article aims at summarizing the identified changes, and discussing (1) if contextual changes automatically imply changes in parenting style, and (2) to what extent changes might be understood in terms of structure and/or culture.

1. Methodological, theoretical and contextual framework

This article is based on the interviews with twelve Polish families living in Norway. The families live both in the urban and rural areas on the Norwegian Western

[3] The article is based on some of the findings from a larger international research project on Gender Equality and Work-life Balance named PAR Migration Navigator and funded from Norway Grants in the Polish-Norwegian Research Programme operated by the National Centre for Research and Development.

[4] The Swedes constitute the second largest group of migrants currently registered in Norway (38,414), while the Somalis come in a third position (35,912).

coast. Within each family, three interviews have been conducted: one joint interview with both mother and father, one single interview with the mother, and one single interview with the father[5]. Conducting both joint and individual interviews gave the researchers, we argue, a rich material in terms of everyday life of the family in general, but also in terms of what is said and what is not during the joint interview. The present article is based on the discourse of the women in both the joint and the individual interviews.

Table 1. Main characteristics of the informants

Mother	Year of Arrival in Norway	Number of children	Education	Professional situation in Norway	First job
1	2001	2 (early age)	University level	Employed in a kindergarten (100%)	Cleaning
2	2006	2 (school age)	University level	Employed in a kindergarten (100%)	Cleaning
3	2013	2 (school age)	Vocational training	Cleaning, informal (part time)	Cleaning
4	2010	1 (early age)	University level	Pet care (50%)	Cleaning
5	2008	2 (early age)	High school level	Cleaning and catering (100%)	Cleaning
6	2008	1 (early age)	Vocational training	Employed in a kindergarten (100%)	Cleaning
7	2013	2 (school age)	University level	Employed in a retirement home (100%)	Same
8	2013	2 (early age)	University level	Stay at home	–
9	2013	1 (school age)	University level	Catering (60%)	Same
10	2009	1 (school age)	Vocational training	Cleaning (100%)	Cleaning
11	2007	1 (early age)	University level	Team leader in a factory (100%)	Employee factory
12	2006	2 (school age)	University level	Teacher (100%)	Cleaning

Source: Author’s elaboration.

The article’s theoretical framework is situated within the sociology of everyday life in general, and Goffman’s theory of symbolic interactionism in particular. The study accordingly stresses how roles, meanings and symbols are constructed and reconstructed in everyday life (Goffman 1959).

Further, the article highlights the concept of a parenting style. Darling and Steinberg define the concept of a parenting style as a set of attitudes towards the child that ‘taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent’s behaviors are expressed’ (Darling, Steinberg 1993: 488 cited in Elstad, Stefansen 2014: 651). In 1978, Baumrind developed a well-known typology, which was later

[5] All the interviews were conducted with polish speaking researchers and later translated into English.

extended by Maccoby and Martin (1983) (cited in Elstad, Stefansen 2014). Their model stresses two major dimensions in terms of parenting style, namely, responsiveness and demandingness. Here "responsiveness refers to the degree to which parents are accepting, supportive and receptive, i.e. their recognition of a child's individuality and autonomy and «demandingness refers to behavioral standards and parental reinforcement, i.e. the parents» willingness to act as socializing agents who demand compliance with norms and rules" (Elstad, Stefansen 2014: 651). In their study dealing with the perceptions of parenting styles among the youth in Norway, Elstad and Stefansen (2014) introduce two additional dimensions, namely the dimension *neglecting*, which refers to the degree parents are disinterested, unhelpful and unconcerned, and the dimension *intrusive* which reflects "how parents act in overly controlling and invasive ways" (Elstad, Stefansen 2014: 655).

The existing studies show that parents raise their children in a way that corresponds with the demands of their environment and economic context as well as the systems of beliefs and cultural ideologies that they are being socialized within and into (Liamputtong 2007). These systems are, however, not static. The Polish society is an example of a national context that has experienced an important structural development over the last decades. These changes have also had an impact on the traditional gender roles. For example, White (2011) points out that attitudes towards working women have recently improved in Poland, and the dual-earner model has become more accepted. There are, however, still considerable differences between the Polish and the Norwegian societies in this respect. For example, in 2007, "only 50.6% of women in Poland were formally employed, considerably below Norway's rate of 75%" (Ryndyk, Johannessen 2015)[6].

The changeable characteristic of parenting styles is further influenced by the global phenomena in general and migration in particular, which is what the following part of the article will particularly focus on.

2. Perceptions of the Polish and the Norwegian parenting styles

How do the Polish mothers perceive and talk about the 'Polish parenting style(s)' and the 'Norwegian parenting styles(s)'? The table below provides an overview of words and expressions used by the informants when asked to talk about the differences between the Polish and the Norwegian parenting.

The table shows that the informants' perceptions of the Polish and the Norwegian parenting styles differ and that if we relate these empirical findings to the above-mentioned dimensions of Baumrind, Maccoby and Martin, and Elstad and Stefansen, the Polish parenting style would be rather 'demanding' and 'intrusive', while the Norwegian – rather 'responsive' and 'neglecting'.

[6] The percentage of Norwegian women participating in the work force is later in this article said to be slightly lower. However, in order to be able to compare the two countries, I here refer to the numbers of Janneke and Chantal.

Table 2. Word and expressions used when talking about the Norwegian and the Polish parenting styles

Polish parenting styles	Norwegian parenting styles
Obedience, punishment, strict rules, shouting	Relaxed/stress-free (*bezstresowe* in Polish), no rules
Overprotectiveness	Underprotectiveness, independence, responsibility
Care and affection	Little affection shown
Appearance important	Little attention paid to personal hygiene of children (dirty clothes, hands and hair, running noses)
Respect for parents/older people	No respect for parents/older people

Source: Author’s elaboration.

Nevertheless, to a certain degree, the table above reflects the stereotypical perceptions of the Norwegian and the Polish parenting, and does not state whether parents relate to them or not. The analysis of the mothers’ narratives gives a more nuanced picture. In the following section we will see how mothers ‘themselves’ talk about being a mother in a migratory context, in terms of what kind of parenting style they place themselves in, explicitly or implicitly, and to what extent mothering in a new context has brought any changes in this regard.

3. Re-thinking mothering?

Some of the informants had children in Poland before migrating to Norway, others gave birth to their child or children in another country where they had had migrated before coming to Norway, while the third category of informants became mothers in Norway. As already mentioned, migrating is a life-changing experience not only for mothers, but also for children. Especially those who had older children back in Poland before migrating to Norway, expressed that they were concerned about how their children would react to the decision of leaving and how they would adapt in Norway.

Narratives on leaving and adapting

Mother 7 says that she took into account her eldest child’s opinion while taking the decision of leaving:

> Our son understood it and took it [the fact that we were leaving for Norway] as an opportunity. [But] he presented some conditions: at least once a month he had to go to Poland to meet his friends – Mother 7.

Mother 7's son was in his early teens when he left Poland. As agreed with his parents, he travelled frequently to Poland during his first months in Norway. Thus, the family kept an apartment back in Poland, which the mother also uses frequently. The back and forth pattern seems to be one of this family's transnational adaptation strategies: they are here (Norway), but also there (Poland). With the low-cost direct flights between the two countries, travels back to or visits from Poland are frequent for most of the families interviewed. What is specific about this family is that the possibility for the son to go home frequently was agreed on within the family before the migration.

Another mother says that her daughter did not want to go to Norway and that the adaptation process was particularly difficult. At some point she even considered returning to Poland:

> When we came to Norway, she did not agree. She did not want to live in Norway (…). It was difficult (…). She cried, she did not want to be in Norway. Sometimes I was thinking that we should go back – Mother 2.

Mother 2's daughter was also in her early teens when she came to Norway. After graduating from high school, she went to Poland to study at the university. Since many of the post-2004 Polish migrant families still have rather young children, it would be interesting to see if studying or working in Poland is something many of them aspire to or undertake.

Mother 10 also encountered challenges regarding the adaptation process of her child who was also a teenager when they came to Norway to join the father who had already been in the country for almost ten years. She claims that *if* her child had told her that he wanted to go back to Poland, she would have done so:

> If my [child's name] had come to me and told me: "Mom, I don't want to be here. I want to go back to Poland", I would have packed those suitcases and we'd have left. For everything I did, I did it with regards to my child. I didn't care about myself. I would not even care about [husband's name], whether he would agree or not – Mother 10.

Mother 10 thus laid stress on the well-being of the child, putting his best before her own or her husband's needs or preferences. The fact that she had been a single mother in Poland for almost ten years, with a husband working abroad, might explain why she does "not even care about what [husband's name] would say". As she puts it herself: "In Poland I was the mother and the father"; she is used to making decisions on behalf of the child single-handedly. Furthermore, she states that it was difficult to live as a family again, which is a common challenge within the family reunification scheme. Mother 10 and her family have since learned how to live together and are currently planning to expand their family.

Mother 7 also places an emphasis on the well-being of her children and says that when they came to Norway, she gave priority to the adaptation process of her

children, a teenager and a pre-teen, rather than to her own career as a professional health worker:

> We assumed that our financial situation was good enough to make a living on one salary. We decided that I wouldn’t be looking for a job and that I would look after the children [during the first months] – Mother 7.

According to Mother 7, the children’s adaptation went rather smoothly and she started looking for a job earlier than planned. She quickly obtained a job as a professional health worker and is the only Polish woman in the sample whose first job in Norway corresponded to her formal qualifications. The financial situation here seemed to make it possible for the mother to stay at home during the first steps of the children as immigrant children. Many of the interviewed families say that in fact in Norway, unlike in Poland, it is possible to live on one salary.

The experiences of the above-mentioned mothers show that migrating together with a child leads to certain challenges (child wanting to keep the apartment back home, not wanting to leave, to go back, or the general adaptation process) which, in its turn, contributes to changes and new ways of performing motherhood (transnational lives, learning to live together again or putting a career on hold). Further, the quotations show that for these women the child’s perspective and well-being, which correspond with the responsive dimension, constituted important aspects as regards the leaving and/or adaptation phases. Thus, here, it is the practices and not the parenting style that change, as the parenting style refers more to the attitude (responsive) expressed in the context (migration). These attitudes do, however, not appear in the table 1, as they are not explicitly expressed by the mothers talking about the characteristics of the Polish parenting style.

(Economic) migration as a possibility to *become* or to *feel* like a mother

A different type of change described by the interviewed mothers is linked to the type of migration logic they are within, namely ‘the economic migration’. In Poland, Mother 4 lived in such conditions that she could not imagine having a child there:

> [Coming here] has changed everything. In Poland we could not afford anything, there were financial problems all the time. We lived with my husband’s mother in her flat. We did not have hot water and the toilets were outside (…) we could not imagine having a child in such conditions – Mother 4.

According to Mother 4, it was the migration to Norway that gave her the possibility to become a mother. For her, better economic conditions equaled to the possibility of taking care for a child. Mother 2 also lived in difficult economic conditions back in Poland, together with her husband and two children. She claimed that moving to Norway, and the economic possibilities that came along with it, made her ‘feel like a mother’:

> In Poland I had nothing. We lived poorly. It has been a huge change to move here. It was amazing to move here. Only here did I feel like a mother. Only here I could relax a bit, I felt comfortable, I did not have to worry whether my child would have food to eat or whether I would be able to ensure a good future for her – Mother 2.

Economic security is mentioned by many families as one of the most important changes in their lives when compared to the life they led in Poland. Elstad and Stefansen (2014) note that in earlier studies, economic hardship has been linked to poor parenting. They refer, for instance, to the Family Stress Model of Conger *et al.* (1992; 2010, cited in Elstad, Stefansen 2014) which states that "economic problems, such as unmet material needs and inability to pay bills, tend to generate emotional stress and parental conflict" which might lead to the "lack of care and harsh disciplinary methods" and the complementary Investment Model of Linver *et al.* (2002, cited in Elstad, Stefansen) and Bradley and Corwyn (2002, cited in Elstad, Stefansen 2014) which "suggests that parents in poor families will have to prioritize immediate material needs and will therefore be more inattentive towards their offspring, while families with ample economic resources are more able to «invest» in their children, both in terms of time spent and in terms of economic outlays" (Elstad, Stefansen 2014: 652). The link between (better) economy and (better) parenting is, as seen above, very explicit in Mother 2's discourse.

More specifically as regards time perspective, spending more time with the family is stressed by many of the informants as one of the most important changes regarding the family life in Norway. In the Norwegian context, both the organization of the labour market[7] and the relatively high salaries compared to other countries, give families more time together. As one of the mothers puts it: "In Poland parents must hold four jobs to pay for the children. Then when are they supposed to spend free time with them?" – Mother 4.

It is important to note, however, that not all of the informants migrated for economic reasons. Moreover, some of them state they had even better economic conditions back in Poland than in Norway. This is the case of Mother 10. Her husband had, as mentioned earlier, worked abroad for over ten years and during this time he sent money to her and her son. She explains that joining her husband was not a question of money, but a question of saving the marriage. Other informants, with the experience of a husband abroad, explain that coming to Norway was a strategy to stay together, as transnational marriages cannot last forever.

Acquiring or not acquiring new values?

Other differences concern values, such as a child's independence and creativeness. Mother 2 came to Norway in 2006. With one child over the age of eighteen and

[7] According to the Confederation of Norwegian of Enterprise (NHO), Norway has one of the lowest average hours worked per year in Europe (NHO 2013).

one of school age, she had a long experience of mothering both in Poland and in Norway. When talking about the perceived changes, she says:

> In Poland I was extremely careful with everything. When we went for a trip [I worried] that she would fall or get her clothes dirty for example (…). When I went here I [thought]: "Oh my God! My daughter got all wet in the kindergarten, all they ate were sandwiches, they did not have warm meals and they drank only water!". It was horrible! I could not believe it. But now, from a longer perspective, I think that it is positive that children learn to be independent – Mother 2.

The aspects Mother 2 mentions as particularly different (falling, getting dirty, wet, no hot meals) are similar to those found in other studies dealing with migrant parents and childhood (see for example Johannessen *et al.* 2013). What is of particular interest here is that the informant links the perceived changes to the length of her stay: "But now, from a longer perspective, I think it is positive that children learn to be independent". In other words, she herself highlights that the adaptation process has occurred over time and that her perceptions of 'Norwegian parenting and childhood' has evolved from negative to positive.

Mother 8 came to Norway in 2013. She has two small children who attend kindergarten. When talking about the Norwegian kindergarten, she says:

> In Poland, there were just crayons and paints, and possibly gluing some leaves. Here they make something out of nothing. And most importantly, he [my son] can get dirty (…) they assume that dirty kids means happy kids (…). I am delighted with the nursery system here – Mother 8.

Finally, Mother 11 claims that what is considered 'dangerous' in Poland is not necessarily considered as such in Norway, and how independence can be taught to even very small children in the kindergarten.

> It was surprising for me when my daughter below one year and a half was seated by the table with a plate and a knife to put butter on a sandwich. It was shocking for us. I always thought I should protect her against sharp tools but in fact they [those working in the kindergarten] taught her to use cutlery. They develop independence and self-reliance in the kindergarten by teaching them how to prepare a sandwich or by asking the children what they would like to eat – Mother 11.

Viewed from a symbolic interactionist perspective, the symbolic meaning of, for example, the situation 'child using a knife' has switched from 'dangerous' to 'learning independence' through (intercultural) interaction in everyday life. This perspective is in line with the theory of William Isaac Thomas (a scientific partner of the Polish sociologist Florian Znaniecki) and his wife. They argued that if a situation is defined as true, it is true in its consequences (known as the 'Thomas theorem'). Defining a situation as dangerous will thus result in a negative impression of the Norwegian education ("it was shocking for us"). Defining the same situa-

tion as a way of learning independence, which in addition is defined as a positive value, will result in a positive impression of the Norwegian education.

Mother 11, for her part, believes that the Norwegian parents put their children in dangerous situations, which she expresses in the following way:

> Here, parents, including mothers, follow somehow a rather casual model of upbringing, or you could even call it non-upbringing of children. For example, for me a 3-year old child is still a 3-year old child with a brain at this level and he or she cannot assess danger. Such children here are uncared for, they approach slopes and they jump from them. I try to look after my own child and warn the other mothers but they just say: "Let them go, they will not get hurt" – Mother 11.

Mother 11 does not share the same symbolic meaning of jumping from a slide as the Norwegian mothers she interacts with at the playground. Acquiring new values in the migratory context is, in other words, not automatic.

Finally, Mother 7, who came to Norway in 2013, and is a mother of two teenagers, claims that she does not feel any difference about being a mother in Poland and being a mother in Norway.

> I feel a mother in the same way here as I did in Poland. I don't notice any differences (…). I have other economic possibilities, but our family and private lives are the same (…). I have certain values, which are important for me regardless of where I live – Mother 7.

The values Mother 7 here refers to seem to be the religious values the family adheres to. Religion is an important aspect in their life and they are active church members. The family if Christian, but not Catholic. Consequently, their religious values are not the Catholic ones traditionally linked to the Polish identity. Although Mother 7 says that she 'does not notice any difference' in being a mother in Poland and in Norway when asked explicitly about it, later in the interviews she admits that she has become less 'demanding' and 'pushing' in Norway. This change is not linked to the Norwegian context in particular, but rather to the migratory context which the mother perceives as stressful: 'I did not want to add extra stresses or duties', she says, implying that she adapted her parenting style to the (new) migratory context and changed from being rather demanding to more responsive.

Mothering far from home and the extended family

Finally, although the informants claim that migrating to Norway has given them new economic and other structural opportunities, raising a child in the new context presents also new challenges. Being far away from extended family members is commonly stressed as something that makes parenting particularly challenging in Norway, as they have few or no possibilities to get help with the children. As one of the mother says: "We feel we are exhausted. Being only with

her, without relatives" – Mother 11. Thus, visits of grandparents, one of them or both, are appreciated.

> It helps a lot when our parents visit us; I can relax because I know that not all the duties are on me. They are great help in cooking, cleaning and other housework when my child is in the kindergarten. We've just realized what a great asset a helpful grandparent can be – Mother 11.

In the existing literature on the Polish migration, the concept of 'flying grandmothers' is often used to illustrate how grandmothers circulate between Poland and the country where the grandchildren are being raised (Kilkey, Plomien, Perrons 2013; White 2011). From a gender perspective, it is interesting to note that the interviewed mothers, more than the fathers, seem to consider being far away from family members as a considerable loss. Some fathers even say that they feel good about being far away from the extended family and, thus, all kinds of 'family obligations'. Another mother expresses in the following way the feeling of being constantly with the children:

> When someone complains that they don't spend enough time with their kids, I cannot understand them. Because we are with our kids in every second! Every day, every weekend. All the time, all the time! I wish that one day they [the kids] can just go and that I will not worry for them. I just hope that it will happen one day – Mother 1.

Being a parent far away from other family members, and thus the possible help in terms of child care, is a challenge not only for migrants. It is a challenge, however, added to many other challenges they encounter as non-natives in a whole new environment. It is also a challenge that might, if experienced as very stressful (e.g. "we feel exhausted"), have a negative impact on the parenting style (e.g. less responsive parenting). This impact is not, however, visible in our data, but still worth mentioning as a possible change in terms of parenting style in a migratory context.

Discussion and conclusions

This article has shown how the Polish mothers in Norway perceive and talk about motherhood in a migratory context, stressing the changes this context might imply in terms of a parenting style which has been defined as a set of attitudes that express parents' behavior towards a child. The empirical data show that the mothers interviewed consider the Polish parenting style as rather 'demanding' and 'intrusive', while the Norwegian parenting style is considered as rather 'responsive' and 'neglecting'. There is, however, no absolute connection between ethnicity and parenting style. In addition, we have seen that there is a difference in terms of (stereotyped) general perceptions of the Polish and the Norwegian parenting

styles, and the actual attitudes and behavior among the mothers. For example, among the mothers with the experience of mothering in Poland, some express that they were particularly concerned about the child's well-being and that they included the child's perspective in the decision of leaving – which is a rather responsive behavior. Also other scholars find that such models are not absolute. In their overview of the individual-centered and community-centered parenting, Holm-Hansen *et al.* (2007) highlight that parents most probably recognize aspects from both models in their own parenting styles.

The informants stress that coming to Norway has improved their economic possibilities and many of them relate this with motherhood, in the sense that coming to Norway gave them the possibility to become a mother, to feel like a mother and/or give a child a better future. Economic security is a structural change, linked to Norway's general welfare system that might have, according to this and other studies, a positive impact on mothering (e.g. less 'running for money' = less stress = better parenting in terms of attitudes and the time spent with a child).

Other observed changes are connected with (the appreciation of) values such as independence and creativeness, often referred to as typically Norwegian. In the World Values Surveys with numbers from 2005–2009, people around the world are asked which values they consider most important in the upbringing of a child. 90% of Norwegian respondents think independence is among the five most important values, which places them first among all countries regarding the importance of the value 'independence'. To compare, 41% of the Polish respondents think this is an important value, while 58.9% do not. In the same survey, the value 'imagination' has a score of 54.6% among Norwegians. Only Swedes hold a higher score here. Among Poles, the percentage is 20.2%. In other words, the existing quantitative studies show that there are notable differences between Norwegian and Poles in terms of values related to parenting. This article has given an in-depth description of how parents might perceive and talk about these differences, and how some of the mothers gave new symbolic meanings to the actions such as using a knife or getting wet and dirty in kindergarten. A Norwegian child psychologist Willy Tore Mørch (2013) argues that the values considered as important in a society reflect the general situation of the country under study. Thus, welfare and security give space for the above-mentioned values. Hence, the observed changes in terms of these values might also be linked to Norway's structural landscape.

Some mothers, nevertheless, explicitly state that they have not changed any of their values, as regards parenting, since coming to Norway (e.g. "my values are the same here as in Poland"). Others express a negative opinion of how Norwegians raise their children. That means there is, among our informants, a certain diversity when it comes to perceptions and attitudes of the Polish and the Norwegian parenting styles. Furthermore, how the mothers are aware of and put into words these observations, attitudes and possible changes, differs from a very conscious discourse to a more unconscious one. Additionally, the interview situation itself

might have influenced the informants’ discourse. Adding to the interviews a methodological approach in terms of observation would give a more nuanced picture of what is said in the interview situation, and what is practiced in everyday life.

In the introduction to this article, I put forward an idea that as ‘migrants’ and ‘mothers’, they hold ‘two careers’. In our sample, ten out of twelve informants do have a formal job and one holds an informal job. Only one stays at home. That is to say that most of them have three careers. Migrants from the EU countries of Eastern Europe[8] have in fact one of the highest labor force participation rates in Norway (73.2%). Only migrants from other Nordic countries hold a higher rate (76%). If we compare the rates of the non-migrant female population and the female population from the EU countries of Eastern Europe, 66.8% of Norwegian women aged 15–74 are employed, while the rate for Eastern European women is 67.6%. In other words, the rate is slightly higher for the latter group. In comparison, the rate for African women is 37.5% (Statistics Norway, data from 2015 published in 2015). Thus, many Eastern European women, in their everyday lives, jungle three careers (migrants, mothers and employees), where they negotiate meanings and play different roles. For mothers, this in itself is a change.

In this sample we have included those *willing* to talk about the meanings, roles and challenges, stressing their role as mothers. The sample consists of rather ‘traditional’ families with few (identified) conflicts and/or divorces and/or stepchildren. A different sample would most probably contribute to different perceptions and experiences of mothering in a migratory context. Whilst unemployment rates in Norway are currently increasing due to the decrease in oil prices, none of the interviewed mothers have experienced losing a job.

