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Helma Lutz [a]

[a] Gender Studies, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Germany

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Gender in the Migratory Process

Helma Lutz

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This paper argues for treating gender as a key category in the understanding of migratory processes. Starting with an illustration of the absence of women in mainstream migration research, it presents the debate on this phenomenon and its development from a focus on women to one on gender. Through discussion of the debate on current migration phenomena it is demonstrated how gender can be used in a conceptual framework which includes various levels (micro, meso and macro). The paper advocates the analysis of migratory processes within a broader framework of social change.

Keywords: Gender; Transnational Migration; Care Practices; Gendered Labour Markets; Transnational Parenthood

La Femme Perdue: (In)Visible Women in the Migratory Process

Number 7 of the 'laws of migration' proposed by the social geographer Ernest George Ravenstein in 1885 reads as follows: 'Females are more migratory than males'. Ravenstein then modified this female inclination to migration over short distances. Unfortunately, it took a whole century before this article was rediscovered and recognised anew in the 1980s (see Donato *et al.* 2006; Morokvasic 2003, 2007). The absence of women in much of the migration research during the twentieth century caused Mirjana Morokvasic, in her introduction to the first *International Migration Review* special issue on 'Women in Migration' in 1984, to make the following comment: 'Rather than "discovering" that female migration is an understudied phenomenon, it is more important to stress that the already existing literature has had little impact on policy making, on mass media representation of migrant women, but also on the main body of migration literature, where male bias has continued to persist ... in spite of growing evidence of women's overwhelming participation in migratory movements' (Morokvasic 1984: 899). Another 25 years later, it seems appropriate to have a closer look at the examination and theorisation of female

Helma Lutz is Professor and Chair of Women's and Gender Studies at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Germany. Correspondence to: Prof. Dr H. Lutz, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute for the Analysis of Society and Politics, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Robert-Mayer-Straße 5, 60054 Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany. E-mail: lutz@soz.uni-frankfurt.de.

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migration and follow this strand into the twenty-first century's paradigmatic shift into a focus on gendered migration.

From the perspective of today it would be easy to declare the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the 'era of mass migration' and—according to the main bulk of research results—consider this a phenomenon in which men were the primary actors, then followed by the feminisation of migration as a particular characteristic of the twenty-first century (Castles and Miller 1993; Koser and Lutz 1998). A critical review shows that this reconstruction is debatable. Historians, re-evaluating migration processes during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Gabaccia 1996; Harzig 1997, 2003; Moch 1992), have shown that, already in the nineteenth-century transatlantic mass migration to the United States, almost half of the migrants were female. Later, during the twentieth century, women became more visible in migration research, but this occurred in a particular way: they were defined as passive and followers of their male partners. As Everett Lee put it in his classic paper on theorising migration, '[C]hildren are carried along by their parents, willy-nilly, and wives accompany their husbands though it tears them away from environments they love' (Lee 1966: 51; see also Fielding 1993: 53).

In fact, Lee reverted to a conceptualisation of the female migrant as 'victim', which had emerged already in one of the first and still most eminent theories on migration, Thomas and Znaniecki's (1996[1918–20]) *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America.*[1] Within a bi-coded framework of voluntary = male, and involuntary = female and child migration, there seemed no need to analyse the role of women in 'mass migration'; nor were the family reunification schemes investigated or conceptualised as a tool for women to achieve the aim of active participation in the labour market which they had been refused access to in the first place (Kofman 1999: 271). Moreover, it was overlooked that in many mass migration processes women were often primary migrants themselves (Booth 1992; Kofman 1999; Morokvasic 1987).

