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## **Between two lives and two countries.**

### **The case of migrant sex workers from Ukraine in Krakow**

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*The prostitution is this rare occupation, seen as a completely non common value system regulated one. This profession does not reach its consumptive top yet, for many women from poor countries, to which Poland has not already belonged after all, it can offer a financially attractive option (Zadumińska, www.atest.com, the women's rights activist)*

*Everyone will label any street hooker as an evil. However, it makes awkward things for everyone when you see six cars waiting for a fourteen years old tart. Why have I never heard of these “street men” about their immorality? (S. Eugenia Bonetti, www.phuimplus.pl)*

## **Introduction**

A variety of both visual arts and academic papers that give rise to gender quake has constantly constructed around the gender migrations. From the gender studies perspective, we seek to understand the complex relationship between gender and

migration. The task of using such theoretical perspective is twofold, firstly, it serves to examine the sex migration pattern and to reconstruct the cultural roots of female oppression. Migrations can be treated as a social mirror into which we look in order to unravel the complexity of sexual identities. The conceptualization offered by this theory could be useful for showing some of sex ideologies that arise when being absorbed into the mainstream discourse. In the present paper we seek to examine the intersection between three phenomena: immigration, gender and prostitution in Poland. Firstly we shortly present how the patterns of migrations changed in this region over the last 20 years, how new phenomena as the feminization of the migratory inflow or its increasing heterogeneity changed the traditional patterns. Secondly, we talk about the issue of sex migration and we evoke the debates around the different perceptions of prostitution. We base our analysis on the two-case study of the biographies of female immigrant sex workers in Poland, therefore in the final, empirical part, the stress is being put on how these women themselves define their situations, their occupations. We are trying to uncover their perception of what it means to be a prostitute, how they constitute their identities and how they combine this role with other social roles they have, for example the one of the mother or a daughter.

## **1. Several factors can be examined to recognize some patterns of sex workers' migration:**

### **a) Rising heterogeneity and the scope of the inflow of migrants to Poland (after 1989)**

The structural transformation in Poland, which began after 1989, has encouraged the geographical mobility of many people from and to Poland, as well as internal migrations. The migration flows (both emigration and immigration), resulting from economic, political and social changes, appear to produce some undocumented and barely recorded migration practices so far. Vandana Shiva (2002) argues that the globalization (while encouraging greater mobility) „is giving rise to new slavery,

new holocausts, and new apartheid. It is a war against nature, women, children, and the poor. The globalization is a violent system, imposed and maintained through use of violence”.

According to statistical figures (NSP 2002, GUS 2008) 46% of immigration influx to Poland comes from such countries as Ukraine, Russia, Byelorussia, and Lithuania. If we focus our attention on potential migrants from European countries, we realize that those female migrants from former Soviet Union countries make up to a total of 62%. The feminization of migration from East to West is being even more significantly recognized as a new pattern of migration. Female migrants from the former USSR boost local demand for domestic services in rich countries (domestic industry). By the same token, the local sex market in such countries continues to grow as a result of a steady stream of newcomers from the former USSR. Those two industries are more likely to draw attention of female labor migrants. The political and economic transformation in Poland and its results have pulled some female migrants from poorer countries with the opportunities for new lives. Meanwhile, those female migrants were being pushed by some obstacles in their countries of origin.

In addition to migrant populations, many sex workers operate transnationally as well. Poland has been usually picked up as a destination for sex workers from Eastern Europe. Since Poland signed the EU treaty (21. XII 2007), its eastern border becomes an external border of the European Union. The Polish membership to “Schengen zone” acts as an obstacle to mobility for labor migrants from behind the eastern border. Even though,, the new policy isn’t likely to change a visibility of immigrants in Poland in a significant way, the number of sex workers seems to be decreasing.

## **b) Widespread publicity about the problem after 1989**

The sex migrants’ activity is documented by media (either documentaries or press reports are more likely to get the bottom line of this issue). The media usually touch a problem of human trafficking and victimization of female migrants. Such movies as

*Lilja 4ever* (Lukas Moodysson), *Moja Angelika* (Stanisław Kuźnik), *Córy szczęścia* (Marta Meszaros), *My name is Justin* (Franco de Pena) break down deep rooted cultural taboos. These pictures have nothing else to do with romantic stories such as *Pretty Woman*. They contain an act of extreme brutality against the women's dignity.