To conclude, I argue, in line with other scholars (see for example Nadim 2014), that 1) changing attitudes and practices regarding motherhood are above all to be understood in the light of new structural opportunities and personal experiences and thus, the influence of receiving a society’s values appears as secondary. In addition, this article has shown that a country’s values are also influenced by structural opportunities. Structural, cultural and individual aspects are in other words intertwined. The analysis of parenting styles in a migratory context in terms of intersectionality, with a more systematic use of variables such as ethnicity, class, gender, religion and sexuality, as well as other contextual and individual factors, is an approach that would further strengthen the knowledge on the (changing) transnational Polish motherhood. I also recommend further reflection on how Polishness and Norwegianness (Fangen, Lynnebakke 2011) is perceived and practiced by Polish mothers, which is an (identity) aspect not touched upon here. Finally, a gender-centered approach, stressing how gender roles are (re)negotiated among Polish mothers and fathers in a context which strongly promotes gender equality (Norway), is also welcome.

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[8] This is the category Statistics Norway use. However, as Polish migrants represent by far the largest group of migrants in Norway, the numbers should reflect the general tendencies regarding the Poles.

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Strange Heaven –
The Social Implications of Nikola's Case

During the research in Norway, our Polish-Norwegian team encountered a social fact which inspired us to create a separate research field in the project. Many interviewees mentioned the name of The Child Welfare Service of Norway: Barnevernet. The majority of opinions about this service were negative – both in the respondents' narratives and on the internet forums for the Polish migrants ('mojanorwegia') or social network fan pages (*Polacy w Stavanger*, *Polacy w Norwegii*). There are vividly negative emotions present in the Poles' statements about raising children in Norway, and the fear of Barnevernet is particularly apparent. It was this 'fear' that triggered the research presented in this article. We started to look for its presence in both the Polish public reality and in the private sphere. We decided to use a critical discourse analysis to discover communication mechanisms which have influenced the shape of the Polish attitude towards Barnevernet.

Key words: migration, discourse, Barnevernet, fear

Introduction

Poland is a country that has experienced a massive economic migration. The most important reasons of the Polish migration abroad are: difficult post-transformation reality, high unemployment rate, and low wages. Norway is currently one of the most popular destinations for the Polish economic migration. It is estimated that there are about 100,000 Polish people in Norway, which makes them the big-

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gest immigrant group. Currently, more and more Polish women and children migrate to Norway, following the men who migrated earlier.

The Poles who live in Norway permanently are aware of the many cultural differences between Poland and Norway. Despite the differences, PAR[4] Migration research shows that Poles adapt very well to new conditions and the Scandinavian norms, concerning for instance family and domestic chores division (Żadkowska, Kosakowska-Berezecka, Ryndyk 2016). The children of the Polish immigrants go to Norwegian schools and kindergartens where they not only learn the Norwegian language, but also acquire the Norwegian habits (Bourdieu 2005). Still, in encounters with the Norwegian public services we find that the Polish immigrants experience a vast array of services with diversified modes of supporting family integration (Nødland, Vedøy, Gjerstad 2016). The research on striking a balance between private and professional life proved that many Polish are so fond of the Norwegian leisure activities that they gladly engage in physical activities together with their families (Kossakowski, Żadkowska, Herzberg 2016). Living in Norway has a huge impact on the quality of the family life.

During the research interviews with families in Norway, our Polish-Norwegian team encountered a social phenomenon which inspired us to create a separate research field in the project. Many interviewees mentioned the name of The Child Welfare Service of Norway, Barnevernet. The majority of opinions about this service were negative – both in the respondents' narratives and on the internet forums for the Polish immigrants ('mojanorwegia') and the social media fan pages (*Polacy w Stavanger*, *Polacy w Norwegii*). We encountered the same negative opinions in Poland among the Poles who had a possibility of moving and starting a life in Norway. As an example, we provide three opinions that we collected:

> 1. About this horrific institution… the way the media shows it is a little exaggerated. Only this famous carrying off by Rutkowski here from Norwegian family, but no. Somehow I would like everything in Poland. To Polish school, in Poland – Magda (twenty-six years old) and Bogdan (twenty-eight years old), no children, two years in Norway.
>
> 2. My wife was very much against Barnevernet until she read in Polish on the internet about this four-year-old who got the shit beaten out of him so badly he is now deaf and blind. What a life this kid has, what happens to his stepfather, cohabitant, fuck him. So this kid will be disabled until death. You don't hear about such things here. Barnevenet's sword is so close to your neck it disciplines you. If Barnevernet decides your kid is in danger in the community, it has every right to take the kid

[4] All data comes from PAR Migration Navigator. The project WLB_GE: *Socio-cultural and Psychological Predictors of Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality Cross-Cultural Comparison of Polish and Norwegian Families* is funded by Norway Grants in the Polish-Norwegian Research Programme operated by the National Centre for Research and Development. The project consists of five complementary components (work packages). A different research unit runs each of them. Particular parts of the project concentrate on different goals, using different methodological approaches. The article is based on cooperative work of Work Package 1 and Work Package 5.

away from you, and you have no right to appeal. You can appeal later, but you cannot appeal the decision, so the kid is physically taken away from you, and that's what scares Poles the most – Sara (thirty years old) and Adrian (thirty years old), parents of one, one-and-a-half years in Norway.

3. Frankly speaking, this is a totally unpredictable institution to me; nobody has control over it. One office worker decides whether they take your child away; and he/she can be mistaken, right? Time and again these kids are taken and then the case is explained, what really happened in that family. Darn it, if such a small kid, let's say, I don't know, a three-year-old, is taken away for a year to a foster family, nobody can tell me it's for the child's sake, because it is not – Marta (thirty-two years old) and Sebastian (thirty-two years old), parents of one, two years in Norway.

The emotions present in the Poles' statements about raising children in Norway are vivid and negative, and the fear of Barnevernet is especially apparent[5]. It is that fear that triggered the research presented in this article. Together, our Norwegian and Polish project team members asked the reasons of these emotions. Do we observe a moral panic among the Poles and the Polish migrants? Can this phenomenon be understood in terms of the cultural differences? How do the Poles transform notions that they give to their family while adapting to living inside the Norwegian culture?

We started to look for these emotions both in the Polish public reality and in the private sphere. We decided to use a narrative analysis, as it is understood in the frame of critical discourse analysis, to discover the communication mechanisms that have influenced the shape of the Polish attitude towards Barnevernet. We discovered that the infamous case of the Nikola kidnapping was repeatedly mentioned in the publications and interviews that we analyzed. The case concerns the kidnapping of a nine-year-old Nikola, in 2011, from her foster home in Norway, by a Polish celebrity detective Krzysztof Rutkowski, and taking the girl to Poland. So together (Norwegian and Poles) we realized that this case constructed a point of departure for us to understand the phenomenon of the moral panic around Barnevernet. We concluded that texts published at the time the case was still in progress (2011), both in Poland and in Norway, established the narrative around the Poles' relations with The Child Welfare Service of Norway. The aim

[5] Currently Barnevernet is one of the most controversial Norwegian institutions because of its policy towards migrants. It is regulated by the Child Welfare Act from 1992. However, it also raises reservations among Norwegians, for it possesses a very wide range of authorizations that enable it to enter a family's private life and interpret events taking place there from the perspective of children's rights circumscribed by law and Norwegian culture. The cases of Barnevernet taking the right of custody away from foreigners are publicized more and more often. Before we start to evaluate Barnevernet, we have to note the fact that The Norwegian Children Act, chapter 5, clearly places the responsibility for the upbringing of children with their parents. In order to ensure a secure environment for children the purpose of the Child Welfare Act is formulated as follows:

- to ensure that children and young persons who live in conditions that may be detrimental to their health and development receive the necessary assistance and care at the right time,
- to help ensure that children and young people grow up in a secure environment.

of this article, however, is to describe and to deconstruct the narration about the Nikola's case, to discover the hidden facts of this story, how the interpretation might differ, the reasoning about the emotional reactions, and in the end, what meaning do the narration and national scripts, used by the Polish immigrants living in Norway, have.

Methodology

In this article, we are connecting the two perspectives: one represents the narration analysis, and questions how 'the first' version of a story might live and influence social attitudes towards institutions such as Barnevernet both in Poland and in Norway; the second perspective asks how 'living in Norway' might change this attitude and allow for the incorporation of the Norwegian version of the story. As a base of this work, we chose a qualitative perspective in which we confront the public voice as represented by the media, with the perspective of a person who is living in certain conditions. Within our research in the Polish press concerning Nikola Rybka and Krzysztof Rutkowski, we used basic tools created within the critical discourse analysis (Wodak, Meyer 2001) and adapted by sociologists (Janks 1997). We assumed that there exists a link between the subject level, the ideological level, and the knowledge level, and that institutions influence subjects and their actions through knowledge, thus controlling their social actions (Barczewski 2008: 70–95; Chomsky 1978; Douglas 1980; Jorgenssen, Philips 2002; Nowak 2010: 237–249). The text informs a reader about how it came to existence and how it is to be read. The author introduces certain concepts to suggest how the text has been produced and how it is to be consumed. If we take the perspective of a critical discourse analysis, we consider that:

> Our knowledge of the world should not be treated as objective truth. Reality is only accessible to us through categories, so our knowledge and representations of the world are not reflections of the reality 'out there', but rather are products of our ways of categorizing the world, or, in discursive analytical terms, products of discourse (Jorgenssen, Philips 2002: 16).

We used the synchronic method to select and analyze the body of texts in our research. Our goal was to explore the most important features of the Polish media coverage concerning Barnevernet, and to determine what kind of picture of this institution the Polish public discourse creates. We wanted to take a closer look at the linguistic manipulations which accompanied the coverage of the Nikola Rybka's kidnapping. So we decided to analyze the articles published between 2011 and 2012. The main source was the "Super Express" (SE), because it was the newspaper that had first published the Nikola's case. We discovered a very conservative

style[6] of narration at that time, and other sources that repeated the information published by SE. SE was cooperating with Krzysztof Rutkowski who was one of the main players and the narrator in the Nikola's case. The second source was "Gazeta Wyborcza" which represents a liberal style of narration, closer to the government and its official representation.

From articles published in those two newspapers, we chose six articles to present the main plots in the narration about the Polish migrants and Barnevernet[7]. It is the reason why we used a discourse analysis in three contexts: linguistic – examining argumentation strategies and content analysis, and also considering grammatical systems specified for certain media; psychological – where we study sets of methods and techniques aimed at transmitting a content; and social – where we try to describe how the communication status influences the social reality, and how it is connected within the sphere of activities undertaken by individuals. Hence, we treat discourse as a social interaction which takes place in a specific context (Rancew-Sikora 2007, 2009).

The purpose of the following analysis is to find main plots and discourse strategies that have appeared in the Polish and Norwegian mass-media, introducing the Barnevernet institution. We analyzed articles published in newspapers in Poland and Norway between 2011 and 2012, where the case of Nikola was mentioned. In this work, we gave much more attention to the publications from 2011, because we consider them as those constructing the main social habits of interpretation.

As a point of departure for the coverage of the Rutkowski case in the Norwegian media, we chose three episodes that are connected to the activities by Rutkowski, Barnevernet, and the international relations from 2011 (13 articles), 2014 (14 articles) and 2015 (21 articles). Mapping the Rutkowski's case in the

[6] Conservative style – regards the family to be the most important value, characterised by Christian norms, defamilialism of institutions and patriarchal attitude towards gender roles and parenting style, As Hidi and Graham wrote: "Conservatist have lowest scores on Harm and Fairness, and very high scores onIngroup, Authority, and Purity. They had the lowest scores on Openness and the highest scores on Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation, as well as the highest frequency of religious attendance" (Hidt, Graham 2009: 114).

[7] The analysis of articles published from June 18, 2011 to December 30, 2011. They were taken from websites and archives of two main Polish daily newspapers: "Super Express" and "Gazeta Wyborcza". Out of 11 articles concerning the Nikola's case, six were chosen for the body of analysis. The Nikola case description starts with an article published in "Super Express" and ends with information published in a local "Gazeta Wyborcza" issue, which announces the end of the trial in December, and the court's decision to keep Nikola in Poland. Three other publications are added as auxiliary materials, published in liberal newspapers "Newsweek" and "Wprost", and in conservative "Fronda". These are opinion-forming weekly newspapers, and they are published in large quantities (with an exception of "Fronda") (also available online). Another category of analysis is films: *Child Hunting* by TV Polsat and *Escape from Paradise* by TVP, both showing Polish immigrant issues. They were broadcasted in 2011. We only mention them here, without further analysis. However, we think they strongly contributed to establishing opinions about Barnevernet and Norwegian child welfare. The whole material that we have collected and analyzed about Barnevernet contains 32 items.

Norwegian media we searched for the media coverage about these cases through the search engines Retriever and Google, and ended up with a number of representative printed articles, commentaries, and letters to the editor. We ended up with forty-eight articles, thirteen articles from 2011, fourteen articles from 2014, and twenty-one articles from 2015. Having systematized the types of newspapers, titles, types of articles, authors, and the descriptions of heroes, villains, helpers, and the main messages in the text, we can paint a picture that represents the overarching story printed in the Norwegian newspapers after these three episodes. Our theoretical point of departure has been the discourse analysis as inspired by Foucault (1970).

In addition to the media discourse analysis, we have used interviews collected during the Par Migration Project. The reason of using them was to show that the media headlines and stories about Barnevernet are strongly present in the collective memory (Halbwachs 1979) of the Polish immigrants living in Norway. They do read and repeat stories about the Polish children and Barnevernet. We have conducted and analyzed sixty-nine interviews with couples (joint and individual interviews, fifteen within the project component Work Package 5, and fifty-four within Work Package 1), plus twenty-three interviews with civil servants within the health and education sectors in 2014, in the three municipalities in the county of Rogaland, using a semi-structured interview guide, tape recorder, and notes. The researchers were present at each interview. The interviews were held in Norwegian and organized in the work places of the respondents. The interviews from Work Package 1 were conducted in 2014 with Poles living in Norway (thirty-seven semi-structured, in-depth, individual interviews and eighteen joint interviews) and with Polish couples (the same group of respondents) in Norway in 2015 (seventeen semi-structured, in-depth, joint interviews). Brief descriptions of the respondents provided in the brackets indicate their age, number of children, and the time they have stayed in Norway (as of February 2014).

1. How to Build Fear? The Nikola's Case as a Recurring Cultural Script in the Poles' Narratives

In addressing Barnevernet (The Child Welfare Service of Norway) which operates in Norway, detective Krzysztof Rutkowski's 'Rambo' case of the Nikola's kidnapping is one of the recurring narrations present in the Polish and Norwegian media. Nikola and her family migrated from Poland to Norway in 2006. She had been living in Norway with her parents for five years then. Having had decided that Nikola was not being properly taken care of by her parents, Barnevernet took care of the girl a year before issuing a decision to move her to a foster family. After the girl was taken away, the parents asked the Polish embassy and lawyers for help. Finally they received help from the detective Krzysztof Rutkowski who in 2011 kidnapped the nine-year-old girl from the foster home where she had been

temporarily staying. The detective took her away to Poland where her parents had been waiting.

The case of this 'double kidnapping' reverberated throughout media and diplomacy. Norway demanded Nikola's 'return' and the Polish consul compared Barnevernet to a fascist organization. Both the Norwegian and the Polish media covered the Nikola's case and monitored it until finally, in December 2011, the court in Szczecin, Poland, decided that Nikola will stay in Poland (Winnicka 2012).

As we have written before, the case of Nikola and Rutkowski was mentioned many times in the narrations concerning Norway and the situation of the Polish families. It has been recalled in both the Polish and the Norwegian newspapers whenever the points of dispute between Barnevernet and the Polish immigrants appeared in the public discourse. It has a special function in the narratives about the Polish families in the Scandinavian countries, and has been inscribed into the structure of the Polish collective memory. Its echoes are found not only in the articles published in the Polish press, but also in documentaries (*Barnevernet – Hunting for Children, Escape from Paradise*) and fictional films. Dariusz Gajewski's film *Strange Heaven* (2015), a story about a Polish immigrant family, is based on this case. The kidnapping of Nikola from her foster family in Norway had also diplomatic repercussions: a worker of the Polish embassy in Norway was sent back to Poland after he had publicly denounced Barnevernet.

What we learn about Barnevenet from Poles living in Poland and in Norway refers to the fear narrative rooted in the Nikola's case. A characteristic feature of the media coverage of that event is that none of the respondents (as well as none of the journalists back in 2011) used solid facts which could help Poles understand and become familiar with Barnevernet as an institution aimed at protecting children's rights. One hypothesis is that the social fear might explain why Polish and other migrants are in opposition to the actions of Barnevernet. They are afraid to cooperate with it. This attitude has been revealed in the interviews with the Norwegian public servants.

Why do Poles have negative attitude towards Barnevernet? We decided to look for the course of fear in the Polish and the Norwegian media, and in the narrative strategies that the Polish and the Norwegian newspapers adopted in presenting the Nikola's case. We investigated how it was possible that some Polish immigrants were not familiar with the Barnevernet policies and with the Children Welfare Acts, and why they were avoiding the contact with this institution, were not looking for the information about it, and often referred to the Nikola's case (Haavind 1987, 2006: 683–693).

The Nikola's story, due to its repetitiveness and the specific means used to describe it, seems to have been embedded into the role of the cultural script which evokes the awareness of the risk related to the family migration to Norway. Cultural scripts pass information about feelings and their meaning. Norbert Elias noticed that the reaction to the cultural script is never individual; it depends on the history and human relationships (Furedi 2007: 5). The way Nikola's case was depicted by

the Polish media had a major impact on the way Barnevernet is perceived by Poles living in Poland and for migrants abroad. Currently it functions as a warning. The narrative about Barnevernet in Poland evokes the fear of losing a child.

The emphases on emotions is another feature present in the articles. The narratives about the Barnevernet function as a warning against moving to Norway with children. The analysis revealed that the language used in the Polish media describing the Barnevernet story is one that evokes fear. A warlike, conflicting discourse, the Nazi references, and invoking the most tragic visions – all this must have brought the given results.

The Nikola's case seems provocative in both societies, and in various forms. The Norwegian media described Nikola as being kidnapped from her foster family. The Polish media claimed that Norway took the child away from her Polish parents, endowing the description with negative connotations. In the articles that we studied, this tendency perspires throughout the Barnevernet debate. It begins with the comparison of Barnevernet with Hitlerjugend (the Hitler Youth):

> It's some kind of bullshit. Barnevernet officers act like Hitlerjugend. Because of a low rate of natural increase in Norway, they want to take the immigrants' children away no matter the cost and naturalize them by force. And they especially like Polish children – Anna Warchoł, Polish consul in Oslo, the capital of Norway, has no doubts. She tried to intervene at the institution, but she claims she's been fobbed off ("Super Express", June 18, 2011)[8].

The 'Hitlerjugend' plot is the one that obscured the Nikola and Barnevernet's case. Polish newspapers, especially "Gazeta Wyborcza" (GW), focused on this component of the events. The activities of Anna Warchoł, the Polish consul in Oslo, recur in the GW[9]. The first reaction to the material published in SE on Krzysztof Rutkowski's actions equates Barnevernet with the whole Norwegian society, both in SE and GW. It is a generalization; perhaps it is a discursive formula which expresses the conflict, and an attempt to put a pressure on Norwegians who in turn could influence Barnevernet.

It is significant that so little has been written about the institution, its goals and history, yet so much more has been written about detective Rutkowski, at least in 2011. Rutkowski himself became an interesting issue for the Norwegian media. Of course, this may be the result of the fact that Rutkowski used the Polish media quite effectively to promote himself and his actions, thanks to the help of the Rybka fami-

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8 *Krzysztof Rutkowski wyrwał Nikolę norweskim oprawcom*, http://www.se.pl/wiadomosci/polska/krzysztof-rutkowski-wyrwal-nikole-norweskim-oprawcom-zdjecia_193310.html (accessed: 10.07.2015) and *Norwegowie ukradli nam dziecko*, http://www.se.pl/wiadomosci/polska/norwegowie--ukradli-nam-dziecko_191468.html (accessed: 10.07.2015).

9 2016, GW published more articles titled: *Taken away, kidnapped*, *We won over another child*, *Alexander got stuck on the border*, *Norway wants little Nikola back*, *Poles in Norway fight for their sons*. We obtained electronic access to these articles in the GW Archive (July 15, 2015). The publication about Nikola we also found in "Wprost" and "Newsweek" and other less significant publications.

ly. The story can also be treated as a plot that obscures the core of the matter, namely, the difference in the parenting standards between the Polish and the Norwegian culture, or the limits of public intervention into the family life. Neither GW nor SE wrote about those issues. The headlines suggest a conflict and blame the Norwegians. "Super Express": *Norwegians stole our baby!* and GW: *Norwegians write about 'Rambo' Rutkowski and kidnapping, and the detective is proud of his actions* (the first paragraph in GW: *Norwegowie piszą o 'Rambo' Rutkowskim i kidnapingu, a detektyw dumny z akcji* – GW Szczecin, 30.06.2011, www.gazetawyborcza.pl). It states:

> They catch children in Norway like dogcatchers catch dogs, though they don't use nets yet', detective Krzysztof Rutkowski announced during a press conference in Szczecin. He recaptured Nikola, a nine-year-old Polish girl, from her Norwegian foster family earlier that night. She was placed there thanks to municipal child welfare and care organization, Barneverntjenesten.

Both the Polish and the Norwegian media buy the Rutkowski's manipulation; what he really did was carrying off Nikola, since her story, as well as the problems of children in Polish families, literally disappeared from the sphere of the journalists' reflection in 2011. From this moment on, the newspapers wrote mainly about the detective, how he 'liberated' the girl, how she came back home, and how the diplomatic conflict evolved. "Gazeta Wyborcza" also evaluates Rutkowski's actions. There is almost no reference to Barnevernet; GW quotes a short statement from an employee of the institution. Yet, GW and SE very radical opinions, such as: "Norway created a system of Norwayzation of Polish and other foreigners' children to save their own (Norwegian) families" (GW)[10]. In both articles, Rutkowski becomes the main character of the narrative. Even though Nikola is a very important figure, little attention is being paid to her. What can we learn from the SE's article?[11]

> It was a well-thought operation made with military precision. The stake was the future of a little Polish girl – Nikola (9). The Norwegians took her away from her parents and gave her to a foster family. They did it because they claimed… she is sad at school. However, the girl was liberated from her confinement and carried away to Poland. The interception was organised and supervised by detective Krzysztof Rutkowski (50) (SE 2011).

Just like the child Nikola, also the Barnevernet's voice is marginalized in the articles. The Barnevernet coordinator's statement was published in GW, but the quality of the article seems debatable. We read in the articles that SE cooperated with Rutkowski, and the underlying motive seems to be to hype his actions and make him more popular. "Super Express" appears as a major opinion former in the case.

[10] www.gazetawyborcza.pl. Norwegians write about 'Rambo' Rutkowski and kidnapping, and the detective is proud of his actions.

[11] *Norwegowie ukradli nam dziecko!*, SE, 18.06.2011, http://www.se.pl/wiadomosci/polska/norwegowie-ukradli-nam-dziecko_191468.html (accessed: 16.04.2014).

A very warlike, fighting spirit is clearly visible in the text. The whole procedure is directed against the Norwegian people and culture. In both articles, the plot of 'Norwayzation' (adopting Polish children by Norwegian families) appears, with reference to Rutkowski.

Leaving aside tragic cases of kids taken away from parents, the attitude the Polish media claims to have towards the problems of migrants' children, seems intriguing. One can say that Nikola's situation is presented as a problem of emotional separation. It seems that in the Polish community culture there is an understanding that intimacy means much more to Poles than to Norwegians, or that the Norwegian and Polish expressions of love and affection for children take different shapes[12]. In Poland there exists a very strong stereotype of Norwegians who are seen as those who do not express physical intimacy, 'Scandinavian chill', and who consider intimacy as somewhat shady (look at the *Terror Barnevernet* documentary and a Polish father story).