In retrospect it can be said that various, often contradictory, developments account for the long-term absence of women in theoretical (and empirical) studies on migration. I differentiate between four possible explanations:

1. There has been little interest to investigate Ravenstein's statement by a comparative analysis of various data on the migration propensity of women and men; neither the disproof of Law no.7, nor its confirmation, were regarded as in need of discussion. Within the dominant gender order of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the focus on 'men' was considered 'natural'.
2. Feminist researchers have suggested that the gender bias was a product of the absence of female researchers in the field and in theory-making. Donato *et al.* (2006: 9) suggest that, even at the University of Chicago 'where an almost entirely male sociology department co-existed with the casework-oriented School of Social Service Administration (SSA) with origins in one of Chicago's Social Settlement Houses, it was the work of men in the sociology department that defined those forms of knowledge understood as theory' (see also Mahler and

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Pessar 2006).[2] Such a statement is linked to the assumption that theory building is never dissociated from the gender of the person collecting data and evidence.[3]

3. A different explanation for women's absence is given by Jørgen Carling (2005: 4) who writes that, in studies on mass migration, '[W]omen were not considered because they were seen as following men or *behaving like men*' (my emphasis), thereby proposing that the gendered rule as such need not be revised as long as female migratory activity is considered a habitual aberration.
4. A fourth explanation goes back to theories about modernity and social change.

As philosopher Hannah Arendt (1958) and historian Carolyn Steedman (2009) argue, the gendered bias in much of social scientists' and economists' work dates back to the single-edged definition of 'work' as gainful employment (waged work) in most economic and social theories (starting from Adam Smith to Karl Marx and then on to neoliberal theorists). In contrast care/domestic work, one of the main fields of female occupation, was and still is defined as *non-productive* and subordinated to the importance of *productive work*. According to Steedman, this asymmetry accounts for the fact that female domestic servants, making up one of the largest occupational groups in the society of modern time, were almost entirely neglected as the backbone of developing modernity. The majority of women participating in mass migration movements at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century were not occupied in factories but were rather recruited for domestic work in the cities and the countryside. The assumption that migrant women's work was simply overlooked because of its location in the *private sphere* and its characterisation as 'family work' when simultaneously the 'real work' was considered to be performed in factories is still open to study and confirmation by historians.

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From Women to Gender in Migration Studies

The renewed interest in migrant women is closely linked to the establishment of Women's Studies from the 1980s onwards in many Western societies and in international institutions. Without being able to give an exhaustive account of the various stages research on migrant women underwent, one can at least distinguish four stages in the development of this field (see also Lutz 2004).

The first—as mentioned above—pledged itself to make women *visible* in migration movements; it aimed at demonstrating typical female migration patterns as well as special aspects of female migratory processes. Seen from a theoretical perspective this could be called a *compensatory approach*.

The second can be qualified as *contributory*, focusing on the contribution of women to various migration movements. It included research projects dealing with the specific role of women in the migration context and with their particular migration experiences.

A third stage starting in the mid-1980s in the US and developing further in the 1990s looked at specific *differences* in power relations between women. Inspired by

black US-American feminists like Angela Davis or bell hooks, black and immigrant researchers started to question dominant feminist epistemologies and their (homogenised) subject. The focus of their project was not so much the search for commonalities but rather the analysis of differences in social positioning (social inequalities through citizenship status, economic and cultural inequalities) and 'racialised or ethnicised' genealogies of identity formation, separating indigenous from immigrant women. This approach, which became known as the 'race–class–gender' debate, led to many heated discussions between 'black' and 'white' feminists and was deeply politicised. Immigrant and minority scholars identified politically as 'blacks', a collective identity formation which can be termed the 'radical resistance' approach.

The virulence of this debate—in particular in the Anglo-American context—can be explained as a reaction to the *double-edged position* of the subject area; migrant and minority women were neither considered a core subject of mainstream *migration studies* nor were they seen as a subject of mainstream *women's studies*. They existed purely as a 'sub-theme' or a marginal category, separated or added on as exotic strangers, eclipsed behind the eminent subject of '*the* male' (migration studies) and '*the* female' (women's studies). Both fields[4] contributed to their perception as (ethnic, cultural or national) 'others', thereby reifying the binary of sameness–otherness and reconstructing migration as a deviant social phenomenon or the female migrant as deviant from her male peer. Various studies have deconstructed the representation of migrant women as 'others', a designation which has not only informed stereotypical commonsense notions but also scientists, administrators and policy-making in migrant-receiving countries (Kofman 1999; Kofman *et al.* 2000; Lutz 1991a, 1991b, 1997; Phizacklea 1998).