### **c) The formation and general aims of non-governmental institutions for helping the victims of human trafficking.**

A braking point of rising the public awareness in Poland was awarding Stana Buchowska (cofounder of "La Strada") with a prestigious medal of St. Joseph in 2004 for helping the female migrants and human trafficking victims sold to brothels. In fact, many Eastern European female migrants face a similar risk. In addition, that award could be seen as a protest against the outrageous words pronounced by a Polish bishop (who does not seem to understand the heart of the problem) that "the hookers working at the highways menace the Polish landscape." Of course, this landscape should be marked by Catholic faith and morality, instead of "filthy deviation and prostitution".

## **2. Conceptualizing the prostitution**

Conceptualizing the prostitution is very difficult without taking one of the side in the heated debate between those scholars and activist who perceive it as an exploitation and a form of slavery which is against human dignity and human rights; and those who look at it from the point of view of a professional occupation potentially providing women with a certain level of financial independence within the broader phenomenon of 'sex industry'. There exist of course other approaches towards prostitution looking at it from the moral or philosophical point of view, but for the purposes of this paper we will limit ourselves to the two aforementioned ones. One of the problems while conceptualizing the prostitution is that it is either described in terms of the absolute culture of violence as an act of the women's exploitation, or through the sex market as an act of offering sex service. A number of scholars have

currently emphasized that the prostitution defined as a free choice and respond to growing demand of the sex market could lead to “decriminalize” the prostitution. In the current paper we are presenting two cases – life stories of immigrant street prostitutes and the emphasis is put not on choosing our side in this debate but on showing this phenomenon from the point of view of those women.

Generally speaking, four legal approaches towards prostitution can be distinguished:

- 1) Prohibition: prostitution is prohibited under arrest for any form of that crime
- 2) Regimentation: prostitution is sanctioned by law
- 3) Neo-regimentation: prostitution is sanctioned by medicine
- 4) Abolition: prostitution is seen as a crime against women. Consequently, brothels are closed down and potential victims of prostitution are given a hand

The current prostitution debate has been constantly articulated in two dimensions. The first is largely expressed in terms of abolition for prostitutes, the has been a prevailing trend within the last decade. The second is constructed around the regulation of prostitution as profession therefore granting the prostitutes all the rights attributes to those formally participatin in the labour market together with granting them the right to medical care.

The prostitution is clearly defined as a violent act against the human rights by *the Coalition against Trafficking in Women*. In fact, such typology based on forced and voluntary prostitution has never been perfect, it could be even misleading. Even though a prostitute works for herself without any pimp, she is still treated rather as a sexual object ready to be sold for a market price than a human-being. In fact, every prostitute is forced to deprivation of her dignity ([www.sciaga.pl/tekst/prostytucja](http://www.sciaga.pl/tekst/prostytucja)). The sexual violence against women means that its victims are stigmatized and degraded to a sexual object. Therefore, *the Coalition* has strongly disagreed with an

idea of legalizing the prostitution as “selling a sexual good.” Nor does *The Coalition* believe in the solution that legalizing the prostitution could sort any problem out with the social stigmatization of prostitution.

This universalistic approach fails sometimes to capture the social reality. In the chapters below which are devoted to the analysis of the empirical data collected during fieldwork we will show how prostitution is related to migration strategies of women, and how it intersects with gender and social and economic resources of the individuals.

### **3. Reporting on the research: *Integration of female immigrants in labour market and society: Policy assessment and policy recommendations.***

The empirical part of the current paper consist of a two-case study of the biographies of two street prostitutes from Ukraine working in Poland. These biographies were collected during fieldwork carried out as part of the larger international Research Project entitled “*Integration of female immigrants in labour market and society. Policy assessment and policy recommendations*” - FeMiPol realized between 2006 and 2008 by the research team I was coordinating<sup>1</sup>. One of the aims of the project was with the conceptualizing and defining the ‘female sex immigrant category’. This mode of migration has been traditionally referred to as “sex migrations” . In our research we decided to focus solely on the independent street prostitutes deliberately excluding the category of the victims of human trafficking and women working in escort agencies. A precision needs to be made at this point, firstly, by ‘independent street prostitutes’ we understand those women, who chose this activity and are not forced by third parties to perform their work. At the same time we are aware of the fact the even the ‘independent’ street prostitutes are subject to control and financial exploitation and procurement by the pimps.