A child's intimacy borders are dynamic and blurry in Poland. They change as the child grows. Parents have the right to touch their child, because a child's body in some (biological) way belongs to the parents. This view cannot be hidden. The first SE article is entitled: *They stole our baby*. One can steal an object, something that belongs to him or her. It is possible that in some Polish families, a child is still perceived as a family's property, while in Barnevernet, regarded from the Polish perspective, the notion of a child's subjectivity is based on independence, and the emotional bond with parents seems to play a secondary role.

Another emotional issue recurring in many articles is the problem of being "gloomy and sad": "Office workers in Norway, where the Polish family lived for five years, stated that the girl should go to a foster family. Why? Because she was sad at school" (SE, 18.06.2011).

Having read this, we understand that Barnevernet may be criticized for interfering for irrelevant reasons. On the other hand, it seems that in Poland, a child's sadness is not a satisfactory reason for a social care institution to intervene. It is reported in the articles that teachers, not the parents, noticed Nikola's sadness. The parents did not see what was going on. The Norwegian media told a somewhat different story: they reported that Barnevenet had pointed at the quarrels in the girl's home as much as a year earlier, and perhaps the girl's sadness was the result of the atmosphere at her home.

It can be argued that in Poland such a situation would be regarded as an internal family affair, and hence hardly anyone would dare to intervene. A Polish family, often understood as a closed community, does not share information with public institutions. Probably the limitations of the public interference in Norway are different.

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[12] In 2012, narration about the Nikola case changed in liberal media. The article in GW published in 2012, *How they make children in Norway*, claims that in Poland, emotional closeness (parental/family love) is expressed by physical closeness (Polish children sit close to their mothers, Norwegian children are free to run), things like touching and stroking are a sign of parental care and love, which is not necessarily seen like this by Norwegians, because it may be perceived as violating a child's intimacy.

Sadness therefore is a path through which Poles relate to their emotions, but also to public institutions. This has been strongly discussed in the Norwegian media which presented an exaggerated picture of the institution described in the Professor Nina Witoszek's text as typical[13]. As a reaction to the 'twin case', the author compares Barnevernet to Politburo, and she has some right to do so. We can perceive this as an intentional rhetoric in a discussion that aims at drawing the Norwegian public's attention to the problems Barnevernet encounters in its actions.

Another matter worth considering is the very little amount of information in the analyzed articles about the way Barnevernet works. "Super Express" writes very little about it and also GW does not pay much attention. The articles focus on a negative description and expose the flaws. As in our narratives, Barnevernet always appears as a silent institution, which is disturbing, since on the one hand it impedes a person's self-defense, and on the other, is a sign of inflexibility and the lack of openness. From the Polish perspective, the argument 'it is for the child's good' seems rather absurd.

In the articles published in GW and SE, a divisive approach prevails: the goal is to use Barnevernet, practically absent in the narrative, to establish a negative view of Norwegians. It seems characteristic for a newspaper like SE to target low-educated receivers. The language of the articles abounds in conflicts and accusations. "Linguistic means used by senders, which introduce a hidden/indirect evaluation, are usually based on emphasizing the opposites through hyperbolization of the phenomenon and reference to phrases and linguistic metaphors" (Nowak 2010: 240). In this case, it is very characteristic that there is a certain agreement in the evaluation between the receiver and the sender of the message, and most probably there is one between the receivers of the articles. The question is: an agreement on what? This agreement assumes some distrust. It is implied that the Norwegian institutions act against the Polish immigrants and show hostility towards Polishness, which, as things are, must be defended both by the senders and the readers.

Nikola's Case: Norwegian Media Perspectives

As a point of departure for our news search we chose three episodes that relate to the activities by Rutkowski and Barnevernet, and international relations. The three episodes are (1) the Rutkowski's kidnapping/rescue of a nine-year-old Polish girl in June 2011; (2) *Child Diplomacy*, a documentary aired in April 2014 on the government-owned television channel (NRK) where Rutkowski's case was one of the three cases presented; and (3) the demonstrations against Barnevernet on May 30th, 2015, with the subsequent petition handed over to the Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion by Barnevernet critics on June 11th.

[13] Ł. Kędzierski, *Nina Witoszek alarmuje i wzywa do ważnej debaty*, http://www.nportal.no/articles/374-nina-witoszek-alarmuje-i-wzywa-do-waznej-debaty (accessed: 7.07.2015); N. Witoszek, *Tyrania dobroci*, http://www.mojanorwegia.pl/czytelnia/tyrania-dobroci-czyli-dyskusja-o-barnevernet-cz-i-4878.html (accessed: 7.07.2015).

The Norwegian media highlighted different perspectives than the Polish ones as to what happened to Nikola. In addition, the case is intertwined in a general discussion about Barnevernet and international affairs. The kidnapping itself became of course a colorful tabloid story, also because people from the Polish embassy were involved in it. Leaving aside the offense and the diplomatic and juridical controversies between the two countries, the Norwegian media is very little occupied with the Polish immigrants, their culture, and the family life as such. It is true that the facts of the Nikola and her parents' story are told and used in a discourse, however, the fact that the girl is Polish and that there may be essential differences between the Polish and the Norwegian society and the family life practices, is not an issue. The media's concern, however, is about Barnevernet and its work methods. Its right to intervene in the family life over the parental will among the migrant communities in general is debated. In regard to legal issues: which acts are applied in given situations, and to what extent do Barnevernet and the Child Protection Act relate to other countries' legislation and to various interpretations of the international human rights?

On a more basic level, this can be considered a part of an ongoing discourse regarding child case. Who is in charge? Which criteria, and whose judgments are valid? We followed these questions by asking who participated in the media discourse at different times.

In 2011 the story is told by journalists in the major Norwegian newspapers. Apparently, this is a well dramatized report on a child removed from Barnevernet by a Polish celebrity investigator, a self-appointed hero who calls himself 'Rambo' and states: "I am the police of my fellow citizens". The abduction of the child was planned, edited and reported to the Polish media: The girl was saved from her 'Norwegian prison'. From the Norwegian authorities' perspective, as reported by the Norwegian media, this is a story of kidnapping and a criminal offence, at the same time recognizing that the Norwegian authorities are powerless within the Polish jurisdiction.

After the documentary *Child diplomacy* was released, we found numerous letters to the editor who criticized Barnevernet, but commonly we found them in smaller local newspapers and special interest press. Headlines like 'Crisis of trust' and 'Where is humanity' can illustrate the mood. The authors were private individuals or people representing interest groups that had various kinds of experiences with Barnevernet. The core of the critique oscillates around various forms of expression of the powerlessness in the encounter with Barnevernet on behalf of minority groups or parents of whose children Barnevernet has taken custody. Only few articles and letters to the editor defend the practices of Barnevernet, and these were by Barnevernet themselves and two politicians. When Rutkowski is mentioned, he is portrayed like a sort of exotic hero who rescues children from Barnevernet and brings them back to their families. Still, in the picture created by the media, the professional and governmental voices are completely missing.

In April 2015 demonstrations were arranged outside the Parliament in Oslo and in front of the Norwegian embassies or consulates in several other larger European cities. This was first referred to in the news and in articles, and a couple of critical reportages about individual cases of women claiming to have had been treated unjustly by Barnevernet were published in major newspapers. Following these episodes, a group of over one hundred professionals handed in a petition to the Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion on the 11th of June in which they demanded reforms of the practices in Barnevernet. In the media, this became a public debate between individuals and professional groups. But again, the critics outnumber the defenders. Lawyers in particular gave Barnevernet a very strong critique, worried about the families' legal and human rights, and wanted a debate about what a proper care of children signifies. They argue that we should listen more to international protests, since they might have a point. The other side stresses that the Barnevernet is under pressure from other countries. Even though there have been very few unfortunate events, Barnevernet is doing a job Norway should be proud of, and tries to expand to other countries.

The discourse in the Norwegian media on child care as an international issue is also linked to discourses regarding issues of globalization and a multicultural society. This is a much larger debate on one level regarding which and whose values are to be adopted, and on another level, how they can co-exist and how different countries' jurisdictions relate to one another in case of disagreements. The media do not explicitly become involved into that discourse in the 2011 narrative. The problem touched on the surface is how people living in another country and experiencing problems in their daily life may experience challenges in their meetings and negotiations with other countries' institutions. On the system level, there appear also challenges, since definition power and communication forms are left for the host country to decide. In 2014, this discourse was addressed directly by interest groups and engaged private individuals, while in 2015 the professionals really started to participate in the public discourse. The core question is still who decides what is best for a child? Questions about what good child care is and what acceptable variations in forms and approaches of child rearing are, however, were not asked.

2. Social Context of Narration: When a Story is Confronted with Experience

"Fronda" (a Polish Catholic journal[14]) is the newspaper that wrote the most about the different social care systems in 2011. Since the first issue, it contains articles about 'the death of civilization', critiques against liberal worldviews and post-com-

[14] "Fronda's" subtitle, 'A consecrated paper', tells a lot about its peculiarity. "Fronda" appeals to Catholic teachings, especially to John Paul II encyclicals, and also using counter-culture aesthetics and postmodernist equipment; *Czy Polska uchroni dziecko przed Norwegami*, http://www.fronda.pl/a/czy-polska-uchroni-dziecko-przed-norwegami,16386.html (accessed: 21.12.2016).

munism, and drawings referring to advertisement aesthetics promoting rosary prayer and confession. The journal often criticized the childcare system, not only the one of Norway. "Fronda" protested against the political correctness from the very beginning of its existence and attempted to create 'the fashion for conservatism' among the youth.

The article published in "Fonda" is very extensive. The paper's conservative inclination is very clear here: a family is a community with a separate subjectivity, and the state is an enemy of families. The article tells a lot about mistakes made by childcare institutions, about the traditional family roles, but nearly nothing about children's rights. A lot of attention is paid to what threatens family values and to anti-family policies in the Norwegian society. And here comes an important question. The mentioned publication, regardless of its radical conservatism and worldview biases, is paradoxically one of the most important among those which consider intercultural differences and problems immigrants may encounter in the process of adaptation to the Norwegian culture. Although those questions do not appear in the article itself, it is strongly felt and easily recognizable that there are differences between the two systems of family life and state child care. Hence the crucial question: What is the relationship between a family and the state in Norway and in Poland? What is a family in Norway? What is a family in Poland? What is it like to be a Polish family living in Norway?

The echoes of these opinions we find in the narrations of immigrants that we met:

> Yes, a famous institution. There are so many myths and legends about Barnevernet.
>
> We also look through the lens of the Polish media.
>
> Yes, the Polish media also sustains them, so you do not know what is true and what is a legend. But there is some kind of a tiny whip; you do not spank a kid, no matter what, just like that.
>
> But there is a different mentality here too. I see Norwegians bring up their children differently and I think Polish mentality causes you to love children more but you also hate them more. We are [incomprehensible] more emotional, more [incomprehensible] hug, kiss, and love above life if everything is okay. On the other hand, sometimes your hand is just itching to spank, when the kid is simply naughty. Norwegians are more low-key – Sara (thirty years old) and Adrian (thirty years old), parents of one, one-and-a-half years in Norway.

The Polish respondents living in Norway, when asked about being a parent in Norway, have a unique disadvantage: the Barnevernet. Some of them have fear of the institution they just have heard or read about. In this group there were mostly the interviewees with lower social status and who often do not raise any children (like Magda and Bogdan). The other group talked about the fear that comes from little knowledge and the lack of information on the on hand, and on the other hand, they admitted that they personally knew someone who was in trouble because

of Barnevernet. They often understood cultural differences by observing the way Norwegian parents treat their children (like Sara and Adrian recall). The majority did not understand the role and the goals of the institution. There were, however, some respondents that made an effort to understand how Barnevernet works, what rights a child has, and how they should behave and act as parents in Norway. But still, they felt uncertainty and they did not have trust. Public servants in Norway report that they do not understand why Polish immigrants have fear of Barnevernet, and they think that has to do with misunderstandings and misconceptions.

3. Conclusion

In this article, we have described how the narratives in the Nikola's case developed and took different strands in the Polish and the Norwegian national media. In the Polish media we see examples of how cultural differences might function as a tool of conflict and a strategic argument for building a negative relationship between two countries, and how this policy of integration through fear can influence the lives of Poles who migrated to Norway. It is important, however, to emphasize that migrants, through the process of adaptation, can become the translators of culture. In interviews and inscriptions on Polish forums, we found voices that defend and explain the system of values that is important for Norwegians. In the conclusion, we would like to present the main aspects that we discovered while working on the Nikola Rybka's case.

As the first argument, we saw that introducing a national plot, as appeared in the Polish articles, attached importance to Nikola and her family's problem. The confrontation of Poles with Norwegians brought a perspective of a diplomatic case. It made invisible the questions related to cultural differences, concerning the place of a child in Polish and Norwegian families. It highlighted negative emotions and stereotypes between Poles and Norwegians. We conclude that in 2011 and even today the issue of preparation of Polish families for a new life in Norway is missing in the media. Children's status in Norway should be explained by the media to help Polish families integrate, understand how Barnevernet works, and know how to get rid of the fear of this institution. In the Polish media, Barnevernet's actions are interpreted as anti-Polish and intentional, having no aim to improve the demographic situation in Norway, and not as an act on behalf of children's rights. Such radical statements may increase fear among immigrants. So, in the Polish news, Barnevernet is pictured as if it had no mission to protect children's rights, because nobody writes about it. Nobody describes the procedures, legal proceedings, etc., and nobody offers solutions to Barnevernet concerning what it could do and how it could help Norwegian and Polish people.

These aspects are present in the narratives of our Polish informants. We found that experience changes the perspective. Polish migrants do not speak about the Norwegian politics or about the Norwegian actions; they talk about Barnever-

net as an institution that is powerful in Norway. Polish migrants can point out problems and they even propose solutions (like Nina Witoszek), while the narrative in the Polish media continues on the total adaptation or the conflict strategy. Migrants more often take the perspective of a child. They try to discover positive solutions for children.

In the Norwegian narrative we initially found the exotic portrayal of the Nikola's kidnaping, while the Norwegian authorities remained more or less silent. Then in the next phase, we saw protests against Barnevernet of several various minority groups, until the authorities and Barnevernet itself become an active part in the narrative in the third phase. Still, we find that it is the limits of Barnevernet's authority in an international and multicultural context that is discussed, not the needs of a child.

In conclusion, we found that the case-narratives in the media of different nations adopt quite different perspectives. Generally, the Polish versus the Norwegian media take two different strands as to who makes decisions regarding a child at risk – the parents or Barnevernet. Neither of them explores the child's situation and the difficulties of adapting to a different country and inter-cultural context. As we mentioned above, the Polish media narratives, warlike discourse, the perspective of kidnapping, and the Norwayzation of Polish children, create a view of Barnevernet among Poles. Barnevernet plays the role of a threat to Poles who are willing to move to Norway. The Norwegian media narratives discuss Barnevernet's role and the room for a manoeuvre in the international context.

Fear is a powerful tool of social influence. The Norwegian system of values may turn out to be a very unknown and difficult space for family lives of many Poles. It can be hard to live in Norway according to the traditional and conservative family values, while in Poland a family is perceived as a separate, independent group of people to which a child belongs. The fear of being forced to change a lifestyle may lead to the decision of a life 'in separation' for many Polish families and the raising of children in Poland. There are many different strategies of confronting the fear of Barnevernet in Poland, visible on the internet forums for migrants. Some of them search for information themselves even before the arrival, others take part in meetings and embrace the Norwegian point of view, yet another group 'avoids the danger'. These strategies may serve as an interesting survey category which may help Barnevernet reach more Poles and work on the change of image.

The national context is only one of the several narrative layers concerning Barnevernet. The issues concerning the relations within a family and its status can serve as another possible point of reference or a common ground for senders and receivers of the message. Poland perceives a family as a bastion of independence and freedom. Due to their historical experiences, Poles respond negatively to the attempts of the state to regulate the families' lifestyle. The conservative discourse defends a family as a mainstay of freedom. The situation is much different in Norway where Norwegians have a trust-based relationship with the state and

its institutions whose function is not only to care, but also to regulate. The Poles in Norway perceive this as a huge threat.

At the end, we would like to point out that the fear also generates behavioral changes. The Polish immigrants have concerns about the Norwegian system of values. We find that Barnevernet also understands that the fear of losing a child is present among the Polish immigrants. We argue that it is a good moment to pose a question: What can this fear bring in the long run for the Polish and the Norwegian societies? We think that the politics or the pedagogics of fear have short-term positive effects. We have shown that Poles adapt to the Norwegian culture just because they want to save families – as a Polish value rooted in different influences – and are not adapting the more hidden Norwegian norms about the relations in family. It is possible that immigrants who share the fear play a role where they are 'always smiling, talking with teachers, calling the school, informing about private life events', yet they do not understand and they are not sharing the reason of their acting in this way with the Norwegians. Where there is fear, there is no trust, and trust is the basis for social integration.

In order to address the fear, a solution could be that Barnevernet and other institutions that cooperate with the Polish immigrants in Norway work to build a real trust, if they consider integration as partially their responsibility. Many Polish families migrating to Norway might benefit from a program that could help them recognize cultural differences and influence the way their activities as parents are judged. Participation in workshops might help them understand what is considered an action against a child's good in Norway, and confront it with the Polish style of child-raising, expressing emotions or dealing with the conflict in the style of the Scandinavian culture. Hopefully, it would help them to get rid of their fear of Barnevernet, and help their children adjust to the new life conditions.

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Work-life balance in the Polish migrant families settled in Norway

The paper discusses the notions of maintaining work-life balance (WLB) as evidenced in the interviews with Polish family migrants in Norway. After presenting an overview of the WLB scholarship, we analyse the empirical material collected for the *Transfam* project. By looking at the migrants' narratives on striking the right balance between work and family in the mobility context, we use the intersections of gender, welfare and care as paramount for explain how the Polish couples in Norway discuss the reduced demands of paid employment for the sake of childcare and time for a family at home.

Key words: work-life balance, childcare, gender, migrant workers, Norway, Poland

1. Introduction

There is little doubt that work-life balance (WLB) and its opposite – the employment and home imbalance – have a cardinal meaning for the lives of men and women, especially those with families and children (e.g. Perrons 2003; Milkie, Peltola 1999; Tausig, Fenwick 2001; Emslie, Hunt 2009; Halford, Savage, Witz 1997; Becker, Moen 1998; Aryee, Srinivas, Tan 2005; Clark 2000). Referring to the non-family and non-work spheres of social participation and leisure, the WLB research generally encompasses balancing private life and work life more broadly, moving beyond the tensions that are simply located in families. In this paper, however, we tackle a specific environment of negotiating balance in which working people with children engage in international migration, thus becoming subjected to the unfamiliar WLB's meanings, pressures and choices.

The landscape of the family, organizational and economic research is marked by the growing interest in the WLB. The shift towards seeking the right combi-

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nation between work and home has been largely necessitated by the profound changes in the labour market. The conditions of the new economies under the neoliberal capitalism initially encompassed the consequences of the increased proportion of the women in paid employment, yet were followed by more universal changes linked to globalization. Those included a tendency to work longer, having less predictable schedules, experiencing altered employee-employer relations and exploitation, as well as operating under the prerequisite of constant flexibility (Sennet 1998; Beck 2000; Standing 2011; Burawoy 2008). In brief, global markets and modern technology lead to a multi-spherical social deregulation; the '24/7 society' is plagued by a proliferation of new forms of work (non-standard contracts/schedules, telework, part-time work; see e.g. Perrons 2003; Castells 2001; Brough *et al.* 2008: 262). There are also concurrent transformations within gender orders. The prevalence of new family types (i.e. higher number of single-parent households and 'non-traditional' families; see e.g. Tausig, Fenwick 2001: 114; Beck 2000) elicits revised configurations of masculinities and femininities. In this paper, we add transnational families to a repertoire of the new and atypical families. We argue that family migrants experience specific challenges when seeking to manage their private (family) and work lives in a transnational reality.

Various studies have contextualized the determinants of the work-life balance and imbalance on the axis of a type of welfare state regime in a given locale, which is inherently tied to the WLB policies and provisions in the place (see e.g. Esping Andersen 1989, 1996; Korpi 2000). Fewer studies, however, have investigated the WLB among migrants, especially those moving between different social contexts, dissimilar levels of welfare provisions, and alternative socio-cultural and institutional conceptualizations of support for families. This paper seeks to contribute to this knowledge gap by presenting data from a study within the *Transfam*[3] project, which focused on the Polish migrants in Norway.

We anchor our discussion in the exploration of Hochschild's notion of a 'time bind' and Clark's boundary theory, seeking to examine if and how they are applicable and useful for the study of WLB among migrants. Further, we summarize the theoretical debates with a brief methodological note. In the main part of the paper we undertake an analysis of the Poland-to-Norway mobility as an example enabling a discussion of the changes in the realm of the WLB, following a transition between distinct socio-cultural contexts. By focusing on families with children, we demonstrate how relocating to a different welfare and work macro-regime impacts the micro social sphere of decisions within a family. We foreground the WLB practices in the matrix of gender and family roles.

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2. Work-life balance, welfare and migration

Two sides of the coin: the WLB and the 'time bind'

Leading scholars have put forward the claims on the consequences of the changing economy and the very nature of work 'in flux'. The concerns over growing insecurity and inequality of the current employment landscape were raised by Beck (2000), while their gendered nature was further pinpointed by Castells (2001). Fragmented work and flexibility mean that values associated with successful family life and stable employment are now incompatible, thus leading to the 'corrosion of character', which, according to Sennett (1998), happens as the professional identity occupies the entirety of one's life and slowly brings on detrimental and destructive changes in the workplace. All in all, numerous scholars underscored that the new economy exerts pressure on social sustainability, social cohesion and individual choices, thus making the work-life balance less and less attainable (see e.g. Reich 2001; Perrons 2003; Standing 2011).

In her seminal work, Hochschild refers to the experienced and perceived incapacity of handling the demands of work and the requirements of the family and personal life. She calls this imbalance the 'time bind' (1997) and applies it to the situation in which people's desires to restructure the allocation of work and personal/family time occur simultaneously to the inability to fulfil these wishes. According to Tausig and Fenwick, "the time bind represents a complex phenomenon reflected in the simultaneous time and energy demands of family life and the workplace" (2001: 101) and takes a form of a subjective feeling of inadequate capacity of balancing two spheres that both seem to demand of an individual a due time investment, as an employee and a family member (see also Jacobs, Gerson 2001). In other words, the significance of family and work makes them 'greedy institutions' which, in the social sense, leave people with no room for activities beyond them (Coser 1974; Hochschild 1997). In addition, family and work are individually positioned in the emotional realms linked to satisfaction, commitment and love, thus becoming impossible to delegate (Milkie, Peltola 1999: 477). In this context, the sense of the work-life balance is an opposition of the time bind (Tausig, Fenwick 2001: 103).

What is important is that the topic of tensions between the conflicting demands of work and family/personal life has formerly existed under different research headings alluding to the same phenomenon, e.g. 'role conflict', 'role strain', 'work-home conflict' and 'work-family conflict' (Gregory, Milner 2009). These notions had spearheaded valuable arguments until the most recent term of work-family balance (WLB) has taken over as an overreaching conceptualization. In her work introducing a boundary theory, Clark has defined work-life balance as "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict" (2000: 751). In other words, the attainment of WLB means that a completion of goals in various areas of life is possible (Chirkowska-Smolak 2008: 236). The novel

conceptualizations underscore that the two spheres of 'work' and 'home' are no longer set apart as autonomous, but always mutually implicated in one another, resulting in, for instance, the spillover effects when organizational/work identities transgress into the home domain, and vice versa (Emslie, Hunt 2009: 151–152; Halford, Savage, Witz 1997).