An important insight from this debate is the understanding that gender relations are always mediated by other socially constructed categories such as 'race'/ethnicity and class etc.; vice versa, various studies have illustrated that the analysis of 'race'/ethnicity, class or nationality cannot do without looking at its gendered dimensions (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992). This approach has now received more attention under the term 'intersectionality' (see Phoenix and Pattynama 2006; Yuval-Davis 2006).

The fourth stage, from the mid-1990s onwards, is the paradigmatic change from a Women's Studies to a Gender Studies perspective, following the evolution of this theoretical perspective in Women's Studies. Gender was introduced in the social sciences to emphasise the difference between a person's 'biological' (sex) and the 'socially acquired and performed' (gender) identity, way of living and role in society. It exposes the essentialism of a narrow preoccupation with women alone or with women and men (as statistical variables) in data collections[5] but focuses, instead, on the question of how gender asymmetry is a *product of* the social order, in institutional and socio-political processes, and *produces* it at the same time. The key subject of concern is the social construction of masculinity and femininity, the differential meaning of private and public as a workplace, the gender-specific evaluation and the

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differential consequences of migration experiences for male and female migrants in the context of being couples, parents and families ('fragmented families', distant parenting etc.). This approach opens up new ways of theorising because it makes it possible to distinguish between practices, identity or sex without the urge to identify this within one single category: a woman is . . . ; a man is . . . Furthermore, it makes space for moving away from monolithic and universalistic notions of the female and male by studying gender relations as expressions of asymmetry, inequality, domination and power not only between the genders but also within one gender category. A relational perspective can, for instance, show how the work of migrant domestic and care workers can enable their female employers to pursue their professional career, thereby 'undoing' their gendered obligations in care work to a certain extent. I return to this particular point below.

In conclusion it can be said that this list of different stages does not imply the absence of any of the models in current research; in fact, many studies are still using the compensatory or the contributory approach. The latter are also important in so far as they can make a contribution to the recognition that gender is not just one 'aspect' in the study of people on the move like economy, politics or religion (see Levitt *et al.* 2003: 566), but a *central organising principle* in migration flows and in the organisation of migrants' lives. Thus, pushing gender 'from the margin to the core' (see Mahler and Pessar 2006) requires a further elaboration and advancement of the gender approach.

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The Gendered Nature of Crossing Borders and Boundaries

The exploration of migration as a gendered process benefits from the paradigm shift from women to gender as much as from the recent development of masculinity studies as a strand of gender studies, as will be shown in the following.

When Castles and Miller (1993) declared the 'feminisation of migration' one of the characteristics of the 'Age of Migration', they did so on the basis of statistical evidence that, in processes of *international* migration, women have outnumbered men, an observation that has been confirmed by various large-scale studies since (Carling 2005; Global Commission on International Migration 2005; Yinger 2006, 2007; Zlotnik 2003). While this is partly due to the fact that the majority of refugees and displaced persons are female, the number of those migrating voluntarily and transnationally as single migrants (and mothers) has also increased. According to Yinger (2006) not only does this development account for a dramatic change in numbers but the reasons why females migrate have also changed. Simultaneously, it needs to be asked what changes occur in male migration and what implications the overall changes have for men and women, those who go and those who stay. Therefore, a gendered approach needs to take into account four aspects: a) feminised and masculinised *labour markets*; b) *care practices*; c) shifting *discourses and practices* on gender orders in receiving countries; and finally d) *discourses and practices on gender* in sending countries.

Labour Markets

The work areas into which women migrate now comprise feminised domains like domestic and care work, entertainment and prostitution, and also sectors in agriculture and catering services. The term 'feminised domains' (Wetterer 2002) was coined on the basis of the observation that, when the majority of the workers becomes female, this links up with low wages, low status and low occupational mobility. It also concerns work in the service sector and tasks performed in the private sphere in which workers tend to be isolated and collective organisation is difficult. In contrast to 'feminised' labour markets, there also are those dominated by male workers like the construction and road-making industries, truck driving, butchery etc. some of which suffer from the same disadvantages: isolation, low status and low occupational mobility.[6] However, there are also huge differences in the work and its organisation. One example here is the difference in public attention for the irregular workers in these sectors. While, for example, construction worker unions in Europe focus on and shame exploitative working conditions, there are few unions taking up this case for domestic workers and carers (see Anderson 2000; Schwenken 2005). The classic gendered divide between the *public* and the *private* spheres and their attribution to *productive* and *non-productive* labour can be considered an explanation for this asymmetrical commitment.

