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In a paper on the state of the art of research on Polish migration published in 2007, the authors note one peculiarity of academic paradigms in Poland in that field. Krystyna Iglicka, one of the authors points out:

'It might be argued that migration research in Poland after 1989 has been influenced by certain national paradigms and 'hidden' national agendas on the one hand, and 'hidden' international agendas supported by the foreign financial aid on the other hand. The national paradigms have been shaped by a long history of Poland as a country of emigration. Therefore the stress on national political and research agendas was put on relations with Polish diaspora and repatriation of the fellow countrymen or their reintegration in the society. In turn 'hidden' international agendas were created ad hoc after 1989 in many minds of western politicians who feared hordes (to quote the media parlance of those times) of ex-Soviet citizens to flood western European countries (2007: 12).

As she argues, the result was a peculiar methodological and epistemological split between the studies of the past with its assumptions of stability and community and on the other hand, studies focusing just on mobility, movement and flows. Although the main reason behind this is the fact that during communist period most of research was confined to historical analysis (since in official propaganda, no one wished to emigrate from socialist 'paradise') it seems also to reflect some deeper aspects of the 'national agendas', or, cultural assumptions about the symbolic, political and social significance of human mobility as constructed by various strata of Polish society throughout history. The split between the past and present, between research on mobility and settled communities of Poles abroad reflects something much more intriguing and it would be a-sociological not to think that the origins of these assumptions go beyond the mere fact that during communism collecting data on contemporary emigrants was something done by the security apparatus rather than demographers and economists.
Poland is a society, which is torn between its strong peasant rooted cultural significance of the territory, the land (Kłoskowska 2005; Chałasiński 1968) and the fact that throughout last 200 years Polish state borders were shifting, disappearing, reappearing and shifting back and forth again. Consequently, it is not surprising that mobility evokes and re-enacts deep cultural traits and symbolic meanings and that movement across space is culturally also a movement back in time since it connects the imagined communities of the living to these of the dead. Elsewhere (Garapich 2010) I point out the strange similarity between what elites in 19th century Warsaw thought of emigrants like Józef Korzeniowski (Joseph Conrad to those across the Channel) and what some members of the Warsaw elites thought of migration movements in the wake of EU enlargement in 2004. The taboo on Polish citizens emigrating during the communist regime demonstrates the powerful meanings associated with place and space defined through human mobility. International migration, in Polish culture is thus a political act, which defines individual’s relationship to the socially constructed wider whole, or as Mary Erdmans puts it ‘a moral issue’ which confronts, articulates and symbolizes inherit tension between the group and its individual members, between the obligations to the collective and rewards to the individual (Erdmans 1992). Without firm structural boundaries controlling movement, without the state which has the monopoly on legitimate human mobility, the creation of boundaries is shifted into the domain of the cultural, the symbolic, and the ‘soft’ sphere of meanings. As scholars note (Davies 1981, Burrell 2009) the Polish romantic era of poets/prophets was constructed around the notion of exile, diaspora and loss. After all, the Polish national anthem repeats the notion of return migration, evoking the nationalist idea of the hope that one day - in ‘a mythical’ future - the nation will be again reintegrated within the ‘container’ of a territory guarded by the administrative structures of the nation-state.

One of the numerous outcomes of that discourse has been the distinction present in academic terminology and public debates but also popular parlance between settled, and rooted, integrated Polonian communities and the (by contrast) chaotic, messy movement of individual migrants. I will never forget a professor of sociology whom I interviewed back in Italy in 2004, who invested all his theoretical vocabulary to passionately explain why Polonia is so different from ‘these migrants’ (referring to waves of economic migrants before and after Polish accession to the EU) and why they still need to learn a lot if they wish to become Polonia – which for this scholar was a natural sequence of events. For that scholar the firm and absolute boundary between settled ‘community’ and ‘migrants’ was just a version of the boundary between the host society and immigrants, who are essentially a threat to given stability and status quo (more on that: Garapich 2009). In a way there are many similarities between this approach and that other paradigm of the ‘hidden’ international agenda of the Western scholarship which
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Iglicka writes about. It is much more politically straightforward, since for the Western states and their labour markets it has become an increasingly urgent need to be able to assess the migratory potential of their Eastern neighbours. In this paradigm it was the movement, the mobility, the migration strategy that remained the dominant questions driving research agendas. Yet it was still a mobility of aliens - of those that did not belong - as if, metaphorically, movement excluded settlement and mobility was contradictory to belonging.

Times change, of course. Although the cultural critique of Polish scholarship on migration is yet to be written, I think the fast growing and expanding research in that area is a sign of the inadequacy and ideological bias of previous paradigms and the still ripe need to develop new conceptual and methodological tools to be able to better capture this fast changing reality. Adrian Favell’s and Tim Elrick’s special issue of the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies (Favell, Elrick 2008), Kathy Burrell’s edited volume on Polish migration (Burrell 2009) as well as Anne White’s monograph on Polish families (2010) and a special issue of Social Identities edited by Marta Rabikowska (Rabikowska 2010) paved the way in this respect by bringing rich data to the foreground. I hope that this Special Issue of Studia Migracyjne - Przegląd Polonijny is an analogical sign of the changing paradigms and merging theoretical frameworks which link scholars from various places in the UK and Poland.

Crucially, these academic conversations are carried out not only across geographical space but also across generational and cultural boundaries and I feel this Special Issue is a strong invitation to future researchers to keep exploring the new outcomes of this huge population movement in contemporary EU. This Special Issue brings a mix of fascinating insights into the nature of mobilities in contemporary world, and reinserts notions of social class, in-group differentiations and ultimately meanings of integration, exclusion and interaction between groups. For example, the articles by White, Ignatowicz and Botterill look at the meaning of mobility for individual Polish migrants pointing out some of the limitations and challenges it poses for our understanding of ethnicity, diversity, and traditionally conceived transnationalism. White argues that in order to fully understand people’s perspectives and their agency we need a more localized and place-situated view, which has to include the ‘smaller cities’, moving away from the global cities focus. On the other hand Ignatowicz and Botterill describe new and enriching ways in which migrants’ rationalize their agency through particular meanings of mobility – contesting social constraints, retaining a sense of control or linking physical mobility with a social one.

The sign of the times I am referring to lies also in the fact that this collection of articles goes beyond static accounts of ‘community’ or ‘settlement’ versus ‘mobility’ but demonstrates what being mobile means for individual life choices here and
now. It brings to the forefront individual agency and ability to deconstruct and contest some specific hegemonic static notions of what Teresa Staniewicz in this volume calls ‘sedentary bias’. By showing the practices of being simultaneously connected to several places across countries, regions and towns, the constant social practice of comparing between ‘here’ and ‘there’ and the continual creation of transnational social fields, the articles in this volume break down the bias of the sedentary discourse and the above mentioned split between the past and present or between movement and settlement. White’s article, for instance, moves us beyond looking at transnationalism through the prism of nation states and demonstrates that locality and intimate, personal meanings ascribed to landscape evolve in time and have a crucial role in the processes of incorporation and adaptation of Polish families to particular towns in England. Joanna Krotofil’s article, on the other hand, shows how Polish migrants shape distinct religious experience in a new setting, to some extent contesting the traditional institutional structures of the Catholic Church. Halina Grzymala-Moszczynska’s and David Hay’s text shows how different contexts (Scottish Catholics in this case) may have very different outcomes with the supposed cultural proximity (Catholicism) undermined by ethnic particularity.

Numerous articles in this volume also demonstrate what this means for migrants’ perceptions of difference within categories assumed as static, total and un-differentiated – ethnicity being the main one. Most of the articles dwell, with understandable fascination, on the mutual perception among Polish migrants, new forms of differences and structures of exclusion or old ones being reconfigured. Teresa Staniewicz, for example, demonstrates this process by discussing the case of the Polish Roma and ethnic Poles, arguing that differences in social capital and levels of trust have a direct outcome on the presence of some groups in public sphere. Katarzyna Andrejuk and Emilia Pietka focus on the relationships between the established groups and new arrivals or relationships between arrivals from more middle class background towards working class Poles. They tease out the various forms of differentiation which people construct in order to pursue their interest but also make sense of what it means to be Polish.

The article by Paul Lassale, Ewa Helinska-Hughes and Michael Hughes on migrant entrepreneurs in Scotland, clearly illustrates how these practices of internal differentiation affect business behaviour, trust, market niche creation and, eventually, the economy. Bernadetta Siara in her article on gender constructions among Polish web forum users shows how these practices are also influenced by gendered constructions of ethnicity, the body and the nation. Paulina Travena brings explicitly forward what is often hidden in scholarship that so often overuses ‘ethnic lenses’ (Glick Schiller et al. 2006) – the notion of social class and status within groups. Here, the fact that so many articles in this volume deal directly
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with this issue may show that scholars find the Polish case intriguing. The evident clash between ethnic ascription and class-related forms of differentiation remind us that these two forms of social identity are more closely linked in plural societies than we often realize. Michal Buchowski notes that ‘as it happens, in the case of virtually monoethnic Polish society, class and cultural diacritics fulfill a primary role in making social distinctions’ (2006: 479) and we could argue that – whether we talk about co-workers in same factory, Polish students, entrepreneurs, Polish Roma, intelligentsia – Poles seem to constantly maneuver between the horizontal imaginary bonds of ethnicity and the vertical world of hierarchical structures of domination and unequal access to power. However, in the migratory context this negotiation seems more complex and intense, because it happens among more numerous negative and positive reference groups, significant Others and situational decisions Polish migrants have to make in their daily lives.

Louise Ryan, Alessio D’Angelo, Bogusia Temple and Beatrice Judd articles bring these issues to the forefront by looking at how in the ‘host’ society’s diverse environments - workplace, school, public and private space - these strategies of differentiation and distinction making play out and are made socially significant. Ryan and D’Angelo demonstrate how children manage diversity both in relations to their peers as well as parents, Temple shows how Polish perceptions concerning ethnicity influence notions of integration and interaction with other ethnic groups and Judd offers an insightful interpretation of how culturally bound ideas of care, age and commitment influence care delivery among Polish staff working in adult social care. My own article in this volume fits this theme as well, since the Polish homeless men I describe are the recipients and victims of the ‘host’ British society’s complex welfare policies with their exclusionary practices to which the homeless themselves respond with learned and tested culturally embedded social practices.

If mobility, ‘settling in’, class, ethnicity, interaction with new Others, transnational practices and reflexivity are the focus of this volume, then it may be well argued that current scholarship has successfully moved on from the two dominant ‘national’ paradigms discussed by Iglicka above. We seem also to have moved on from the early dominant question within British public and academia alike on whether Poles are here to stay or not and for sociologists and anthropologists this is a positive sign of the move away from the methodological nationalism, which dominates many theoretical agendas of migration research. In many ways the profiles of authors of this volume demonstrate that there is a steady and increased communication between academics from both countries and that this particular domain of scholarship has developed into another, specific transnational social field. This is not surprising because, after all, we describe the world that we simultaneously shape. There are surely numerous special issues, edited volumes,
monographs and books on Polish migration ahead and I hope that this one will mark another step forward in this fascinating field of study.

This endeavour would not have been possible without commitment, encouragement and mild but firm pressure from the Editor of Studia Migracyjne – Przegląd Polonijny, Prof. Dorota Praszałowicz who in 2009 took over the rejuvenated (another sign of times) Przegląd published by the Polish Academy of Sciences. I would like to thank her for creating this opportunity. I wish also to thank my colleagues at the Department of Social Sciences at Roehampton University who provided me with an intellectually stimulating environment and especially Prof. John Eade, who has been supporting me all these years with great patience and friendship.

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THE MOBILITY OF POLISH FAMILIES IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND: TRANSLOCALISM AND ATTITUDES TO RETURN

INTRODUCTION

One of my interviewees had moved from Pszczyna to Trowbridge. As the title of this article suggests, the subject matter – broadly speaking – is ‘Poles’ in ‘England’. However, my aim is to explore the significance of moving from specific locality within Poland to specific locality in the UK. What does it mean to migrate from Pszczyna to Trowbridge? Research among Poles in the UK and Ireland tends to ignore their localities of origin. Age, education, gender and family status are the usual demographic variables taken into account; differences between locations within the UK or Ireland are also understood to be significant. As for research in Poland, there are plenty of studies about differences between different sending locations, but these studies tend to identify the countries of destination which are popular in various Polish localities, remaining silent about specific destination localities. The failure to discuss migration from specific Polish locality to specific UK locality derives partly from the fact that to date there is rather little research which considers Poland and the UK together, as two ends of the same migration arc. However, given the geographical diversity of migration patterns which researchers have uncovered in both Poland and the UK, it is evident that each combination of sending and receiving locality is likely to produce a unique migration experience. To migrate from Pszczyna to Trowbridge (small towns of 25-27,000 inhabitants) is not at all the same experience as to migrate from Poznań to London or from Pszczyna to London.

Moreover, in addition to the ‘realities’ of geographical diversity, there is a subjective dimension of migrants’ lives which is both significant and under-researched. This is their attachment to place, as opposed to ethnicity or the nation-state. Even if Poznań and Pszczyna were identical, the fact that a migrant had a specific attachment to one of these places in particular would remain important to that individual. I argue that the current interest in transnationalism – which often focuses on national and ethnic identities – obscures the fact that translocal attachments are powerful too. I am not saying that ethnic and national identity are
unimportant, merely that too much emphasis can be placed on the role of ethnicity and national belonging in the lives of migrants. This is especially true in the case of economic migrants whose motive for migrating was to find a better livelihood, rather than to escape persecution under a particular political regime, and family migrants who reunited for emotional reasons, to be in exactly the same place (not just the same country) as their relatives. Locality remains important to individuals, even if, as Appadurai (1996, p. 179) observes, ‘it is one of the grand clichés of social theory… that locality as a property… of social life comes under siege in modern societies’.

The topic of migrants’ connections and attitudes to specific places in the sending and receiving countries has a policy dimension, especially given the rather limited extent of internal mobility within Poland, discussed later in this article. People often migrate from Poland because of specific conditions in their home town or village; they migrate to specific places abroad where they have friends and family (the choice of country is often secondary); when abroad, they maintain emotional and financial ties with specific places in Poland, which they frequently return to visit on holiday; and, if they return to Poland to live and work, they are likely to settle again in their places of origin. In fact, post-2004 return migration to Poland is characterised by an even greater incidence of return to home locations than pre-Accession migration had been (Grabowska-Lusińska 2010, p. 56). For all these reasons the actual mobility of Polish migrants is quite limited, and, if public policy in the UK and Poland is to implement improvements to their living standards and opportunities, these improvements must take place in the location(s) where they are based in order to have an impact on their migration decisions. Hence the local dimension of migration is important to take into account.

This article explores some ways in which Polish migrants to the UK experience place attachment and construct local identities, both in the UK and Poland, trying to understand why it is that they feel rooted in just one location per country. This is not to suggest that Poles are unique, or that all Poles are the same. Clearly, for example, Polish families’ experience of using local community resources in the UK may have similarities with the experiences of families of other ethnic origin, while young and childless migrants – of any nationality – will have different perspectives. Notwithstanding similarities with other groups of migrants, however, there are also ways in which Polish and other A8 migrants are special. Their unique opportunities for mobility across national borders means that in many respects their migration has ceased to be ‘international’ and can be compared with traditional internal labour migration, such as has occurred historically within individual European countries. Internal migration, around the world, is often rural to urban, and indeed, Okólski (2007, p. 3) argues that the ‘root causes’ of much labour migration from Central and Eastern Europe to the West lie
in ‘the “underurbanisation” suffered by many of its societies’ during the period of rapid industrialisation under communist party rule.

However, post-2004 Polish international migration is not necessarily literally rural to urban. Traditionally, many international migrants have congregated in big cities of the receiving countries: New York, Melbourne, London, and others. A special privilege of A8 migrants is that they do not have to go to a city to substantially improve their income or even to enjoy an urban lifestyle; indeed, many live and work in small towns and villages across the United Kingdom (Pollard, Latorre and Sriskandarajah, 2008: 62-71). I argue that this re-location outside the city is often a congenial arrangement for Poles from rural parts of Poland, and that the similarities they perceive between their Polish and British places of residence constitute a powerful translocal tie and do much to make them feel at home abroad.

My article focuses on Poles moving to the West of England, to localities of different population size. These were the small towns of Trowbridge and Frome; a larger town/small city, Bath (population roughly 90,000); and Bristol, which is the tenth largest city in the UK, with a population of at least 380,000.¹ However, my understanding of Polish migration also owes much to insights gained from interviewing former and potential migrants in small-town Poland. In 2006-9 I conducted 33 interviews in the UK and 82 in Poland (Grajewo, Sanok, Elk, Suwałki and seven locations in Wielkopolska).² The research project considered the situation of families with limited money and other resources, and the interviewees were women who did not have university degrees and were mothers of children under 20. The main research questions were why increasing numbers of families with children were migrating to Western Europe, and what factors influenced their thoughts about how long to remain abroad. I was particularly interested in factors specific to the particular places where interviewees lived: for example, I always asked the question ‘What’s the job situation like in your home town [in Poland]?’. The interview material is one of the main sources for the present article. However, I have only really appreciated the full importance of locality as a result of informal conversations with Polish parents, subsequent to the formal interviews, in my capacity as a voluntary teacher of English at the Polish Saturday School in Bath. Everyday conversations about matters which preoccupy Polish parents centre on

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¹ Populations are not for the ‘urban areas’, as given in the 2001 census data (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/census2001/ks_urban_sw&w_part_1.pdf) but for the smaller area of the cities themselves. See http://www.ukcities.co.uk/populations/.

² The main part of the research was funded by the British Academy. It also included an opinion poll commissioned in Poland, to uncover attitudes towards migration by parents, with and without children. See White 2011, pp. 15-20, and Appendices 1 and 2, for more details on the methodology. This article also draws on one interview conducted with a Bristol mother in 2010, the first data from my current research project on return migration.
the actual places where people live in England and Poland, even if conversations are occasionally punctuated by moments of reflection and comparisons between ‘Poland’ and ‘the UK’.

‘TRANSLOCALISM’ AND ‘TRANSNATIONALISM’: DEFINITIONS AND INTERRELATIONSHIPS

My research makes a small contribution to the literature which emphasises the continuing importance of ‘place’ in the contemporary world (see for example Appadurai 1996, Flusty 2004, Harvey 1993, Kennedy 2010, Smith 2001). The relationship between globalisation and locality exists on different levels, most of which are outside the scope of my article. In particular, the theme of the article is not the impact of globalisation on specific places. Instead, like Flusty (2004, p. 8), my starting point is that ties across national borders are ‘the product of specific persons in specific locales’. In common, for example, with researchers who have analysed connections forged by migrants from particular locations in Latin America to cities in the USA (Smith 2001, p. 170), I focus on how ordinary people create links between places in different countries. In particular, I am interested in the extent to which they view their migration as being from locality to locality rather than nation to nation.

Since the article explores the relevance of the translocal respective to the transnational, it seems important to discuss the relationship between the two concepts. Since its ‘launch’ in 1990 (Glick Schiller 1992) the term ‘transnationalism’ has been extensively employed in migration scholarship, acquired a myriad of meanings and generated considerable debate (see for example Kivisto 2001, Portes 2001, Vertovec 2001). On the most general level, ‘the literature on transnationalism generally underscores the fact that large numbers of people now live in social worlds that are stretched between, or dually located in, physical places and communities in two or more nation-states’ (Vertovec 2001, p. 578). As Vertovec’s formulation suggests, it is possible to view migrants’ links with their sending communities as being translocal and transnational in equal measure. Some authors appear not to sense any tension between the terms, and use the term translocal as an occasional alternative to transnational, apparently for stylistic variation. However, the term translocal is also used more precisely to imply that a distinction is being drawn between translocal and transnational. Given that many scholars of transnationalism have been particularly interested in the impact of transnational ties on state borders, citizenship and migrant integration, it is hardly surprising if the term is often used with particular focus on the portability of ‘national’ cultural and political identities. This way of using transnationalism, implying that it is all about ‘nationality’ and not about ‘locality’, is so common
that it seems helpful to employ the term translocalism to restore the focus on cross-local links. However, the relationship between the concepts of transnationalism and translocalism is viewed differently by different scholars. Translocal can be a sub-set of transnational: collectively, communities of fellow nationals span from nation to nation, but individual migrants experience the sending-receiving country relationship as local to local. For example, Smith (2001, p. 169) argues that ‘recent research on transnationalism illustrates that the specific social space in which transnational actions take place is not merely local but often “translocal” (i.e. local to local).’ (See also Grillo 2007, p. 204.) Viewed within this relationship, both translocalism and transnationalism are aspects of globalisation.

It is common, however, for transnationalism to be viewed as distinct from translocalism, and for (trans)localism to be identified with a narrower perspective. For example, Wessendorf, writing about Italian migrants to Switzerland and their return migrations, prefers translocal to transnational for the following reasons:

_The connections Italians maintain to their homeland are translocal rather than transnational. Italian migrants’ relation to place is localised in that they usually travel between the town of settlement in Switzerland and the village of origin in Italy. Most of them feel a strong connection to these places rather than to the nation-states._ (Wessendorf 2007, p.110, endnote 2.)

McGregor, discussing organisations of Zimbabweans living in the UK, describes a contrasting case: the surprisingly non-local frame of reference of these diasporic organizations, whose concerns are primarily national.

_Hometown associations, which have attracted attention in Africanist and broader migration studies literature, are absent among Zimbabweans in Britain, while burial societies, which were (and are) important in migrations within the region, are less prevalent in the British context._ (McGregor 2009, p. 186).

Translocalism can identified with a kind of insularity and inability to appreciate the wider context of the receiving country. For example, Gustafson (2001b, p. 383) identifies ‘translocal normality’ as a lifestyle pursued by some Swedish retirees to Spain:

_The difference that these respondents appreciated in Spain was associated with the friendly social climate in the Scandinavian community (in addition, of course, to the weather) rather than with Spanish culture. Also, place attachment_
in Spain was generally directed towards the respondents’ residential area or town, and the Scandinavian community there, largely excluding the Spanish people, Spanish culture and Spain as a country.

(Trans)localism in the sense of insularity is often contrasted with cosmopolitanism and openness to new cultural experiences. Individual migrants may sense that they are under some pressure to choose between insularity and openness: Gustafson’s Swedish migrants to Spain ‘could be sensitive about seeming to be culturally insular’ (Gustafson 2001b, p. 389) and middle-class British migrants to France, discussed by Benson (2010), are conscious of a ‘need’ to choose cultural adaptation over insularity. However, as Benson also illustrates, even these migrants feel an emotional need for the company of fellow-nationals. The same individuals can display ‘cosmopolitan’ and ‘local’ attitudes in different contexts (Roudometof 2005, p. 127).

Individuals have a degree of choice as to how cosmopolitan their lives will be. Nonetheless, social and economic structures also determine how much cosmopolitanism is possible for individual migrants. Some have more agency than others: the Swedish and British lifestyle migrants described above enjoy opportunities to integrate which are inaccessible to many economic migrants. Werbner (1997, pp. 11-12), drawing on Hannerz 1992, distinguish between ordinary labour migrants and privileged and wealthy cosmopolitans, whom she describes as

multilingual gourmet tasters who travel among global cultures, savouring cultural differences as they flit with consummate ease between social worlds. Such gorgeous butterflies in the greenhouse of global culture are a quite different species from the transnational bees and ants who build new hives and nests in foreign lands... [and whose] loyalties are anchored in translocal social networks.

With reference to UK Poles in particular, there has been a tendency to set up typologies contrasting migrants with narrower agendas to those with more cosmopolitan attitudes. Garapich distinguishes between ‘storks’, labour migrants who fly back and forward between countries for the narrow purpose of seasonal labour, and ‘searchers’, whose plans are more open-ended and who ‘are keen to raise their own social and human capital in both countries simultaneously in order to keep their options open... They represent the best example of a de-localised [my italics] social class where social position and status depends on several reference

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points in more than one country’ (Eade, Drinkwater and Garapich 2006, p. 17). Fomina (2009, p. 1) writes about the ‘parallel worlds’ of Poles in Bradford, UK. ‘Educated, upwardly mobile, confident Poles’ live in one world. Quite separate, according to Fomina, is the ‘world of less successful Polish immigrants, stuck in one place’. Both Garapich and Fomina are interested chiefly in social, rather than geographical mobility; however, the two are interlinked, since migrants with less human and social capital often have reduced geographical as well as social mobility, particularly if they are inhibited about migrating except to be with close friends and family (see below).

Fomina emphasises that well-educated Polish migrants in Bradford want to integrate into British society, and that – in their eyes – this is a key difference between them and working-class Poles, as well as British Pakistani Bradfordians. Clearly, less well-educated and confident Polish migrants, who do not speak much English and work in sections of the labour market dominated by migrant workers, with weaker ties to the receiving community, are likely to socialise more with fellow-Poles (White and Ryan 2008, White 2011). If ‘transnationalism’ is used in the sense of ‘doing Polish things in the UK’ – watching Polish television, eating Polish food, etc. – then (like Gustafson’s more insular Swedes in Spain) working-class labour migrants may possibly be more transnational as well as more translocal, more ethnically oriented as well as more oriented towards their particular dual places of residence, than highly educated Polish migrants. However, this is a complex topic, dealt with in greater depth in my book (White 2011, ch. 9), where I show the range of attitudes towards maintaining Polish identity found even among working-class Poles with poor English.

A more helpful approach to transnationalism, for the purposes of this article, is to remember that Poles in the UK since 2004, unlike earlier generations of migrants, have such easy access to Poland, and to Polish goods and services, that ‘they do not particularly need to worry about maintaining their Polishness’ (szczególnie dbać o swoją polskaść) (Fomina 2009, p. 28). If Polish identity can be taken for granted, then local preoccupations may have space to take precedence over national ones. It is this sense that locality is in some contexts more important to Polish migrants than ethnicity which is the chief focus of my article and the main way in which I understand the distinction between translocal and transnational.

A further reason why the national may seem less salient than the local to Polish migrants in the UK is simply to do with travel patterns. In the days of visas and limited air routes, the journey from Poland to the UK required a Polish passport, a UK visa, and usually also travel between Warsaw and London, the capital cities and symbols of the nation-state. Today, it is simply necessary to take one’s identity card and drive from Pszczyna to Trowbridge, or fly from Kraków to Bristol, i.e. from regional centre to regional centre, avoiding capital cities.
A final use of the term ‘translocalism’ is to refer to links between locations within a single nation-state, for example in the book title *Translocal China*.\(^4\) Mobility within a nation-state can promote a greater sense of connectedness among inhabitants of different localities, and therefore contribute to the building of national identity and nationalism, as, for example, Uimonen (2009) illustrates with reference to contemporary Tanzania. Since travel is easy within the European Union and it consists of a single labour market for all its citizens (except those from new member-states subject to transitional arrangements), it makes sense to understand within-EU migration as internal, not international. This suggests that – by analogy with Tanzania – some kind of European identity might be built as a result of migration around Europe, identity focused not on identification with EU institutions in Brussels, but on people in Pszczyna learning about the existence of Trowbridge, and *vice versa*.\(^5\)

THE LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY APPROACH

Internal migration is commonly migration for work, connected to the pursuit of better livelihoods. As used in the international development literature, the livelihood strategy approach tries to understand the whole range of resources available to households (including human and social capital), in the context of their perceptions of what livelihood options are available and socially acceptable in their local area. To understand how and why people migrate for work, we need to know the *choice* of livelihoods available in a given location, why these are rejected in favour of migration, and the local migration culture, in the sense of conventions about ‘who goes where when’ (M. White 2009, p. 7). The livelihood strategy approach is not a theory which explains why people migrate, but more like a checklist of different factors which have to be taken into account in order to explain migration decisions. Above all, it focuses attention on the ‘local [my emphasis] resources that shape livelihood… options for households’ (Findley 2009, p. 35). Despite the fact that livelihood strategies are commonly studied in international development projects, ‘migration studies… rarely take in-depth research into specific livelihoods as their point of departure’ (Olwig and Sørensen

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\(^5\) On the other hand, such translocal ties may not be conceptualised as ‘European’, given that Britons do not ‘feel European’ (Eurobarometer 2009 QE4.1) and that Poles in the UK can easily come to the same conclusion and decide that the UK is not Europe. As a Polish parent complained at a recent meeting of Poles with the Bath police: ‘Why does everything in England have to be different from in Europe?’ A further problem concerns difficulties of pronunciation (for both sides) which make place names hard to remember. Trowbridge, for example, is pronounced like ‘grow’, not ‘brow’.
The mobility of Polish families... (19). Insofar as a literature exists on migration as a livelihood strategy, it tends to focus on the unfashionable topic of internal migration (e.g. Deshingkar and Farrington 2009, Hossain 2003, Mosse et al (2002), Sørensen 2002). Moreover, even scholars who apply the concept to international migration often write about continents other than Europe and North America (e.g. Jacobsen 2002 or Mandel 2004, on Africa) and perhaps the European/American preoccupations of many Western social scientists help explain their disregard for this literature about the rest of the globe. With regard to Europe, the narrower concepts of ‘survival’ or ‘coping’ strategies are sometimes invoked to explain migration, but these are a poor substitute.6

Like my earlier work on Russia and Poland, this article applies a livelihood strategy approach to understand migration, in both the sending and receiving localities. In particular, the article explores: migration cultures in certain Polish towns which limit migrants’ choice of destination to localities accessible via social networks; dynamics of household decision making and the role of wives in determining the suitability of certain locations for family migration; how family settlement in the receiving location is seen through the lens of expectations brought from the home town or village in Poland (creating a ‘good’ local livelihood in the UK, but according to Polish criteria); and how even in the UK migrants keep a close eye on livelihood options in their Polish home locality, with a view to potential return to that place in particular.

**CHOICE OF DESTINATION TOWN AND TRANSLOCAL NETWORKS**

Although the use of commercial agencies for migration is increasing in Poland (Anon 2007) and although a minority of Poles migrate w ciemno, with nothing fixed in advance, personal connections are still considered essential by many Poles. This is especially true for people from locations with strong migration cultures of moving to close family and friends; indeed, I was told by a number of interviewees in Sanok and Grajewo that – out of their vast acquaintance of migrants - they knew no one who had migrated through an agency (White and Ryan 2008, White 2011). If would-be migrants only choose migration as a livelihood strategy if they can go to someone they know well, this clearly limits their choice of destination. A typical situation was described by Jagoda, a lone parent from Silesia currently living with her child in Frome.

*I could never get a decent job [in my home town] and in the end I decided to migrate. I was supposed to go to Ireland, because I have friends there, as well*

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6 See Pickup and White 2003 for fuller discussion.
as here. But somehow it turned out I came here... Because it was here that there was a room to rent, the first that came up, it was by chance it happened. This was the first place where a friend said that now you can come, there’s a room, there’s a job, you can come [to Frome].

As Jagoda’s story illustrates, the country of destination was all the same, as far as she was concerned – she could equally well have gone to somewhere in Ireland as to Frome. My interviews in places such as Grajewo and Elk, where there is huge migration to every west European country, from Iceland to Cyprus to Finland, suggested that it was often almost a matter of chance which country people chose. They went to the location where their network took them; often, even language knowledge was not a criterion. The globalisation literature tends to focus on “global cities”, but Polish towns like Grajewo are ‘global’ in their own way, at the centre of a web of international links.

If the migration culture in some Polish locations encourages migration to personal contacts in general, in the more specific case of chain migration by families the destination location is more or less dictated by the location of close relatives. This is not the same as chain migration which occurs when female relatives and friends find each other domestic work in countries like Italy or Greece, leaving their families in Poland. Today, increasing numbers of whole families, with children, are moving abroad. If more families are moving to the UK, this is sometimes because sisters and best friends are already settled in specific places where they feel comfortable living with children. For example, Marianna’s sister suggested to Marianna that she should come to Bath with her daughter Wiola. The fact that Wiola would be going to her aunt and grandmother made Bath a kind of ‘home from home’. In Bristol, Olga asserted that she would never have risked coming to the UK with her husband and baby if her sister had not persuaded her. In other cases – the majority, among my sample – wives and children came to join their husbands, again, moving to be in precise locations dictated by personal networks. Only rarely did the family settle in a UK location which was not where the husband had first worked in England, a place which in most cases he found through family or friends.

Family migration was also often translocal in the sense of the home town in the UK being similar to the home location in Poland. In other words, the place was chosen because it was a familiar size and seemed safe for children. This was a definitely observable trend in the case of those husbands who had an element of choice over their destination. The sample included seven women married to bus drivers, who had been recruited by the company First Bus, trained in Poland and offered a small choice of UK destinations. For example, Patrycja explained:
He didn’t like London at all, because it’s too big…. If he he’d been sent to work in a city he wouldn’t have lasted out. He would have gone back to Poland at once. But Bath is really quite a pleasant little town, very pleasant, it isn’t big…. We’re from a small village. For us, the quieter the better. Bristol is too noisy. Here is better.

Wives also had a say over the destination of family migration, in the sense that they definitely had a right of veto over whether to join their husbands abroad. (Many interviewees in Poland described instances where this veto had been used and the family did not reunite.) Usually the wife made an ‘inspection visit’ to reconnoitre, before the family settled abroad. This gave her the opportunity to see if the UK town was suitable for her and the children. Hanna described her inspection visit to Trowbridge from Pszczyna:

Before we moved here I came to visit him, in December. I liked it,… it was just a kind of normal town... I realised it wasn’t different in any way from [Pszczyna], in fact it’s smaller in size, well, a kind of big village. You can feel safe here.

Naturally it is the specific place which is the wife notices most, not the English way of life or England in general.

Anne: So you already knew what England was like.
Marzena: My first impressions were really positive. It was the town I liked...
The town is really pretty.

In this conversation about Marzena’s holidays to see her husband before she settled in Bath, I referred to her visiting ‘England’, but she immediately pointed out that it was Bath she liked. England, by implication, was not a relevant category. Although I had expected my interviewees to comment on the differences they encountered on arriving in England from Poland, it was striking how often they pointed out the (attractive) similarities between their points of destination and arrival.

I like Bath. It’s a beautiful city, old. It’s like Grudziądz … Overall, it’s a pretty place. And it has lovely countryside around. I like it and I can’t imagine moving to another town. I’m used to it…. I feel at home, relaxed about things. (Jolanta)
As Jolanta’s comment illustrates, similarity finding is part of the process of settling in and making migrants feel that they want to stay in the place where they live in the UK. Gustafson (2001a, p. 14), writing about the process of place attachment, suggests that ‘the attribution of meaning involves distinction: the definition of similarities and differences, and therefore often comparisons with other places.’ When I asked UK interviewees whether they would consider moving to a different destination in the UK, all but one asserted that they would stay where they were, frequently stating their identity as small town to small town migrants, and their dislike of cities such as London.

Kinga: We’ll stay in Bath. Elk is small. In Bath you can walk everywhere.
Anne: You could earn more in London.
Kinga: But prices are also higher, it’s not worth it. This is where we are, I have a job, she has her school, I more or less know my way around, Auntie has been helping us.

Bernadeta, the only interviewee who said she would not mind moving in the UK (following a city-city trajectory from Elbląg to Bristol to Cardiff) was younger, less sentimental about place and more rootless than most of the others. She claimed that all her friends were ‘in England’, so England had to some extent succeeded Elbląg as her point of reference. Even Bernadeta, however, could by no stretch of the imagination be described as a ‘searcher’ or nomad, since she had very limited aspirations.

If interviewees felt attached to their UK localities, this could partly be simply because they were attractive places. A 2009 survey identified Bristol as the ‘best’ city in the UK, in the sense of being the place whose residents had the most positive opinions about it,7 while Bath is a world-renowned tourist attraction and World Heritage Site. By contrast, some research into UK Poles living elsewhere (e.g. Kaczmarek-Day 2010) has found respondents who were not at all happy with the place they lived.

Despite the objective attractiveness or otherwise of different localities, however, places are constructs, and the perceptions of Polish parents are shaped not just by the environment but also by their own preconceptions about acceptable family livelihoods. In particular, the mothers I interviewed definitely subscribed to the view that it was normal for children to lead settled lives. Ní Laoire et al (2010, p. 156) suggests that this a Western (but not global) commonplace:

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7 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/bristol/8330514.stm
It is assumed in western societies that children have a natural need for stability and security which can be provided by the domestic and familial environment. This has resulted in much research and policy towards children being underlaid by assumptions that associate ideal modern childhoods with residential fixity.

Having uprooted their children once already, and often exhausted after the period of intense mobility by all parties while only the husband was working in the UK, mothers felt anxious about the prospect of uprooting children twice. Ewa, in Bath, made a typical comment:

*It wouldn’t make sense to go back to Poland once our daughter had got used to being here, to her school, her friends, the language, and to tear her away from that and take her to Poland. So if we don’t leave now, before she gets really attached, well later it will make no sense.*

Similarly, Magda, whose family had experimented with return to Poland before coming back to Bristol for a second time, said that, having returned to Bristol, they would probably stay for a ‘long, long while… because, well, it’s well-known, children can’t keep chopping and changing’.

Everyone creates their own mental map of the place they live. Polish domestic workers in Rome make the streets and parks of the city their own because they do not live in their own homes (Malek 2010), just like the Filipino women in Hong Kong described by McKay (2006). Similarly, Noussia and Lyons (2009) discuss how migrants congregate in specific places in central Athens. The towns in my sample are too small to have such areas, and the parents I interviewed lived in their own homes. Nonetheless, Sunday outings for the whole family were an important part of their lives and involved a kind of mapping of the local region. They would take their children to the seaside (later recommending to one another their favourite beaches), or find a river for swimming, as they might do in Poland, despite the fact that British people – who never live more 72 miles from the sea⁸ - hardly ever swim in rivers. One mother, for example, described her delight at finding a riverbank near Bath which was ‘just like in Poland’. They also felt that they ‘knew their way round’ their immediate neighbourhood, to refer back to Kinga’s comments cited above.

*One can argue that by following everyday routines – going to shops, banks, work, playgrounds, using public transport and familiarising themselves with

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⁸ [http://www.bbc.co.uk/coast](http://www.bbc.co.uk/coast).
the surroundings and its inhabitants – newcomers domesticate the local landscape and create a sense of neighbourliness, a sense of possession of space, of being “at home” (Osipović 2010, p. 174)

Like Osipović’s London Polish respondents, but unlike many labour migrants across the world, my interviewees self-identified as consumers, who had money to spend and used the local shops and banks: in this respect, they had a sense of membership of the local area which contrasted with their sense of marginality in Poland, where they had scraped by from week to week and often fallen into debt.

With regard to livelihoods, probably the most important anchor keeping interviewees in specific locations was steady employment. Interviewees in Polish small towns constantly complained about insecurity of employment in much of the private sector; by contrast, people employed by ‘solid’ local employers, such as the bus factory in Sanok, were not likely to migrate. UK interviews often had bitter memories of feeling exploited in small private firms in Poland or by unreliable hotels and agencies during early months in England. They treasured jobs, even cleaning jobs, in institutions such as universities and hospitals or in big companies. Agnieszka, for example, explaining why her bus driver husband would not change jobs even to earn more money elsewhere, pointed out that ‘it would be a shame to change jobs, a risk. It’s a solid company (pewna firma). If you work for a big company it’s more secure’. In this regard, many of my interviewees differed sharply from the long-term agency workers described by Thompson in Llanelli, Wales, who never have control over their own lives. Thompson (2010) suggests that ‘the obstacles of breaking into the mainstream economy ensure that their life in Llanelli is seen as a temporary phase.’ By contrast, my interviewees did have a measure of control and security in their British locations: they had arrived at places where their Polish livelihood aspirations for a ‘good’ job had been realised.

The interviewees also had a sense of being in control in that, by their own efforts, they were leaving their mark on the local community. This can be viewed as part of the process of place attachment.

Over time, places may acquire new meanings, sometimes because of external events or developments, sometimes through the conscious efforts of the respondents. In this perspective, place and meanings of place stand forth as an ongoing process. Indeed at times, the respondents take an active part in the process of giving places meaning. (Gustafson 2001a, p. 13)

As other research also suggests, Poles often have a sense that they are valued by local British people because they are viewed as good workers (see e.g. Parutis
This feeds into their perception that they have a positive influence on their UK localities. They are changing the community for the better by doing jobs which the local population does not want to do, or does badly. Ewa, for example, reported that she and fellow-Poles had been discussing strikes by British workers in protest against migrant labour in 2008 and imagined what would happen if Poles in Bath had gone on strike. ‘It would be paralysis, simple paralysis! At least here in Bath. And there are Poles in every town. Buses wouldn’t go, restaurants would be shut!’

Families, in particular, could also have the impression that the local community was accommodating to their presence. Service providers such as the police and National Health Service, who have a duty to improve local community cohesion, use toddlers groups and Saturday schools to contact Polish parents. The Communities Advocate from the Bath police force confessed to me that she often found it hard to locate ‘communities’ (i.e. minority groups) for which she was responsible, hence the Saturday School was a convenient point of access. Many childless, English-speaking Poles in Bath are scattered individuals whom it would be hard to reach; families, however, easily become identified as ‘the Polish community’. (See Gill 2010 on similar assumptions by UK authorities about Catholic organisations as contact points for Poles.)

A further reason for families to feel comfortable locally was because of their perception that, by 2009 (unlike a few years previously), there was a critical mass of Poles – it was simply normal to be Polish in their new home town. Their impressions were of meeting more and more Poles locally. Again, there may be a difference between their perceptions and those of other types of Polish migrant. Toruńczyk-Ruiz (2008, p.37), writing about the Netherlands, observes:

_The difference in the perception of the number of Poles even in the same city was quite astonishing: individuals with pre-existing networks, or working in manual jobs that were popular among Polish migrants, felt that they were surrounded by Polish people, whereas skilled workers usually stated that they would hardly ever meet compatriots._

On the whole, my interviewees were in the happy position of being able to choose their own Polish friends: it was not the case that they were simply thrown together with random compatriots, as migrants might be when they first arrive in a locality. Rather, as in their home location in Poland, they could pick and choose with whom to socialise.

_We have quite a circle of Polish friends. When people ask us, Poles, whether we are on our own in Bristol, I say no, we have a group of friends, we meet_
up. If we were here on our own we wouldn’t like to stay here, not for a long
time. (Monika)

Having Polish friends compensated for the fact that many interviews had extremely limited contact with the local non-Polish population, mostly because they did not work with British colleagues and/or were not confident about speaking English. Malwina, for example, complained about how she was unable to befriend fellow parents at her daughter’s school:

_We stand together but I’d have to know English well. That’s why not. So I just collect my daughter and go home… [In the playground] someone will come up to me, ask me something, and then I say I can’t speak much English. Obviously they’ll say a few things to me, but after a while, since I can’t say anything [back], they don’t try to talk to me._

Women could sometimes have a vicarious sense of connectedness to the local community through family members; they recognised that at least their school-age children had such links, as did their husbands, if the latter were bus drivers or had other jobs which brought them into contact with the public. Overall, however, they had little sense of how British people lived, making comments such as ‘I don’t know what people cook for dinner in England’.

Hence, in terms of _national/ethnic_ attachments, the mothers I interviewed were most often not very integrated into UK society. They pursued a range of ‘transnational’ activities, speaking Polish, cooking Polish food, socialising with Poles and frequently working with them as well. On the other hand, considering _local_ ties (especially looking beyond the mothers themselves and taking into account the local ties of other members of the household, children at school and husbands who had more contact with English language) it is evident that the interviewees did have many causes to feel increasingly rooted in their UK locality.

**RETURN TO SPECIFIC LOCALITIES**

As already mentioned, many Polish return migrants return to the places they left. Most of my UK interviewees tended to feel that for the time being they were likely to remain in the UK, although they often thought about return. It frequently seemed to be the case that some family members were keener on return than others, so any return migration strategy would be decided as a result of family discussions and arguments. Insofar as they discussed return as a real possibility, the UK interviewees assumed, apparently with only one exception, that this would be
return to their home locality. This was mostly because – like most return migrants (King 2000, p. 15) – they expected to go home for emotional reasons, to be with their extended families. It was also because of their habit of seeing livelihoods in local terms. As already argued, many Polish migrants prefer to migrate abroad to places where they have something already fixed up. By the same token, they will not return *w ciemno* to a strange place in Poland. Knowledge about the economy of their specific home location is important, given that some parts of Poland are more flourishing than others. It is not enough to watch Polish television: my interviewees were not impressed by media reports of Polish economic growth, perhaps partly because of an inbuilt suspicion of journalists, but also because they had such firm ideas about the specificities of their local economies in Poland.

Their continuing perceptions of local economies were partly formed as a result of telephone and internet conversation with Poland-based friends and family. These may sometimes emphasise positive developments in an attempt to persuade migrants to return (as suggested by some of my interviews in Poland), although, overall, pessimism seemed to be more common. Fairly frequent visits back to the home locality in Poland also enabled interviewees to keep an eye on local conditions. Ilona, for example, reported:

*There’s a bit more than there was, when we were there in summer, on our holiday, we found out that it was like that because lots of people had migrated, so now there is a little bit more, but I don’t know how it will turn out... and earnings are a bit higher than when we left, it’s got just a tiny bit better, but it’s nothing like as good as here in England, where you can leave one job and find a new one.*

Having housing in each locality clearly created dual local identities, and over a third of the UK interviewees had their own flat or house in Poland. This gave them a special sense of ‘going home’ to a particular place in Poland, when they returned on holiday. However, although they often talked about their Polish housing, either to reminisce fondly about how nice it was, or alternatively, to worry about the repairs it needed, the presence of a house (even one bought with money earned in the UK) was not in itself a reason to return.

It might make sense to ‘return’ to a Polish city where there are jobs available, but, as a recent CBOS poll suggests, Poles (other than young people who move to cities to study) rarely migrate within Poland (Kowalczuk 2010, pp 1, 3-5). There was almost universal agreement among my small-town interviewees in Poland that it made little sense to move permanently to a city in Poland, rather than going abroad. Iglicka (2008, p 65) suggests that ‘the relatively low [geographical] mobility of the Polish workforce is caused both by cultural factors and also
by the inflexible housing market. Changing one residence for another is very expensive, which discourages people from moving in search of work, or better work. This is especially true for people who earn only average wages, or less.’ My UK interviewees voiced exactly the same attitudes. When I asked Marianna, for example, why she came to Bath with her child instead of moving from her Polish small town to a Polish city, she said ‘I didn’t feel like changing my place of residence in Poland, I’d learned English at school and I liked it and perhaps that was why I didn’t feel like going to a Polish city, I don’t know, I didn’t consider it… and it’s more expensive to live in a city.’ Dominika, another lone parent from a small town, said that Gdańsk had, in theory, been an alternative destination (to Bath) but that it would have cost so much to rent a flat that it would not have made sense.

In theory, Polish small-town and rural migrants might become more favourably disposed towards living in a Polish city as the result of information garnered from Poles in the UK. During 2009, different Polish cities took it in turn to advertise themselves to Poles in the UK, holding meetings to inform migrants about employment opportunities, but these meetings were in London, so not very accessible to people like my interviewees. Of course, simply by being in the UK, Poles from small towns and rural areas came into contact with other Polish people from a range of Polish cities. However, judging by the pessimism of my UK interviewees and acquaintances from cities (including the Tri-City, Poznań and Wrocław) the accounts of these migrants were not likely to persuade their small-town compatriots that it would be worth moving back to a city in Poland. The city migrants were very conscious that not everyone even in the cities with the best economic indicators could access a well-paid job.

CONCLUSION

The Polish mothers I interviewed in the UK had differing attitudes towards how to maintain their Polish identity and it would be wrong to assume that, despite being ‘bees and ants’ rather than ‘gorgeous butterflies’, their attitudes were insular or that they had no interest in British culture or associating with non-Polish people. Nonetheless, in most cases their poor knowledge of English did make access to the non-Polish community quite limited, and they tended to socialise with fellow Poles and lead Polish lives in the sense of speaking Polish at home, eating Polish food, watching Polish television, communicating with family and friends in Poland, etc. Hence they could be said to engage in a range of ‘transnational’

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activities, if transnational is understood to refer to migrants’ maintaining national cultural identity in the receiving country.

At the same time, however, their frame of reference was often local rather than ethnic or national. When thinking about where they were and where they had come from, they referred to their specific cities, towns and villages in Poland and the UK. Like all migrants, they were ‘agents of globalisation’ (Kennedy 2010), but in the sense of being people weaving local to local links from Pszczyna to Trowbridge, Elbląg to Bristol or Grudziądz to Bath. They had usually come to the UK via migration networks which took them from one location to another, and, in the UK, their eyes remained fixed on their locality of residence in Poland. This was where most of them had extended family and about a third had houses or flats: this, therefore was the place to which they considered return. It seems to be common in Poland for internal migration not to be considered as a livelihood strategy, and, in keeping with this culture, my interviewees did not envisage return to a new Polish location. Instead, they studied the livelihood options available in their places of origin, forming their perceptions of whether they were improving by communicating with friends and family, and on visits home.

Using a livelihood strategy approach, the article has shown how cultural factors – expectations about ‘good’ livelihoods – are brought from Poland to the UK and facilitate family settlement in places like Bath and Bristol. On the one hand, there is the common Western assumption that it is ‘good’ for children to lead settled lives, and this facilitates settlement in the same towns where families first arrive in the UK, as well as shaping the original choice of UK location (which should, if possible, be similar to the home location in Poland). On the other hand are attitudes created by life in Poland, particularly a preference for the security of state employment or a job at a major local factory. Finding a job at a ‘solid company’ or state institution in Bath or Bristol – a goal which had eluded interviewees when they lived in Poland – was a good reason to stay in those locations. The livelihood strategy approach also involves investigating the resources of the entire household and thus helps the researcher understand not only the migration decision – e.g. the wife’s role in choosing the family location abroad – but also the integration process. At first glance, for example, it seemed hard to understand why some of the mothers interviewed did feel a sense of local attachment, especially those who did not have paid employment and spoke little English, but if one takes into account their husbands and (particularly) their children’s stronger ties, their sense of anchoring in the UK place of residence is easier to explain.
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INTRODUCTION

Mobility is everywhere. It is something that we do and something we experience in day to day life, from walking and dancing to travelling and migrating. Perhaps it is this ever-presence of mobility that has led a number of scholars from different academic fields to conclude that mobility is central to human life. For John Urry (2000, 2007) mobilities create society, for Tim Cresswell (2006) life increasingly occurs “on the move”. There is now a widespread interest in movement and mobility that has resulted in the emergence of a major trend in social sciences that has been termed a “mobility turn” (Urry, 2007) or “mobilities perspective” (Sheller and Urry, 2006). But how has this affected migration studies?

Migrant mobility has long been established as a site of exciting scholarly work. The current developments in the field have contributed to a new and richer understanding of movement of people. However, human mobility raises questions, especially in relation to its flexibility and fluidity. Why certain groups of migrants move and remain mobile and others stay put? Under what conditions and when people become mobile? What is more, in the era of globalisation, mobility is seen as an integral part of a global economy and understood as a unified human condition (Cresswell, 2006). Hence, much of the past research neglects the lived experience that often instigates the movement of people in the first place. Numerous ethnographic studies and interviews with migrants around the word suggest that being mobile remains materially and emotionally significant for people on the move. There is no denying that mobility can transform many aspects of social and economic life of mobile migrants (i.e. Cyrus, 2008; Diminescu, 2003; Morokvasic, 2004). The question then is not whether being mobile matters to migrants but how? What is the meaning of mobility at the level of individual’s life?

In this paper I attempt to engage with these questions by looking specifically at one aspect of mobility: migrant visits home. Freedom of circulation within the European Union made the borders inside the EU space less important to those who have the right of free movement. More recently, the expansion of the EU
in 2004 and the availability of cheaper, more frequent and more accessible air travel connections, has allowed for new forms of mobility, based on more frequent return visits for Eastern Europeans, who have gone to work and live in Britain. In recent years, the “visiting friends and family” (VFR) mobility type has been the fastest growing segment of inbound air traffic in the UK, accounting for almost half of all trips within European Union (CAA Passenger Survey, 2005).

My research is an attempt to make sense of migration and mobility in the context of people’s lives and notions of travelling home. I analyse the ways in which visiting country of origin is experienced by “new” Polish migrants in England, and how is migration narrated in relation to individual mobility. I approach this set of issues through the lens of ‘mobilities perspective’ (Urry, 2007; Sheller and Urry, 2006). While the discourse of human mobility and movement has been central to the already vast literature on globalization, and rather than thinking of mobility as constituted only through the processes of physical movement, the mobilities perspective considers how mobility is made meaningful (Cresswell, 2006; Urry, 2007). Given that migration is a diversified phenomenon, a new mobilities paradigm reflects on “how social life gains expression through the movement of people” (Garcera and Fumaz, 2007: 5). Furthermore, it attends to the institutional infrastructure of movement and the economic and political conditions that encourage or hinder the movement of people.

Recognising that international mobility is becoming both more commonplace and complex, this paper emphasise people’s accounts and meanings attached to mobility and migration, as well as the contextual factors, opportunities and constrains through and within which this mobility is experienced. Given the widespread use of various communications, such as cheap phone calls and the Internet, the questions of why do migrants physically travel and how their journey home is experienced continue to be significant. My aim, however, is not to undertake a systematic examination of these experiences. Rather, through the examples, I wish to develop a series of arguments about the interweaving of mobility and visits home that allow the processes of migration to gain new meanings.

Finally, there is a need for research that accounts for Polish migrants’ continuing involvement with homelands and the role that being mobile plays in their migration processes and experiences. People seem to be finding increasingly creative ways of living in more than one place at the time, and this raises some interesting questions, especially while some migrants seem to be returning home and others are successful in managing their “new fluid living patterns” (O’Reilly, 2007).
METHODOLOGY

This research is based on the qualitative data collected for a PhD thesis between with young Polish migrants, who arrived in England after the Enlargement of the European Union in 2004. Of the 27 interviews, 21 were with women and 6 with men. All of the interviewees had spent on average 3 to 5 years working and living in England prior to the interview. The study utilised the life story approach (Arkinson, 1998) with respect to migration. The emphasis was on eliciting personal narratives and asking the interviewees to tell their migration stories in their own words. A number of questions related to the topics of lived experience of migration, migration strategies, mobility, contact with Poland and gender were also asked. All of the interviews were conducted in Polish, with the exception of one. The selection method was based on the snowball principle and purposeful sampling. Interviews were undertaken with people found through one of the providers of adult education in the West Midlands (England) that offered ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses, and those who were willing to share their migration stories. Due to limited number of males in the sample, I tried to maximize the variance by purposively seeking male participants through further snowballing of contacts.

SETTING THE SCENE: FROM A COACH TRIP TO LOW-COST AIR TRAVEL

As Burrell (2008) argues, the post-2004 Polish migration to the UK presents an interesting account of migrants’ mobility as it is emblematic of changing understandings of “east” and “west” within the Europe. Prior to 1989, going abroad for many Poles represented a final decision, with long-term consequences and no possibility of return. But the political and socio-economic changes in Eastern and Central Europe at the beginning of the 1990s resulted in liberalisation of rules for international travel. Along with these changes, the mechanisms and patterns of mobility changed (Więckowski, 2008). As some of the research suggests (i.e., Wallace, 2002; Cyrus, 2008), the post-1989 period brought about an increase in short-term and circular mobility, particularly to Germany.

With Poland’s accession to the European Union in 2004, mobility and travel have been transformed yet again. Prior to the advent of low-cost air carriers, for many Poles the coach was the only accessible mean of transportation abroad. The visa restrictions in the UK also meant that some were not able to enter or re-enter Britain. The introduction of cheap air-travel, and more importantly, freedom of movement in the EU, revolutionised the way Polish migrants in England now travel.

Several participants mentioned the importance and increased use of low-cost airlines as means of transportation home:
‘I can’t imagine travelling to Poland on the coach! 28 hours! Never!’ (Tomek)

‘Ryanair, Wizzair, even Easyjet, if you search well, you can fly home for less than 60 pounds’ (Marcin)

Tomek’s and Marcin’s comments also exemplify a larger trend in Eastern European air travel and migrant mobility. As Dobruszkes (2009) suggests, the rise in the number of low-cost airlines and the west-east air routes could be as a response to the post-2004 migration need for mobility. Undoubtedly, for new Polish migrants in England, the journey home is eased by the existence of reasonably priced airlines and regular air routes.