WLB, boundary and a gender lens

Employing a metaphor that is particularly apt for our research, Clark's analysis (2000) of work and family domains in the work-life conflict area relies on the notion of a 'processual boundary'. She dynamically focuses on how people 'manage and negotiate the work and family spheres and the borders between them in order to attain balance' (Clark 2000: 750). The author sees people moving between family and employment as border-crossers similar to those encountering different countries with contrasting cultures. Emslie and Hunt (2009: 151) find Clark's metaphor fitting with regard to permeability (i.e. a degree to which one can bring work home and home to work) and flexibility (i.e. how much one can shift the borders with regard to work location, family-friendly schedules, etc.), though they also urge for an addition of a gender perspective to this application (Emslie, Hunt 2009: 152).

The results pertaining to the importance of a gender lens have initially been mixed, as Hochschild's original time bind study on the corporate America (1997) indicated a convergence between male and female views on work and family life. Reeves interpreted this finding as a sign of an evolution of work and family demands characteristic for the career-oriented parents. He claimed that the post-industrial work is in fact unmatched by the home-life, which has a continuously industrial nature (2001: 128). According to this stance, those who appreciate the attractiveness of modern workplaces can be inclined to feel resentful towards dull, routine, conflict-ridden and low-skill duties, as well as childcare obligations required by the everyday family life. On the contrary, Tausig and Fenwick argue that paying due attention to the actual work conditions and social positions of those performing the bulk of care and domestic tasks cannot be overlooked (2001). It is quite characteristic that the initial WLB and family friendly policies were primarily addressed to the valued female employees that needed to be retained in spite of having children (Milkie, Peltola 1999). This translates to the assumption that the very idea of reconciling life and work was (and often still is) a predominantly female concern. Reinforcing this point, Connell (2005) emphasizes the cultural notions of femininity which ensure that women are, across the life-course, seen as the ones responsible for the ideally imperceptible operations of work and family life. She further draws attention to the heterogeneity, impact and variety of time bind consequences for men and women. In essence, while they constitute two negatives of a time bind, the women's 'double shift' (at work and at home) and the men's career-driven stress of constant competition are not alike (Milkie, Pel-

tola 1999; Becker, Moen 1998; Connell 2005). For that reason, employing gender perspective requires a recognition that "employed women and men have different role qualities – actual and felt expectations and demands – and that women's demands are higher overall. Additionally, women's location in the social structure affords them less power and control in work and family spheres and likely contributes to a greater total workload, more sacrifices, and difficulties in balancing work and family" (Milkie, Peltola 1999: 476).

Reiterating this point, the social development within the new forms of families and partnerships did not seem to alleviate the gendered divisions of labour and a burden of care and home-life being primarily bestowed on women (e.g. Gattrell 2005; Chambers 2012). One of the resulting problems is focusing the research on WLB on the employed mothers of young children (e.g. Allen 2003; Kamerman 2000), though the lack of WLB actually affects parents of both genders and remains crucial irrespective of the children's age (Emslie, Hunt 2009: 166). However, the evidence of the reported WLB and the lack of it in quantitative studies has been inconclusive and country-specific. While some authors suggest that women experience harsher consequences of the time bind (e.g. Lundberg, Mårdberg, Frankenhaeuser 1994), others found no gender discrepancies (Emslie, Hunt, Macintyre 2004). While investigations of parenting further suggest growing gender convergence, they do not support the thesis of gender equity. In addition, Milkie and Peltola break down the complexity of the WLB issues, stating that harmony and accord may be a function of beliefs about the proper balance and what is 'considered fair' rather than the balance itself (Milkie, Peltola 1999: 477). This paradox has become known as the myth of equality (Knudson-Martin, Mahoney 1998, 2009) and was studied among presumably egalitarian couples who believed in having a balanced gender division of work in order to avoid confrontations.

Nevertheless, other studies highlight the importance of gender for the WLB throughout the life-course (Emslie, Hunt 2009) and propose that the "changes in gender consciousness are the «final frontier» in the quest for greater gender equality in work–family linkages" (Loscocco 1997: 223), as well as urge a recognition that the WLB trade-offs "are gendered in the sense that they include objective elements, as well as gendered expectations" (Milkie, Peltola 1999: 487). Additionally, gender equality is being stressed as a mediating factor in the achievement of work-life balance in the present structural and cultural conditions (Slany, Krzaklewska, Warat 2015). The discriminatory macro features of the labour markets may reinforce the already tense relations of gendered inequality in households. In Poland most couples suffer from both the time-based and strain-based conflicts that make balancing work and family nearly impossible due to stress and fatigue. This led researchers to conceptualization of the tensions as gender-inequality-based conflicts (Slany, Krzaklewska, Warat 2015).

Societal approach to WLB between Poland and Norway

Following the proposal put forward by Crompton and Lyonette (2006), who draw on earlier works by Maurice, Sellier, Silvestre (1986) and Gallie (2003), we recognize the relevance of societal and contextual approach for a cross-country comparative analysis. Therefore, we note that the "levels of work-life conflict will vary with national, individual and family circumstances" (Crompton, Lyonette 2006: 380). Rather than adopting an assumption of the WLB issues, we rather see them as prompted and differentiated by "cultural values and policies that are specific to particular societies" (Gallie 2003: 61). This approach has been proven in the European context of regimes that present stark differences between governmental and workplace-led support of WLB (Den Dulk, Van Doorne-Huiskes 2007). Abendroth and Den Dulk's research shows how the line is often drawn between the Scandinavian countries, while "in other European countries work-life balance support is seen as a private responsibility, with people depending mainly on help from relatives or friends" (2011: 235). The latter is clearly the case in Poland (Sadowska-Snarska 2008; Płomień 2009).

Scholars also argues that work-life imbalance and the time bind can have detrimental effects on organizational productivity, as well as personal relations, particularly having a negative influence on the quality of coupledom, parent-child relationships and even lowering the outcomes in terms of children's health and development (Russell, O'Connell, McGinnity 2009: 73; Gornick, Meyers 2003; Moss, Melhuish 1991). Therefore, both the governmental and organizational initiatives across different countries were tasked with spearheading the recognition of caregiving demands faced by many employees, and introducing more policies that somewhat abandon the care angle, and instead simply arguing for the importance of balance in general (Brough *et al.* 2008: 262–263). Four major areas that promote WLB have been listed as:

- flexible/alternative work arrangements (e.g. part-time work),
- availability of leaves under social protections (maternity/paternity, etc.),
- subsidized care services (childcare or elderly care),
- access to further WLB-relevant information on health services and similar (e.g. on handling stress, professional burnout and mental health).

Identified by Brough and colleagues (2008: 262–263), these four aspects are closely linked with the policy level and the models of responsibility anchored in the dynamics between public and private. They further account for differences between 'collective' and 'individual' society models (see e.g. Spector *et al.* 2007). Before we briefly discuss the Norwegian context, it needs to be noted that reflections on part-time work schedules are again twofold. While some proposed them as means of improving WLB (Gornick, Meyers 2003) through 'scaling back' (Becker, Moen 1999), others retained the view that part-time schedules nevertheless decrease income and eventually lead to partners' imbalance, with women usually being pushed out from the labour market and having lower pension or retirement

in the future. This research strand additionally pointed to work-life conflicts being attributed to spousal income discrepancies in the long run (Glass, Camarigg 1992; Tausig, Fenwick 2001).

The 'societal' effect concerning the quality of working life and WLB has been demonstrated in the case of Nordic welfare states by Gallie (2003). In Korpi's terms (2000), the Scandinavian region qualifies as 'encompassing' welfare regimes, offering a substantial support and benefits to all inhabitants. They promote a 'dual-earner – dual-carer' partnership model through the availability and affordability of public care providers (nurseries, kindergartens, elderly care facilities), as well as generous parental leave schemes (Brough *et al.* 2008; Gauthier, Hatzius 1997; Esping-Andersen 1989; Żadkowska, Kosakowska-Berezecka, Ryndyk 2016). According to Gornick and Meyers, the impact of the welfare policies was positive when measured across the indicators like the high rate of female participation in the labour market and very low poverty rates among families with children (2003: 66–74).

To sum up the main differences between Poland and Norway, one can note the opposite tendencies with regard to how the distinct welfare systems contribute to either familisation or defamilisation processes (Esping-Andersen 1989; Korpi 2000). Referring to Żadkowska's, Kosakowska-Berezecka's and Ryndyk's (2016) reading of Korpi's (2000) and Bühlmann and colleagues' (2010) works, we reiterate that the Norwegian social democratic model moved away from the promotion of 'traditional' family values. On the contrary, the Polish post-communist welfare in transition seems to be based on the two non-compliant norms: an economic necessity for dual-earner model, and a cultural superiority of traditional gender roles. In essence, "[p]ost-communist states encourage dual careers but give families scant support" (Żadkowska, Kosakowska-Berezecka, Ryndyk 2016).

WLB and migration

Finally, the analyses dedicated to WLB in the migrant families can be split into the categories of separated (parent-away) families and the entire couples or families living together abroad. The research is clearly dominated by the first subtype and concentrates on the organization of care for left-behind children (Danilewicz 2011, Moj 2015). Migrants are said to have limited resources – especially with regard to time – meaning that a parent staying in the country of origin most probably struggles to have any WLB, especially in the countries where public institutions or their own participation in social life are considered (Wall, José 2004). This situation, however, is also dependent on the gender of a migrating parent. For men's migration, the bulk of attention is centred on how absent fathers are often excused from care as long as they meet the breadwinning standards (Parreñas 2005: 68; Slany, Ślusarczyk, Krzyżowski 2014; Moj 2015). The WLB of a non-migrant parent does not seem to pose a concern, being understood as secondary to the men's economic role. Essentially, the search for WLB in separated couples is fruitless due to geographic, temporal and gendered separation of the work and family spheres. The mother-away

families differ in a sense that women engage in alternative forms of motherhood and seek to achieve some kind of balance between the demands of work (physical separation) and the obligations resulting from having a family (Parreñas 2005), understood primarily as being a mother, to a lesser degree being preoccupied with a role of a wife or partner. The works dedicated to the issue of how parents reconcile work and family from afar, emphasize the care from distance, often with the support of kin members and new technologies – the finding that has also been confirmed in the studies on Polish migrants and families (Parreñas 2005: 103; Hochschild 2002; Urbańska 2011; Danilewicz 2010).

Studying Polish people in Norway brings in the elements described above into a novel discussion, since gender equality is invariably linked to external nationally-conceived and structural solutions for families that are different across borders. In Norway, it implies high engagement of a father in the family realm, as well as a value of both women and men in families, and at work. The separation that families undergo due to the migration, before they become reunified again, may in turn reinforce the habitual and structural lack of WLB desires on the part of Polish men, thus posing gender-role-invoked challenges abroad.

3. Methodological approach and data

The arguments presented in this chapter stem from a thematic analysis of the empirical material collected for the international *Transfam* project (*Doing Family in Transnational Context. Demographic Choices, Welfare Adaptations, School Integration and Every-day Life of Polish Families Living in Polish-Norwegian Transnationality*, 2013–2016). More specifically, the qualitative research aiming at the exploration of *Migrant families in Norway / structure of power relations and negotiating values and norms in transnational families*[4] was conducted with the use of a combination of biographic and semi-structured interview techniques.

The fieldwork of this study was conducted in Oslo and the surrounding areas in the early 2014 and encompassed thirty households of Polish migrants settled and employed in Norway. Mothers, fathers and couples in the age range between 29 and 54 (average 37.5 years) were interviewed in this study. Ten interviews were completed with couples, three with fathers, and the remaining seventeen with mothers. All the respondents had children (between 1 and 5 years of age) of varying ages ranging from infancy to early adulthood. Close to 25% of the respondents' children were below the age of 5, and an average age for children was also rather low, falling just below 9 years. We have collected stories from people representing diverse family forms – from married couples (24) to those in informal partnerships (3) and divorced (3). Inter-ethnic (mixed) couples were represented

[4] WP2, *Migrant families in Norway /structure of power relations and negotiating values and norms in transnational families*, Magdalena Ślusarczyk (WP Leader), Paula Pustułka (Co-researcher), Anna Bednarczyk, Inga Hajdarowicz (field research assistants).

(5 cases), though the dominant household pattern included the Polish-Polish relationships. The respondents spent a minimum of six months in Norway, though an average length of stay in Norway was eight and a half years.

Following Emslie and Hunt's conclusions (2009) that the work-life balance issues are neither restricted to one gender, nor encompass solely one age-group (i.e. the assumption that mostly parents of young children experience time bind), we resumed a broad approach to the data analysis. The data analysis proceeded in three phases beginning with a thematic categorization followed by open coding. This led to a detailed examination of the selected cases in the final step. The empirical material was investigated with regard to tracking work-family tensions in the migrants' accounts, particularly looking at the answers to the questions about the migration-driven changes to family life, the evaluation of the Norwegian labour market and working conditions, as well as their meaning for family life. We also reviewed answers to the questions about daily lives, gendered divisions of labour and leisure time, as well as recoded scattered, yet strongly emergent, data pattern pertinent to the feelings of safety, stability, security, as well as financial and resource capacity of a family.

4. Findings

a. Narrating Norwegian workplaces

Opening the discussion, it is important to take a second look at the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, particularly with regard to the labour market trajectory and status versus the educational attainment and the held qualifications (Charts 1 & 2).

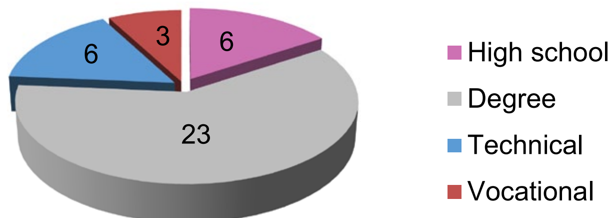

Chart 1. Educational level (in numbers)

Source: Own analysis, WP2 *Transfam* project data.

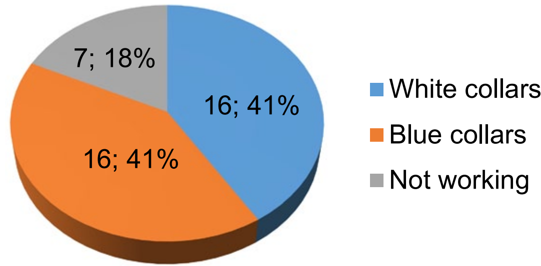

Chart 2. Occupational status (in numbers)[5]

Source: Own analysis, WP2 *Transfam* project data.

The data indicates an undeniable discrepancy, showing that the participants of the study have either used to or continue to work below their qualifications level (see also Huang, Krzaklewska, Pustułka 2016). However, the subjective evaluations of one's work situation provided by the respondents were definitely positive. The explanation of the discrepancy between the objective outcomes and personal opinions could largely be attributed to the fact that the interviewees compared their status as significantly changed, having navigated from Polish (worse) to Norwegian (improved) context. Rather than simply drawing on the categorical professional identification as a type of work and occupation that corresponds (or fails to match) their educational qualifications, the respondents were prone to reflect on the broader meanings of work for their life trajectory.

The majority of the interviewees referred to the Polish reality, their previous circumstances and earlier experiences. On this comparative axis, the main dichotomy resonated the employment's 'stability-instability' shift:

> [Here] before the 1st of every month the money is always in. The wage is on time – Cyryl, one child, thirteen years in Norway.

Reflecting on the financial predictability was very common among the respondents in Norway. They often called their situation abroad 'normal', much in the spirit of migration being a quest for a 'normal life' recalled by the researchers examining the trajectories of the Polish migrants in the UK (White 2011: 62–66; Galasińska, Kozłowska 2009; Botterill 2011: 58–60; Ryan 2010; Rabikowska 2010). This dualism between 'here' and 'there' inherently creates a stark opposition between the appreciated 'now' and the left-behind 'abnormality' of the place of origin. Moving to a generous welfare state translates into a new set of existential possibilities in the realm of work. Financial stability, in turn, takes the pressure off these people who formerly constantly needed to worry about making ends meet. As a result, the very first prerequisite for striving for a work-life balance is met.

[5] Note that the 'Not working' category encompassed broad experiences of not being in employment, i.e. unemployed searching for work, those on parental or health leaves, etc.

Cyryl's short narrative below does not exhaust the topic of work, since the money-oriented understanding of employment that generates sufficient and timely income should be paired with further characteristics of 'working hours' and 'employer-employee relations'. Agnieszka, for instance, has underscored how every employee in Norway is consulted, valued and asked about their satisfaction. That gives people an aid that supports the navigation between work and home life:

> I think that it looks different here, in Poland everything and yourself – all has to be tip-top, I mean here also, five minutes early you are at your post, and five minutes after it's done you leave, right? As long as the work is done. In Poland, you know, well, everything is in a hurry, a rat race, here it isn't so (…) Certainly as at every job there are some days that we work, we all work and we are working very diligently, but sometimes we just fool around – pretend that we are working (…). I suspect that it is so in every area of work, right? (…) Here (in Norway) they talk to you more, even the bosses, whenever there is a problem, "Look, listen, perhaps you'd solve it like this?" and there are even annual meetings with the manager, my husband has those, so [there they ask] things like "Who do you like to work with? (…) What is an acceptable distance to commute to work? Would going away for [business for] two-weeks be possible for you? They talk about having a kindergarten (…) and so it is that they have these meetings once a year; it is very telling" – Agnieszka, two children, three years in Norway.

Many Poles are surprised by this sort of dialogue between employers and employees across various labour market sectors, being used to receiving commands. The consultations gives an impression of being more empowered at work, and thus, having a good enough position for starting negotiations. In essence, the Norwegian workplaces do not exhibit as many features of greedy institutions [in Coser's (1974) and Hochschild's (1997) terms] as their Polish counterparts. While this area may appear gender-blind, it clarifies how Norwegian policies empower both men and women. Crucially, even the women who stayed home with children, experienced the spilling-over of the WLB policies, as their husbands worked less and asked about the family needs, which limited the periods of being away. For working women, workplace observations not only elicited renegotiations at home, but also eradicated the dilemma of whether it makes sense for them to work at all. This pertains to the common situation when the entire mother's salary was spent on childcare in Poland, thus rendering being at work, away from a child, questionable. On the contrary, valued and well-paid in Norway, women felt freer to develop their professional careers.

Another clear trait of the Norwegian labour market that the respondents notices was a safeguarded and respected "right to free time and leisure". What in Poland would be unheard of, the right to vacation or breaks, comes first before a company's income. Agata described how the business model of ski rental service reflected these priorities:

> People came and went, they wanted to get skis and there were none because it was vacation time [for employees]. In Poland this would never happen. [In Norway] things are more relaxed and people do their work with a smile on their face, unlike in Poland when you hear "deadline, deadline, due then, due at this time". And then people do overtime (…) here it is very rare and one gets solid compensation for this. There is no pressure like in Poland that everything has to be absolutely [perfect]. (…) No fear of being fired over speaking up – Agata, one child, three years in Norway.

Agata's story addresses a new quality of a fearless work life. This can be attributed to a considerably low risk of losing a job suddenly, thanks to social and legal protections[6], but also sheds light on dealing with earlier experiences of mobbing and exploitation in Poland (Pustułka 2015). They seem to coincide with the deregulation, 24/7 availability, flexibility and high uncertainty that make the workplace changes observable at the neoliberal capitalist workplaces (Sennet 1998; Beck 2000; Standing 2011; Burawoy 2008; Perrons 2003; Castells 2001; Brough *et al.* 2008), undeniably characteristic for the post-1989 Poland. What the Poles abroad often reflect on is the invaluable clarity and stability of workplace rules (see also Pustułka 2015), especially with regard to respect that is paid to one's free time. Consequently, the work-life balance becomes easier to attempt and retain, which confirms the paramount societal effect of the welfare regime (Crompton, Lyonette 2006; Gallie 2003; Den Dulk, Van Doorne-Huiskes 2007; Abendroth, Den Dulk's 2011).

b. WLB, parenting and family

The key issue that emerged from almost all interviews[7] was the fact that the meaning of money has changed. Employment in Norway was seen as something that sufficiently secures a change of 'supporting one's family without particular sacrifices', a finding that directly translated to a fulfilment of family plans with regard to procreation (see also Pustułka, Krzaklewska, Huang, forthcoming). According to Magda and Michał, for instance, staying in Poland would have hindered their desire to have more children. They evaluate their past work in Poland as enabling only 'vegetating':

> [In Norway] we can support our child and ourselves. We can live a normal life, not like in Poland (…). In Poland it was mostly just work and for this reason the

[6] Note that we hear talk primarily about the Poles in legal employment. While it is not the topic of this article, it can be inferred that the situation of migrants in undocumented sectors and grey zones does not boast the same chances for social protections.

[7] Different trajectories that did not comply with this pattern pertain to the exception of Poles recruited and arriving in Norway as expats/expatriates. For their life and employment trajectories, it was less the matter of money (which they already seem to have had enough of in Poland), and more the question of the improved (sometimes 'more modern'/technologically advanced) working conditions and a chance for professional development.

> life we had was very hard. One had rather fought for survival than thought about how to make the life for oneself nicer. Or for example think about wanting to show children the world, it was more about things, like "Damn, we have no money for diapers" (…). Once our child was born it became impossible for me to get any job whatsoever, even in a supermarket, this was impossible because I already had a child… And anyhow, there was no work, even if my mum had agreed to take care of the child, then it was still not happening, I had no chance of getting a job – Magda and Michał, two children, six and seven years in Norway.

This excerpt demonstrated the weak position and discrimination against working mothers on the Polish labour market (see also Płomień 2009; Pustułka 2015). A similar trajectory of lack of perspectives and financial hardships that translated to a husband's or a father's migration, stable income and ultimately a family reunification has framed the story of Przemek and Beata. They resumed procreation after the relocation and now have five children:

> It has to be underlined that I work alone for the whole family, I mean professional work, and we manage, right? In Poland it would certainly be difficult, I suppose, if not very, very hard (…). [Thanks to migration] we are richer in some experiences – good or bad – that only time will tell, however, I have to repeat that having five children and somehow, let's say, not worry about having enough money for food. (…) Last year I also took out a mortgage for a flat in Poland, and I also have been slowly paying that off – Beata and Przemek, five children, six and seven years in Norway.

What has to be clarified, however, is that also a less optimistic picture of recent times has been painted by Przemek, who acknowledges that the change from having three to having five children has tremendously hindered his ability to work only in one place, be back home around 3 or 4 p.m., and still boast a comfortable financial standing. While earlier Przemek was able to live on one salary only, he has now founded his own business to supplement the income and a real-estate in Poland. Nevertheless, the situation in Norway, as compared to the one in Poland, is tremendously different, allowing the father to spend time with his family and rarely work at weekends. It is worth mentioning that these stories have a practical daily dimension, but also extent to the long-term planning and general attitudes. One example is that the Polish respondents became quite adamant about benefitting from their employee rights with regard to leisure time, as exemplified in the quotation from Andrzej:

> An employer is not to dictate me when should I be able to take my leave – Andrzej, one child, one year in Norway.

Further unveiling of the primary importance of migration with regard to having children, the migrants – especially women – have often recounted the Norwegian welfare state's guarantees of support for parents:

> I work in a profession [kindergarten teacher] where a decision [to have a child] is not at all problematic. It is mostly women working in this area and most of them have children, they know how it is, so it is easy… there is no problem that one is pregnant. In fact, I have started a new job when I was pregnant and it felt strange but it was not a problem (…). The maternity benefit/leave is very long, and one can share it with a father, so the dad had also been able to stay at home with them – Emilia, two children, eleven years in Norway.

The women were quite unanimous in stating that becoming a parent in Norway is – unlike in Poland – not frown upon at the workplace. A special emphasis was also put on how the promotion of the dual earner dual career model alters the gender relations in many couples, since the men utilized the 'father quota' of the leave (see also Pustułka, Struzik, Ślusarczyk 2015, Żadkowska, Kosakowska-Berezecka, Ryndyk 2016). Consequently, a former solely female strain connected with motherhood and maternity can be alleviated and elicits re-negotiations of the traditionally gendered work-life imbalance and conflicts. It essentially assigns men a dedicated time 'away from work' and, simultaneously, induces women to work regardless of their parenting duties. At the same time, however, we have not noticed that there is a convergence of male and female perceptions of work, as argued by Hochschild (1997) and Reeves (2001). While the WLB concerns both men and women, the gender orders remain somewhat stable in exerting different types of pressure. Among the Polish migrants, the time bind on the whole still makes the work that needs to be done for the WLB a primarily women's issue (Milkie, Peltola 1999; Chambers 2012; Gattrell 2005).