As mentioned before, a look at the genderedness of migrant labour markets through the lens of masculinity studies renders fresh insights into the diversity of gender roles in labour market sectors for migrant men. As Connell (2007: 57) argues, some groups of men do not receive a positive but, instead, a negative dividend from the maintenance of a patriarchal capitalist order. Among those men who pay a price in terms of oppression, violence, injuries etc. are certainly homosexuals, but also (groups of) migrant men: those who wish to fulfil their role as male breadwinner through earning remittances, and who endure racism, heavy exploitation and dangerous working conditions, while possibly finding their status as head of household contested during their absence because their wives left behind take up new roles and activities formerly defined as male tasks (Gulati 1993). As various studies on male migrants in construction work (Osella and Osella 2003; Walter *et al.* 2004) show, these men need to 'perform' their ability to do this work by conveying physical strength, willingness and toughness as 'natural' male competencies, just as women perform their 'natural' capacities when hired for domestic services. Moreover, some studies on Asian men (in Italy and Germany) working alongside their wives in feminised domestic settings (Gallo 2006; Shinozaki 2005) are perceived as 'unthreatening' because of their physical appearance and working habits which render them 'effeminated'.

Care Practices

In contrast to expectations that, when women become breadwinners of their households, traditional female tasks are taken over by husbands (see Sassen 1991,

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1998), the reality is that this did not prove to be the rule—in fact, in many cases, it did not happen at all. Instead, in the absence of mothers, the re-distribution of care work in sending households seems to be primarily performed by female family members such as grandmothers, aunts or oldest daughters, or is outsourced to female neighbours or friends (Gamburd 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Lutz 2007a; Parreñas 2001a, 2001b, 2005).

While for a long time it seemed unthinkable that mothers from countries with a strong motherhood ideology—meaning the general conviction that a child cannot grow up healthily without being cared for by its biological mother—would be willing to migrate, now it seems that, even in countries like Poland, the Ukraine and the Philippines (to name but some), 'distant motherhood' is a common phenomenon. From the emerging literature on 'transnational mothering and parenting' it becomes obvious that the absence of migrated fathers is more widely accepted than the absence of mothers (Parreñas 2005). Moreover, some case studies qualify the effects of the change from male to female breadwinner status as causes for a crisis of masculinity, the symptoms of which are found in augmented male alcoholism, violence and child misuse (Gamburd 2000; Lutz 2007a). It is still an open question and pressing issue for further research on whether those men staying behind and performing caring practices are in danger of losing their 'masculinity' and at risk of being labelled as effeminate.

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Discourses versus Practices in Receiving Countries

As mentioned before, in various studies migrant women have been portrayed as 'victims' of migration processes; this perception is not only applied to women working in precarious sectors but also to those following their husbands as marriage migrants or on the family reunification scheme. In public and scientific discourses 'the male perpetrator/villain' functions as a counterpart of 'the female victim'. As Katharine Charsley (2005) has shown, this model is particularly applied to the portrayal of gender relations among Muslim migrants. Using her own case study about transnational marriage migration involving a British-born and -raised wife of Punjabi background and a Punjabi husband migrating to live in the household of his wife in England, Charsley convincingly demonstrates how the asymmetric power relation between the partners can lead to the phenomenon of 'unhappy husbands'; these husbands, deprived of their kin support, lacking the social knowledge relevant for their new environment and often dependant on their wives' (families') income and advice, are under enormous tension and suffer greatly from the indignities of life in Britain. Here, then, it is not the wife, but the husband who becomes frustrated, depressed and isolated because he cannot live up to his own and others' expectations of performing his masculinity adequately. This study shows that the representation of Muslim men as patriarchal villains is quite often a cherished dominant discursive figure which obscures a much more complicated portrayal of masculinity or, better, a *multiplicity* of masculinities. Within the scope of Muslim masculinity, the patriarch

and perpetrator is but one possible pattern of social practice; others are hardly investigated and attract little attention.