Furthermore, as the following testimonies illustrate, even though initially for some of my participants the price of the plane ticket had been a major consideration when making decision whether to travel home or not, with more disposable incomes and longer time spent working and living in England, the price became less important:

‘I used to look for a cheapest ticket possible. Now I earn more money, the price is still important, but I can afford to fly whenever I want to. The only problem is taking time off from work’ (Anna)

‘If I want to go home, I usually will. It doesn’t matter that the plane ticket is more expensive (…) Low-coast airline tickets are not that expensive anyway’ (Witek)

Most of the interviewees did not have a strong preference for which airline they traveled with and in most cases, it was the convenience, the geographical proximity and accessibility of the airport that played a role, both in England and Poland:

‘I travel with Ryanair, because it is the only airline that travels to Rzeszow’ (Iza)

‘I often have to travel to London Luton Airport because there are no flights to Warsaw from Birmingham Airport’ (Ryszard)

‘East Midlands (Airport) has really good flight connections to where I live, but it is a nightmare to get to. I don’t think you can get there by public transport, only if you have a car’ (Basia)

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1 The names of all participants have been changed
2 Author’s annotation
The examples listed in this section demonstrate, as Dobruszkes (2009) suggests with regards to new west-east European low-cost services, that some Polish migrants in England have taken advantage of the new freedom of border crossing and embraced the more flexible migration trajectories that this freedom permits. The post-2004 regular return visits home are just one aspects of this new acquired liberty. In case of the participants in this study, the idea of frequent visits home was a reoccurring theme in the interviews. Travelling home and visiting friends and family was emotionally and symbolically significant for Polish migrants. More importantly however, visits like these, gave rise to a new form of mobility based on more regular return visits home. Hence, I am using migrants’ visits home in this paper as a contextual case study for exploring wider themes around mobility and migration and offer a starting point from which to think about mobility of “new” Polish migrants in England.

THE RHETORICS OF TRAVELLING HOME

Migration, alongside the physical action of moving countries, is also a metaphorical and emotional journey to be travelled. In the same vein, the journey home is not just about getting from the host country to homeland. For migrants, there are distinct social practices and experiences embedded in travelling home. How might we then understand these apparent journeys home? For that matter, how can we understand the motivations, dynamics or emotions of travelling home? In this section, I explore the rhetorics of migrants’ journeys home - the rationale and the emotive elements of travelling.

The rationale for travelling

At first glance, the majority of respondents travelled back home to see their families and friends:

'I travel (to Poland) because of my parents. You know, it's important to visit the family' (Tomasz)

The patterns of mobility displayed by many Poles in England are intertwined with networks of kinship and appear to be playing a central role in facilitating and supporting the movement of Polish migrants home. Of course, this has been a widely recognised aspect of migration. The importance of family and kinship relations for international mobility has been well documented in a number of

3 Author’s annotation
research studies (i.e. Levitt, 2001; Sassen, 1996; Vertovec, 2002). For new Polish migrants in England, family networks in the home country indeed appear to be acting as a facilitator of their visits home. In some cases even, the act of travelling home is concentrated around sustaining these very networks:

‘It’s definitely my parents who I go to visit, it’s important to them that I stay in touch and visit as often as I can’ (Dominka)

The visits home are regarded as significant and demonstrate important aspects about kinship practices ordered through migration and mobility, in particular the centrality of family networks to these new patterns of mobility. Some of the interviewees suggested that if not for their families in Poland, their visits home would have not been as frequent:

‘I don’t think I would fly home so often if not for my mum’ (Ania)

‘If my family lived here with me, I would probably visit Poland once a year or not all’ (Witek)

This raises interesting questions with regards to the form and dynamics of the relations through which patterns of mobility are nurtured and maintained (Vertovec, 2001). Conradson and Latham (2005) have begun to answer these kinds of questions, but in relation to young New Zealanders in London. They argue that New Zealanders’ social networks assume great importance not simply because they exist, but rather because they offer a meaning for mobility. In general, migration implies absence from home. As a consequence, many of the migrants’ most emotionally significant relationships are conducted across the national borders. The ability to visit home therefore assumes enhanced status. For Polish migrants in this study, mobility has a meaning because of the existence of family members and social relationships in Poland. As many of the respondents demonstrated, regular contact with relatives and friends gave form to much of the mobility they displayed. The return visits home serve to nurture and cultivate these relationships. What is more, mobility as a social movement functions not only to bring together people that live across the borders, but can also play a role in emotional terms. Migrants often rely on their networks at home for emotional and moral support. In this way, mobility and visits home have a powerful significance, expressing something crucial about kinship practices across distances, in particular about enabling migrants to access the help and support.

However, for new Polish migrants in England, the connection with Poland organised through mobility can operate on many other levels. Some of the
informants made it explicit that amongst the reasons for travelling home are also the desires to display new social status and show off the “achievements” of migration. This point came out very clearly in Marek’s narrative, as he was open to admit:

‘Travelling home is all about money and how well you are doing in England’ (Marek)

Kasia’s comment very much echoes Marek’s statement about the journey home as a “successful” migrant:

‘It’s nice to be able to come back home knowing that you are doing well in England’ (Kasia)

Return visits home for these Poles reflect thus, to some extent, their strategies to seek a social status at home. For Marek and Kasia, being mobile is about being able to display their “wealth” accumulated in England. There are of course, differences between migrants’ wealth and standard of living in England, as well as between the meanings and values attributed to this processes of showing off the “success”. For some Poles, travelling home is about optimisation of the resources and money they earned in England. For instance, some of the respondents waited until the visits home to go to dentists, doctors or hairdressers, which is all cheaper than in England. Here, mobility is central to Polish migrants in the context of the economic power it can embody. It opens up the possibilities to decide how to manage the resources and migration experience. More importantly, however, the existence of low-cost air services has allowed migrants to travel more frequently and this movement of people is becoming increasingly important. It is not just a movement for family or kinship motivations. Polish migrants no longer see their migration choices as limited and are increasingly becoming the active agents in their migration journey.

The emotive elements of travelling

A number of interesting points emerged from the discussion of emotive elements of travelling home. The first is the feeling of nostalgia that often accompanies Polish migrants on their journeys back to Poland:

‘I don’t know…there is something about knowing you are flying back to Poland. When the plane touches the runway, you know you are home, somewhere you know well’ (Natalia)
Migration raises challenges and questions of home and belonging. In the act of migration, as Ahmed et al. (2003) argue, home is formed in relation to movement. The construction of home therefore, is both re-made and remembered through mobility and migration. In this way, Ahmed et al. (2003) challenge the dominant tendencies to associate home with stasis and fixity, and mobility with detachment (p.1). The idea of home, for migrants like Natalia, exerts a powerful influence. In her comment, the journey home becomes idealised, revolving around deeper considerations for Poland as home. Riccio (2002) in particular argued, drawing on the example of Senegalese migrants in Italy, that the perception of the country of origin as “home” becomes more intense when migrants are highly mobile. Germann Molz (2008) further writes how mobile migrants often “find themselves living their lives at the increasingly complicated intersection between home and mobility, negotiating movement through a prism of attachment and affect while negotiating belonging through various intersecting mobilities of people, technologies, cultures, images and objects” (p. 326). In explaining her feelings while travelling to Poland, Natalia emphasizes familiarity and comfort that the idea of home conveys. For Natalia, home is not only a place, it also a feeling that she experiences while she travels home. It is the memory of place and home, the journey itself, the plane and even the act of landing that are all bound up with the processes of mobility. In this way, “home” and nostalgia for home are inseparable from migration and mobility.

The second point, exemplified in Paulina’s narrative, is that of feeling of reflection:

‘When I travel home, I often think a lot about my decision to migrate. You know, did I make the right decision? It then becomes hard to go back to England. Knowing that in a week time I will have to leave everyone and everything I know behind all over again’ (Paulina)

For Paulina, travelling home involves deeper consideration for migration processes and life that she left behind in Poland. Visiting home for migrants can often involve complex and sometimes sensitive sets of negotiations and practices. The following comment is especially revealing:

‘It sometimes feels like you have no home, this travelling, because your one foot is here (in England)\(^4\) and one there, in Poland. And you cannot do anything about it, because you are emotionally connected to Poland’ (Anna)

\(^4\) Author’s annotation
For some of my informants, mobility is associated with perpetuating movement and a sense of homelessness, while some see it as normal and taken-for-granted aspect of the act of migrating. Andrzej for example, saw visiting home as unavoidable and inevitable aspect of migration. As he puts it:

‘I got used to it (travelling to Poland). It has become part of my life, you know, like going home for Christmas, visiting my family’.

In Kaplan’s research, she reflects on her own mobility and travel. Because her family lived in various countries, travel was for Kaplan ‘unavoidable…and always necessary for family, love and friendship as well as work’ (1996, p.9 in Urry, 2006). Mobility as a social and cultural movement home is therefore part of more general processes of social networks that, as I have already argued, is central to the mobility demonstrated by Polish migrants in England. As such, there are complex connections between mobility, social networks and return visits home in sustaining family connections and assisting the new mobility patterns. On the one hand, mobility for new Polish migrants in England represents choices and possibilities to manage the migration experience. It allows the continuous keeping of relationships with their country of origin, the optimisation of the economic resources and the display of new social status. On the other hand, as it emerged from Natalia’s and Paulina’s comment, this new form of mobility can entail difficult negotiations of home, identity and decision to migrate.

TRAVEL AS AN OBLIGATION

The return visits home may also be about the obligation. Weddings, funerals and religious occasions are examples of events where Polish migrants may feel obliged to travel home. The narratives and experiences of travel amongst the respondents reveal that travelling home is often enfolded in obligation. Przemek recalls:

‘In a way, I feel obligated to travel back to Poland. My mum would never forgive me if I just visited once a year’.

This obligation to travel can include, as mentioned above, familial, legal or economic commitments to attend funerals, birthday parties, christenings and weddings, just as Ania articulates:

\[5\] Author’s annotation
'It is sometimes difficult to go home, you know, because of the work commitments, but I often feel compelled to fly due to circumstances. Like, last year it was my aunt's funeral, this year it was my friend's wedding and in few months I have to go because my sister is having a baby'.

The practice of travelling for funerals or christenings has a major significance. More than simply continuing and recognising the religious and cultural traditions, mobility as an obligation acts as a motivation for the maintenance of social relations.

What is more, the obligations for Polish migrants to travel home are often a result of the expectations of the migrants’ family members to visit:

‘My parents expect me to visit during Christmas. During the five years I have spent in England, they only came to visit once’ (Ania)

This is consistent with studies of migration that suggest that it is the migrant, rather than those in the home country, should visit (i.e. Mason, 2004). Furthermore, as a number of scholars (i.e. Smith, 2001; Ong, 1999) have pointed, social relations ordered through mobility are different to those structured around emplacement. For some Poles in England, social relations constructed through this new form of mobility are also about duties and obligations to see families and friends. Being mobile then can assume different meaning and consequences for different migrants.

**Constructing Polish migrants’ mobility: from migration to mobility?**

Thinking about the ways in which new Polish migrants in England use return visits home and the experience of being migrants as part of their personal mobility, brings us to yet another issue. The existence and possibility of quick and low-cost travel home can potentially enable many migrants to change and transform their migration experience. For some of the respondents, having the option to fly home became an alternative to unsuccessful and unpleasant experience of migration:

‘If migrating to England doesn’t work out, I am only a short plane journey away from home. It’s great’ (Basia)

For Basia, the experience of mobility is about being able to travel back to Poland whenever the experience of migration becomes difficult. Mobility then may also come to take on a more complex personal significance. What is more, Basia expresses a degree of contentment at being able to quickly and
conveniently fly home, as it allows her to take a more relaxed approach to the act of migrating. Conradson and Latham (2005) argue that mobility as a strategy can be empowering, but only if it is under migrants’ own control. In Basia’s case, being mobile embodies autonomy and freedom to move across the borders and mediates many of the reservations associated with migration. It also reduces pressure to fully assimilate with the host country. Furthermore, this figurative proximity of Poland and England expressed in Basia’s comment is very much symbolic of most of the Polish migrants’ mobility and migration experience. The voluntary nature of mobility and travel home places Basia and many young Poles in England in a position of privilege and control regarding their own standards and itineraries of mobility. It is not the actual physical movement that Basia is considering, but rather the perception of mobility when desired. Mobility is then not only about the actual physical movement but also about a feeling of being in a privileged position to go home at any time of migration process and most importantly, remain flexible and mobile. In this way, this new mobility pattern is not only a very flexible migration trend but also a distinctive process structured both by the freedom of circulation within the European Union and the expansion of the low-cost air-travel. While it is clear that Poles have always constituted a highly mobile society with a long history of migration (see for example, Sword, 1989; Iglicka, 2001), the meanings of this mobility have transformed with time. While earlier patterns involved traditional understandings of migration as a linear process and permanent settlement in the host country, the nature and the frequency of this new mobility, changed with respect to the past migration waves of Poles to the UK. Mobility, in case of “new” Poles in England, is as much about having control over the migration experiences, as it is about the infrastructure channelling this movement. Indeed, Polish migrants’ view and understanding of the nature of their migration is heavily inflected with the feeling of being mobile. Hence, this new mobility needs to be seen in the context of these broader individual, cultural and technological transformations.

What is more, not only is this a very flexible migration trend, it is also difficult to disentangle migration and mobility here. Many Poles came to England after the Enlargement of the EU in 2004 with no intention of settling but stayed longer than they initially planned. Most of them, if not all, go “home” for weddings, funerals, doctors, dentists and hairdressers or just to visit their families. They use the national health services in both countries, they spend holidays in Poland and come back to England to work and study. Their migration trajectories are structured by the national and EU borders, in England they are subject to laws and regulations for EEA migrants. Yet, their lives are closely bound up with Poland. This strategy enables new Polish migrants in England to turn mobility into a way of living and to construct more fluid lifestyles, which fall short of traditional understandings
of migration. In this way, it would appear then that migrants, who live their lives in mobility, understand their migration as mobility. What is more, young Polish migrants have no intention of settlement in one place. They employ, what Garapich (2006) calls “intentional unpredictability” or Moriarty et al., (2010) refer to as “deliberate indeterminacy”, the strategy of not deciding what the next step in the migration trajectories is. Many Poles utilize this approach because they do not see their choice as limited to living in one country. Indeed, some of the participants in the sample mentioned the possibility of further migrations to other countries:

‘I don’t have set plans for the future. It changes often. Maybe I will migrate to Canada, or Australia. I’ve heard that there is a lot of Poles in Sweden, so maybe I will go there’ (Pawel)

‘I don’t know what my plans are. I don’t know whether I want to go back to Poland. Ask me in ten years’ (Monika)

In case of Poles in England, being mobile allows them to make decisions based on the opportunities they encounter during their migration journey, which for some may embody the possibility of further migrations.

CONCLUSION

The notion of mobility, developed in this article, incorporates several ideas. Firstly, I have suggested that the ways in which the journey home and the distance between England and Poland are encountered by Polish migrants, are crucial to their understandings of migration. Because of the figurative proximity between Poland and England and “when desired” nature of their movement, Polish migrants are placed in a position of privilege and control regarding their mobility. What is more, in a process a migration, the narratives of physical mobility and travel home concentrated around the ideas of keeping in contact with families and friends, obligation, optimisation of resources, means of displaying social status and wealth accumulated in the process of migration. Secondly, it can be argued that young Polish migrants in England participate in the construction of a new way of living that entails a great deal of mobility and can reasonably be interpreted as a contemporary articulation of new practices of movement in Europe. This is not to suggest that this mobility of new Polish migrants in England is a totally new phenomenon. However, its dynamics and meanings have changed substantially through time. Being mobile allows for some of the Polish migrants to successfully manage their experience of migration. In this context, mobility as migratory is as much about being in control, as it is about the infrastructures of this movement.

The low-cost airlines and freedom of circulation within the EU are central to new Polish migrants’ mobility and return visits home. Without the complex systems of cheap mass air travel, socio-economic conditions and the freedom of movement, Polish migrants’ mobility could have been utterly different.

REFERENCES


MOBILITY AND IMMOBILITY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG POLISH PEOPLE LIVING IN THE UK

INTRODUCTION

"Some of the world’s residents are on the move, for the rest it is the world itself that refuses to stand still”

(Bauman, 2000:58)

Since the declaration of a common European market in 1968 the idea of free movement in European space has been a mainstay on the European Union agenda. Over the past 40 years barriers to mobility have steadily eroded so that more and more goods, services, people and ideas flow across the porous borders of Europe in a continually expanding and shifting space. Mobility is encouraged and vigorously promoted by the EU through its communications and the programmes and projects it funds. From the designation of 2006 as the European Year of Workers’ mobility, the 2010 ‘Youth on the Move’ Initiative to smaller sub-regional projects such as the ‘Mobile Citizen Service’ in the Rhineland, Germany1, the EU extols the virtues of mobility and protects it as a ‘social right’ for all European citizens. Despite this, there is little evidence of a ‘culture of mobility’ in Europe with only 10% of European citizens having engaged in intra-EU mobility at some point in their lives (European Commission, 2010). So why is mobility so important in Europe?

It is often assumed that geographical mobility leads to upward ‘social mobility’. Even the metaphors we use in everyday life denote mobility as progress – to move forward, to be dynamic, to be a high flyer. In political discourse it is declared that improving opportunities for geographical mobility among European citizens can contribute to prosperity and a higher standard of living, whilst at the same time reducing inequalities and combating poverty in a ‘rapidly changing labour market’ (European Commission, 2008). Yet, the positive valuation of mobility should not be overstated. For all those who experience the hope and optimism

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of new opportunities within a more mobile and ‘shrinking’ world, there are those who are constrained and confined by a lack of rights and access to resources in an increasingly complex and uncertain world, whose experience is perceptively un-free and immobile (Skeggs, 2004; Stenning, 2005; Anderson et al., 2006). In this paper I will unpack theories of mobility and discuss particular forms of EU mobility within the context of Polish migration.

THE MEANING OF MOBILITY

“Mobility as progress, as freedom, as opportunity, as modernity, sit side by side with mobility as shiftlessness, as deviance, and as resistance. Mobility, then, is more central to both the world and our understanding of it than ever before. And yet mobility itself, and what it means, remains unspecified. It is a kind of blank space that stands as an alternative to place, boundedness, foundations, and stability”

(Cresswell, 2006:2)

Rather than attempt a full definition of mobility² I will reflect instead on some of the theoretical trajectories that have contributed to the omnipotence of ‘mobility’ as a positive valuation in contemporary discourse. As Cresswell (2006) notes ‘mobility’ is represented in myriad ways, it can be chaotic and undetermined but it is always embodied and inherently related to time and space. We move through time and space - our movement is shaped by them, but we are also active in the ‘production of time and space’ and it is because of this agentic capacity that mere ‘movement’ becomes ‘mobility’ (Cresswell, 2006). Literature in the social sciences has long theorised the social production of time and space whereby they are not understood as absolute but rather relative to a social context of meaning and power and, as Cresswell (2006) notes, mobility is part of this process of social production and reproduction. The vast increase in travel through more affordable transportation in an era of automobility and aeromobility, the rise of information technologies and increase in speed of communications are all processes that have ‘revolutionize(d) the objective qualities of space and time’ (Harvey, 1990:240). Some have argued that technological advancements in transportation and communications have caused the ‘death of distance’ (Cairncross, 2001) or ‘time-space compression’ as conditions of a postmodern era (Harvey, 1990). Bauman talks of the ‘acceleration of modern life’ that has changed the relationship between space and time. He argues that we are in an age of ‘liquid modernity’ where power

² Research on mobilities spans from human migration to transport studies to corporeal mobilities, for a comprehensive summary see Cresswell (2006)
has become ‘exterritorial’, unbounded by space where traditional, sedentary practices are fast being overtaken by nomadic lifestyles.3

Theories of mobility and migration have burgeoned over the past 20 years and some have championed the emergence of a ‘new mobilities paradigm’ or a ‘mobility turn’ in the social sciences (Shellar and Urry, 2006). It is argued that contemporary theories and discourse has moved beyond sedentarism and notions of vertical or social mobility to a new ‘horizontal’ mobility, a space of networks and fluidity rather than fixed space and time (Urry, 2000; Castells, 2000). Cresswell (2006) argues that ‘as the world has appeared to be more mobile, so thinking about the world has become nomad thought’ where mobility is seen as implicit to our understanding of the world. Sociologists, anthropologists, geographers and cultural theorists have broken with sedentarist traditions to develop theories on mobility as anti-essentialist, anti-foundationalist and anti-representational (Cresswell, 2006; Said, 1994; Deleuze and Guattari, 1986; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, Gupta and Fergason, 1992). This has contributed to a shift in discourse from understanding space and society as bounded, territorialised categories based on the formation and development of the nation state to a globalised, unbounded and de-territorialised space based on global, supra-national or transnational networks, processes and structures (Castells, 2000; Held et al, 1999; Sassen, 2002).

To mitigate against the placelessness and rootlessness of grand narratives on mobility, theory has developed to interrogate the local-global nexus and maintain the importance of place. Within the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ the idea of ‘moorings’ or ‘dwellings’ point to the continued significance of the local (Hannam et al., 2006; Urry and Shellar, 2000). Massey (1993) maintains that mobility is always ‘located and materialised’ and subject to uneven ‘power geometries’, so that not all mobile ‘subjects’ are positioned in the same way (Ahmed, 2004). Some say mobile populations are not ‘free flowing’ actors who are unbounded and de-territorialised, instead they are involved in a set of specific social relations that operate around and because of them (Anderson, 2000). For example, transnational migrants are not only determined by the historical legacy of coloniser and colonised, core and periphery but are involved in a more textured portrait of migration and the power relations that operate across space (Mahler, 1998). How social relations operate in space has been the focus of many studies on migrant transnationalism, diaspora and citizenship (Basch et al., 1994; Ong, 1999); as well as those devoted to migrant subjectivities (Blunt, 2005; McDowell, 2005) and the materiality of migrant lives (Tolia-Kelly, 2004; Rabikowska and Burrell, 2010).

3 See Deleuze and Guattari (1986) for a discussion of nomadology
Thus, history and place matter. Cresswell (2010) theorises ‘constellations of mobility’ as ‘historically and geographically specific formations of movements’ – those situated and contextualised by place and time rather than unfixed and fluid. The opportunity for mobility of people all around the globe is linked to this historical context of socio-economics, politics and culture within which differential access to mobility is positioned (Morokvasic, 2004). Feminist critiques of mobilities research have interrogated the way in which some of the studies on mobility are formed from particular gendered and classed (male and middle class) subjectivities arguing that they fail to interrogate the complex intersections of gender and class in the debate on mobility (Adkins, 2004; McDowell, 2006). Skeggs (2004) asserts that ‘mobility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship’ (p.49), therefore it is important to recognise the particular conditions and discourses within which mobility and immobility are represented, constructed and lived out.

POLISH MOBILITY IN THE EU

The EU operates as a supra-national body politic, tasked with regulating and monitoring the power of national governments in Europe and protecting the rights of individual citizens to move freely and live equitably in this shifting landscape. Mobility is represented through the discourse and praxis of the EU as an emancipatory ‘social right’ for EU citizens. In theory, this means the removal of barriers to mobility and widening access to resources for mobility, since it is now considered ‘free’. Economic forecasters extol the virtue of mobility for the welfare of individuals (Bonin et al., 2008), while official discourse offers a limitless menu of the benefits and opportunities for intra-EU mobility. Mobility is one of the key pillars in the Europe 2020 Strategy and a cross cutting theme in policy relating to education, employment and welfare and is reported to play a key role in strengthening the infrastructure of labour markets and ‘as an instrument for more effectively anticipating the effects of economic restructuring’ (European Commission, 2006). In the Action Plan for Skills and Mobility communicated by the European Commission in 2002, three priorities are reported: expanding occupational mobility and skills development; improving information and transparency of job opportunities; and facilitating geographical mobility. Such policies and programmes have been implemented to respond to calls for enhancing ‘workers’ mobility in the EU and are linked unequivocally to the economy. Rarely are cultural meanings of mobility referenced in EU policy, suggesting that official understandings are motivated by wider macro-economic concerns rather than the everyday experiences of EU citizens. Moreover, the extent to which these ‘enhanced’ opportunities for mobility in the EU are acknowledged and enacted by young Polish people is yet to be fully examined.
It is widely regarded that Poland’s accession to the EU in 2004 contributed dramatically to the increase in geographical mobility of Poles in the EU (Drinkwater et al., 2006; Grabowska-Lusinska and Okolski, 2008; Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). Through the removal of borders Poles were able to travel freely throughout Europe without a visa and opportunities for work in another member state held the promise of economic gain and upward social mobility. The UK has been the major destination country for Poles since it offered full access to the labour market and has been viewed as less difficult to negotiate due to widespread knowledge of the English language. It is estimated that by the end of 2007 690,000 Polish citizens were living in the UK, compared with 150,000 at the end of 2004 and 24,000 in 2002 (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). EU membership generated a significant increase in the scale of Polish migration to the UK but it was not the beginning of this trend since Polish migration to the UK is not new (Burrell, 2009; Iglicka, 2001; Sword et al., 1989). Geographical mobility has been a feature of modern day Poland in line with key political events - from the exiled populations produced through partitioning by Prussia, Austria and Russia, the ‘za chlebem’ immigrants of the 19th and 20th Century to the forced migrations of the Second World War and the post-War Polish diaspora; the short-term, circular, often clandestine and highly restricted migrations of the communist period (Iglicka, 2001) to the rise in mobility among Poles following the end of Communism in 1989 (Wallace, 2002) and, most dramatically, upon accession to the European Union in 2004 (Burrell, 2009).

In the period following EU accession, Poland has seen the continuation of many post-wall migratory patterns, such as seasonal ‘shuttle migration’ (Drinkwater et al., 2006). Moreover, White (2010) argues that the migration histories of certain localities has in some places contributed to a culture of migration where young people feel ‘socialised into migration’ and expect to engage in some form of geographical mobility. This implies that the personal histories of mobility in particular locales or particular families may also have a bearing on the future migratory patterns of younger generations. It is these historical patterns of migration that have generated the proliferation of informal transnational networks of mobile populations (Iglicka, 2001; Morokvasic, 2004). Some have argued that the intensification of these migratory patterns and networks have developed into a more formal migration industry between Poland and the UK (Garapich, 2008). The continuation of migratory patterns demonstrate that strategies for mobility have been developing over a significant period of time, across generations and across the shifting, uncertain borders of Europe. Thus, the question remains as to how far the perceived gains of mobility are the effects of EU accession rather than that of pre-accession mobile experiences, or inter-generational experiences.
Burrell (2009) sees 2004 as a ‘watershed moment in history’ for Polish mobility, especially relating to the UK but contends that despite the increase in opportunities for mobility some remain on the margins:

“Not all Europeans are ‘free movers’, not all countries are allowing free settlement, and EU membership still excludes as much as includes” (Burrell, 2009:6)

The EU process of accession by condition (‘conditionality’) places new member states in an intermediate and indeterminate position, subject to restriction and specification reinforcing their status as secondary, as if they are ‘catching up’ on the impermeable road towards a better and more viable economic, social and political model. These structural inequalities are at the core of the everyday realities of mobile people lived out through ‘constrained choice’ and ‘reduced access’ to resources (Stenning, 2005). The migration strategies of some young Poles living and working in the EU frequently involve de-skilling or ‘brain wasting’ with many graduates working in low skill, low wage work (Drinkwater et al., 2006; Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). Many of them are involved in informal work practices often resulting in temporality, lack of rights and insecurity (Anderson, 2000), demonstrating that the reality of lived migrant experience is often different from the EU promise of opportunity in a borderless world. Mobile populations remain in ‘state of transition and renegotiation’ (Castles and Millar, 2003) compelled to adapt to economic and social changes and negotiate the complex processes of national and EU regulated intra-European migration. As the EU has opened its borders to extend opportunity to some stringent regulations on mobility remain to enforce compliance and shape the spatial distribution of labour within it (cf. Massey, 1979). This is further repudiated by the lack of opportunities for those outside the Schengen borders, whereby the experience for many post-socialist states who have not been accepted into the project of integration is one of exclusion and subordination (Burrell, 2009).

However, as Bruff (2007) argues ‘migrants are not variables, but active agents that help to shape political, social and economic outcomes’ (Bruff, 2007:1) and there have been well documented examples of the agency of pre-accession undocumented migrants who were sophisticated in their use and development of the informal networks and irregular channels of migration in Europe (Duvell, 2006). Movements calling for the rights of migrants have emerged out of such networks and whether or not there are legal frameworks acknowledging their status or denying their rights, migrants ‘learn to cope despite the state, not because of it’ (Castles, 2004:860).
THE MOBILITY OF YOUTH

In EU discourse, mobility is viewed as a solution to un latching the potential of young people in particular - a generation perceived to be at risk due to declining numbers and increased global competition. This has implications for the mobility of older people and whether the targeting of young people leads to fewer opportunities for older people. For example, the ‘Youth on the Move’ initiative began in 2010 to increase mobility among those aged between 15 and 35 in order to minimise the effects of the crisis on young people. Programmes such as ‘Socrates’, ‘Leonardo Di Vinci’ and ‘Youth for Europe’ have been developed to encourage young EU citizens to engage in transnational exchanges for lifelong learning, vocational training and voluntary activities. Frameworks and toolkits have been created to encourage the harmonisation of processes among EU states and address the relationship between spatial and social mobility for all EU citizens of working age, such as the European Qualifications Framework and EUROPASS, the European Job Mobility Action Plan and the EURES programme. This includes older ‘workers’ but again stresses the economic imperative of intra-EU mobility, which excludes those unable to work for health reasons, a category within which older people more frequently fall.

While the co-ordination of educational and work-related frameworks in the EU can simplify the process of accessing jobs for some people across Europe, the level of awareness of this service among young people and how far this encourages geographical and social mobility is unknown. A socio-demographic profile of Polish migrants in the UK since EU enlargement shows that 72% of Polish nationals living in the UK are aged between 20 and 29 years old (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). Looking at the aspirations for mobility among young people, 58% of 18-19 year old Poles living in Poland stated that if they were offered an opportunity to work abroad they would consider it (CBOS, 2009 as cited in White, 2010). This suggests that the idea of mobility is becoming more widely accepted as a lifestyle choice for young people. However, there are a large number of Poles, young and older, who do not choose mobility, and many for whom both mobility and immobility is a ‘fate’ rather than a ‘choice’ (cf. Bauman, 2004). In reality, 85% of Poles have never lived abroad and 88% have not been to school or university abroad4. Being geographically mobile across the EU is not the norm in Poland and despite media portrayals representing a flood of Polish workers entering the UK the reality is a lot more nuanced and complex. The experiences of mobile people are highly differentiated so it is fundamental to discussions on mobility to ask whether ‘we are all really in the same boat’ (Fabricant, 1998).

4 Eurobarometer (2010) 377
THE POLITICS OF MOBILITY

“In this world it is important to understand that mobility is more than about just getting from A to B. It is about the contested world of meaning and power. It is about mobilities rubbing up against each other and causing friction. It is about a new hierarchy based on the ways we move and the meanings these movements have been given”.

(Cresswell, 2006:265)

Some politicians and policy experts use the phrase ‘mobility poor’ as a mark of those who are doing less well, whether blamed on idleness or as victims of a system (Cresswell, 2006). The assumption that mobility is a social right available to all Europeans, whether or not they choose to harness it, is interwoven in the discourse I have been challenging throughout this paper. It is based on understanding the world as no longer bounded by traditional, sedentarist, territorialised practices but rather as fluid, flexible, classless, cosmopolitan and mobile where traditional social ties and collective social arrangements have been eroded and the ‘individual’ is an agent with the capacity to choose and interpret reflexively their own social position (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991). The most damaging consequence of this ontology is its denial of history and failure to recognise that pre-existing socio-economic, political and cultural structures and practices play a key role in shaping the life chances of individuals. There is a ‘politics of mobility’ that is defined by sets of specific social relations and their productive and reproductive capacities (Cresswell, 2010). Varying degrees of choice, necessity and compulsion lead to different kinds of mobile livelihoods (or not) among young Polish people and the intersections of class, gender, ethnicity, religion and nationality are all complicit in these experiences.

State power is integral to the politics of mobility as it regulates a moral tone for contemporary understandings of good and bad mobility. Deleuze and Guattari (1986) assert that ‘the State never ceases to decompose, recompose and transform movement, or to regulate speed’ (as cited in Urry 2000:196). While the flow of capital and goods is encouraged, the free movement of people is subject to regulation through monitoring and surveillance. Moreover, across Europe mobile populations are viewed by States with varying degrees of acceptance from a ‘kinetic’ elite who exercise ‘transnational corporate choice’ (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2004) to engage in unsustainable mobility which is seemingly encouraged through rewards for air miles; to Roma populations, and the forced migration of refugees and asylum seekers whose mobility is highly constrained and discouraged despite
often being compelled. The positioning of mobile ‘subjects’ in this way occurs at national, supra-national or transnational level to regulate mobile practices and reproduce hierarchies of mobility.

Social relations operate at different levels influencing the values and decisions of individuals, their aspirations for and experiences of mobility. The politics of mobility plays a role in the outcome of mobility decisions as well as in the process of mobility decisions by setting a moral tone for good and bad understandings of mobility and ascribing who can and cannot be involved. The subjectivities of individuals who engage in migration are based on a mix of ascribed, inherited and invented values within which the classic binary of structure and agency intersect. Micro level research into the individual narratives of mobility and mobile lives is an important method to understand the values and aspirations of those engaged in mobile livelihoods, their distinct socio-spatial practices and the materiality of everyday mobility. The following section takes case study examples from a recent study on the mobile experiences of young Polish people in the UK.

NARRATIVES OF MOBILITY

In 2010 I conducted over 30 biographical-narrative interviews in and around Edinburgh, Krakow and Katowice with young Polish people aged between 18 and 35. The narratives display a diverse range of rich and textured biographies of young Polish people who have experienced migration to the UK or Ireland, some of whom have returned to Poland. They shared with me their thoughts on geographical and social mobility and the following section offers a range of interpretations on mobility. Within the narratives preconception, expectation and memory are explored to understand how values shape experience and experience shapes values. It is hoped that this approach will feed into other research on the motivations and intersections of Polish migration to the UK (Cooke et al., 2010; McDowell, 2008) through a deeper look at how mobility is imagined and enacted by young Polish people. Just as mobility is represented by the governing structures of contemporary society, it is also imagined by individuals in myriad ways – as necessity, as freedom, as escape, as independence, as choice, as change, as difference. The discourse on mobility and the social relations that operate in the family, the local, the national, supra-national and global perspective all contribute to personal understandings of mobility and intersect to form a unique imagination of mobility.

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5 A recent example of this is the French government’s expulsion of Roma populations from France, most of whom incidentally are from Central and Eastern Europe.
PRECONCEPTIONS OF A MOBILE LIFE

Poland’s accession to the EU undeniably changed the nature of mobility for many young people and improved access to mobility for many who had previously not imagined leaving Poland. However, as discussed previously, the mobility of Polish nationals has an historic trajectory and it is important to recognise that the aspiration for mobility is influenced by more than just the physical removal of borders. Many of my interviewees recalled memories of migration prior to 2004, whether as individuals or families. Some people’s parents and grandparents had been emigrants themselves; others had other family members living abroad. Personal histories of mobility gave an inherent self-confidence to Joanna who moved to Edinburgh in 2006 but has had many previous experiences of migration having lived in London, San Francisco and Finland. Also, Joanna’s mother lived in the USA during the 1970s before getting married and settling in Poland to bring up her children. Her mother’s emigration left a positive ‘impression’ of mobility on Joanna, and a less positive impression of being ‘stuck at home’.

“My mum got stuck at home after she got married and this was their life. So there was that kind of impression on me, I’d kind of like to be more free than my parents, it was awful I think for them not to be able to do what they wanted.” (Joanna, age 31, Edinburgh)

Joanna’s perception of mobility is associated with her mother’s pre-marriage experiences of mobility to the US and conversely immobility is bound to the experience of her parents being tied to home and a fixed place. Her aspiration to be ‘more free’ than her parents has led to a life of continual movement from place to place in order to experience the world and ‘work more internationally’. This idea of perpetual mobility as a lifestyle choice echoes Morokvasic’s (2004) research on the circular patterns of migration in Poland as ‘settled within mobility’.

Contrary to this, mobility was conceptualised as a ‘newly acquired freedom’ by those without prior access to mobility (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh). Many reflected on the barriers to mobility during the communist era and felt that their parents had shaped their aspirations in reaction to those barriers – exploration, travel and education were commonly held inter-generational values.

“Education was the door for better life but they didn’t know what it was... they never had this opportunity to go somewhere... if you wanted just to have a normal life and family it was good to...tame your aspirations” (Dorota, age 31, Edinburgh).
Maria moved to Edinburgh in 2005 and had previously lived and worked in Ireland, the Netherlands and Sri Lanka since leaving her parental home after University. She views parental encouragement as habitual and contributing to a feeling of confidence in travel.

“Your parents are always repeating ‘you are so lucky you have this passport and you can go wherever you want’ and if you hear this through your youth and have this passport and can go and see all your friends going somewhere, if I stay at home I would feel a bit like I didn’t use the opportunity given.” (Maria, age 31, Edinburgh).

However, the idea of mobility as freedom and opportunity was complicated by an additional layer of grandparents who encouraged the nurturing of family and community bonds over values of mobility and the aspiration for foreign travel. Many people had strong inter-generational relationships with grandparents due to their presence in the family home during childhood and the traditional structures of care in the household. As a result the values of mobility and independence from the family home were counterbalanced in many cases by a sense of family responsibility, a duty of care for ageing parents and elderly relatives and a longing for home. Kasia works in a residential care home in Edinburgh and compares the different structures of care in UK and Poland.

“I’m assuming that as soon as [my parents] retire they’re going to need help and I’m planning to help them. It’s normal in Poland. That’s the big difference for me and my work makes it possible to see in that in…[UK]…children aren’t so involved with their parents’ care” (Kasia, age 28, Edinburgh).

The duty of care for relatives was a commonly held value among young Poles, particularly young women. The expectation of family, community, church and country were cited as factors that instilled an implicit sense of family responsibility upon them. This was not viewed as an explicit obligation and few felt compelled to return to their family but rather would consider it a personal choice. This tension between the individual aspiration for a mobile life and the collective expectations of family and community in Poland has been a recurring feature of modern Polish migration. For example, in Mary Erdmans (1992) work on Polish migration to Chicago in the 1980s, she explores how emigration from Poland was ‘constructed as a moral issue’ and for some Poles, particularly activists of Solidarnosc, to leave Poland was viewed as betrayal by the political elites involved with the trade union

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6See Stenning (2010) for a discussion of care structures in Polish family life
and democratic opposition movement. In the narratives of post-accession migrants in Edinburgh, mobility is perceived less as a political desertion but rather a reneg of family duty. While it is clear that mobility is viewed as a youthful enterprise, an opportunity not to be missed and an aspirational value, for many the importance of family networks serves to balance the desire for perpetual geographical mobility.

EXPECTATIONS OF A NORMAL LIFE

In their research on the discourses of a ‘normal life’ among post-accession migrants from Poland living in the UK, Galasińska and Kozłowska (2009) argue that geographical mobility is frequently equated with seeking ‘normalcy’ in Polish (online) narratives of migration. Their assertion is that migrants view the UK as a place to achieve a ‘normal life’ as opposed to Poland. Similarly, in studies on post-communist transformation the aspiration for ‘normality’ is read as a rejection of the uncertainties and challenges of a transitory political climate and ‘re-constructed’ in association with the ‘solid ordinary comforts of northern Europe’ (Rausing, 2002 as cited in Galasińska and Kozłowska, 2009, p.87). From the research I conducted in Edinburgh it was in fact the expectations of ‘normal’ life in Poland that were a catalyst for emigration. Some expressed aspirations beyond what they considered to be a ‘traditional’ or ‘typical’ life in Poland and saw geographical mobility as the alternative.

“I was looking to change something. I wasn’t quite ready to do the other part of Polish traditional typical life which is finish Uni, find yourself a boy, get a house and all the marriage stuff... In Poland to be honest, it would have been my only alternative” (Maria, Edinburgh, age 31)

Here, mobility is viewed as an alternative to a traditional life in Poland – rather than settling down and getting married, mobility is perceived as something individual, different and emancipatory. For some of those living in Edinburgh, particularly graduates and those who described themselves as ‘cultural migrants’, mobility was perceived as a break from normal life, a search for difference and a celebration of uncertainty, echoing ‘cosmopolitan’ theories of migration. Tomek moved to London in 2001 for a short-term working holiday and is now living in Edinburgh and working as an architect. He describes a ‘need for movement’ and discovery of new places and people. For Tomek mobility is geographical – he sees the physical move away from Poland as offering tangible benefits in terms of its experiential effects – meeting new people, working in a ‘different’ place, seeing a new environment. He is less concerned with occupational mobility of this move
since he feels that if he had stayed in Poland he would be working at the same level and earning an equivalent wage.

“I know Poland, it’s time to go somewhere else, Poland will wait for me”
(Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh)

For others the mobility is less about cosmopolitanism and more about the search for a fairer chance. Narratives of disillusionment portrayed Poland as a place in which people experience limited opportunities, repressive and bureaucratic social structures and difficult, work-oriented everyday lives. For many, these factors are seen as directing a move away from home whereby the opportunities for upward social mobility lay outside of national borders. In many of the narratives people talked of life as a ‘struggle’ in Poland, compared to an ‘easier’ life in Scotland. Some felt that the hierarchies of work in Poland meant that personal contacts were still an important factor in being successful and thus unfair work practices were common. Ania moved to Edinburgh from Warsaw in 2007:

“Before I had decided to come here I made some attempts to change the job – you know like more exciting or more fulfilling for me but I felt it like impossible. I don’t know, they call it like a glass ceiling or something, I couldn’t jump, like, up” (Ania, aged 34, Edinburgh).

Representations of a highly competitive work environment, lack of work/life balance and limited options for sociability, of ‘people furiously struggling for jobs and competing’ were commonly held by those living in Edinburgh (Lucas, age 29, Edinburgh). Dawid returned to Poland after working in the UK for 6 months. He believes his migration experience in UK and previously in Canada offered an alternative vision of what his life could be like ‘somewhere else’.

“People here [in Poland] are quite...you know the expression ‘rattrace’, I think it’s kind of a big competition... I don’t really want to stay here...I want to start life somewhere else, in a country where it is more economically stable.”
(Dawid, aged 29, Krakow).

Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009) have explored the link between the availability of jobs in a local area and the propensity to migrate arguing that an over-supply of graduates is causing the out-migration of Poles from certain locales. Often, negative expressions about Poland came from those who grew up in particular locales, which were seen to be in structural decline and areas of high unemployment. Konrad grew up in Radom but has lived in Warsaw and Edinburgh since then in
an attempt to leave a city he perceives as ‘dying’. He now lives in Edinburgh, he runs a small business and says he has no aspiration to return to Poland.

“There’s nothing going on at all. At 6pm the city is dying and no-one is on the streets. I would say right now all the young people moved out from that city... no jobs... it’s a hole on the map. There is opportunities of work in the supermarkets, all the big companies closed and moved out somewhere else” (Konrad, Edinburgh)

While the socio-economics of local labour markets and the expectations of a life of ‘struggle’ played a key role in influencing motives for geographical mobility, many people narrated their motives for migration to the UK as non-economic, remarking that they are not ‘the typical migrant’. The social and cultural gains viewed as integral to mobility were central to their biography. Helena moved to the UK in 2006 from Łódź in order to move away from the family home and ‘lose [her] inhibitions’

“I never thought of coming here just to earn money. I wanted to make a home, my own home...my vision of Poland is...if you’re trapped in a job you never get enough money, you never get enough time to do stuff that you love to do. It’s only work” (Helena, age 28, Edinburgh)

The independence gained through her experience of mobility is a significant step for Helena – she does not imagine returning to Poland as it is, for her, associated with dependence on family structures and a life dominated by work. She too views mobility as an alternative life.

IMAGINING RETURN

In general, most people felt that geographical mobility in some way leads to a chance to improve their lives, in economic, social and cultural terms, but this was most often conceptualised as a move away from Poland and towards something else. Thus, many people living in Edinburgh imagined a return to Poland as a ‘backwards step’ leading to downward social mobility, not only in terms of economics but also cultural issues, such as having independence from family structures and renting or owning their own flat. Olga came to Scotland in 2005 with her partner, Paweł, with the intention of working for a short time in order to save for their wedding. They have been living in Kirkcaldy ever since and working in a range of low wage work and more recently higher waged work. Now, Paweł works as a mechanic, Olga works in a recruitment agency and they own a flat in Kirkcaldy.
“We could go to Poland and do the student life but being realistic I have seen the opportunities here and I can compare them with the ones in Poland and if I would go to Poland I would never have what I have here” (Olga, aged 25, Kirkcaldy)

Dorota moved to Edinburgh in 2005 to move closer to her Spanish partner. She feels a move back to Poland would be a step backwards because she thinks her work experience in the UK could not be easily transferred to the Polish labour market and she feels a sense of pride prevents her from returning to Poland and starting a career path from ‘zero’:

“I don’t want to go back and start from zero. I can go to any other country and start from zero but I’m not going to my own country to start from zero” (Dorota, aged 31, Edinburgh).

These narratives reflect the feeling of uncertainty felt by many who had made conclusions about the lack of labour market opportunities in the Poland compared to the UK. Many of these conclusions were based on memories of a deteriorating economic climate, restrictive work practices and an insecure political system. Some lacked the social networks in Poland to develop knowledge of potential opportunities and some were cynical about state efforts to encourage return. However, not everyone felt that a move back to Poland would signal downward mobility. Some felt that the economic prospects in Poland are on the rise. Particularly among those who had returned many felt that although in real terms the wages are lower than in the UK the opportunities for personal and professional development do exist and are getting better. Emilia moved back to her home town, Bytom, in 2009 after living in Edinburgh for one year while finishing her studies. She now lives with her parents and works in Katowice as an accountant. She sees this stage in her life as a transition from studying to work, viewing more ‘sensible’ opportunities for graduates in her home town of Katowice than in the more competitive city of Krakow or abroad.

“It’s getting better. Maybe the jobs aren’t….for people who don’t have much experience the jobs aren’t very attractive but if you want to find a job, they are there” (Emilia, aged 25, Katowice).

Weronika moved back to Krakow in 2009 after spending 3 years living in Dublin with her boyfriend. He remains in Dublin while she has returned to ‘try’ to make a life in Poland for them both.
“I always wanted to come back – I missed my life, my family here and I still have lots of friends here...I’ve worked in Ireland, in the States, in Spain but I’ve never worked in Poland so how can I say there is nothing to do in Poland when I never tried. So that’s why I came back – to try” (Weronika, aged 25, Krakow)

Weronika reflected that she always planned to come back and her optimism upon return signals a sense of relief and happiness at being close to family and friends. This initial feeling of optimism or ‘urlop pomigracyjny’ is remarked to be a common emotion during the first stages of return migration (Centrum Doradztwa Strategicznego, 2010). For some, this optimism shifts at a later stage towards anxiety and stress due to the practical issues of finding work or starting up a business or family, particularly if the return was unplanned or individuals are ill-prepared for the re-integration into the Polish labour market, and wider society. For Weronika though, the move back to Poland was a perceived success, expressed most emphatically through her desire for closer proximity to family and friends.

DISCUSSING EU MOBILITY

Poland’s accession to the EU was viewed by most as providing more opportunities for Poles to engage in geographical mobility with greater ‘ease’ and most people were in agreement that this lead to a number of significant and unique benefits.

“We can move to another country and when I think of going to another country I think of an opportunity to develop yourself, your skills and not only connected with foreign languages but also with some very precious experience that you wouldn’t be able to get while moving from one city to another within Poland” (Emilia, age 25, Katowice).

Emilia contends that the EU affords more opportunities to individuals to be mobile, and her perception is that exploiting this mobility through foreign travel is a wholly positive experience. Overwhelmingly the young people I spoke with were optimistic about Poland’s accession to the EU, both in terms of the opportunity for geographical and social mobility – through fewer limitations for working and living abroad, and through the improvements in living standards and economic prosperity of Poland.

“The EU gave Poles lots of opportunities I think and that was a very positive change and I guess that’s also why the economic[al] situation improved” (Bartek, age 33, Krakow)
This optimism was balanced with reproach by some who perceived the EU as a negative force responsible for a decline in the social fabric of Poland due to a growth in consumerism, competitiveness and greed. Nostalgic reflections on the ‘lack of options’ available during communist times somehow making life ‘simpler’ were backed up with the denigration of the over stimulating yet addictive public culture of consumption that was observed, by some, in contemporary Polish society. Some lamented the wider injustices of contemporary society through nostalgic reflections on life during socialism.

“We were trapped to be the same and people didn’t like it, but everybody had the same flat which is good because at the end of the day you had a flat, you had your own family – ok one orange per family per year but you still had the orange and just now you have families who have five oranges and the other ones who will never get one – and apparently now it’s better?” (Olga, age 25, Kirkcaldy)

Some expressed critiques of mobility itself. Although positive about her personal migration experience in Edinburgh, Maria reflects on the nature of perpetual mobility in the EU.

“Mobility gives you a lot but takes a lot for you. The whole chances of going to every country and seeing everything – It de-roots you…this freedom of choices is making that, I’m not happy here, I’ll move; I’m not happy here, I’ll …you didn’t have choice in Poland…in the block of flats – that’s your neighbour you have no choice, you don’t move because you can’t move because there’s no moving ideas in your head, so you had to deal with what you had and make the best out of it. I learnt to have the choice of moving, in Britain for travelling but I have to say, every time I moved I am loosing something” (Maria, age 31, Edinburgh)

Echoes of post-communist nostalgia (Todorova and Gille, 2010) reflect here a paradox of mobility – while the promise of geographical mobility is ‘a newly acquired freedom’ in many ways, the obligation to choose is often overwhelming (Rose, 1998). Making sense of the choices for mobility in the context of seeking a better and happier life is the key challenge for Maria and for her there is some merit in staying in one place – there is a sense of gaining more through staying put and working through the everyday struggles.

Mobility was viewed as a rite of passage among young Polish people and many felt worried about the decline in work opportunities in an increasingly...
competitive labour market within which there is no shortage of qualified mobile people. Dorota felt that geographical mobility has become so common among young people in the EU that it makes little difference to social mobility.

“Most people have experiences abroad working or doing different things so you’re really nobody special cos there’s so many like you that can do the job – it’s kind of scary... sometimes this mobility is a bit pointless...why the need to travel, you know – it doesn’t work for everybody I guess” (Dorota, age 31, Edinburgh)

Geographical mobility has the potential to maximise opportunity for economic and social benefit for some but, as discussed, the degree of social mobility experienced by many people living and working across EU borders is often impeded by lack of rights and restricted access to resources and information (Stenning, 2005). For many the realities of deskilling and under-employment, of insecure and temporary housing, language challenges and the wider ramifications of distance from family led to a less positive reading of geographical mobility. Wanda moved to Edinburgh from Bialystok in 2005 with her partner, Grzegorz, and two of their eight children. Although she sees opportunities to make enough money ‘for a life’ in Scotland she feels the competition for jobs is becoming fiercer and those, like herself, without good English language skills are struggling most. The opportunities for social mobility in Wanda’s circumstances have been highly constrained by the experience of precarious work, resulting in below minimum wage earnings and lack of representation at work. Grzegorz is unable to work since he had a serious accident at work (in Edinburgh). Wanda is now the sole earner on a part-time low wage, which she feels has implications for the future mobility prospects of her children. However, she maintains that despite this it is ‘not possible’ to return to Poland because ‘if people find a job here, it’s a simple job on minimum wages and there is enough wages for a life, but not in Poland’ (Wanda, age 35, Edinburgh). For Wanda and Grzegorz emigration was viewed as necessary for a better life and any underlying longing for a return home was suppressed with a belief in the lack of choice in that decision, particularly in relation to advancing the opportunities for their 8 children, five of whom are studying or working in Poland and three at school in Scotland.

Some of those who had returned to Poland expressed reservations about the possibility of making a life permanently in the UK expressing the ‘threats’ associated with EU mobility.

“It’s a big opportunity but on the other hand it’s also some threat because the people who either have no opportunities here in Poland...are going there
and doing hard jobs and in my opinion they have no life there...Maybe here they have less money but they will be with their families” (Szymon, age 33, Krakow)

The sacrifice of family was viewed by many, particularly those who had returned to Poland, as a key challenge associated with EU mobility. In a recent Eurobarometer survey7 (2010) it was reported that the majority of Europeans think moving countries is good for European integration, but only one third think it is good for families. The idea of family as antithetic to geographical mobility implies that a mobile livelihood is still perceived by most Europeans to be a non-stable, anti-local phenomenon. It goes against the idea of fluid and hyper-mobile lives, opting instead for the family as a source of security and comfort. However, returning to the previous example of Wanda and Grzegorz, their experience of mobility is bound to the notion of family, providing for and advancing the opportunities for their own family through mobility since they perceive the alternative, sedentary life in Poland as fruitless. The importance of family within the context of mobility was central to many narratives, particularly the assertion that friends and community networks were in many ways taking the role of family. Whether real or imagined, family, friendships and community networks are a source of stability in the context of mobile livelihoods too (Pahl, 2000), echoing notions of transnational communities and transnational families (Smith and Guarnizo, 1998; Vertovec and Cohen, 1999), and the idea that family and mobility are not mutually exclusive categories.

Mobility has been presented throughout this section as opportunity and as threat. Many people see it as both, suggesting that mobile livelihoods can be viewed as a mark of progress and extending choice, whilst simultaneously dislocating from the known, the expected and the secure. Mobility involves risk, uncertainty and choice in varying degrees. In many of the narratives freedom of choice is conceptualised through the discourse of the changing nature of post-socialism – from the repressive structures of state socialism where choice was not an option to a free European space with abundant opportunities to choose a mobile life, or alternatively from a simple and equitable life under socialism to a complicated, uncertain and transient existence under neo-liberalism. This is an incomplete reading of post-socialist transformation in Poland yet features, often nostalgically, in the memories and explanations of personal migration histories. Mobility did not suddenly occur as an idea or an opportunity in 2004. The experience of mobility (and immobility) before 2004 – whether on family holidays, individual

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7 Eurobarometer 337
travel experiences, seasonal work or transnational business – shapes subsequent experiences and influences decisions for mobility. Burawoy and Verdery (1999) claim that ‘the past frames the present, imbuing it with distinctive meaning’, so in studying the paths of mobile people it is important to understand these historical trajectories of their migration journeys. Through the lens of a hyper global mobility, these meanings are often lost and the choices and decisions of migrants themselves are often ignored. A more nuanced and contextual analysis is needed to understand the motivations, aspirations and experiences of young Polish people from their household boundaries, to their notion of the Polish state, the UK state and the EU.

CONCLUSION

The discourse on mobility has developed over the past century towards a more general agreement of the idea that we live in a mobile world. In the social sciences, metaphors of the nomad, the vagabond, of flux and liquidity are ever present in literature describing the mobile world (Berman, 1988; Bauman, 2000; Deleuze and Guattari, 1986) and as we have seen new academic work on mobilities has reinvigorated the subject (Urry and Sheller, 2000; Cresswell, 2006). It is clear that technological developments and political conditions have contributed to more mobility for more people in the Twenty First Century, yet it is confounded by pre-existing and new hierarchies of power that require some to remain immobile. As Urry (2000) maintains ‘social inequalities are often spatial, resulting from hugely uneven forms of access to, or the effects of, various kinds of mobility’ (Urry, 2000:195).

Drawing from the narratives, EU mobility represents a beacon for those who see limited opportunities for work and ‘a life’ in Poland and for many moving forward is a move abroad. Mobility is perceived as the enterprise of youth and an alternative to a traditional, sedentary existence, but also as a search for a fairer chance. Family, community, church and country continue to influence migration strategies including that of return and the desire for geographical mobility is counterbalanced by home and family commitments which are often located and rooted in a specific place surrounded by specific people. The opportunity to be mobile in Europe, and in the world, is of symbolic importance to young people, transpiring from past or inter-generational experience and values, but the material inequalities of de-skilling, ‘brain waste’ and precarious work are just some examples of the uncertain transitions of both emigration and return. Perpetual mobility is less appealing then, if de-rooting form one place leads to a backwards step in another. For many, the risks outweigh the opportunities.
Youth affords choice and wealth affords more choice. The economic rationale of EU mobility targets working-age young people while older people, particularly those of non-working age, are assumed to be content to stay in one place. Though it is undeniable that EU accession has enabled many more Poles to live and work abroad, the differential access to resources for mobility and the discursive construct of good and bad mobility continues to reinforce stark inequalities among young and older Poles. Balancing individual stories with a discursive reading of the ‘politics of mobility’ (Cresswell, 2010) is therefore integral to uncovering the way in which underlying processes and structures ascribe and shape values for mobility among young Polish people.