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<sup>1</sup> 6 Framework Programme of the European Commission. Project acronym: FeMiPol; Contract no.:022666

While conceptualizing our research we focused on the one hand, on a social stigmatization of this kind of migrant activities while on the other hand, the questions concerning these issues cannot be answered without looking into direct experiences and of everyday life. Therefore, our research carried out in particular context of the respondents' storytelling put in question universalistic assumptions about prostitution. Our analyses of sex migrant experiences cannot be completed without references to their cause of arrival to Poland, circumstances of their deprivation, family background, body awareness, self-awareness, social stigmatization, role-taking process, spoiled identity and future forecast that correspond to our respondents' sense of life experiencing and that is the focus of our research. The two female immigrant working as street prostitutes are originally from Ukraine. Viola, our first interviewee is 40 and she holds a full-time post as a teacher in the high school in Ukraine. She comes to Poland seasonally, during the summer break to work at the streets of Krakow. We met Viola thanks to an NGO which provides assistance to street prostitutes and she agreed to share her life story with us. She withholds any information about her activity in Poland from her family and especially from her son who is now 16. Viola considers Ukraine to be her place of settlement in the future, she is not considering staying in Poland on more permanent basis.

Our second interview partner, Masza, is also Ukrainian, a little younger than Viola, 35 at the moment of the interview has a grown-up son of 19 years. Unlike Viola, Masza doesn't have university education and her trips to Poland took place several times a year before the country introduced stricter visa schemes for the Ukrainian citizens. In future she is not excluding the possibility of settling in Poland.

### **3.1. The darker side of life and migration decision making process**

#### **Background**

The fall of the USSR in 1991 encouraged Ukraine to make the fundamental transformation from the socialist economy to the increasingly competitive global

economy. Each country of the former soviet bloc canceled or severely limited social protection schemes and social privileges such as work security. Women were the first ones to become unemployed in large masses. It was a brand new experience for them, because formerly there existed a system of job obligation. In addition, many of them had practiced their professions and the level of education among Ukrainian women was relatively high. After the transformation the unemployment hit 70% of highly educated women. Well-paid jobs were offered to men; women had to work for lower wages. The unemployment problem forced women to adopt some new strategies for survival. That situation indicated a compromise in reinventing their new identities. A number of women was afraid of being set in the permanent poverty trap, so that they decided to get involved in the black market. Some of them dealt with cross-border trade. That painful transformation meant to them: deskilling, deprofessionalization and disempowerment.

A new inequality of opportunities across the gender line has been established. The costs associated with the social and economic transformation have also ruined the women's family life having an impact on increasing the divorce rate. Experiencing the divorce a woman had to face a new challenge to feed her family. Therefore, getting into a black market was the only way they could make a living. Eventually, they could decide to leave their country in the search for a better life. Many of them became transmigrants dealing with small illegal businesses across the borders. Sometimes they worked as sex migrants. Others sold themselves as mail-order brides. They took their life as it was- full of uncertainty and risk. They called themselves "home establishers" (Zhurzhenko 1999).

There was the only one certain thing in their life. Their children and older parents were waiting for their help. Therefore, despite numerous obstacles they migrated at regular intervals. These migrants managed to control their lives somehow in the name of their families. They could reject their cultural role to meet the family's expectations turning into an egocentric existence. However, their generic habitus committed them to personal sacrifice. The female migrants did not escape from their social roles and norms. Eventually, they redefined their roles in an effective way.