In order to obtain more insights into changes in the lives of migrant women and men, the discourses on gender orders in the receiving and the sending societies need to be investigated and confronted with social practices of migrant actors. An interesting case study in this respect is *the public debate on parenthood/motherhood, gender equality and care work*. In many Western European countries over the last twenty years the massive integration of 'native' women into gainful employment was not followed by the redistribution of care work and family tasks between spouses; neither did it cause states to enhance their efforts in the provision of care facilities. Thus, women's substitution in the private household is poorly covered by the state's allocation of child care and elderly care (see Lutz 2007b, 2008). While women's participation in employment became a key goal in the emancipation measures taken by the European Union, the question of this policy's repercussion for the organisation of work in the private sphere stayed in the background. Instead of equal distribution of care work between the genders, middle-class families prefer the outsourcing of the *three c's*, cleaning, cooking and caring for small children and elderly people, nursing the disabled and diseased (Anderson 2000), to a migrant woman. Today, in Europe, the reasons for increased female participation in migration from the sending countries have to be analysed as a process where (changing) gender relations, welfare state organisation and economics in the receiving countries intersect.

It is now estimated that at least one out of ten households in several European countries uses domestic 'help'; while the majority of workers are women, a small proportion of men is also found among them, executing tasks in the realm of the private home, i.e. as gardeners and 'handymen' (Kilkey 2009; Ramírez and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2009) and, albeit in rare cases, also performing 'female' tasks (see above). Although the request for migrant workers in this area is pressing, the different governments of the European Union react in very different ways. Some have established quota systems (like Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece), or have opened their borders to them (Britain and Ireland).[7] Others, such as Germany (see Cyrus 2008), the Nordic States and the Netherlands, have hardly acknowledged the need for migrant domestic workers, let alone included this need in their managed migration policies, thereby creating a large unprotected employment sector. This, however, does not mean that migrant domestic workers are absent from these countries. In many countries the work of migrant domestic workers does not fall under labour law, another indication of the asymmetrical assessment of care work which is not considered proper 'work'. The study of domestic workers in Europe illustrates that a new gender order—once the dream of the feminist movement—is not in sight. Rather, middle-class women have entered what Jacqueline Andall (2000) has called the 'post-feminist paradigm', reconciling family and work by outsourcing (parts of) their care work tasks to migrants; to a certain extent it even helps them to mitigate the pressures of their daily gender performance.

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As I have argued elsewhere (Lutz 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008; Lutz and Palenga-Möllenbeck 2010), the question of whether or not emancipation discourses and gender equality policies in the Western World, and in particular in Europe, have generated a fundamental change of gendered cultural scripts (represented in gender regimes), is still to be evaluated. A sound analysis has to take into account *three different intersecting 'regimes'*: next to *gender regimes*, we can consider *care regimes* as part of welfare regimes (concerning a multitude of state regulations according to which the responsibilities for the well-being of national citizens is *distributed between the state, the family and the market*), and finally *migration regimes*, which for various reasons either promote or discourage the employment of migrant domestic workers.[8] A sound analysis using these parameters is still missing.[9]

So far, from the few existing comparative studies, it can be concluded that the public debate on gender order in receiving countries is only linked to migration issues where Muslim gender relations are identified as patriarchal and oppressive and as threatening for gender equality.[10] Where, for various reasons that cannot be elaborated here, Muslims function as the ultimate 'others' in the representation of gender relations (Lutz 1991a, 1991b), other issues in which migration and gender regimes intersect, like domestic care work, are rather pushed into the background. Here it is interesting to realise that traditional care regimes in 'home-caring' societies (Pfau-Effinger 2000) like Germany are maintained by using state allowances for 'caring family members'[11] while employing a live-in migrant carer to do the actual work. The process of outsourcing is perfectly camouflaged by the state (which can keep up the image of family care provision), and the employers, many of whom would otherwise not be able to combine employment and home nursing (for an analysis of this informal market see Lutz 2009). While debates on women's emancipation and gender equality are on the agenda of most European states, they seem to be detached from discourses on transnational care migration. On the level of practices, however, it is obvious that the latter helps to resolve conflicts about gendered task redistribution and it supports the perpetuation of traditional gender orders in receiving societies.