The support for family time and the balance between private and work lives does not finish with the generous leaves for young children carers, but comprises also convenient working hours and a predictable schedule which guarantees a certain quality of life. The relatively high wages allow more people to decide to work part-time, while the increasing flexibility of devising schedules helps keeping the work and family balance alive in the long-term perspective for parents of older children (see also Emslie, Hunt 2009). The respondents are very much aware of how beneficial the limited commuting and reasonable time of getting back home are for their experiences at home:

> We are lucky to be working till 4 p.m., both of us. We work in the same town we live in and have everything close by. It is enough to have one car to take care of everything – Daria and Adam, two children, seven years in Norway.
> Michał comes home at 3:30 and then we can plan the rest of the day together. If we go to a shop, then we all go. We drive together, go for walks together – Magda and Michał, two children, six and seven years in Norway.

Norwegian working hours differ starkly from the memories and imbalanced private/work spheres that the respondents experienced back in Poland. There, the reality of insecurity (for those who struggle, lower-educated, new graduates) or

a neoliberal rat race (for the more established, professionals) meant that having small children posed substantial risks concerning a family's financial stability, partners' career paths, and, most importantly the quality of family relations in a coupledom and between parents and children. Many respondents reminisced that men's breadwinning obligations in the end caused the husbands' permanent absence from home, childcare, and leisure.

> It was very hard because I wasn't working and he was working all the time. We also still lived with the in-laws, so everything was not as it should be for me (…). We later planned to go abroad (…) but it has turned out that I was pregnant with our son, so we again stayed in this [miserable] Poland (…). So my husband worked and worked, while I just sat at home and raised the kids – Agnieszka, two children, three years in Norway.

It was quite common for the women not to have a chance of negotiating anything resembling balance. The 'time bind' remained extremely strong and tied with the cultural constructions of femininity (Connell 2005) in Poland, thus negatively affecting the health and the well-being of all family members. Beata recalls her life prior to migration, after the birth of her first child:

> It was just the dull everyday life and nagging, arguments, I was tired [from taking caring of a newborn], weighing less and less, my weight was dropping day and night, and Przemek was working a three-shift-job and went to university, so the exhaustion, no, really, we did not enjoy each other, nor the baby. One only understands it after some time, actually even after several years (…). I have then realized that [Przemek] was coming back from work and I was only hoping to be able to put [our son] into his arms 'Take care of him, daddy, it's not only mum but also dad that a baby need'. And Przemek was all like 'what does she want from me? I have to get some sleep to get up for work'. So really we had hit those very low points – Beata, five children, six years in Norway.

The interesting finding here is that Polish families in Norway may not necessarily openly re-negotiate gender contracts, but the shift towards more WLB for both men and women nevertheless occurs in their households. This is because the 'transformations of family roles' are happening in a particular twofold manner. Firstly, they are preconditioned by the external factors and the societal effect of the policies in a destination country's welfare state (Gallie 2003). They are further reinforced by the comparisons made with the Polish post-communist system that does virtually nothing to promote WLB (Sadowska-Snarska 2008, 2011; Płomień 2009). Secondly, the main transformative power seems to lie in the parent-child relations of care. Open renegotiations of gendered division of productive and reproductive labour seem to remain challenging in the Polish cultural setting of traditional values that many migrant couples live in. However, the major gender effect can be seen in the alleviated burdens of mothers and the possibility and the cultural appropriateness of engagement of fathers (see also Pustułka, Struzik, Ślusarczyk 2015).

Summing up, the top-down shift (rather than the inner bottom-up transformation of values) in the family roles and practices is mostly narrated as a chance for both parents to take part in childrearing and care. The institutional promotion of the 'dual carer – dual earner' model in Norway, with the mechanisms like 'father quota', has been offered in Poland, but the solutions are new and so far failed to be incorporated to the parenting and child-raising cultures. Again, the societal effect of culture and welfare (Gallie 2003; Crompton, Lyonette 2006) predominantly embeds caring and parenting roles in the private sphere, making it an intra-family concern in Poland. It is assumed that any problems with support will be solved by kinship networks, especially grandparents (Abendroth, Den Dulk 2011; Slany, Ślusarczyk, Krzyżowski 2014). The respondents at first appear surprised and find it hard to believe that the Norwegian employer approve of caring duties, parental leaves, as well as broader long-run WLB assistance, yet with time they also begin to consider it obvious, as well as legally and culturally supported. To illustrate this point, among those quoted in the article, both Michał (Magda's husband) and Emilia's life-partner took extended leaves, while Cyryl, who is sharing the custody over his son after a divorce, described receiving a considerable aid from his workplace, even though he performs a low-level skilled job. These are the extract from the interviews:

> – So have you indeed shared the leave?
> – Yes, we did. He took his six – I am not sure how many – I think even more – ten weeks for [our daughter]. For [our son] he had a bit less [of an allowance] – Emilia, two children, eleven years in Norway.
> – Michał took it [the leave]. He took care of our [younger daughter] for three months.
> – I had a twelve weeks paternity leave [tacierzyńskiego], as they call it – Magda and Michał, two children, six and seven years in Norway.
> It's the law here. So sometimes it happened that I have just come to work and my ex-[wife] would have called me and said that [our son] was sick and needed to be taken home from the kindergarten. This was never a problem – I would just call in and said I needed to finish work and go, someone would be called in to fill my spot [for the day]. The law here says that one cannot be fired for something like that. In Poland, however, well, I have friends who just had a baby and the wife, she has just broken her leg. He worked for, I am not sure, one and a half or maybe two years in one company (…) and took a leave. He took one week, it is normal, a broken leg will not heal in a day, that's clear. Then he took one more week and instantaneously got fired. They told him that one should work and not sit around at home. I'd say that [having a family] is normal [here] but in Poland it's crazy, it's not like it should be – Cyryl, one child, thirteen years in Norway.

Summing up, the sentiments and critiques perspiring from the respondents' WLB narratives are similar.

5. Conclusions

To sum up our discussions, it has to be said that the Polish migrant couples with children who settled and found an occupation in Norway, interviewed for the *Transfam*'s WP2 study, have evaluated the ability to achieve and maintain the work-life balance in their new foreign surroundings very positively. The decisions' to move abroad were very much affected by the bottom-down spill-over of the macro social consequences of the welfare systems they found themselves in. A change from the Polish to the Norwegian system means tremendously effective family and work reconfigurations, and is conducive to potential outcomes for the WLB. This applied to how broadly the people revised the meaning of work in their life, and the intra-family modification of choices concerning parenting, care and the quality of leisure.

The WLB logic of an international move from Poland to Norway can be explained with the welfare state regimes' terminology (Esping-Andersen 1989; Korpi 2000; Bühlmann, Elcheroth, Tettamanti 2010). First, it signifies leaving behind the post-communist regime, which glues together the remainders of the past socialist state and welfare support provisions with the hectically created neoliberal and family-oriented 'rolling out the state' (Sadowska-Snarska 2008, 2011). We concur with with Płomień that Poles inherently turn towards the implicitly present 'familialism' (2009). As the kin networks cease to be sufficient, they suffer under the residual nature of care and employment policies, as well as a diminishing support for working mothers, which altogether make any proposals in the WLB area 'miss the point' (Płomień 2009: 147). Secondly, a transition is an encounter and an eventual submergence in the Norwegian socio-democracy, marked by generous, 'defamilialized' and 'rolling back to the state' type of a welfare regime. The new lives abroad operate under the main macro social and political assumption that the state is responsible for how society and families are able to function as its basic institutions. A state's institutional system reflects this care by offering support to citizens and residents, especially families with children.

The positive consequences of the Norwegian WLB-promoting policies are multifaceted. It appears from the interviews with the Polish migrants that they primarily pertain to developing stronger bonds between parents and children, a better quality of life, a better health and well-being, less fatigue, self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as an often underscored new finding that there is more to life than just work (see also Pustułka 2015). On the contrary, we have not found the WLB to be particularly de-gendering in the Polish context (see also Sadowska-Snarska 2008), considering how time bind and greediness of work and a family as an all-embracing institution need to be navigated, negotiated and established primarily by women. Caring duties, as well as the need to keep a family together by shared practices and the organization of leisure time, appear to be considered a female task (Slany, Ślusarczyk, Krzyżowski 2014; Slany, Krzaklewska, Warat 2015).

At the same time, one has to be cautious to acknowledge that the majority of migrants have not been staying in Norway for more than a decade, and the

inflow to this country is rather new. Therefore, it is difficult to predict how, with the passing of time, some of the gender equality-focused mechanisms (e.g. 'father quote') might in the future alter the WLB in its more gendered sense in the Polish households abroad. Additionally, in support of this claim there are the socio-demographic characteristics of the migrants, which now point to a number of people experiencing deskilling and a considerable proportion of people not in the workforce (Huang, Krzaklewska, Pustułka 2016). The pattern particularly applies to women and might be somehow explained by the population's demographic structure, with women being in the reproductive age and having children. Being outside of the labour market is dictated by a family's current needs and the postponing of the procreative plans, yet it is possible that it also distorts the WLB perspective and evaluation that may change after this phase of the family cycle is completed. When Polish women seek to go back to work, we observe both those who experience certain challenges, and some that are able to progress quickly through ranks and secure demanding, top-level managerial positions (Huang, Krzaklewska, Pustułka 2016). The fact that they perceive Norway as conducive to completing their professional goals should be noted.

It has to be seen, however, how both men and women are affected by the increasing global flexibility demands, further changes in the landscape of work, and the length of their settlement abroad, which may all warrant a renegotiation of the WLB contracts in the Polish couples and families. This paper demonstrated the general outcomes of the WLB for the entire families (including children) and expanded the basic understanding of professional work and family/housework by acknowledging the significance of a family leisure. At this point, a somewhat 'genderless' yet enthusiastic implementation of the Norwegian institutional mechanisms seems to suffice the couples' needs, as they commonly reflected on experiencing a possibility of having a balance for the first time in their adult life. Nevertheless, while the WLB improves on the surface, thanks to the prominent structural solutions and regime's characteristics, there is still room for more gender-centred and progressive modifications of the migrants' worldviews about masculinities and femininities in the WLB reality.

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Putting gender into the migration-development nexus. A micro level case study of Sri Lanka

Be it an indigenously or exogenously driven process, gender roles play an important part in the mechanisms affecting changes in a society. It has been theorized that migration creates a real challenge to the persistent patriarchal structure and gender stereotypes within and outside the households of migrant workers in their country of origin. Otherwise using data from an empirically designed longitudinal ethnographic research, this paper argues that migration hardly brings out stable or enduring structural changes in the traditional gender roles in women's lives at the micro level. Instead, migration brings forth a set of simultaneous interplays into gender roles. Particularly, the change in migrant women's roles within households is not perceived to affect the overall micro level social structure. It is simply a partial and short-term outcome of an exogenous process. Migration-induced changes in gender roles arbitrarily shake, strain and disrupt the existing social, cultural and institutional foundations on the micro level. The study finds strong evidence that the long-term impact of arbitrary changes in gender roles causes a number of micro social issues. The consequences of these issues insidiously impair the long-term developmental capabilities of migrant households in the country of origin.

Key words: gender, migration and development

Introduction

Sri Lanka is a developing country, currently undergoing a transition to a middle-income status. It is the first nation that has introduced trade liberalization policies in South Asia in the late 1970s. The sudden introduction of the neo-liberal economic policy reforms enables Sri Lanka to win access to the international labour market. In fact, along with the economic policy reforms, the country's migration boom fully coincided with the worldwide demand for the oil production from the

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countries in the Persian Gulf in the 1970s. Having started the momentum in such a way as of 2013, Sri Lanka became a home country for nearly three and a half million workers (WB 2013). This number represents approximately twenty percent of the country's domestic labour force (CBSL 2012). The economic impact of the international migration and the resulting inflows of remittance are often viewed positively in Sri Lanka both at the macro and micro levels (IPS 2013). Migration workers' remittances are a great source of foreign exchange to the economy. Official figures state that the country received a high stream of remittances amounting to approximately ten percent of the country's GDP in 2012 (CBSL 2012). Over the last three decades of its engagement in the global labour supply chain, Sri Lanka has been widely seen as a proved case of the operational nexus between migration and development in the Global South (IPS 2013). Furthermore, Sri Lanka has been known to be successful in utilizing remittances to increase the per capita income, thereby reducing poverty and increasing access to the basic services such as health, education and livelihood development opportunities (Sanjeewanie 2012).

Aside from operational links of migration to economic growth and development, however, labour migration has turned out to be a full-blown social challenge to the Sri Lankan society. For the most part, the roots of this challenge lie in the village level social dynamics. In the last three and a half decades of Sri Lanka's migrant labour boom, female labour migration has largely outnumbered the male one (Gamburd 2000). It has been recorded that the majority of these outbound female migrants are married, with an average of two or three children of school age (Sanjeewanie 2012). Sri Lankan migrant workers' plight in the home country has reverberated with ripples of shock waves in the recent years, as compared to its original burgeoning in the 1980s, due to its heavy social cost on the families left behind. Migration induces big changes in spending patterns, family structures, gender relations and micro social relations, particularly in rural settings (Gallina 2007). The most commonplace stories about the migrant families' issues often relate to instances of family destruction, spousal abandonment, school dropouts, alcoholism and drug addiction, paternal incest, and physical, sexual and psychological abuses mostly against girls left behind. Concerning all these issues, gender remains a fundamental cause in understanding the extent of development outcomes and the problems of migrant families.

Putting gender into development; theoretical context

Gender roles play an important part in the mechanisms affecting changes in a society. The sociology of modernization and development explores the influence of gender roles in development in two distinct ways. Firstly, the case is that the established patterns of gender roles in the family organization can create substantive stimulation for social formation to bring about desired changes. Secondly, being open to the opportunities of development can bring about a progressive change

in the traditional gender roles (Hulme, Turner 1990). Talcott Parsons from the structural-functionalist perspective extends his discussion on family to explain the differentiation of gender roles within a family. Partners of a family are somehow assigned to perform different and sometimes complementary functions. Men are mostly involved in fulfilling an instrumental role, while women perform a complementary role of an expressive nature. However, Parson analyses women's central role within a family, particularly in the matter of their bonding with children (Jacobsen *et al.* 2004). German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies (1855–1936) describes human social life based on the relations between family members. His observations derived from empirical research repeatedly show that the strongest relationship in the family organization is between a mother and her children. The relationship between a father and children appears to be less instinctual than that between a mother and a child. Psychologist Edward John Mostyn Bowlby (1969) argues that a mother's emotional role in the childrearing leads her to become a child's psychic organizer. He further contends that the lack of the maternal love can have disastrous consequences for children's emotional health.

The connection between gender and development invokes a great deal of research in social anthropology. Yet, the conceptual and analytical grounding of the case of gender in development has not escaped the attention of feminist sociologists as well. Social anthropologists clearly explain that the role of women in the spheres of childrearing and domesticity is important in bringing stability to the family organization (Bowlby 1969). Even feminist scholars in their arguments countering gender stereotypes widely acknowledge the mothering role in the process of men's and women's personality development in a society (Chodorow 1978). Chodorow asserts that the emotional bond between a mother and a child naturally builds the influence of the mother's dominant role at the early stages of the child's life. Irrespective of this contention being a subject to the debate, however, nurturing social values is symbolically attached to women (Jacobsen *et al.* 2004). Feminist scholars acknowledge women's affinity with social values as an element which forms a basis for the desired social change.

Method of sampling and methodology

A case specific sample was drawn from a rural village called Polhena in the extreme south of Sri Lanka. Polhena has been known for a considerable number of remittance recipient families (Sanjeewanie 2012). Given the power of its socioeconomic significance in relation to migrant families, the village offered a good cause for being the primary research site of the study. The initial sample was selected using the criterion-based method. The strongest reason for the selection of the sample frame was the anecdotal evidence of migration-induced changes in gender roles and their potential to trigger disruptive social consequences for a long-term development at the micro level. The sample consisted of a total of ten migrant

families who were financially dependent on the remittances sent home by their migrant relatives in the last five or more years. The first round of collecting the field based data for the study took place in June 2008. The second round of the research was conducted in August 2013. In July 2014, further observations of the same set of cases were undertaken.

A well-focused case study of selected migrant families was applied as the main research method. In-depth individual interviews and participatory approaches made up a huge data collection. On some occasions, narrative interviews were also conducted. In order to maintain the consistency of information revealed in the case studies, the researcher referred to a guide questionnaire during the field work. A number of problem centered interviews were also held with informed tacit sources. A semi-structured interview was also conducted with a government officer of the village. All cases subject to the study were covertly and overtly observed by the researcher during and after the field work. In some crucial and serious cases secondary observations were done later, through a locally based informant.

Eight out of the ten migrant families of the sample had female migrants. Of these, five women were still working abroad and three had returned. There were two families with male migrants. The Gulf countries exporting oil were a common host destination for all the migrant workers of the sample. Seven migrants had worked in their host destinations either as housemaids (all four women) and unskilled or semi-skilled laborers (the men). All these workers had repeated their migration to the same destination during the last twenty or more years. The researched migrant workers were all in the age group between forty-five and fifty-five years, were married and had no less than one to three children at the time of their migration.

Dimensions of the counter-developmental micro social consequences

Micro social consequences of the migration-induced changes in gender roles in development were analyzed using a multi-dimensional approach. The dimensions selected for the analysis included principal issues and concerns in relation to left-behind children, failed marriages, spousal abandonment and the problems of re-integration. As regards the underlying reasons for these dimensions, they were somehow closely interconnected with each other. The process of establishing dimensions was largely guided by the generalization of individual cases of the sample. Therefore, the set of the foregoing dimensions primarily referred to the respective social and cultural context in which the study had been undertaken. For the purpose of the analysis, the significance of the degree of intensity and the frequency of issues and concerns pertaining to the key dimensions were analyzed explanatively.

Putting Gender into the Migration-Development Nexus

In general, migration apparently created a real challenge to the functioning of the persistent patriarchal structure and gender stereotypes within and outside the households of migrant workers. The study found a suggestive evidence that migration accompanied a set of compelling reasons for changes in traditional gender roles and power relations within migrant households in the Sri Lankan rural society. The village women's participation in migration contributed in many ways to bridge the existing gender gaps, particularly in terms of rights, freedom, opportunities and privileges. The findings of the study also overlapped well with the developing country context of migration, as it has opened a window of opportunities for women's empowerment. Notably all the migrant women of the sample enjoyed their right to choose work and women's traditional role in childrearing was not considered a barrier for them to enjoy such a freedom of choice. The women's economic contribution to a family during their migration significantly surpassed that of their husbands. In terms of economic contributions, the changing context of gender roles within a household had gradually led to a transfer of the role of the main breadwinner to the female workers of the sample. The study also explored the overwhelming evidence of the changing patterns of property rights (especially rights to land) between husbands and wives, which is the fundamental basis of the patriarchal relations of power in the Sri Lankan context.

Despite all these notable positive changes in gender roles and power relations, however, migration also influenced gender interplays within households in other very complex ways. These interplays evidently created challenges in negating the migration-induced positive changes in power relations and gender roles within and outside migrant families in quite oppressive rural social settings. The explorative analysis of the case study revealed a set of complex and counter-productive changes in gender dynamics within households of both male and female migrant workers. Positive changes in gender roles, especially in terms of the improvement of women's role within households, were deemed to last only for a certain period of time. During the active periods of earning, especially abroad, women enjoyed more power in household affaires than as returned migrants. The long-term migration exposed family members who were left behind to new social and economic vulnerabilities. The long-term absence of mothers forced fathers to take up maternal roles for the left-behind children, while mothers played a single parent role in the absence of migrant husbands. Initially, internal adjustments of household roles were peacefully negotiated between husbands and wives, and based on the prospect of a family's future economic elevation. But such economic motives lost their value particularly in the eyes of the men who were left behind for a longer time. Doing housework and childrearing eventually damages their sense of pride and self-respect as men. The migration of their wives steadily and gradually caused a shrinking of the men's role as traditional breadwinners of families. Thus, in the context where so-

cially and culturally constructed gender roles are deeply ingrained, such sudden changes in the husband's role within a household diminished his masculinity. Changes in socially assigned gender roles within a family even drew the attention of neighbors and in general the village appeared to shun men who were financially dependent on their wives.

It was also a common practice among the villagers to suspect the migrant women of being involved in prostitution in their host countries. As a result, when families received money from abroad, the villagers often ridiculed husbands for selling their wives for money. Such a social blame would often reach the ears of adult children of families as well. On the other hand, those wives who had been left behind by their husbands were more exposed to oppressive treatment, mostly by their immediate relatives. The findings emerging from the cases of failed marriages of female migrant workers showed that the confrontations resulting from the issues of changing gender roles often resulted in growing fissures in family relationships in the long run. The frustration resulting from the undermining of their gender role in the family sometimes was strong enough to cause the men to become alcoholics. Alcoholism appeared to be an enduring issue affecting the whole family and was often the biggest obstacle for men to use their own skills productively. The tendency of chronic unemployment among the left-behind husbands was very high. Also the overall pattern of men's depression and alienation within a family sometimes led them to seek their own relief, mostly by re-marrying another woman who represented a female stereotype. Alcoholism and re-marrying were often the way for the men to regain their lost manhood in the village.

By setting the findings of the study in a general national context of female migrant workers, it was very rare that the husbands or the society treated the returned migrant women with respect, especially on grounds of their contribution to households' well-being, sacrifices and various kinds of hardships experienced while working abroad. Instead, the returned migrant women were suspected of having had extra-marital relationships with men while living abroad. The society is not ready to see migration as a route towards the empowerment of women, but instead, inflicts a long-term marginalization on them, upon their return.

The reasons affecting the family separation did not, however, emerge one-sidedly from the social consequences of the changing gender identities of men. There was sufficient evidence of the women's contribution to the problem as well. All the respondents representing the cases of households of female migrant workers revealed suggestive evidence that female migrant workers on their return home were reluctant to live with their husbands. They had experienced a modern lifestyle abroad for a long period of time, which was very different to living in the village society. Also their exposure to the world outside of their village and the country built their self-confidence. Being the main breadwinners, these women's power to make key decisions in a family was also increased and after being exposed to their rights and freedom, they were not prepared to live with the ste-

reotypical husbands anymore. They were also not willing to tolerate any sort of resistance resulting from strong masculine traits at home.

The real fact about these cases, however, is that the impact of migration on the changing traditional gender roles has worked in two different directions simultaneously. Migration has empowered migrant women while further strengthening the male stereotypes at home. The gendered changes resulting from migration have caused serious power imbalances between men and women in the families. Thus, migration has not been effective in catalyzing the systemic process of simultaneous changes in gender roles and power re-constructions between men and women at the micro level.

The pattern of re-migration among female migrants also soaked in more evidence of counter-productive impact of the changing gender roles on women. The re-migration of women was largely a means of maintaining the breadwinner role. Many cases of women's migration created a lifetime breadwinner role and similarly an enduring spinner of chaos in families and responsibilities for women. Because of the growing role of women who took up new functions in providing for a family, their husbands and adult children gradually became dependent on the remittances and such dependency reduced the incentive to find jobs for themselves. These consequences led to an even more pathetic state of family affairs when the men's undertaking of the women's duties of child caring and housekeeping was largely unfulfilled. The level of complexity of the issues with regard to the left-behind children mattered most in the re-integration process of female migrants and thus, burdening women with dual roles continued unchanged. The re-integration phase was seen as the last stage of the regressive cycle of the development achieved by migrant families.