The decision of becoming a prostitute has resulted from economic pressure, rather than it has been made by individual choice. A range of available choices has been often limited by structural factors. Our respondents- Viola and Masza, have similar experiences, but they appear to look at the future in a different ways. Their economic deprivation has made them get engaged into circulation migratory movements between Poland and Ukraine frequently. A degree of poverty that they have experienced is different. Viola has to copy with by far worse financial situation. The prostitution has offered them seemingly easy and quick money to make a living. It is significant for many sex workers that they appear to have lowered gradually in their social status, first from skilled workers to unemployed, and then, from labor migrants to sex migrants. Since their migration experience is affected by some push factors to rescue their families' well-being, migration can be seen as a courageous step towards improvement of their position. The migrants usually find employment in domestic industry, welfare, tourism, agriculture and manufactures. Very often they bring up their children as a single mothers (we use the term of *Mater Migratoris* to describe such category). One of our respondents, Viola, after her husband had passed away, decided to move back to Ukraine. She had studied, worked and delivered her child there before. Although she grew up in Ukraine, their parents live there, she has been constantly feeling as a foreigner, a "stranger" while visiting her home country. She chose prostitution as a getaway from terrible poverty:

*My dear girls, I tell you, sweet God protect you from that, you go shopping, and your child wants a cheap candy, costs 20 groszy, and you are totally out of money, any coin. I haven't got any money... no money... and that intolerance...I'd rather live in a foreign country and work as ... you know, work my body and then, back to my parents and give them something, give something to my child, and be treated as a human being in my country." (Viola)*

Viola remained unemployed during a very long period of time. She was treated as a foreigner because of her Russian passport. However, she is still an Ukrainian citizen and after all, she has never felt like renouncing her nationality. After offering a bribe, eventually, she got a job at secondary school. She compares her experience

to a very long tunnel, without the light at the end of it. She has mentioned that other social groups had to face the crisis, because their salary and pension were not paid.

*That was necessary. I was imaging a tunnel, but there was no light at the end of that tunnel. I was looking for any job; I knocked on the doors, but all those doors were locked down. Indeed, I am Russian! (She exclaimed ironically). We all were handling with the worse economic crisis in Ukraine. For example, the pensions for older [people] had not been paid for half year, seven months, eight months; we had waited for our salary for ages! We had not been paid for two or three years. Can you believe it?*

She was teaching History, Business and Law, but she living on incomes barely below the poverty line. Despite her educational attainment she had been caught in the poverty trap. She had to look for another job to make a living.

*I have got a job there, but I want to repair my budget here. It [Ukraine] is a crazy world... let me get it straight... I graduated from two faculties and I earn \$100, \$107 correctly, I work eight hours per day, I hold my master... wait... it is not exactly a master degree, but I can work at university... I don't know exactly how to say it in Polish. I work at college. I have my child; I have to cover the stuff for teaching (stationery), all the material... I spend money on my child and me.*

Masza finds herself in a relatively better financial situation. She managed to escape the fate of the poor person by working seasonally as a labor migrant in agriculture. She wanted to make ends meet first for her son and family.

*My Ukrainian friend told me that she found a job in Poland working at the garden... for farmers...and it did not come so easy to me, but here I am. First, I found it so hard. It was hard, I didn't speak Polish, I arrived in at the market. I had to get up very early for work.*

Masza has shared her first experience in Poland with us. She had to work hard. In addition, she did not speak Polish. Frequent visits to Poland have encouraged a need of improving Masza's financial situation. However, meanwhile, her husband had an affair with another woman, which he got pregnant. Their marriage ended in divorce and Masza hold full financial responsibility for the financial sustain of the family and their son.

*I mean, I used to have a husband, I have my child. Before I started to visit Poland frequently, we had got on well with each other...But I wanted to earn money, and I thought I could do it here... I had problem with making a stash, we were being offered a small amount of money. Then my husband had an affair with a girl. He got her pregnant. She managed to hide it for 5 months.*

A breakdown of the marriage has resulted indirectly from circular migrations. Facing a new situation in her life our respondent needs money to make meets end. She enters prostitution as a way of making easy money.

The economic hardship is pointed out by Viola as a push factor to migrate from the country in the search for opportunities to twist her fate.