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Discourses and Practices in Sending Countries

The question of how discourses in sending societies react to (massive) out- or transnational migration of men and women, and whether or not the debate on gender relations in the sending countries is influenced at all by this kind of mobility, is still an understudied issue. In the first place sending states are interested in remittances; in order to make sure that these financial flows are continued, measures safeguarding health care, social security and pension schemes on return are taken by various governments. Most states seem to prefer male migration, which in fact fits the traditional image of the male breadwinner best. As mentioned before, this expectation has always put much pressure on men who were, and still are, in danger of paying high prices if they fail to fulfil these hopes (Osella and Osella 2003). Female

migration seems to be seen as unproblematic as long as it is restricted to unmarried, young and single females, but it is seen as a threat for social coherence where it concerns mothers of young children; thus the debate on 'fragmented families' started with the outmigration of 'mothers' (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001). One example where state reaction to mothers' migration is well-documented is the Philippines. Here, the state, in collaboration with the (Catholic) Church, has launched various emigration-preparation programmes in which women are not only prepared for the hardships of their work abroad but also taught how to acknowledge and deal with loneliness and isolation; moreover, they are reminded of their (financial) responsibilities towards their family members left behind and exhorted to be faithful to their country. To make sure that migrant women are rewarded for their loyalty, they are officially designated as 'heroines' or 'ambassadors' of the Philippines and receive prizes for their faithfulness during their (rare) visits home (Parreñas 2005; Shinozaki 2005).

In our ongoing research project on care chains from the Ukraine to Poland and from Poland to Germany, Ewa Palenga-Möllenbeck and I carried out a press analysis on migration related issues in the Ukraine and Poland.[12] As we found several inconsistencies in the discourses, we have noticed that the societies of these sending countries are somehow caught up in contradictions. One characteristic found in Poland is a '*laissez-faire*' attitude which one-sidedly portrays Polish labour migration to EU countries as a success story and tends to minimise or ignore its social costs altogether. We assume that this tendency has several causes. Firstly, this attitude goes hand-in-hand with, and is a consequence of, another discourse on labour migration, which has dominated the overall Polish press since 2003–04, when Poles could legally access some Western European labour markets for the first time. It was an 'enthusiastic' discourse that framed labour migration as 'liberating', and an economic success for both the state and individuals. Labour migration was officially welcomed as a solution against unemployment and poverty, especially in the context of a downsizing welfare state. Above all, this was typical for the liberal-conservative press, where this view dominates, even until today. Secondly, the ignorance or blaming of labour migrants obviously depends on the gender and family roles (mother, wife, husband, daughter etc.) that are ascribed to men and women in the given national or regional contexts (Lutz and Palenga-Möllenbeck 2010). Interestingly, until the year 2008, the repercussions of labour migration for families left behind were not an issue in the press at all. Starting in 2008, public discourse switched from complete silence to a very vivid interest in the issue of children of labour migrants. What can be observed now is a strong tendency to criticise and scandalise the absence of parents, in particular of mothers. The pattern we identify in this debate follows the logic of *naming, blaming and shaming*.

Naming refers to how some (not all) media, politicians and diverse collective actors such as NGOs suddenly 'discovered' the phenomenon of children living in migrant households and highlighted their negative consequences. This naming took place mainly in a negative manner, labelling those who were to be *blamed* for this situation, and finally *shaming* those 'culprits'. In the case of both countries, Poland and the

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Ukraine, two responsible groups were identified: the state and the parents. The state (and its various social actors, i.e. local and national governments, welfare institutions such as social security authorities) gets blamed for the weak economy and its (corrupt and inefficient) policies, while parents are blamed for being irresponsible, materialistic and egoistic.