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A QUESTION OF CLASS? POLISH GRADUATES WORKING IN LOW-SKILLED JOBS IN LONDON

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, there has been a growing trend of (temporary?) emigration of young, university-educated Poles. This phenomenon may be ascribed to the deep economic, political and social changes taking place in Poland after the fall of the Communist system in 1989 which resulted inter alia in an unprecedented educational boom and a simultaneous rapid increase in unemployment levels, particularly among young people (Fihel et al. 2008a). At the same time, the opening of borders entailed a growing popularity of foreign travel and international migrations. Under the circumstances, many graduates of Polish higher education institutions decided to seek work abroad and while the United Kingdom had become one of their favourite destinations already in the 1990s, it had gained even more popularity upon Poland’s European Union accession in May 2004. Nevertheless, even though the UK has for years particularly attracted educated migrants from Poland (Fihel et al. 2008, Grabowska-Lusińska and Okólski 2009: 112), the definite majority of Poles working there are employed considerably below their qualifications level, typically carrying out elementary occupations regardless of their educational attainment (Drinkwater et al. 2006: 18).

University graduates are persons of high cultural capital1 (c.f. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In Poland they are attributed a certain degree of prestige, if only due to their achieved level of education (Domański 1999: 86). Having a higher degree ‘allows’ them to apply for positions ascribed with fairly high social status in their home country (Domański and Mach 2008: 283), yet due to the difficult situation in the Polish labour market graduates often find such positions are not attainable in practice. Moreover, the level of earnings in Poland, even when carrying out higher status jobs, is often too low to secure an independent living. The decision to migrate to the United Kingdom, in turn, is usually bound with a ‘cost’ in the

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1 Cultural capital as defined by Pierre Bourdieu refers to the agent’s knowledge, skills, competencies and predispositions that enable them to partake in social reality and understand the surrounding world (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).
form of undertaking work decidedly below their level of qualifications. Though this phenomenon has by now been widely acknowledged (Anderson et. al. 2006, Drinkwater et. al. 2006, Currie 2007, Pollard et. al. 2008, Home Office 2009), the problem of overeducation of the ‘new’ Polish migrants to the UK has been framed predominantly in terms of issues of brain drain, brain overflow and/or brain waste (Kaczmarczyk and Okolski 2005, Kaczmarczyk 2006) while little attention has been given to the social aspects of this situation, including the issue of class.

In migration research, class per se is rarely applied as an analytical category. Rather, analyses tend to focus on more clear-cut and broader categories such as ethnicity, race or gender (Bottomley 1998). Literatures on integration do touch upon the problem of class, though indirectly, under the heading of economic, social or cultural integration (c.f. Biernath 2008). Moreover, the problem of class is more readily addressed in studies of well-established immigrant groups while newcomers are typically analysed in their entirety as national groups, even if they are in fact a highly heterogeneous community (as is the case with the ‘new’ Polish migration to the UK). I believe that for highly educated migrants working in low-skilled jobs class is an issue which is not so much voiced or analysed, as experienced and felt. Hence, in this paper I shall consider the complexity of the social standing of these migrants in view of ‘objective’ factors on the one hand, and their own subjective perceptions on the other. How do they see their working environment? How do the graduates view their class position in relation to their occupational and social standing in the UK? These are the questions I would like to attempt to answer here.

This paper consists of three parts. Firstly, some basic information about the study the analysis is based on will be provided. In the second part, the issue of class and status will be analysed. I shall start from a brief discussion of the problem of the intelligentsia. Next, I will look at the traditional sociological indicators of status and try to apply them in the context of social positioning of the graduates in both the sending and receiving society. In the third part I will discuss the interdependence between work roles and class identity, and see how the situation of migration and working in low-status jobs affects the graduates’ perception of their own class belonging.

THE STUDY

The analysis presented here is based on a qualitative case study carried out on highly educated migrants working in the secondary sector of the London
economy. Since the aim of the study was to consider the individual perspective of the migrants, the methodology adopted was based on Florian Znaniecki’s concept of the ‘humanistic coefficient’ (1922) as well as elements of grounded theory (Konecki 2000), as given hypotheses were not formed prior to the research but in the course of gathering empirical material. Qualitative research techniques were applied: semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observation.

The target group were graduates of Polish higher education institutions aged 25-35, who had been living in London for at least twelve months and were or had previously been working in the secondary sector of the UK economy for the same minimum period of time. Only persons in the ‘mating’ stage of life were considered, i.e. single and with no dependants (Giza-Poleszczuk 2000: 62). It was assumed that such persons would take migration decisions in a highly independent manner, i.e. not within a family context but for individual reasons (c.f. Düvell 2004: 7).

The research in London was carried out in two rounds over a period of over three years: the first round in Summer 2004 and the second in Winter 2007/8. Altogether 42 interviews were conducted with 28 migrants, of which 21 interviews were completed in 2004 and another 21 between December 2007 and February 2009 (19 in Winter 2007/8 in London and two in Poland with return migrants, one in October 2008 and one in February 2009). The research included a panel sample of 14 respondents who took part in both rounds.

During the first round of research 21 respondents were interviewed, thirteen women and eight men, aged between 25 and 33. The majority had master’s degrees, one person had a bachelor’s degree and one had not formally finished her studies (she had a certificate of completion but no degree). All were graduates of accredited Polish institutions of higher education, and had graduated between 1996 and 2002. Out of the 21 graduates, thirteen had majored in Arts and Humanities (Psychology, Political Science, History, Language Studies, Philosophy, Library Studies), seven in the Sciences (Environmental Studies, Nutrition Studies, Biology, Engineering, IT) and one person in Business Studies. Roughly half of the respondents had one to three years’ experience of full-time work in Poland (10 out of 21), the others had no professional experience in their home country (though some had done odd jobs), and had migrated to London directly upon finishing their studies.

The respondents interviewed in 2004 had migrated to London between 1998 and 2003, and had been staying there for a period of between one and eight

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3 According to Giza-Poleszczuk (2000: 62), the ‘mating’ stage encourages such decisions as migration, as it is characterised by a low level of family obligations on the one hand (no children), and greater flexibility and inclination to take on risks on the other, yet at the same time accompanied by strong pressure to achieve professional and financial success.
years. At the time of being interviewed, thirteen were still carrying out such work (working in catering, construction, as shop assistants or doing domestic work), while seven were doing lower- or middle-level white-collar work (receptionist, internet content administrator, psychiatric nurse, reflexologist, engineer, journalist, secretary), and one was working according to his qualifications (IT specialist).

During the second round of research, fourteen of the earlier respondents were interviewed, and an additional small-scale sample of one pre-accession and six post-accession migrants was drawn, consisting of four women and three men aged between 25 and 33. The post-accession sample included four persons with master’s degrees (three full-time MAs, two in History, one in Sociology, and one part-time MA in Law and Administration), and three with bachelor’s degrees who had completed part-time studies (one in Sociology, one in Marketing and Management, and one in Automatics).

The post-accession migrants had been in London for a period of between one and three-plus years. At the time of being interviewed, two were doing menial jobs (renovation worker, waitress), and four were employed in lower-level white-collar jobs (customer assistant in a bank, receptionist, supervisor in a hotel, archivist).

The main motives for migrating in the case of the studied group were the situation on the Polish labour market (poor prospects of finding satisfactory work and low earnings) coupled with a desire to improve language skills (these two motives being predominant among pre-accession migrants). Other popular motives were searching for new opportunities and/or higher earnings (especially

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4 It must be here underlined that the participants of the first round of research had migrated to the UK prior to Poland’s EU accession, i.e. at a time when the institutional conditions in the UK were highly unfavourable for Polish migrants. The majority of the pre-accession migrants had entered the UK as either ‘false tourists’ or on a student visa; in consequence, the former were not entitled to work in the UK at all, while the latter were permitted part-time employment only (up to 20 hours per week). In consequence, taking up full time employment was in breach of the visa entitlements, the pre-accession migrants would commonly seek work in the secondary sector of the economy (Piore 1979), where their illegal or semi-legal status was tolerated. The institutional conditions were thus one of the major macro-level factors impacting on the graduates’ position in the British labour market. For a detailed discussion on this issue, please refer to Trevena (forthcoming). For an analysis of the impact of the experience of working below one’s level of qualifications on the identity and well-being of educated migrants see Trevena 2010a

5 Which is an IT specialist who had only done physical work during two summer holidays in the UK. Though he does not fulfil the ‘12 months of working below one’s qualifications level’ criterion, his case had been included in the study for comparative reasons. However, he will be excluded from the analysis presented in this paper, and therefore I will later be referring to 27 (and not 28) cases.

6 The fact that so many respondents within this sample have completed part-time studies can be treated as a sign of the times: almost 68% of the increase in the number of students, from 404,000 in 1990 to 1,584,000 in 2001 was constituted by part-time students, while only 32% by full-time students, marking a new and reverse trend in higher education in Poland (Kabaj 2002: 30).
true for post-accession migrants), the need for change and adventure, and finally personal reasons, such as running away from a relationship.

THE NEW INTELLIGENTSIA?

Before moving to a discussion of the graduates’ position in the social stratification systems of the sending and receiving country, I would like to touch upon a concept I will be referring to in the forthcoming discussion, namely that of the intelligentsia.

The fact that, as earlier mentioned, university graduates enjoy a certain degree of prestige in Poland, if only due to their level of education per se (Domański 1999: 86), may arguably be seen as a legacy of the strong intelligentsia tradition in Polish culture. The term ‘intelligentsia’ is a long-standing one in Polish sociological thought spanning a period of around 150 years, yet its precise definition, as well as the very existence of this social class, has been repeatedly debated (c.f. Domański and Mach 2008, Chojnowski and Palska 2008, Gawin 2008, Snopek 2008, Suchocka 2007). Traditionally, an intelligentsia status has been associated with having higher educational qualifications yet also fulfilling certain roles in the society. Historically, the intelligentsia came into being in the nineteenth century, which was a time of great political turmoil as the Polish state was under partition.7 Under the circumstances, the fight for preserving the nation was dependent on charismatic leaders, and such was the role to be fulfilled by the intelligentsia, originally defined as:

‘Those who have received a versatile and careful education at institutions of higher education and lead the nation as scientists, civil servants, teachers, clergymen, industrialists, who lead the nation for the reason of their higher enlightenment.’

Karol Libelt (1844; 1967:61)

Therefore, education, patriotism and carrying out a ‘social mission’ by taking on leadership were seen as the major constituents of the ‘intelligentsia ethos’ at the time. Significantly, financial status had no bearing on belonging to the

7 Stein Rokkan (1974) and Józef Chałasiński (1946) (both cited in Chojnowski and Palska 2008: 25) have argued that the very origination of the intelligentsia was simply a consequence of failed systemic (economic and political) reforms in Poland: on the one hand the economy was not able to absorb all well-educated individuals, on the other the failure of the nation state (which was under partition at the time) and political turmoil resulted in the degradation of the gentry and ‘knocking them off their perch’.
intelligentsia, and the class included both high and low earners\(^8\) (Chojnowski and Palska 2008).

Subsequently, with the historical changes the state was undergoing, the concept and role, and in consequence the defining factors of the intelligentsia would also be changing. In modern sociological theory, ‘intelligentsia’ remains a highly elusive term (Palska 1994: 16-17), and one heatedly debated in view of the rapid changes brought about by the introduction of democracy and a free market economy after 1989. It has been argued that:

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\text{The intelligentsia (...) understood as a group of people of high cultural capital, characterised by a particular ethos of national mission does not exist (...). The remains of this stratum have divulged into so-called people’s intelligentsia, meaning the category of ‘educees’ [wykształcenie]. Similarly as in other countries there are intellectuals\(^9\) in Poland, their role, however, seems to be currently decreasing.}
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Bohdan Jałowiecki (2000: 97)

Although opinions as to the validity of this thesis vary widely, there is common agreement that the new conditions in Poland – marked by a massive increase of university graduates over the last twenty years\(^10\) and a rapid change in the structure and needs of the labour market – have significantly impacted on the current standing and perceptions of the intelligentsia. Therefore, ascribing intelligentsia status is nowadays a rather complex issue. While more structurally orientated scholars argue that it is possible to ascertain it on the basis of objective factors, such as education, occupational position, and income (Domański and Mach 2008), others contend that in present times it is rather ‘soft’ factors such as self-identity, habitus, or cultural participation that should be seen as indicators of belonging to the intelligentsia (Suchocka 2007).

In this paper, I shall however leave aside these theoretical arguments relating to the issue of the intelligentsia; these refer to the particular context of the Polish society yet not the British one. Instead, I shall attempt to analyse the issue of

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\(^8\) This disassociation of social prestige and financial status has arguably remained a feature of the intelligentsia up to the present, yet definitely throughout the Communist period (Domański 1999: 85-93). Domański (1999) has even argued that if the Polish intelligentsia had been able to achieve the higher financial status it had been inspiring towards during the Communist period, it would have in consequence transformed into the middle class, as known in Western societies.

\(^9\) A linguistic note: the meaning of the word ‘intellectual’ in English is equivalent to the Polish term ‘inteligent’.

\(^10\) Over the years 1990-2001, the number of higher education institutions increased from 112 to 310, and the number of students from 404,00 to 1,584,000 (Kabaj 2002:30). Currently, there are almost 2,000,000 students in Poland (GUS 2008).
migration and class looking at ‘both ends’ of the migration experience by comparing ‘objective factors’ vs. perceptions of own status.

HIGHLY-EDUCATED MIGRANTS IN LOW-SKILLED JOBS

Apparently, the situation where highly-educated migrants carry out low-skilled work is a case of downward mobility. As mentioned before, university graduates enjoy a certain degree of prestige in Poland (Domański 1999: 86) where their cultural capital allows them to apply for positions ascribed with fairly high social status (though this might not be reflected in the level of earnings) (Domański and Mach 2008: 283). In the receiving country, on the other hand, the situation of the studied group of graduates is directly opposite: their educational credentials are typically not recognized and hence lower level positions are accessible to them rather than higher ones. By taking on such positions, the graduates locate themselves in the lower echelons of the British labour market and, consequently, also in the British society. Yet may we conclusively state that the graduates’ experience indeed presents a fall in social status? In order to ascertain how international mobility has affected the status of educated migrants from Poland, we should analyse their position both prior to migration, i.e. in the sending country as well as in the receiving country.

The graduates’ status within the sending society

In empirical (survey) research on social stratification, three major factors are differentiated as indicators of status: occupation, level of education and level of income (Domański 2004: 149). However, determining the social position of the researched group of graduates according to these indicators proves to be problematic.

In terms of their occupational position in the home country upon graduation, we can differentiate three groups within the sample: those working in graduate positions (6 out of 27), those working below their level of qualifications (4/27), and those who had not at all entered the labour market (17/27). This last group includes both persons who attempted to look for work in the home country but could not find a satisfactory position (3/17), as well as persons who had not at all looked for work but had decided to migrate directly upon graduation (14/17). Therefore, considering the occupations of the graduates in the home country, we

could only ascribe a small minority (6/27) to the intelligentsia\(^{12}\) (with a certain reservation, however, as to the break in continuity of employment, as three out of six persons within this group had lost their positions prior to migrating). The remaining sub-group of graduates who had been working in Poland could be classified as lower-grade white-collar workers\(^ {13}\) or low-skilled or non-skilled workers\(^ {14}\) (c.f. Goldthorpe 1987, Domański 2007). Still, the definite majority of graduates within the group researched (17/27) had not worked prior to migration, and hence in fact had no occupational status in Poland. Therefore, in their case we cannot use occupation as an indicator of their social status.\(^ {15}\)

The next indicator, level of earnings, seems to complicate the picture further rather than clarify it. As has been mentioned above, the majority of graduates within the group researched had not entered the national labour market after finishing their studies, and hence was not earning in their home country. Thus, similarly as in the case of occupation, we cannot relate to income as an indicator of their social status. Furthermore, the group of migrants who had been working in Poland prior to migration had relatively low earnings, insufficient to maintain themselves independently. Therefore, according to their level of earnings they would be located in lower rather than higher social positions.

The one single indicator which we can apply to the whole group under research is the level of education: all respondents had completed tertiary education. As mentioned earlier, having a higher education diploma constitutes a ‘pass’ to ‘intelligentsia occupations’\(^ {16}\) and higher level positions in the labour market. However, the reality of the national labour market places a great number of Polish graduates in a rather unfavourable situation; the educational boom of the 1990s resulted in a surplus of persons with tertiary level education and furthermore entailed a devaluation of diplomas as the result of the sharp increase in student numbers on the one hand, and the fall in quality of education on the other. In consequence, securing higher education credentials nowadays does not, as in the beginning of the ‘golden nineties’, guarantee receiving a ‘good’ position (c.f. Łukasiuk 2007: 318-322). Therefore, as Domański and Mach (2008: 281) have noted, there has been a considerable outflow of Poles with higher education credentials to ‘non-graduate’ occupations within the last decade. Sociologists

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12 These were positions such as teacher, journalist, and editor.
13 E.g. real estate agent, assistant secretary.
14 E.g. waiter, shop assistant.
15 The problem of ascribing occupation to people who are not in employment at the time of being interviewed is a largely conceptual one: depending on the aims of the research it is solved in various ways. However, in the cases described above typically no occupational status would be ascribed and they would be classified as ‘not studying and not working’ (c.f. Domański, Sawiński and Stomczyński 2007: 38-41).
16 Domański and Mach (2008) use the terms ‘intelligentsia occupations’ or ‘intelligentsia positions’ as basically equivalent to ‘professional occupations/positions’.
(c.f. Domaniński and Mach 2008, Palska 2008) and the media alike (e.g. ‘Wprost’, February 2008) draw attention to the significance of the phenomenon of diploma devaluation, which is especially true for part-time studies and/or studies at (many) private institutions of higher education. We may thus conclude that in the times of educational boom, when gaining higher education has become rather widespread while its quality is often questioned, possessing a university diploma alone is a more and more arguable source of prestige. Hence, the sheer fact of having higher education can no longer be treated as an indicator of belonging to the intelligentsia; as Henryk Domaniński (2000: 60) argues, in present times it is work roles that are crucial in ascribing status.

Considering all the above, the problem of ascertaining the social status of the graduates within the sending society arises. In the case of the overwhelming majority who had not entered the Polish labour market prior to migration, we cannot refer to two of the crucial indicators, namely occupational position and level of earnings. On the other hand, the group of graduates who had worked before leaving Poland was located at the lower level of the income ladder, even if their occupational position was fairly high. As follows, it is difficult to ascribe status to the graduates within their home society, at least according to the categories traditionally used in ‘objective’ (survey) research (Domaniński 2007: 39). Concluding, the position of the graduates within the stratification system of the sending society was a highly ambiguous one.

**The graduates’ status within the receiving society**

The status of the graduates within the receiving society seems much more clear-cut. Upon migration, the graduates would start their ‘professional careers’ from the most accessible positions, i.e. low-skilled jobs in the hotel and catering sector (waiter/waitress, barperson), construction sector (builder’s help), services sector (shop assistant) or carrying out domestic work (cleaning, taking care of children). Therefore, as they were carrying out simple, menial jobs, the graduates would take the lowest positions on the occupational ladder in the British labour market.

As to their level of earnings, this is also – from the point of view of the receiving society – low. As one of the interviewees observed:

*We [Polish migrants] are living at a totally different level, at a different standard [than the host society]. We don’t buy as much as they [the British] do, we don’t throw away as much as they do. And that’s why it’s easier for us to live here. But if we switched to their way of thinking, it would appear that we can’t afford anything.*

Therefore, their low level of earnings classifies the educated migrants at the lowest level within the social stratification system of the receiving society.

The educational credentials of the graduates would typically appear non-transferable to the British context. Polish diplomas are generally not recognised by British employers nor are they regarded as credible (Currie 2007). Moreover, it should be underlined that the possibility of making use of one’s diploma in another country is largely dependent on having good knowledge of the target language. Meanwhile, almost half of the sample had no more than rudimentary language skills upon arrival (13/27). Therefore, the fact that the migrants had higher education levels had no impact on their labour market position in the UK, and in consequence, no impact on their social status within the host society.

Within the British society, Polish graduates who have low occupational positions and low earnings, also take low social positions. Despite their high educational attainment, their credentials are difficult to make use of in the receiving country: as they are generally not recognised, they are also not valued by members of the host society. Therefore, we may conclude that the graduates locate themselves in the lowest echelons of the British society.

**Downward mobility?**

In the above section the position of the graduates has been considered from the angle of indicators of status used in quantitative sociological research. According to these, as far as the graduates’ position within the structure of the Polish society was rather ambiguous, by carrying out low-skilled and low-paid jobs in Britain they undoubtedly take positions at the bottom of the social ladder. Can we consider this phenomenon simply as a case of social downgrading, however? The issue is not as obvious as it may seem.

Though having higher education credentials allows the graduates to apply for higher positions in the Polish labour market, as earlier mentioned, the majority of the study participants were facing the problem of finding satisfactory work in Poland or even any work at all. One of the major reasons behind their migration was the situation in the home country’s labour market, commonly perceived as difficult (particular conditions faced by given interviewees being dependent on the situation within their local labour markets). A respondent who graduated in 1998 recollected her position in the following way:

*Life after graduation was a big disappointment to me. My first job right after finishing my studies was working in a curtains’ shop. That was really depressing. Then I moved into the real estate branch which I found so boring*
that I had had enough. Looking for work was... At that time when you opened the paper there were no offers for biologists.

Łucja (2004)

Six years onwards, the situation in the home labour market was equally bad:

I was depressed with the situation with work. In 2004 things were quite difficult. My friends who had finished full-time studies had enormous problems with entering the labour market. At the time one could find work only through having the right contacts.

Jagna (2007/8)

Another problem, mentioned by those graduates who had been working in Poland prior to migration, was their poor financial standing. As Grażyna, who had a rather high and responsible position as editor in a health magazine recalled:

I couldn’t put up with this any more in Poland (...). Honestly, I couldn’t stand the fact that despite that I was working I wasn’t able to rent a place unless I would devote my whole salary to making ends meet. And I decided I don’t want to live this way.


Meanwhile, the financial situation of the graduates in Poland stands in sharp contrast with how they are living in Britain. Though their earnings are rather low by the standards of the receiving society, they are sufficient in the eyes of the graduates who underline they earn enough to maintain themselves and cater for their own needs:

Living here [in London] and paying for everything you can still afford more. You can afford to go out, to buy yourself something, to go on holidays, to attend some course or something. The standard of living is higher here.

Hanna (2004)

As can be concluded from the above quote, the level of earnings received from carrying out low-skilled jobs is sufficient for the graduates to maintain themselves independently (providing they live in shared accommodation, however) and allows them to lead the lifestyle they could not afford in Poland, making use of culture (theatre, cinema, exhibitions), entertainment (clubbing, pubs, restaurants) as well as going travelling. Hence, it should be underlined that the educated migrants share a feeling of economic advancement.
Still, despite this subjective feeling of ‘wealth’, according to the ‘objective’ indicators of social status university graduates carrying out low-skilled jobs take low occupational and economic positions in the receiving country, and hence also have low social status. However, relating the social status of the migrants to that they had in their home country, their overall situation may be considered as a case of ‘contradictory class mobility’ (c.f. Parre 2001, Currie 2007) rather than simply downward mobility.

WORK ROLES AND CLASS IDENTITY

As demonstrated in the discussion above, in view of ‘objective’ indicators of class, the status of the graduates is highly ambiguous. This ambiguity relates to both their position prior to migration as well as following it. In Poland, only a few of the graduates were working in positions consonant with their qualifications and aspirations, i.e. ‘intelligentsia positions’ (c.f. Domański and Mach 2008); in Britain, none of them do.\textsuperscript{17} Thus, we could say that the graduates under study have been deprived of the opportunity to take up occupational positions most of them would have wished for.

It is commonly agreed that work is an important part of our lives, inter alia being a source of self-esteem. Erik Erikson (1963:262) maintains that identity formation is based on the individual’s drive to combine earlier acquired social roles and skills with the ideal prototypes of their times, and that failure in achieving integrity of the individual with his social roles may lead to a state of identity ‘diffusion’. The key reason behind such ‘diffusion’ is the individual’s inability to accept his/her professional role. Robert Park (1931 in Bokszański 1989:68), in turn, observes that the self-concepts created by individuals seem to depend on their profession and the roles carried out in society, as well as the esteem and status that is attributed to them by the society as a consequence of these roles. Meanwhile, we may assume that for the graduates – who carry out low-skilled and hence low-status work in the UK – treating such work as a source of esteem would be difficult.

Nevertheless, though work and the professional roles we carry out are said to be one of the basic factors defining our social identity and hence also class identity (Domański 2007), it has also been pointed out that in the contemporary world the meaning of work for ascribing class status is decreasing (Giddens 2006:17) I am here concentrating on the situation of carrying out work below one’s qualifications which is typical for the initial stage of migration. As has been mentioned before, the majority of the graduates would move up the occupational ladder over time, though in the case of the pre-accession migrants this would typically take a few years’ time. For a detailed analysis of the process see Trevena (forthcoming).
Divided by class...

318). Nowadays, with the dynamically changing labour markets, changes in occupational standing occur much more frequently than ever before. Therefore, it has been posited that class affiliation is demonstrated through habitus, lifestyle choices and consumption patterns rather than professional status (c.f. Bourdieu 1986, Savage et al. 1992).

Considering the above, we shall now turn to an analysis of class affiliation in terms of less clear-cut, ‘soft’ indicators such as lifestyle choices, values and class awareness (c.f. Suchocka 2007) – examined within the context of work. Firstly, we shall discuss the clash of habitus between the graduates and their co-workers. Secondly, we will consider the problem of work roles and self-perception vs. social perception. Finally, we shall present the graduates’ own perception of their class positioning.

The clash of habitus: co-workers and customers

Because of carrying out low skilled work, the graduates often work in positions typically designated for persons without any particular qualifications (e.g. builder’s help, barperson, waiter/waitress, sandwich maker, cleaner). In consequence, their colleagues (both Britons and other immigrants) are often persons of much lower levels of education and cultural capital than theirs. This situation promotes deep frustration for the migrants since not only is the nature of the work per se ‘stupefying’ but the same regards their daily work environment:

Those people I work with are disastrous. The intellectual level of these people is petrifying, truly petrifying. If someone reads, say, the Sun, and believes everything that they write there and has no critical thoughts about this type of press (...), then what can I say?

Łucja (2004)

In consequence of such lack of ‘common ground’, educated migrants working with people of much lower cultural capital rarely establish any deeper (or even satisfactory) relations with their co-workers, and are hence fairly isolated at work. Especially as they find the necessity of making never ending small talk and

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18 Habitus, as defined by Pierre Bourdieu, consists of the social agents’ dispositions acquired in the process of socialisation. It is influenced by both collective and individual conditioning: on the one hand it is formed by the powers shaping the society we grow up in, on the other by what we learn within the family and through individual experiences in the course of our lifetimes. Habitus accounts for the constancy of dispositions, tastes and preferences. Though a durable structure, it is not a fossilized one but is constantly affected by experiences in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:133).
spending many hours per day with ‘ignorant’ persons – be it their co-workers or customers – simply very tiring. As a psychologist working as a barmaid put it:

*I love my pub and I love our locals, we have the same drunks [coming] every single day. (...) They are simple people, very simple people, and I like them a lot and I respect them, but sometimes I simply get a little annoyed that I have to spend time with such simple people on a daily basis. What I miss in London is being around people at a certain level.*

Ola (2004)

The problem of having to readjust to the much lower intellectual level of their working environment appears especially difficult for those carrying out work which they find physically over-demanding. While others can receive their very much needed ‘intellectual input’ outside the workplace, this is much harder to achieve for graduates who are totally worn out by work:

*There’s no one you can talk to (...) at work; in the case of the majority their knowledge of the world is very limited and you simply regress (...). Intellectually, I have reached the absolute pits. You know, if you don’t have conversations at a certain level then you start forgetting certain words, certain meanings. And I don’t have the energy to read after work and as far as TV goes, you know what sort of programmes they have, it’s worse than in Poland. And so you just regress, regress, regress...*

Rafał (2004)

Such feeling of intellectual regression is most often mentioned by those carrying out heavy physical work, e.g. on building sites. Others also feel that they have no opportunity for ‘intellectual development’ at work but if they are working in an English-speaking environment, especially along Britons (and not only other immigrants), this is to some degree compensated by the opportunity to improve their English language skills:

*Despite [working in a clothes shop], I’m still developing somehow, at least in terms of language, I’m learning new vocabulary.*

Łucja (2004)

However, at some point the graduates reach the stage where they feel they are no longer acquiring any new capital in their workplace. If they also find their working environment hard to bear, they typically chose to change jobs at this point:
I quit my job at the pub (...) because I couldn’t put up with it any longer (...). I just couldn’t put up with this place any more, those customers, and all those people who were working with me. Some hopeless guys. And I knew that nothing will change, that they’ll all stay there. So I came to the conclusion that I won’t get anything more out of this place.


As can be seen from the above quotes, educated migrants find the situation of having to readjust to colleagues of much lower cultural capital rather challenging in the long run. Nevertheless, the clash of habitus between them relates to more than only intellectual differences. The graduates’ co-workers typically have a disparate outlook on life and a distinctive value system, which poses an additional difficulty in mutual relations. Some educated Poles are truly shocked by these differences:

A customer left a book behind one day [in our shop]. And I can see one of my colleagues taking this book and throwing it into the bin. So I ask: ‘What are you doing?!’ ‘Well, what do we need this for?’ ‘Well, maybe I could take that?’ And that was a great book about the history of London, of the city centre. But for them a book is simply trash. This was shocking for me.

Łucja (2004)

Łucja (quoted above) also had to deal with colleagues whose behaviour she regarded as against work ethic and generally immoral:

This is the meaning of life for them to spread gossip about somebody, to stab you in the back. Everyone has slept with everyone else, each of them gossips about all the others. They all have partners. A real nightmare. It’s better not to know about it all. (...) [And] we [Poles] are the best workers there, one of the few that don’t cheat or steal like all the others.

Łucja (2004)

As exemplified by Łucja’s case, differences between the educated migrants and their working environment may be indeed stark, not only in terms of intellectual differences but great disparity in value systems. Therefore, being able to work with (at least some) people they have common ground with is seen as a significant asset by educated migrants, while lack of mutual understanding in the workplace leads to a feeling of lack of acceptance, isolation and mental weariness. Therefore, carrying out menial work is much easier for persons working with individuals of similar cultural capital and habitus to them, especially students or other graduates who have other aspirations beyond earning money:
I work in a restaurant. 90% of my colleagues there work only to earn money while 10% also study. (...) And we understand one another very well because we know that we’ll be attending lectures and studying and just need to earn some extra money. I won’t be working 100 hours per week because I need time to study (...). Obviously, one wants to have time for one’s hobby, for studying and for work.

Maciej (2004)

Summing up, the educated migrants’ attitude towards life, their value system and general lifestyle appear very different to that of their (uneducated) co-workers. Many of them remark that their colleagues do not seem to have any interests apart from shopping and television, have very poor knowledge of the outside world and are not interested in further development, while ‘seeing the world’, pursuing one’s hobbies, gaining new knowledge and self-development are crucial elements of the graduates’ lifestyle and identity. Therefore, we may posit that in terms of consumption and lifestyle choices, the difference between working-class persons and the educated migrants is notable.

Middle class? Working class? The graduates’ perception of own status

Graduates working in menial jobs are in a ‘schizophrenic’ situation where they are aware of their potential yet cannot realise it through work roles. Meanwhile, research on attitudes of the Polish society towards work shows that Poles see work not only as a means of fulfilling broadly understood individual needs (material needs, need for security but also of self-fulfillment and group membership), but also as a focal point of all elements that constitute one’s identity (Sikorska 2002). Professional standing is thus perceived as the fundamental pivot defining social identity both at individual and group level (Hawrylik 2000). Considering this great meaning of work for defining social identity, how do the Polish graduates who live in London and carry out low-skilled work there perceive their social position within the receiving society? Let us now move to an analysis of this question.

According to the educated migrants, their work roles are perceived very differently by the sending and by the receiving society. Those graduates who had not entered the labour market prior to migration would often declare that in Poland, ‘never ever, in their whole lives’ would they have taken up the type of work they have been carrying out in the UK. This unwillingness to take up menial work in the home country is based on socio-psychological factors: according to the respondents, physical work is generally disrespected in Poland:
Here you really (...) carry out such jobs which are considered third class or even lower in Poland. I’m afraid this is a notion transferred from Poland – that people doing menial jobs are worse.


In Poland, if you are working at lower positions you are treated like dirt by those at a higher level than you, you are treated really badly. I experienced this when I was working at a supermarket. People who are a little higher up than you look at you with contempt.

Piotr (2004)

Furthermore, the migrants draw attention to the single-track perception of professional success in Poland, where physical work is not seen in terms of a possible career option – unlike in Britain:

In Poland professional career is regarded in terms... that it has to be some office job. An intellectual job, god forbid some physical work as this is seen as an antithesis of career. Meanwhile, here there seems to be an alternative. That you can have a career in such types of jobs which we [Polish society] really depreciate.

Milena (2007/8)

Therefore, to Poles working in the UK, the traditional Polish attitude towards the concept of career seems conservative, even parochial. The educated migrants tend to take on a different attitude to work than that of the wider Polish society. In their opinion, work is generally respected in the receiving society, regardless of its nature:

Here if you go to clean someone’s house, say, everybody respects you because you do work. Work is respected here, you know?

Piotr (2004)

The graduates, who are physically ‘outside’ Polish society¹⁹, attempt to consider their social status in ‘local’ and not ‘Polish’ terms. However, their perception of ‘local’ terms seems to be somewhat distorted: their specific occupational and financial position largely impacts on their social circles, hence the migrants have predominantly contact with given segments of the host society. Moreover, as they

¹⁹I am here referring to a simplified definition of the concept of ‘society’ where it is understood as ‘a commonsense category (...) equivalent to the boundaries of nation-states’ (The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology 1994:395). Applying such an understanding of the term is consonant with the interviewees’ perception of Polish (and British) society
do not identify themselves as members of this society, they are to a large extent free from its estimates as they are not pressurized to fulfill any higher expectations within it: all that is expected of them is to do their work well and respect public order. Hence, on the one hand, the British society (or rather the multicultural community of London) is indeed much more tolerant than the Polish society, yet on the other it should be stressed that the graduates’ interpretation of ‘what is expected’ does not exactly reflect the actual rules applied to ‘true members’ of that society.

On the other hand, even though in general the graduates agree that the attitude towards physical work in England is far more favourable than in Poland, this perception might relate predominantly to their employers and fellow employees. As for the ‘outside world’, including customers in some cases, the graduates feel their work roles are frequently perceived as demeaning:

*For them you are just a girlie who makes coffee. They’re convinced that if you work there you are either stupid or lazy, [but] you are definitely not someone who has graduated from university and wants to achieve something in life. Apart from being a manager of such a coffee stand, that is.*  

Hanna (2004)

Summing up, the educated migrants generally distance themselves from the negative perceptions of physical work held by the Polish society and attempt to take on the positive view of such work voiced by their (British) colleagues and employers. Nevertheless, they are aware of the fact that the wider society typically categorizes them as unintelligent or lacking ambition on the basis of their work roles, and such perception is difficult for them to accept.

Notwithstanding, the graduates themselves do not necessarily perceive their low occupational position in Britain as indicative of status – for at least two reasons. Firstly, the receiving society is perceived as a more open and tolerant one and – paradoxically – is not seen as preoccupied by status:20

*I think that Britain is such a country that you are free to do what you want, what you like. It doesn’t mean that you are better or worse.*  

Maciej (2007/8)

Secondly, the graduates underline that their low occupational position is a natural consequence of their international mobility under the circumstances. They are fully aware of the fact that they have found themselves in a completely new

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20 Such attitude seems to be overall shared by the contemporary wave of Polish migrants to the UK (c.f. Jordan 2002, Garapich 2006).
social reality where the norms and rules of social life are different than those followed in their home country and accept that adapting to these must take time. Hence, they perceive the period of working considerably below qualifications as characteristic for the initial stages of migration when the newly arrived needs to find his/her way within another system:\footnote{This view is consonant with research carried out on immigrants’ labour market incorporation. See for example Chiswick 1978, Borjas 1982.}

\textit{Practically speaking, everybody who has migrated has been through the same. That they were working below their abilities in the beginning. You have to make your way in [to the system] somehow, don’t you?}

Mariusz (2007/8)

Consequently, many of the educated migrants perceive their low occupational position as a temporary stage they are going or have gone through rather than a case of downfall. Moreover, significantly, due to living in a global city and multi-cultural environment constituting of people who speak over 300 different languages (Vertovec 2006), the graduates have a rather weak sense of living within the British society:

\textit{It’s hard to define British society in London. There are so many people living here, from so many different countries, that I simply feel one of them. I don’t feel as if this city ‘belonged’ to the British.}

Wiktor (2007/8)

\textit{I somehow feel separate from this society. I feel part of the international London community.}

Paweł (2007/8)

Therefore, the graduates tend to identify with the multicultural, largely immigrant community of the metropolis rather than the receiving society.

Thinking along British class divisions is an even more complex (and obviously artificial) exercise for the educated migrants. The majority find it impossible to place themselves anywhere in within the structure of the receiving society:

\textit{I don’t know, I simply am [here].}

Beata (2007/8)

- \textit{Working class. No, middle... Well no, I’m not middle class.}
“- So?
- I don’t know, I wouldn’t be able to place myself; I haven’t the faintest idea. Maybe because I’m Polish and not English, I don’t think in terms of class, I’d say. I don’t pay attention to such things at all and I wouldn’t be able to say if I’m middle class because I don’t even have such a concept. I’m a Pole working in England (…), that’s how I’d put it.”

Ewelina (2007/8)

Some of the migrants, however, would define their position in Britain by referring to their perceived class position in Poland and/or their social background there:

“[Where do I see myself] in terms of class? I think this comes from the environment I come from in Poland. This is why it’s easier for me to associate with the middle class here, despite the differences.”

Joanna (2007/8)

This, however, would be more typical for those graduates who had started from the lowest occupational positions but had moved a little higher over time. Significantly, educated migrants who would still be carrying out physical work at the time of being interviewed, would typically associate their class standing with their current occupational position:

“I’m in a state of social personality split. Because when I think I’m an educated person… But this doesn’t mean anything in the UK. After all, looking from the perspective of what job you’re doing, you are at the lowest level of the social ladder.”

Jagna (2007/8)

At the same time, those migrants who were carrying out the most physically demanding manual jobs (typically men working on building sites), would voice associating with the working class more than any other members of the studied group:

“I feel part of the lower classes, of the working class. Because I feel taken advantage of – like every ordinary worker, I feel taken advantage of.”

Rafał (2004)

“I think I can classify myself as working class.”

Piotr (2004)
As follows, carrying out heavy physical work (which is so wearing that it leaves little space for ‘pursuing one’s true identity’ outside working hours) is most difficult to distance oneself from. In contrast, persons carrying out lighter menial work typically avoid identifying with their work roles and treat their social identity as separate from these:

*As for today, working in a shop is a matter of my own choice. I think about myself in this way that I am aware of what I’m doing and what kind of work that is and I do not get involved in it emotionally.*

Łucja (2004)

At this point, we would like to come back to the issue of habitus and identity, and analyse its role in ascribing class. As exemplified above, it is mainly those graduates doing the physically most tiring jobs that associate with their co-workers’ occupational status and see themselves as part of the (British) working class. Others, however, seek different reference points to define their social identity. While some refer to their immigrant status (‘I’m simply a Pole working in England’), others define their social identity in the UK through their (perceived) social status in Poland (‘I’m middle class though not in the British sense’). In other words, the majority of the educated migrants do not seek to define their social status in Britain through their occupational status nor their financial status (both of which are low when judged by objective criteria). Rather, they apply another reference point, namely cultural capital and self-identity:

*I don’t earn as much as the middle class. So I’m rather not middle class… Though I associate being middle class also with educational level and interests. So perhaps I would classify myself as middle class but then… half of the people [living] here could also associate with such a label. If I were to compare to [the context of] Poland then [I could associate with] the intelligentsia.*

Monika (2007/8)

As follows from the above discussion, the graduates under study take various attitudes towards their own class affiliation. While some feel ‘classless’ and unable to place themselves within the social structure of both sending and receiving society, others – through reference to their social background in their home country or to their educational credentials and general cultural capital – have the feeling of belonging to the intelligentsia. Others apply comparable (to some degree) class terms such as middle class22, and still others define their class position through

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22 Some theorists, such as Henryk Domański, argue that the intelligentsia is essentially part of the ‘new’ middle class in Poland (Domański 1999: 210-213, Domański 2002: 12).
their occupational status in Britain and hence describe it as ‘working class’. Therefore, there is no one feeling of class belonging among educated migrants working in low-skilled jobs: they take on a highly individualised stance towards class, frequently underlining the fact that this is an artificial concept which has little meaning for them.

CONCLUSIONS

While literature on highly-skilled migration suggests that educated persons typically achieve upward mobility through migration (Iredale 2001, Mahroum 2001), Polish graduates undertaking low-skilled work in London present a different case, moving (relatively) up in terms of finances yet (relatively) down in terms of occupational and social status. Therefore, through taking on such work roles in the country of migration they find themselves in a highly ‘schizophrenic’ situation: despite their high cultural and human capital, they find themselves at the bottom of the occupational and hence also social ladder. Nevertheless, according to ‘hard’ indicators applied in social stratification research (educational attainment, occupational position, financial standing,) their social position prior to leaving Poland was also highly ambiguous. Though their educational credentials may be seen as a source of prestige, none of the graduates could be ascribed high social status on the basis of level of earnings. Furthermore, with reference to their occupational status, only a small number could be associated with higher, ‘intelligentsia positions’ (though also with certain reservations). Considering these particular circumstances, in view of ‘objective’ indicators of class, the graduates’ position in the receiving country can be seen as a case of ‘contradictory class mobility’ rather than simply downward mobility.

Through analysis of the same issue in the light of ‘soft’ indicators of class, such as lifestyle, values or class awareness, the graduates’ class belonging becomes an even more complicated issue. If we compare their habitus with that of persons typically constituting their working environment (uneducated persons), it becomes apparent that the disparities between them may largely be ascribed to class differences. The educated migrants demonstrate an – in essence – intelligentsia habitus, where self-development, knowledge and work ethic are core values to their very identity. At the same time, though aware of the generally disdainful attitude towards physical work (especially within the sending society), the majority of graduates do not see their low occupational position in the UK as indicative of status. They point to the fact that, considering the circumstances, it may be seen as a natural stage in their migration experience rather than a status quo. Moreover, they do not perceive themselves as part of the British society but rather as members of the international London community, where origin and class
do not matter. Class is a rather abstract concept for these educated persons, out of whom many are unable to place themselves within the structure of the receiving society. Interestingly, those who have the strongest feeling of class belonging – as defined through their current occupations – are graduates carrying out manual work which requires great physical effort and allows for little activity outside working hours. Hence, those working e.g. on building sites typically define themselves as working class. Others find the situation far from straightforward and either refer to their social background in Poland and on this basis ascribe ‘something like middle-class’ status to themselves, or seek affiliation through their educational attainment and cultural capital, defining themselves as part of the intelligentsia. However, within the context of the receiving society, the graduates are aware of the fact that, due to their low earnings and low occupational status, they could not ‘objectively’ see themselves as belonging to the middle class.

Concluding, the situation of university-educated migrants who carry out low-skilled and low-paid work abroad is a highly intangible one in terms of class analysis. While ‘hard’ indicators of class point to their low social position, we may wonder whether applying such ‘objective criteria’ is well-founded in the case of persons whose international mobility involves moving to a global city, where they become part of a multicultural and multinational immigrant community rather than of the British society. Under the circumstances, defining their class belonging becomes a difficult and rather artificial exercise for the graduates. Consequently, the only valid path to analyse class would seem to be through a consideration of lifestyle orientations and shared values. If we examine these, we could tentatively ascribe class status to the graduates: through reference to the Polish social stratification system – of the intelligentsia; or within the context of the receiving society – as either an ‘impoverished’ or ‘prospective’ middle class. We could therefore put forward the idea that the case of Polish graduates working in low-skilled jobs in London is one of ‘middle class deprivation’, where persons who display a largely middle class value system and have cultural capital applicable to higher occupational positions are unable to reach this ‘deserved status’ under their particular life circumstances. Notably, this phenomenon is by no means limited to the case under study, i.e. Polish graduates working in low-skilled jobs in London, but is a global phenomenon relating to many highly educated persons in the modern world – be it immigrants or not – who are trapped in the situation of having the potential yet not having the opportunities to achieve higher social positions.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Divided by class...


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Influences on Integration: Exploring Polish People’s Views of Other Ethnic Communities

Introduction

Muir and Wetherell (2010) in their overview of research funded under the Economic and Social Research Council’s (ESRC) Identities and Social Action programme provide evidence that ‘Britain does seem to have successfully re-imagined itself as a multicultural nation’ and identify the emergence of ‘a convivial culture’:

...in this convivial culture racial and ethnic differences have been rendered unremarkable...they have been able to become “ordinary”. Instead of adding to the premium of race as political ontology and economic fate, people discover that the things which really divide them are much more profound: taste, lifestyle, leisure preferences (Gilroy 200639-40, cited in Muir and Wetherell, 2010).

Similarly, Finney and Simpson (2009) have challenged some of the myths about migration into the UK and the argument that Britain is becoming a country of ghettos. Muir and Wetherell suggest that evidence from the ESRC programme indicates that in the cities there may be ‘a self-fulfilling political dividend: an ordinary everyday anti-racism’ whilst elsewhere there is unease about ‘permissive’ government immigration policies, perceptions of injustice in service provision and in the recognition of ‘majority cultures’ accompanied by the growth of the British National Party. It is therefore by no means certain that increased contact with people from different ethnic backgrounds has positive effects either on individuals or on the communities involved (see Hewstone et al, 2007 and Vertovec, 2007 for reviews of some of the theories used in this field). Vertovec (2007) summarises the lessons from the ‘contact hypothesis’ developed by social psychologists and argues that recent calls for interaction are knowingly or unknowingly based on

1 See www.identites.org.uk
such theories. The contact hypothesis states that contact may promote positive
attitudes under the right conditions as people get to know each other via processes
of either: ‘personalisation’; ‘recategorization’ of ‘them’ and ‘us’ as ‘we’ as a result
of membership in a common category; and ‘mutual differentiation’ where interde-
pendence is stressed. He suggests that public and voluntary bodies would enhance
their effectiveness by clearly considering which process they are attempting to

However, the division between ‘the majority’ and ‘others’ is not the only sig-
ificant dimension of migration that bears scrutiny. A recent Channel 4 documentary
*Immigration: The Inconvenient Truth* highlights tensions between communities
and conflicting judgements about who has the right to live in the UK. As Vertovec
(2007, p. 5) has pointed out, immigrants often only meet, live in the same building
with, socialise or work with other immigrants or people from other minority ethnic
communities and there is a lack of research into these encounters in social science
research or policy development. Inter-group relations have been shown to be
dependent on the competition, or lack of it, for resources and services (Vertovec,
2007). Evidence presented to the Communities and Local Government Committee
(2008) suggests tensions between settled Asian and Caribbean communities and
new minorities around increasing competition for ‘race equality’ resources (House
of Commons, 2008). Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights
Commission has argued that the actual and potential conflict between new and
old migrants has been neglected in national policy and debate on migration and
cohesion (House of Commons, 2008). Rather than lauding integration and shared
values, some commentators have identified underlying issues of power at stake,
They sum up their discussion of policies focused on social capital at the expense
of social and economic inequality with an argument for the need for:

> ...a shift from a preoccupation with social cohesion towards an understanding
  of the nature of connections between people with respect to inequalities, and
  acceptance of the importance of contestation in raising and rectifying them’
  (2007, p. 43).

Migration from Poland since 2004 has raised the profile of Polish and other
Eastern European communities in debates about migration and integration. The
legitimacy of Polish migrants moving to the UK to take up jobs and benefits,
the increasing pressure on services and the escalating costs of translation and
interpretation have become matters for heated debate, including within Polish
communities. In this article I discuss findings from an ESRC funded study into the
role of language in the lives of Polish people (Temple, 2008). I focus on views about
people from other ethnic communities and how these influenced integration.
THE RESEARCH

The research I discuss in this article was carried out with 30 people who spoke Polish living in the Northwest of England. A narrative approach was used, the particular variety of which is discussed in detail elsewhere (Temple, 2008b). The approach recognises the significance of the structure of people’s narratives in interpreting findings. This is particularly relevant in cross language research where evaluation criteria for ‘good’ narratives may vary across languages (Blommaert, 2001). The sample was chosen to be as inclusive of different migration paths as possible, for example, people who had come as refugees after the Second World War were included as well as migrants who came for work before and after 2004. People were also selected from those who chose different ways of interacting with Polish speakers, including attendance at events put on by Polish community groups and those organised by the newer migrants at pubs and clubs around the area. The research was qualitative and exploratory and not intended to be statistically representative of the diversity of Polish communities or of migration.

Four participants in the research came to England as refugees after the Second World War, one came to marry in the 1960s, two were students, 14 had come to find work either before or since Poland joined the EU and nine had been born in England, one of whom was third generation. Sixteen were male and 14 female of varying ages, some belonged to Polish organisations and attended the Polish Catholic Church and some did not. Many migrants were highly mobile and had lived in a number of areas in England and some had moved between Poland and other European countries more than once. All but two participants from the second and third generation described themselves as professionals. It was more problematic to classify people who came over from Poland. Eleven out of 16 new arrivals were university graduates, all but four were now working in manual jobs. None of the three participants who were manual workers in Poland worked in the same trade in England.

Participants were given a choice of being interviewed in Polish or English and a topic guide was used to ensure all topics of interest would were covered. Each interview was transcribed or translated. I acknowledge the influence of both the PI and RA on the translation process is this article by using the appropriate initials after quotes to identify who did the transcription if the interview was in English or translation if it was in Polish. All participants have been given pseudonyms.

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2 My thanks to the ESRC for funding this research. (Language and identity in the narratives of Polish people, RES-000-22-2187. I would also like to thank Katarzyna Koterba for her work on the research and the participants for their time and hospitality.

3 These aspects of the research have been discussed elsewhere (Temple, 2008, 2008b and Temple and Koterba, 2009).
DEFINING INTEGRATION

Unsurprisingly given that Polish diasporas are well established across the world and migrants have lived in different social contexts, there were no characteristics that were agreed as essential to being Polish. Moreover, although participants described themselves as Polish, this did not generally mean that they described themselves as exclusively so. Self ascriptions of identity changed during the course of interviews according the context of the discussion, as the results below in relation to second generation Polish people show. Being Polish was seen as important for everyone in different ways, even though the significance of Polish identity varied. All participants acknowledged the significance of the Polish language. Views of people from other communities and integration featured as part of the interviews and form the focus of this article. I illustrate below that who is defined as being Polish varies as does what constitutes community. Debates over integration and ‘others’ concerned solely with migrants and non-migrants overlook significant dimensions of integration: inter-community divisions and relationships between different ethnic communities.

Integration was defined by participants in the research in various ways. They used the term to apply to both individuals and communities and described it in terms of interactions with others in different spheres of their lives. However, as I discuss below, their discussion was not just around migrants and non-migrants but extended to differences between migrant cohorts within Polish communities and to contact with other communities which included migrants from other parts of the world. Focusing on social networks and work contacts, participants recognised that integration involved more than one aspect of their lives and that they could integrate, for example, at work without wanting to do so socially. Social networks ranged from those made up of other Polish speakers only to those that were intentionally set up to include both English and Polish people. Elsewhere I have discussed the influences on networks and suggested that the kinds of networks people took part in were influenced by a variety of factors, including English language proficiency, likelihood of returning to Poland to live and views about other communities in England (Temple, 2010). Here I focus on who they included in discussions about integration.

The different kinds of social activities set up by younger migrants undoubtedly affected the social contacts they made (see below). Visiting pubs and clubs opened up possibilities for meeting people from different ethnic communities. Garapich (2008) has also documented the significant part played by the media and ‘the migration industry’ in integration. He defines this as ‘a set of specialised social actors and commercial institutions that profit directly not only from human mobility but also from effective adaptation into the new environment’ (2008, p.

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1 The different kinds of social networks used by Polish people are discussed by Ryan et al (2008)
Influences on integration...

736). He gives examples including immigration advisors, money sending outlets, the ethnic food economy and recruitment agencies. Garapich’s research suggests that ‘the migration industry is set to destabilise this political view of immigration which still regards states and governments as the driving forces of international migration and the main actors in incorporating large populations of migrants. (2008, p. 739). The growth of the migration industry has had another significant effect in that Polish migrants are less reliant on the established Polish diaspora for services such as translation and for access to jobs. The gate-keeping roles of community organisations in a variety of ethnic communities, including Polish, have been documented (see for example, Alexander et al, 2004). Alexander et al (2004) have found evidence of, for example, the denial of help to people not considered deserving, such as Polish Roma, before 2004. Recent migrants have more choice outside of established diaspora organisations, even if their English is not sufficient to work with English speakers. However, influences on the formation of those networks are complex, as I discuss below.

MAKING UP YOUR MIND

All participants felt that they were integrating with people from other communities by mixing with them in everyday life, for example on the bus or in shops. They recognised that they were integrating through their daily activities, whether they wanted to or not. Jacek Żuromski, 28, came over from Poland in about 2003 and lived with his wife, child and friends in rented accommodation. He worked as a builder and explained that he knew that the longer he stayed the more ties he made here:

And I explain it sometimes to myself like this. Every time I buy something here [uses kolejny – which means successive – gives picture of mounting pressure], every penny that I invest here is like a nail in my coffin [he means here that it makes it more difficult for him to decide where to set up a permanent home] [translated jointly by BT and KK].

Some people in the research were content with a level of English that was enough for getting by (see also Rutter et al, 2008) and argued that they were integrating sufficiently through these fleeting encounters. However, some wanted to mix as widely as possible with people from a range of backgrounds. For example, Marta Sacha described the need to mix, otherwise Polish people would create ‘something that you can create with Pakistani people. They create their own ghettos. It is like a country in a country’ (translated by KK). Younger migrants who had come to England to find work were more willing to integrate in a way that involved them in activities with others and the more recent migrants were
more likely to choose to mix with people from other communities than the older arrivals who came after the Second World War.

Participants agreed that integration was necessary for people to live together but there were differences in the extent to which they were prepared to interact with others. Vertovec (2007, p. 4) has developed the notion of 'civil-integration' as a way of pointing to the importance of everyday interactions and civility for relationships between people. He defines this as:

...the acquisition and routinization of everyday practices for getting on with others in the inherently fleeting encounters that comprise city life. These include simple forms of acknowledgement, acts of restricted helpfulness, types of personal consideration, courtesies, and 'indifference to diversity'. Recognizing these modes of integration may help the wider public and policy makers to better realise that (a) lack of 'deep, meaningful, sustained' relations is not necessarily an indicator of the lack of social cohesion, and (b) by way of these civil practices, immigrants may be better integrated than often thought. Such kinds of civility can be learned and promoted alongside the calls for more meaningful and sustained inter-group relations.

He asks a question that is significant for this research: can ‘less-than-meaningful’ interchanges have impacts on cohesion between groups? Drawing on sociological and social psychological research, he points out that most encounters in cities are fleeting and that whilst promoting sustained encounters, we must also foster positive relations ‘amid the fleeting and superficial kinds of contact that are the daily stuff of urban existence’ (2007, p. 29). As discussed above, participants in the research recognised that they were integrating over time through daily interactions, even if they did not take part in community activities designed by ‘representatives’ of ethnic communities. However, the research points to the unpredictable nature of daily interactions and their effects, not necessarily leading to conviviality (Muir and Wetherell, 2010) in the cities or to civil integration. For example, Jacek Zuromski discussed above had come to England wanting to take advantage of the opportunities to integrate at work and socially. After experiencing racist attacks, he ‘went in another direction’ and now restricted his desire to integrate to the fleeting experiences discussed by Vertovec. He felt that he was integrating with people, for example, on the bus. These fleeting exchanges were not positive small steps towards people from other ethnic communities but rather unavoidable exchanges that could be threatening as well as productive.

The extent of participation in social life with people from other communities was influenced by participants’ views about the lifestyles and values of people from other communities. Those with strong beliefs about the significance of their
Polish ethnicity were least likely to want to mix with people from other ethnicities. Those who looked favourably on the values and beliefs of others were more likely to want to integrate socially in a sustained way, whilst those who viewed other communities less favourably had decided that a minimal level of contact was sufficient, as in the example of Jacek discussed above. Views about other people’s values and lifestyles were built up through the everyday interactions they had with others and they expressed them in relation to three main groups: English, Pakistani and Polish people living in England. However, there is no way of knowing if the people they were categorising as belonging to these groups would have described themselves as from these communities. For example, the term ‘Pakistani’ appeared to be based on skin colour rather than knowledge of the background that people came from. For all three groups there were negative and positive comments.