Returnee female migrants notably failed in the re-adaptation to their previous life as caregivers and homebound mothers. In Asian culture, the common portrayal of a woman is quite exploitative. In such a scenario, if a woman is not a quintessential mother, wife or daughter-in-law, her husband and relatives are not very accepting of her. So the power gained by these women resulted not in creating a resource for a family, but rather a problem on their doorstep. Thus, the rural society devised no endogenous passage to sustain their empowerment. When women were not willing to be marginalized, there occurred disputes and disagreements with the rest of the family. Reintegration to the family and society as a changed person was an uphill task, especially for the women in the rural society. It was also apparent that social consequences made a re-migration inevitable for the returnees.

The evidence of changes in the gender roles and relations of migration was not only related to husbands and wives, but also to the left-behind children. The children of the respondent households had grown up in the long-term absence of one or both parents. They were living mostly with their grandmothers or immediate relatives. In all cases, the foster-caring grandmothers were not educated and some were obviously illiterate. The grandmothers' role as the key reference

individual for the children of both sexes throughout their early childhood and adolescence impacted gender issues on a wide range. Grandmothers are often actively involved in reproducing the gender stereotypes and patriarchal patterns within Asian families, and the left-behind children's close relationship with their grandmothers played a strong role in building their gender identity. In line with typical social attitudes, grandmothers favored their grandsons over granddaughters. In the case of paternal grandmothers, this emotional intensity between grandmothers and grandsons appeared to be very high and the grandmothers' care-giving role wielded a great influence on instilling a deep sense of masculinity and gender stereotypes in boys. In many cases, this sense of manhood and power led boys to violent behavior. Through observations of the cases and from the information revealed by tacit sources, there was a high incidence of domestic violence, where sisters frequently suffered at the hands of their elder brothers, within their homes.

Likewise, girls also tended to develop their gender stereotypes through reference to their grandmothers, believing that they should take up maternal roles for their male siblings and perform domestic chores because they were girls. Girls started experiencing the gender-based discrimination at a very young age of their lives at home and thus, gradually came to terms with their growing subordinate position at home. The grandmothers' role in the foster care often overtly influenced boys in developing the ego boundaries from their own sisters, which exacerbated a gender tension between brothers and sisters of the same respondent households. These repercussions were quite obvious, resulting in left-behind children being disposed towards long-term unchangeable gender stereotypes. As far as the individualization and socialization of those children were concerned, they were exposed to the same conservative social structure of gender stereotypes as their parents' generation. Thus, on a micro scale, the continued patterns of the status quo had directionally restrained qualitative enrichments of the positive changes in gender roles and their relations.

Such circumstances strongly suggest that migration brings out no stable or enduring structural changes into power relations and gender roles at the micro level. Instead, migration appears to bring forth a set of simultaneous interplays into gender roles. Especially the changes in the role of migrant women did not appear to have touched the overall social structure at a micro level. Also the change of the sort was not resulting in the response to the advancement of the overall quality of the social structure concerned. Simply, it was only a partial outcome of an exogenous process. Thus, the micro level social system and its subsystems embrace no overall seeds of change in gender dynamics. Furthermore, the adaptation becomes more painful when the changes in gender roles occur in an arbitrary manner. The long-term repercussions of painful changes jeopardized the stability and the status quo of a family well-being and its strength as an institution in the micro socioeconomic system as a whole.

Discussion and Conclusions

Migration is seen most in the light of its economic potential. The multiple homogenous references to the economic gains of migration have contributed most to the discourse of migration and the development nexus in the direction of a serious lack of evaluation of various features of development that characterize functioning and capabilities of lives of migrant workers and their families. Not surprisingly, the gender aspect of migration is the one that hardly becomes an input into the migration-development nexus. Nevertheless, prevalently in gender studies, it has been empirically theorized that migration can create a real challenge to the persistent patriarchal structures and gender stereotypes within and outside the households of migrant workers in their country of origin, particularly in the global South. But it is absolutely clear that migration is not a homogenous process that can pursuit the enduring gender changes in every society, and above all, not every society is prepared to put its gender potentials into the migration-development nexus. Likewise, the gender dimensions of migration and development nexus can be centered in two different ways. Migration can induce social changes in minimizing the gender gaps in a given society. And at the same time, the gender elements of migration can hurt the links between migration and development, rather than help them. The impact of gender on the migration and development nexus sometimes poses anomalous effects to the very nature of the social structure and the organization of a given society.

In Sri Lanka, of course, gender has serious implications regarding the migration and development nexus. In effect, it can derail or destroy socioeconomic capabilities within and outside the migrant households. Migration can influence a range of short-term and long-term gender-related social consequences that go beyond the income-related capabilities it generates. The micro social consequences of the gender-related issues of the left-behind children, failed marriages, spousal abandonment and the problems of reintegration of migrant workers were, disturbingly, strong enough to cause a chain of socioeconomic consequences that could undermine the development capabilities of the migrant workers' households. Even though the income growth is crucial in achieving the economic progress, the ultimate sustainability of development is largely dependent on the social and economic dimensions that are fundamentally interrelated with the present capacities of the people's lives. Gender role changes, influenced by migration within families and its social repercussions, decisively affect the long-term families' well-being and the productivity of the human capital, and thereby, the households' capacity to participate in the ongoing social and economic processes. The utility of the remittances could considerably overshadow the actual prerequisites for a god life, and even emasculate the families' defense against the social chaos. The financial effect of migration, however, is not powerful enough to alleviate the overall adverse effects of micro social consequences on the long-term development. Instead, the micro social consequences clearly tend to undermine, in the long run, the financial effect, or simply the poverty reduction, as the advantages of the remittances.

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Statistical trends and law regulations of Japanese marriage

> If Socrates were alive today and living in Japan, he'd say, "my advice to you is to get married. If you find a good wife, you'll be happy; if not, you'll become a philosopher".
> www.professorshouse.com

This article will endeavor to examine the process of Japanese marriage through the prism of its law regulations and various requirements, all of which are intrinsic to the formation of a marriage partnership. This will include a range of trends within the sphere of marriage and divorce, numerous examples of documents pertinent and relating to the institution of marriage, as well as several sociological and economic theories of future trends in marriage. The article is based on high quality multiple data sources taken from Japanese census reports, relevantly social statistics and nationally representative large-scale surveys such as the Statistical Handbook of Japan, the Japanese National Fertility Survey and Vital Statistics of Japan (2015), with scientific commentary from fellow researchers in the field.

Key words: law, family and marriage, Japan

About Japanese marriage

The institution of Japanese marriage has proven to be a very interesting areas of research, the scope of which is considerably diverse and wide-ranging. In terms of legal procedures, it is no different from that of most other countries, but the social and culture trends which comprise it, are fascinating and somewhat revelatory in a social context, most notaby for scientists. In this article, I will present the law regulations of Japanese marriage, which will encompass past trends once inherent in Japanese marriage and divorce.

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Law regulations of Japanese marriage

To begin with, any future husband and wife must register at a municipal government office. It is here that the appropriate documentation for marriage application is officially filed, thereby beginning the process of civil marriage. It is important to note (japan.usembassy.gov 2015) – that religious ceremonies and other spiritual observances are held at churches or shrines elsewhere, and are not a valid element of the marriage act. Husbands and wives can organize special ceremonies for celebratory or religious purposes, but as previously illustrated, they are not part of the r of the official requirements when conducting the marriage process (Seed 2012).

Article 24 of the Constitution of Japan (日本国憲法, Nihon-koku-kenpō), and articles from 731 to 737 of the Japanese Civil Code (民法 *Minpō*) and Family Register Act (戸籍法 *Kosekihō*) give more details of the requirements and restrictions produced by this institution. For example, some wards or prefectures may impose special restrictions on couples (seiyaku.com 2015). Article 24 of the *Japanese Constitution* stipulates that marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes, and that it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of both husband and wife as the existing foundation. Additionally, in regards to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes (Family Register Act 1947).

Following on from this, is the *Family Register Act*, which represents the next important step in the Japanese marriage process. Article 13 of the *Family Register Act* states that in addition to the registered domicile, all relevant matters according to the individual shall be entered into a family register. Article 74 states that people wishing to marry their prospective spouse should submit a notification to that effect, including the surname that both husband and wife will take, as well as other stipulations as specified by the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice. Article 75 states that the provisions of Article 63 of the *Family Register Act* should apply mutatis mutandis in the case where a judicial decision of annulment of a marriage has become final and binding. When a public prosecutor files such an action, he or she shall request that an entry be made in the family register without delay.

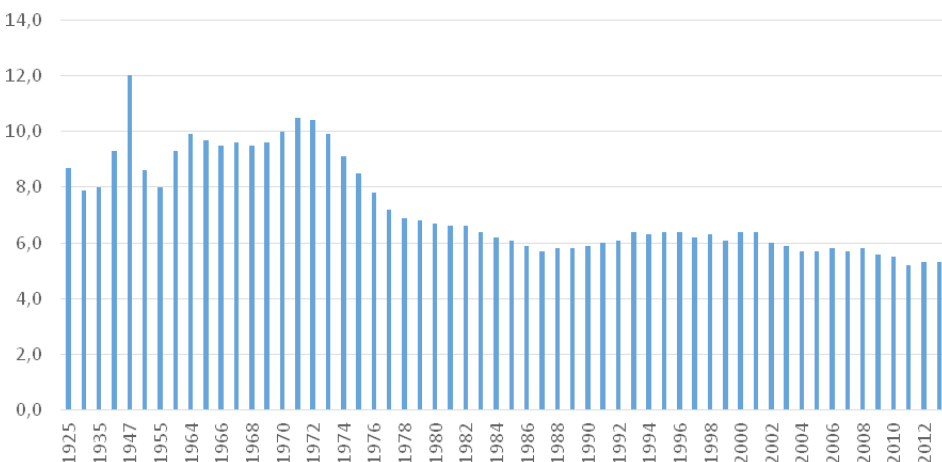
In articles 731–737 of the Japanese Civil Code (book IV, chapter II, section I), we can find many legal requirements for prospective spouses – for example, marriageable age, prohibition of bigamy, period of prohibition of remarriage, prohibition of marriage between close relatives (relative by blood), prohibition of marriage between lineal relatives by affinity, prohibition of marriage, parental consent for marriage of minors, marriage of adult ward, notification of marriage and acceptance of notification of marriage (Japanese Civil Code 1896).

Japan's Civil Code also clearly stipulates that same-sex couples are not legally allowed to marry in Japan, because only a person who is legally a man can marry a person who is legally a woman. Marriage in Japanese law is recognized as being a union between man and woman only (Article 24 of the Constitution of Japan 1946) (Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships 2014).

Trends of Japanese marriage

The Japanese National Fertility Survey, the *Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples* (jap. *Shussho doko kihon chosa*) is a national survey which is conducted every five years to determine the current situations and backgrounds of married couples throughout the country (this information is not contained within any other publicly available statistics) (*The Fourteenth Japanese National Fertility Survey*, 2010). "The age of the first encounter is higher, the length of courtship has lengthened and the trend of later marriage further strengthened" – we can read in *Overview of the Results of the Thirteenth Japanese National Fertility Survey, Married Couples*. Interestingly, the authors of the report noted that the average age of couples meeting for the first time, had increased for both sexes, with a continuing increase in the proportion of resulting marriages (Kaneko *et al.* 2008).

These significant changes in marriage trends were duly noticed by Robert D. Retherford, Naohiro Ogawa and Rikiya Matsukura, in their book *Late Marriage and Less Marriage in Japan*, in which they detailed how Japan is now one of the main countries in which people marry much later on in their lives. Between 1975 and 2005, the age at which women first married increased from 24.7 to 28.0 years, while for men it rose from 27.0 to 29.8 (see Table 1 below) (Retherford, Ogawa, Matsukura 2001). What is more, in 2013 there was another increase, (see Table 1), from 30.9 for men, and 29.3 for women (www.stat.go.jp 2014; www.jref.com 2013). Primarily, the marriage rate has been increasing since the early 1970s (see Graph 1 below). In the article, *Marriage in Japan*, taken from the website http://www.jref.com/, it is stated that many "scholars have attributed this high marriage percentage to confucian ethics of fidelity, to household continuity or the obligation of every person to marry" (www.jref.com 2013).



Graph 1. Marriage rate (1925–2012)

Source: www.stat.go.jp (accessed: 21.12.2016).

Table 1. Mean age of first marriage in Japan

Year	Groom	Bride
1950	25.9	23.0
1955	26.6	23.8
1960	27.2	24.4
1965	27.2	24.5
1970	26.9	24.2
1975	27.0	24.7
1980	27.8	25.2
1985	28.2	25.5
1990	28.4	25.9
1995	28.5	26.3
2000	28.8	27.0
2005	29.8	28.0
2010	30.5	28.8
2011	30.7	29.0
2012	30.8	29.2
2013	30.9	29.3

Source: www.stat.go.jp (accessed: 21.12.2016).

This particular trend in which either fewer Japanese marriages are taking place, or happening later on in life, has noticeably been rising since the 1970s (Fukuda 2013). From 1965 to 1970, the marriage rate noticeably increased, but afterwards the rate subsequently declined, and as such became the general trend in Japanese marriage today. In 2011, there were 662,000 marriages, marking the first time that this figure fell below 700,000 couples. Two years later, 661,000 couples married, the rate dropping to 5.3.

Stephanie Nakajima wrote that some of the reasons for this tendency towards marrying later on in life was due to the following social changes:

a) socially acceptable to stay unmarried,
b) income and career become more important than traditional dating,
c) woman are more ambitious and educated than ever before,
d) fewer marriageable men on the market,
e) woman and man houseroles,
f) unrealistic expectation of both of sexes (Nakajima 2012).

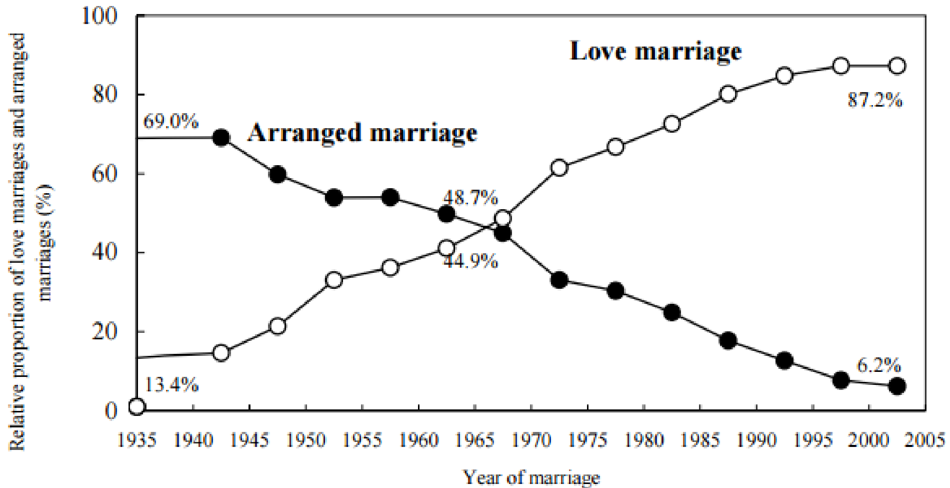
Another author wrote that the reasons are “bound up with rapid educational gains by women, massive increases in the proportion of women who work for pay outside the home, major changes in the structure and functioning of the marriage market, extraordinary increases in the prevalence of premarital sex, and far-reaching changes in values relating to marriage and family life” (Retherford, Ogawa, Matsukura 2001). Setsuya Fukuda in his article *The new socioeconomic marriage differentials in Japan* wrote that today much less is known about the new

relationship between women's economic standing and the likelihood of marriage in Japan, because:

- "whether these new evidences are truly a population trend as they are based on panel data analysis of rather selective cohorts",
- "whether the emerging marriage pattern suggests an increasing trend of socioeconomic homogamy in Japan" (Fukuda 2014).

Arranged and love marriage

Love marriage has completely replaced arranged marriage during the last fifty postwar years. When analyzing the proportions of these two types of marriage based on the results from the Japanese National Fertility Surveys, we can see that after the war the proportion of arranged marriages consistently fell, and that ever since, this proportion, especially during 1965–1969, was replaced by love marriages (Kaneko *et al.* 2008). The dates below show that there has been a sizeable shift in the percentage between love and arranged marriages, with the latter accounting for nearly 70% of all marriages in Japan in the 1930s, whereas now more than 80% of marital unions in Japan are love marriages (see Graph 2) (Yamashita 2014; Hendry 1981; Kato 2013).



Graph 2. Changes proportions of love and arranged marriage from 1935 to 2005

Source: www.ipss.go.jp (accessed: 21.12.2016).

Summary and conclusions

As we can see, Japanese marriage is constantly evolving as a result of the changes taking place in Japanese society. We can also observe other transformations, such as lower marital fertility and greater participation of married women in the labor force, changes which are very similar to those which took place in other countries around the world, in particular in the industrialized societies of Europe and North America (eastwestcenter.org 2015). The reasons for these trends, can be found in the following:

1. tradition – marriage is one of the duties (www.everyculture.com 2015),
2. more freedom in choosing a partner has translated into people getting married at a later stage in life (www.jref.com 2013),
3. into the 1990s most marriages were facilitated by 'go-betweens' (Eberspacher 2014),
4. Japanese marriage usually ends a woman's working career (Kawaguchi 2015),
5. once they have a child, women face strong social pressure to quit their jobs and assume very traditional roles, serving both the husband and the child (Eberspacher 2014),
6. this trend has been blamed on the fact that woman who rarely saw their husbands while they were working can't deal with having them suddenly around the house all the time (factsanddetails.com 2015).
7. cultural misunderstandings in international marriages (Rogers 2014).

Japan is now a country with one of the lowest fertility rates in the world, while at the same time having one of the highest longevity rates. It is a remarkable period of change, especially in terms of what it means for marriage and family in Japan. These changes have begun to mix together the age old traditions of Japanese culture with those of Japanese modernity, which surely presages yet more seismic transformations ahead.

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Solvita Pošeiko[1]

Images of women in the semiotic landscape of the Baltic states

In researching the linguistic landscape (LL) of nine cities in the Baltic states, this article will show that female discourse is significant within public areas and spaces. This has been linguistically proven by female personal names in ergonyms, as well as by female ergonyms and themes within graffiti texts. However, there are multi-modal advertisements which display female products publicly, which can be viewed from the perspective of the semiotic landscape. A total of 294 photos showing women were selected from the LL database in order to describe visual images of women, by focusing on the archetypes and concepts of a woman's role in society.

The research showed that any target audience is linguistically identified more often than not by age, which social and ethnic group one belongs to, while images emphasize the target audience more commonly by sex, that is, by female gender, for example, images of women or female body parts and of women's products (e.g. women's clothing on a mannequin).

Selected materials are generally characterized by absolutization of the perfect appearance, one which includes the maintaining of certain stereotypes, that a woman is both beautiful and slender, that she is physically fit, replete with perfect makeup, someone who belongs to the cult of youth, who reflects how popular and successful women should appear. This is the standard example, one that exemplifies the need for solitude, narcissism and emotional concealment, all wrapped up within the glorification of an advertisement for perfume.

According to the data, typical female activities tend to be the receiving of beauty treatments, various forms of relaxation such as traveling, dancing, visiting the tanning salon or sunbathing, and most significantly of all, shopping. These images mainly emphasize service-sector occupations: waitresses, bank employees, flight attendants, masseuses, cabaret dancers or exotic dancers. In regard to the roles of wife and mother, they are viewed as social roles, which are represented as being inseparable from each other. The female lover (flirtatious temptress) and female friend, are two of the most common archetypical images reflected in the semiotic landscape of the Baltic states.

In conclusion, the visual representation of women in the Baltic states is related to the perception of life as pleasure, emphasizing the significance of sensuality and entertainment.

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Key words: advertisement, archetype, ergonym, semiotic landscape, social semiotics, visual image, visual communication, women

Introduction

As we move through any city in the world, we knowingly or unknowingly examine various buildings and advertisements with readable texts, images, symbols, artefacts, and even a few examples of advertising copy that is crass and insensitive. In their own way, they all indirectly influence our ideas and notions about social issues, including that of a woman's image and role in society.

Female discourse is formed by different types of written texts and images, many of which play a significant part in the everyday world of public communication in the Baltic states. This is demonstrated by the widely practiced application of female personal names as company names, or so-called 'ergonyms'. For instance, in the city of Valmiera in Latvia, 13 out of 105 recorded local company names were created by female anthroponyms (also mythonyms), such as Evita, Vija, Līga, Rēzija and Artemīda, the "Hellenic goddess of the hunt, archery, wild animals, forests and hills, and the moon", while only three are male anthroponyms (or literary character names): Rimants, Austris, Kristaps, Vinnijs Pūks and 'Winnie the Pooh'. Moreover, only female personal names are used in ergonyms in Druskininkai and Visaginas (both in Lithuania), e.g. Monika, Inga, Vika, and Agneta. Especially striking are how advertisements, posters, and forms of graffiti utilize verbal texts about women (typifying or exulting romantic or sexual relationships with them), while images of women (both complete and partial, e.g., face, hands or legs) and photos of women's goods (clothes, cosmetics, hygienic products, jewelry), openly dominate public spaces. Women are also indirectly depicted by the use of female nouns in ergonyms. For instance, the wedding salon name Baltoji dama[2], 'The White Lady', is used to refer to a bride in general, while at the same time denotes a particular photo of a bride on advertising hoarding in Alytus, Lithuania.

The aim of the article is to look at these public advertisements and to characterize the visually-represented images of women in the context of identity and social processes, particularly focusing on typical archetypes and notions about the role of women in society. The basic research questions are: (1) How are women displayed visually? (2) Which are the most typical features of images of women? (3) Which things, goods and services, and social roles are ascribed to women? (4) How are women's relationships with others (e.g., other women, boyfriends/ husbands, friends, colleagues, children) shown? Research is based on the LL approach and semiotic landscape methods, the social semiotics theory in visual communication, and the conception of visual identity in marketing and popular culture, as well as archetype theories.

2 Here and further on examples are followed by the author's translation to English.

This article is divided into several parts. First, the research materials and methods are explained, which will support the basic theoretical background on the research issues. This is followed by various research examples that have been provided for comparison and further discussion. Next, the general description of selected public advertising is provided, which will highlight typical characteristics, while also interpreting certain examples of advertisements. Analysis and interpretation of the social roles of women and their archetypical images, will be followed by a summary, and finally, the most significant of these conclusions are given.

Materials and methods

The research began in Rēzekne, Latvia, in 2008, and consisted of photographing every advertising hoarding or poster (written messages demonstrating completeness of text, features of a defined text genre, objectives and functions) in the public spaces of a city, then analyzing and interpreting them using the Linguistic Landscape (LL) approach. LL research was then conducted in Ventspils and Valmiera (Latvia); Pärnu, Narva and Viljandi (Estonia); and Alytus, Druskinkai and Visaginas (Lithuania)[3]; in which 7,347 advertisements were selected. The whole of the LL research in these nine Baltic cities was carried out from 2008 through to 2014, with the acquisition of data in each city. All advertisements were analyzed according to the 24 sociolinguistic criteria in the statistical program SPSS, and the accompanying photos were gathered and compiled in a digital and freely-accessible form at www.lldata.lv. Until now, the public signs of the Baltic states have been examined mainly from the perspective of sociolinguistics and language politics (e.g., Marten *et al.* 2012, Lazdiņa, Pošeiko, Marten 2013), with little attention paid to nonverbal information (such as images in posters – Pošeiko 2012, graffiti – Pošeiko 2013).