*I think unless the legal restrictions, everybody would emigrate from Ukraine, so do you, travel without any restrictions. Nobody would work there. People would migrate elsewhere, so do you, after opening the borders... But they might get to work camps. You can find there also the Poles. On the one hand, it is needed. On the other hand, I wonder why, everybody in free Europe has locked down their doors for us. For survival, clearly, do you know what I mean? People should earn money and learn more about a country, but they have to leave their family and migrate for jobs, and then their family will break up, human tragedy (...) A husband might stay there, set up a new family, and his hopeless wife and children get drunk at home. Ultimately, there is neither husband nor money.*

She stresses a lack of life opportunities in Ukraine:

*People lose their faith. There is no hope. They wanted to escape desperately from their country. They don't mind, whether or not, it is a good way. They think how to leave. Nobody thinks of having a baby. You might find it nearly in Poland.*

Both Masza and Viola are willing to set themselves free from grinding poverty. So do many other migrants. Female migrants are devoted to their cultural habitus<sup>2</sup>, so that

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<sup>2</sup> Bourdieu (2004) defines the cultural habitus as the system of preferences that allows individuals to act in a proper way. The cultural capital is created on the basic of the habitus, which makes certain the reproduction of social confidence.

they can work elsewhere in the name of the preservation of their micro-social worlds.

The migrants have risen in status under neighbors' very eyes. Their higher social status of migrants has been recognized by personal finances; consume expenditure, personal independence and decision making. The true extent of poverty in their country of origin plays a considerable role in perceiving the wealth. Making their livelihood well the female migrants are not only seen as well off people, but in fact, they are treated as a better sort of human-beings.

*Here I get my cash, I have bought my car. Aaah! Do you know what it really matters to my people? Your belongings, how fancy you are dressed up... and I don't feel like getting dressed fancy! First of all, it should suit me well. Sport shoes, jeans, shirt that suits me well. And that doesn't go well. Since I have bought my car- Ojeeej! She is well off. She is somebody. If you own something, you matter. I had waited so long for them to stop turning their back at me. Since I have got my car, everybody is nice. But I know what it means. I am friendly, but I don't want to strike up any friendship. Oh no, when I experienced my poor fate, they treated me as a loser. I don't want to call them losers in exchange, but I keep my distance from them, we can exchange "hello, how are you doing? Great" and that it is... (Viola)*

Masza has got a temporary job in Ukraine. There are neither profits nor future plans from it. However, she can pull her weight. She earns some extra money working as a cosmetic assistant. Her arrivals in Poland are dependent on the visa regulations. These young professionals would never consider themselves for the job of a prostitute. Experiencing the economic deprivation they had to sell their bodies. However, they did not accept their occupation smoothly. Especially, Masza has mixed feeling about being a tart. Both respondents experience painfully their metamorphoses.

*There has never been alcohol in my house. Occasionally, we might drink during some events, but nobody did swear, or make a row. And my parents brought me up so. I couldn't make up my mind for ages, because I was thinking of that and I couldn't do it. Selling my body? I got to be crazy. However, when I hit the dramatic situation, I had to...*

The culture of consumption has oppressed our respondents to take their world as it is. The capitalist system has created new dimensions of gender inequality. The economic exchange has more in common with sexuality. The gender studies perspective helps to reveal a variety of the power relations that determines the position of woman in the larger society. The gender option examines the main avenues through the segmented gender labor market and the process of gender migration have been confronted with each other.

### **The economic sense of work**

Our analyses of respondents' stories have presented a picture of life strategies designated to learn to value the earning sums of money in life. Our respondents appear to approach the money question in a different way. Viola sensibly invests her money rather than spending it. She has purchased a new apartment. In addition, she has helped out her parents and has ensured her son's education. Masza likes spending her money. She has been living in Poland for 12 years. Once she had a large sum of money. However, she squandered her money on amusing her partner. She regrets that she had not thought of her future before.

*When I lived with my boyfriend, I was spending my money for nothing. I lost a lot of money. I threw away my money and didn't bother myself to think of my future ... There were no future plans.*

At present, Masza tries to set some money aside for her son's continuing education. Viola has explained the necessity of working as a prostitute by creating the growing needs.