Only a minority (three recent migrants) commented on the advantages of multiculturalism. One young migrant referred to herself as a European citizen and valued the experiences she could have in England with people from other communities. Most participants felt that they had been well received in England and that Polish people were generally respected by others. They acknowledged the positive aspects of an English lifestyle, including opportunities to live more comfortably than in Poland, especially in retirement. However, eleven people mentioned some experience of racism ranging from physical attacks to calls to go back to Poland and five people made negative comments about English people. Krzysztof Biel explained that ‘I know that some English people hate Polish people and here if you are Polish it means you are cheap labour’” (translated by KK). He went on to say:

\[I \text{ don’t like about the English people that they feel like lords of the world! It doesn’t matter they had colonies. They brought Blacks, Pakistanis! And what do they have now? They don’t work here. They live here on benefits}’’\] (translated by KK).

He felt that ‘there is all the time shagging [English word used here]’ and many participants agreed that English and Polish people had different values and life styles. Krzysztof Biel stated that he didn’t make any effort to integrate because of his views about English values. He described how his conversations with English speakers were about ‘trivia’ and how he was not interested in football and TV, things that his English work colleagues focused on. Tomasz Salomon also felt integration involved sharing a system of values he did not support. The differences were mainly around family values and especially with reference to leisure time spent drinking. Concerns about safety in the evenings were voiced, with descriptions of drunken behaviour in the city and anti-social behaviour on the
streets. Some migrants expressed negative views about ‘Pakistanis’, mentioning problems at school for their children between young Pakistani children and Polish children and incidents of verbal abuse by Pakistani teenagers. The quote from Biel above illustrates the tone of these comments.

However, descriptions of ‘others’ who were seen to have questionable values and lifestyles were not limited to other migrant communities or to English people. It was generally recognised that there were different Polish communities rather than a single undifferentiated group, with sometimes over lapping and sometimes exclusive social activities and networks. Participants were as concerned in the interviews about how the more recent migrants who had come to England to work were integrating with the established diaspora as with how Polish people were integrating with other migrant or long established communities. Recent migrants from Poland did not tend to regularly use facilities organised by the older Polonia2, except for some events such as Polish dances which were popular and attendance at the church. Lack of time, the absence of any perceived need to attend church or to be a member of a Polish organisation and tensions between migrant groups were reasons given for not taking part in such activities. However, the Polish Church was viewed as somewhere that people far from home could hear Polish spoken, even if attendance was not every week. Eight participants saw attendance at church more in terms of social interaction than fundamentally about beliefs. For example, Magda Poznanska, a student from Poland, described herself as ‘a practicing non-believer’ (praktykująca niewierzząca) and felt that the Polish Catholic Church was different from the English Catholic Church because it was ‘a Polish place’ and ‘maybe it is simply that people are missing something…their own language’ (translation by BT). However, Daniel Grass and his partner Bozena Stanczyk described how the links between Catholicism and Polishness led to social pressures to go to church, get married and have children – none of which they wanted to do. They felt it was easier in England to be more anonymous and to get out from under ‘the Polish yoke’ (Stanczyk):

   I think that we have pulled ourselves out of the Polish erm...actually the Polish yoke...the fact that we are in England helps us to be anonymous (Translated by KK).

   Myślę, że wyrwałyśmy się spod ... spod takiego polskiego jarzma właściwie ... spod takiej presji społecznej. To, że jesteśmy w Anglii pomaga nam w tej anonimowości.

   Tensions between sections of the community meant activities organised by community groups sometimes worked to signal difference rather than to strengthen links between Polish people. Jan Majczak, born in England, described how:

   I have discussed the problematic notion of an undifferentiated Polish diaspora, community or Polonia in previous research and refer the reader to a fuller discussion of these issues in my previous work, for example, in relation to gender in Temple (1999).
The new people that have arrived from Poland all sat chatting together and there was us lot that had been born here sat in another corner chatting together and there’s a kind of…we’re of the same community but we’re not [Transcribed by BT].

The Polish Club and Church as well as the Saturday School are organisations predominantly set up to foster a ‘Polish’ way of life. The activities organised outside of the confines of the Social Club tend to be representations of this Polish life to others, for example, in displays of Polish dance and/or occasions for showing the skills of Polish people in competition with others, for example, in football games. The newer migrants bring challenges to this established view of a ‘Polish way of life’ as, although they appreciate some of the activities on offer, they are more willing to take part in social activities that are not necessarily based on ethnicity, particularly more traditional views of appropriate activities.

Second generation Polish speakers described the ‘avalanche’ of recent migrants that had brought the end of an era. Edmund Lesniak, who was born in England, described how the recent migrants brought their problems with them. Tensions at Polish Saturday School were discussed. Recent migrants were seen to be different in their values and more like English people. Divisions within Polish communities around ‘proper’ Polish values and identity are not new (Temple 1999, 2001) and have continued since 2004 (Temple, 2010; Garapich, 2007). The numbers of migrants post 2004 has meant that ‘alternative’ Polish organisations such as Saturday Schools and organised social activities can be set up and activities that older Polish people may define as ‘not Polish’, such as Polish nights in pubs which women attend, become the sites of celebrating the diverse ways in which migrants can knit ‘English’ with ‘Polish’ ways of relaxing.

DIFFERENTIATING INTEGRATION

Scholars have long warned about the dangers of assuming undifferentiated ethnic communities. In his review of transnationalism and integration, Vertovec (2007, p. 20) points to the value of the American literature on ‘segmented assimilation theory’. The term integration is preferred in research in Britain but the points made concerning assimilation are valuable. Vertovec argues that it emphasises ‘that a linear process based on White, middle class norms is not the only measuring stick for integration’. Assimilation approaches describe possible paths for socio-economic mobility: upwards into White, middle class society, downwards into the broadly excluded or low income working class, or into an ethnic or racialised community characterized by its own economic and cultural patterns. Participants in the research discussed in this article undoubtedly aimed
at the first or third of these paths. The first route involved taking up education opportunities and the latter meant taking advantage of the increased need for goods and services for Polish speakers.

The influence of class noted by Vertovec was seen as significant by many participants, with integration being discussed in terms of the desire of integrating only with particular kinds of people in England, whether migrants or members of other ethnicities. They did not want to live and work as part of the low income working class whose values they saw as questionable. Benjamin Kwasniak, a recent migrant, suggested that he would integrate only with people of ‘high culture’. Participants in effect asked themselves: integrating with whom?

Language was discussed as key to the kind of integration possible. The level of English spoken was seen as important in allowing people to mix with the class of people they felt comfortable with. However, language could also serve to stress difference rather than act to bridge the gap between different language speakers. Some participants felt that they would never be able to use the lexicon of professionals or have the knowledge of the English context to be accepted by English people who were highly educated. They highlighted the limits of their existing networks in improving their circumstances. Daniel Grass, for example, commented on the cultural gap he experienced between English and Polish that was evident in talk:

*But when we talk to English people we talk about, excuse my language, about not important things (o ‘dupie Maryny’ literally Mary’s ass, slang word for unimportant things, translated by KK).*

This class related aspect of integration is often neglected in accounts of integration that focus solely on ethnicity. Views about other communities were made on the basis of everyday interactions and in particular participants discussed what they had seen in evenings out in the city relating examples of drunkenness and inappropriate behaviour by women. These were labelled as ‘English’ and as class based behaviour that the ‘the right kind’ of people would not take part in. Skeggs (2002) argues that defining what is ‘respectable’ involves judgements about class, race, gender and sexuality and that different groups have differential access to the mechanisms for generating, resisting and displaying respectability.

Debates about integration have pointed to different expectations about what activities and lifestyles are appropriate and ‘respectable’ for women. Gender
within Polish communities has been discussed by researchers (for example, Ryan and Webster, 2008) and the intersections of gender, class and ethnicity, as well as other social characteristics work together to produce different possibilities and constraints on people’s lives (Anthias, 2006). Many researchers have shown that women play a significant role in the reproduction of nationality and ethnicity (for example, Yuval Davis, 1997). The gendered aspect of being Polish in the research discussed here was evident in accounts of how traditions, and language, were practiced and passed on. Krzysztof Biel, who arrived nearly two years ago and lived with his girlfriend, discussed the importance of Polish food and joked how he couldn’t cook ‘because he had a girlfriend to do this’ (translated by KK). Artur Kisielewski who was born in England and was in his late 40s had married an English woman and said ‘she bred them’ when discussing the decision not to bring up his children following Polish traditions. When talking about women who do bring up children in Polish traditions he commented that ‘It shows you the character of the mum’ [Transcribed by KK]. Being a mother was therefore linked to, and judged by, the ways in which women took on the traditional roles of preparing meals and taking responsibility for their children’s upbringing.

Even when passing on ‘Polishness’ was seen as a shared task the division of labour tended to be stereotypical. Often, as participants pointed out, this was because the division of work within families they had grown up in was structured in a gendered way, with the father going out to work and mother staying at home to look after the children. For example, Marta Sacha said her mother taught her as a woman’, for example, taking care of something, smiling and her father taught her how to do a job ‘without anybody’s opinion’ (translated by KK):

> My dad made an idea how it should look [Polish festivals] and then my mum was the one who showed me how to create it...he said it should be cooked this way...I think that’s again like a mixture, he has ideas and my mum is a person to do that.

However, women did not always accept responsibility for bringing up children as Polish. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that accepting these responsibilities made women powerless. Some women spoke with pride of their work in educating their children in Polish ways and others just did not accept their roles. The example of Artur Kisielewski given above is a useful reminder of the complexities of investigating gender. His wife was English and had decided they should speak English as she did not like Polish traditions. She did not accept she was responsible for her children learning their father’s culture, even though it is clear from his statements that he took that view. There were, therefore, counter-narratives. Another interesting example is that of Anna Lechowicz who was born in Poland and was separated from her Muslim husband and felt it was not up to her to pass on her husband’s traditions. She did see herself as responsible for passing
Bogusia Temple

on Polish language and traditions and felt that her husband had the chance to pass on his traditions but ‘he didn’t use the chance’ (translated by KK).

Views about how ‘respectable’ Polish men and women lived influenced who they mixed with and how they behaved. Men and women were assigned different routes for integrating, if they chose to take these. Choosing an unacceptable route, such as socialising in pubs and clubs for women, not getting married or going to church regularly led to charges that they had taken on more English lifestyles.

DISCUSSION

The research discussed in this article points to the complexity of factors that influence integration and contact with ethnic ‘others’. It is small scale and exploratory but nonetheless serves to question the suitability of government policies based on assumptions that migrants will stay in one country.

None of the comments in this article should be taken to suggest that there are ‘Polish’ or ‘English’ values. Indeed, the findings question such a sealed view of ethnicity. Participants recognised that definitions of ethnicity were context specific. However, they continued to make assumptions about the ways in which people from different ethnic groups lived and their values from their daily encounters. There is some evidence of the ‘conviviality’ that Muir and Wetherell (2010) point to, and of the appreciation of the diverse ways of living that are possible in England. However, some participants had experiences of encounters that they found threatening, both in respect of social occasions and at work. Although the everyday practices referred to by Vertovec (2007) as ways of integrating are recognised by many participants, for some they were tinged with resentment and racism, on both sides. Moreover, these everyday practices are influenced by the wider social, political and economic context in which debates about increasing numbers of migrants have begun to influence everyday experiences and challenge migrants’ rights to access services and scarce resources. Integration was not just seen in terms of instrumental choices about who to mix with. It involved an examination of what was acceptable in living with others. This involved an emotional willingness or, lack of it, to accept different ways of experiencing being Polish and living in England.

The research discussed in this article suggests that the results of increasing contact with people considered as ‘other’ in terms of ethnicity are influenced by a variety of factors, including whether everyday contacts are convivial but also whether, given that movement between EU countries is now easier, staying in England is likely to be long term. Views about people from ethnic communities are not formed in a vacuum and further research is needed on the best ways of countering some of the negative perceptions of Polish people as well as those held
Influences on integration...

by Polish people. There is also a need for research that examines the interplay of factors that influence the nature of integration, including the changing pattern of migration, economic context and attitudes and experiences of people from other ethnic communities. In particular, research that addresses the factors which influence the outcome of contact with ‘others’ is needed which examines integration in terms of more than a one dimensional issue of ethnicity and explores whether and how ‘them’ and ‘us’ becomes ‘we’.

REFERENCES


BODY, GENDER AND SEXUALITY AND RECENT MIGRATION OF POLES TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on the constructions around body as gendered and sexualised within recent migration of Poles to the United Kingdom (UK). No attention has generally been paid to the issue of body within migration. Moreover, migration of Poles to the UK attracted a lot of attention among academics; however, the gender and sexuality dimension of this migration has been overlooked. Gender and sexuality issues may turn out to be crucial within this migration, as different discourses on gender and sexuality appear to prevail in Poland and the UK and can potentially influence views on body. Around 613,000 Poles have migrated to the United Kingdom since May 2004, when the UK Government decided to open its labour market to the citizens from the new European Union (EU) states (Home Office 2009). Poles migrate, as it appears, from an environment in Poland characterised by more conservative views on gender and sexuality to a more liberal environment in the UK. As the discussions Poles run in the cyberspace show, the body as gendered and sexualised appears to play an important role within this migration.

Although Foucault (1991) focused on the body as site of social and cultural regulation and target of power, he did not consider gender dimension of this phenomenon. However, these online discussions mostly focus on female bodies rather than male ones. Therefore, this article uses feminist perspective and examines the influence of this migration on discourses around body as gendered and sexualized and its potential to liberate conservative discourses especially on women’s bodies. Bordo (2004) argues that the body is a medium of culture and the body may be seen as a site for investigation into gender and sexuality (Petersen 2003), which this article undertakes. This article uses intersectionality framework as lens to examine issues around body and analyses how specific social categories

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1 My PhD research project focuses more broadly on issues of gender and sexuality within Polish migration to the UK; the thesis is due to be completed at City University London by the end of 2011
such as gender and sexuality, seen as ‘social processes’, simultaneously influence construction of these issues (Nash 2008). Gender allows the focus on the division between women and men and the relationship between them that includes power (Jackson and Scott 2001). Gender as a social category is seen as greatly influencing the construction of social bodies (Lorber and Martin 2008). However, gender operates on multiple social and cultural levels and they include not only the body, but also the state (Mahler and Pessar 2006). This article also uses sexuality as a social category and investigates sexualised aspects of the body. Sexuality is seen as encompassing sexual norms, expectations and pressures from others that exist in every cultural context (Lorber 1999). These patterns of sexual behaviour are gendered, and as Lorber (2005) alleges, a departure from established norms of gender and sexuality often provokes a reaction manifesting itself in the use of power and social control.

This article looks at body within migration and migration in turn is also a gendered, and for that matter, sexualised phenomenon (Donato et al 2006; Erel et al 2002). Mahler and Pessar (2006) argue that although gender ideologies, relations and practices have a great role in migration processes, they are often unexamined. This article considers the role gender and sexuality ideologies play in constructions around body by Poles in the UK. The focus of this article is on bodies as engaging in relations, also of a sexual nature, bodies as attempting to prevent pregnancies through the use of contraception, and bodies as dealing with unplanned pregnancies through the use of abortion. It also looks at men’s sexualised bodies in relation to women’s sexualised bodies. The main aim is to show how gender and sexual ideologies are reproduced and negotiated in relation to body within this migration process. In order to be able to understand the gender and sexuality dimension of this migration, this article now looks at the local gender contexts, gender ideologies and gender histories prevalent in both Poland and the UK.

BODY POLITICS IN POLAND

Polish culture is perceived as quite conservative in relation to gender and sexuality (Gontarczyk 1995). A lot of changes have taken place within the last two decades, when the process of transition from communism to democracy has been taking place. Within the process of the post-communist nation-building the prevalent context has been nationalist (Booth 2005; Graff 2008) and it was

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2 For more discussion the physical appearance of bodies, Polish women’s and men’s sexualities and the perception of inter-ethnic relationships please refer to Siara (2009)
especially prominent when right wing governments were in power\textsuperscript{3}. Nationalism, however, has deeper historical roots in Poland. The country was partitioned in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century by the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Habsburg Austria. First partition took place in 1772 and it was followed by second partition in 1793 and third partition in 1795. Following the third partition and until the end of World War One Poland was not officially regarded as a separate independent state on the political arena. During this time the particular focus was on maintaining the continuity of the nation. A special role was then given to women who through their sacrifice and focus on home and motherhood were supposed to help this process and this led to creating a notion of ‘Matka Polka’ [Eng. Mother-Poland] (Ksieniewicz 2004) seeing woman’s role as sacrificing herself for the benefit of the nation.

Apart from the Polish state, its governments and their politics, the influence of the Catholic Church on gender, especially since 1989, has been very visible (Pankowska 2005; Duch-Krzystoszek 1997). The Catholic Church in Poland not only has insisted on traditional understanding of gender, but also strongly influenced changes in the policy concerning women’s loss of reproductive rights once the strict anti-abortion law was introduced in 1993 (Pascall and Kwak 2005). This law prohibited abortion for social and economic reasons (Kramer 2007). According to this law, abortion can be carried out only in cases when “the woman’s life or health is threatened, when the pregnancy is the result of crime or in cases of severe foetal abnormality” (Nowicka 1996: 24). At the same time, there has not been free contraception available and there have been efforts made to limit the access to paid-for contraception (Nowicka 1996). Interestingly, around the time when the anti-abortion law was being introduced, 37 percent of Poles supported abortion in the case when a woman wanted it for any reason (Saxonberg 2000). In any case, the strict anti-abortion law did not stop abortions from being carried out as it is evident in existence of so called ‘abortion underground’ in Poland (Zielinska 2000). Moreover, attitudes to sex in Polish culture are often not only heavily influenced by the Catholic Church’s rhetoric, but also patriarchal views (Hauser et al 1993). In official discourse sex is then constructed as connected to reproduction rather than sexual pleasure.

Generally, women’s movement in Poland has been quite weak. This is partly connected to the negative perception of feminism in Poland generally, and resulting from it limited support for a women’s movement (Booth 2005). Furthermore, the women’s movement in Poland had been heavily attacked by the Catholic Church officials (Nowicka 1996). Although, women’s movement in Poland grew in strength in the 1990s with the support from many intellectuals and academics,\textsuperscript{3} From 1989 until 1993, from 1997 to 2001 and from 2005 to 2007
it did not successfully impact on creating women-friendly policies in Poland or changing discourses on gender and sexuality.

**BODY POLITICS IN THE UK**

British gender context appears to be more liberal in comparison to the Polish one. As the historical conditions were different, women’s liberation was entirely separated from the nation-building process (Booth 2005). Moreover, the Anglican Church, main religious institution in the UK, has had a weak impact on people’s lives choices for a long time (McDowell et al 2008).

Furthermore, the women’s movement in the UK has been strong and has campaigned for many years for liberation of traditionally understood gender roles (Zweiniger-Bargielowska 2000; Pascall and Kwak 2005). It also led to redefinition of issues around sexuality and the body. It called for the separation of sex from reproduction and insisted on women’s sexual pleasure (Charles 2002). The women’s movement saw sexuality not as a personal but a political issue and it became concerned with securing free contraception and abortion on demand (Smith 2000). As a result of campaigning, contraception became available free-of-charge on the National Health System (NHS) in 1974 (Zweinigier-Bargielowska 2000). Moreover, “Abortion Act” allowing artificial termination of pregnancy was legalised in 1967 and abortion became available, also free-of-charge, on the NHS in 1974 (Pilcher 1999).

The UK makes it an interesting research terrain when focusing on the issues of body and more generally gender, sexuality and migration as it is inhabited by migrants from various parts of the world. The more intensive movement of people into the UK started in the 1950s (Vertovec 2007). It included migrations from West Indies, India, and Pakistan. However, Vertovec (2007) claims that since the 1990s there has been not only a rise in immigration to the UK, but also a great diversification of migrants’ countries of origin as for example from the other (EU) countries or from the Middle East. He also refers to substantial further increases from the accession states since the 2004 EU Enlargement. In Vertovec’s (2007) opinion, such diversity leads to greater socio-cultural differences and greater variety of cultural values and practices carried out by migrants. This diversity is especially important when considering social relations, including gender and sexual relations as there are variations in terms of attitudes to gender and sexuality among different migrants.

**INTERNET FORUM DISCUSSIONS**

This article uses internet forum discussions as data. Such a choice of research technique was motivated by a number of factors. Firstly, choosing such a method
Constructions around body within recent Polish migration to the United Kingdom

gave an access to naturally occurring settings (Romano et al. 2003), which are in no way influenced by the presence of the researcher. Secondly, it also provided access to research participants, who actively engage in debates relating to the topic under study (Markham 2005). What is important is that topics of discussions are set by participants themselves rather than a researcher and this gives an opportunity to analyze issues that are important to discussants themselves. Additionally, such data is unstructured, rich and detailed (Byrne 2001) and not controlled by time or space. However, the researcher does not know much about respondents apart from what is apparent from their opinions. As quite a novel and emergent research technique (Rutter and Smith 2005), analysis of the internet discussions can extend knowledge about gender and sexuality within the migration process (Curran and Saguy 2006), as it gives an insight into the issues important to migrants themselves.

The analyzed discussions were carried out on the forums hosted on a number of internet portals catering to Poles in the UK. The names of the portals are kept confidential for ethical reasons (Rutter and Smith 2005). All the identified discussions relating to body, gender and sexuality were included in the study and subsequently analyzed. All these discussions were carried out in a public space i.e. forum participants voluntarily published their opinions on the Internet and as a result made them available to the open public. However, anonymity of forum users is maintained by not stating their real or nick-names (Markham 2005; Hewson et al. 2003).

The analysis involved ten forum discussions. Discussions comprised of between 10 to 175 posts, with the mean of 52. They were carried between 2006 and 2008. The discussions lasted between a few days and several months. All the internet forum discussions were held in Polish. The analysis was firstly carried in Polish, and only afterwards main themes were translated into English. Thematic analysis approach was used in the process of analyzing discussions as this method focuses on identifying themes that are important in describing an analyzed phenomenon (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Byrne 2001). As in Polish language a verb agrees with gender, by looking at verb’s ending the gender of the speaker can be recognized. Therefore, when the gender of the person expressing an opinion is known, it is marked accordingly in both analysis and the quotes.

Some forum users refer to ‘race’, which is translated accordingly in the quotes. However, it is recognized in the analysis that ‘race’, marked in inverted commas, is a socially constructed category without a content created for ideological reasons and used in the processes of racialization, in which people are seen as belonging to distinctive groups – races and this supposed belonging is imposed

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4 For more information on the internet usage by Poles in the UK please refer to Siara (2009)
on them (Pilkington 2003; Miles and Small 1999). However, in order to refer to the multicultural population in the UK in this article the term ethnicity is used and ethnicity is seen as a fluid process encompassing variety of people's cultural identities, belongings and attachments, and these are seen embraced by these people themselves (Pilkington 2003; Miles and Small 1999).

BODIES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS

Women’s bodies and sexual relations

According to some (only male) internet forum users Polish women in the UK engage in relations, also of sexual nature, with men of other ethnicities and these men disapprove of such practices. Within such statements strong objectification of women as passive sex ‘providers’ to men rather than those actively participating in sexual activities could be observed:

‘How is it Polish women that you give yourselves all over, to anyone who wants’ (male)

It was claimed that Polish women who engage in relationships with men of other than Polish ethnic origins “spoil” the opinion of the whole country Poland. By such users women were seen as ‘representatives of the nation’:

‘Because of such women from London it is not only them who lose out in the eyes of foreigners but the whole our country does’ (male)

The counter-opinions expressed by other forum users suggested that such a statement strongly objectifies women and therefore it was strongly rejected:

‘Gentlemen, don’t exaggerate, Polish women are not prostitutes... and they won’t be giving themselves either to you, dear country-fellows, or to any other nation’ (male)

Moreover, it was claimed by some male forum participants that apparently some men of other ethnic origins also see Polish women in such an objectifying way; as passive sex ‘providers’:

‘It piss me off that Pakistani or Hindu comes over to me at work and boosts about how many Polish women he slept with’ (male)

It was also suggested that Polish men are laughed at by men of other ethnic origins in the UK, because Polish women are sexually active whilst abroad:
'Other nations laugh at us, Polish men, and such stories how many Polish women they slept with are very frequent. [...] Many Polish women and girls act outside the country as typical and additionally cheap sl...s. At the moment I don’t think as a man. For me, a Pole, it is very upsetting'. (male)

Men expressing such views appear to have conservative attitudes to gender and sexuality, according to which women are not allowed to actively engage in sexual relations with a person of their choice (i.e. of varied ethnic origins) and when they do so, they risk being stigmatized. This could also be the case in relation to how some men of other ethnic origins may perceive some Polish women in the UK as they may also hold conservative views on gender and sexuality.

Moreover, the suggestion was made by other user that it could simply be a man’s talk i.e. men like to talk about their sexual adventures even if they are only the imagined adventures rather than the real ones:

‘One has to consider how true these stories are coming from Turkish or Afghani men that they ‘slept’ with Polish women. Men like to boost about a lot’ (female)

However, the claim was made that it is rather Polish men than men of other ethnic origins who engage in stigmatizing and name-calling Polish women who engage in relations with men of other ethnicities:

‘Never before I heard about a stereotype of a Polish woman as a slut from an Englishman. However, I heard many times when Polish men called so their female country-fellows, who had relationships with British or Pakistani men. Stereotypes don’t come from anywhere’ (male)

“Sexual-ethnic double standard” was constructed within these debates as it was claimed that whilst a Polish woman can engage in a sexual activity with a Polish man, she is not allowed to do that with a man of other ethnic origins. At the same time, Polish men are also allowed to do so women of other ethnic origins, but Polish women should not:

‘So if a Polish woman goes with me, that’s cool, but it’s bad if she does it with somebody else. Gentlemen, let’s be honest, which one of you didn’t feel like [meeting a woman of other ethnic origins]? If possible I would be very willing. Who wouldn’t be? Why do we criticise women? I don’t defend anyone, but please be tolerant. It is a private issue of each person. Let everybody live their life, and how they do it, it’s their business’ (male)

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5 It is understood as sexual double standard embracing the issues surrounding ethnicities
Men’s bodies and sexual relations

It was pointed out that Polish men who express negative opinions towards women engaging in relationships with men of other ethnic origins may be sexually frustrated as they themselves are not involved in relations with any women:

‘And why do you write rubbish? Do you have some complexes over racial issues or your hand can’t stand it anymore? [...] if any woman prefers other races over you, one should only feel sorry for you. [...] and maybe this problem exists only in your head as a creation of imagination tired of masturbation?’ (male)

Such men were seen as unable to engage in similar relationships either with Polish or with women of other ethnic origins; in the latter case likely due to poor language knowledge:

‘Why are you so much focused on Polish women? [...] But be honest men. Do you feel upset because they don’t look at you (such great men) and you don’t speak good enough English to be able to attract British women or other migrant women?’ (female)

‘Rather Poles are hopeless. There aren’t any discussions here about English, Hindu, Black or any other wives or fiancées of Polish men...’ (female)

When Body, Gender and Sexuality Intersect with Ethnicity

Negative comments made about Polish women were seen by some forum users as driven by nationalistic attitudes and seen as a need to preserve Polish women for Polish men through controlling their activities (also the sexual ones):

‘You should only get condolences now. No Polish woman was interested in you. And this should justify in your opinion the crusade in defence of POLISH AR...E, understood in wider patriotic terms?’ (male)

However, such nationalistic attitudes were ridiculed by others and the questions were asked whether there is a “national duty” for Polish women to engage in relations only with Polish men. The claim was also made that Polish women are not owned by Polish men:

‘Who cares who Polish women sleep with? Does any Polish woman have a duty to see only Polish men? If this is a constitutional duty, you men are such great patriots, and what are you doing on the Isles?’ (female)
'Why are you so jealous about Polish women? You are boiling when you see a Polish woman with a foreigner. Nevermind his nationality, POLISH WOMEN DON’T BELONG TO POLISH MEN’ (female)

The discussion was raised to a global level and it was argued that a person’s ethnicity whilst engaging in relations with other people does not matter in the global world:

‘We live in the world in a global village, where nationality doesn’t matter. The fact that you offend Polish women who meet with foreigners simply shows your own level!’ (female)

It was also argued by some that women should be able to act freely the same as men do including engagements in relations, also of sexual nature without a risk of being criticized and their choices should be their private matters:

‘How is it that a man is always allowed and we, women, have to resign from everything, because they can talk about us. If anybody fancies a foreigner, it is their private matter’ (female)

‘Easy or not easy [women]. Who cares? […] everybody does what they want and they have a right to it’ (male)

GENDER AND SEXUAL ENVIRONMENT

The importance of gender and sexuality environment was also stressed in internet discussions. By some forum users the UK context was seen as more liberal and characterised by sexual liberty, whilst the Polish context was perceived as more conservative:

‘I don’t understand how in the atmosphere of total sexual freedom amongst young people on the Isles anybody can be seen as sleeping around’ (female)

The claim was also made that women change the way they think once they move to the UK and it was argued they should never be allowed to leave Poland in the first place:

‘It is a call for men, never allow your women to go abroad, even if you are to go together. Their brains turn sides as soon as they cross the border. Total reset. It is a fact, tried in practice’ (male)
BODIES AND REPRODUCTIVE ISSUES

Contraception

Some discussions surrounded contraception i.e. some Polish women sought advice on the forums about places, where they would be able to obtain contraceptives in the UK. Differences between Poland and the UK were discussed, and the UK was described as a “contraceptive paradise”, where contraceptives are available free of charge. At the same time, they are quite expensive in Poland and the claim was made that they should be made free as this helps to prevent unplanned pregnancies:

‘In comparison to Poland it is a ‘contraceptive’ paradise’ (female)

‘I have lived in the UK for two years. All the contraception is free. When I lived in Poland, I used contraception pills, which are unfortunately quite expensive and most women can’t afford to buy them. I think that such basic means as contraception pills should be free-of-charge’ (female)

Abortion

The debate on abortion started with some forum participants quoting newspaper publications which claimed that a large number of Polish women undergo abortion in the UK. However, it was argued that despite a possibility of having abortion done on the NHS many women still use private ways to terminate pregnancy:

‘Every year ten thousands Polish women undergo abortion in London only. [...] despite abortion being free-of-charge in the UK, most ‘Polish’ abortions are carried privately or completely illegally’ (male)

Another claim was made that it is a woman’s private matter and comments suggesting interest in these issues is driven by conservative views and is an attempt to control women’s activities:

‘And so what? Why do you care? It stinks with mohair’ *

Moreover, it was suggested that Polish women use so called ‘abortion underground’ in the UK. Some forum participants wondered why women would

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* Mohair [Polish – Moher] became a symbol of conservative thinking in Poland. The word originated in mohair hats worn by older Polish women who are church-goers and who are seen to have conservative views on gender and sexuality
Constructions around body within recent Polish migration to the United Kingdom

do so in the face of free access to abortion services available on the NHS or the possibility of using private services set up for this purpose. This was seen as a strange practice in the light of legally allowed access to abortion in the UK in opposition to Poland, where abortion is prohibited and abortion underground is well-developed:

‘But why underground? In the UK one can undergo abortion legally for free on the NHS or privately in the clinic.’ (female)

‘If abortion is legally allowed, why so many women undergo illegal abortion, ‘in the underground’?’ (female)

Women experiencing unplanned pregnancies also used the forum to look for information about the ways abortion is done in the UK:

‘I became pregnant, but it is not a planned pregnancy and I want to terminate it. How do you do it here? Where should I go? Directly to the hospital or to my GP?’ (female)

The differences in attitudes towards women dealing with the situation of unplanned pregnancies in Poland and in the UK were also stressed. The attitude in the UK was seen as more ‘human’ and where women have an opportunity to make a decision themselves and this was appreciated by female forum users:

‘Go to your GP or to the Family Planning Centre – in the UK women in your situation are not treated as an outcast’

‘Every woman has a right to decide because she lives in a FREE country the UK and not a Catholic, bigoted and backward Poland’.

EVALUATING VIEWS ON BODY AS GENDERED AND SEXUALISED WITHIN MIGRATION SPACE

In a wider perspective although the analysis focuses on bodies, it is also helpful for learning more about contexts, ideologies and practices that constitute bodies and the constructions around them. Different views on body were identified through the analysis and it was found that debates contained a mixture of nationalist, patriarchal, conservative and liberal attitudes. These discussions concerning bodies in migration space are initiated within a specific discourse – a nationalist discourse. However, at the same time counter-discourses are also
constructed. Conservative and patriarchal attitudes are mostly associated with the
Polish gender context, whilst liberal attitudes with the UK context, although they
are also present in Poland. This agrees with a claim made by Bator (1999) that there
had been two prevalent discourses on gender in Poland in the 1990s; a nationalist,
conservative and patriarchal discourse based on Catholic Church’s teachings,
which accordingly sets specific roles for women; and a liberal discourse treating
women as equal citizens aware of their rights and who should fully participate in
public life. Migration to the UK gives an opportunity to interact even more with
a liberal context, outside of the Catholic Church’s politics and the conservative
governments’ policies. However, some men still expressed more nationalist,
patriarchal and conservative views, whilst women and some men articulated more
liberal views on body.

Nationalism has been a dominant political discourse in Poland for quite a
long time, but it has been highly prevalent especially since 1989. Initially, it was a
backlash against communism, when pro-democratic changes started in Poland and
within this backlash; the conservative and nationalistic understandings of ethnic,
gender and sexual identities have been revoked. This has been additionally fused
with Catholicism and its approach to gender and sexuality (Pryke 1998). McClintock
(1997) suggests that all nationalisms are gendered and alleges that the needs of
the nation are typically defined by men and often connected to their aspirations.
At the same time women’s needs and wants are dismissed and this is the case
with Poles in the UK. Furthermore, Milic (1996) argues that nationalism dwells on
people’s frustrations and fantasies, in this case men’s. Within a nationalist project
women are perceived as ‘mothers of the nation’ (Sharp 1996: 99) and reproducers
of national and ethnic group identities and boundaries (Einhorn 1996; Yuval-Davis
and Anthias 1989). As a consequence women’s bodies, behaviours and roles are
‘objects of national concern’, and as such they are closely monitored and controlled
(Puri 2004: 115) and the same happens to Polish women in the UK. There are
restrictions exercised on the choice of a partner for their marital and sexual relations.
Pryke (1998) suggests that nationalist ideology insist on ‘national sexual duty’ e.g.
an individual is required to seek a partner within his or her national or ethnic group
and some forum users required this from Polish women in the UK.

Within the nationalist approach also state-based regulation related to
reproduction is also targeted at women (Puri 2004; McClintock 1997). Women’s
bodies are controlled through anti-abortion laws and as such it means that women
have no right as individuals to make decisions about their own bodies (Milic
1996). Such control is also often done in the name of religion and moral values
(Melchiori 2001) and this is a case in Poland where strict anti-abortion law is in
place. Pryke (1998) alleges that nationalism in its view of gender and sexuality
does not allow any space for women’s agency.
Furthermore, attitudes to gender and sexuality in Polish culture are influenced by patriarchy (Hauser et al 1993). As Liu (1994) argues, patriarchal ideology constructs specific meaning of sexuality as to serve the interests of men rather than that of women. Men are allowed to have sexual desires and sexual freedom, but not the women (Abbott et al 2005) and this can be observed in relation to Polish women in the UK. According to Liu (1994) a woman is expected to abstain from sexual activities and any contravention of these rules is severely punished, as women are then stigmatized and labelled negatively and Polish women in the UK also experience it. Melosik (2002) suggests that women’s sexual activity may lead to anxiety amongst men, as they become afraid of losing power over women as well as losing them as potential partners.

As it was outlined earlier, the nationalist discourse is dominant in Poland and this analysis showed that this discourse in a way “travelled” with migrants. Within this discourse women and their bodies are constructed in a specific way; they are not only a national symbol, but also sexualised aspects of the body are seen in particular ways. However, counter-discourses were created in the process such as liberal one, which gives women choice in relation to their lives and does not prescribe strict gender and sexual roles. These two discourses have been battled over on ‘the symbolic terrain’ of Polish women’s bodies (Liu 1994: 37). Liberalism as an ideology in relation to gender is concerned with the language of gender equality and equal rights for women and men. Generally, such a view is mostly held by women and cultivated by the women’s movement, but it is still quite limited in Poland, at least in an official public discourse. However, according to Saxonberg (2000), Polish women, especially the younger and the more educated ones are more in favour of gender equality than men. The analysis also showed that some men have liberal views on gender and sexuality.

In the UK women have more opportunities to interact more with a liberal context. In addition attitudes are liberal and more personal freedom and choice is allowed in relation to gender and sexuality. This liberal context offers a lot to women and they are the ones who use these opportunities and this is heavily criticized by some men. It can be observed within discussions that women actively argue against nationalist, patriarchal and conservative views. As Einhorn (1996) alleges, women refuse gender and sexuality constructions imposed on them by others and they want to be able to construct their own understandings. Einhorn (1996) also argues that women open up the spaces for interethnic dialogue and this is also the case with Polish women in the UK.

However, Poles in the UK encounter not only liberal attitudes but also conservative and patriarchal attitudes from people of other ethnic origins. Within such views, liberated women are seen as commodified and prone to ‘sexual exploitation’ and such a view also does not allow for women’s agency. It appears
then from the analysis that some migrant men of other ethnic origins try to impose their understandings of gender and sexuality on Polish women and men.

There are different constructions around female body and sexuality in Poland and the UK. In the UK, sex is separated from reproduction, and in Poland within the official public gender and sexuality context, sex is constructed as closely connected to reproduction and a strict anti-abortion law is in place. Also, in the UK, women are decision makers with regards to the reproductive sides of their lives, and on the other hand, in Poland, this decision has been made for them in the form of a strict anti-abortion law. This law in Poland takes away women’s rights to control their own bodies and reproduction, but women gain this right in the UK. The fact that there may be Polish women who undergo abortion in the UK caused stir among some discussants, whilst others thought it was a normal phenomenon. Moreover, whilst some women used legally available abortion services run by the NHS, other women used other alternative ways by undergoing abortion in private clinics, or made use of “abortion underground”. For some women liberal attitudes to sexuality and availability of free access to abortion in the UK may not really be important, it is likely that shame and the lack of language knowledge pushes some women to the underground when they seek help in situations where they want to terminate the unplanned pregnancy.

CONCLUSIONS

This article looked at the constructions around gendered and sexualised body within Polish migration to the UK. Not much attention has been paid to body within migration and this paper attempts to fill this gap. It shows how bodies are becoming ‘gendered’ and sexualised within migration space (Jackson and Scott 2001). In wider terms, this article also contributed to the debate on gender, sexuality and migration. It also showed how the use of novel research techniques such as the analysis of internet forum discussions can help in extending knowledge about gender and sexuality within the migration process.

The analysis showed that gender and sexuality ideologies and contexts have a great impact on people’s views on body, particularly on women’s bodies. It also demonstrated that gender and sexual ideologies and practices are negotiated and reshaped as part of the migration process (McIlwaine et al 2006; Datta et al 2008), where different views on gender and sexuality as well of intersections of these with ethnicity come into play. Gender and sexuality are both reconstructed and reproduced within the transnational space; in the opinion of Dannecker (2005), especially women’s migration initiates transformations of gender and this was the case in this research, which also revealed women’s liberalising agency. However, some men were trying to reinforce conservative views of gender and sexuality. As
Akpinar (2003) suggests, in the migration context, men who are discriminated and as a result frustrated and who additionally hold conservative views, will attempt to exert pressure on females to hold onto patriarchal values. However, many women were questioning these norms through their individual practices (Mahler and Pessar 2006) and some men did the same. At the same time, some women relied on the sexuality constructions prevalent in Poland and considered abortion as too private an issue to be able to seek help in the public health system.

Practices concerning women’s bodies and their sexualities are in flux within this migration process. Two intersecting processes take place in relation to sexual practices within this migration. Firstly, the process of liberalisation of sexual practices i.e. women in the new context construct more liberal sexual practices and embrace the ‘sexual freedom’ of the new context. Secondly, the process of ‘nationalisation’ of sexual practices takes place. As the new multicultural context offers opportunities to mix with people of other ethnic origins than Polish and some women and also men engage in relationships of varied nature with people of other than Polish ethnic origins, such relations are perceived negatively by some Polish men as well as men of other ethnicities, who then try to impose their conservative views on Polish women and men. It appears that women’s views are changing in the new environment but not all the men’s, or at least women find it liberating in gender and sexual terms.

REFERENCES


INTRODUCTION

The recent political and public debate in the UK is focused on the cohesion and integration of increasing cultural and ethnic diversity within British multicultural society (Robinson 2005). This appears to occur within the framework of possible instability of social cohesion caused by increased immigration and cultural diversity (Castles and Miller, 2003). The discourse on incorporating cultural differences emerged as a result of a breakdown of assimilation theory and understanding that the ‘melting pot’ did not always melt, as ethnic minorities were not completely incorporated into the British nation state. Instead, the ethnic and racial diversities have reproduced and reconstructed themselves, constructing not a single ethnic identity but hybrid ethno-national, ethno-local and ethno-national, ethno-local and ethno-transnational boundaries of social identity (Hesse, 2000).

The recent multicultural policy called Community Cohesion adopted by the British government is a new idea of setting and managing ethnic and cultural diversities by putting the notion of ethnic communities and shared relations and values within its central concern (Cantle, 2001). According to its agenda, the integration and cooperation between diverse cultures should occur between ethnic communities based on shared values and mutual intercultural dialogue. According to this meaning, the community is a frame through which the issue of cultural and ethnic differences should be understood and managed (Robinson, 2005).

Basing on the study of Polish migrants in Glasgow, this article will argue that the meaning of community exists in multiple and fragmented forms. As the concept of community is being constantly constructed, imagined, and reconstructed by human relations it does not explain itself but requires a fuller explanation (Cohen, 1985). Alleyne (2002) suggests a reflexive concept of community; one that focuses on the exploration of the process of community formation. This requires an analysis of how the meaning of community came to exist in the first place and how it reproduces itself. Consequently, this study is aimed at exploring the
dynamics of Polish communities’ formation within the Glasgow area. In particular, it will concentrate on an analysis of the meaning of ‘community’ among groups of Polish migrants living and working in Glasgow and how this varies in relation to gender, age, and social class. In addition, this study will analyse the dynamic of the social networks of Polish migrants within their ethnic group living in the Glasgow area and it will explore the factors (cultural, social, political, economic, etc.) and the ways in which social networks within the Polish community are mediated and developed. Finally, it will explore the types of activities (physical, emotional, material) that are performed by the Polish community in the Glasgow area and the attachment that Polish migrants feel towards the city and their sense of belonging and attitudes to living in multicultural diverse areas.

MIGRATION FROM POLAND TO GLASGOW.

Since 2004 and the accession of various countries from Eastern Europe into the Europe Union, Scotland alongside with the rest of the UK has experience the increase in the number of migrants coming from central and Eastern European (predominantly from Poland, but also from: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria known as Accession 10). According to Home Office data, between May 2004 and December 2004 there were 134,555 Work Registration Scheme (WRS)1 applications, following 212,325 WRS applications in 2005 and 217,970 in 2007 (Home Office, 2009). However, it should be emphasised that WRS data presented an incomplete picture of the net migration of A8 migrants to the UK, as it does not monitor the outflow of A8 nationals from the UK. The WRS data includes only those A8 migrants who register when they take up a job within the first year of their stay in the UK, however it does not monitor the duration of employment or if and when a return home occurs. The data thus give a cumulative total of those arriving but no information on departure and so cannot be regarded as migrant stock statistics. The second major problem with the data is that they do not record those migrants who are self- employed, students (unless they register to work), dependants, or migrants who simply do not register with the WRS. In addition, it can be argued that the WRS data monitors the numbers of applications for particular jobs that migrants possess during the first twelve months of their stay in the UK, not the number of applicants themselves. Apart from the WRS data, the number of

1 The Work Registration Scheme (WRS) was introduced in 2004 to monitored the influx of labour migration of A8 nationals to the UK. Each national from an A8 countries who wishes to take up work with an employer in the UK for at least a month is required to register with the scheme and to pay a registration fee (£90) to the Home Office. Applicants must re-register with the scheme if they change employer (but do not pay another fee) for the first twelve months of their stay in the UK.
National Insurance Number applications (NINo) made by A8 nationals also makes it possible to identify some of the major socio-demographic characteristics of the new EU post-accessed migrants. However, similar to the WRS data, these figures do not give a full picture of the scale of migration, but only indicate general trends and cannot be regarded as a definitive representation.

Table 1: Number of the WRS and NINo registrations made by A8 migrant workers in Scotland 2004-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WRS</th>
<th>NINo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>8,150</td>
<td>3,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>15,895</td>
<td>20,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>19,050</td>
<td>27,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>19,550</td>
<td>27,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 2008</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>5,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>66,345</td>
<td>85,398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to Home Office data Polish migrants constitute the largest group registering and account for 64.4 per cent (327,538 people) of the A8 migrants in total (Home Office, 2009). In terms of the geographic concentration of Polish migrants within the UK, it seems that Poles are being widely distributed throughout the whole country. However, some parts of the UK, in particular the Scottish Borders, Central Valley, and the industrial North East are the main areas of Polish migrant concentration when compared to other regions within the country. With reference to the same data, the number of A8 migrant workers who had settled in Scotland registered by the WRS up until the first quarter of 2008 was 66,345. However, the data from the Department of Work and Pensions shows that between May 2004 and March 2008, 85,396 A8 nationals applied for a National Insurance Number. Both data sources, although they contain different estimations on the influx of EU post-enlargement migration show an increase in the number of applicants over the same time period.

In terms of the geographical location of A8 migrants in Scotland, until September 2005 one out of every four post-accession migrants lived in Edinburgh, with slightly fewer in Perth (15%), Aberdeen (14%), and Glasgow (11%). In
2007, accordingly to the WRS data, 3,135 migrant workers from A8 countries lived in Glasgow. Similarly, figures from the Department of Work and Pensions show that between 2002/03 and 2005/2006 there were 3,730 registrations for a NINo made by A8 nationals (Blake Stevenson, 2007). Even though Glasgow City Council does not keep separate records of migration from accession states, their estimation on the basis of the WRS and NINo figures indicates the total number of A8 migrants being closer to 5,000 (Blake Stevenson, 2007).

DEFINING THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN GLASGOW. APPLIED RESEARCH METHODS

The aim of this project was to analyse the structures and dynamics of the Polish migrants’ co-ethnic networks that are being created within the Glasgow area. The quantitative analysis of WRS and NINo data, focusing on the extent of EU post-accessed migration flow and its geographical spread within and to Scotland, provides the context for the further exploration of Polish migrants’ communities in Glasgow. Subsequently, the migrants’ socio-demographic characteristics - such as migrants age, gender, employment status, undertaken occupations, and wage levels, have been analysed within the study. The qualitative methods, the in-depth interviews with Polish migrants, were use to grasp the relations, interactions, and other mechanisms that constitute and facilitate social networks creation. Indeed, it should be emphasised that migrants’ networks involve both meanings and actions that are placed within the context of specific geographic and symbolic locale, therefore this research only focused on post-accessed Polish migrants living and working in the Glasgow area.

The first stage of the sample selection was to define the characteristics of Polish migrants living and working in Scotland, particularly in Glasgow. The sampling frame based on the number of WRS or NINo registrations proved to be of limited use. Therefore the further in-depth analysis of the available literature, recent studies on A8 migrants in Scotland, particularly in Glasgow (Blake Steverson, 2007; Clark et al., 2008), Edinburgh (Orchard, Szymanski and Vlahova, 2007), Fife (Fife City Council, 2007), and Tayside (Scottish Economic Research, 2006) were required to identify the target migration population. Based on exploration of local studies and available data the contacts to Polish migrants communities and other service providers who provide assistance to the Polish migrants living in Glasgow have been identified. The service providers and members of established communities served as initial contacts that provided the researcher with the names and contact information of other potential Polish migrants living in Glasgow who fulfilled the research criteria.
In selecting interviewees attention was given to factors such as age, gender, migrants’ professional/working status, and area they were living in throughout Glasgow. However, to avoid the situation where the whole sample was narrowed down to one group of friends or relatives (Erikson, 1979), which is a possible result when using the snowball method of data gathering, the initial contact was differentiated with various contacts via the service providers, members of established migrants communities, or the dedicated migrants’ web sites such as www.emito.net, and www.glasgow24.pl, to ensure that subjects from different areas and subgroups appear in the final sample. In addition, each subject who agreed to participate in the research provided an additional number of respondents, this process continued until the desired number of names was reached (Goodman, 1961). At the final stage the sample of interviewed migrants included twelve Polish migrants of diverse ages, genders, professional/working statuses, and living in various areas of Glasgow.

Table 2: Sample of interviewed Polish migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between 40 and 50 years old</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 25 and 35 years</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professionals/ highly qualified migrants</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low paid migrants</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of living in Glasgow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West End</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East End</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sout Side</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the research includes two focus groups with Polish members of established Polish community groups in Glasgow, in particular with six members of Govan Residents and five Polish teachers from Polish Saturday School in
Glasgow. The aim of the focus group was to give insights into the mechanisms of groups’ practices and methods of establishing formal migrants’ organisations as one of the methods of maintaining migrants’ collective identity. In addition, attention was given to the range of factors that influence the foundation of migrants’ organisations and in the longer term its further aims and activities. Furthermore, the aim of the focus group was to grasp a better sense of complex dynamics and developments of relations that take place within Polish community.

Apart from interviews with migrants themselves, the study included in-depth interviews with particular key stakeholders who work in Glasgow and have an interest or concern with Polish migrant populations. The interviews with various service providers aimed to explore both the range of trust and distrust relations within Polish communities and the diverse forms of social networks created within it. Based on the in-depth analysis of the available literature, recent studies on A8 migrants in Scotland, particularly in Glasgow (Blake Steverson, 2007; Clark et al., 2008), Edinburgh (Orchard et al., 2007), Fife (Fife City Council, 2007), and Tayside (Scottish Economic Research, 2006), five service providers from already established migrant communities and several non profit organisations which provide assistance to Polish migrants have been identified: the Polish Saturday School in Glasgow, Sikorski Polish Club, St Simon Church, Resident of Govan, and the West of Scotland Regional Equality Council.

US’ VERSUS ‘THEM’. THE DIVERSIFICATION OF POLISH COMMUNITY IN GLASGOW

Community, as a specific unit of sociological studies, is arguably one of the most ambiguous and vague terms in sociology (Day, 2006). In general, the idea of community refers to a body of resemblance and ties that people have between each other that binds them together and creates their sense of belonging. In general, the idea of community is about collectiveness and various links that construct its internal relations. The idea of community is understood as a framework within which people experience continually repeated personal contacts with the same people, where ties can be created around a group of close friends, family or neighbours, who are in regular, usually daily and face-to-face, contact with one another. As community can be perceived as a contested idea, attention can be drawn to the way it is defined by social actors. This means that community is constructed around aggregate relations that its members can feel, identify and describe. As such, the community, and the ties within it, is something that members are conscious about and these brought into being through the interpretative activities of their members. The idea of community and its internal ties are constructed
via the members’ awareness, based on the symbolisation of the group boundaries by which the group differentiate themselves from the others (Cohen, 1985). Community is composed as a set of symbols, norms, values and moral codes, and ideological awareness which provides a sense of identity for its members.

The Polish migrants in Glasgow experience a complex range of relations within their community that involves different levels of trust and reciprocity. As such, Polish migrants maintained a diverse range of social contacts that were made through personal relationships including kinship, friendship, and community ties. Such networks vary in commitment and feelings of trust, solidarity, and reciprocity. Those personal ties in which Polish migrants were embedded, vary in terms of in complex and multi-stranded levels of personal confidences and emotional support, as well as common interest and companionship. Indeed, migrant feelings of commitment and trust towards other groups or individuals determined the way in which migrants gradated their personal relations from strong ties with a high level of commitment and trust to weak ties. Interviewing migrants suggested that most of their strong ties were concentrated around their family relations.

*I live with my partner here, and apart from that in Glasgow I have my parents and my brother and sister. Those are the people I can count on, and vice versa. I can say that I’m lucky because I have my closest people with my here in Glasgow.*

(Kasia, female, 29, on maternity leave)

Polish migrants define family relations through blood relations, marriage, or partnership and tend to feel a high sense of obligation towards each other. The research on illegal Polish migrants in Belgium suggests that social networks among Polish migrants based on common ethnicity began to lessen in value in comparison with family networks (Grzymała-Kozłowska, 2005). As Polish migrants settle within the host community they often brought their family, thus family networks steadily replaced broad ethnic cooperation and relationships on the basis of kinship began to play the most significant role. Family relations provided an important instrument and construct of social capital that could be used in order to pursue migration and facilitate adaptation within a new environment. The presence of the family in Glasgow for many Polish migrants provided emotional, informational, and practical support like arranging accommodation, employment, or helping with access to public services. Most of interviewed Polish migrants interact with members of their families or specific groups of friends and while those groups of networks are based on varying numbers of co-ethnic relations, they often distinguish their close ties and communities from the wider perceived
and more generalised ethnic community, as a different and trustful one. Indeed, interviewed Polish migrants in Glasgow suggested a lack of cooperation between closed, small kinship, and friendship network groups. Thus, it could be argued that Polish migrant daily life was bounded among specific, trusted, and close groups of networks between members of the family and close friends (Evergeti and Zontini, 2006). In addition, those close, trusted relations were not created within the host country, but they were transferred from their home country and acquired upon arrival. This was especially true in terms of Polish migrants’ strong ties, which were relocated and carried from the migrant home country than acquired upon arrival. Migrants often indicated the fact that they had already established close and trusting relations either with their family and friends in Glasgow or back home, thus they did not have a need to search for a new ones.

I’m staying with my partner, and apart from that I have a few good friends here, and some, back in Poland, and to be honest it is enough for me.

(Agnieszka, female, 25, PhD student)

The Polish migrants in Glasgow tend to distinguish two types of co-ethnic relations, those organised around small kinship, and friendship network groups and others, more generalised one that were perceived as a mistrustful one. Polish migrants in Glasgow tend to report a lack of solidarity within their co-ethnic community and a general feeling of distrust towards other Polish migrants. The interviewed Poles in Glasgow emphasised the general suspicion towards the Polish ‘imagined’ community² living in Glasgow and they tended to be mistrustful of other Polish fellows.

In general, when you meet other Poles on the street you have this distance. I remember three years ago when we went shopping and we heard Polish voice, it was something great, but now, when we hear Polish voices we go to an another direction, you know how the Poles are here.

(Kasia, female, 29, on maternity leave)

The findings are consistent with other research on Polish migrants in London (Eade et al., 2006; Ryan et al., 2008; Ryan and White, 2008). In should be emphasised that the increasing number of Polish migrants coming to Glasgow

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² Concept introduced by Benedict Anderson (1983) which states that a nation is a community socially constructed, which is to say imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group. As such the nation is an “imagined political community”: imagined because the members of the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. A nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves or, in other words imagine themselves as to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one
Encountering Forms of co-ethnic relations: Polish community in Glasgow

introduces competition for employment opportunities. For example, while between 2003/2004 there were thirty Polish NINo registrations in Glasgow, while in 2006 the number of Polish NINO registrations reached 2620 (Blake Steverson, 2007). It was especially true in terms of low skilled migrants for whom co-ethnic ties were the only source of support in terms of employment or accommodation. That is, the Polish migrants’ co-ethnic relations often provide the support for other relatives living in Glasgow, but at the same time the appearance of the numbers of Polish migrants in Glasgow constitute the source of competition over limited resources on the labour market. This often caused the broken expectation and lead to conflict between Polish migrants. In fact, this sets up discrepancies in perception between particularly close, personal Polish communities and the general population of Polish migrants living in Glasgow who were often recognised as competitive and threatening. From the interviews, it could be argued that Polish migrants had a dichotomous perception of their own community, ranging from close and trustful relations with their close family and friends to suspicion and distance towards other Polish follows. The research in London (Ryan et al., 2008) suggested that in the longer term migrants tend to rationalise their distrust relations and balance them with on-going reliance upon co-ethnics.

I think that Polish community is not well organised. I think that we are too lazy and egoistic for that. However, in general my experiences with other Poles are rather positive. I try to avoid the contact with other Poles who I don’t trust [...] I think that Poles are meeting only with their own friends and families.

(Renata, female, 45, cleaner)

Respondents tended to emphasise their supportive and trustful relations, mutual help, and support from their relatives or other circles of Polish friends, which often comprised their main source of emotional and informative support. In addition, based on research of undocumented migrants in London, Jordan (2002), suggested that while there is a general low level of social trust within post-communist societies the networks of friends and family are highly trusted. It should be emphasised that many Poles during the communist era relied on a wide range of kinship and other informal social networks to obtain desirable goods and services, compensating inadequacies in official provisions (Sztompka, 1999). According to the Public Opinion Research Centre in Poland (2008), almost three out of four Poles indicate a low level of trust towards the people they do not know, compared, to one out of four who indicated that they should trust most people.

Apart of my husband, I have some friends from my college and from my home town. They are all Polish. Apart of those people there is Andrzej, my husband’s
work colleague. He is this kind of person who you can trust and count on, he is always willing to help whenever we ask for it.