However, it is not only evident in written texts, but also in the multiple various images contained within collected photographs. To examine texts formed by diverse sources of information (written text, images, sounds) or multi-modal texts, a wider point of view is necessary. The semiotic landscape (SL) theory provides this. The SL approach is similar to LL in that the methodology pertains to acquisition and analysis of public signs in the city. If the LL method is focused on linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis of public signs (Gorter 2006; Backhaus 2007; Shohamy, Gorter 2009), then the SL approach is based on the understanding of

[3] Research of LL was carried out by students and researchers of Rēzekne university college (including the author of the article) within the scope of the Rēzekne university college project "Research of Linguistic Landscape of Rēzekne City and its Comparison to Other Baltic Cities" (supervisor Sanita Lazdina, Heiko F. Martens) and ESF project "Linguo-cultural and socio-economic aspects of territorial identity in the development of Latgale region" (supervisor Sanita Lazdina). The author of the article has individually carried out LL research in Valmiera during 2012, Daugavpils under 2013 (Latvia), during 2013 in Visaginas (Lithuania) and Viljandi under 2014 (Estonia).

language, graphic design, layout, composition of text, visual elements and symbols, as well as various discourses (e.g., spatial, transgressive, commercial), all of which are tools used to express ideas and communication. Therefore, a disclosure of implicit and explicit information of verbal and nonverbal text is also necessary (Kress, Van Leeuwen 1996; Scollon & Scollon 2003; Jaworski, Thurlow 2010). In both cases it was emphasized that the text can be polysemic and open to multiple interpretations.

In conducting this research, 294 public advertisements were selected from the LL photographic database, which clearly showed images of female products (photographs, picture, and sticker). All image details of the advertisements were described, paying particular attention to women's facial expressions, their poses, clothing and accessories, as well as the depiction of stereotypical female situations. Additionally, texts (slogans, to buy or use particular goods or service stimulating phrases) in any language relating to women were excluded from public advertisements and translated, in order to better understand the content.

The next step was putting images and their descriptions into social semiotic and commercial identities in which concrete gender and sexuality are highlighted, as well as archetype theories. They are briefly discussed below.

Theoretical framework

Social semiotics is an approach to visual communication that seeks to understand how people communicate by a variety of means and modes, which are historically specific and socially and culturally shared opinions (or 'semiotic resources') in particular social settings (Halliday 1978; Hodge, Kress 1998; Van Leeuwen 2005). It is more or less focused on unlimited interpretation of the information that is presented in the form of images and the free combination of formative elements, with special attention paid to social issues. One illustrative example of a gender and sexuality study of social semiotics can be found in the research of visual representation of the heterosexuality of men in leaflets that are aimed at teenagers in Great Britain (Jewitt 1999). This research showed that all visible verbal and nonverbal tools, texts and explicit ideas as semiotic resources used on selected public advertising are combined together with implicit information: deeper meaning, contexts and socially determined notions.

As advertisements have become more diverse and accessible to everyone, more attention is being paid within the sphere of advertisement management to the perception mechanisms of the advertisement, adjustment of implicit information to the recipient's psychological characterization, cultural experience, and collective subconsciousness, and in so doing, discusses the psychoanalysis of advertising, archetypes and archetypical characters (e.g., Koptev, Klark 2003; de Muijnck 2009; Lankovskis 2010).

By evaluating materials on mythology, folklore and history, as well as modern tendencies of cultural development and improving theory of analytical psychology by Carl G. Jung, the new characters of the collective subconsciousness are defined. It must be mentioned that the system of 12 archetypes was created by archetypical branding theoreticians Margaret Mark and Carol Pearson, according to the results of qualitative research conducted in 33 countries where consumers' attitudes towards more than 13 thousand brands were examined (Figure 1).

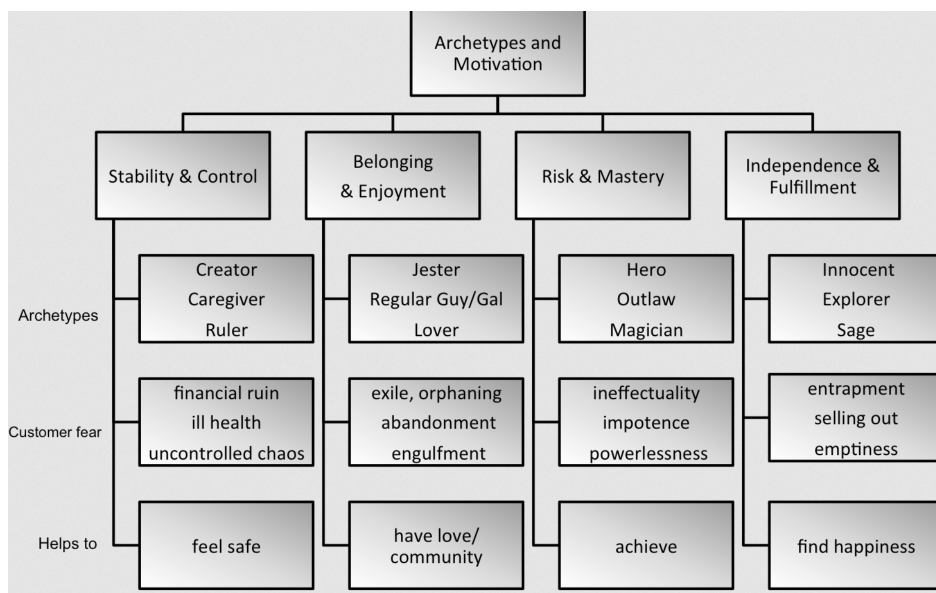

Figure 1. Archetypes and motivations according to M. Mark and C. Pearson

Source: Mark, Pearson 2001: 18.

Marketing specialist Andrey Ivaschenko (*Андрей Иващенко*) has created an 8-archetype model (Warrior, Thinker, Keeper, Esthete, Friend, Child, Pilgrim) and archetypal space (plane quadrant), that is based on human temperaments (extraversion and introversion) and levels of perception of information (logic, sensorics, ethics and intuition). He builds connections between the archetypes and conceptions of specific brands, and links advertisements to their recipients (Ivaschenko 2005).

Both archetype models share a number of common features which show that some individual expressions of archetypes are prevalent and firmly entrenched within modern culture. In some studies, these archetypes refer not only to people, but also to the culture of materialism (things), which visualizes the instincts and drives present in the human subconsciousness, as well as the kinds of needs that are related to the characteristic features of humans.

An advertisement is not only a recommendation designed to persuade people to acquire a certain product or service, but it is also utilised in order to frame an interesting story, one that often features a remarkable character who has a clear life goal. More often than not, these stories focus on successful relationships, in which the gaining of trust and friendship are paramount, and the more people this attracts, the more successful the advertisement (Mark, Pearson 2005: 8).

It can be concluded that visual identity is very important – a consciously-built conception or public image by which various means (colors, slogans, symbols, and images) represent a given company, brand or article (Dawson 2013). Thus, in order to decode visual information and characterize visual communication, linguistic analysis of a text needs to be complemented with research of the context of nonverbal text, as well as by interpreting the deeper, archetypical level.

Characterization of Research Units

A general overview of selected advertising was devised using two forms of criteria: the target audience and the typical features of signs.

The LL database from nine Baltic cities consists of more than 7,000 units. Of these public advertisements, nineteen are company signboards with linguistic indication that the apparel/shoe store or hairdresser is solely for men, for example: *viss vīriešiem*, *De Lera*, *all for men* and *Sieviešu un vīriešu frizētava* 'Hair salon for men and women' in Daugavpils, *Мужская*, *meeste* 'men' [hair salon], *Fashion for men* in Narva. Meanwhile, potential customers who are linguistically indicated in 11 ergonyms, for example: *Naiste juuksur* 'Hair salon for women' in Narva, *SJ apģērbi sievietēm* 'SJ women's clothing' and *Šarms frizētava dāmām un kungiem* 'Hair salon for men and women Charm' in Valmiera.

Furthermore, a potential female customer is also linguistically indicated by slogans in advertisements, e.g. the slogan of the cosmetics company *tianDe* in two different languages *Skaistai būt viegli! Красивой быть легко!* 'It is easy to be beautiful' in Daugavpils, the slogan of the cosmetics line *LHYPERL Paris*, *Jo Tu esi tā vērta!* 'Because you're worth it', in Valmiera; in listings of offerings, e.g., *Мужскиеmples of offerings*, 'Haircuts for men and women' in Narva and *Nauji drabužiai moterims* 'New clothing for women' in Alytus. In the city of Visaginas, it was women who were the target audience of a recent advertising campaign against abortion, which was demonstrated by the emotive words: *Mama, padovanok man gyvenimą!* 'Mom, please give me life!' along with a child's drawing depicting an infant in a woman's hands.

When women become the target audience, they are more often communicated with through nonverbal means. For instance, in hair salons women are visually depicted as having fashionable hairstyles, while nearby street advertisements show women with well-manicured hands. Similarly, in areas close to tanning solariums there are pictures of women with perfect tanned skin, and equally, near

spa centers there are plenty of images of women lying on massage tables, just as in close proximity to clothing stores there are mannequins dressed in women's clothing, etc. Therefore, we can assume that specific types of companies (hair salons, beauty salons, apparel and shoe stores) are mainly commercial outlets intended for women, which are indicated by the many different images of objects and products (clothes, shoes, bags, cosmetics), or images of women, and so, an additional verbal form of advertising text becomes unnecessary.

Professor of social sciences and anthropology, Joanne Finkelstein, in her analysis of popular culture (especially advertising and movies), and the specific 'objects' represented in it, as well as the attitudes of public personas, names several features of the visualized world: the personification and glorification of objects, fiction and falsehood, stereotypical characters and their familiarity, and also the main principle of life – "to look good because people are watching" (Finkelstein 2007: 1–38).

Looking at the survey's findings, we can observe some similarity in features. First, visual perfectionism is the dominant visual characteristic in the public advertisements of the Baltic states, absolutizing the appearance. In many of these advertisements, they show slender, visually attractive and well-groomed women with athletic bodies and a sense of style that includes fashionably modern clothes, matching accessories, and perfectly applied hair styles and makeup. In a plus-size clothing store in Daugavpils, discriminating attitudes toward "nonstandard" women can be observed in one of its advertisements, in which approximately one third of the poster shows only a fraction of the image of an overweight woman, thus reducing the proportions of her body. This example shows how the image of stereotypically attractive women has become the standard for female proportions, which is supported and maintained throughout society, including visual advertising.

Another indication of how public advertisements aimed at women use nonverbal communication, is the imagery of the cult of youth, images which are dominated by either young and/or middle-aged women. During the research, we came across three posters advertising a range of cultural events, in which only three older women were depicted, and as such were shown to be happy while in the company of a man their own age. In two other advertisements, older women were depicted, but this time in the presence of a much younger woman. In these advertisements, it is the younger woman who gives advice, and is subsequently seen to protect the older women, advising them on how to takes care of their health and well-being (e.g., by reminding her to check her breasts for lumps). All five advertisements focus on providing help, essentially, the caregiver archetype (see Figure 1). But it is these images of the younger woman which implicitly demonstrates their initiation and mental victory over an older woman, in which the roles are reversed (mother–daughter).

In addition, we discovered three advertisements for facial creams that featured two photographs of the same woman in contrast (see Image 1), thus showing the necessity to delay the process of aging, as well as the possibility of a miraculous change (revival).

Image 1. Advertisement of facial cream Vichy in Ventspils

Source: S. Pošeiko, 2008, http://lldata.ru.lv/LATVIJA/Ventspils/ (accessed: 21.05.2014).

Another characteristic feature of public advertisements is how fear of loneliness is so often ceased upon, and in all of the cases researched, only 22% of women were shown in the company of other people such as colleagues, friends, and children. Interestingly, even in photographic showcases in many wedding salons, the bride was pictured by herself, or more accurately, alone. Arguably, this might be explained by the belief that the groom is not allowed to see his future wife before the wedding day, which is thought to be an indicator of a happy life together in the future. Conversely, it might also indicate that weddings are more psychologically important to women.

However, these solitary images of women often show facial expressions and poses that depict independence and freedom, self-confidence and a certain self-delight, seldom that of loneliness and sadness.

A certain degree of familiarity in public spaces is demonstrated through the use of photographs of famous women (Penelope Cruz, Britney Spears, Celine Dion), which allows consumers to feel closer to the world of celebrities, in an attempt to give the impression that one can belong to another distinctly different social group. Furthermore, certain products such as cream, shampoo and mascara, become a kind of unifying element. It is an indirect indication that there are no strict boundaries, or if there are, they are relative. For example, Image 2, explicitly shows world-famous model and nineties icon, Linda Evangelista, alongside a specific brand name and the phrase *Pasijausk ypatinga!* 'Feel Special!', with additional information about discounts and promotional gifts, as well as the period of the particular sales campaign (representative meaning). The implicit message seems to be that, with LHYPERL Paris cosmetics you will feel as special (visually attractive) as Evangelista (contextual meaning) does. In this case, verbal sugges-

tion links the idea behind the brand with the depicted woman (the 'target' woman whom one wants to resemble) and the potential customer.

Image 2. Advertisement of the cosmetics line LHYPERL Paris in Alytus

Source: S. Pošeiko, 2008, http://lldata.ru.lv/Lietuva/Al-ta/ (accessed: 21.05.2014).

Using images of famous women is commonplace, since these images function as desired examples, helping the company associate their specific product or brand with the public image of a certain woman, most notably in her professional environment of activity. Here is another example of this marketing principle in effect: in the window of an optician seven advertisements showed the world-famous model, Gisele Bündchen, in various physical scenarios that presented an array of sun glasses using the same phrases/slogans – *Gisele plays with Vogue*. Implicitly, the advertisements express: (1) these sun-glasses are high fashion; (2) trying out different images and changing accessories and clothes is both fun, while also emphasizing the emergence of the changeable or chameleon archetype (according to Silbert 2008: 63–75) and the child archetype (Jung 1991: 82–96); (3) and that the magazine is a companion of equal worth to people.

Glorification in public space is often demonstrated by advertisements for perfumes. Many perfume advertisements are designed to create admiration, suggesting that these specific products can reveal the true nature of women. Hence, the natural odor of a woman is rejected as a sign of being uncultured, and therefore is replaced with an artificial scent. This can be exemplified with the advertisement of the perfume, Escada, where the same dark red color is used for the woman's dress and the perfume bottle, indicating mutual harmony. The fact that the bottle is visually depicted as being much larger than the woman, indicates that the role of the product, the perfume itself, is done in terms of getting to know the woman's sensuality. Similar color harmony can be observed in advertisements for the per-

fumes, Black XS and Gucci, in which the black and golden colors are used, both in the design of the perfume bottle as well as the woman's clothing, and subsequently, the hair color and makeup. The woman seen in the advertisement for Axe Vice deodorant, was situated in a police station, followed by the words: *Axe Vice padara meitenes nerātnas* 'Axe Vice makes girls naughty'. Alternatively, the woman who represents 'the proper' girl (also see: the excellent pupil), dressed in a pink blouse which is buttoned up to the chin-line and with a flower pinned to the right breast, was depicted as being a smiling, carefree rebel who was satisfied with her assigned situation, and who had surrendered to the outlaw and child archetype as befitting her image.

Lipstick is also a conspicuous element of femininity that is commonly appropriated for public advertisements. In 56% of the images taken, women were depicted with colored lips (dark red color), which is astonishingly high when compared with 13% of images showing women wearing high-heeled shoes. However, unlike the primary function of perfume advertising, their role is secondary.

Further attention should be paid to the emphasizing of a woman's hands (palms and fingers), in images that are a characteristic feature of feminine advertisements (Goffman 1976: 29), which demonstrate emotions and interaction with oneself, other people and objects. In Baltic cities, for example, dreaminess was visually represented with the woman placing her face in the palms of her hands, while inclining her head and looking upwards. The unexpected joy felt over receiving a bouquet of roses was shown with the woman lifting her hands and spreading her fingers, while smiling widely. In order to express logic and strategic thinking, advertisement showed the woman with a chess piece that was lifted up in one's fingers whereas, in order to express caring for other people, advertisements showed people placing their hands on the shoulders of the person needing mental support, while people holding hands or hugging each other, showed the closeness of their relationships.

In depicting a conversation between two women, if one covers her mouth with her hands, it indicates a decreased volume in speech in order to facilitate the confidential nature of what they are talking about (secret), thus implying trust. However, the idea of touching oneself most often indicates a sensual action, an erotic gesture. For example: playing with bead necklace by gently running it through one's fingers while exhibiting an open mouth, smoking a cigarette in underwear and high-heels, or placing one's thumb behind women's panties or underwear (see Image 3).

The aforementioned examples show that visual information in various public spaces of Baltic countries demonstrate a certain behavior principle, one that is mentioned by J. Finkelstein, who goes on to emphasize: "look good, because people are watching", which supports the tendency to depict an ideal (visually improved), even fictive image of the woman, by choosing not to reveal her true visual appearance and emotions. An important role is also assigned to the things that characterize women: perfume, flowers, underwear, lipstick and high-heel shoes.

Woman's social roles and archetypical characters

As established earlier in the article, the imagery of women in advertising often depicts them existing in solitude.

The research also showed that there were three other types of images in which a woman was usually shown in the company of a man: weddings (though not always), photographs depicting family, and work relationships. It is worth noting that in only two of the images does the woman make eye contact with the man, and therefore by doing so, she is indicating an awareness of being together, and that mutual coexistence is important, as well as 'going public with the relationship.'

In regards to the imagery of wife and mother, these were social roles that were mostly presented alongside each other, thus showing them as being inseparable entities. Pictures of families typically featured happy and carefree expressions, of people spending time relaxing. The following activities and forms of relaxation were used as reasons for families getting together: swimming, travelling, photo sessions, cozy moments spent on the sofa eating snacks in front of the TV, riding a merry-go-round and other types of entertainment. Visually, the positive side of family life was revealed and subsequently idealized.

Overall it is clear from the advertising seen in the streets that beauty treatments, the various forms of relaxation such as dancing, traveling and shopping, are promoted as the typical past-times and hobbies for most women, strongly emphasizing that enjoyment is a natural way of life for most women.

An example of this can be seen in the advertisement for an international retail chain, *Monton*, featuring the words/slogan, *Karsta izpārdošana*, 'Hot sales', alongside the image of a woman getting genuinely excited about the upcoming discounts. This perception of a woman pursuing an easy life, where the individual is blissfully content spoiling themselves, is closely associated to that of the fun-loving archetype, one whose sole goal is to experience as much as joy as possible (Mark, Pearson 2005: 186–192). However, the sense of humor or irony, or even self-irony, that is characteristic to this archetype, is not a typical element of public advertisements in the Baltic states. A similar motivation can be observed in the child archetype, as stated by A. Ivashenko, someone who perceives life as a game, and who strives towards all things new, while the guard archetype is someone who is characterized by desire for balance, comfort, peace and relaxation (Ivaschenko 2005).

When examining the world of careers and employment, the most common imagery was within the service industry, which tended to depict women as barstaff, on-floor service staff, bank tellers, flight attendants or masseuses, which was followed by professions in both the fashion and film industry, professions that involved posing in front of the camera, or acting, which are generally seen as being typical professional roles for women.

In terms of other imagery represented in the entertainment industry, women are also reduced to stereotypes such as cabaret dancers or exotic dancers. As for

businesswomen, they are often characterized by either bowties or ties, jackets with wide lapels, or having a hair style modelled on a man, thus emhasizing the masculine side of the woman – the animus archetype (Jung 1991: 82–96). It has to be noted that in the advertisements shown in public, female doctors or tailors were represented by drawings instead of the standard photographic imagery.

Focusing on the most visually displayed images of women in public advertising, one motto stands out, 'es redzu tikai tevi', meaning, I see only you. This motto supports and comunicates the idea of the typical archetypical image of the woman as lover, while emphasizing the themes of love, sexuality and aesthetics. The essence of this archetype is expressed through different forms of love, for example, parents' (in this case, mother's) love, friendship, physical and spiritual love (Mark, Pearson 2005: 170–185).

In public advertising, a woman is commonly represented in the form of a temptress, one that is externally characterized by sexual attraction and dressing provocatively (scant clothing and exposed parts of the body décolleté and long legs), and by gazing in a way that is perceived as coquettish, (lips slightly open, while a faint smile can be glimpsed), secretly implying that the woman is longing for intimacy and sexual pleasure (see Image 3).

Image 3. Advertisement of perfume Moschino Funny in Pärnu

Source: S. Pošeiko, 2008, http://lldata.ru.lv/IGAUNIJA/P-rnava/ (accessed: 21.05.2014).

According to M. Mark and K. Pearson, the art of seduction is in its own way a challenge to the prospective lover (Mark, Pearson 2005: 172). However, in comparison with men, the woman's behavior could be described as passive, since in the photographs it is the man who initiated physical – contact by hugging her from behind, or touching her body with his hand.

The following is an example in which a woman's sexuality (the lover's archetype) was used to advertise a product: in the city of Valmiera, there was an advertisement that used the phrase, *Perfect vision*, along with a picture of a pair of men's sunglasses, through which one can get a glimpse of a half-naked woman lying on the beach, her upper body more visible than her raised legs, positioned outside the frame of the sunglasses. Thus, we can conclude that the goal of the advertisement was to show that the criteria for selecting qualitative sunglasses was the ability to see that which is most valuable to a man, the nakedness of an attractive woman.

That outwardly self-confident women are mainly depicted living in solitude, quite possibly implies that not only is independence viewed as a lifestyle, but that alienation and dislike for competition, and other unfulfilled psychological and physical needs, are all causes for concern, deliberately provoking a state of mental discomfort. Fear of loneliness, of not being desired, of being unloved, coupled with the constant intellectual and physical improvement of oneself as a woman, including the forming of relationships, is the basis for this archetype (Mark, Pearson 2005: 171). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be stated as thus: advertisements focus on less self-confident women or women with unfulfilled desires of one type or another, encouraging them to strive for emotional and physical intimacy, while simultaneously stimulating dissatisfaction with their current life situations, and creating a desire to resemble the women that they see in various forms of advertising imagery, as well as perpetuating a longing for intimacy and love. Therefore the answer is at hand, and a solution is proffered: the use of specific products or services (e.g., erotic underwear, colorful makeup, beautiful clothes or jewelry) are all fast and effective method in achieving these goals. In the advertising slogan, *Drogas: Laiks pārmaiņām!*, meaning: *Time to change*, which was displayed with different sets of photographs advertising a range of cosmetics at a number of stores throughout the city of Ventspils, implying that things themselves have no importance, what matters are the emotions which they provoke, and in turn, the events which follow.

Although it is much harder to visually depict spiritual love in the public spaces of the Baltic countries, emotional unity is suggested by photographs of older couples that show them being kind and respectful to one another. Since the images of women shown in advertisements were often those of the female individual in search of sexual intimacy and love, it can therefore be asserted that only the archetype of the lover is exhibited, and in doing so, the woman fails to reach such heights as that as defined by the quality and ecstasy of experiencing spiritual love (Mark, Pearson 2005: 172).

In turn, something of material value compensates for this lack of spiritual love, and as viewed in public advertising, several dozen red roses, the keys to new house, a car or jewelry are offered by way of recompense. This is further exemplified by an advertisement seen in the city of Druskininkai, in which the question (in English): *How deep is your Love?* is asked, with a backdrop showing a gold

ring inset with a large ruby, displayed within the folds of a silk cloth. The image is directly stating that the more valuable the ring, the deeper the love, therefore, the jewelry serves as an emotional indicator showing the depth of someone's love.

Seldom depicted is the archetype of the regular guy (also a friend, upstanding and reliable), that unlike the lover's archetype, values being together much more, and enjoys the feeling of belonging to a group, not accentuating the desire to be alone, but to relish having a predetermined and unique role among a group of people, friends others (Mark, Pearson 2005: 171). The depiction of friendly relationships is typical used in the advertisements of telecommunication companies (see Image 4), and/or the posters for family comedies.

Image 4. Advertisement of O karte in Daugavpils

Source: S. Pošeiko, 2013, http://lldata.ru.lv/LATVIJA/Daugavpils/ (accessed: 21.05.2014).