One discursive figuration that turned up and had a huge impact was the term 'orphan' or, even stronger, 'Euro-orphan'—a child without parents, or of parents leaving their country for 'Europe', a child being left behind in the care of foreigners, a victim of the parents' hunger for Euros. *Euro-orphan* has strongly pejorative and normative implications, identifying the children of labour migrants as quasi-orphans. The term is applied to the situation of children of labour migrants, most of them living with at least one parent or carer in Poland. The prefix 'Euro-' has to be seen against the background of other discourses on labour migration from Poland after the country became a member of the EU in 2004 (*Euro-migrants* and *Euro-labour*). The combination of 'Euro' and 'orphans' as a neologism was allegedly coined by Polish psychologists dealing with migrant children.

In the Ukraine, the analogous term we found was *social orphan* which originates from the discourses on social poverty, street children and abandoned children, often referred to as social orphans. The term is quite self-explanatory; like 'Euro-orphan' it suggests a state of being a quasi-orphan.

In both countries, this discursive configuration received its strength from scandal stories according to which parents, migrating to 'Europe', had left their children in the custody of children's homes. In an effort to underline the strongly normative term 'orphan', statistical references are used for emphasis: most articles mention large numbers and suggest that they can be seen as indicators of a yet undiscovered and underestimated mass phenomenon. In the absence of concrete figures, however, constant appeals to count these orphans in order to arrive at a more precise figure is used in the press coverage.

Although the blaming for this situation is directed at parents in general, in both countries mothers receive special attention; in the press presentations concrete examples always scandalise the absence of mothers, not fathers. Thus, the migration of women (as mothers, wives, daughters-in-law etc.) is seen as more problematic than that of men. While male migration is portrayed as 'normal', female migration is being constructed as 'abnormal'. In an extreme version of this picture, migrant women are 'suspicious'; former Ukrainian president Kuchma's equation of women migrants with 'prostitutes' exemplifies this particularly well.

This case study gives some clues about the incongruous evaluation and portrayal of male and female migration. The fact that both countries belonged to the former socialist block where female full-time employment was not the exception but the rule, and, therefore, women's inclination to migration can be considered high, the clash with culturally engrained gendered scripts concerning female and male role performance seems nevertheless quite serious.

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Further research focusing on long-term analysis of gender relations in migrant families is required to illuminate the changes or shifts in gender orders of the sending countries.

A Model for a Gendered Analysis of Migration Phenomena

In summary, a gender analysis has to take into consideration three aspects which are described in the following as three levels of analysis, the macro, meso and micro level.[13] Table 1 is a scheme for the following analysis.

On the *macro-level*, migrants are found in gender-specific labour market segments in the receiving context, like domestic work or the construction sector, which exert a pulling power on female or male actors respectively. Moreover, it is not only the sort of work that is feminised or masculinised, but also its organisation. For example the construction sector potentially requires regular *full-time* workers; agriculture needs seasonal *target-earners*; domestic work, by contrast, can be arranged more easily in a *frame of rotation* (e.g. three-month rotation rhythm, replacement by a colleague or friend). Therefore, the organisation of work in these three sectors, the *meso level*, is strongly linked to gendered models of care and family organisation but also to networks and opportunity structures.

On the *micro-level*, individual practices, identities and positions come into sight. Since migrants live transnational family lives, they have to reconcile work abroad with family life at home. In everyday life practices, gender-specific characteristics are mirrored and, simultaneously, the individual migrant's position in transnational social spaces is marked by intersections of life-cycle, class and ethnicity that can turn out to be (more or less) resourceful. When trying to identify these positions, it is important to investigate the care responsibility of the migrant in the household (as a spouse, parent or even child); the age of starting migration (young adult or pensioner) is of great relevance as much as the migrants' social networks, skills, abilities, economic resources or/plus their biographical experiences which may be piling up into biographical resources.

Such an analysis, which is supposed to exemplify how migrants develop gender-specific (transnational) migration patterns, has several consequences for the way in which the research is carried out. First, among the methodological consequences is the need to identify a) the embeddedness of masculinities and femininities in the respective context of sending and receiving societies, and b) the embeddedness of masculinities and femininities in the context of gendered labour markets,

Table 1. Scale and gender in migration

Analytical level	Gendered social phenomena
Macro level	Labour market segments
Meso level	Organisation of work
Micro level	Individual practices, identities, positions

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organisations, care-practices and discourses. Second, among the theoretical consequences, the need to integrate gender aspects into theories based on transnational migration, labour market, and network approaches prevails. The search for *gendered* motivations and opportunities can highlight the strengths and weaknesses of these theories. Moreover a closer look at economic theories of migration from a gendered perspective promises to show a multiplicity of motives other than purely economic ones for pursuing or refraining from migration projects.