(Renata, female, 45, cleaner)

In addition, the low level of trust among the Polish community was associated with widely-recognised stereotypes of ‘immoral Poles’, who were perceived as those migrants who compete between each other, live on social benefits, have a tendency to emphasise their economic status, and in particular have a tendency to show off their economic status and wages, but at the same time they complain about a lack of social justice. The reinforcement of this stereotype often justified migrants’ dichotomous perception of the Polish community and gives a reasonable explanation for selectivity in terms of given support.

Sometimes I feel ashamed of Poles behaviour, for example, I’m standing in the grocery shop and I can here 3 Poles behind me buying vodka and swearing all the time. I know that Scots swears too, but we, Poles, are here as a guest, this is not our country. This is Scotland, and this is their [Scots] country and we suppose to respect their law and culture. I don’t like those Poles who are coming here with this demanding attitude, looking only for occasion to apply for social benefits.

(Kasia, female, 29, on maternity leave)

The rationalisation process of mistrust and competitiveness was strongly referred to the notion of ‘immoral Poles’, meaning ‘benefit abusers’ or ‘dodgers’. The previous research on undocumented Polish migrants in London (Jordan, 2002) and Brussels (Grzymała-Kozłowska, 2005) indicated that the increased competitive situation in the informal labour market resulted in frequent examples of exploitation throughout the Polish community. Low levels of cultural capital and limited access to economic resources of undocumented Polish migrants resulted in little assistance and cooperation within their ethnic community. However, the legal status of post-accession Polish migrants in Glasgow and their migration experience differed from that undocumented ones, although the notion of competitiveness and exploitation among Polish community in Glasgow was still an issue.

No, I wasn’t deceived by Poles personally, I don’t have that experience maybe because I can count on my family, but I heard from other Poles the stories like that.

(Barbara, female, 50, cleaner)
Encountering Forms of co-ethnic relations: Polish community in Glasgow

Migrants tend to adopt strategies to rationalise the support that they receive from other Polish migrants, simultaneously distinguishing it from imagined Polish community. As it was anticipated above, many Polish migrants in Glasgow receive various support from other Poles despite the widely recognised rhetoric of suspicion and lack of trust. In addition, ascribed and shared meaning of ‘immoral Poles’ was often used by Poles to interpret the various relations within the Polish community.

*When I meet other Poles on the street I keep the distance, I don’t know why it is like that, it is stupid, because we should help each other as one nation and what is more, we should not feel ashamed of each other.*

(Kasia, female, 29, on maternity leave)

It should be emphasised that the lack of solidarity amongst Polish migrants living in Glasgow was also associated with social class stratification. The Verdaguer (2009) argues that scholars who concentrate on the ethnic solidarity often overlook class stratification among co-ethnics groups. Indeed, compared with migrants who have little knowledge of the English language, the Polish students or professionals indicated that they had little contact with the Polish community, apart from their close relatives and friends. Their social networks branched out from their co-ethnic relations and often included various networks with other nationalities. In addition, they often stated that their perception on the general Polish community in Glasgow did not change due to their migration.

*I don’t work with Poles and don’t study with Poles, and I don’t go to the church, and I don’t think that because of the fact I’m from Poland I need to find a friend who is Polish. I don’t have a need to meet with other Poles. Maybe if I didn’t have Polish partner, I would have this need to meet other Polish people, perhaps just to talk in Polish language.*

(Daniel, male, 25, architectural assistant)

Polish migrants level of cultural capital, mainly their proficiency in English language, limits their social networks to co-ethnic ones. Indeed, those migrants tend to depend on their co-ethnic relations as a source of emotional, informational and practical support. It should be emphasised that Polish migrants define the meaning of support mainly in terms of provision of various information on employment opportunities, arrangements of accommodation in Glasgow, and other information referring to accessing public services, health, education, or leisure. For some Polish migrants in Glasgow participation in co-ethnic networks strains their relationship with other Poles and often results in conflict and broken expectations.
This could support Evergeti and Zontini’s argument (2006) that theory on social capital tends to overemphasise the positive role of co-ethnic networks, in a sense idealising its cooperation nature and overlooking its diverse power relations. On some occasions Polish migrants perceive helping other migrants as a burden.

_I used to work in recruitment agency, so I met a lot of Poles whose English was rather poor. I was trying to treat them professionally and equally. Some of them where coming and crying that they need a job, and they are desperate to get it. It was this kind of psychological blackmail that because I’m from Poland I should treat them differently than other nationalities, what was not fair. And when I managed to organise something for them and I called with information that they can start the new job on the next day, sometimes, of course, they appreciated it a lot, but there were some occasions that something suddenly has happened that they couldn’t take the job. There were some situations like this. I know that I’m from Poland, but some people tried to use this, thinking that I should give them the job, just because I’m from Poland, not because they have sufficient qualifications. It is not like that._ (Weronika, female, 29, HR assistant)

From interviews it could be argued that many Polish migrants in Glasgow assumed that it is moral obligations that arise from the fact that all Polish migrants belong to imagined Polish community to help each other. As migration to host community place Polish migrant in different social and cultural, the fact of belonging to imaginary Polish community oblige other Polish migrants to provide support to those fellow Poles who are unfamiliar with social rules and norms in host community. Surprisingly, the Poles who relied the most on the co-ethnic networks were very critical about other Polish migrants living in Glasgow, indicating a lack of solidarity and support within Polish community. A high level of dependence was sometimes evident due to lack of fluency in English and this created unequal power relations between Polish migrants and often led to unrealistic expectations toward other Poles in Glasgow.

_Sometimes you can help people not because you want to have financial benefit from it, but just to feel good about it. Sometimes when you refuse to help other Poles, or that you are sorry but you don’t have time, you can get really negative reaction, something like, ‘this is how it is’, or ‘you can’t never count on other Poles’._

(Maciek, male, 28 factory worker, photograph)

Indeed, lack of proficiency in English language limited Polish migrants abilities for developing social networks to those within the Polish community. Different
Encountering Forms of co-ethnic relations: Polish community in Glasgow

expectations, needs and migrations aims result in the difficulties in exchanging and accumulating the trustful relations within the Polish communities in Glasgow. Solidarity of immigrant networks is not only contingent on structural forces in the context of reception, but also on specific pre-migration characteristics and the demographic traits of a particular immigrant community (Verdaguer, 2009). It should be emphasised that within groups of post-accessed Polish migrants we can distinguish diverse groups with different demographic and social characteristics such as Polish professionals, business people, students, low skilled migrants, families/single parents, and other Polish migrants who came to the UK and who stay abroad for various period of time. Polish migrants social structures such as gender, class, age and proficiency in English language embody different needs, expectation towards the social relations causing the difficulties in exchanging the trustful relation. As it was indicated above migrants’ social status, and language proficiency created internal social boundaries that influenced the process of social network creation between Poles in Glasgow. Again, different migrant trajectories constitute the important factor creating further social boundaries differentiating and influencing Polish social networks within their ethnic community. Those differentiations amongst Polish migrants living in Glasgow shaped their social relations and influenced their experience of forming and maintaining ethnic ties. Indeed, different migration experiences, migrants’ social class, age and gender lesser the mutual, co-ethnic relations within Poles living in Glasgow. In addition, some of the respondents emphasised that they have no need to meet other Poles in Glasgow as they have little in common regarding social and cultural capital.

Here, Polish community is very diverse, people need to have common aims or links to feel this solidarity between each other, but as I said there are various aims, class, social habits and needs and even though we are all from Poland it is not enough. In Poland you would not make friendship with someone with who you have nothing in common apart from your nationality, same in here. However, here it is much more possible that you will meet other Poles with whom, apart from being Polish you have nothing in common. Ok, we have the same history, tradition, we speak the same language, but it is very general. To make strong ties you need to have something else that you can refer to on daily basis. Yes, I meet many Poles on the street, but I won’t jump to each of them and say ‘hi I’m from Poland, let’s become friends’; it is so unnatural and rather weird.

(Agnieszka, female, 25, PhD student)

It seems that for Polish migrants the process of negotiation, maintenance, and construction of their ethnic identity was complex and includes diverse migration
Everget and Zontini (2006) suggest that it is not enough to define what ethnicity is but also ‘when’ and ‘how’ it is mobilised as communicative resources. In addition, Fenton et al. (2002) argued that the character of ethnic minorities’ distinctiveness is marked both by their culture and their specific position in the social class hierarchy. It means that ethnicity often corresponds with other markers of social stratification such as gender, social status, age, and religion that often overlap within each other and are constituted by processes of formatting and maintaining social boundaries that arise in particular contexts and construct significant factors influencing individuals’ social identity.

One of the teachers in Polish Saturday School indicated the complexity of factors that construct identity of Polish migrants.

*There are many different Poles coming to Glasgow, thus it is hard to describe them as one ‘Polonia’. Those people are bringing with them they habits, customs, language, culture, networks, social class, that are different among all Poles. Thus, even those we [Polish migrants] are using this same language, there are many things that make us different. I mean, some Poles will never get a chance to meet within each other, because they work, live in a different places and they have a different aims, values, perspectives, that as well define who they are.*

(Beata, female, 32, teacher in Polish school in Glasgow)

The symbolic meaning of Polonia refers here to imagined Polish community as a community of fellow Poles whose contact and networks are constructed on ethnic and cultural bonds. However, from the interviews, it could be argued that some of the traditional or well established boundaries of social identity such as social class, religion, gender, age and so on, construct as well important components of migrants’ sense of belonging. Again, Polish migrants tend to maintain the different forms of community consciousness and solidarity that were embedded and brought from their home country. In addition, Polish migrants suggested that despite their transnational citizens’ status they tend to reproduce and reshape their values carrying some of their cultural and social attachments across borders, thus social class, age, and gender are seen to be important factors diversifying migrant communities.

*There are two Poles working in our factory who know English language, but they don’t work with us, they sit with Scots in the offices, they are different than us.*

(Wojtek, male, 30, factory worker)
Polish migrants tend to position themselves with relation to a range of categories including class, ethnicity, age, gender, and religion. Migrants’ day-to-day experiences of working, studying, looking after children, and their experience of the communities they live in appear to be critical in influencing their attitudes to Glasgow and the extent to which they feel part of it.

From the interviews, it could be argued that Polish migrants experience and understanding of their ethnic community results from the interconnection of a migrant’s social status, perception of their ethnicity and migration experience. Those social boundaries constitute the criteria that shaped the access and maintenance of social relations of Polish migrants in Glasgow. Indeed, the differences in obligations towards various co-ethnic relations help to grade diverse networks in terms of migrant personal commitment. Polish migrants based their close, intimate, and trustful relations with high level of obligation within their family relations, mainly those relations between a migrant and their partner, siblings, or parents. It should be emphasised that those relations were not spatially bounded, as most of the interviewed migrants’ experienced close and dense transnational networks with their family and close friends back in Poland. Again, the high level of commitment within the close ties involves a high level of trust and solidarity. The interviewed migrants revealed the dichotomous perception of Polish community, as they tended to perceive their own community as a competitive and threatening one, simultaneously distinguishing it from their close and dense co-ethnic ties with specific groups of their friends and family members. In addition, the low level of trust was associated with the widely recognised stereotype of ‘immoral Poles’. This category of certain modes relating to particular Polish migrants justifies the selectivity in terms of given support.

From the interviews, it seems that Polish migrants tend to operate within different social spaces and economic opportunities that from their social networks and influence community formations. The internal social divisions of Polish migrants in Glasgow position their social relations and influence their experience of forming and maintaining their ethnic collectivises. As such, it could be argued that Polish migrants’ sense of belonging depend on their overall experience of living in Glasgow and has the multi-faced nature that apart of ethnicity also include a complex combination of other characteristics such as social class, religion, gender, age, and marital status. There are great diversity of understanding regarding what it means to be a Polish migrant and how this identity is experienced. Multiple representations of Polish migrants’ identification reflect multiple ways in which people define themselves and present themselves to others. This brings a question about how strong the category of being Polish migrant is to become as individual
identity marker. By saying this, identity become a form of relationship and it is expressed situational (Parekh 2006; Kymlicka and Norman 2000; Hall 2000).

It could be concluded that the Polish community in Glasgow cannot be defined as an aggregate of a certain population of Polish migrants living in Glasgow, but as a range of personal and institutional relations diverse in strength and extent, that migrants experience and maintain both in Glasgow and back in Poland. Indeed, migrants tend to maintain diverse personal relations with particular circles of Polish friends and family, with certain characteristics and common aims, values, and experiences. The degree of commonality of migrants aims, migration experiences, values that strongly relates to a migrants social class, age, and gender, helps to determine migrants’ co-ethnic relations. This study revealed that the Polish migrant community can be described as several personal communities defined as a set of various networks within which individual migrants are embedded. In addition, Polish migrant’s personal communities and their own social networks were built among groups of friends and family and were different in relation to internal variations such as age, gender, class, internal structures of marginalisation and feelings of trust or distrust (Alexander et. al, 2007). Interviewed migrants indicated social stratification within their ethnic community that came along the social class, age, and gender, and tended to influence both their co-ethnic relations, thus diversify and define their personal communities.

INSTITUTIONALISED NETWORKS, POLISH ORGANISATIONS IN GLASGOW

Apart from personal social networks, the voluntary and ethnic organisations as well as the profit driven institutions such as travel and recruitment agencies, schools, dedicated diasporas websites were important agents in responding to the Polish migrants needs, providing the informational support, initiating institutional networks, and assisting in assessing host-society institutions in Glasgow. It should be emphasised that increased migration from Central and Eastern European Countries have made migrants a highly profitable type of consumers, therefore many advisory institutions or recruitment agencies constitute their activities based on migrants economic, social, and cultural needs creating specific migrant industry (Garapich, 2008). In addition, for some of the respondents, organisations that were established mainly by those from the generation of Polish post Second World War migrants did not reflect the needs of new waves of post-accessed Poles in Glasgow. In fact, those organisations that were established by Poles who migrated to the UK after the Second World War, and thus within a different context of migration and with the migrants having different experiences, constituted a
distinctive migrants’ community that differed from the new post-accession one. As such, most of interviewed migrants remained detached from and wary of this community.

*I was in Sikorski Polish Club, maybe once or twice, because there is a Polish restaurant there, but it is not a place for me.*

(Daniel, male, 25, architectural assistant)

Polish migrants did participate in a wide range of migrants’ organisations in Glasgow of certain characteristic aims and interests that reflected the complexities of identities within Polish diasporas society in Glasgow. Garapich (2008) argued that private and profit driven migrants’ industries in London have a positive impact on migrants’ process of integration into the host community, as for many Polish migrants a limited knowledge of English language created a significant barrier to accessing public services, thus the migrant organisations provided a desirable source of support and information. The wide range of profit based institutions such as travel and recruitment agencies, interpreting services, tax and benefit advisors, money sending agencies, Polish shops, and Polish restaurants construct a wide range of activities that offers their services to Polish migrants and facilitate setting migration networks in Glasgow. In addition, Polish migrants were offered health service, hairdressers, beauticians, mechanics, electronic specialists, baby-sitters, transport services, interpreters, lawyers, and photographic services that often provided a common communication platform for Poles in Glasgow (Garapich, 2008). Even though Polish migrants still strongly relied upon their social networks, formal recruitment agencies were important actors in initiating migration processes. For example, the transport company First Bus or the Turner Group Company have actively recruited from Poland as a means of filling workforce vacancies.

Apart from stimulating migration flow the profitable organisations often provide information support on migrants’ employment rights and entitlements or assist in migrants’ social and economical incorporation. However, on some occasions migration institutions had an exploitative character towards Polish migrants (Castle and Miller, 1998). According to the service providers there were some examples of exploitative activities towards Polish migrants in Glasgow.

*I remember it was I think in 2006, there was one organisation called ‘gang Bachy and Kachy’. They advertisement themselves as recruitment agency in Polish newspapers, and they were charging people for accommodation and employment arrangements, so people [Polish migrants] were pre-paying for
the service around £500, and when they were arriving in Glasgow, there was no job and no accommodation.

(Anna, female, 30, Sikorski Polish Club)

After 2004 a wide spectrum of media dedicated to Polish migrants started to appear in Glasgow. Apart from the two main diasporas web sites that are dedicated to Polish migrants in Glasgow, the post-enlargement migrants have also set up their own newspapers (‘Szkocjapl’, ‘Emigrant’) and radio stations, ‘Szocjafm’ and the ‘Sunny Govan Radio’ in Glasgow which was the first in Scotland to broadcast the Polish language program called ‘The Rainmen’s Land’ (‘Kraina Deszczowców’). Those institutions provide information and practical support about employment, housing, health and education in Glasgow. In fact, as a result of regular media information, Polish migrants could learn about free of charge English classes, how to claim benefits, how to sign up for trade union membership, and other help and support that before could be obtained only among migrant social networks. In addition, the dedicated diaspora websites bring forth external links to other organisations that provide further support for immigrants. In addition, most of diasporas websites provide public forums where Poles are able to share their migration experiences, acquire support and advice, or arrange meetings with other Poles in Glasgow. The public forums construct and develop migrants’ social networks and establish mutual communication and relations between Polish migrants in Glasgow. It should be emphasised that the social capital that emerged from the public forums often creates a specific form of social control, as migrants used the public forum to exchange information of exploitation experiences in order to prevent and to protect other migrants from similar situations.

Dear All, Please pay attention, and be aware that the Mr Jacek, aged 28 and Mrs Basia, aged 27 are offering false services. Their company is calling ‘Repair service’, and I paid them in advance to do some repairs with my bathroom. After I have paid them, they never called me back.

(Joanna, female, public forum user)

For many Polish migrants dedicated diaspora websites were one of the key sources of social networks. By using the public forums Polish migrants tend to arrange regular meetings. In particular, many young Polish mothers often use the website to communicate with other Polish mothers in their local area to meet in the local park or go for a walk with their children. The maintenance of the networks

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3 www.glasgow24.pl www.emito.pl
4 Both quotations are from the public forum on the dedicated diaspora web site www.emito.net
Encountering Forms of co-ethnic relations: Polish community in Glasgow

within diaspora dedicated websites refers only to those migrants who were living in Glasgow, or who were about to come to Glasgow. It should be emphasised that the dedicated websites were not used to maintain transnational networks. In addition, the use of the public forums often helps to establish the range of relations with migrants of similar interests or needs.

Apart from the private and profit driven institutions, the Polish Catholic Church was a traditional institution that created social networks within the Polish community. In Glasgow, there were three Catholic Churches that provided masses in Polish, St Patrick and St Simon located on West End area and St. Constantine’s Church in Govan. The Church creates a space where Polish migrants are sharing a particular action that is the same, common action that constructs the common experience for them all. Similar to the study of Hindus in Southern California (Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 2009), the maintenance of religious places by Polish migrants in Glasgow helped to create co-ethnic, social networks. Indeed, maintenance of the same space and participation in place rituals on a regular basis often encourages individuals to form and sustain casual relations.

I think that lot of Poles knows each other from the church, you can see those same faces each Sunday.

(Anna, female, 30, graphic designer)

Church activity was mainly concentrated on supplying migrants with religious services such as masses in Polish language, sacraments, or religion lessons for Polish children. In addition, the Polish priest often assists migrants in critical moments of their lives such as serious illness, accidents, or death. For many Polish migrants participation in Polish masses and Catholic religion played an important part in maintaining their identity. Some of the migrants chose to attend the Catholic masses given in the Polish language on purpose in order to experience the Polish tradition. In addition, the church helps to strengthen migrants’ ethnic and cultural identity, as during the masses the priest often refers to the Polish traditions, history, and literature, or provides current information from Poland.

Again, establishment and participation of Polish migrants in their co-ethnic organisation set up a binary opposition between a particular trustful Polish networks and general population of Poles in Glasgow who were often perceived as competitive and threatening. Even though some of the migrants clearly suggested some concern about the lack of trusting relations amongst the general community of Polish migrants, on a day-to-day basis many of the Polish migrants in Glasgow were often interacting with each other. This was especially true amongst older
migrants and Polish mothers with a little knowledge of English language and who found life in Glasgow slightly challenging as moving to a new place had had a large effect on their personal relations. Indeed, migrants suggested that on some occasions they felt lonely in the city and they missed their social life back in Poland. This need often became a strong push factor for participation in Polish organisations that brought them a little familiarisation in a new social and cultural environment:

*Some people feel lonely here, and even though they may live with their partners, they miss those relations that they have back home. This creates the need for meeting other Poles. It especially true it terms older people, for example my dad*

(Marta, female, 25, NGO worker)

From the interviews it seems that participation in Polish organisations was one of the coping strategies used by migrants in response to the social, cultural, and institutional environment of their new country of residence. Thus, it could be argued that such strategies and experiences both support and create opportunities in gaining improved control over determinants of migrants’ welfare and wellbeing in the host community. In addition, the feeling of loneliness and the need for social and cultural familiarisation gave a strong foundation for the creation of Polish migrants’ organisations. Indeed, Polish migrants set up organisations to create, express, and maintain a collective identity (Schrover and Vermeulen, 2005).

**SUMMARY:**

Looking at the example of Polish post-accessed migrants in Glasgow, this study has argued that ethnic communities construct diverse and fragmented communities that are based on a range of dense but autonomous networks of social relations that are differentiated by migrants’ age and social status, involving various levels of social trust, reciprocity, and obligation. The aim of this study was to investigate the meaning and the mechanism of community formation among Polish migrants living in Glasgow. With regards to post-accessed Polish migrants in Glasgow, the data indicates that Polish migrants did not constitute an integrated or ‘one’ ethnic community, but rather a range of different ‘personal’ and ‘casual’ communities that were constructed either around common aims, interest and mutual linking that appears in a certain time and space or via their kinship ties and close friendships that they experienced in Glasgow as well as back in Poland. The Polish migrants were bounded among specific, trusted and close networks between members of their family and close friends that distinguishes this group from the wider and
more generalised ethnic ‘community’. From the interviews, it can be argued that migrant feelings of commitment and trust toward other groups or individuals determined the way in which migrants gradated their personal relations and what constitutes the base of migrant personal communities. In addition, interviewed migrants revealed a dichotomous perception of the Polish imagined community as they also described some Poles in Glasgow as being competitive whilst, at the same time, distinguishing this wider community from their own personal (trusted) community that were constituted via particular co-ethnic ties with specific groups of friends and family members. It is interesting to note that this finding corresponds with previous research on post-accessed Polish migrants living in London (Eade et al., 2006; Ryan et al., 2008; Ryan and White, 2008; Garapich, 2008) and Amsterdam (Elrick and Lewandowska, 2008). Apart from different ‘personal’ (trusted) communities the Polish migrants in Glasgow did participate in a wide range of migrants’ organisations with certain characteristic aims and interests such as education (Polish Saturday School), information/support (Sikorski Polish Club, Govan Residents, private institutions), religion (Catholic Church) that reflected the complexities of needs, interests and expectation among Polish diaspora society in Glasgow. Indeed, Polish migrants tend to group themselves around common experience, values, and interest that construct the commonality, mutual linking and internal relations between them. The relations that arrive in such contexts can be described as ‘casual’ friendships and communities, which arrive in a certain time and space. Whether at work, college/university, at Church, in the park or shop Polish migrants experienced various strengths and frequencies of relations with other Poles and in which common experienced and links were created. It should be emphasise that the study was limited to the analysis of community formation of Polish post-accessed migrants in Glasgow context. The study only focused on of social networks and notion of trust and reciprocity as agencies of community formation, however further research on mechanisms that constitute ‘community’ is required. Indeed, as has been argued here, Polish migrants did construct a range of social networks within their ethnic communities in Glasgow. The city itself does become a place and the framework for Polish migrants’ personal, tight, institutional, or instrumental relations simultaneously influencing their sense of belonging. With regards to critical debates on globalisation, it can be suggested that the communities become more internally divided, being socially stratified via issues such as gender, ethnicity, or class that tend to overlap each other. Therefore, we can consider Polish families, Polish low skilled workers, or Polish women but not a Polish community as a whole. It is suggested here that when it comes to assessing or simply trying to make sense of migrant identities and feelings of belonging in a ‘new home’, then a holistic view is required and essential. From the interview data, it seems that Polish migrants sense of belonging
is largely determined by their overall experiences in new surroundings, including the complexity of characteristics of their ethnicity, age, gender, and social status that remain flexible and fluid in constructions of migrants’ perception of ‘self’ and ‘other’ when faced by changing circumstances and situations, both geographically and economically. As we have witnessed throughout the commentary and interview quotes above, feelings of security, acceptance, bonding, and trust were lively and enduringly shared among specific groups of Polish personal communities. The experience of Poles in Glasgow illustrates that some migrants create their own communities within specific groups of close friends and family members. In this regard, community is ultimately family for many of those Poles whose voices are heard in this paper.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to establish a new understanding of Polish migrants in the UK based upon contemporary research undertaken in the greater Glasgow area, focusing on Entrepreneurs within this community. The analysis of this specific population is interesting for the following reasons. First, life trajectories comprising the decisions to emigrate and subsequent long-term settlement are not particularly well understood within this recent wave of migration from Poland. These trajectories are exemplified by business start-up decisions taken by some Polish migrants and their families. Therefore, the research attempts to address the issue of business start-ups as part of a long-term settlement strategy; and why and how this decision occurred. Second, the analysis of relationships between Polish Entrepreneurs and the Polish Community contributes to the academic debate on migration networks, and their role in this immigrant population.

The paper will explore the background of recent waves of migration from Poland to the UK from 2004 following recent European Union enlargement. Following a brief review of the literature on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs, the analysis will then consider the importance of social networks for Polish migrants. Then, the qualitative methodology employed for data gathering will be outlined. Based upon this methodology and data collected, and a description of the case studies conducted, will enable a ‘portrait’ of the Polish Entrepreneur to be drawn. Third, findings focusing on the individual’s (and household) migratory strategies will be examined. This analysis will highlight the trajectories of migration observed amongst Polish Entrepreneurs, comprising the decision-making processes leading up to emigration, their experiences on arrival in the UK, and their relationship with established and new Polish migrant networks. Fourth, the paper will highlight the incremental business and settlement strategies pursued by Polish Entrepreneurs. Finally, the paper will focus on the Polish Entrepreneurs’ social and business relations within the Polish Community. The analysis concludes with a discussion of how Polish Entrepreneurs primarily serve co-ethnics, using the community as a
market, and the emergence of Polish enclave-markets where Polish Entrepreneurs play a key role.

The research findings will be summarized by discussing the Polish Entrepreneurs Life Processes paying particular attention to a range of issues that emerged from the research including: relationships with the ethnic and wider community, recruitment and employment agencies, fellow citizens, and existing networks, business strategies, and the importance of households in settlement decision making.

BACKGROUND: A NEW PATTERN OF MIGRATION

Although there is a growing body of literature on Polish migrant workers in the UK, this has tended to focus on economic factors with little if any research considering the new phenomenon of businesses being established by Polish migrants in the UK. In May 2004, Poland became a member of the European Union (EU) along with seven other countries (often referred to as the A8 countries). A major element of the EU is the Single Market that allows the free movement of goods, services, capital and labour between member states. Consequently, Poles and citizens from other new accession economies could move freely within the EU. However, most EU economies placed temporary restrictions upon the flow of labour since they anticipated extensive east-west migration. The UK was one of the few countries that did not place any conditions on the flow of labour, so Polish nationals were legally entitled to enter the UK in search of employment. Since then the UK has witnessed an influx of Polish migrant workers that has exceeded the numbers forecast by UK government officials. Despite a paucity of accurate and reliable data on the magnitude of outward migration from Poland after May 2004, there is some evidence to support the significant scale of this westward movement of Poles following EU accession (see IPPR, 2010; and Pollard et al., 2008). This argues strongly that migration from the A8 countries to the UK has been one of the most important social phenomena in recent years. An estimated one million workers have arrived from the A8 countries and Poles have gone from the 13th to first largest foreign national migrant group in the space of four years (Pollard et al, 2008). It may prove to be one of the most concentrated voluntary migrations in the world; and while the scale of the migration is undoubtedly important for the host countries, so too are its impacts on those who are migrating. Recent media reports highlight the fact that Poles are now returning home due to a combination of tightening economic conditions in the UK, and a comparatively weak pound coupled with an unprecedented surge in the Polish economy (Mostrous, 2008). However, large numbers of Poles remain and have settled in the UK. Therefore, this is a rather unique migratory phenomenon and this paper seeks to address the
gap in our knowledge of this significant minority group; explore their propensity to start businesses in Scotland; and examine the impact of starting-up on their migratory strategies.

WHY AND WHERE DO POLES EMMIGRATE?

The present research focuses on migrant workers who have arrived in the UK since May 2004. The term migrant worker has different official meanings and connotations in different parts of the world. For the purposes of this study, the United Nations (1990) definition will be used which is very broad, essentially including anyone working outside of their home country. The United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families defines a migrant worker as “a person who is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national.”

Polish migrants have dispersed to a larger number of different areas of the UK than have any previous group of migrants (Pollard et al, 2008). This indicates that Poles’ overwhelming motivation for coming to the UK is to work. One of the reasons for migration in 2004 was the desire to improve a migrant’s living conditions and standard of living, especially when the migrant comes from a deprived region (Kaczmarczyk and Okolski, 2005). The role of household based decision making is enhanced by the micro-economic perspectives and freedom of choice (stay or emigrate) within the transition context. Therefore, this present wave of migrant workers poses a unique set of characteristics, and represents a different body of migrants to those who had previously arrived from Poland. There are diverse groups and typologies of Polish migrants shaped by at least three generations of migratory history between Poland and Great Britain. They are characterized by multiple patterns of mobility and diverse diasporic identities (Garapich 2007). Smith and Eade (2008) identified four clear historical categories: post-war refugees, Communist regime émigrés, pre-2004 transit migrants, and EU accession migrants. The trans-national activities of post war refugees and post EU accession migrants are quite different. The main line of division is a rigid boundary that can be drawn between ‘political’ migrants which characterizes the majority of pre-1989 migrants, and the recent ‘economic’ migrants (Smith, 2001).

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF POLISH MIGRANTS

It is difficult to estimate the total number of migrants, not only because of gaps in available statistics, but also because of the dynamism and circularity of these flows (Garapich, 2007). The Home Office (2009) reports that 505,300 Poles
arrived between 2004 and 2007, with unofficial estimates putting this figure as in excess of 700,00. Bearing in mind the seasonality of these flows, generally more in summer and less in winter (see Accession Monitoring Report (AMR), Home Office 2006), and the recent waves of return migration, the overall numbers of Polish nationals in the UK hover around a half a million. While the reliability of the statistics is debatable, the socio-demographic picture of recent Polish arrivals is more quantitatively accessible. Eighty percent of them are below 34 years of age; most are single and, according to the AMR (2006), work in lower segments of the labour market as well as filling in gaps in health services, education services, and finance. The top five sectors in which Polish immigrants registered to work between May 2004 and December 2007 were administration, business and management (39%), hospitality and catering (19%), agriculture (10%), manufacturing (7%) and food, fish and meat processing (5%) (Home Office, 2009). Certainly, a range of survey data suggests that as a group they are highly educated (Pollard et al., 2008). Therefore, there is a considerable discrepancy between the high levels of education that many Poles have attained and the low-skilled and poorly paid jobs in which the majority are employed. A survey of migrants who had returned to Poland found that educational attainment has no significant impact on respondents’ earnings, and that those with vocational skills are more able to find work in skilled trades (Pollard et al, 2008).

With regard to Polish migrants’ intention to stay, White and Ryan 2008 observe that in London there is actually little evidence of planned short-term residence as most of the Polish migrants are uncertain about the future. However, household based decision making strategies strongly affect the migrant’s decision of stay. In addition, migrants are acting in a social context and take into account their incomes in comparison with their closest networks (Kaczmarczyk, Okolski, 2005). Therefore ‘migration can be perceived as a strategy driven by an intention to change position in a reference group or to change the reference group’ (ibid. p15).

**DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS**

This literature review aims to present the major themes concerning both Polish migrations and the main concepts around EMEs. Immigrants are rooted in a new environment, and their economic activity is deeply embedded in a structure of social relations within the migrant community (Granovetter, 1985; Coleman, 1988; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). It also allows the development of structures of opportunity as an alternative path to social mobility and inclusion

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1 Most economic behaviours are closely embedded in networks of interpersonal relations that influence economic action.
within the wider mixed embedded context (Zhou, 2004). Moreover, as confirmed in the case of Polish Entrepreneurs, Ethnic Entrepreneurship acts as a deepening mechanism for the community’s economic infrastructure, and its social networks (Duvell 2004).

THE ETHNIC MINORITY ENTREPRENEUR (EME)

The definition of an EME used in this analysis will cover a large number of types between the Serial-Entrepreneur, and the Small Business Owner. Concerning the definition of ‘ethnicity’, our attention will be focused on the nationality of the immigrant rather than on ethnic origin. In this respect, the analysis focuses on business solely owned by a Polish person. The literature on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs (EMEs) has identified different ‘ethnic’ Entrepreneurs or ‘immigrant’ Entrepreneurs. The immigrant Entrepreneur belongs to a communal solidarity network in an alien new society. The migrant is a group-insider by virtue of shared identity (Rams, Jones 2007)2 and members of this social network share ethnic resources (Light and Bonacich, 1988). The issue of access to specific resources depends on the nature of the links with the community, i.e. social capital.

PUSH AND PULL FACTORS TO ENTER SELF-EMPLOYMENT

The literature often refers to ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors in order to explain the decision to start-up a business3 (Deakins and Ram, 1995; Freel, 1998). The analysis of the push factors is crucial because it stresses the role of policy-making in the integration of immigrants into civil society (Hjerm, 2004), the need to fight against discrimination in the labour market (Metcalf et al. 1996) and in enabling access to finance and support (Deakins et al. 2005). As for necessity entrepreneurship, the push factors emphasize the sets of motivation for an immigrant to start-up their own business because of the lack of opportunity in the host countries’ labour market. Obstacles to joining the labour market include: language barriers, lack of knowledge about the institutions in the labour market, and lack of trust in these institutions. These factors may push the immigrant into self-employment. On the other hand, the community networks, the ability of immigrants to spot business opportunities, and the desire to be independent and to “be their own boss” are factors that pull the immigrant into self-employment. Pull factors thus include the

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2 Moreover, “ethnicity is much more contingent than formerly recognised (Ram and Jones 2005)

3 Motivation is the result of an inter-play between these two factors.
identification of new opportunities (as in opportunity entrepreneurship) and self-elected goals of independence (Barret et al., 1996).

To some extent, the immigrant is also subject to an acculturation lag. This is a delayed process of acculturation that enables the EME from a lower-waged country to exploit some opportunities more effectively than local Entrepreneurs (Light, 1972). For instance, Polish Entrepreneurs have identified gaps in the market concerning the needs of the Polish community in Scotland, with evidence of emergent enclave-markets.

ETHNIC OR ENCLAVE ECONOMY?

The field of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship must address the debate about the markets in which EMEs operate. There are two main concepts used to explain the strategies of EMEs. First, the ethnic economy designates all ethnic-owned businesses in the economy. For instance, the Polish ethnic economy in Scotland is the sum of all the Polish Businesses in Scotland, regardless their size, their type or the customer they serve. Second, the enclave economy is a more appropriate concept in order to discuss the strategies pursued by EMEs since it includes the businesses bounded by co-ethnicity and location (Zhou, 2004; Wilson and Portes, 1980). The enclave is thus a specific case of an ethnic economy. The enclave economy also maps onto the ethnic social structure allowing the control of behaviour by co-ethnics (Portes and Zhou, 1992). This cultural component does not appear in the general and neutral concept of ethnic economy. In the case of the enclave economy, the economic activities of the businesses are not solely commercial because of the cultural component underpinning this market, including the construction of networks and of ethnic institutions or associations that mediate economic action. Access to finance, advice or business support as well as ethnic employees are provided through ethnic institutions (Portes and Manning 1986). Last but not least, EMEs operating in the enclave economy initially serve a co-ethnic clientele (Zhou, 2004). Although Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland do not meet all the requirements to build an enclave economy, this concept will be developed later. Despite the clear role that culture and co-ethnicity play, and unlike some other communities, there is no explicit or implicit community control over members when it comes to running their businesses (Zhou, 2004; Wilson and Portes, 1980; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Portes and Zhou, 1992).

* In our fieldwork, most of the self-employed individuals refer to this crucial factor as “being their own boss”. They can be referred as life-style entrepreneurs (Bolton and Thompson 2004). The *pull* factors differ on this particular point with *opportunity entrepreneurship* which is based on rare and innovative actions (Schumpeterian entrepreneur).
SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The Ethnic Minority Entrepreneur has a multiple set of relationships within the immigrant community, and in the host socio-economic and cultural context. Indeed, the analysis of migrants’ economic actions cannot be understood without paying attention to the wider networks in which the migrants are embedded. Thus, the concept of ‘mixed embeddedness’ provides some leverage for understanding the relationships between these actors and their environment, primarily within the opportunity structure or system (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001; Crozier and Friedberg, 1977). The opportunity structure refers to the specific market conditions, and potential for the ownership of assets. The literature is consistent in the analysis of the role played by networks and the concept of mixed embeddedness. The migrants’ economic activity is embedded in a variety of social networks (Granovetter, 1985; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Waldinger, 1996) such as community, family, and business clubs (Deakins et al., 2007). Their relationship with the opportunity structure encountered in their new environment is also crucial in the case of migrants Entrepreneurs since the EME is looking for opportunities to start-up a business (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001).

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The size and type of social networks that one can access and draw upon (a quantitative measure of social support) are increasingly regarded as important sources of social capital for migrants (Bourdieu, 1986). Micro-social capital is associated with an individual’s links forged through family and friends. Macro-social capital captures experiences within the institutional infrastructure of the country such education centres (Della Giusta and Kambhampati, 2006). Zetter et al., (2006) differentiate between ‘dense’ (family and kinship) ties which coexist with so-called ‘weak’ (institutional) ties. They argue that both types of network ties are equally significant among migrant groups that seek mutual support and engagement with the resources and networks of the host society.

Migrants will have differing abilities to access existing networks or establish new ties in the ‘host’ country. Many Poles who speak no English or who have limited social and economic resources on arrival may be dependent upon the practical support of co-ethnics (Ryan et al., 2006). Ryan and colleagues (2006)

5 See also Williamson and Ouchi 1981 and the issue of trust and malfeasance. The individual is engaged in the pursuit of self-interest but also in opportunism. Here, the malfeasance is averted because clever institutional arrangements make it costly to engage in it. See the commentary by Granovetter 1985.
found that many Polish migrants had to develop some cautious and strategic ties across the ethnic group that provided practical support in order to secure employment and accommodation. Research has shown that the ability to speak the host country’s language can be a key factor in whether migrants receive the information they need, the extent of their social contact with the host population, and how migrants feel they are treated by the host population (Spencer et al, 2007; Finch et al., 2009).

As we will discuss later in our analysis, Polish Entrepreneurs still struggle with English but it appears to be less of a problem when it comes to starting up. First, they are self-employed and sometimes work with one or two (Polish) employees. Second, the paperwork is very easy and they can deal with it using only basic English skills, or alternatively they find other Poles to help them out if necessary. Third, 13 out of 21 businesses studied serve Polish clientèle and do not even need to speak a single word of English. Thus, self-employment is a way to overcome the language barrier in the labour market which otherwise prevents them from reaching a managerial position or a better job.

ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES

Berry (1997) argued that individuals have a choice in the matter of how far they are willing to go in their engagement with the acculturation process. Acculturation strategies are based on migrants’ attitudes towards their culture of origin and towards the host-group. Taking into account these two dimensions four strategies can be defined: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 1997). It could be argued that a considerable number of Polish migrants adopt a separation strategy. This is defined as “when people choose not to take on customs and culture of the larger host society, but rather stick to their native culture” (Kosic et al., 2006, p.3). However, a degree of flexibility in this approach is now realized as a necessary development since individuals may seek different levels of attachment to and involvement with their host and native cultures, rather than complete separation (Padilla and Perez, 2003). As we shall argue, Polish migrants who start up their own businesses may follow a separation strategy, but it is more of a negotiated partial separation.

The majority of research tends to find that migrant Poles spend limited time with British people and instead tend to work and live with a diverse mix of recent and settled migrants forming bounded socio-economic environments (Pollard et al. 2008).
METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDIES: NARRATIVES OF LIFE EXPERIENCES.

The following section will focus on the methodology used during this research. Attention will be paid to data gathering techniques, the advantages and limitations of using a qualitative methodology based on case studies, as well as the reasons underpinning this choice. The second section will be a presentation of the different case studies, and a portrait of the Polish Entrepreneur. The case studies were identified in various sectors of the economy such as delicatessens, hairdressers, IT or garages (see below). Most of the interviewees arrived in Scotland between the last few months of 2004 and the first months of 2005. The median Polish Entrepreneur in Scotland is in his or her 30s (14 men and 8 women); has worked in Scotland prior to starting up a business; has a degree from Poland, but has poor English language skills.

INTERVIEWS AND CASE STUDIES: AIMS AND LIMITATIONS

Although previous Polish migrations have been studied, very little is known about Polish immigrant businesses that have been set up in Western Europe since the latest EU enlargement. In the case of recent immigrant Polish Entrepreneurs in the UK, there is scant knowledge due to the lack of data available; with few official sources of information concerning the Polish community in Scotland. First, the immigrants are classified in the Census under the “other white” category which does not represent phenotypical differences to the indigenous population. Second, the immigrants from EU countries do not need a visa or a work permit to settle in the UK. Thus, research based on case studies and interviews rather than aggregate national statistics was the solution adopted in order to gather data on this population.

Qualitative research was conducted in the greater Glasgow area in 2009. During the fieldwork, 21 case studies were generated from the post-2004 cohort of Polish Entrepreneurs. They were identified by using Polish community portals, newspapers and networks, as well as personal contacts and random encounters.

The population of Polish Entrepreneurs in Glasgow is very difficult to measure and there is a striking lack of data. However, drawing on a variety of sources and fieldwork data, it can be estimated that there are between 30 and 40 Polish businesses in the Glasgow area, excluding self-employed construction workers.

See below.

One key informant spoke about 10 to 20 Polish businesses that started-up each year between 2004 and 2008 but “hardly any in the last 6 months”. Of course, many prospective entrepreneurs avoid formal institution, and others never start-up after contacting them. A vast majority of this population are self-employed construction workers according to this respondent.
A total of 19 case studies from the non-construction sector were compiled and is a representative sample of the population. Thus, despite the lack of secondary data on this population, the number of case studies conducted does allow some conclusions to be drawn from the analysis. However, further research on this specific migrant population in Scotland and the UK is required in order to draw a broader picture of the trajectories and strategies of Polish Entrepreneurs.

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES AND ANALYSIS

All the interviews were conducted in Polish, using a full-handnotes technique; and five interviewees also agreed to have their interview recorded. The interviews are based on a guide containing sections about various aspect of entrepreneurship including inter alia business start-up, running a business, expectations for the future, and relations with the Polish and wider community. An important part of the interview was dedicated to non directed questions in order to let the interviewee develop freely their views and thoughts. The interview guide did not solely focus on migratory strategies nor did it remain exclusively within the field of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship. The different sections of the guide, as well as the open questions, allowed a range of aspects of the interviewee’s strategies to be covered.

The average length of the interview was over an hour, usually followed by an informal discussion. The data were coded for analysis with NVivo using both tree and free nodes. In the full-handnotes technique, the interviews are read immediately after the interview and the researcher takes some notes on specific points during the interview. This helps to build the tree nodes containing the most commonly found information emerging from the interview guide questions. These included areas such as relations with the community, prospects for the future, and reasons to start-up a business; whilst free nodes often concern life experiences and arrival in the UK.

THE CASE STUDIES: BRIEF PRESENTATION

As mentioned previously, 21 case studies were generated from data gathered from Polish entrepreneurs in the Glasgow area in 2009. In our analysis, we have

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8 Some other Polish suitable case-study businesses are missing due to a lack of contact details, refusal to participate (especially taxi drivers, and transport companies) or delayed appointments.
9 Adapted from the qualitative methodology used by the Centre for the Sociology of Organizations (CSO-CNRS in Paris). It aims to understand the subjective views of the individual placed in the context of economic action.
10 The informal discussions provide other elements that cannot be included as quotes, but could help in understanding interviewees more broadly.
Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland: life trajectories, social capital and business strategies

excluded a Polish delicatessen staffed by Poles but run by British or Pakistani owners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Business</th>
<th>Age, education/ year of arrival</th>
<th>Typology/business relations with the Polish Community</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S. computer-shop</td>
<td>30s, P/G degree, 2005</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. garage</td>
<td>20s, U/G degree, 2004</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. travel agency</td>
<td>60s, University degree, 1970s</td>
<td>Middleman Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. delicatessen</td>
<td>20s, UK P/G degree, 2004</td>
<td>Enclave-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. book-shop</td>
<td>40s, P/G degree, 2006</td>
<td>Enclave-market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. hairdresser</td>
<td>20s, Student, 2007</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. body-shop</td>
<td>30s, College degree, 2004</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. construction</td>
<td>30s, Secondary school, 2004</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. hairdresser</td>
<td>40s, Secondary school, 2004</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M &amp; I, restaurant</td>
<td>40s, University degree, 2005</td>
<td>Middleman Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. legal adviser</td>
<td>30s, P/G degree, 2004</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. legal adviser</td>
<td>40s, P/G degree, 2002</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. construction</td>
<td>30s, Secondary school, 2005</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Hairdresser</td>
<td>20s, U/G degree, 2007</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Boxing School</td>
<td>20, Secondary School, 2005</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. IT</td>
<td>20s, P/G degree,</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. garage</td>
<td>30s, Secondary School, 2004</td>
<td>Mainstream Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Hairdresser</td>
<td>20s, student, 2005</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Driving School</td>
<td>Late 40s, P/G degree, 2005</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Delicatessen</td>
<td>50s, University, 2006</td>
<td>Enclave-market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. IT</td>
<td>20s, P/G degree, 2005</td>
<td>Niche-Market Entrepreneur</td>
<td>M</td>
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FIRST OBSERVATIONS: SECTORS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL PORTRAIT

The first observations and inferences from the fieldwork comprising interviews, informal discussions, and observation notes, form the basis for creating an initial portrait of the Polish Entrepreneur in this study. First, Polish Entrepreneurs tend to cluster in specific sectors of the economy such as hairdressing or delicatessens, and in the construction sector. In addition, 13 out of 21 businesses studied serve an exclusively Polish clientele, so the owners did not need to speak any English.

Second, most of the interviewees arrived between November 2004 and November 2005 but did not start their businesses before 2008/2009. Thus, these Polish Entrepreneurs worked during the period prior to starting up a business and saved funds; built social networks, and improved their English language skills.

Third, the Polish Entrepreneur is (mostly) young and educated (college or university degree) but have average/poor English language skills. Despite holding higher education qualifications, there are barriers to entering the British labour market and finding a commensurate and well paid occupation. These barriers remain because of the lack of language skills; poor knowledge of the local labour market, and the reluctance of employers to understand or recognize Polish qualifications.

Fourth, Polish Entrepreneurs are mainly economic migrants, looking either for opportunity, education and/or a secure life-style in the UK. When husbands emigrate first, they bring their family later and usually change their migratory strategies by taking permanent or long-term settlement into consideration. Interestingly, eight of the Polish Entrepreneurs interviewed (two of them working together) are women. Since women have a major influence on the decision to settle in a country (White and Ryan 2008), gender is an important factor to take into account when analyzing household migratory strategies.

Finally, the entrepreneur is embedded in networks of Polish friends rather than participating in established community networks, and is usually married to a fellow Pole. Therefore, their relationship with the community appears to be tangential and ambiguous, and this will be developed later in the analysis.

INDIVIDUAL TRAJECTORIES: EMIGRATION AND MISTRUST AMONGST POLES

Why and how did Poles migrate after the 2004-EU enlargement? Concerning the population of Polish entrepreneurs in this study, the push and pull factors influencing the migration decision are not really different from other fellow Poles in the UK. Despite a lack of networks in the UK, little knowledge of the country and its labour market, and poor English skills potential migrants did
find employment. According to most of the interviewees, they were recruited by employment agencies based in Poland that were looking for construction and factory workers, security guards, or butchers to work in the UK. Also, new migrants frequently relied on co-ethnics, but experienced various degrees of success in these relationships.

EMISSION AND THE ROLE OF POLISH RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

The fieldwork data highlight the importance of economic factors in pushing and pulling Poles to the UK. However, Polish Entrepreneurs were not unemployed in Poland. They were either recent graduates or were involved in struggling businesses. Moving to the UK was perceived as a great opportunity to increase their income and improve their standard of living. In addition, male migrants brought their families over after a couple of months of work in the UK. Hence, economic factors include the migrant’s desire for a more ‘secure’ and higher standard of living; and this theme will be developed later, as it plays an important role in the decision to start-up a business when these expectations are not met.

The decision to migrate was influenced by economic factors since the economic situation in Poland was difficult in 2004/2005; but there was little prior knowledge about the UK:

“I could not place Scotland on a map. I have contacted this agency. It had a good reputation in Poland on the market. My girlfriend and I have received a job. They told me to fly to Scotland” P. body-shop.

“It was random, by accident that I happened to come here in Scotland. My wife knew a friend who was working in an agency. There was neither work nor money in Poland. It was a bomb in 2004 with the opening of the borders. This agency, the one I was working for had numerous offers in Ireland, England, Scotland. I left with a team of four. A construction team. I have worked for this agency, with a bit of security but then I wanted to be independent. I had nothing, I was starting from zero” A. construction, self-employed, kiosk-keeper in Poland.

The feeling of trepidation amongst Polish migrants who have to start from scratch in the UK is a recurrent theme in the interview data. The recruitment agencies in Poland act as gatekeepers to the UK labour market and its anticipated opportunities. Due to this mediating role, employment was secured whilst these entrepreneurs were still in Poland, and this prospect encouraged them to emigrate. This is a powerful pull factor influencing their decision to emigrate as they did not have to look for a job; thus avoiding uncertainty and high risk decisions. It
also enabled the new migrants to overcome barriers to entry into the UK labour market. Therefore, an important factor in securing employment prior to migration was the rapid development of a network of recruitment and employment agencies located in Poland, some of which acted on the behalf of UK employers seeking higher productivity based on the lower labour costs of migrant labour. This is clearly evident in the interview data:

“When I arrived, I had a job. There was an agency, back in Szczecin. They secured jobs here for Poles. There was a job for me in Liverpool. I worked there for one month and then they told me, there was another job free here in Bathgate. I did not have to look for anything at all; I already had somewhere to sleep”.

M. Driving School, first job as a security warden.

“Its name was Advance... various professions. For me it was Advance security. They were dealing with various things but mostly about butchers.”

M. Driving School.

“They found a flat for me and they gave my National Insurance Number. I looked for a job from Poland, I was looking for work in the UK. At the very beginning... Everything was in Poland, I had my job interview in Poland”

A, School of Fighting, first job as a butcher.

The importance of these agencies also lies in the unintended part they played in the process of business start-ups for Polish Entrepreneurs. Migrant Poles did not have to look for a job in a foreign country since the first job was secured from Poland.

SOCIAL SUPPORT VS. MISTRUST AMONGST POLES

Arriving in the UK is not a simple process because the immigrant must engage with a new cultural and economic environment. The presence of social support is important and plays a key role in ensuring a decent livelihood for the migrant. Whereas the recruitment agencies in Poland acted as a gatekeeper for emigration to the UK, and reduced the uncertainty of employment on arrival, the migrant community also played a role in providing some social support for the new migrants. However, there is little evidence of strong support provided by the established networks in Glasgow for new wave migrants. Rather than relying on the Polish community, migrants found support in personal networks, either from strong or weak ties. Concerning information and practical support (White
and Ryan, 2008), Polish informal networks for new migrants such as emito.net, glasgow24.pl provide information for new immigrants and an advertising platform for Polish businesses.

“Yes, of course I do have contact with the Polish community... Actually not really. All my contacts are private. We could say I have contacts with friends. They do not have any meaning for my business. There is also emito.net. Polish people are running it, the advertising is conducted by polish people.” K. hairdresser.

Rather than slotting smoothly into existing networks, new immigrants make considerable use of fellow new migrant and personal networks; often as a result of random meetings and acquaintances.

“I went to the Polish Klub once or twice I think [...] I have a lot of contact with Poles from my work before or just friends of friends. I also met a lot of Poles on emito.net or on glasgow24. We play football together sometimes but I also use it to find spare pieces for the cars.” R, garage.

“It [the Polish Community] was really helpful at the beginning. I did not know anyone here and I met people who helped me a lot, they told me where to go, where to find a job, where to find books, where to learn English. These are people I met at the very beginning. I was surprised, even more because of the image I had from Polonia. For me they were like strangers but they helped me” D, book-shop, poor English skills.

“I received some help from a friend in London, he explained me everything. In Polish it helps. A, construction, came with an agency.

However, as many new migrants experienced, their first few days in Scotland were difficult due to a lack of English language proficiency, feelings of isolation, and also because of negative experiences with local state agencies or co-nationals.

“I flew to London, I had seen an advertisement in the papers in Poland and this Polish girl told me she could help me when I will arrive. She would help me for £200 and the same amount to book a room for me. I had nobody abroad. I did not speak a single word of English. Of course, in theory I had learnt English at school but... She gave me an appointment at the airport. I have waited for 3 hours. Nobody came.” M, garage, in a survival strategy.

Furthermore, most of the entrepreneurs did not seek out any immigrant community support, apart from socialising with Polish friends.
“I have such people, they are good people. We meet, there is a good contact between us. I know that some people are not happy of the Poles. But at the beginning, nobody helped me. I have done everything by myself”. P, body-shop.

The desire for independance is another recurrent theme in the Entrepreneurs' discourse.

„We did not look for help. Because we do not have family or friends here when we arrived” B. Delicatessen, family business.

The Polish networks in which potential Entrepreneurs are embedded are more likely to provide emotional support, as friends would do in Poland.

„We have friendly contacts. We meet, we go out, we go for some dinner, for a party [...] I did not receive any help, I rather help for all those things such as finding flat, local but I do not ask from others“ K, IT, high English skills.

Finally, the family and household factors played a key role in the migration decision, and its influence is even stronger concerning the length of stay.

“Our husbands were the first to arrive here and then we came, we found a school for the children, a Scottish school. It was haphazard that it was in Scotland” M&I, restaurant.

MIGRANT EXPERIENCES AND CRITICAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLES

Interestingly, interviewees though proud to be Polish also adopt critical attitudes and discourses about their co-nationals. This point also appears in the research literature [Duvell 2004] as illustrated below:

“A Pole is a wolf to Pole [...] I am really proud to be a Polish person, I meet them all, I help them“ L., lawyer for Poles, arrived 2002.

The Polish identity is strongly present in the discourse, and only one of the respondents chose not define himself as Polish or proud to be so. Hence, emotional support and link to ‘Polishness’ is provided by Polish friends and acquaintances as well as by the migrant’s family.

“I arrived on March 28th, my wife in June. Three months without my family were really hard. Hopefully, we could talk every evening with skype. We could be in contact.” D.book-shop, lack of English skills.
“Pole forever! (laughs). I will not pretend that I am someone I am not. I am Polish, I eat Polish food, I have Polish friends and I watch Polish TV.”

A, construction.

All interviewees consider that it is easier to become an entrepreneur in the UK than in Poland. This mainly because there are fewer regulations, controls and taxes; but also due to the more positive attitude about self-employment in the UK; rather than the off-putting negative image projected of the Entrepreneur in Poland.

“Here, anyone can have its own business and you are still a normal person [...] In Poland, they think, how to say, its “wow” and at the same time they think you “kombinujesz” (to combine, not really legally). A, Boxing School.

Therefore, Polish immigrants arriving in Scotland in late 2004 or during the early months of 2005 constitute the largest cohort of the new wave of migrants following the 2004 EU enlargement; and the interviewees have followed similar paths of migration. Polish Entrepreneurs left Poland for the UK primarily for economic reasons utilising recruitment and employment agencies to find them their first job, and sometimes with accommodation. Polish Entrepreneurs in the Glasgow area did not rely too much on pre-existing Polish networks for support. They have confined their personal contacts to friends and close relatives; and used new migrants’ informal contacts in order to access information and obtain practical support11. These new networks, based on weak ties and on-line resources are responding to the needs of new migrants. Interestingly, very few interviewees mentioned the role of well established Polish associations in the wider community12. Finally, their employment was crucial in providing small amounts of start-up capital for potential Entrepreneurs, and the unsatisfactory nature of the job and growing personal aspirations for a better standard of living, acted as push factors into self-employment.