Similarly for the purpose of athletic activities and building a cohesive team spirit, this archetype is used to demonstrate brand models, a community that is characterized by the equal worth of its members, unity, a heightened sense of belonging and having trust among one's own people.

The archetypical image of the woman-hero is characterized by brave and energetic moments of action (see Figure 1, as well as Ivaschenko 2005) as can be seen in eight specific advertisements, that highlighted professional competence, selflessness and awareness of objectives, as well as supporting self-assertion, and possessing a masculine nature (see Image 5). Evidence of this archetype can be observed in advertisements for sporting goods and its various forms of activities, but only those in which above all victory, satisfaction and pride at a successful accomplishment were emphasized, such as a woman holding aloft a trophy or wearing a winner's medal around their neck.

Image 5. Advertisement of sunglasses in Alytus

Source: S. Pošeiko, 2008, http://lldata.ru.lv/Lietuva/Al-ta/ (accessed: 21.05.2014).

In regards to a woman being portrayed as a child of nature, this is characterized in simple visual terms, with the woman appearing natural and in a relaxed mood, often against a photographic backdrop involving an area of water, or at least the hint of a natural water environment, such as a pond or a lake, observed in four distinctly separate photographs. The women in these photographs had long hair, billowing dresses and genuine smiles, and none of them were wearing any makeup or jewelry, thus eschewing the artificial improvements of such things in an attempt to represent the innocent and the authentic.

To summarise, it can be concluded that in public advertising the imagery and use of women is to depict and to emphasize the importance and meaning of appearance and sexuality, in essence, to become the lover's archetype. The imagery suggests that to reach self-realization, women should strive for such things as relaxation and entertainment, while at the same time emphasizing the archetypical role of giver (of food, information, relaxation, agitation), one that values emotions, and the ability to create the required atmosphere, where reason or logic either have less importance, or none at all. It is clear then that women are not perceived as physical laborers, researchers or creators of new products.

Summary and main conclusions

The research was an attempt to look at public advertising in the cityscape of the Baltic states, to highlight and analyse visually depicted information. It is only one form of interpretation, a methodological way that allows us to 'read' verbal and nonverbal, explicit and implicit texts and writing (also at the archetypal level), by paying attention to issues related to visual identity and sexuality, and indirectly, the values of modern culture and society, along with world views and its often incumbent stereotypes. The results partly can be interpreted as just one person's –

the receiver's – interpretation, based on their individual social experience, knowledge and comprehension.

Generally, the research showed that a male target audience is linguistically indicated more often than not. However, in terms of photographic imagery, the female target audience is emphasized far more frequently. It is often through visual images that the essence of advertisements are revealed, functioning not only as a supplement to the verbal text, but even as an autonomous text. An important principle of visual illustration is the emphasis on various details (e.g., objects, body parts).

Public advertisements that use images of women are characterized by the absolutization of the perfect appearance, and subsequently the maintenance of the stereotype, that a woman is beautiful and slender, physically fit and replete with perfect makeup. This is reinforced by the imagery of the cult of youth, how popular and successful women are reflected, solitude, narcissism and emotional concealment, using such products as perfume to glorify these ideals, while promoting relaxation and entertainment-related themes. There are no differences between domestic business advertisements and international advertisements, which suggests that these are general tendencies, less related to local characteristics.

Research of the selected advertisements revealed that there are many conceptions created and maintained in public advertising in regards to what constitutes a typical, modern woman, and mainly focuses, on one hand, on her egocentrism, while on the other, implying personal satisfaction in the creation of an artificial public image/visual persona (a mask). All of which is generated by a fear of alienation, the need to acquire material goods, and achieve one's goals as quickly and easily as possible. Although some advertising shows women in the company of other people (men, other women, children), most depict women alone which mainly demonstrates that loneliness can be viewed as having double meaning, both comfortable and uncomfortable.

The common archetypical image of a woman in the semiotic landscape of the Baltic states is women-lover, with added focus on the significance of sensual enjoyment and relaxation. The motivation behind these advertisements is to promote the idea of love and community, or, at the very least, some kind of relationship. Women are depicted as being concerned with physical changes and sexual satisfaction, and much less on spiritual and professional improvement.

These visually-represented conceptions form society's views of a woman and her social role, as well as opinions about what should/can be expected of her. All of the aforementioned characteristics can be ascribed to common tendencies currently inherent in modern society, such as self-awareness, how people think, various worldviews, and models of accepted behavior and relationships.

In researching the semiotic landscape, it was shown that visual identity plays a significant role in creating a public image, one that is extremely difficult to attain due to the rhythm of modern life that is incredibly fast-paced, and requires an ability to look perfect and be omnipresent at the same time.

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Wherever One Wants to Go. Rosi Braidotti's Concept of a 'Nomadic Subject' and Its Philosophical Possibilities

> Feminism is also the liberation of women's ontological desire to be female subjects: to transcend the traditional vision of subjectivity as gender free, to inscribe the subject back into his corporal reality.
> Rosi Braidotti (2011: 272)

The ideas embedded in Enlightenment concepts of subjectivity, understood as a coherent and rational identity, have established a universal perspective for a long time. Today, this outlook is being questioned by the experience of difference. The voices of minorities demanding acceptance and representation, both in social practice and in theory, have become more audible. But while theory allows for radical mental conclusions, the social and existential practices require positive theoretical solutions. A postmodern deconstructed subject does not constitute a sufficient basis for social activity or political identification. Therefore, a significant challenge for the feminist theory today is to find a form for the social subjectivity and, at the same time, avoid an oppressive and reductive category. Rosi Braidotti employed the Deleuzian figure of a nomad, and proposed a concept of a subject being resistant to postmodern fragmentation. She made a distinction between identity and subjectivity: identity is rooted in the unconscious, while subjectivity is conscious and a source of political resistance. The resistance is not due to stronger foundations, in comparison to the Cartesian subject, but results from mobility and openness to the Other. Attempting to construct a clearly positive conception of a subject, Braidotti proposes 'a nomadic political project'. The question is: is it possible to put this idea into a social reality or do we have just another sophisticated theoretical concept?

Key words: feminism, feminine subjectivity, nomadic subject

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Introduction

My reflections in this paper result from thinking on the turbulences around the categories of identity and subjectivity in the contemporary philosophy and social practice. The turbulences have their source in the question: is it possible to build any subjectivity concept after the poststructuralist critique?

The poststructuralist critique, represented by the thinkers like Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, Michel Foucault, or Judith Butler in her early works, concerned the concept of a subject as provided the Cartesian tradition and developed in the age of Enlightenment and modern philosophy. This concept of human subjectivity, understood as being aware, coherent and rational, has long established a universal philosophic perspective, but also a political and ethical one. After the moral decline of the World War II in Europe, however, these ideas were put into question as a possible source of violence and exclusion. According to poststructuralists, the classical philosophical categories, which possess the character of monuments, are tangled in dogmatism and fundamentalism, and we need to rethink them deeply.

The critical need to deliberate constantly over the foundations of our thinking and analyzing the words that we use, levels out a different philosophical tendency: the tendency to climb to the highest peak of the Universe and embrace the Reality with a comprehending glance, which is as enticing as it is dangerous. And it has been so since – as poststructuralists point out – the thematization itself constitutes the product of thinking based on hierarchization. Describing, defining, categorizing, and even establishing names – all of these actions lead to designating those ways of thinking that we see as proper, while rejecting others. Following this direction, we – who we are and who we believe to be – our subjectivity, are a product resulting from our collection of pieces of the world and recognizing them as our own, while rejecting others (Foucault 2005: 353–354).

Thus, as much as the categories like 'subject', 'identity', 'woman', 'gender', 'culture', 'nature', etc., constitute a certain kind of thematization, and, on the one hand, assure a certain type of identification, and allow us to classify our thinking and action, while on the other – confine us to it. The level of our acceptance of the said identifications usually depends on whether it entails any privileges, or not. If we are faced with the latter, we deal with discrimination and exclusion.

From this point of view, the struggle with exclusion is one of the most difficult human undertakings, as it is a fight with one's own thinking, with its deeper structure. It boils down to the question: how can we include without excluding at the same time? This question brings to the surface the irreducible aporia of the discourse on exclusions. The aporia that manifests that a struggle against violence invariably causes violence of another kind, that the bizarre mechanisms that drive human reality always strive towards maintaining a certain type of homeostasis based on the production, processing and relocation of the centre and the margins.

The resulting theoretical impasse is also visible at certain stages of activity of the emancipatory movements, forcing them to revise their assumptions constantly. It is especially important in the case of feminism. The process of waves occurring one after another shows how the approach of female theoreticians of the movement evolved with regard to the category which lies at its very foundation, namely the category of a 'woman'. In this paper I consider the concept of a feminine 'nomadic subject' developed by the European feminist philosopher Rosi Braidottti as a possible solution to the problem described above, as well as an interesting and important voice in the debate on modern subjectivity.

Feminist question about subjectivity

A 'woman' initiated feminism, recognised it and experienced the oppression resulting from the social consequences of representing the female sex. The first postulates connected with the right to education, work and vote, seemed to represent the interests of all women. The so-called 'unity of women in the fight against patriarchy', however, proved to be doubtful. The reduction of experiences, needs and hopes of all women to a common denominator of belonging to the female sex, turned out to be oppressive in its nature. That is why the majority of feminist theories turned towards post-structuralism. The central category of the feminist analysis, the category of a woman, was problematic from many points of view, e.g. the intersectional approach or postcolonial feminism. The identification connected with the race, class or sexual orientation, may generate differences in the social status and have a great effect on the quality of life, to a much greater extent than being limited to representing a particular sex (hooks 2000: 15–16).

Thus, the exclusive practices within feminism were a consequence of adopting by the movement certain ideas reflecting the reality in which a particular group of women lived and experienced a specific form of oppression, while, which is also significant, it was not subject to other forms. Therefore, the question is whether the existence of feminism as an equality movement based on the category of a woman, is still justified? If not, does feminism, as scattered voices of numerous groups of interest, cultures and worlds, have a sufficient political impact? Is it still feminism?

All of these questions are the result of turbulences around the category of a subject, whose Cartesian universalistic countenance, which had been carved into the corner stone, became replaced with a number of mirror reflexes. The poststructuralist answer to this problem was the deconstruction of the existing concepts of a subject, and the postulate of the inability to develop a conceptualization of subjectivity that was not likely to become an oppressive category. Following that, the first hardship in the philosophy of 'the feminine subject' stems from positioning feminist theories with regard to the tradition of concept and subject itself, and therefore, questioning the need of its construction as strictly masculine.

But there is a problem – as Rosi Braidotti points out – that the deconstruction of a rational subject that has never truly existed in its feminine form, is a misguided action (Braidotti 2011: 268).

It is therefore justified to search for a feminine subject, which, however, entails yet another problem, namely, bringing the search down to the 'irrational' and 'chaotic' reality of a body which results from interpreting rationality as masculine. As much as this kind of reality is worth attention and the discussion on carnality within philosophy is extremely valuable, the theoretical consequences of assuming this option prove to be pernicious to feminism in the long run. By rejecting a rational subject, women risk the omission of an important stage in the construction of identity, namely, the one based on gaining power and the sense of empowerment, if these are in fact the privileges resulting from being a rational subject.

Therefore, it turns out that it is not only necessary to establish the feminine subject in defiance of the post-modern tendencies, but also to restore the concept of rationality within the feminist theory and practice. As it is presumably required to restore also other concepts that are 'traditionally' attributed to masculinity, the next trap that Braidotti notes is the 'feminization of thought' – only apparently appreciating women (2011: 267). The 'feminization of thought' is based on dismantling the powerful, strong and rational masculine subjectivity with the help of feminine gentleness and sensitivity. And this took place at an unfortunate moment in history, when women were about to reach out for the discourse, rationality and power. Meanwhile, these concepts became suddenly discredited and, along with their carrier – the masculine subject, eliminated from having their share in contemporary humanities. Thus, as much as fragmentation and dispersion may constitute a new experience and indicate a creative transformation for the masculine subject, in relation to women this position is historically founded: in their case, a transformational movement would be the one faced in the opposite direction – towards the subject.

The problems with the feminine subject and the notion of a 'woman' are still present in the global feminist debates, and require the responses from philosophy of subject that would not be entangled with the commonly held cultural stereotypes of femininity. By searching for its place in the pantheon of philosophical categories, 'femininity' perhaps is the reason to assume that the experience of a sex is a stronger building material for identity than the experience of being the so-called 'human'. That is why it is so important to emphasise that a woman as a 'figure of postmodern subjectivity' is not identical with a feminine subject, nor is a woman as a subject. What is required is a feminine subject that does not constitute an extrapolation of a masculine process of subjectivity, a simple reversal of the vector of phallogocentric culture. In this way, the thinking about feminine subjectivity perhaps would avoid the pitfalls of postmodernism.

Braidotti's answer

To confront the paradoxical condition of the subjectivity concept, the majority of authors attempt to tread a path between the classical Cartesian *ego cogito* and the poststructuralist 'lack of the cogito'. Rosi Braidotti, who represented the path in her work *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (2011, first published 1994), employed the Deleuzian metaphor of a nomad instead of the Cartesian metaphor of a building as a better definition of subjectivity.

The subject described here is a collection of diversified, non-linear developments and potentially conflicting experiences, an aggregate of variables, such as sex, age, race, social status or lifestyle. Therefore, it is impossible to indicate its unchangeable essence that would define it once and for all. The term 'woman' is a code word, a key serving to initiate the social and symbolic practices, and not a definition of categories of beings.

The sphere of creation of a nomadic subject is the one located 'in between', with the metaphors of travel found in all kinds of transit zones and means of transport. The quasi-places in which one is no longer in a given place, but also not yet anywhere in particular. To a nomadic subject, any place is exactly like that, as it is developed 'in between': languages, cultures, races, sexes, bodies, and ways of thinking (2011: 47–49). However, it is mainly the sphere 'between oneself', which requires the recognition of the polyphony of one's own existence without the need to introduce a symbolic hierarchy into the structure of subjectivity, like Cartesianism did. According to Braidotti, a subject may constitute an absolute monarchy or a deep democracy for itself, this is a question of choice, political determination.

The identity, as Braidotti writes, is a retrospective concept based on the traces from the places in which we have already been, the trails of memories, the codes that we used. A nomad does not succumb to the temptation to settle down in one of those places and promote it to something more than merely a trace.

To a proper Cartesian subject this option is unacceptable, and by transferring these considerations to the sphere of modern politics, we may observe a great resistance towards a multicultural indeterminacy on the part of defenders of the 'mother tongue' and one's own land. "We are all epistemological orphans – Braidotti says – and the ontological insecurity we suffer is our unavoidable historical condition. Afflicted by the melancholy which henceforth marks the end of this millennium, haunted by a feeling of loss, philosophy is no longer the queen of knowledge, nor is it the master-discipline any more. At the most it can claim the status of a merry widow, sadly trying to find her place in the new cynicism of postmodern society. As a famous graffito on the Paris walls put it: «God is dead, Marx is dead, and I'm not feeling so well myself»" (1991: 2).

Braidotti notes that the process of democratisation, creating a new unionised European identity is not an easy transformation. It requires a profound modification, rebuilding of the structure of a subject and its relationship with the environ-

ment. What is important, this new cultural identity emerges more from the inner dynamics of a subject rather than from its external opposition towards others. A moving nomad is always different in the places where he or she arrives. Thus, the subject's stability may no longer lean on the thematization or reification of the other, nor the revelation. A nomad moves among the others as if they were 'his' or 'hers'. It is moreover necessary to make a distinction between a nomad and a migrant who moves to other places in order to settle down and reinstall his identity in its every detail. Also, nomadism is not based upon 'homelessness', it is rather an ability to make a home anywhere. A nomad is "a subject in transit and yet sufficiently anchored to a historic position to accept responsibility and therefore make [himself] accountable for it" (2011: 34).

A nomad constantly travels between cultures, languages and his or her own figurations, it is an ethical being which avoids relativism of what it would be like to be accused by the Cartesian subject. It is the awareness of multifariousness of the world that generates the ethical position, which does not involve the reasonable 'I' leaning over the Other, nor rejecting oneself for the benefit of the incapacitating otherness of the Other. It is the ethics based on esteem, exchange and sympathy, one that does not require great words and lofty ethical systems or, to quote: "the bubble of ontological security that comes from familiarity with one linguistic site" (2011: 43).

But the question is: does such a concept of subjectivity allow to avoid the regime of power? The whole story of an ethical, nomadic subject freed from the shackles of fundamentalism, transferred onto the contemporary social and political dimension, perhaps sounds like a wishful fable. Transit zones do not always offer the atmosphere of excitement connected with travelling, and the others do not always respect the otherness that we represent. The lack of the sense of belonging may be hell to those who do not travel willingly out of their curiosity of the world. The European integration may provide the opportunity to stretch the horizons of one's identity, but it may also induce the pressure to unify, with the term 'community' concealing the existing ethnocentrism and a different kind of exclusion. As much as the European community constitutes an area of nomadic travels, it sometimes imposes on migrants the need to change places.

Moreover, the discovery of new lands, the acquisition of other cultures and languages is also connected with violence. Deleuze refers to nomadic tribes as 'war machines' aiming at tearing away the goods provided by native tribes. While stepping against the political violence – as Braidotti writes – one needs to be aware of the dark side of nomadism. Therefore, the concept of a society composed of nomadic subjects is not a naïve tale of a paradise freed from violence.

Another question arises: why, then, do we prefer the violence of pirates than that of a regular army? Braidotti writes about her ambivalent attitude towards the nomadic violence. This is the violence we fear, as any other kind of violence, as we fear ourselves, the existence that we embody. But at the same time, in a sense, we desire it, because it carries a certain secret and the prospect of transformation. The

nomadic violence snatches us from our beaten tracks and, at times, we are grateful for it, since in our attachment to the system into which we are rooted, we would not find enough strength for it. And nomadism offers us the opportunity to go wherever one wants to go.

It is not an attempt to justify the violence of a nomad inscribed in the metaphor, but rather a realistic recognition of the fact that we live in the world of power relations, in the world of politics of desire which organizes our thoughts and experiences. While thinking about a model of identity, and thus the politics of dealing with oneself, Braidotti chooses the nomad identity as more authentic nowadays.

Moreover, Braidotti's concept is particularly interesting, because apart from the declarations of a need to seek for 'a new concept of the subject', it also offers a proposal of a working plan for the feminist nomadic thinking, based on three levels of sexual difference. The first level analyzes the differences between men and women, the second – among women themselves, and the third – the differences existing within a woman. Only such coordinates, as Braidotti sees it, make it possible to position a feminist nomadic subject as differentiated and non-hierarchic at the same time. Still, the concept of difference as such, similarly to other concepts coined throughout history, should be recovered.

Therefore, the essentialist connotations related to the concept of difference that provide an excuse to oppose its application in the feminist theory, do not have to be obvious and decisive. Contrary to the contemporary feminists' speeches against the sexual difference as inevitably heading towards the restoration of the metaphysics of the 'eternal femininity', Braidotti believes that the difference, as a revised term freed from the traditional context and not entangled in hierarchisation, rule, determination of the better and the worse side of things, could constitute the basis for a new identity project. Yet, at the same time, she does not want to give up the asymmetry. According to Braidotti, the sexual difference is a major reason of asymmetry and 'differently' does not mean 'equally'. A false notion of the sexual asymmetry emerged as a result of thinking from the perspective of the concept of 'gender', and particularly due to its institutional career as 'gender studies' (2011: 141). Moreover, the concept of 'gender' puts an emphasis on the social and material factors, whereas the 'sexual difference' opens the area of linguistic and symbolic references. And both these areas constitute significant fields of exploration of gender theories, they both shape and reveal the feminine experience. Meanwhile, the extremism present within these both approaches leads to reductionism and poses a risk of a wrongful understanding of essentialism. One of them may involve the deepening of social separation and reduction to 'what is feminine', whereas the other may unify the differences that occur on numerous levels and lead to a reduction of 'what is human'. In Braidotti's view, this impasse becomes unblocked in the situation when we reject the dualist way of thinking as a 'module of existence of patriarchy'. What is meant here is the classical dichotomy, such as 'nature-culture, active-passive, rational-irrational, masculine-

feminine', which cements the universalisation of a masculine subject and locks a woman in the position of the Other.

Thus, the nomadic project forces its way through the three levels of depiction of the sexual difference, but also integrates the three areas of thinking about the subject. It starts with the distinction on the ontological or existential level, goes through the political-social reflection and ends with the psychological analysis of 'I' in which the expression of longing becomes more meaningful. Therefore, the most significant determinant of the nomadic subjectivity seems to be processuality. What proves to be crucial are the desires and passions, the affirmation of life with its instability and variety. The multiplication of differences on the third level bursts the heavy categories from the first level and does not leave any doubts as to the second one. Braidotti writes: "It is about the ability to adapt and develop suitable navigational tools within the fast-moving techno- and ethno- and genderscapes of globally mediated world. Against the general lethargy on the one hand and the rhetoric of selfish genes and possessive individualism on the other, hope rests with a non-rapacious ethics of sustainable becoming: for the hell of it and for love of the world" (2006: 278).

Closing remarks

To summarize the above deliberations, it seems today that post-structuralism, having fulfilled its critical role, does not respond to a certain irreducible existential need of a person to associate oneself with a somehow defined identity. That is why turning back to the positive definitions of identity is a clearly visible tendency in the field of philosophy today. Therefore, further theoretical challenge involves the establishment of a subject category with the entire poststructuralist awareness of the impossibility of making such a move.

The contemporary feminism attempts to cope with this difficult situation. It tries to respond to the need of the simultaneous deconstruction and recognition of a feminine subject, or its simultaneous creation, in such a way however, as not to endow it with a stiff, oppressive and reductive structure. A theoretically reckless project, which entails taking two steps back whenever one step forward is made, is to establish a new language, with the only one available now being the old one in which the distance makes it impossible to utter any truth. It is reckless, yet necessary. Hence, if we fail to see the habit of hierarchisation at the most fundamental level of thinking and speaking, we will only be shuffling the places of those who win and lose. As Rosi Braidotti said: "The point is to overcome the dialectics of domination, not to turn the previous slaves into new masters" (Braidotti, Butler 1994: 39).

However: is Braidotti's response satisfactory? Is the concept of a feminine nomadic subject a possible solution to the problem of oppressive tendencies of thematization?

It seems that the pillar of this concept is to go beyond duality towards processuality. This gesture should make it possible to establish a point of view based on difference, without the acceptance of relativism. This would mean that it is feasible to provide a category of subjectivity which would be socially and psychologically functional and not aspirant to universality. The theoretical abandonment of dualism is not an easy task, however, and requires a reconfiguration of the basics of thinking. Meanwhile, Braidotti, who criticizes the post-structuralism as a consequence of male thinking about subject, and searches for the feminine subjectivity that would not be just an inversion of the vector of phallogocentric culture, chooses the figure of a nomad that had been earlier proposed by Deleuze, undoubtedly one of 'the high priests of post-structuralism' (Braidotti 2011: 267). Thus, despite the threats from the poststructuralist perspective, she sees nomadism as a creative field of reference.

In summary, I am not fully satisfied with the outcome of Braidotti's work – it definitely still needs a deep rethinking of the mechanisms of constructing subjectivity – but I agree with her assumptions. It seems that, probably, the best way to overcome the mechanism of exclusion is to seek new categories outside the systems of dichotomies that regard processuality. Besides, nowadays we need subjectivity that is at the same time localised and culturally diversified. Even if 'a nomad' is ultimately not the best metaphor, we can use its philosophical possibilities in overcoming the Cartesian tradition. As Braidotti writes: "Resting on a nomadic understanding of subjectivity, I will attempt to de-pathologize and to illuminate in a positive light some contemporary cultural and social phenomena, trying to emphasize their creative and affirmative potential" (2002: 5).

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