In summary, it can be assumed that the evaluation of gendered phenomena on the above-outlined three analytical levels can answer questions about the conditions and experiences of women and men in migratory processes. It can also be considered a tool for a deeper analysis of Joaquín Arango's critique of theories which portray the migrant as a '*homo economicus*': 'It is true that almost everything can be translated into costs and benefits and that a value in monetary terms can be attached to it, but the price of such effort may often be the practical irrelevance, close to tautology, of finding that people move to enhance well-being. In practice the cost of overcoming entry obstacles is often so staggering that it dissuades the majority of those who might be candidates for migration if economic considerations alone were at play' (Arango 2004: 20).

Therefore, any effort to exceed economic reductionism in theories of migration needs to make perceptible migrants' gender, their gendered obligations, care responsibilities, loyalties, family ties and the like. This may include submission to dominant gender orders as well as their modification and transformation.

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Notes

[1] This was partly caused by an uneven collection of empirical data: while ego documents (personal letters and autobiographies) formed the basis of their analysis on the migration experiences of males, they did not collect this type of material from women but examined the records of welfare institutions and courtroom documents on help-seeking women (see Kohli 1981).

[2] Moreover, Donato *et al.* (2006: 9) make an interesting observation by saying that the Chicago School started off with a large number of female researchers who later left the department and found long-term employment as founders and administrators of social welfare and public health agencies.

[3] Many studies aimed at interviewing the 'head of household' have often considered this to be men; accordingly male researchers talked to male migrants only, resulting in a distorted picture of decision-making and bread-winning (for various examples see Curran *et al.* 2006). In the same manner, Espinosa and Massey (1998) tested different theoretical positions on transnational Mexican–US migration by selecting merely male heads of household for their interviews (for a critique see Erel *et al.* 2003).

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[4] One could even argue that the conceptualisation of each area as a 'field' is hampered by the fact that both are multi-disciplinarily organised and fragmented—a characteristic, however, that also contributes to the intellectual wealth and high reflexivity of each field.

[5] Although, until recently, even this breakdown was missing in many international statistics (Calloni and Lutz 2000).

[6] The sector's preference for male workers is usually explained with physical strength; however, the 'Trümmerfrauen' (rubble women) in postwar Germany or the 'tractor women' in the former Soviet Union have demonstrated that muscle power is not a male monopoly. Rather, the question as to whether certain tasks are performed by men or women depends highly on cultural rules and gender orders.

[7] For an interesting comparison between Britain, Spain and Sweden see Williams and Gavanas (2008).

[8] The term 'regime' as it is used here refers to the organisation and the corresponding cultural codes of social policy and social practice in which the relationship between social actors (state, labour market and family) is articulated and negotiated. By introducing the term 'regime', Esping-Andersen (1990) explained how social policies and their effects differ between European countries.

[9] For some exceptions see Anthias and Lazaridis (2000), Kilkey *et al.* (2010), Williams (1995) and Williams and Gavanas (2008); Bridget Anderson (2000) published data from different European countries, collected during the late 1990s, which show interesting differences between European countries, but these are not analysed systematically.

[10] Various measures have been taken by governments to ban so-called 'forced marriages' which are often equated with arranged marriages. Populist and racist political parties in many European states, like the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark etc. have now chosen Islamic patriarchy as the main target for their campaigns, explicitly using (or misusing) feminist language and feminist demands.

[11] In this case for the home nursing of elderly and sick family members predominantly carried out by females in the family.

[12] 'Landscapes of Care Drain' financed by the DFG 2007–10. The press analysis covered four different kinds of (national and regional) newspapers in each country over the last decade.

[13] The following scheme was first elaborated by Ewa Palenga-Möllenbeck in her unpublished thesis (2010) and later applied in the context of our ongoing research project 'Landscapes of Care Drain'.

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