*I can't give up my work. I need it badly. To be honest, I had never felt in that way before. I had the dues that must be paid. In the beginning I planned to deal with prostitution one year, but once I started, I couldn't cut it off easy...*

## **A family background: real mothers**

Both Masza and Viola raise their children. Masza is divorced, whereas Viola is a widow. The cause of her husband's death is under the veil. Throughout a period of their visit in Poland their mothers have agreed to look after their children. Our respondents love their sons and are ready to sacrifice themselves for them. They usually spend many hours on talking by phone, whenever they are away from home. Masza seems to be very proud of her son. She tells that he is 19 years old now, he starts studying law (extramural studies) this year, and if he will pass the firsts exams "it is made that he could go to 'normal' studies". He works at the staff of the prison. He doesn't know what Masza does in Poland – when her son wanted to come to Krakow, she stopped working on the street. It was possible because she has a friend who owns small shop and for this one month (when the son was in Krakow) she worked in this shop. So her son doesn't know about her work.

*I had to leave my beloved son, because I arrived in Poland to make meet ends. I want to reward him that time of absence. It doesn't mean I give him money. That is stupid. I want him to have fun. However, it does not come easy. I love my son so much, my family, everybody will say so; there is strong bond between us; our love is out of this world. I will never stop thinking of him.*

She was only 16 years old when she got married. At present she regrets that decision, as well as that fact of being committed to that toxic relationship for 4 years. However, she is still a believer that she will make it, and will fall in true love with someone. She said she has been offered some matrimonial proposals, but she had to reject them because of her son.

Viola used to love her husband. She was 23 years old when she delivered her baby. She has mentioned her commitment and great disappointment that griped her.

*We loved each other...We were head over heels in love. When he died, I found out the painful truth. He had sex with half of Russia. Our marriage violated, sadness, and anger. Anyone had sex with him. And I thought I am the only one. .*

Her possibility for remarriage has been affected by experiencing the strong family ties. She is devoted to her family so much that she is reluctant to find out her own way.

### **Self-perception and self-stigmatization**

One of the most important issues appearing many times in the narrations of both of the women is the question of shame and stigma (Goffman 2005) related to the work as prostitutes. Both Masza and Viola clearly define their attitude to their work as very negative and they refer to prostitution as being a "dirty job" associated with moral 'evil' and fall. The mechanism visible here is the self-attribution of the stigma which is associated with prostitution both in Poland and in Ukraine. Our interviewees perceive themselves as deviants, non-normative women and they believe that this is the perception shared by their host society. Therefore it is essential to them to keep their activity in Poland as a very well guarded secret from anyone in their home country. It seems as they have double identities, roles they enter when crossing the border, double lives in a very literal sense of the word.

*"I don't want to lie and I cannot say the truth. (...) At home, in Ukraine they call me a "mysterious lady, a madam", and I'm thinking: what am I going to tell you, that I'm a whore here? A bitch? So I end up not saying anything, I simply cannot say anything". (Viola)*

At the same time, the fear of their biggest and darkest secret being uncovered is very strong and never leaves them. This self-perception of being stigmatized is one of the most important reasons for Viola not to settle down in Poland, she considers her reputation in this country ruined forever.

"When riding a tram I can see the looks that people give me. They can see it from far away, who is riding on this tram – even though I'm trying to look more or less modest. And every man I pass on the street could have been my client, I cannot possibly remember them all, if the truth came out I couldn't possibly survive that, it would kill me and be a great moral shock and stress for my child. I suppressed all these feelings" (Viola)

Both Masza and Viola mostly feel that their shame, once discovered will spread the stigma on their families and especially on their sons. Since they both come from little towns, they cannot afford such a risk as losing social respect. For Viola, the secret and shame are vital reasons to remain unmarried and single, neither can she imagine hiding the truth about what she does from somebody she is with, nor can she tell them the truth.

### **Conclusion: Migrant identities and their vision for the future**

The process of migration, its consequences and modes, increasingly indicates the identity question: who am I? Whether does the fluidity of my identity correspond to any distinct collectivity to which I will belong? The old paradigm of migration studies offers a straight-line explanation. The migrations produce a social categorization principle that helps people differentiate human collectivities and mark their social and cultural boundaries. A migrant identity may be derived externally, through relationships within the host society, its culture and social order. The new paradigm launches out transnational identity in order to show that the old assumptions neglecting the ways in which contemporary migrants create their identities outside the borders of the nation-state (Faist 2004). Contemporary migrants have been called “supra-nationalists” and “liaisons” by Samuel Huntington (2007: 188) who live between two countries, “standing one leg in each country.” A new form of identity has been developed as a result of migrations, cultural hybridism and policies of multiculturalism. However, according to my research experience, using such theoretical concept of transnational migrants cannot be sufficiently accurate.