FROM MIGRANT-WORKERS TO ENTREPRENEURS: AN INCREMENTAL STRATEGY

Despite employment in the UK, nascent Polish Entrepreneurs were usually dissatisfied with their job. Fieldwork results identify two main sets of reasons

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11 They have also advertised their business and hired employee from these new networks.
12 There is a real gap between the older generation with its well established networks and social institutions, and the new generation of Polish migrants. Newcomers hardly mention the pre-2004 immigrant community, while older members of Polonia do not have many acquaintances amongst the new migrants: “Of this Polonia there is not any more [...] Now they are more self-centred, they only think about themselves, they think that the world is theirs, whereas, before, Polonia was their family”. L, 35 years in Scotland
Paul Lassalle, Michael Hughes, Ewa Helinska-Hughes,

underlying this situation. First, the jobs were low-skilled and perceived as unsatisfactory given the skills and educational levels of the migrant worker. Second, these potential Entrepreneurs had high expectations about life in the UK because of their motivation to fulfil greater career goals, or to follow a self-elected goal such as independence (Barret, Trevor, McEvoy 1996).

Prospective Polish Entrepreneurs were dissatisfied with the physical nature and conditions of their jobs in factories or on construction sites. Amongst the interviewees, 14 out of 21 had graduated from University or College in Poland; and two of them had graduated from a Scottish University. Furthermore, the ones who had worked in Poland prior to emigration have seen their job status decline in the UK. The reasons behind this are the barriers faced by Poles and other immigrants when entering the UK labour market. These include language barriers, lack of awareness of job opportunities, refusal to recognise foreign qualifications, lack of social capital, or weak social networks. The barriers to entering a host country’s labour market and discrimination at the workplace have been largely documented in the literature on EMEs (see for instance Aldrich et al. 1981, Bonacich 1973, Deakins et al. 2005, Granovetter 1985, Light 1972, Portes and Rumbaut 1990, Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993, Waldinger 1996, Zhou, 2004). In addition to working in lower-skilled and more physically demanding jobs than they had in Poland, interviewees also felt undervalued because their jobs did not match their expectations or skill levels.

“There in Poland, I was like the queen and here a cleaner.” M. Delicatessen, manager of a large office in Poland.

“I have worked during one year and a half in a factory. The work was really hard, really monotonous. I was doing parts for fridge. It was a whole thing: it was a new experience in life, despite hard work. It is here in Scotland that I have taken the decision to start-up. When we left Poland with my wife, we did not have any specific plan to establish a business. Nothing special in mind. We have decided during this year. The work at the factory was really exhausting. I had never worked in a factory, at the beginning it seems ok but then it becomes so exhausting to go every day.” D. book-shop.

A person with higher education qualifications working in a factory also faces barriers to entry in the wider labour market. Considering their aspirations for improvement in their standard of living and employment prospects, the expectation in term of occupational level can be lower in the UK than in their home country. Therefore, the immigrant may want to leave their current employment when he or she becomes more familiar with the host country, or when the family has
joined him or her. At this moment, the decision to create a business can be an exit strategy from this low status employment into self-employment; thereby fulfilling the desire to improve their standard of living and social status. To some extent, the immigrant is pushed into self-employment because of the disparity between his or her high expectations in the host country’s labour market, and the actual conditions they experience during the initial period of settlement and acculturation. The second push factor is the standard of living expectations held by the Polish migrant\textsuperscript{13}. Since this standard has not been achieved whilst in employment following arrival in the UK, self-employment is envisaged a way to regain dignity, pride, and motivation to succeed.

**EASY BUSINESS START-UP IN THE UK**

The interviewees also emphasised the ease of the start-up phase in Scotland, as well as the small amount of paperwork required. This acts a factor pulling them to self-employment. All the interviewees made this observation:

“Yes, it is straight forward. At the beginning, there is only the language barrier. Only the language barrier has prevented me from starting-up earlier or doing it faster.”  I. Hairdresser, Entrepreneur in Poland.

“It was really easy. Generally it is straight forward. I am self-employed which makes it even easier. Registration is done through the Internet, it is far easier from what I have hear about it in Poland.”  P., IT, the father is an Entrepreneur in Poland.

The case studies confirm the reluctance of immigrant Entrepreneurs to access and/or contact local institutions and formal sources of support and advice in the host country, as reported in previous research (Deakins et al, 2005; Barret, Trevor, McEvoy, 1996). First, there is the problem of agency accessibility due to a lack of skills, local knowledge and language barriers faced by the ethnic Entrepreneur. Second, there is a lack of knowledge about what resources these institutions can provide for a start-up Entrepreneur. Third, there is a marked reluctance to use formal sources of support and advice as Polish Entrepreneurs usually find it time consuming and fruitless considering the small amount of funding needed

\textsuperscript{13} Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland have been pushed into self-employment by these factors, rather than being pushed by unemployment as commonly experienced by other migrant communities. The research found no evidence of ‘necessity entrepreneurship’ amongst Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland. One may also argue that Polish Entrepreneurs as well as Polish workers have an easy ‘exit’ route available in the case of failure due to the freedom of movement of labour in the European Union; they can easily go back to Poland as noted earlier (e.g. pendular migrants).
to start-up. Therefore, given their self-elected goal of independence, most of the interviewees prefer to rely on their personal savings to start-up14.

“Around – 4500 and that was enough for a start. I have done everything all by myself, I had the money, I do my own business, my own bills, I am independent. I know that there is something called Business Gateway, I know there are such organisations but I do not know really what they do.” A. Boxing School.

Fourth, unlike other immigrant communities, Polish Entrepreneurs do not borrow money nor seek advice from co-nationals. Thus, these results contribute to the existing literature on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs that emphasises the role of the community in business start-up and small business management. Polish Entrepreneurs in the Glasgow area rely solely on personal savings and their own ideas rather than on resources from the co-ethnic community for finance and advice; thus making very little use of ‘social capital’. Furthermore, as the quotes below indicate using social capital could have a detrimental effect:

“Poles are like a knife on your throat, they spend their time gossiping. As long as you work at the factory with the others it is fine but as soon as one is doing better, or is succeeding to achieve something, they are just like [unreadable word], they attack. As soon as someone has some success, or someone has a house.”

M, Driving School.

The ease of the start-up process and the small amount of finance required15 partially explains why unhappy factory workers, or as in the case of the latter example, a person who has been unemployed for just a day, can start-up a new business venture as a solution to low job satisfaction. Entrepreneurs themselves tend to articulate this decision as an ad hoc matter based upon luck and ‘flair’, rather than a fully documented process. Thus, the start-up phase is easier in the UK than in Poland since there are less painful bureaucratic requirements and procedures. In addition, despite low levels of access to formal sources of finance and advice, and avoidance of using co-ethnic community social capital or finance, starting-up is described as straightforward by the Polish Entrepreneurs interviewed. The amount of capital needed is small enough to permit this strategy to succeed, as

14 The businesses identified and studied comprise micro-firms or self-employed people, mostly in the service sector (e.g. hairdressers, IT, delicatessens) that require low levels of financing. Thus, these types of businesses are clearly suited to the ad hoc nature of the strategy and can operate within the co-ethnic community at relatively low risk. The decision to start-up is opportunity based and mostly spontaneous, and is usually a sudden decision influenced by various push and pull factors. It could be termed initially as haphazard Entrepreneurship which then pursues incremental strategies to develop the business through later phases.

15 Between £4,000 and £10,000 for start-up in all the case studies.
funds can be provided by savings from employment. As we have argued, ‘pull factors’ (Barret, et al., 1996, Deakins and Ram, 1995; Freel, 1998) do not operate in the same manner in the case of Polish Entrepreneurs than for other immigrant Entrepreneurs. The research findings underscore the importance of incremental strategies amongst Polish Entrepreneurs. Having worked in the UK prior to their business start-up initiative, prospective Polish Entrepreneurs accrue funds from paid employment. They have developed a business idea, usually predicated upon a community-based niche market; but the opportunity spotted in this niche market is rarely identified in a business plan, or even benchmarked. Thus, the Polish Entrepreneur’s decision to start-up is quick and undocumented; and often the opportunity is the outcome of a hunch or entrepreneurial ‘flair’.

FROM SOJOURNER TO SETTLERS?

The findings from the fieldwork highlight the decision-making by Polish Entrepreneur concerning the length of stay as well as the reasons underpinning this choice. Starting-up is an opportunity for an individual to ensure a decent income, and, as noted earlier, to meet life standard expectancies in a more interesting and qualified job than having a routine occupation in a factory. During the fieldwork, there is strong evidence of both open-ended and permanent settlement strategy. There is strong evidence that migrants who came as sojourner now plan to stay longer.

“For my future, I see Poland. I will go back to Poland, I can see my house on the seaside. I think that I will go back in four or five years. My daughter is already five. I need to decide if we stay or not.

This exemplifies the change from a sojourner strategy to open-ended settlement. Migrants’ plans change overtime as their relationship with the home country become weaker and ties with the host country strengthen. The key factor in this shift is the immigrant family unit, once they have been re-united in the UK. Household rather than individual strategies are developed and these strongly affect the migrant’s decision to stay (White and Ryan, 2008). The same interviewee commented on the change to his migratory plans:

“It is because of school. Next year, my daughter will start school” A, construction

The importance of household is underlined by the key role played by women in the decision making process. As presented below, women have had firmer plans for settlement from the beginning.
“We are not going back to Poland. We have a house and our children are now better in English than in Polish, they can write better in English. Here we bought a house and here we will stay. From the beginning I was sure that we will stay, yes” M, delicatessen, woman entrepreneur.

Another reason for change in migratory strategies is the anticipation of a more secure and stable standard of living, and improved life-style in the UK.

“It is easier to live here. Everything is easier. It is more secure, either from a personal and from a business perspective.” K, hairdresser

POLISH ENTREPRENEURS AND THE COMMUNITY

The following set of findings concern the relationships of the Polish Entrepreneurs with the Polish Community from the business’ point of view. First of all, Polish Entrepreneurs tend to focus on ethnic niches by serving the community on products and services. They are using the Community as a market. Secondly, Polish Entrepreneurs in the Glasgow area play a social and an economic role in the construction of Polish-enclave markets.

SERVING CO-ETHNICS

The Polish Entrepreneurs in Glasgow tend to serve their own community for cultural “proximity” reasons. First, they share a common language and this removes an important cultural barrier for migrant consumers. Second, it is easier for a new Entrepreneur to trade within their co-ethnic community since they have a better understanding of its needs than their British competitors. However, in some cases, Polish businesses do face competition from other ethnic minority run businesses e.g. Pakistani delicatessens employing Polish People to sell Polish goods. Nevertheless, successful start-up businesses need to develop, either by breaking out into the mainstream market or by extending the enclave. In other words, initially Polish Entrepreneurs see the community as a market. They are able to spot opportunities within this niche market before they eventually pursue diversification strategies.

COMMUNITY AS A MARKET

For a large majority of the business studied, the Polish community is the primary, or even, the only market targeted by a new business venture16. Although

16 Though most Polish start-up ventures are ‘co-ethnic serving’, seven of the businesses studied began as mainstream. Five of them are located in the service sector, and two in construction.
there are local clients, the businesses studied strongly rely on the Polish community as customers. Most of the Entrepreneurs serve the enclave Polish community with ethnic goods (such as food, Polish computer programmes), or mainstream products and services (e.g. legal advice, car repair, hairdressing). In addition, all the interviewees advertise their businesses on the Internet via Polish immigrant websites such as emito.net or Glasgow24.pl. The Polish Entrepreneur is more likely to identify enclave-market opportunities and fill perceived skill gaps than a local business or Entrepreneur17.

“I could see that there was a lack for a Polish Computer shop” S, IT.

Polish businesses serving the community are represented in our typology by the concepts of ‘serving co-ethnics’ and ‘niche-entrepreneurs’. First, the Entrepreneurs serving co-ethnics sell Polish goods to the Polish community. The delicatessens are included in this category since they mostly serve Poles. Once they begin to serve a significant local client base, they come under the concept of middleman Entrepreneurs. This involves an extension in the range of products or services to the community, i.e. horizontal and vertical integration. Second, niche-entrepreneurs represent 12 out of the 21 case studies. They serve the Polish community with mainstream goods or services such as IT, hairdressing, or leisure activities; and their opportunities for further development lie in serving local clients.

FURTHER BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

Polish immigrant communities provide co-ethnic Entrepreneurs a range of business opportunities in a niche market. Nevertheless, staying in the ethnic or niche market18 can lead to survival strategies (Ram and Jones, 1998, Curran and Blackburn, 1993; see also dead-end thesis, Metcalf et al. 1995). Since an enclave-market is bounded by the size of the community, there is a demographic constraint on further development. Given the limited depth of the Polish Community, EMEs need to develop strategies in order to deal with competitive pressures and market saturation by reaching the mainstream market19. The future of these businesses lies in a more incremental diversification process as well as extension of the enclave-market adding a transnational dimension to the business. Indeed, by adding a

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17 Although there are Polish delicatessens run by Czechs, and Pakistanis.
18 Ethnic Market: serving ethnic clients with ethnic products. Niche market: serving ethnic clients with mainstream products or services.
19 See Annex II. As there is in the case of Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland no evidence of direct breaking-out strategies.
transnational dimension to the local ethnic enclave, an Entrepreneur can extend the range of products or services.

“We use to order our products from a Polish trade company but now we do our own transport. We order directly from Poland. We deal directly with the producers in Poland and we order.” B. Delicatessen, serial entrepreneur, enclave-market entrepreneur.

Most of the Entrepreneurs serving co-ethnics and niche-entrepreneurs try to attract local customers. The data suggests that Entrepreneurs do manage to attract local customers as language barriers are increasingly overcome; but so far this is far from a fully developed business breaking-out strategy.

“Almost all our clients are Poles. I think it is because of the language barriers. Sometimes I have to ask three or four times to understand a question with the locals […] We are trying to reach more and more locals with the advertising, the flyers.” M, garage, niche-entrepreneur.

SELF-PERCEPTION OF POLISH ENTREPRENEURS

The fieldwork data provides evidence of pride taken in work amongst Polish Entrepreneurs. Poles see themselves as ‘cheaper’, ‘faster’, ‘more reliable’ and ‘serious; and these are now common terms used when defining their own activities in comparison to their Scottish competitors.

“We have a reputation. ‘the Polish builder’, you can see it on every advertisement, Polskie Solidnosc (Polish solidity). Our prices are good as well, the work is done faster by Poles than by Scottish companies” A, construction.

This high reputation achieved by Polish immigrants is a major reason for starting-up in the niche market.

THE SOCIAL ROLE OF POLISH BUSINESSES

At a first glance, it is difficult to talk about a UK Polish enclave economy in the same way as it is described in the literature concerning the Puerto Rican or Latino communities in the USA (Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Unlike these communities there are no coercive restrictions placed by the community upon Polish Businesses. In addition, Polish Entrepreneurs are self-funded and do not rely on the community for advice or support. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence that they use the co-ethnic based local labour market for hiring staff.
“I have Polish employees. I trust them more than Scottish ones. It is also for the fact that they show more motivation at work. Really that’s the main reason.” K, IT, good English skills.

Second, and more importantly, the economic activities of the businesses are not solely commercial because of the cultural component underpinning this market, including in this case sharing information and emotional support amongst the Poles. The social role of Polish Businesses in Poland has mostly being observed and discussed during the informal talks following the interviews. After numerous interviews, the researcher was involved in hour-long talks with Polish clients who gathered in the hairdressing salon or in the restaurant.

“All the clients are Poles, many of them, especially women, come every week or so. Yes, sometimes we spend a lot of time chatting together (smile).” A, Hairdresser.

The role of practical support can become very time consuming for the Entrepreneur as illustrated below:

“I also help for the language. Some of my clients do not only ask me about their PC but also about the children, letters, and paperwork. Everyone thinks that I know everything. It is good to help but sometimes they ask too much.” S, IT.

POLISH ENCLAVE-MARKETS AND ‘LITTLE POLAND’

Whereas Polish construction companies work together in tight networks20, other businesses operate in different enclave-markets in looser networks located in a variety of economic sectors. However, there is evidence supporting the emergence of a ‘little Poland’, where Polish businesses play an important social role and facilitate the development of stronger links between businesses. In comparison with other immigrant communities, Polish entrepreneurs have a clear desire to be independent from their co-ethnics community. Nevertheless, their situation is different from the other communities since there are fewer Polish Businesses in Glasgow, and they do not make the same use of strong ties as there is always a possible ‘exit’ back to Poland. This means that the Polish Community does not exert the same degree of control, influence, or potential

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20 Construction businesses work as a close network of several specialised self-employed construction workers. They help each other, cooperate and swap workings “Whenever we cannot finish a restoration alone, or if we do not have time, we always give each other the word. I can help with roofing for example.” P. construction
coercion upon co-ethnics as other communities may exert (Zhou, 2004; Wilson and Portes, 1980; Portes and Zhou, 1992). Though there is a high cultural affinity within this Polish entrepreneurial and wider community, there is less dependency upon tightly coupled kinship networks and financial support, or restrictions on the choice of business pathways that may have been established by previous migrant entrepreneurs within other communities e.g. Chinese restaurants, and ‘take-aways’. As mentioned above, Polish Entrepreneurs use the Polish community for emotional and informational support but wish to be financially independent from the community (see Part III 2, and Part IV 2 above). Polish Entrepreneurs socialise with Poles but do not raise finance from their networks; whereas empirical findings from research on Entrepreneurs in other communities indicate that they use shared ethnic resources to start-up [Portes and Zhou 1992]. In these cases, there is evidence of mechanisms of control within the community, as the ability of the community to reward or sanction its member is crucial in ensuring trust. In these communities, the sentiment of obligation and community control may however constrain further development of businesses. Finally, the last difference between Polish Entrepreneurs and the ones from other immigrant communities is the relatively short period of time since the current wave of migrants arrived. Therefore, research data for most of the Polish Entrepreneurs in Glasgow is less easy to collect or directly use in a comparative context.

Polish businesses start to collaborate via weak ties, and via informal networks such as the Polish Community’s websites (emito.net and Glasgow24.pl) or the Emigrant magazine, available in every Polish Business.

“I do not have any contacts with other Polish Businesses. I mean… I cannot call it contact, I know the shops, the hairdressers… It is just that, we know each other.” D, book-shop, lack of English skills.

Finally, one of the Polish entrepreneurs had also started at his own expense an advertising flyer scheme distributing information about Polish businesses.

“I had the idea to improve the visibility and the links between the Polish businesses in Glasgow. We sometimes knew each other or I found some on emito, I contacted them and added them on the flyer. I do that for myself, I print it and it is available in every Polish Business. Of course, there is also my logo on it.” K, IT, mainstream entrepreneur, Polish employees.

Despite being a mainstream Entrepreneur, this Entrepreneur is contributing to building a network of Polish businesses in Glasgow.
CONCLUSION

This paper is based on new empirical data concerning Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland. The case studies reveal interesting features concerning individual Polish Entrepreneurs and their business strategies in the context of post-2004 migration to the UK. The primary outcomes and observations regarding the Polish Entrepreneur’s Life Processes are summarized in Annex III. There are three major conceptual categories based on the research findings: use of the ethnic and wider community by Polish Entrepreneurs; their incremental strategies from migrant-workers to Entrepreneur; and the importance of the family in personal migratory strategies and choices regarding settlement.

First, Polish Entrepreneurs follow similar paths of migration to fellow Poles arriving in UK after 2004. Whilst economic reasons act as a push factor to migration, Polish Entrepreneurs had secured employment when still in Poland using a wide network of recruitment and employment agencies. This reduced the uncertainty and risk with migration to the UK. Once in the UK, new immigrants tended to make contact with co-citizens from the same wave of migration; making little use of established networks that were generated by Polish migrants prior to 2004. They did not slot into existing networks and associations; rather they make more use of new co-ethnic networks, especially based on the Internet. This conclusion fits with the established literature on recent Polish migration to the UK (e.g. Ryan et al, 2006) where Polish migrants develop some cautious and strategic ties across the ethnic group that provides practical support in order to secure employment and accommodation. The research also supports conclusions from the literature on EMBs concerning the avoidance of formal sources of support, finance and advice amongst Polish Entrepreneurs because of lack of awareness of institutional and state agency services and provision (Deakins et al. 2005; Ram and Jones, 2007) and their self-elected goal of independence, (Barret, et al 1996). Thus, the Polish community is used as a market in which to sell goods or services and to hire staff; showing evidence of Polish enclave-markets. Finally, this paper underlines the growing social role of Polish Entrepreneurs in the community.

Second, this paper highlights the importance of incremental business strategies amongst Polish Entrepreneurs at different phases of the business development process. After arrival in the UK, Polish Entrepreneurs had a job secured by agencies based in Poland. However, this job was unsatisfactory and did not meet their expectations. After a few years in the construction sector, or as butchers or security guards, Polish Entrepreneurs had some savings. The ease of the start-up process in the UK and the relatively small amount of finance required partially explains why dissatisfied factory workers can start-up a new businesses venture. This provides a solution to low job satisfaction, and enables the migrant
employee to become self-employed, and meeting their aspirations for a better standard of living; the primary reasons underpinning the decision for emigration to the UK. Entrepreneurs themselves tend to articulate this decision as an ad hoc matter based upon luck and ‘flair’, rather than a fully documented process. Later business development is also an incremental process from serving co-ethnics to the extension of the enclave-markets (Annex II).

Finally, the analysis underscores the importance of the household in the process of settlement in the UK. Male immigrants usually brought their wives and children to the UK after a few months; thus households rather than the individual are established, and this strongly effects the migrant’s decision to stay. This confirms previous research (White and Ryan, 2008), but extends our understanding regarding changes to migratory plans from sojourner worker to entrepreneur and settler, and the process business start-up and entrepreneurial behavior amongst the migrant community.

Annex I: ideal-types of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product/services sold</th>
<th>Mainstream Market Entrepreneur</th>
<th>Middleman Entrepreneur</th>
<th>Enclave-Market Entrepreneur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The principal market for ethnic market entrepreneur is his own community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Products/Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Characterizes self-employed immigrants who serve non-co-ethnics. It also involves entrepreneurs who sell ethnic products and services to a mainstream public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niche Entrepreneur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrepreneurs who sell non-ethnic products such as financial services, legal aid to their own immigrant group. Although they sell non-ethnic products, they have the cultural competence to enter this niche market.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 P/G stands for “Magister” and over, U/G stands for all degrees from Polish Universities up to “licencjat”. 
Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland: life trajectories, social capital and business strategies

Annex II: The Diversification Process

- Enclosure-Market Entrepreneur
- Middleman Entrepreneur
- Niche Entrepreneur
- Mainstream Market Entrepreneur

Products or Services sold

- Ethnic
- Mainstream

Market served

- Ethnic Customers
- Mainstream Customers

Diversification (Products/Services, clientele)

Diversification within the enclave-market (new product/services, transnational dimension)

Annex III: Polish Entrepreneurs Life Processes

2004/2005

- Using networks
  - Agencies
    - Job search in the UK
  - Polonia – new networks
  - Formal source of support and advice
  - Polish Community
  - Enclave-markets
- Lack of knowledge or avoidance
- Community as a market
- Social role of Polish Entrepreneurs
- Links between Polish Businesses and Little Poland

The Business Life Process

- Emigration
  - Job secured prior to emigration
  - Non satisfactory employment
  - Starting-up
  - Diversification strategies
- Incremental decision - flair
- Incremental strategies - flair
- Small amount of Finance
- Self-selected goals of independence
- Easy start-up opportunities

Individual and households’ migratory strategies

- Family gather in Scotland
- Life standard expectancy not met
- Self-employment
- Longer term settlement
- Economic Emigration
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THE CONTRIBUTION OF POST ACCESSION POLISH MIGRANTS TO ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

GEOGRAPHIES OF CARE: SETTING THE CONTEXT.

The need for post accession migrants to work in the UK adult social care services is the outcome of a number of national and international drivers. Demographically, the UK, like much of Europe, is an ageing society (Pommer et al 2007). Older adults (ONS 2008) and people with learning disabilities are living longer (Emerson and Hatton, 2008), often with multiple and complex needs (Mansell 2007), while also presenting service providers with new challenges (Cambridge and Carnaby 2006 and Madders 2010)). In particular the emerging, but increasing, cohorts of adults who were diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder as children are now raising significant issues for adult social care services (Boucber 2009). Alongside there now exists a much higher expectation of services by users, their families (Audit Commission 2003) and politicians (DH 2007 and DH 2009). Historically in the UK, long term care for people with learning disabilities was provided in large isolated institutions (Race 2007), or by families (Read 2000), most usually by informal unpaid women carers. These were, and still are, often close family members, principally mothers, undertaking what feminists describe as a ‘a labour of love’ (Finch and Groves, 1983)

It is now suggested that the ability of western women to engage in informal care as an on-going commitment has become some-what compromised (Lister 2002; Mitchell et al 2004). In part this can be explained as the outcome of Western women becoming more economically active and having more opportunities to achieve educational qualifications. Increasingly women have to work out of financial necessity to support their households (Hochschilds 2002). In the UK many women find that their earnings are needed to sustain duel income mortgages and aspirations of owner occupation. As a result care and care roles, have been reconfigured- while Western women ‘enjoy’ the fruits of their investments in further and higher education and associated independence, so other women literally ‘move in’ or are formally recruited to take on their traditional caring roles (Hochschilds 2002). Ungerson (2004) convincingly explores these developments by drawing
on globalisation discourse. From this perspective, globalisation has produced the commodification of women’s work and caretaking (Ungerson 1997), where other women are paid for caring for family members. and do those tasks traditionally associated with ‘women’s work’ (Parrenas 2001). This generates what Hochschild (2000), has described as ‘global care chains’, where women from third and developing world economies work in the west, doing traditional gendered tasks such as cleaning and caring for dependents to support their families at home. These families are in turn being cared for by other female members such as aunts and grandmothers, suggesting no significant change in traditional gendered caring roles and responsibilities.

Gender is an important dynamic within social care arrangements. Feminist trajectories highlight the ways in which gender mediates ‘global circuits of care’ (Anderson 2000). While western economies have long histories of employing migrant women workers as wet nurses, nurses and cleaners, it is the scale and growing dependency by service providers on this arrangement that is new (Yeates, 2009). Moreover, across Western Europe as welfare services increasingly move from direct care service provision to cash for care arrangements through Direct Payments and individual budgets, then drawing on international examples (Degiuli, 2007), it is anticipated that the demand for migrant labour in the social care sector will continue to grow.

GLOBAL CARE CHAINS: THE ROLE OF MIGRATION IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Building an accurate picture of the UK adult social care workforce is very challenging. While the annual Labour Force Survey provides some insights, the sector skills sector itself acknowledges the lack of robust and reliable workforce data (Skills for Care: National Minimum Data Set-Social Care 2009). Until recently this has been compounded by a lack of research in this area. From the emerging literature a trend can be seen amongst UK social care service providers based on their growing need to draw on migrant labour (Eborall and Griffiths 2009; CSCI 2009; Compas 2009). Similarly a small but growing number of reports linked to migration studies (EPERIAN 2007), social geography (Datta et al 2006) and migration policy analysis (Office of National Statistics: Annual Population Survey, 2006), highlights the increasing reliance by UK adult social care services on migrant labour.

Research by Dupont (2006), confirmed the increasingly internationalized nature of the social care workforce. While the ONS APS (2006), found that 12% of those employed in the care sector were born outside of the UK, this statistic fails to embrace the enormity of regional differences in the patterns of employment
The contribution of Post-Accession Polish migrants to adult social care services.

amongst migrant care workers. Some areas, most notably London and the south east are estimated to employ up to 80% of their staff from pools of migrant workers. (CSCI, 2008). Given the availability of work then it is not surprising that since 2004, a significant number of migrant workers coming to the UK from the post accession states have found themselves working in adult social care, possibly out of choice or as the result of financial necessity. In 2006-07 the care sector emerged in the top 10% of most popular ‘choice’ of employment in an analysis of the NINO destinations for post-accession migrants (ONS APS 2008).

WORKING IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES- MACRO ANALYSIS

Community based care for dependent adults in the UK is premised on what is described as a ‘social model’ of disability (Oliver 1990; UPIAS 1979; Barnes and Mercer 2010). This was originally driven by demands from disabled people themselves and emerged as a result of ideological considerations and EU imposed imperatives around human rights. The social model is primarily a western construct, largely associated with advanced economies. It is by no means a universal phenomena .In relation to people with learning disabilities the dominant model in many societies, including Poland, remains that of institutional care or care within the confines of the family home usually provided by female blood relatives (Wapiennik and Grzegorzewska, 2008). Social care is an extremely diverse sector and embraces work with a range of adult service users, ranging from people with learning disabilities; disabled people; people with mental health needs; and older adults. Stakeholders are drawn from the private, voluntary and private sectors. The organisational context for social care practice, while centrally regulated, is delivered by multiple stakeholders some of who are large international businesses. Largely following on from the neo-liberal policies of the New Right, New Labour under the guise of new public management and modernisation (Clarke, Gewirtz and McLaughlin (2000a) ‘have maintained this mixed economy of welfare’. More recently ‘personalisation’ has been added to this agenda (Department of Health 2007). These developments now dictate that local authorities should purchase care services, in their various forms, from the private and voluntary sectors (Sharkey 2007). Recent statements about the ‘Big Society’ (HM Government 2010) coupled with the cost cutting measures contained in the comprehensive spending review initiated by the new coalition government clearly suggest that this approach will be further extended (Smith and Clavill 2010). Over the last two decades the ‘marketization’ of care and associated neo-liberal welfare policy has transformed UK care service infrastructures. Juxtaposed with associated labour market deregulation and sub-contraction this has allowed low paid employment and limited job security to become institutionalised (Lavelette and Ferguson 2007).
While some local authorities may maintain some direct service provision increasingly, in the mixed economy of welfare, these are being transferred, under the guise of efficiency savings and extending choice, to external agencies who become ‘preferred providers’, contracted to deliver specific services and implement care plans for individuals. As a result, statutory responsibility is increasingly confined to the assessment of need, to establish eligibility for support, funding assessed need, commissioning appropriate services, regulatory functions (Sharkey, 2007) and the protection of the most vulnerable. As such, post accession migrants may find themselves in any one of a number of jobs in one of the three key service sectors.

Today care is an ‘industry’; it has been largely unravelled from its post world war two origins both ideologically and practically. Contemporarily it is highly fragmented with multiple players and providers. CSCI (2009) draw attention to the complexity of a sector that has evolved to include 30,000 employers who employ in excess of 1.6 million workers. Given the enormity of the sector and the insatiable demand for care services, post accession migrants, as care workers, could find themselves in any one of many social care environments, being given one of many related job titles, and be working in a sector with wide ranging conditions of employment and career prospects. Research by UNISON (2008) and CSCI (2009) has identified how gaining employment within a local authority represents the greatest gains in terms of pay, conditions and job security for those employed in this sector. This point was reiterated on a number of occasions by the care workers who were interviewed in this study. Aspirationally employment within the local authority adult social care sector was articulated as a longer term goal

“I love my job and working here. But working for the local authority would be the jewel in my crown. Those are the best jobs to have in the UK”. (Kasia: employed in a small voluntary organisation)

Nationally the adult social care workforce is made up of largely unqualified and predominantly female workers. The latter is not surprising given the popular correlation of care as being ‘women’s work’ (McKie et al 2001). The sector is largely non-unionised; where unionisation does exist this is mainly confined to workers with better paid public sector jobs (UNISON 2008). The shift towards cash for care systems which are based on personalisation, direct payments and individual budgets, means that there are growing numbers of user-employers in the sector (Ungerson, 2004). As highlighted, this sector is beset with recruitment and retention difficulties with above average vacancy rates across many parts of the country (CSCI, 2009). Even the impact of the recent recession has not dented this situation in any meaningful way (National Care Association 2009). These
The contribution of Post-Accession Polish migrants to adult social care services.

factors, in a sector that is associated with low pay, are seen as increasing the need for migrant workers, even if this is not formally acknowledged by government policy (Compas 2009). Drawing on research findings from a study of care workers in London, May et al 2007 (page 151) describe the emergence of a new ‘migrant division of labour’. The authors of this report suggest that the employment market in London is characterised by growing occupational polarization with many of the capitals low paid jobs being filled by foreign born workers, care work appears to fit within this paradigm.

WORKING IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE-MICRO ANALYSIS

Care practice embraces both competence in various practical skills and an ability to engage in complex relationships. Regardless of the label attached to the specific job, the diverse roles associated with employment in the adult social care sector, demand a combination of well developed generic skills supported by sector specific understandings of service user need. Working in social care is hard work- it demands both physical and emotional labour. Care is also characterised by both analytical and normative dimensions. However, as an area of academic discourse those elements that make up the day-to-day activities associated with care needs emerge as under-researched and poorly articulated (Cangiano et al 2009), particularly when attempting to locate them within an analysis premised on a social model of need. In learning disability services such an approach demands that carers move beyond the ‘condition’ and associated medical needs of the individual (Thomas and Woods, 2003). To this end, government rhetoric and disability studies discourse, suggest that social care staff embrace and demonstrate a much broader range of variables and values including acknowledging the rights, dignity and wider social needs of the service user. This approach is now central to the government’s personalisation, dignity and inclusion agendas for adult social care (DH 2008). According to Putting People First (DH 2007), ‘good’ care for adult social care users should be personalised and documented in an individual care plan. For people with profound, complex and multiple needs, care may involve highly intimate tasks e.g. managing incontinence, bathing and care during a women’s menstrual period, alongside deeply personal care activities such as support with feeding, dressing and undressing. For practitioners, this is rarely articulated in terms of process; rather it emerges in terms of underpinning values and broad policy requirements. ‘How’ the worker should undertake this practice is much vaguer. Thus ‘dignity and respect’ become the by words for closing the door when undertaking intimate care. Without such detail, it is hard to understand how new staff especially those who come from different cultural heritages, can adequately meet the needs of service users without causing them further distress.
The need to deconstruct ‘care’ in order to fully understand the various dimensions of this concept would appear to be long overdue if the skills and competencies of the work force are to be recognised and rewarded accordingly. Moreover if this sector is to increasingly rely on migrant workers then insight into the actual nature of the day to day work may improve retention. Workers would then be able to make more informed decisions about the reality of the employment that they are entering. It is generally accepted that care workers need to be highly empathetic, patient and hard-working, besides having the skills and knowledge needed to work effectively in the social care sector. The complexity and demands of care work are not necessarily reflected in the pay or the status given to the sectors qualification infrastructure and requirements. These are laid down by the Care Quality Commission (the UK regulatory and inspection body for adult social care) and are formulated on the National Vocational Qualification system. The sector ‘norm is a competency based NVQ Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) qualification. On the national Qualification and Credit Framework (QCDA, 2009) this emerges as a relatively modest achievement. Moreover competency based training is not without its critics and has been accused of being ‘reductionist and atomistic’ (Henkel, 1994 p.89).

THE RESEARCH

The research was undertaken through recorded semi-structured interviews with a small cohort of ten respondents who mainly originated from rural areas of Poland and who had come to the UK as a result of the opportunities offered by EU enlargement. The respondents were employed in three different voluntary organisations that provide a range of support to adults with learning difficulties. The majority of the service users were, by nature of the support that had been commissioned for them, adults with complex and challenging needs arising out of their specific learning disabilities and associated impairments.

An examination of the employing agencies Care Standards Commission Inspectorate (now the Care Quality Commission) reports, showed that on inspection all of the organisations had histories of good governance, good financial management systems, and sound approaches to the care of people with learning disabilities premised on personalisation and quality provision. All of the voluntary organisations were headed by directors with social work qualifications and had stable, well-established management infrastructures. Managers from each of the organisations were also interviewed.

The Polish staff who volunteered to be interviewed were all female (none of the organisations had ever recruited male staff from the A8 countries). Their ages ranged from early 20s to mid 40s, most were single and had lived in the
UK for varying periods, with the longest serving person arriving in 2006. Unlike many women involved in global care chains, none of these women had dependent children.

All had been formally recruited and had gone through their organisations quite vigorous and robust procedures for recruitment and selection. These reflected nationally prescribed requirements for the recruitment and selection of staff (Care Standards Act 2000; Bichard Report 2004 and now defunct Independent Safeguarding Authority 2009). They all worked in small group homes for adults with learning disabilities, delivering complex packages of care that had been commissioned and funded by local authority adult social care departments. In keeping with best practice in the sector these care packages were translated into detailed person centred care plans, which are subject to regular review by the commissioning social worker and subject to further scrutiny by independent inspectors from the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Many of the service users that they were supporting clearly had high dependency needs compounded by limited communication. Some of the service users were described as having ‘challenging behaviours’, sometimes manifesting as unpredictable behaviours which could involve aggressive outbursts towards others, including staff. Such matters were addressed and managed through highly individualised and very detailed care plans. Adopting a person centred approach, the triggers to such behaviours are carefully identified with the expectation that care staff will then strive to de-escalate what could be a very difficult situation.

As a behaviour management strategy this was evidently very effective, but it did demand staff that had an ability to assess and manage complex situations juxtaposed with excellent communication skills. None of the Polish staff appeared challenged by this dimension of their day to day work; rather they were able to articulate it as an integral aspect of the persons needs. Such an approach is clearly consistent with the wider value base of social care and a reflection of the training that they have received in their present employment. While nurturance is said to be strongly influenced by gender (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2002), it may also be a reflection of religious values (Moss 2005). Neither Catholicism nor the strong value placed on family bonds in Polish society (Mikolajczyk-Lerman 2010) were explored in this research.

As individual workers they appeared to have little difficulty in conceptualising and discussing their day to day work, and they did this in a manner that was entirely consistent with the values and ethos of their employing organisations. Indeed, it was the challenge of meeting the demands and complex needs of the service users that they appeared to find particularly rewarding. For a number of the respondents the rewards of their work emerged as more than financial gain; the job satisfaction gained from caring was also important:
I love working here. I always try to do a good job for the girls. It’s doing the little things that makes a real difference to the girls’ lives. I think we are really appreciated. It great to get paid for doing something that you like so much’ (Alina)

The post accession migrant workers were working alongside UK born colleagues. None of the respondents gave any indication that they were experiencing discrimination in their workplaces. These were however working environments characterised by a strong ethos around equality and diversity, with an associated zero tolerance of racism etc.

Six of the respondents had achieved a NVQ Level 3 qualification- which is higher than the required NVQ 2 minimum recommended by the CQC for this sector. The other four had obtained NVQ L2 and were working towards their Level 3 award. All of the training had been supported and funded by their employers, who are able to draw on workforce development funding. These are government provided but locally administered funds aimed at the private, voluntary and independent sectors to support those staff training and development activities deemed necessary to meet central government requirements.

For some of the respondents, working in their present jobs emerged as somewhat opportunistic rather than as the result of long term planning. It was often a series of events that led them to work with people with learning disabilities rather than any significant plans or systematic considerations based on previous experiences or knowledge. One woman had initially come to the UK through an agency to work as a cleaner. She had left this as she felt exploited and underpaid. She then went on to gain employment in private care home with older adults. This was not a particularly positive experience:

‘Those places want Polish workers but won’t pay them for what they do. They get given the worst jobs. No one cares as long as they are working’ (Justyna)

She appeared much more satisfied with her present position and described her job and experiences of the post much more positively, this was posited in terms of the pay and conditions but also regarding job satisfaction and the sense of ‘making a difference’ to the service users lives. When asked if she thought this was good job, while she replied ‘yes’, she went on to clarify this by reference to the statutory sector, where there were the, ‘very best jobs, but they are really hard to get for Polish people’

The respondents were all living in private rented accommodation, which they considered to be ‘good’. Finding accommodation, setting up a bank account and
knowing how to get a doctor were cited as things that they would have found helpful to have support from their employers after initially arriving in the UK.

At the time of the research study none of the women had any contact with employment agents, although some of them spoke very negatively about experiencing such exploitative practices when they first came to the UK.

‘It’s more than the money...’ Reflection on Leaving Poland

Job security, potential promotion opportunities (even if not taken up) and free training were consistently articulated as important motivators for remaining with their present UK organisations. The respondents described employment in Poland as much less secure and premised on more informal arrangements -

‘Every time the government changes you think how safe will my job be now’ (Kazimiera), another person talked of how ‘You only ever get a temporary contract. You never know when you might lose your job’ (Agnieszka). When it was suggested that the Warsaw Voice (2009), along with other commentators in the Polish media, had produced an analysis that implied that unemployment while still problematic, was reported to be actually falling in parts of Poland, and in some parts of the country there were skill shortages, this was quickly dismissed by a number of the respondents. Rather it was seen as either a temporary phenomena, or if it was true, ‘then it was only happening in the big cities’. (Alina)

All of the women had worked in Poland and most had direct experiences of unemployment. Implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, their accounts were highly critical of the lack of equal opportunities for women and underhand institutionalised employment practices in Poland. More than one respondent stressed that in relation to getting a job,

‘Is not what you know, but who you know’. Another, cited youth, age and gender as variables that served as potential barriers to getting jobs, especially better-paid and more secure jobs. These were qualified by accounts from their own experiences.

Nepotism and knowing the right people were most often cited as examples of the mediums needed to secure employment

‘It’s who you know, that was my problem. Without knowing the right people and having connections I just couldn’t get a job in my part of Poland’ (Alina)
Such comments served to reiterate the findings of Stenning (2005), regarding a lack of transparency in employment practices within Poland. The role of informal networks and connections in the former communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe has been explored in some detail by Wedel (1992) who concludes that such practices are the by-products and legacy of such political regimes.

While the women had come from various areas of Poland, those from North Eastern Poland were most heavily represented in the sample. Few of the respondents originated from Polish towns or cities, rather their family homes were mainly in village and rural locations. A recurring theme was the opportunities posed by migration to ‘escape’ what was perceived as parochialism and associated lack of opportunities in these rather isolated Polish villages. A number of the women went on to expand this into a wider discussion on the perceived liberalism and relative lack of community censorship which they associated with life in the UK. This tended to focus on relationships, freedom of dress and life-style choices

“Here I can do things that would not be possible in Poland. I can be myself. Here no one bothers about what you wear- in Poland everyone in the village has a view on what you have on!” (Bronislaw)

While contemporary discourses on post accession migration focus on the economic and political reasons for the influx of workers to the UK after 2004, there does appear to be a need to further contextualise this from a socio-geographical perspective. Such a micro-level analysis could be then used to provide insight into the regional socio-economic drivers in Poland that are influencing migration from particular areas. Similarly a sociological analysis that embraces structuration would have the potential to embrace the role of agency in this process (Giddens 1991). Agency was a feature that was highly evident in the respondents who were interviewed in this study. Wallace and Stola (2002) have acknowledged the role of agency and autonomy in the decision making that underpins migration. While it would be easy to embrace the popularist view of economic migration and see these women only as economic migrants from areas of Poland characterised by unemployment and high levels of social deprivation, their individual narrative painted a much more complex and richer picture, which reflected the findings of Trindfyllidou (2006). While they may have been initially driven by unemployment – indeed one respondent talked of migration to the UK as her ‘only choice’ - this was never the only factor in their decision making.

While the research was based on a very small cohort sample, a significant if unexpected feature of the interviews was the objectivity, and stoicism in face of adversity, demonstrated by a number of the respondents. Rarely were the interviews emotionally charged situations. Few tears were shed. While always warm and
open when giving their deeply personal accounts, the women’s experiences were consistently described in a focussed, considered and articulate manner. Possibly this is the outcome of on-going internal dialogues, or it more simply reflects the reality of life in an increasingly mobile and globalised world (Skrbis, 2008).

Migration is certainly not a new phenomenon in Poland; historically it is a country that has seen waves of mass migration which have been driven by war, politics and economic imperatives. What is new in post-communist Poland is that people are ‘now free to leave and free to return’ (Sylwia). Such a view is consistent with the findings of Morokvasic (1996; 1999) who found that women migrants from Central and Eastern Europe were more ‘shuttle migrants, than settler migrants’, engaged in what has more recently been termed ‘turnstile migration’ (Pollard et al, 2008).

It was the open-ended nature of the new arrangements that emerged as a particularly attractive trajectory to these women. All of the women spoke of the ease of returning to Poland to visit friends and family. Cheap air fares, access to new technology and local Polish networks facilitated frequent interaction and cultural contact. In terms of coming to the UK, unlike previous generations of Polish migrants, globalisation, the media (particularly films and television), the internet and local sources meant that the women had a lot of practical information about the UK at their disposal before they actually arrived. Rather than diasporas, a number of their narratives suggested a journey which offered new experiences gained from their status as travellers, working to support themselves while also enjoying the opportunities that this facilitated. Ewa Hoffman (1999), drawing on her own experiences and using post modernist trajectories offers an analysis of migration which embraces the positive drivers for ‘exile’. These she suggests, include the desire for new experiences and challenges. This view was consistent with the views articulated by the respondents. This was summed up by Cecylia when she stated,

‘I have learnt so much from coming to work in the UK. Lots of the things have been about myself. Here I have a freedom to do things that wouldn’t be possible for me in Poland. Yes, I earn good money but it’s more than that. It’s about being in control. It’s for yourself.’

BETTER PAY, BETTER LIVES AND MORE OPPORTUNITIES?

The women were most certainly not economic victims driven by circumstance, rather they each demonstrated high degrees of agency and independence in their decision making, much of which was premised on and driven by aspirations for
a “better life”. When this was unpacked it emerged as coterminous with greater material security and purchasing power.

‘Here I can make money and buy more things that I want. I send money home to my family but I can enjoy a good life’- Aldona (emphasis added). However a further dynamic was also evident, premised on wider considerations linked to independence, personal enhancement, opportunity and citizenship. The women had surprisingly few complaints about life in the UK, apart from comments and observations about the indifference of most UK citizens in relation to their relative good standard of living.

‘People here take so much for granted, they should be grateful for all the things that they have got’ (Elzbieta)

Their narratives revealed hope rather than loss. Their responses were largely short and succinct, particularly when asked about their longer term intentions and views on remaining in the UK or returning to Poland. It quickly became evident that the respondents found the question “How long do you intend to remain in the UK?” difficult to answer. This tended to lead on to discussions around those factors that were instrumental in their decision to remain in their present employment for the foreseeable future.

Gender is a powerful mediator in citizenship discourse. . While all of the women came across in the interviews as confident, friendly and articulate this was not confirmed by their individual narratives. None of the women occupied senior positions within the organisations and none presently aspired to gain more senior positions, with more than one respondent, when asked about career plans and opportunities for progression stating that ‘this would be too difficult for me to cope with’. When this was explored, gender did not emerge as a determinant in relation to possible promotion rather; being a manager was something the respondents felt needed ‘excellent’ written and spoken English, which they thought they presently did not have. This lack of confidence amongst the women was a re-emerging theme throughout the research and seemed to be rooted in their negative perceptions of their English communication skills, especially in relation to their written English and ability to produce reports etc that would be seen and reviewed by others. They described the quality of their English teaching in Poland as quite poor, ‘just enough to get by on’. The focus at school, for a number of them, seems to have been acquiring skills in English grammar based on tests of their written work rather than developing their expressive communication through interactive approaches.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Given that care is a relational activity that involves both carers and recipients then well developed communication skills are a fairly fundamental pre-requisite for success (Cangiano 2009). The UK regulatory bodies are not allowed to require European workers to pass a test of their competency in written and spoken English language skills (DH27/05/04). The Care Quality Commission does however require employees to have the linguistic knowledge necessary for them to work effectively and safely. Completing their lengthy and often very wordy portfolios for their NVQ assessments emerged as a major challenge for a number of these workers. This is not surprising, it is a factor cited by many care workers in the sector; the demands of compiling the Portfolio of Evidence to demonstrate their practical competence is one explanation why many care workers do not achieve or move beyond NVQ Level 2 on the qualification infrastructure (Swales and Roodhouse, 2003). Portfolios require well developed written communication skills which emerges as a challenge for a number of care workers (Cox, 2007).

None of the employers provided any additional English language support, although in one organisation it became clear that the team leaders did go through the respondents NVQ portfolios with them, prior to their submission for verification. This was aimed at helping them correct any grammatical and spelling errors. More than one employer suggested that they would have found it helpful to have been able to access appropriate English support for the workers as part of their needs at induction.

All of the respondents were self critical and often apologetic about what they described as their ‘poor English’. In reality their spoken English was actually very good, presenting no problems to the interviewer/listener. The desire to improve their spoken English skills was frequently articulated and emerged as a significant motivator in the women’s migration trajectories. While all could speak some English before they had arrived, it was generally recognised that their spoken English had improved since working and living in the UK. They mainly saw this as the product of their work-based and social interactions. All had regular contact with both English and Polish speakers. The use of colloquialisms and associated problems posed by the strong local dialects particularly amongst the service users and their families were initial challenges. These were mainly overcome through familiarity and explanations from other staff.

Each of the respondents had independently accessed English classes provided at their local further education colleges, however these had been quickly abandoned as not fit for purpose and offering them little in terms of improving their spoken English or helping them with their jobs in social care:
‘They are old-fashioned and don’t help me at work. I go but I feel like I learn nothing new, then I stopped. I learn better English from the other girls at work…’

(Partycja)

When asked how they thought this situation could be improved, a recurring theme was around the need for support with vocationally specific linguistic skills. The activities in the classes appeared to have been premised on improving their conversational English skills and did not reflect their actual needs as workers. As one woman pointed out, she wasn’t here on holiday; she could get by in English, she had learnt the basics in Poland. What she needed to know was about opening a bank account, dealing with a person having a fit and following care plans! This is possibly an important message for local Further Education providers who offer this sort of provision, skills councils and work force planning agencies that recognise the potential posed by English speaking migrant labour as a medium for filling posts in adult social care services.

VIEWS FROM THE EMPLOYERS

Characteristic amongst all of the employers was the view that the post accession Polish women that they had employed were a very sound investment and positive asset to their organizations. All reiterated either directly or indirectly, how these workers were hard working, reliable and making an important contribution to their staffing arrangements

“Our Polish workers are hard working, often more so than the English staff. It’s their strong work ethic. We would take on more if we could recruit them”

(Assistant Director)

Many of the sentiments that were expressed served to reinforce widely articulated stereotypes about A8 workers in the UK. The positive work ethic displayed by the Polish women was clearly a major bonus for the employers. The employers were aware that many of these staff were over qualified for the posts that they were occupying within their organisations- this was an obvious bonus at no additional costs. Generally as new staff they had been well received by the service users; however their employment had generated some initial concerns from some of the family members who still maintained very close involvement in their adult children’s lives. When the management team had investigated these they found they were mainly linked to language difficulties and problems that the families had in understanding the accents and intonation of some of the workers. Conversely, a number of service users who were supported by the post-accession staff were non-verbal and more than one employer highlighted how ‘empathetic’ these staff were with such service users.
The contribution of Post-Accession Polish migrants to adult social care services.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND USING THEIR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES

The women’s descriptions of their working experiences demonstrated both potential ‘brain drains’ for Poland and ‘brain wastage’ in the UK. Many of these women were graduates or held professional qualification. Clearly while in the UK they had acquired a huge knowledge and associated practical skill base in working with adults with learning disabilities and supporting them in community based settings. However when asked how these skills and associated experiences could be used in Poland to improve the lives of Polish people with learning disabilities, most of the women commented that their UK competency based NVQ qualifications would not be recognised in Poland where the emphasis remains on using unseen exams as key determinants of knowledge and understanding. Potentially this is a lost opportunity to improve services, develop practice and inform thinking in Poland around citizenship and community based care provision for adults with learning disabilities which is still largely in its infancy (Wapiennik and Grzegorzewska, 2008). While Poland, as a result of post accession migration, claims to be in the midst of a skills drain their newly acquired knowledge and ways of working gained by these women could provided a potential skills gain for this sector. Any possible contributions in Poland, apart from gaining unskilled work at the most basic level, they felt simply would not happen. Possibly this can be explained by reference to the dominant model of care for people with learning disabilities in Poland being premised on medicine and hospital based care infrastructures (Otrebski, Northway and Mansell, 2003). There was also a sense of powerless and inevitability about their responses, this appeared to have been drawn from their previous experiences, their position as women, lack of formally recognised qualifications and their marginalised status within the Polish social class system and hierarchy. Rather what would be valued, according to the respondents, were their now much improved English skills. These would make finding a job in the service or commercial sector much easier.

CONCLUSION

These findings highlight the specific contribution being made by a small group of post-accession Polish migrants in the lives of people with learning disabilities. These workers are filling a gap that, for a range of reasons, can not be filled by indigenous labour. It also demonstrates the wider and potential contribution of Polish workers in the UK adult social care sectors. Polish workers come to the UK to work for a range of reasons, not just those associated with financial gain. The research provides some insight into the need for a greater awareness of migration as autonomous, individual, and seemingly open ended processes driven by both
financial and agency orientated motivators. Understanding these complex drivers is an important element if employers are to retain these staff members. Through mandatory training employers make a significant investment in these staff. Where they receive the necessary support, as demonstrated in this study, they appear to be a valuable asset to their employing organisations.

However employers are often unsure of how to support post-accession workers, both on arrival and in terms of advancing their careers. They would welcome more systematic support and advice on this. The role of English language classes appears to be an area in need of review, in particular the research has identified that there is a need for more vocationally specific language support and instruction, instruction that takes the learner beyond conversational English and into the world of work.

The narratives of the women interviewed for this research were premised on positive accounts of working in voluntary sector organisations with adults with learning disabilities. The strengths of the women’s contribution were reiterated by their managers however these accounts have not been verified with actual service users- the recipients of the care giving. This is clearly an area for further research and study.

The women interviewed were able to articulate good levels of job satisfaction and an understanding of service users needs consistent with best practice in this sector. More research is needed to see if these findings are applicable to those working in the private sector and other parts of the UK adult care services. The respondent’s experiences of working in the UK have produced a somewhat critical analysis related to the lack of equality of opportunity in Polish workplaces, which may serve to open up debate about such practices in Poland and present longer term challenges to Polish employers.

The knowledge, experiences and skills gained by those working in UK services appear to offer both benefits and gains for both Poland and the UK. This emerges in terms of the need in Poland to develop more widely available community based personalised care services for previously institutionalised cohorts of people with learning disabilities. By drawing on the experiences of workers who are returning from the UK there is now considerable international experience that the Polish authorities could utilise. International recognition of qualifications acquired in the UK could further enhance this process. For the UK, the pro-active recruitment of Polish workers to work in a sector characterised by retention and recruitment difficulties is highly attractive. Despite the recession there remains a persistent demand for staff to work in this sector. Polish workers would appear to offer a positive source of labour and the capacity to fill this vacuum. However, strategically, there is an urgent need to move beyond the realms of individual employers trying to manage the needs of these workers. This would also serve to
The contribution of Post-Accession Polish migrants to adult social care services.

enhance employer and employee confidence and improve outcomes for service users, whose needs, views and observations on these recent developments have largely been ignored.

NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY:

1. **Cash for care schemes** are variously known as direct payments, personal budgets, individual budgets and self-directed support- all are a central part of the UK personalisation agenda within adult social care and are arguably designed to promote choice and control for those with long term social care needs(Department of Health 2007). Drawing on a wider social policy analysis they need to be understood as part of the ‘de-commodification of care’ (Ungerson 1997).

   **Direct payments** are cash payments given to service users in lieu of those community care services they have been assessed as needing and are intended to give users greater choice in their care. The payment must be sufficient to enable the service user to purchase services to meet their assessed needs, and must be spent on services that users need. They confer responsibilities on recipients to employ people (who can be family members) or to commission services for themselves. Some councils have commissioned support organisations to help service users handle the responsibilities of being an employer.

   **Personal budgets** are an allocation of funding given to users by the local authority after an ‘assessment of need’ which should be sufficient to meet their assessed needs.

   Users can either take their personal budget as a direct payment, or – while still choosing how their care needs are met and by whom – leave councils with the responsibility to commission the services. Or they can have some combination of the two. This is increasingly described as ‘self-directed support’.

   As part of the Putting People First (Department of Health 2007) agenda, under which personalisation has been rolled out, all English councils are meant to have 30% of care users on a personal budget by April 2011. There are doubts as to whether every single council will be able to manage this ambitious target compounded by and some reluctance by some service user groups, especially older adults regarding their take-up.

   As with direct payments, personal budget holders tend to be among client groups with physical impairments or learning disabilities. There are growing attempts to expand self-directed support arrangements among mental health service users and older adults.
2. Individual Care Plans are a written summary of the various needs that an individual has. The plan provides in-depth details of the persons social, physical/ medical, communicative and emotional needs. Correctly implemented they are drawn up and reviewed in consultation with the individual, their family, advocate and service commissioners along with the service provider.

They are a requirement of good practice and form part of the evidence used in the statutory inspections of care providers that are undertaken by the Care Quality Commission.

At the best they are person-centred and unique to the individual, providing goals and criteria for success. They offer staff and carers a ‘road-map’ for their day-to-day support, intervention and care with the individual.