The sex migrants have declared that they treated Poland as a temporary host. Our respondents have swung into action unintentionally. Very often their activities are affected by emotions. It cannot be said that they are cosmopolitan oriented, nor want they to live in Poland. Our respondents are attached to their primary group-family. In fact, they have got poor social benefits in Poland: neither future perspective nor social insurance. It may be understood that they are strongly home



oriented. However, they have never been bound to their country. Their homeland is criticized by them, because it can offer them neither any sense of security nor any better outlook for life. Their lives are devoted to their family.

Viola stresses her attitude towards the homeland: *“I don’t like my country. I can’t say it because I am prostitute (...) I teach my students how wonderful Ukraine is, but [it is not true]”*. She is talking about a huge corruption, also in the hospitals.

On the one hand, they appreciate Krakow’s atmosphere and historic sites there. They like the city. On the other hand, they know their paradise on earth called family. Therefore, they would rather shape their own future in Ukraine.

*When I tell about Poland I tell it enthusiastically, with a huge emotions, because your country helped me to “stand up” . I like your country and when the winter goes, and the spring comes I think about going to Poland. I long for Polish language, for this city [Krakow], for everything.  
(Viola)*

*(...) Staying in Ukraine Masza longs for Krakow: “it is my second home. It is not that I like Krakow – I love Krakow!”. She has any duties (e.g. as a mother) so after work, she has some free time, so she walk in the city. Comparing Krakow and the city of her origin (14.000 of inhabitants) Krakow seems to be an “another world” – and she explains: “another means ‘better, much better.*

As it has been argued before, our respondents cannot imagine their live without their family. However, living in Ukraine they have often thought of Krakow.

*I find it difficult to be disconnected with my family. However, I am by far longer there than here. I always miss my son much. Sometimes I feel I cannot take it anymore. I miss him so much,*

*I want go to home. My neighbors and family look after him. Besides, he is adult. Some day he will move out, but I cannot handle with it right now. (Masza)*

Viola tells that in the future (as she hopes) she will nurse the grandsons and will work in her own garden, and she will remember Poland. *“It will be good memory, but memory of the day in Poland. The evening and the night mean another thing. Her family thinks that everything is OK – and “that’s OK.”*

*Viola has cherished her big dream of writing a doctoral dissertation: "I would like to write a doctoral thesis on the relationship between Ukraine and Poland, but now it is impossible". She asked about it in Kiev but the staff there answered that the rule is to wait 10 years for the presentation of the thesis. They suggested her that this time could be shorter if she paid 500 dollars. As a PhD she could earn 180 dollars (now she earns about 100\$).*

They experiences can be described either in terms of the theoretical concept of *unsteady identity* (Bokszański 2005). They have got an ambivalent orientation towards integration into the larger society, used by them to demarcate social boundaries between two spaces in which they live and to distinguish "self" from "others."

In the past Masza would come to Poland every time for 3 months, but now "everything has changed because of the European Union". If Masza has the invitation she receives a visa for 90 days, but in another cases she has a permission for staying in Poland 3 months (visa valid for 1 year) or 1 month (visa valid 3 months). The only reason for coming back to Ukraine is her son. The marriage with Polish citizen would resolve the problem with visas, but Masza still doesn't know if she wants to change a work place".

Our respondents realize their possible incorporation into Polish society with fear, because of their social stigma suffering. They have got the individual capital (language fluency, transferable skills) that could facilitate their adaptation as soon as they decide to. Nonetheless, their situation may be understood in terms of the "marginal man/woman," who is trapped between two spaces: Ukraine and Poland and who shares their double life between them. We would like to know: how can we use the concept of transnational social spaces to understand and to develop our systematic conceptualization of different forms of immigrant adaptation, concerning the experience of sex migrants? Which aspects of transnationalism should be received a great deal of our attention to build up our theory of sex migration?

## Literature:

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