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‘HOLY SPIRIT WEEKEND’ – CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE OF POLISH CATHOLICS IN UK

INTRODUCTION

Generally acknowledged adaptive functions of religion in migration context and religion’s ability to adapt to new socio-cultural contexts placed together with the notion of ‘global’ charismatic Christianity (Koning, Dahles, 2009; Coleman, 2000), pose a question about the relationship between migration and charismatic forms of religious expressions. As some scholars argue, the processes concerning religion in post modernity are to a large extent directed by the preoccupation with these-worldly issues which in context of religion most often means that the traditional religions give way to those more congruent with the contemporary world. In some cases it can also entail repackaging old religions and ‘offering’ them in a more accessible and comprehensible language. The fundamentalist elements are not necessarily abandoned, but they are given a “charismatic gloss” (Hunt, 2004). Charismatic movement in general, but also as considered within the boundaries of the Catholic Church comprises many groups very diverse in terms of their size, stage of development, structures and their emphasis – shaped by distinctive charisms, nevertheless the common denominator of charismatic groups is the centrality of the Holy Spirit and his ‘signs and wonders’.

The Catholic Church hierarchy position in relation to charismatic movement is ambivalent. Within the Catholic Church the newness of the charismatic

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1 These processes commonly referred to as Charismatic renewal are welcomed with some ambiguity by those representing old, established religions and guarding their timeless foundations. The scepticism expressed in writings of church representatives, is also traceable in academic work, although it comes from a different angle. For academics analysing the growth of charismatic movement in Western society commonly seen through the lens of secularisation thesis there is a very strong temptation to look at individuals engaging in this kind of religiosity as marginal and in a way deviant, or to look at their religiosity as something which is not a ‘real religion’ (Neitz, 1987). Others however argue that the growing significance of charismatic movements should not be underestimated, especially in the context of secularisation and fragmentation of big frameworks characteristic to postmodern worldviews (Miller, 1999).
movement is reflected in the lively theological debates focusing on doctrinal issues related to the charismatic renewal and its authenticity. The book titled ‘Charismatic movement – Is it Catholic?’ by Fr Karl Stehlin exemplifies the preoccupation with maintaining boundaries between what is Catholic and what is not and suspicion towards everything that goes beyond (Stehlin, 1997). Also in context of the Protestant origins of charismatic renewal, the significance of conceptual distinction between ‘Charismatic’ and ‘Pentecostal’ is drawn from the important differentiation between Catholic and Protestant (Cleary, 2007). What can be so attractive in Charismatic groups to potential new members constitutes at least a few serious problems from the Church perspective. On the one hand the ‘renewal’ is regarded as a positive trend in Church seen as being in need of ‘less organisation and more Spirit’ (Ratzinger, 1998). Many acknowledge that it can be an ‘engine for positive changes’ in Church ‘struggling with shallow religiosity focused mainly on its cultural manifestation’ (see Mariański, 2003: 197). On the other hand, historically the Roman Catholic Church was one of the last major denominations to accept charismatic renewal (Bord and Faulkner, 1983). In common perception characteristics usually associated with charismatic religious groups include speaking in tongues, healing powers, prophesy and supernatural miracles (Koning, Dahles, 2009). This kind of expression of ‘religious experience’ characteristic to Charismatic movements is criticised as being related to the widespread attraction to the dramatic, exotic, and emotional and therefore being dangerous.2 In line with these critical views charismatic groups are constructed as occupying menial role in relation to the Church. As M. Hayes highlights in his introduction to the collection of essays on New Religious Movements in Catholic Church, the gifts from Holy Spirit are to be used ‘for the benefit of the whole Church’ (Hayes, 2005: 6). The discursive positioning of charismatic groups in relation to Church is further reinforced in the discussion on the descriptive terms whereby the term ‘ecclesial movement’ is preferred to the term ‘lay movement’, as the first one ‘contains’ clergy and therefore implies that the movements ‘are for the whole Church’ (Whitehead, 2005: 15). A similar message is explicit in writings of Polish Church leaders, as illustrated in the work of R. Wawrzeńiecki, who

2 Very firm expression of mistrust towards the ‘experiential Christianity’ can be found in the article addressed to Poles in Chicago published in 2008 by Fr R. Groti, who wrote: ‘Looking at the currently alive, third wave of charismatic movement, with its focus on phenomenal and experiential forms, which are called nowadays “experiential Christianity”, it is right for Catholic Church to stay openly cautious. This is even more justly, because those forms have taken extreme manifestations in the past, in a form of theological extravagancies, new Pentecostal churches, or even non-denominational Christianity. Reservations is caused by before mentioned superficial emotionalism of people taking part in this kind of worship, expressed sometimes in animal-like howling, convulsions, and hysteria and associated usually with animistic, pagan religions.’ (Source: http://www.katolikwchicago.com/katonline/2010/01/7.aspx, accessed August, 2010)
identified the following dangers posed by the charismatic movement: ‘rejection of Church’s prayer tradition for emotional charismatic experience, unhealthy behaviour of group members, or even those responsible for the group, resistance towards Church authority, excessive focus on differences between hierarchical church and charismatic church, abundance of the main stream church and elitism.’ (Wawrzeńiecki, 1999, s. 155). As this example illustrates, in a Polish context the discussion is very much focused on the place religious movements occupy within the traditional Catholic Church structure, especially within the parish. This discursive positioning of charismatic groups as menial in relation to Church is counterbalanced by the everyday reality of charismatic group in the parish context, quite often permeated with conflict and misunderstanding, which antagonises many clergy, as many observers readily acknowledge (Whitehead, 2005).

The dialectic between change which is needed, but welcomed with apprehension and opposed to on the one hand, and the congealment in ‘old ways’, stagnation and intensification of conservative tendencies on the other hand observed in migrants’ churches (Mol, 1971; Yang & Ebaugh, 2001) creates a very particular context for the spread of charismatic religiosity. Some observations of religious experiences of new Polish migrants in the UK, who in the vast majority have or had some connection with Catholicism, suggest that what the traditional Catholic Church has to offer is not relevant for the majority of them (Krotofil, 2010). Alienated by their mistrust and disappointment with clergy and what is perceived as harsh judgment and an uncompromising attitude of Polish priests in the UK, they do not see a place for themselves in ethnic churches run by the Polish Catholic Mission4. London, however with its vibrant mixture of cultures and religions provides a variety of religious and secular options. Some of the newcomers embrace the possibility to explore new religious horizons which were not available to them in their communities of origin and turn to other religions; others drift from the Catholic Church and remain on the peripheries of religious life. Among those undergoing changes in religious domain, there is also a group of Poles who in

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3 Similar reservations towards more broadly defined religious movements within Catholic church (including charismatic groups) expressed J. Mariański, who wrote: ‘We must beware of the danger posed by localising religious movements and associations somehow beyond parish structure, in position parallel to essential parish stream, or dividing parish members into groups of better and worse Catholics.’ (Mariański, 2003, s.199)

4 Polish Catholic Mission (PCM) is a fairly autonomous structure established in 1894 to work and care for Polish migrants in England and Wales. As a main body responsible for ethnic chaplaincy, PCM defines its mission in relation to new Polish migrants around the concept of new migration – as undesirable and morally objectionable. In this discourse, new labour migrants are portrayed as breaking their roots with the fatherland, breaking away from protective family ties and choosing to live in a secular, de-christianised and empty society, which has been stripped from all moral values.
the course of life transition brought upon by migration become introduced to charismatic Christianity. In Poland a few different charismatic groups have been gaining popularity over the last few decades, but they attract only a small minority of the Catholic population. Charismatic Catholicism is by no means familiar to the majority of Polish Catholics who have had very little exposure to it. The growth of Polish charismatic groups in the UK is therefore stimulated mainly by people who embrace charismatic religiosity after their arrival to the UK and to a lesser extent by those who had contact with this form of religious expression in Poland. In the following sections of this paper I would firstly like to focus on the first group and take a look at the means used by charismatic groups to attract new adherents among Polish migrants. Secondly, I will analyse how the specific context of Catholic Church in Britain influences that process. I will start with the description of missionary activities of Polish Charismatic Catholics in the UK, using the example of the ‘Holy Spirit weekend’.5

PHILIP COURSE

This part of the paper is based on the participant observation and mostly informal conversations carried out during one edition of the introductory course to charismatic religiosity addressed to Polish migrants in the UK. I have chosen the Philip course for a few reasons. Firstly, Philip course alongside similar Alpha course is for many a ‘trigger event’, an entry point into the charismatic movement. Secondly, because of its’ highly concentrated ‘texture’, compression of delivered material and its’ emotional and experiential intensity Philip course is well suited to illustrate the ‘newness’ and ‘exoticness’ of charismatic Catholicism experienced by new adepts, and the mechanisms by which new members are attracted to the charismatic forms of religious expression.

Before proceeding to describe and analyse this event, a short methodological remark seems to be expedient. My presence at the Philip course was that of an outsider, an emphatic observer, but not a member of the group sharing experiences with others. My situation in a large group of unknown people was ambiguous; minimal participation in most of the course activities enabled me to observe and carry out informal conversations with course participants, but the process of collecting data blurred my status and motives in the eyes of others. This misperception was a source of some personal discomfort related to me being a ‘stranger’ and to my loneliness. In this process I have also experienced a strong

5 ‘Holy Spirit Weekend is the term used by S. Hunt in relation to the part of Alpha Course emphasising the ‘charismatic core’ of Alpha. It is concentrated round teaching about and ‘experiencing’ Holy Spirit (Hunt, 2004: 233). I use this expression in relation to Philip course to highlight similarities between the later and the ‘weekend away’ part of Alpha course.
Philip course described in this article takes place periodically in a small town outside London, in Chertsey (Surrey). It is hosted and run by a charismatic community Cor et Lumen Christi (The Heart and Light of Christ). Damian Stayne founded the group in October 1990. The community identifies three different ways to fulfil its mission ‘to become the Heart and Light of Christ through Divine Communion’: ‘building praying communities around the Holy Eucharist which are a prophetic sign of the kingdom of God’, ‘reaching out to others especially Catholics, to empower, encourage and equip them to live an intimate Divine Communion with God and realise their full baptismal inheritance through life in the Spirit’ and ‘identifying with, ministering to and sharing with the poor and needy’. Among other activities of Cor et Lumen Christi, initiatives addressed directly and almost exclusively to Polish Catholics has crystallised as a distinguished area of activity called ‘Mission for Poles’. The later comprises of four evangelical courses: Philip course, Andrzej course, Barnaba course and Jan course leading participants through successive levels of charismatic initiation. The courses are hosted by the covenanted community based in Highfield House and run by one Polish family belonging to that community, in cooperation with Polish speaking ‘Companions of the Heart’ - members of the community who live out the rules and values of Cor et Lumen Christi but in the non-residential expression. The Philip course described below, is the most basic introduction to charismatic Catholicism. It is addressed to those who want to ‘experience the Lord in a more powerful and personal way’, currently it is run exclusively in the Polish language; each edition attracts around 50- 80 participants. According to the website, the programme is composed of a series of spiritual exercises and inspiring lectures, Holy Mass and Adoration, practical workshops, praise and worship, food, fun and fellowship. Throughout the three days of the course participants remain in constant company of others; meal times and leisure time (suggested to be spent on group sport activities) are incorporated into the missionary endeavour as they create important space for

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7 The main language of these events is Polish, however organisers state that there is a possibility of simultaneous translation


the formation of social bonds between course participants, and enable them to recognize themselves as a group.

The praise and worship part of the course that are intertwined with teaching and spiritual exercises are dominated by very particular ways of musical expression. Texts of songs are short and easy to remember (they are projected on a screen so that hands are free from song books and can be used in physical expression of emotions) and repeated many times over. The style is oriented towards cultural currency and contemporary musical forms. This kind of charismatic music does not resemble in any way traditional hymns sang in the accompaniment of organ music. Analysing the use of music during charismatic meetings, Miller refers to Jamesian notion of religion as a distinctive province of meaning with its own ‘sub-universe’ of consciousness and suggests that these kinds of songs ‘trigger entry into the level of consciousness in which everyday defensiveness is abandoned’ (Miller, 1999: 86).

The lectures and spiritual exercises are delivered in a form of thematic blocks focusing on eight basic messages: ‘God loves me’, ‘I am a sinner’, ‘I am saved’, ‘Holy Spirit descended upon me’, ‘I need to convert’, ‘I need to give control over my life to God who is the King’, ‘I need to trust God’ ‘With baptism in Holy Spirit I receive his gifts’. The content of ‘lectures’ is very basic and lacking theological complexity and density, which is in line with the strategy embraced by the majority of courses organised within the charismatic movement and which is also promoted in Alpha course where ‘experiences lead to explanation’ (Gumbel, 1994: 17). The renewal in relation to specific Christian teachings favoured by charismatic groups, including leaders of Philip Course means the return to ‘biblical Christianity’. The impact on listeners is magnified by the use of multi-sensory teaching, in each lecture video, music, and even food, are intertwined into the narrative together with the incorporation of ritual elements described as spiritual exercises. The concept of “Christianity in entertainment business” can be useful here. It implies that the Christian message is promoted in a way which uses state-of-art technologies, where “image is more important than substance” (Hunt, 2004: 24).

The opposition between thought and action has been heavily criticised as a basis on which the concept of ritual is constructed (see Bell, 1992). Therefore it would be hard to argue that in the context of the Philip course the acts of participants express truths, which they learn and can be simply defined as enacting of these ideas. The processes of conceptual learning and enacting should rather be seen as bounded and mutually reinforcing. In the analysis of the role of ritual in this context, dramaturgical metaphor, despite of its limitations, can be helpful. Coleman when recounting characteristics of charismatic Christianity writes about 'dramatisation' describing the way in which ‘biblical exegesis is achieved through acting out of the text’, which is complemented by ‘textuality’. (Coleman,
This interconnectedness of dramatisation and narrative emplacement is clearly visible in the structure and content of the Philip course. All sessions of the Philip course start with a ‘talk’ on a chosen subject which comprise of a ‘story’ (allegory) and its interpretation, these are culminated by the ‘enacting’ of particular roles introduced to participants in the preceding talk given by one of the leaders. The ‘staged’ situation implies a scene and control of that scene, which defines and reproduces boundaries; boundaries between performers and observers. In the Catholic Church the use of elements defining situation: requisites, clothing, bodies, progression and duration have established meaning. What can be observed during charismatic rituals is reproduction and negotiation of that meaning. This process is rooted in the symbols which are public, and for the majority of participants have acquired specific religious meaning in the past, but symbols are used in a way which not only affirms and expresses the pre-defined meanings, but also produces alteration, something new. Ritualised prescribed acts undertaken during spiritual exercises draw on familiar symbols and requisites, but also incorporate new ones. The subsequent lectures on sin and salvation are culminated respectively by immersion of hands in mud and dirt, and by ‘nailing of sins’ onto a wooden cross. The first exercise is initiated by the person running the lecture who brings out a wrapped up box meant to imitate an ‘attractive present’ and makes a confession to the audience that at some point he came across something which initially seemed very attractive and pleasant. Subsequently he has been drawn to that ‘pleasure’; started devoting more and more attention to the activity and that with time was becoming more and more disruptive. At the end he could not free himself from it as it became clear that he has been ‘enslaved by sin’. Towards the end of that narrative, the speaker puts his hands into the box and takes them out after a while covered by wet mud, symbolising sin. He finishes this ‘performance’ by touching his white t-shirt and other people near him and stating that the sin made ‘dirty’ his entire self and other people close to him. The members of the audience are encouraged to follow his example; to come to the front part of the room, immerse their hands in the mud and therefore admit to God and to others that they have sinned. After a short break, the role of the death of Christ on the cross in salvation is elaborated in a short lecture. At the closure of this part of the programme, a big wooden cross is brought on the stage. Members of the audience are instructed to write down their ‘worst sin’ on a piece of paper, come to the stage and nail that paper to the cross. In both cases those who initially occupy the audience position during the Philip sessions are invited to step on the stage and to act. The formalised boundary between the ‘performing’ priest and the much more passive congregation inscribed in division of ritual space into stage (where the altar is) and the audience (where the pews are), experienced and reproduced during traditional mass is partly abolished. Through ritual symbols
transcend the religious reality and affect other realities (Neitz, 1987). Participants of the Philip course are exposed to familiar ritual symbols, which for many, through the process of religious socialisation have been taken for granted. The re-organised use of these symbols and the commentary disrupt the automation of the performance. Participants are encouraged to immerse themselves in doing, but they are drawn into the figured word where at least some positional aspects of identity are consciously realised.

The renegotiation of ritually constituted norms and prescriptions described above concerns also a mass celebrated each day during the Philip course. An unusual space (one of the rooms in the house converted into a chapel) as well as the incorporation of elements rarely seen during traditional mass celebrated in church, such as Holy Communion received in two forms of bread and wine, placing children’s drawings on the altar during the ceremonial placing on of bread and wine; brings ‘newness’ and ‘freshness’ into the ritual known by participants in the majority of cases from their childhood and considered by some as ‘stale’ and ‘old-fashioned’.

Apart from lecture sessions, spiritual exercises and singing, some course participants can also be subjected to special attention from Course leaders and offered healing, for example. This however is done on the side of the official programme, individually and in more intimate circumstances.

The culmination of the program is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the reception of charismata – the gifts of Holy Spirit. The moment of the baptism is preceded by careful preparation of course attendants. During a lecture, given shortly before the Baptism, attendants are told what should happen, what kind of experiences they should expect, and how to avoid disappointments. They are given a detailed description of ‘usual’ emotional and physical manifestations, which occur during the Baptism in Holy Spirit and in the receipt of his gifts, such as crying, falling over, speaking in tongues, speechlessness and experiencing overwhelming affection. The detailed instruction on how to behave during the coming of the Holy Spirit indicates a ‘mechanistic approach to the Holy Spirit’ (see Hunt, 2004: 242), similar to the one adopted in other charismatic introductory courses. More specifically, what S. Hunt writes in relation to Alpha course, can also be applied to the Philip course:

‘[…] in preparing the ‘divine appointment’ – the conditions in which the Holy Spirit works in a human environment – there are various aspects of suggestibility to be considered. This suggestibility is largely observed through the lyrics of songs and choruses (and their mantra-type form), group conformity, and the influence of charismatic leaders which all create atmosphere which precipitates alleged ecstatic and esoteric manifestations’ (Hunt, 2004: 242)
During the culmination moment – infilling of the Spirit - the leaders exercise nearly absolute control over the situation, by overlooking the reactions of individuals who have been persuaded to open to new experiences and to submit themselves to the unknown trusting in God. This leads to a very high level of conformity manifested in the occurrence of ‘usual’ and ‘expected’ reactions which are experienced as supernatural phenomena and classified as ‘signs and wonders’ – manifestations of a ‘true’ presence of the Holy Spirit, confirmation of leaders’ credibility and legitimisation of their authority.

The whole program is designed to foster ‘personal receptivity to the person, presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and the reception and use of spiritual gifts (charismata)’ (Hayes, 2005: 6). It functions as ‘an entry ritual into a charismatic worldview’ (Walting, 2005: 93). The ‘rational’ teaching is over-dominated by the creation of emotional experiences, which encourage the notion of charismatic Catholicism as emotionally relevant to individuals participating in the course. Individuals embodying this particular worldview are thought to be empowered by entering into a special relationship with God – a personal guiding agent and experiencing God’s power. I would like to argue that this spiritual ‘empowerment’ is achieved through means of disempowerment. The blurring of the boundaries between ritual leaders and the ‘audience’ is counterbalanced by the disempowerment of course participants achieved in various ways. One of the most striking exertions in this respect is the concealment of the details of the course programme; participants do not know what kind of activities have been planned for them, and do not know what to expect at any given point in time. Those who have participated in the course on previous occasions are explicitly asked ‘not to betray’ to others what the upcoming activities are. Participants are yet again reminded in this way to place their trust, emotionally, and spiritually in God, rather than to try to control the situation and submit it to rational scrutiny. Inductive strategies are used here to encourage the embodying and ‘living out’ of the biblical texts (Coleman, 2000: 118). The intensity and novelty of the experiences evoked during each session has been expressed by many participants during informal conversations:

‘What has happened here today…I have proofs now. I don’t think I will tell my friends about what has happen, this could be received badly.’ (L.)

‘During my first Philip course something happened to me. I went for many more Philip courses, I wanted to keep my head and see what kind of techniques they use.’ (A.)
'I was wondering if this is all arranged, if this is some sort of sect. They cram stuff into your head, but leave no time for reflection.' (L.)

The above fragments touch on the issue of common perception of unusual religious experiences, which by many are welcomed with some reservations and resistance. This remark sheds more light on the importance of careful sequencing of material in the teaching process. In order to be assimilated the ‘truths’ conveyed by the leaders have to be in the ‘zone of proximal development’ (Wygotski, 1989). This means that they cannot be entirely foreign to new adepts, but should have some connection to the skills and ideas which they already have. This condition is realised in the process of ‘scaffolding’ (Valsiner, 2006: 197-206; Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte and Cain, 2003: 82). Scaffolding occurs in situations when course participants are encouraged to work with biblical stories and symbols which they are familiar with and add new elements to them, re-negotiate their meaning, and see them as more personally relevant.

The effectiveness of the missionary techniques described above is at least partly demonstrated by the striking uniformity of symbols, metaphors and means of expression adopted and displayed by course participants in situations when they are given space to express what they have learned and experienced. During the Philip course there are three occasions given to participants to publically express their views and emotions and to talk in public about their personal experiences: the first two arise during the presentation of the work carried out in small groups (posters, pantomime, poems), and the third one comprises a separate part of the programme, when participants are encouraged to give individual testimonies. Testimonies, (‘witnessing’ or ‘sharing’) are considered by some authors of particular importance in the commitment mechanism in the charismatic groups (McGuire, 1977), they are also very effective as tools of evangelisation making the complex issues discussed during the lectures personally relevant (Walting, 2005: 98). What seems very significant in context of Philip course is the fact that course participants are prepared for the ‘spontaneous’ witnessing (which occurs as one of the last sections of the programme), by the preceding formal testimonies given by the leaders at the beginning of the course, and therefore given templates for this activity. The general pattern can be discerned in all testimonies given by the course leaders and later by course participants (Walting, 2005: 98), the narrative structure of testimonies is as follows: the individuals have been brought up in a Catholic family, drifted away from Church and from God in later life, did not know much about God and did not understand God, at some point in their life had a traumatic experience (a loss of a close person, family disruption caused by alcoholism), after arrival and settling in the UK experienced some kind of ‘emptiness’, or ‘incompleteness’, discovered God again in their life, experienced
his forgiveness, entrusted their lives in God, received the gifts of Holy Spirit and in that way found peace and harmony in life. As McGuire notes, although witnessing appears to be ‘spontaneous’ and an individualised expression, it is in fact bounded by ‘careful norms’ (McGuire, 1977: 167). The norms set by course leaders were learned and reproduced in testimonies given by course participants at the end of the event, as the following examples illustrate:

‘... in general I used to be a scoundrel...and I lived like that, cheating God and myself and all life. I used to have many friends, I was surrounded by beautiful women, beautiful cars, but I always felt some kind of shortage...And then England, my first honest job, first honest money, and my new passion: just discovered love to God! It became the biggest passion of my life.’ (M. M.)

‘I got to know God’s love, I understood that God loves me the way I am. I understood that God forgives my sins, I understood why Jesus died on the cross for me.’

‘I noticed an inner transformation. Since my childhood I have been going to church, I heard about Jesus, but only here I truly understood who Jesus is. Here I received Jesus into my heart and he is inspiring me inside, and the whole me’ (D. J.)

Telling personal stories in this way is an important tool in the process of self-understanding and belonging. It carries the message that the speaker has entered the charismatic milieu deep enough to be able to carry the message. Here the process of identity renegotiation can be seen as ‘giving life to words’ (Coleman, 2000: 119), where religious language becomes integrated into a particular, and personal life story. I would argue that ritualised acts such as testimonies and spiritual exercises described above play a central role in the process of the transformation of new members’ sense of social reality. They introduce a religious frame of reference and expand it beyond religious context, this enables individuals to organise their experience in a way that is in line with religious ‘definitions’ of reality.

**REPACKAGED CATHOLICISM**

Koning and Dahles (2009) in their work on Chinese charismatic Christians point out several characteristics of the charismatic movement, which make it very attractive to new potential members all over the world. First, it easily adapts to local circumstances including specific socio-political contexts and offers solutions to individual and collective problems. It gives a sense of purpose that is beyond
self-actualisation; as there is the charity aspect (tithe) of it. The theology of practice is directly applicable (caring, repairing, but also, personal goals). Finally, there is a sense of identity, being the “born again” people of God – this is the unifying factor. Charismatic groups and initiatives operating among Polish migrants share these characteristics with the wider charismatic movement. Charismatic spirituality addressed to Poles in the UK has been adapted and tailored specifically for this group, ‘packaged’ in a way that makes it attractive and acceptable to Poles with their specific cultural and religious background. In practice this adjustment means an incorporation of a ‘repackaged’ Catholic tradition. Although the theological content of the introductory course as illustrated on the example of the Philip course is so basic and general that it could be seen as very ecumenical, and nondenominational; the indispensability of the Eucharist, and other sacraments during the course and at later stages of formation reintroduces Catholic theology and reinforces a very traditional and dominant role of the clergy. Philip course organised in Highfield House for Polish migrants is just one element of a growing network of charismatic groups and initiatives among Polish migrants in the UK. At the very end of the three-day course the importance of membership in a prayer group is emphasised. People who want to follow ‘the path of conversion’ form prayer groups, which constitute the basic units of charismatic communities. Their members meet on a regular basis ‘to pray together’ and ‘to care for each other’. One of the course leaders highlighted the importance of membership in a group by describing charismatic community as, ‘a matter of spiritual life and death’. This emphasis on the prayer groups brings together the missionary endeavour and postulate of evangelism with elitism. On the one hand it has been repeated many times during the course that everybody is invited and everybody can belong, on the other hand there is a boundary between those who have been initiated by the baptism in Holy Spirit, are in receipt of his gift and conversion, and those who still have not met God this way. Only those who have undergone initiation can understand each other, and support each other in their ‘journey’. So constructed membership in charismatic groups means intensive engagement, which goes ‘beyond mere affiliation, group membership now forms a central aspect of their life and indeed of their identity.’ (Cleary, 2007: 154).

The centrality of the group creates a tension between individual and institutional religiosity, which brings back the question of the place of the charismatic movement within the structure of Catholic Church, and more specifically its place in the space divided between the Polish Catholic Mission and local Catholic Church structures. It is beyond the scope of this paper to explain fully the relationship between Polish Catholic Mission and local Catholic Church in England and Wales. Relatively strong position of the mission can be traced back to the post
II World War period when Polish pastoral centres, separate from local church structure, have been established to cater for religious needs of Polish soldiers who came to Britain with the Polish armed forces and their families, and decided to remain there after the war (Marzec, 1989). The emphasis on the uniqueness of Polish Catholicism and link between national and religious identity prevalent in so-called ‘Polish churches’ and maintained to this day has been reflected in a very traditional interpretation of faith expressed in liturgical forms by means of music (e.g. traditional, solemn hymns with numerous patriotic references), prayers, and use of particular objects and symbols (e.g. national emblems incorporated in church interior decoration). The most relevant to our discussion is the lively dispute between Polish and English hierarchy on the provision of ethnically specific forms of religious expression for new Polish migrant communities. Confronted with the recent influx of new migrants and revitalisation of ‘Polish churches’, Polish clergy advocates strongly for the continuation of traditional forms of pastoral care, and focuses on perseverance of ethnically bounded religion among new migrants. The clergymen see themselves as solitary fighters striving to protect national and religious identity of new migrants ‘endangered’ by their contact with secularised British society.

The disappointment with traditional forms of religious expression and with the Catholic Church widespread among new Polish migrants has been reflected in the dramatic decrease of church attendance observed among that group, as compared to church attendance in Poland (Krotofil, 2010). Many of those migrants who loosened their connection with the Catholic Church identify their departure from religion as a direct or indirect effect of migration and often experience the urge to find deeper meaning of their new life circumstances. The potential of charismatic missionary activities, such as the Philip course, to congregate and mobilise believers, can be magnified by migration context.

The developing network of prayer groups and people meeting regularly on all-night retreats is to some extent reinforced by personal links among clergy involved in the charismatic movement. The pastoral care of the Philip course is shared by three Polish priests working in parishes in North-East London, Harlow, Greys and the neighbouring areas forming London commuters’ belt. Their activity in parishes is focused on promotion of new forms of pastoral care adjusted to new migrants and on supporting different forms of charismatically oriented activities such as regular weekly meetings of prayer groups, larger all-night prayer meetings organised a few times a year (e.g. night prayer meeting in Walthamstow, ‘Haven Harlow’), or organisation and delivery of Alpha course in Polish (hosted by parish in Stanford Hill, London). Charismatic groups operating in these parishes are the ‘destination’ of some of the Philip course adepts who became their permanent
members, and at the same time are recruitment sites for new course attendants.10 All three priest work in parishes belonging to a local structure of the Catholic Church in England and in Wales, and being independent from the Polish Catholic Mission (a structure officially responsible for pastoral care of Polish migrants in England and Wales) they see their work as better suited to young people, as the following fragment of interview illustrates:

‘One of the problems with Polish Catholic Mission is, that it is very difficult for them to notice the very obvious fact that the age profile of people they are meant to be looking after has changed drastically: [...] The majority of people who come here are young people with different needs and different problems.’ (Polish Priest).

The response to what is seen as ‘different needs’ is based on the dialectical opposition between old and new. ‘Old’ churches working in the areas with long established Polish presence under Polish Catholic Mission are focused on the religious needs of the older generation of migrants and adapt too slowly to the influx of new migrants who have different needs.11 The contestation of the discourse focused around national identity and the connection between being Polish and being Catholic is reinforced by the incorporation of national symbols into the religious milieu so prominent in parishes belonging to the Polish Catholic Mission (Krotofil, 2010). National identity as the main focal point and unifying factor is replaced by the identity of ‘people born again’ unified by the ‘path of conversion’ which they follow. The departure from the traditional pastoral programme is hoped to create a space for new forms of religious expressions and promote spontaneous, individually relevant grass root activities. Rather than branding the new socio-cultural environment in which migrant find themselves as dominated by privatisation, pluralism and secularisation, and seeing them as inevitably bound to destroy their religiosity, new pastoral ideas seek to counter these forces by emphasising personal relevance of repackaged Catholicism. The prerequisite of this new pastoral programme is the ‘democratised access to the sacred’ which is so evident in charismatic movements (Miller, 1999: 80). As

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10 A significant proportion of people taking part in the Philip course has had some previous contact with some kind of charismatic groups personally or through friends and family before attending the course. On each edition of the course there is also a group of people who have participated in Philip course before (some of them may be active members of charismatic groups in their local parishes) but decided to repeat this experience.

11 One parish belonging to Polish Catholic Mission and based in Ealing, London is seen as an exception here. It has been hosting regular, weekly meetings of Catholic Charismatic Renewal from 2001 and through personal ties of the clergy leader of that group with other ‘charismatically oriented’ Polish priests is included in the described network.
mentioned above, the significance attached to sacraments excludes the possibility of bypassing traditional religious authority. However, in the context of charismatic Catholicism, as Bord and Faulkner (1983: 15) note, there is no clear hierarchical influence on the movement, no ‘single man’ or a centralised structure, in contrary, the leadership is decentralised, segmented and reticulate. The charismas – gifts of the spirit believed to be given to the individual ‘open up the possibility of unmediated relationship with God’, which ‘gives authority to the individual to the degree unprecedented in popular Catholic religion’ (Neitz, 1987) and can mean the devaluation of institutional authority of the Church (Bord, Faulkner, 1983). In line with this ‘Haven Harlow’ is presented by the priest based in the parish hosting it, as an example of something grown out of spontaneous initiative of an initially very small group of lay Polish Catholics who wanted to meet for the whole night prayer. Currently ‘Haven Harlow’ is a regular event gathering over 200 people from different parts of England, who come to Harlow to experience ‘renewal’, and gather strength to return to local parishes and develop their initiatives there. As highlighted by the priest associated with ‘Haven Harlow’ ‘it was never planned and should continue to be unplanned, there is no need to create a structure in Harlow’. What happens during the night prayer meetings in ‘Haven Harlow’ originates from individualised needs of meeting participants, and guidance of the Holy Spirit, as expressed in the testimony of one of participants:

‘There is no doubt, that here [in Harlow JK], Holy Spirit is the director’ (K.)

In a way ‘Haven Harlow’ night is also a Holy Spirit weekend, its programme is a ‘lighter’ and shorter version of the Philip course. It comprises of adoring the God (worship expressing thankfulness, love and praise), teaching (in a form of ‘lecture’), mass celebration, and some form of ‘performance’. During the break, participants share a meal together and talk in a relaxed atmosphere. There is also occasion to ask for individual ‘ministry’ –healing prayer.

Moving towards a conclusion, it is worth noting that within the structures of the Catholic Church in the UK, there exists a space for the development of a charismatic movement among new Polish migrants. Currently it is located in the intersection of two very different visions of the Church in migration context. Missionary activities structured in a specific sequence (learn charismatic worldviews - have them confirmed -and live them out), bring effects desired by charismatic leaders. The spiritual turn observed among Polish migrants introduced to charismatic

Catholicism, positioned against the background of traditional Catholicism gives us a better understanding of the appeal of ‘repackaged Catholicism’. The grounding in Catholicism and use of familiar symbols positions those who become exposed to Charismatic teaching within the realm of religion sanctioned by tradition. The presence of clergy provides legitimisation for charismatic experiences and facilitates the formation of a new identity of ‘born again’.

Charismatic religiosity seems to be well fitted to attract adherents among new Polish migrants, however at this point in time it is hard to guess what proportion of people will turn towards charismatic forms of religious expressions in that group in the next few years and what impact will the ongoing structural changes in the Catholic Church in the UK have on the charismatic movement. The research presented in this paper is just a ‘snap-shot’ taken in a given point in time; more research is therefore needed.

REFERENCES

Holy Spirit weekend – charismatic experience of Polish Catholics in UK


BETWEEN UNIVERSALISM AND ETHNIC PARTICULARISM: POLISH MIGRANTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM. PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

INTRODUCTION

There are growing numbers of psychological research publications concerned with the contemporary migratory processes taking place in Europe. Many of them refer to migratory flows between Poland and EU countries (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Kwiatkowska, Roszak 2010; Slany, Kontos, Liapi 2010). As a result of encounters between representatives of different countries, acculturation processes are visible and open to inspection. One of the major destinations for a large number of Polish immigrants is Great Britain, historically a Protestant country though now highly secularized. Between 2004 and the end of 2006 probably at least half a million Poles made their way to Britain in search of employment. Their effect on the job market has been considerable, particularly in the service industries (Burrell, 2009). The impact of Polish immigrants on the British religious milieu has been even more remarkable. Almost without exception the incoming Poles are Roman Catholics. Poland has one of the highest levels of religious practice in Europe (Dubach, 2009), hence very many of the immigrants, after settling down in the new country, start to search for Catholic parishes where they can participate in the local religious life. The effects of such a large group of incomers joining approximately a million British Catholics at Sunday Mass are bound to be manifold. Psychology of religion, especially based on cultural psychology can provide an interesting insight into the process (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2010). Any psychological approach based only on the perspective of one cultural group participating in cultural encounter might be less satisfactory (Henrich, Heine, Norenzayan, 2010).

The goal of this paper is to present features of the dynamic of the cultural encounter that is taking place between Polish migrants in the UK and the local population, within a particular context, namely that of the Roman Catholic Church. The major emphasis in the paper is placed is on analyzing mechanisms and processes of acculturation from divergent perspectives provided by both
groups involved in the process. As the theoretical background of the process The Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, Senecal 1997) will be employed. The model makes predictions concerning outcomes of interactions taking place during cultural encounter between immigrants and members of the host community. The model includes 3 different aspects of the process: “(1) acculturation orientations adopted by immigrant groups in the host community; (2) acculturation orientations adopted by the host community toward specific groups of immigrants; (3) interpersonal and intergroup relational outcomes that are the product of combinations of immigrant and host community acculturation orientations”. (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, Senecal 1997: 379).

There are four acculturation strategies which can be adopted by an incoming immigrant group. The choice of particular strategy can be analyzed on both individual and group levels. These strategies evolve as a result of answers to the two questions posed by immigrants vis à vis the host population. The first question pertains to the value of preserving one’s own cultural characteristics and identity while arriving in new country and the second question refers to the desirability of maintaining relationships with the host population.

As a response to these questions the following acculturation strategies have been specified: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, Bujaki, 1989). An integration strategy implies that immigrants retain values and behavioural codes rooted in their own cultural background while adopting simultaneously values and behaviours of the host community. Sometimes it is described as an additive acculturation strategy (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Rodriguez, Wang, 2007). Researchers and policy makers extol this strategy as the most valuable one. Later in the paper we’ll point to some problems with this model that are sometimes overlooked. Assimilation strategy usually gets presented as the opposite of integration. It refers to the adoption of the receiving culture while discarding the heritage culture. Sometimes it is called a subtractive acculturation strategy (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Rodriguez, Wang, 2007). Separation indicates the retention of the heritage culture whilst resisting the receiving culture. Marginalization refers to the situation where there is neither retention of the heritage culture nor adoption of the receiving culture. This mode has subsequently been divided into anomie – experienced cultural alienation from both cultures and individualism – and chosen identity (professional, gender, social role) independent of membership in either of the two cultures- immigrant or host. Members of the host society also endorse specific acculturation strategies towards immigrants. The strategies originate from answers to the following questions; “(1) Do you find it acceptable that immigrants maintain their cultural heritage? (2) Do you accept that immigrants adopt the culture of your host community?” (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, Senecal 1997, p. 380). The strategies of
the members of the host majority partly overlap the strategies described in relation to immigrant communities (integration, assimilation and individualism), but some of them appear only on the part of host community i.e. segregation, when the host population wishes immigrants to stay in their own enclave, maintaining their heritage culture and not mixing with the dominant society. Another strategy is that of exclusion, when the host society wishes that an already present immigrant group will be deported to the country of origin and new immigrants from this group will not be admitted.

Both sets of acculturation strategies presented by the hosts and their guests form an interactive network which eventually leads towards relational outcomes when representatives of both groups come into contact. While applying the Interactive Acculturation Model to the situation of Poles in UK, one needs to analyze the acculturation orientations adopted by Polish immigrants in the UK, the acculturation orientations of British Catholics towards Polish immigrants and the relational outcome of the orientations of both groups within the context of a parish.

In the British context there are different types of parishes in which Poles participate (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Krofil 2010). At one end of the spectrum there are parishes functioning under the jurisdiction of the Polish Catholic Mission. They are often called “Polish churches”. The parishioners consist exclusively of Poles and they are not interested in making any kind of bond with Catholics from the receiving country. All services are conducted in the Polish language, and issues of Polish ethnic identity are of paramount importance in the life of the parish.

The opposite standpoint is represented by the few parishes which belong to the local British Catholic Church structure and do not cooperate directly (if at all) with the Polish Catholic Mission. Polish priests in such communities serve whole parish community, not only Polish parishioners. The emphasis is put on the universalistic nature of the Catholic Church and on the multicultural richness of the parish. Culturally specific forms of religious expression are welcomed but they are treated as something additional to commonly shared parish activities. All parishioners are encouraged to attend mass together and to work together towards common goals. They are parishes which allow for real interactions between hosts and guests. Thus, these parishes provide opportunities for collaboration between British parishioners (of non-Polish origin) and Polish parishioners who immigrated to the UK. Between these two extremes of the spectrum lie most commonly those parishes with a Polish contingent. They might be called divided mixed parishes. They belong to the local dioceses of the Catholic Church where relatively numerous Polish immigrants gather and where Polish mass has been introduced. The Polish community in the parish exists parallel to the rest of the British parishioners and the Polish priests mainly direct their activities towards
Polish members of the parish. The second and the third type of parishes represent the most interesting cases for analysis of the acculturation dynamic of Polish migrants in the UK.

**METHODOLOGY**

The field research to be described was conducted between November 2008 and June 2009. A sample of parishes was drawn from the dioceses of Westminster and Nottingham in England and Aberdeen in Scotland on the criterion that they have a significant number of Polish immigrants as parishioners. The dioceses were chosen for the fieldwork because they are amongst those with the highest numbers of Polish migrants settling in. The three dioceses are very different from each other, which potentially gives a good basis for comparison and gives a better understanding of the role of contextual factors mentioned above. The research concentrated on parishes where the presence of substantial numbers of Polish migrants in the area where, apart from Sunday Masses in English, Mass in Polish was celebrated on a regular basis. In each of these parishes it was deemed possible, in principle, to establish a potential base of mutual contacts between Polish Catholics and others. We say ‘others’, because more often than not, a proportion of their fellow parishioners were from very diverse cultural and national backgrounds other than from the UK. The research aimed to bring a degree of subtlety to the task of bridging the gap between distinctly different cultural situations, Polish and British, in which nevertheless the Roman Catholic religious tradition forms a common bond.

**METHODS AND RESEARCH SAMPLE**

The study used a variety of methods to collect data. These included structured interviews, participant observation and the use of the internet as an important communicative resource. Major attention was given to interviews with: Polish clergy in Britain, British clergy in parishes where Poles were quite numerous, British members of parishes with a significant contingent of Poles, Polish parishioners served by Polish priests in the new cultural context, Polish hierarchy representatives (bishops and religious superiors) responsible for designating Polish priests to work abroad and preparing them to do so, and members of the British hierarchies who were in some formal relationship with the issues being examined. In total, interviews were carried out with 15 key members of Polish and English clergy involved in the pastoral care of immigrants. Among them were Polish priests working in selected parishes, non-Polish parish priests working in hosting parishes, and representatives of Polish hierarchy and educational institutions (
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seminaries, universities, postgraduate courses) responsible for areas pertaining to the missionary chaplaincy. Lay Catholics participating in the research formed following categories: Polish Catholics attending Sunday Masses in the Polish language and Non-Polish parishioners belonging to the host parishes. In total there were 41 interviews with Polish respondents, 19 with English, and 8 with Scottish respondents.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Detailed analysis of the research results (Grzymała-Mosczyńska, Hay 2009) clearly points to the fact that the Polish priest becomes a key person for understanding the dynamics of acculturation process of both groups: immigrants and host population. In spite of a structurally suitable context for the integration of Poles as newcomers into British parishes, quite different situation prevailed. A potentially suitable platform – the Roman Catholic parish became more like a place of division than a creator of community. In order to understand the phenomenon, several different perspectives on the priest’s role in UK parishes need to be considered: the priest’s own perception of the situation, the perspective of British parishioners and fellow-UK priests, and the perspective of Polish parishioners, as well as the perspectives of the Church hierarchies of the United Kingdom and of Poland. Interviews with Polish clergy show that some of the priests volunteer to come to the UK while others were approached by Polish bishops who were looking for candidates interested in going to UK in order to serve Polish migrants. None of the priests got any sort of preparation prior to accepting the new assignment. Not surprisingly, they arrived in the UK without the necessary skills for the job and with mistaken expectations of what was required of them. The result was that some priests failed to fulfill their role adequately. The main problems related to their lack of command of the English language and the fact that they were unprepared for the task of serving the whole congregation, not just Poles. Some Polish priests actually arrived with the idea that their work in the UK parish would be restricted to the Polish part of the congregation. They expected to pick up good English language skills in their spare time. Some also expected to write a Ph.D. dissertation because of their close proximity to excellent British libraries. Such expectations were heavily frustrated. When these clergy were confronted with a demand to serve the whole congregation, their lack of language fluency meant that they could neither communicate with British parishioners nor cooperate properly with British priests. They were also effectively cut off from possibility of getting into the informal diocesan priests’ network during monthly or term meetings organized by local bishops. Due to linguistic problems, Polish priests self-exclude themselves from this valuable support group. Such a network would
have a vital role for exchanging information and establishing working relations with fellow-British priests. Furthermore, work in several locations, some of them many miles apart, filled many priests’ time and eliminated any chance to pursue their academic interests.

Results obtained during interviews conducted with professors from educational institutions preparing Polish priests and laity for the missions further confirmed that no preparation for working with Polish migrants exists, with the one exception of the preparation in seminary of a monastic order designated to work among Polish migrants abroad. Any preparations available on a broader scale are connected with missions *ad gentes*, (e.g. in Oceania, Africa or Asia). Work in other European countries does not get included in the teaching program because it is assumed that this is not necessary. As the results of this research will show, that assumption is mistaken. The awareness of such a necessity was presented by the Polish Bishops. In the rapidly changing conditions of contemporary Europe, the bishops’ collective view was that priests must be prepared for working in multicultural contexts, (and, one bishop remarked, prepared for the stress of returning home after a spell away from Poland). But whilst the Almost in the same breath they confirmed that such preparation does not as yet exist anywhere. For Polish parishioners, perception of priests have been closely connected to the role of Polish Mass. A very important reason for going to a Polish Mass and sticking to it is to meet and to be served by Polish priests. There are two main reasons given for choosing to attend a Polish Mass rather than a British Mass: Linguistic and cultural. The linguistic reason is to do with the ability to understand the readings and prayers during a Mass in English. Opinions like the following illustrate this point “*During a Polish Mass one really participates, not just sits*”, “Sacraments must be in Polish otherwise they have no depth”, “It is important that confession can be taken in Polish.” “It is simply different to pray in one’s mother tongue” “During British Masses you have to respond in English, and even if you know English from learning it in school, you still do not know how to respond”, “British priests don’t speak clearly enough for foreigners”, “The Pater Noster is simply a very different prayer in Polish and in English”, “Many Poles cannot repeat the simplest phrase in English, even ‘Peace be with you’ - they do not know English at all”, ” British priests don’t speak clearly enough for foreigners”.

Cultural reasons are multi-faceted. Mainly they have to do with re-creating a feeling of being at home and being a member of one’s own national community. “*During a Polish Mass we feel at home*,” “*For Poles the Mass represents not only the religious community but the national community as well. It is a role which cannot be fulfilled just by meeting friends at home*” “*Attending a Polish Mass helps to build spiritual ambitions – I am here not only to work. I have also my spiritual needs*”, “*After a Polish Mass one can help other Poles*” (e.g. English
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speaking students translate documents into English for others who do not speak the language), “In England people feel lost everywhere in their jobs. In the English language they are operating in a totally foreign environment. Therefore in the church they want to feel at home at least for a while”, “The Polish Mass gives people strength, gives a sense of belonging and it is a piece of Polish culture. Amongst people with the same mentality, people could be just themselves”, “My identity as a Pole is connected with my identity as Catholic”, “It is simply different to pray in one’s mother tongue”, “During British Masses you have to respond in English, and even if you know English from learning it in school, you still do not know how to respond”.

Among cultural reasons for choosing a Polish Mass rather than a British Mass one should also specify the range of acceptable behavior of Mass participants. UK congregations are perceived by Poles as treating the Mass with much less respect, beginning with casual dress codes, through very noisy behaviour by children, who are unrestrained by their parents during Mass, and also meetings after Mass – because for Poles the Mass is not a place to socialize. Such meetings feel like an imposition because there are no common topics of interest to share with the British. It is interesting to discover that the attempts by some members of the Polish community to get absorbed into the English language context are met with ridicule and disdain by their fellow Poles: “Some Poles pretend that they are non-Polish, for example they change their name from Alexandra to Alex”. Along the same lines is, “Going to a British Mass means that you pretend that you are someone else than you really are”. Poles feel that they can share their experiences with their priests who also came recently to the UK. Priests and people came in the same way as each other to a foreign land, share the strangeness and therefore they are more approachable than in Poland. Polish priests sometimes help with very practical matters, they also help by introducing fellow Poles to relevant council officers who can advise them, for example, on how to fight discriminatory behaviour in the place of work. Some respondents refer also to the attitude of Polish priests in respect of acculturation in UK: “Our priests stress that Poles should not integrate but remain in a Polish social context while living and working in the UK”.

However it must also be pointed out that such views are not acceptable to all Polish immigrants: “Polish priests should be pro-integration, suggest people learn English to watch TV, and stimulate Polish-British activities in the parish”. One can notice that there is a dual set of expectations voiced by Polish parishioners towards Polish priests in the parishes. On the one side they should serve as a gatekeepers, helping Polish parishioners to retain sense of national identity, but on the other side they are expected (by some respondents) to serve as an active pro-adaptation factor, stimulating parishioners to adapt to the new religious and cultural context.
As previously said, the Polish Mass and Polish priest are also focal points in British discourse about acculturation of Polish migrants in UK. From the British perspective, the invitation of Polish priests to serve in the UK was seen as one part of the universal church requesting another part for help, with the obvious outcome of the integration of the Poles into their UK parishes. In one Scottish parish for example, Mass had been planned to be conducted partly in Polish and partly in English to allow the Poles to have contact with English language. The British expectations towards incoming Polish priests was that they will serve as a bridge for Polish Catholics in the process of becoming a part of the local parishes. Therefore, a very difficult situation occurs when Mass in Polish starts to attract Polish parishioners to the point that they withdraw from English Mass in which they used to participate. Many Poles from other parts of town also start to travel there in order to be able to participate in the Polish language Mass. Instead of the desired integration, separation becomes the case. Such a development has obviously annoyed British parishioners. One of them stated: “Poles should integrate because there is no space in Catholicism for such strong differences among people and such divisions. But there is no organized programme set out for integration and Poles just get more and more privileges and everything is done for them….Then the Poles all moved to a different church because apparently they wanted a mass in Polish”. Along the same line another person said: “Polish mass is a good thing but that it should be only once a month and for the rest of the time Poles should come to the mass in English… without this, there will not be any integration.” Polish priests are blamed by local parishioners for a lack of competence but are also perceived as getting too little guidance for work on the new posting. One of British parishioners quite radically stressed: “should not be any Polish priests in the parishes unless they are fully trained in the cultural and linguistic knowledge of the new context”. Observation of another member of the parish goes in the same direction “Polish priests come and they have no preparation for what awaits them and they end up doing far too much, or far too little. If everyone knew their duties and place, then the whole place would function more smoothly. There is …. Weak leadership and the lack of clear guidelines for the Polish priests who arrive in Aberdeen”. Another person expressed the view that the presence of Polish priests hinders integration and puts more pressure on the existing local clergy because they have to ‘nanny’ the incoming priests instead of getting the help they need. There should be a proper induction for the Polish priests that would include a language course, a brief history of the Catholic Church in the diocese and some meetings with parish boards to discuss the diocesan plan of action. The way it has been done in his diocese seemed to that respondent very ad hoc and messy, hence the problems with integration. He would like to see Polish parishioners forced to go to masses in English. If they don’t, it
Between universalism and ethnic...

obviously means they are not religious, or committed enough, in which case they are a ‘waste of space’ in our Lord’s home. Polish priests are seen as a stimulus for division between members of the parish. It contradicts often expressed, by British parishioners, conviction that ‘Catholicism is a universal religion, which means that Poles should gradually adjust and practice their faith in English because ‘a Catholic is a Catholic’’. Polish priests are perceived as people who do things only for Polish parishioners instead of doing them for the whole parish. It stimulates a sense of envy, “we have difficulty in getting a priest even for Christmas, and the Poles have two masses on Sunday”. In this way the priest can stimulate division in the parish instead of helping parishioners at least to meet, which is an obvious pre-condition for any kind of mutual acculturation. According to some British parishioners in one diocese, the Polish priests are interested only in creating a Polish ethnic church - which the locals feel is wrong because the Poles are supported by the Scottish Church and should work for British parishioners as well. Creating divisions in the parish is seen as potentially dangerous, splitting the local Catholic Church between Polish and British sectors. This could eventually lead to a very serious division, of the kind which has regularly taken place in Protestant Churches to the point of destruction. More than one parishioner in Aberdeen diocese felt that Polish priests lack relevant knowledge about the language, history and social customs of the Scots and they therefore do not know how to behave in the context of a Scottish parish. This comes across as a lack of proper respect for their Scottish parishioners.

Because of a lack of real contact between Polish and Scottish parishioners and Polish priests and Scottish parishioners, wild rumors take root. For example: Polish priests are alleged to make negative comments about their Scottish hosts during sermons. More alarmingly there are paranoid rumors that the Polish immigrants have the intention of driving out the local parishioners from the church and taking over the building exclusively for themselves. Such rumors can only live in a situation where there is no contact between the communities. Some parishioners stress how ill-prepared the Polish priests are for their mission in Scotland. They are coming without adequate linguistic and historical knowledge of the Church in Scotland. They are also getting, according to some Scottish parishioners, unjust privileges, payments and free cars. These are perceived as a sort of abuse of Scottish hospitality and as particularly unjust because Polish priests are doing nothing for Scottish parishioners. One person said “Poles are Catholics in a nationalist sense, which makes them very resistant to change and stubborn. Integration is not in their interest because they come only for a short time and they don’t want to invest in integration. Poles and Scots have completely different ideas of what it means to be Catholic; Poles blindly follow the Church in Poland”. Some parishioners commented sarcastically that the prevalence of
Polish language in the church stops the church from being a refuge where Scots can feel at home, away from foreigners who are plentiful everywhere in their town.

Other British parishioners commented that a failure to integrate can also be due to the attitudes of UK parishioners and priests, “People in the UK are not ready to make contacts with newcomers”; “Integration is a no-no in London”; “People in this parish are absolutely ice cold…..it’s the weirdest parish you could ever wish to be in”.

Some respondents stressed the necessity of changing the attitudes of British priests: “British local clergy should be more forthcoming and show Poles that they care; that’s the correct way to go about integration”. A reflection from another parishioner points to a personal characteristic of the British which might be an obstacle to integration: “British people generally take a long time to get to know someone, and befriend them. Cardinal Cormac [Murphy-O’Connor] is very centralist in his thinking. He likes everybody to be the same”. Other British respondents tried to interpret the non-integration of Poles differently: “Sometimes it is essential when you are abroad to have your own community, because it is on a smaller scale, where you can know each other, and you can really share your struggles and problems” or “Integration must be natural with the second or third generation of children going to school here”. Particularly striking, according to British parishioners, are the expressions of non-integration in relation to the liturgy. Poles have not only separate Masses, but they also, for example, have their separate (or at times parallel) Way of Cross, and First Holy Communion. Also they often refuse to participate in activities like cleaning the church, doing flowers, and they do not contribute regularly to the costs of maintaining the church building. They don’t participate in charitable activities run by parish. Yet again rituals around Christmas and Easter that are run by the Poles contribute to the divisions in the Catholic community in Britain. The Poles also don’t meet social expectations concerning acceptable forms of interaction: “Poles behave in an unfriendly way towards British parishioners: they don’t greet you, don’t smile, never come to you, you have to make first move”, “Poles, due to sticking to the Polish Mass only, are perceived as rude guests who are coming to someone’s home and behaving in unfriendly ways, not trying to learn the hosts’ language, and not interacting properly with their hosts”.

An interesting perspective on the role of Polish priests has been provided by local UK fellow-priests. They see Polish priests as contributing in a decisive fashion to the dilemma concerning the role of the Polish Mass. The dilemma can be voiced as ‘Do we like Poles to stay Polish Catholics, or do we like them to stay Catholics in the universal sense?’. According to them, Polish priests and the Polish Mass contribute to the affirmative answers to the first, but not necessarily
to the second question. The Polish Mass had been originally expected by the UK clergy and bishops only as a transitory stage, helping newly arrived Poles who did not master their English yet, to become fully-fledged members of the UK parish.

Points raised during interviews relate also to lack of certain skills which are important in parish work in UK. Polish priests should first of all exhibit good linguistic capacities, otherwise there is no chance for real communication and collaboration within the parish. Secondly they should have the skills of social worker, because quite frequently they are working for what amounts to an underprivileged group (Poles), who are seeking help from the parish because of various difficult situations like unemployment, homelessness and lack of money for covering medical treatment in case of accident. Another observation by British priests concerning necessary skills for successful parish work done by Polish priests refers to managerial skills. The Polish priest should be a manager, who knows how to remain leader but at the same time shares and delegates many responsibilities to other parish members.

British priests and bishops felt that there were cross-cultural difficulties related to the general attitude of some Polish priests. Some did not seem to have a missionary attitude, or an openness and readiness to go out to meet people. They rather expected that people would come to them, which does not work in the UK context. Some British parishioners commented on this difficulty “Polish priest forgets that he is not a boss here”. The same openness becomes necessary for fruitful collaboration with school principals. Some Polish priests got into conflict in schools because of lack of willingness to accept the expectations of headmasters of the schools concerning content and style of teaching. Another important set of skills necessary for successful work in British parish pertains to openness to cultural diversity and knowledge about such a diversity and cultural differences, because of the multicultural composition of parishes. Such a situation comes as a total novelty to the majority of Polish priests and finds them unprepared for coping with challenges posed by the different cultural origins of their parishioners.

A difficult point perceived by UK clergy and bishops pertains to the loyalty of Polish priests to Polish bishops back home and to the Polish Catholic Mission, which is seen as an institution no longer necessary for Polish Catholics in UK. This view was reflected by respondents who noted their opinion that the Polish Catholic Mission to England and Wales, of which they were at times somewhat suspicious, does the selection work without ever consulting the local British bishops. Logically, both ways of selection (via Polish bishops and via the Polish Catholic Mission to England and Wales) create a situation where some Polish clergy feel that they are responsible only towards their home bishop, or to the Polish Catholic Mission, but not towards the British bishop in whose diocese they
work. Interviews conducted with Polish priests suggested that indeed all the above was true. One important remark from a British bishop and a priest referred to the psychological effects when incoming Polish clergy fully realize that they are functioning in a context where Catholics are not a majority as in Poland but an extremely small minority, possibly less than 10% of the national population. Two corollaries of this difference are the reduced social status and income of the clergy in Britain as compared with Poland, and the multiculturalism in Britain in contrast to the near-monoculture in Poland. On the part of Polish priests it has been often considered as a proof that British people are not “real” Catholics, nor truly Christian, and strengthen their conviction that they should be serving only real Catholics, that is, Poles.

One of the UK bishops suggested a novel way of supporting ‘less than satisfactorily trained’ Polish priests in the UK. Parishes could support the participation of Polish priests in international exchange programmes such as the Erasmus scheme sponsored by the EU. They could come to the UK as graduate students and complete part of their theological education in the UK. Such a solution would allow them to learn more about the British cultural context and increase their effectiveness in serving both Polish and British parishioners. Each British diocese (according to one of the interviewed bishops) could support 3 - 4 Polish student priests who came to study in the UK. Such a support would be seen as an investment in the future of Catholic Church in UK. Right now more than 200 Polish priests would have support if they decide to come and to study in UK. The arrival of Polish clergy in British parishes might create a situation where both the hopes and fears of Pope Benedict XVI expressed in his comments captured by Wikileaks (http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/65066) could be justified. He perceives Polish Catholicism as a counter-weight to Western European secularism and Polish priests are very important expressions of this style of individual and group religiosity. From another angle the Pontiff expresses the thought that the nationalistic and potentially divisive aspect of such religiosity would be a dangerous development, threatening the unity of the Church.

Roman Catholic parishes in UK became an interesting context for applying the Interactive Acculturation Model for analyzing the outcome of encounters between the acculturation orientation of the hosts (British parishioners and clergy) and guests (Polish immigrants: parishioners and clergy). The model specifies three clusters of such outcomes: consensual, problematic and conflictual. A consensual outcome can be achieved when both host community members and immigrant group members share either the integration, assimilation or individuality acculturation orientations. This would be an ideal outcome of encounters between the two communities. Problematic relational outcomes appear when host
community and the immigrant group partially agree but partially disagree as far as regards their profile of acculturation orientations. An example of problematic outcome appears while immigrants favor assimilation strategy while hosts prefer immigrants to adopt integration strategy, or when immigrants prefer integration but hosts want them to assimilate. Similar outcomes will appear when one party insists of individualism as an acculturation strategy while the second party expects assimilation or integration.

Conflicual outcomes appear most frequently. They result for example from the situation when an immigrant community prefers separation while the host community wants them to integrate or to assimilate. “Immigrant group members who endorse the separation strategy are likely to experience tense relational outcomes with most host community members, especially those, who have segregationist or exclusionist orientation. An immigrant group that systematically adopts a separation orientation may shift host majority attitudes from the integration to the segregation or exclusionistic pole of the acculturation continuum (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, Senecal 1997, p. 384). The acculturation dynamic present in parishes where British and Polish parishioners meet, fits to the third category of acculturation outcomes ie. conflicual ones. Poles tend to endorse separation strategy while British parishioners and clergy expect them to integrate. Looking closely at the expected strategy one needs, however, to remark that this is more akin to assimilation rather than to integration. Poles are expected to participate in the English mass, as well as in all form of English parish activities. From the perspective of strategies included in the Interactive Acculturation Model this is more akin to assimilation rather than integration. The host’s expectations are quite heavily frustrated by the guest’s behavior, therefore according to predictions taken from Interactive Acculturation Model there is some possibility of shifting the host’s attitude towards segregation or exclusion. Polish priests who are crucial figures in the process play a critical role in preventing such developments. In order to do so they need a new set of skills and experiences before entering British parishes with Polish and British parishioners. Polish priests should also educate British fellow-priests and local bishops about the possible dangers of imposed assimilation. For Poles it is extremely important— as one Polish bishop stressed – to create an atmosphere where steps toward this goal were freely chosen by Polish parishioners rather than imposed. Any pressure in that respect would be met with resistance because of people’s memories of Polish history when they were pressed to integrate with the religion of the nations that partitioned Poland (Russia and Prussia) in the 18th and 19th centuries. Analogously, the Polish Bishops express a fear that pressure on the part of the British Episcopate about the necessity for Poles to integrate in UK parishes might create a very different result; Poles will resist any attempt which they interpret as imposed action.
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INTRODUCTION

Poland’s accession to the EU in May 2004 brought many new possibilities for Polish migrants to Britain and had complex implications for their strategies and aspirations. Migration from Poland following the opening up of the countries of the Eastern bloc in the 1980s-90s tended to be perceived as short term, transient and individual, much of it undocumented (Iglicka, 2001; Morokvasic 2004; Gryzmala-Kazlowska 2005; Duvell 2004). On the other hand EU membership, by opening up legal access to the labour market in Britain, allows people to come and go freely, facilitating temporary – and often multiple – stays, or ‘commuter migration’ (Morokvasic, 2004; Garapich, 2008). In the period from May 2004 to June 2010, almost 700,000 Poles registered with the Workers Registration Scheme as employees1. While Fihel el al (2006) point to the temporariness of much of this migration, others argue that EU citizenship provides new rights and may promote a sense of belonging, encouraging more permanent stay (Burrell, 2009). Thus, a substantial proportion of Polish migrants have moved onto a new phase of long term or indefinite stays, with family reunion developing as family members join men who had initially migrated alone (Eade et al, 2006; Pollard et al, 2008; Ryan et al, 2009; Lopez Rodriguez 2010). In fact, one unforeseen consequence of this new migration trend was the large numbers of Polish children arriving in British schools. According to the School Census,2 in 2010 there were at least 40,700 Polish school children.

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1 i.e. 690,850 (Source: Accession Monitoring Report, 2008, and Control of Immigration Statistics, 2010). The Worker Registration Scheme was introduced in 2004 to monitor citizens of accession ‘A8’ countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) who come into the UK labour market. A8 citizens need to register under the WRS if they wish to work for an employer in the UK for more than one month. Self-employed, family members, students and other categories are exempted. So the WRS statistics are indicative at best.

2 The School Census is conducted at local level by schools and coordinated by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). It recently started to collect data on languages spoken
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primary and secondary schools pupils in England whose first language was known or believed to be Polish.

In this paper we explore processes of adaptation, accommodation, negotiation and identity formation. In particular, we analyse the ways in which Polish migrants construct notions of Polishness in the context of education. We draw upon data from three recent studies. The first, Recent Polish Migrants in London: social networks, transience and settlement, explored the importance of family and life course in migration decision-making. It involved individual interviews with 30 migrants with a range of family situations, migration history and personal characteristics; interviews with key informants with knowledge of recent Polish migration; and three focus groups (Ryan et al, 2007). This study suggested that children’s schooling may be an important factor in migration decision-making, particularly as stay is prolonged (Ryan et al, 2008; 2009). The second study, Polish Children in London Schools: opportunities and challenges, explored the progress of Polish pupils in London primary schools and involved 17 interviews with a range of staff involved in supporting Polish pupils and with 11 Polish parents of primary school-aged children. The main focus of this study was the achievement of children within the education system but the interviews raised some key issues concerning the nature of migration decisions (Sales et. al., 2009). The third study Stories of Three Generations of Polish Immigrants (2010) focused on the experiences of Polish migrants in the London borough of Enfield and was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. As part of that study three recently arrived Polish children, all of whom were in secondary education, were interviewed. In this paper we also draw upon those three interviews. The names of all interviewees have been changed to preserve anonymity. Most interviews were conducted in Polish and have been subsequently transcribed in English.

and although provision of this data is not compulsory, DCSF quality checks deemed the data supplied by specific language categories sufficiently robust to produce national level reports.

3 Recent Polish Migrants in London: networks, transience and settlement. Grantholders: Louise Ryan, Rosemary Sales and Mary Tilki funded by the ESRC (RES-000-22-1552). Bernadetta Siara was the research fellow on the project.

4 Polish Pupils in London Schools: opportunities and challenges. Grant Holders: Rosemary Sales, Louise Ryan, Alessio D’Angelo (commissioned by Multiverse). The research fellow on the study was Magdalena Lopez Rodriguez. The research for paper also benefitted from our ESRC funded Follow-On activities (RES-189-25-0005).


6 In the schools study the Polish interviews were conducted by Magdalena Lopez Rodriguez, where participants were happy to be interviewed in English these were carried out by Louise Ryan. In the Enfield study the interviews with children were carried out by peer researchers trained by Louise Ryan.
In the following sections we briefly review the literature on schools as sites of socialisation and acculturation and we then explore how Polish parents and children engage with the British educational system. In particular, we focus on schools as sites of socialisation where newly arrived migrants encounter the host society in complex and varied ways. We consider how migrants negotiate their identity in the context of schools and develop relations with other ethnic groups, including English people. Finally we discuss the adaptive strategies that the parents and children use to navigate their new surroundings and make sense of their migratory experiences.

SCHOOL AS A PLACE OF SOCIALISATION AND ACCULTURATION

Schools are a key site of socialisation and acculturation for children. For immigrant children, in particular, they are often the place where they “first encounter in-depth contact with the host culture” (Adams and Kirova 2006: 2) and - as Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) have argued - “where most of a culture’s dominant discourses are exchanged”. Sometimes this is also true for immigrant parents: whilst their working and social life can be partially confined within the ethnic and linguistic boundaries of their own community networks, their children’s education requires them to encounter and engage with the host society, its culture and institutions.

The way in which parents and children approach schools and education is strongly influenced by their pre-migration experiences and by the culture of their country of origin, which can of course vary considerably. For example, in some societies it may be common to hold teachers in high esteem as authority figures that cannot be questioned or challenged, whilst in others parents may have a more assertive and questioning attitude towards education. More generally, Roer-Strier and Strier (2006), in their study on different migrant groups in Israel, observed that within some educational systems independent thinking is valued whereas in others conformity and obedience is expected. They concluded that “parental social cognition, childrearing ideologies, expectations, norms, rules and beliefs tend to preserve meaningful elements of their original cultures” (ibid., pp 104-5) and referred to a cultural lag during which migrants hold firm to their own values and traditions. Parents, as well as children, may also be accustomed to a schooling system where various practical elements can be significantly different from the host country, including the curriculum’s structure, the forms of communication between school and family, the amount and type of homework and even the classroom layout or the dress code (Ryan et al. 2010a).
All these elements can result in clashes of expectations between parents and schools, which may often be implicit and not openly discussed, leading to further misunderstandings and even tensions. Migrants may also regard the education system in the host society as inferior to that of their country of origin, often because they do not fully understand how it works (Reynolds, 2008; Ryan et al., 2010a; Adams and Shambleau, 2006). The norms of the new context, especially in relation to respect for elders, may lead them to conclude that children in the host society are all badly behaved, rude and undisciplined. In recent research with Afghani and Somali mothers in the London borough of Barnet (Ryan et al., 2010b), several mothers observed that school children in Britain are ‘cheeky’ and disrespectful. The mothers were concerned that their children would copy such behaviour and challenge parental authority.

Moreover, parents and children may experience racism and discrimination they did not anticipate or, in a multicultural country like the UK, experience ethnic and cultural diversity for the first time, often having to re-think their own identity. Thus migration requires a form of ‘cultural frame switching’ (Adams and Kirova, 2006: 4; Lafromboise et al., 1993): a process of understanding and engagement with the cultural norms of the host society. This does not mean that parents need to abandon their values and traditions altogether. However, a mutual understanding between parents and teachers, where both become aware of each other’s expectations, can ease tensions and promote a greater sense of trust and cooperation (Heckmann, 2008).

It is equally important that children do not feel torn between conflicting influences and expectations. As Adams and Kirova argue “children’s identity formation is influenced by at least two distinct, and sometimes contradicting, cultural systems: the home culture and the school culture” (2006: 8). This can put pressure on the children as they find themselves at ‘the cross roads’ between home and school (Roer-Stier and Stier, 2006). In most cases the migration experience is unexpected and confusing at best, if not shocking and frightening. These feelings will accompany the child to the classroom, where they may be exacerbated or alleviated according to the practices and strategies put in place by teachers and families. As Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) have suggested, the cultural capital that newly arrived children bring with them may not be easily translated into the new environment. On the other hand, the cultural capital that is valued within the host society may not be accessible to them in the short term (Lopez Rodriguez, 2010; Erel, 2010). For some children socialisation into a new society may also mean rebelling against their parental culture and values (Ryan et al, 2010a). However, as recent research shows (Devine 2009; Holland, Reynolds...
and Weller 2007), children are not mere recipients of parental culture, but can also be “key contributors to processes of capital accumulation by the family” (Devine 2009: 526). In particular, because of their learning experiences in the classroom, children often become the cultural or language brokers to interpret the host society for their parents.

Some migrants, especially transient groups, may invest more time and energy in maintaining links with their country of origin, or with ethnic-specific communities in the host society, rather than establishing new and ethnically diverse relationships. As others have noted (Adams and Shambleau, 2006), parents may view their children’s language acquisition as entirely the role and responsibility of the school, for example making little effort to encourage the host country’s language being spoken in the home. On the other hand, ‘success’ in the new society may be measured by both parents and child in terms of how well the child is doing in school, learning the new language and making new friends (Adams and Shambleau, 2006: 88). Although language proficiency is regarded in many countries as the vehicle for the integration of migrant children, a necessary part of belonging (Roer-Strier and Strier, 2006: 103), it is misleading to simply equate language acquisition with acculturation into new society (Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Language is just the most evident of the many issues faced by migrant children, including: “finding new friends; dealing with loss and loneliness; adjusting to a new teacher and new school system (...); adjusting to a new cultural environment; trauma that may have occurred preceding, during and after migration; and racism or anti-immigration sentiments” (Reynolds, 2008:5).

In addition, parents and teachers reliance on children as interpreters can often lead to further misunderstandings between family and school (Ryan et. al, 2010a). It can also mean that parents feel disempowered or humiliated as their children have more information and knowledge than themselves (Roer-Strier and Strier, 2006: 109). This, together with parents’ downward mobility, challenges about plans to stay or return, may diminish the value of parents’ cultural capital (Kelly and Lusis 2006; Lopez Rodriguez, 2010) and impact on the dynamics between parents and children.

As well as understanding the expectations and prior experiences of migrant parents and children, it is also important to understand the context into which they are entering. In the next section we briefly review education policy and practice in the UK.
THE UK CONTEXT: MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

The UK is a highly, and increasingly, diverse country: the 2001 Census recorded around 8% of the population as ‘ethnic minorities’ and a recent study (Wohland et al. 2010) estimates they will rise to 20% by 2051. This is fully reflected in primary and secondary schools throughout the UK and in England in particular. A decade ago minority ethnic pupils constituted a fifth of the schools population. However, by January 2010 over 1.5 million of the 6.5 million pupils in maintained primary and secondary schools were of ‘minority ethnic’ origin: 25% of the total (School Census). In London the proportion is even higher: 66.7% in primary and 62.1% in secondary schools. The School Census also collects statistics in terms of ‘first language’, thus offering a better insight on the diversity of schools population. Overall, there are 896,230 pupils in English primary and secondary schools whose first language is known or believed to be other than English, almost 14% of the total. Polish-speaking pupils, in particular, have risen from 26,840 in 2008 to 40,700 in 2010, becoming the fourth largest language group in England, after long-established ones such as Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali.

Educationalists and policy makers in the UK have been debating how to approach such diversity since the 1960s (Reynolds 2008: 6). In 1985 the government report ‘Education for All’ promoted a model of multicultural education which should balance the support for the cultures and lifestyles of all ethnic groups and the acceptance of values shared by society as a whole. Whilst the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 - with its emphasis on an homogeneous teaching programme - was seen by some as a step backward (Gilborn 1995), the 1999 Green Paper ‘Excellence for All Children’ marked a strong commitment towards ‘inclusive schools’ and the need to develop structures and practices which allow schools “to respond more fully to the diversity of their pupil populations” (Clarke et al 1999: 157). The same year saw the introduction of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), intended to fund Local Authorities initiatives to meet the needs of ethnic minority children and those who have ‘English as an additional language’ (EAL). The grant allowed the introduction of dedicated EMA practitioners both at school and local authority level.

In recent years, various research studies have recorded both success stories and failures, highlighting the impact of different local practices, socio-economic contexts and ethnic composition on the achievement and socialisation of pupils (for an overview see Reynolds, 2008). The overall national picture, however,
is still characterised by significant differences in terms of school achievement amongst pupils of different ethnic backgrounds (DES 2005).

One of the main limits of the current multicultural policy model is its delay in adapting to and engaging with a new level and kind of diversity – what Vertovec (2007: 3) labelled ‘Super-Diversity’: a “kind of complexity surpassing anything the country has previously experienced”, with a dynamic interplay of variables including ethnicity, country of origin, religious tradition, migration and legal status. Interestingly, the extent and complexity of diversity in UK schools can also affect children’s inclusion. In particular, Reynolds (2008) echoes Verma et al. (1994) in arguing that students’ inclusion may be more difficult in a largely bi-ethnic schools, where identities polarise, than in ‘super-diverse’ schools where “boundaries between groups are blurred and there are many and diverse opportunities for ‘identity matching’”. (Reynolds 2008: 19) In other words “being bi-ethnic is harder than being multi-ethnic” (ibid: 26).

Nonetheless, most of the UK education policy and practice - from monitoring of achievement to provision of dedicated support – seem to disregard this new super-diversity, still relying on the traditional 16 ethnic categories7, mainly based on colonial and post-colonial migration (Sales and D’Angelo, 2008: 30). The concept of ‘Black and Asian Minority Ethnic’ (BAME) means that, for example, ‘White minority’ groups such as Poles are left out from both official statistics and policy. The focus on ethnicity also ignores migrant students as a group with specific needs. In fact, as Reynolds (2008: 5) points out “the status of a student as ‘migrant’ is largely absent from education policies”. It is partly for this reason that, unlike other western countries – the US in particular – UK migrant children exist in a ‘research void’ (Ackers and Stalford, 2004). In particular, “studies of first-generation immigrant children’s voices in relation to schooling are rare, with the exception of some research in the area of refugee children” (Devine 2009: 521).

POLISH FAMILIES IN BRITAIN

As Polish migrants have become more settled in Britain, family reunion has become more common (see Ryan, et al, 2009; Ryan and Sales, forthcoming; Lopez Rodriguez, 2010, White, 2010). But that is not to suggest one simple kind of family

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7 White-British, White-Irish, Any other White background, Mixed (White and Black Caribbean), Mixed (White and Black African), Mixed (White and Asian), Any other mixed background, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Any other Asian background, Black Caribbean, Black African, Any other Black background, Chinese, Any other ethnic group.
migration strategy. In our research we have found various models of family reunion. In some cases reunion is a planned strategy from the outset although one partner, usually though not exclusively the husband, may migrate first alone to find a job and accommodation before the rest of the family follows. In other cases, the family may not have intended reunion but after years of separation it is agreed that the partner and children will follow the lead migrant. We have also found examples where both partners migrate, leaving children behind with relatives in Poland, the so-called ‘Euro-orphans’\(^8\). In a few cases, as we will discuss below, family migration may be linked to marital breakdown as family members leave Poland to make a fresh start following divorce. Of course, as we have discussed elsewhere (Ryan et al, 2009), family migration does not refer only to nuclear families and may in fact involve a wide range of relatives, including sisters, brothers, cousins, aunts, uncles and even grandparents.

In previous papers we have discussed some of the challenges faced by Polish parents in accessing schools and learning to navigate the complex and diverse British educational system (see Sales, et al 2008; Ryan and Sales, forthcoming). In those discussions we focused in particular on issues relating to language and communicating with schools. In this paper we concentrate on wider issues of social interaction and socialisation, for parents and pupils, within the school environment. We begin by examining the experiences and expectations of parents and we then move on to consider the children’s point of view.

THE PARENTS’ EXPERIENCES

Expectations of schools

Most of our interviewees continually compared the British system with schools in Poland, which they regarded as better. As one father put it: “of course, it is a paradise in Poland compared to what it is here”. He was particularly worried about lack of discipline and recommended more corporeal punishment. More generally, parents perceived the British schooling system as too easy and informal, often complaining about too little home work and the fact that pupils do

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\(^8\) The ‘Euro-Orphans’ debate has received significant media attention in Poland and has many of the features of a ‘moral panic’. The term has been used very generally to refer to a wide range of different experiences including where one or both parents migrate, and where children are left for short or long periods with a grandparent. Some commentators have argued that while children may benefit from the improved economic well-being of the family, the absence of their parents may have emotional consequences which manifest themselves in lower motivation to learn, lower attendance at school and falling grades (Walczak 2008).
not take many books at home. At the same time, several parents appreciated that children in Britain enjoy more freedom.

‘Children are not too overloaded with material because they don’t learn too much [laughs] and it is all in the form of play, which I also appreciate; in Poland the level of education is much higher but children cannot have a rest’. (Anna)

‘The good thing is that children do not need to carry their books, that their backpacks, bags are not heavy, they have all the materials there (at school) (...) Yes, children feel much more free, it is all ... I don’t know... maybe more relaxed, there is no stress. In Poland, we know, you have to sit at a desk with someone and you have to always learn something, everyday you have a small test, you have loads of books, different subjects and here it is not like that’. (Zuzanna)

Whilst some parents were critical of the British educational system, others were very appreciative of how schools had welcomed and supported their children. One mother also acknowledges that Polish parents may be overly demanding:

‘Polish parents and Polish mothers are often a bit oversensitive and overprotective and I think they too often go and ask for things and here it seems they(school staff) do not like it’ (Jolanta)

In fact, some parents seemed to suggest that schools were even doing too much.

‘It is very good that school want to help children of migrants [but] I think it is a responsibility of the parent. It is my duty. I do not think that they [schools] should organise additional lessons or place more resources for these children just because these children do not know English’ (Ewa).

Parents’ observations about the British educational system were not only concerned with teaching and learning but also with the ethnic composition of the schools. To a certain extent this relates to a lack of familiarity with a multicultural and multilingual education environment, so different from the Polish schools most parents were used to.

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9 Our interviews with teachers suggested that Polish parents often did not understand the work that was going on in schools to support their children. While some parents were critical of the British educational system, it was apparent that significant resources of time and support were being made available by school staff to help Polish children learn English and adjust to their new learning environment.
Diversity and Racism

Amongst the parents we interviewed there was a sense of surprise that London – and its schools – is so ethnically diverse. This led to some complex encounters around identity in schools. As one mother put it:

“you could count on your fingers all the white children who were there, it was awfully Black there ... so we did not agree and we did not accept this school ... it seemed it would not be a good school for Piotr ... girls in scarves... it was not what we were looking for... in fact it was such a shock for us” (Jolanta).

Similarly, Marta noted “I am not racist but I would not like... you know I am sometimes afraid of Black people, just like that, I had some unpleasant [experiences] in the playground”. This sense of fear and shock may be explained in terms of lack of familiarity with diversity. Black people are encountered as a homogeneous group of suspicious strangers not as individuals with particular characteristics and diverse personalities. In the absence of meaningful inter-personal contact and communication, Black people may be perceived by newly arrived Poles as threatening and frightening. Within this context, Polish people may perceive themselves as being at risk of verbal or physical abuse. For example, Anna said her children were ‘shocked’ by the ethnic diversity of London and had been subjected to bullying from some Black children at school:

“Sometime the children are picked on by some other children and these are not really English but by the Black or, as one colloquially says, by ‘ciapati’ children; and I think most often stems from the racism of the parents”. (Anna)

Although Anna asserted that her family is not racist, it is ironic that she then uses a derogatory term, ‘ciapati’ to describe Black children. Rather than challenging ethnic stereotyping, she is thus, perhaps inadvertently, reinforcing racist language in her own children. Thus, Black/White relations are reversed as White newly arrived migrants perceive themselves as the victims of racist abuse from the Black indigenous population. However, it is not only Black people who are considered to be racist against Poles. Anna added that English teachers were also racist against her son who had special needs: ‘I have the impression he is not entirely accepted by teachers. I don’t know the reason; if it is racism... because they cannot show it openly’. Other parents also suggested that some English teachers don’t like Polish parents and children:

‘Maybe the teachers think that we do not speak good English and they do not have good rapport with us but you can see how they speak to other parents of
English children and how they treat them and how they treat Polish children, for example the teacher can stroke a child or in general the kind of gestures which show that those children are simply better’ (Jolanta)

Thus, some mothers tend to construct Poles as victims rather than perpetrators of racism in London. English people were often described, if not as openly racist, as unfriendly towards Poles. The basis for this unfriendliness was usually explained by the Polish parents in terms of economic competition for jobs.

‘...the English … they have never been very friendly to us … I am absolutely convinced they regard us as second rate … for instance they would not say hello. And they pretend they do not see you, you smile to them… you can feel it… their husbands work, ours work, we do take their jobs away from them, we are rivals for them, we have better skills’ (Marta)

On the other hand most parents agreed that overall in Britain there is a more positive approach towards diversity than in Poland.

‘It is incomparably better here than in Poland, here in all the offices whenever you enter there is ‘hello’ and ‘welcome’ in Urdu, Russian, Polish … in Poland it would never happen because we would never agree upon such influx of migrants as it is here.’ (Anna)

Whilst some of the parents comments would be perceived as ‘racist’ in British mainstream culture, in most cases they seem mainly to indicate a lack of familiarity and difficulties in adapting to London’s ethnic diversity. Suspicion and lack of trust towards other groups may also reflect the socio-economic positioning of many recently arrived Polish migrants in London (Garapich, 2008). This may result in a sense of competition with other groups for jobs, housing and school places. For example, many of the Polish participants in our studies spoke about their children being put together with other immigrants in schools. However, it should be noted that some parents recognised this as a positive approach to overcome common language and integration issues.

‘The good thing was that there was a group of children, not only from Poland, also from African countries, those who did not know the language well or did not know the language at all as in the case of Mariola, they had a separate teacher who would take a group of children to a different room and they had classes, activities where they would learn English from scratch’ (Zuzanna)
Another mother highlighted how, also outside the school context, they would have friends of different backgrounds:

‘We have 3 friends from Pakistan, we worked with them earlier and this friendship stayed, one of them lived with us a bit, he treats our home as his second home’ (Sylwia)

However, for some parents mixing or being grouped together with other ‘non-British’ people came as a shock: for the first time they had to think about themselves as ‘migrants’, as a ‘minority’.

Re-defining identity through migration

As argued elsewhere (Ryan, 2010a) Polish migrants re-construct their identities post-migration. The sense of ‘becoming a migrant’, together with the upheaval, the de-skilling or loss of status, may often lead them to assert a sense of pride and self-worth:

‘I think Poles are a very intelligent nation and there are many Poles here having responsible posts, good jobs and generally the English are not very happy about it’ (Jolanta)

This sense of rivalry between Poles and the English (already seen in the earlier quote from Marta) became particularly strong in relation to the approach to schooling and more generally to parenthood.

‘I think we (Poles) spend more time with our children’ (Jolanta).

Being a good parent was particularly important for women who had lost their career status through migration. As previous research highlighted (Ryan 2010b), Polish women do not simply follow their husbands but are actively involved in the family migration strategy, with the final decision often based on practical considerations. Thus, some Polish mothers may justify their decision to migrate and uproot their children in terms of good mothering:

‘I would love to polish my English, I am a qualified economist but without the knowledge of English it is difficult to find a good work...If I want to go to school, I won’t be able to work. If I give up my work, we won’t be able to afford what we have at the moment, for instance this flat’ (Zuzanna)
'In Poland I graduated in law, so you know... I do not feel bad [doing cleaning] but I would prefer to do something else. However, I am not so flexible in terms of time because I have to drop and collect Piotr from school so there is no great opportunity to have other kind of work’. (Jolanta)

Migrating to London may therefore mean loss of status and opportunities for parents, but it is presented as the best choice for children. In fact, Jolanta adds:

‘...after three years I also can say that it is better here, maybe not for me but for my child for certain... I think here Piotr will have more opportunities. In Poland we live in Lower Silesia and it is poor there. I cannot say we don’t have good universities but here he has greater opportunities’.

Zuzanna also recognised that for her daughter being fluent in English would be ‘a big advantage for her; if not here, in Poland, because there [knowing English] she would always manage. English language is fundamental, that’s what I think’.

THE CHILDREN’S EXPERIENCES

As Grace Reynolds (2008: 12) points out “in order to understand children’s lives it is essential to talk to children themselves”. Although limited in number, the three interviews presented here offer some powerful examples of Polish pupils’ experiences in London schools. All three children were at secondary school and were aged between 13 and 14 years when the interviews were carried out in 2009. These children were not related to the parents discussed earlier in this paper.

Marek arrived in Britain in 2007 with his mother and sister to join his father who had already been working in London for several years. Although Marek was not keen to leave Poland, he realised that the family needed to be reunited and that his father did not want to return to Poland. Initially he found London ‘very difficult’ and he was also shocked by the hostility he encountered:

‘It wasn’t easy. I got different reactions from people. I was surprised, because I have heard that English people are not a racist people, but I was very wrong... They didn’t treat me like someone equal to them. I was an immigrant to them, who should not have come to this country’.

Being treated ‘like an immigrant’ comes as a shock. Marek feels that in general British people have a stereotypical view of Poles: ‘We are just workers
and builders for them... although many Polish builders are more clever than English... for them we are someone, who takes their jobs away’. Like the parents mentioned above, Marek compensates for negative stereotypes by suggesting that Poles are in fact cleverer than the English.

Marek was also of the view that the standard of education in Poland was superior to that in Britain: ‘I am depressed by the level of education here. Math, for example, I haven’t learnt anything new yet, which I didn’t know from Poland’. On the other hand he recognises that studying in England would give him better opportunities for the future: “The truth is that the level of education is not that important.(...) So if I finish any university here, even not that popular, it will be worth more than if I studied at [a university in Poland]”.

Although he had learned English in Poland, when he arrived in Britain he found that he did not understand anything people were saying.

‘At the beginning I didn’t know how to respond, my English wasn’t good enough to say what I wanted... besides I was scared. And they could see it straight away. Fortunately I had a Polish friend, who joined the school the same day when I did. It was easier when there were two of us. But he is different, he has got a stronger personality, he won’t let anyone say something bad to him. If he can’t answer with his words, he will answer with his fist. I’m not like that. I don’t like fighting and that’s why they chose me as their victim’.

Marek spoke very eloquently about how the language barrier inhibited him from being himself: ‘I can’t yet express myself well enough in English to show who I am. My English just doesn’t let me show them who I really am. When I speak English, I don’t really say what I would in Polish’. In a way, according to Marek, it is the language barrier that holds Poles from achieving their full potential.

Like the adult research participants, he also commented upon how difficult it is to make friends with English people:

‘English people stay in their groups and they don’t want to know someone new. There are some exceptions, because I have few English friends, not many... But most of my friends are other immigrants, who were born and grew up here, but they are completely different. I like Indians, as they are very positive about life, they are friendly. I have also friends from Mexico, Germany and Turkey’.
Hence, although some children may not initially like the idea of being seen as a migrant, some may find it easier to establish relationships with others from a migrant background, not just their own ethnic group (cfr. Ryan, 2010a).

While other Polish children have managed to make friends with their English peers, Marek suggests they may have achieved that by denying their Polishness:

‘There are many Polish students here, who don’t speak the Polish language, although they can. I know one guy, who only talks to English students. I have spoken to him once. Now he doesn’t talk to me or to any other Polish guys. He won’t even say “hello”. He is not Polish for me.’

Marek implies that being accepted means conforming to British cultural norms and in the case of girls this can result in a loss of modesty.

‘There are 3 Polish girls as well, but one of them is practically English – because of the way she behaves….very provocative, vulgar. They forgot what modesty is. A lot of Polish people change when they emigrate. Unfortunately, for worst.’

To an extent, Marek himself had to adjust his behaviour in order to settle in: “For some time I was a very fanatic Polish guy. With my every step, I had to show other people where I was from. When I was going out, I always wore a white and red scarf. I had a group of fanatic Polish friends. But that has finished. I grew up.” Marek is adamant that he won’t change his Polish identity, but he also acknowledges that since living in Britain, his relationship with Poland has changed in some ways: ‘When I went to Poland last summer, I was a bit bored. A lot of my friends have changed. They just drink and smoke… it doesn’t interest me…. Although I don’t want to live there, I love Poland’.

Iwona also arrived in 2007 with her mother, while her father has remained in Poland. She sees the move as purely short term and is keen to return to Poland. Having been in Britain only two years at the time of the interview, she admits: ‘I do keep comparing everything to Poland’. Thus, one could argue that she has yet to switch her ‘cultural frame’. Like other participants she is critical of the British standard of education: ‘I think the level of education, (…) is lower and I worry about going back to school when we return home’. However, she does acknowledge that the style of teaching is very different in British schools and this can make lessons more interesting than the more formal approach in Poland: ‘In

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10 Gendered expectations of female modesty among migrants have also been discussed elsewhere, see Ryan 2010a.
Alessio D’Angelo, Louise Ryan

Poland there is a lot of theory learning, here it is all put into practice and it makes lessons a lot more interesting plus it is easier to remember what one is learning.'

Although she spoke no English upon arrival, she has improved quickly and acknowledges the support she received from the teachers: ‘but it was very hard, I couldn’t understand anything during the lessons and it is difficult to pinpoint when I started to, but somehow everything became clear. The teachers helped me a lot; they were giving me lists of words to learn’.

Iwona misses her friends in Poland very much and has found it difficult to make friends at school, in particular she found the English children unwelcoming. “Friends at the English school ask me a lot of questions, but they are stupid questions, e.g. do you have polar bears? And then when I told them I came from Poland by car they could not believe it. It seems they imagine that we stalk wild animals with spears in Poland”.

Like Marek, most of Iwona’s friends are also migrants: ‘I am friendly with girls from Africa and China. The English used to laugh at them, too (...) We understand one another because we have similar problems’. Overall, Iwona enjoys the cultural diversity of London schools: ‘I like the variety of cultures and the fact that one can learn so much about other people’s culture and countries of origin’.

Of the three children, Wioletta, who migrated in 2008, was by far the most positive about being in Britain. Following her parents’ divorce she moved to Britain with her father, while her mother remained in Poland. She had learned English in Poland and although she initially struggled to understand the English accent, she adapted to school quite well:

‘I was enrolled in the class which already had six other Polish students. At the beginning I was hanging around with them. I sat next to a Polish girl. She said she will take care of me, show me around and will take me to the classroom if I am lost. Obviously you feel lost in a new place. Also the teachers helped me a lot, they were aware that I might be a bit behind the rest at the beginning’.

Although - like Marek and Iwona – Wioletta also suggested that the Polish standard of education was much higher, she thought that the system in Britain suited her better: ‘I like the education system here. If I would have to go back to Poland, I am sure I would struggle in the Polish school, because here the education level is lower compared to the level of education in Polish schools.’
Wioletta also acknowledged that while other new arrivals may have difficulties making friends with British children, she had not had any problems:

‘Most of my friends and acquaintances are British. I get on with them really well, as well as with the kids with other nationalities. We meet after school and have fun. I know that not every one has good opinion about English youngsters. Sometimes the boys can be unbearable, I know they can be offensive towards the girls, but personally I have not had such experience. I guess, they think I am a tomboy and I like it that way’.

Unsurprisingly, given how well she has adapted to life in Britain, Wioletta does not want to return to Poland: ‘I do not want to go back to Poland. However, I miss my family and my friends there and that would be the only reason to go back. But I prefer to go to visit them rather than live there.’ Nonetheless, she keen to maintain her Polish identity: ‘regardless of how long I would live here, I always will be Polish’.

The varied experiences of these three young people suggest the complexity of migration for children. All three had been involved in some kind of family reunion, though in two cases close relatives had remained behind in Poland. The migration had been a project for their parents and they had little choice about it. Nonetheless, these children demonstrate an ability to consciously shift their self-representation and become active and strategic in establishing social networks, whether with other Poles, other migrants or ‘English’ pupils. Interestingly, all three young people speak about having friends from other cultures and in two cases, Iwona and Marek, they have found it much easier to be friends with children from ethnic minority groups. This seems to confirm Ackers and Stalford’s (2004) point that many migrant students befriend other migrants creating a sort of ‘migrant bubble’. However, as Goldstein (2003) points out, migrant children can in fact put in place parallel befriending strategies, establishing links with people who speak their first language to create social capital, but also befriending those who speak the host country’s language in order to achieve at school. In addition, as confirmed by Reynolds (2008: 14) language and ethnicity are not the only element driving friendship formation and children rely on “diverse range of bases for such friendship, including sport, music, fashion and an interest in reading”.

Although in very different ways, all three children describe their sense of being ‘in between’ two worlds and two cultures, with a sense of belonging split between Poland and the UK. In her study on migrant children in Irish schools, Devine (2209: 524) reached similar findings, describing how children “talked about their
CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Our research findings chime with other studies (Adams and Kirova 2006; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001; Roer-Strier and Strier 2006) which show that pre-migration values and expectations, together with the experiences within the host society and the education system in particular, shape how migrant families negotiate and (re)construct their identities. Depending on individuals’ feelings and strategies, the school population, structure and the local education practices, this interplay of cultures can lead either to clashes between teachers and parents, with the children at the cross roads, or to a positive cultural frame switching, without necessarily denying ethnic culture and values. As Johnston et al. (2006:20) suggest, with appropriate policy and practice, multicultural schools can indeed become the place where “intercultural appreciation and respect can be nurtured through contact at crucial stages in personal development and socialisation”. However, this is a process that can take time and often involves adaptive strategies and cultural and social re-positioning. As Erel (2010) has argued, cultural capital is not merely transported from one country to another, but is validated by engaging with both ethnic majority and migrant institutions and networks.

Some adult Polish migrants may live their working and social life in a ‘Polish-bubble’; schools thus become the place where they first encounter and engage with British society and in particular with its education system. One of the first and main elements of ‘culture shock’ is the apparent informality of relationships between pupils and teachers and the British curriculum emphasis on learning through creativity, especially in primary schools, so different from the Polish educational model. The second element is the visible presence of multiculturalism, to which many Polish parents may not be used, sometimes leading to ‘racist’ reactions. At the same time, Polish families may experience racism and stereotyping which they had not anticipated, either from ‘White-English’ people or from ‘Ethnic Minorities’. This challenges assumptions about ‘who is the minority’, especially amongst EU citizens coming from a country still relatively culturally homogeneous. As Vertovec (2006: 26) suggests “the new immigration and super-diversity have also stimulated new definitions of ‘whiteness’ surrounding certain groups of newcomers” – the Poles being a key example. At the same time, as Crawley (2009: 56) points out, associated with changing patterns in immigration, new forms of inequality, prejudice and racism are emerging, including “racism among native-born individuals targeted against newcomers (…), racism among long-standing
ethnic minorities against newcomers (...), racism among newcomers directed against native-born ethnic minorities”. These complex interactions between native-born, established migrant communities and newcomers may be played out in schools (Reynolds, 2008), causing further complications to processes of adaptation and integration.

Our study suggests that the adaptive strategies used by Polish parents and children to overcome these issues are quite similar. The English are seen as unfriendly, perhaps jealous of Poles, and in some cases even racist. On the other hand, Poles are regarded as clever, with only the language barrier preventing them from achieving their full potential. This can often lead, despite the initial shock about ethnic diversity, to establishing stronger links with other migrants on the basis of common experiences. Thus, ethnic identities are re-asserted and re-shaped not only in relation to the majority community (English) but also to other ethnic minority groups.

Although there is general consensus among the children, and some parents, that the teachers are usually very helpful and the curriculum is less rigid than in Poland, the English educational system is seen as less good. Nonetheless, as our findings demonstrate, parents also need to justify their decision to migrate either by saying it is a purely short term strategy or in the longer term it will be very beneficial for their children to speak English fluently. This view is also shared by several of the children. For women in particular, notions of mothering may be redefined in the context of migration (see also Erel, 2010; Lopez Rodriguez, 2010). Despite the downward mobility that some of the women had experienced, they tend to present their migration as positive for the family as a whole (see also Ryan and Sales, forthcoming). Thus, the women present themselves as self-sacrificing mothers whose own career opportunities have taken second place to the needs of their families. Overall, they suggest that their children will benefit in the long term from the migration to Britain.

Our findings have implications for understanding how migrant parent and children encounter, negotiate and adapt to schooling in the destination country. In particular, our research highlights that schools are not just places of learning for children but are sites of socialisation where migrant families can meet and engage with multicultural society especially in diverse cities such as London. This presents opportunities but also challenges for migrants as well as for teachers, pupils and other parents. The extent to which this process is smoothly managed by schools may determine how positively or negatively such encounters are experienced.
In addition, our findings also have implications for how family migration is understood. As noted, there has been a tendency to focus on post-accession migration as opening up opportunities for unfettered mobility especially for young, single economic actors (Ryan, 2011). However, our research illustrates the complexity and diversity of family migration and in particular how children may be affected by the mobility of their parents. Processes of adaptation may take longer than anticipated. This is not just a matter of learning a new language but also learning to socialise with a complex array of social actors including not only the native born but also other migrant communities. In that process Polish migrants may come to re-assert but also to re-define their own identities as migrants in multi-cultural Britain.

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Over the last two decades, globalization has resulted in an unprecedented level of migration flows due to the freedom of movement together with social exchange, arising from the improvement of both telecommunications, and, increasingly affordable travel. A striking feature of what has come to be termed the ‘new migration’, fuelled by post-Accession migrant flows, is precisely the dynamic ways in which some arriving migrants, such as the Poles, have capitalised on their transnational associations, via a most efficient ‘exploitation’ of existing/new social networks. On the other hand, such benefits appear to remain beyond the reach of other arriving groups, such as Polish Roma. This paper focuses on the narrativisation of the differing patterns of migratory experience of these two groups arriving to the UK, by utilising relevant elements of materials ([in]formal meetings, public events, focus groups, and interviews), from research projects and other interactions. It examines social, and other forms of capital formation, juxtaposed with their respective relationships to the ‘wider world’, and in so doing, illustrates how this enables these groups to occupy various forms of ‘space’, respectively. The ability to negotiate, to develop, as well as maintain their own social, cultural and political spaces can be seen as a measure of how successful such groups’ integration into society have been. However, a caveat needs to be noted here. Levels of success are contingent upon being able to circum-navigate a range of obstacles. Barriers faced by migrants, such as low levels of human capital, and, structural ones such as sedentarist discourses, collectively only serve to entrench further such groups’ experiences of discrimination and xenophobia. Recent indications inform that intolerance towards the ‘Other’ is on the rise across the EU. These are terrains well known to migrants, but more so, to Roma.

Key words: Polish Roma; Polish migrants; multiple discriminations; social capital; citizenship; cultural/political space; integration; boundaries; community and social cohesion
INTRODUCTION

This paper draws on a range of research projects and civil society engagements, in relation to interactions with Polish Roma and Polish migrants. In addition to this, where some of these interactions formed part of the author’s role in reporting throughout the year to an EU statutory body (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA]); on UK-based minority groups, and, their experiences of multiple discriminations. Throughout the various exchanges, it became clear regardless of setting, that these two as different groups, came to understand the migratory process as a series of inequitable experiences, though in differing ways.

The reason for casting the heuristic net of Putnam’s social capital (2000; 2007) across so many sources is twofold. Firstly, it is to examine these two groups’ engagement, and their ability to form associational ties with mainstream society; and by extension their access to civil society, as distinct ethnic groups. Secondly, the notion of social capital production is often used synonymously with a ‘socially cohesive’ society, within the framework of current policy and practice, so this too will be examined (Zetter, et al, 2006).

The personal narratives used here, illustrate that although both groups might share a common language, and the freedom to move freely throughout the EU, they are otherwise very different indeed. Through an uneven dispersal of risk and opportunity and depending on their resources, assets, and links to wider community networks, mobility has been a driver for these groups. This is the case for both differential expectations and experiences, of migration to the UK. Nonetheless, mobility is one of the four founding principles of the European Union (EU), and by extension is presumed to provide all new members equitable access to full citizenship rights. It was greatly believed that wide-scale migration would result immediately after EU expansion (2004 and 2007), and this was indeed realised (Jordan & Duvall, 2003), and especially so for UK and Ireland.

Only the UK and Ireland (in addition to Sweden) did not apply restrictions on migrants entering their labour markets. The UK however imposed a last minute amendment to the transitional arrangements, which meant that migrants needed to register for the Workers Registration Scheme [WRS], whilst also introducing specific restrictions such as certain ‘out of work’ income-related welfare benefits. These were to cause persisting confusion and problems for many Polish and other A8 migrants who fell foul of the migratory experience for one reason or another, and spiralled towards poverty and destitution (Homeless Link, 2006; Garapich, 2010). Within just two years of the 2004 accession, social commentators and academics were already recognising the inequitability of the Post-Transitional
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arrangements, particularly where presumed citizenship rights were a central issue (for example, see: Currie, 2007; Anderson, 2006). This unremitting movement of labour added to a social transformation across Europe, within which, a different kind of 21st century migrant seemed to be emerging, and developing a new form of identity, one which was neither fixed nor tied to place, but one which itself was contextually fluidic in nature (Eade, et al, 2006; Trevena, 2009).

EU expansion was a primary driver for many Polish migrants to experience migration. Economic restructuring in Poland, in concert with urban but especially rural rationalisation programmes (in preparation towards EU aquis), all took their toll. Social reforms as privatization and the restructuring of industries resulted in many previously family-managed small farm holdings being no longer economically viable. The changed social welfare programmes created niches of intense poverty amongst the lower socio-economic groups, including Polish Roma. In the case of Polish Roma however, a series of ‘drivers’ dictating their need or desire to migrate, were somewhat earlier than that for Polish migrants. For this group, the changes arising from social reforms in the late 1980’s resulted in an even greater impoverishment across the entire social sphere, notably in education, housing, as well as equitable access to healthcare provision and the labour market. In addition to this, the situational experience of Polish Roma was intertwined with the ever present racialised discourse dictating their daily treatment. A significant example of this is the Mława pogrom, in 1991. A violent mob attacked the Polish Roma in the town of Mława, in response to a ‘hit and run’ accident by a Roma taxi driver. The anger towards the Roma grew, and lasted for 5 days, resulting in some Roma becoming injured, and, with 21 of their houses and 10 apartments being destroyed by the violence and arson attacks. What was significant here was that whilst thousands of Poles looked on, not one of them intervened.

The materials used in this paper, are drawn from three studies where Roma, and/or Polish migrants, and, ‘key experts’ for both groups, were interviewed as a part of the research conducted by the author, for a range of end-users. These are: a UK-wide policy report, on the housing experience of Roma, Gypsies and Travellers, for FRA (Study 1, Staniewicz, 2009). The second one was a 3-site project (Coventry, Dublin, and London), which looked at the equitable participation of Polish migrants in civil society (Study 2, Staniewicz, 2007a). The third one was research on behalf of third sector end-users, and analysed how successfully new communities were able to access front-line advice services (Study 3, Staniewicz & Owen, 2009). Additionally, Roma were also approached and formally invited to being interviewed, via related civil society engagements [CSE]. However, some of the Roma participants whose narratives have been used here, were interviewed by
chance whilst undertaking the research on Polish migrants, with the author taking advantage of the opportunity to have some access to this otherwise hidden group. This underscores their established ‘invisibility’ as a marginalised group, and continued limited presence in public spaces (Liégeois, 1994).

All these respondents, drawn from across the various studies, and, those encountered in civil society engagements, were for the most part not highly skilled. Statistics show that over 60% of the Polish workforce in the UK is located in unskilled jobs (Sumption & Somerville, 2009). Unlike Favell’s ‘Eurostars’, these migrants were not ‘cosmopolitans’, and did not possess high levels of ‘intellectual/international’ capital, (Staniewicz, 2007b, 2010). Such migrants would therefore particularly need to have access to existing or create new community networks in order to aid their integration (Zetter, et al, 2006).

Marginalised groups are often ‘hidden’ from the rest of society, and the Roma unfortunately retain the position of possibly being the most disenfranchised, and dehumanised group in society (FRA, 2009a; Mikulska & Hall, 2009). It is comprehensively documented, that Roma live out their lives both spatially and socially segregated throughout the EU, in the most appalling conditions, with no recourse to state help, and, with very poor life chances as a result (FRA, 2009a; Staniewicz, 2009). These two groups arrived to the UK, in the midst of changing government policy (from multiculturalist to assimilationist), steeped in a traditional setting of controlled and tightly managed migration, imbued with an antagonistic ‘race relations’ discourse predicated on ‘us’ and ‘them’. Migration policy had become a deeply politicised issue (Sales, 2008). For the Polish Roma, this environment was nothing new, as noted earlier many are known to have fled Poland, as a result of austere neo-liberal measures and on-going oppressive racial discrimination (Mirga & Mróz, 1994; Ficowski, 1982, 1989).

A consequence of increased global migration, especially in the past decade, has seen greater ethnic, cultural, and religious plurality in the UK (in sharp contrast to Poland’s demographic makeup), causing tensions between new migrant communities and settles ones. In an attempt to analyse the impacts of these new migrant inflows Identity discourses have been rife, particularly in relation to the meaning of ‘national identity’ and indeed citizenship. At the heart of such discussions, was often to do with provision and management at the local level to promote inter-ethnic cultural dialogue, a known driver facilitating more ‘socially cohesive’ communities (Cantle, 2006) and, to mitigate ethnic tensions (Robinson & Reeve, 2006; Markova & Black, 2007). A series of intense urban ‘riots’ across several locations in Northern England in the summer of 2001, led to a determined
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change in policy, with a need to address the integration of new communities within existing, densely populated and flux-like geo-political landscapes. Some groups were found to be leading ‘parallel’ lives in segregation from one another, amidst high unemployment and social deprivation (Ratcliffe, 2004). *Community cohesion* (Cantle, 2005) is one such proposed ‘solution’, and continues to be a central plank in UK policy on the governance of ‘difference’ within society. It sets out an agenda via which communities are to come together for the common good, and exist peaceably alongside one another. The production of reciprocal intra-group ‘networking’ is one strand of this (Cantle, 2006).

But, why examine Polish migrants together with Polish Roma, and, their respective adaptation strategies? Well, the answer is at the same time, straightforward, yet complex, thus requiring a bifurcated explanation. Firstly, it is straightforward because in the eyes of EU Accession transitional arrangements, both groups are now theoretically afforded the same citizenship rights, and collective opportunities. Complex, because they might broadly share some phenotypical (White European) attributes, and a common language (Polish); as well as some culturally and socially shared understanding of nuances – daily cultural rituals in certain settings, etc. Additionally, in terms of history, both Poland (Davies, 1981, 1984), and Roma as a people (Ficowski, 1982; Liégeois, 1994, 1995; Pereira-Bastos, 2010; Nowicka, 2003) have (at differing times) long and blood-drenched histories of territorial appropriation, mass murder, and cultural genocide. The similarity abruptly stops there. These two groups face vastly different challenges in today’s world, as *ethnic minority* groups, depending upon historical specificities constructing their world-views, and, personal circumstances (Staniewicz, 2010).

**HISTORICAL SPECIFICITIES AND CONTESTED TERRAINS**

In order to understand these different challenges, it is necessary to place the multiple discriminations experienced by such groups (as the Roma), within a wider (racist) historical discourse of progress and emergent nationalistic development. Societies have always formed boundaries, in order to better identify those *within*, and those viewed as *beyond*, the perceived community. For many centuries, nomadic groups with differing cultural norms which retained traditional outlooks were a perceived threat to the existing order, by virtue of their difference. MacLaughlin (1998) maintains that such groups were not viewed simply as the ‘Other’ when juxtaposed with settled or sedentary society, but rather, were treated as being in *total opposition to them*, and therefore a threat to settled society, and what it stood for. Placed at the “hostile” end of the “tradition – modernity
continuum”, such groups were racially discriminated against in a brutal manner across Europe (Ibid: 421). Post-Enlightenment nation-building discourses on the course believed essential for appropriate progress, saw such groups’ rights and social standing pushed to the fringes of society, as their traditional ways were deemed in direct opposition to any such development. Such groups as Roma, Gypsies and Travellers, have always found themselves therefore in other people’s societies and consequently removed from participating in any implicit way (Sobotka, 2003; Acton, 1994a; Nowicka, 2003).

In the same vein, enlightened thinking and the need to categorise society within existing hierarchical constructs, served to legitimise their inferiority, and this was orchestrated by applying quasi-biological beliefs of that time (Acton, 1994a). Social ranking therefore located Gypsies, Travellers, and Roma, as being ‘beyond’ society and sub-human, having more in common with animals (Liégeois, 1994). Nomenclature was governed by their nomadism and transient existence, and popular titles in the publics’ mind were vagabonds, thieves, vagrants, (Bauman, 1995). Such racialised notions remain today across Europe, regardless of whether members from these groups are settled (as is the case in many EUMS) or still mobile. The negative racialised association has remained with the group itself. This notwithstanding, policies transcending state boundaries, predicated upon ‘radical exclusion’ and coerced assimilation, have all too successfully denied all such groups, both a voice and, access to political and social ‘space’ in modern society (Nowicka, 2003).

Their history has over time facilitated to shape a sense of diasporic understanding of their world-view (discussed in greater detail later), for some of these Polish Roma. This ‘sense’ has had a pervasive effect, and colours very much their social interaction and ensuing engagement, with wider society at the individual level (Mikulska & Hall, 2009). Both groups differ widely from each other in terms of discriminatory levels, Roma for instance are socially segregated as a group, and, in terms of the degree of educational and economic success (Greenfields & Smith, 2010). Gendered experiences determine even additional variances within groups, such as internal boundaries. Polish Roma females’ choices are bound by a dogmatic patriarchal system, whereas Polish female migrants’ are not (Helleiner, 2000). These experiences collectively, in conjunction with another crucial intersecting identifier, namely multiple discriminations, aid in furnishing sub-cultural identities, and form the basis of self-identity for these Roma. These contexts therefore determine the groups’ interactions in general.

This delineation, and their understanding of how they are perceived by non-Roma in ‘space’ beyond that which they inhabit, was put succinctly by one of
my respondents (from one of the studies noted earlier) and denotes an acute understanding of his own sense of Roma sub-cultural identity (Waters, 1990) as transcending location of birthplace, namely, Poland, and current domicile, UK. I add it here to emphasise how some Polish Roma position themselves as a ‘collective people’, within the ‘space’ they share with other groups, namely Poles and non-Poles. In effect they inhabit a third space, not here (UK), not there (Poland) but, within their own constructed space as Roma. This is ‘carried’ with them wherever they go.

“We are as different to the Poles we left behind in Poland, as we are different from the English here. You ask who I am: I am Roma, and only that.” [Polish Roma young male: Coventry – CSE]

This serves to underscore the parallel spaces within which Polish Roma co-exist on a daily basis, and further serves to reinforce borders around their own cultural spaces, as Roma (Smith, 1994). Roma are vilified as a people in a real sense globally, and moving from one geographical space to another, rarely affords any more protection against this reoccurring (Acton, 1994a; Nowicka, 2003). One such recent example from Poland is the now infamous Mława pogrom in 1991, as noted previously.

This articulation of ‘self’ also raises an essential point about these Polish Roma and elements of a diasporic consciousness (Khayati, 2008). For clarity, diaspora is used in this paper in relation to Polish Roma, to mean *diaspora as a site of consciousness*, in that this state of mind comprises an array of places and an awareness of such (Clifford, 1994). It is manifested by a “dual or paradoxical nature”, which is an apposite descriptor for these Polish Roma, in that this duality is constituted negatively by such experiences of discrimination and exclusion, and positively, by the identification with a historical heritage (Vertovec, 1999). Some of the Polish Roma interviewed are therefore seen to be inward-looking. Subsequently, they have developed very ‘dense’ in-group networks, supporting each other with childcare, and other such necessary arrangements. The following excerpts also aid in illustrating this:

“We don’t belong here … I mean, eh, I don’t mean here - in England … eh, I don’t feel I’m British or European … My children tell no one at the school where they are from - it’s easier you see. We are here now a while, but we only mix with Roma. Where to next, we never know … Our life is different. Do you understand that?” [Polish Roma female: Coventry - Study 2]

Another Polish Roma respondent also said:
“Outside is one life, in my house is our real life. It’s hard, so you treasure what little you have […] you can speak at home, because it’s only us. Out there, you can say nothing.” [Polish Roma female: Coventry – Study 3]

Bauman’s ‘vagabond’ in postmodern society and the problems faced might as easily be applied to the Polish Roma utilised here. He notes (1995: 95):

“Wherever the vagabond goes, he is a stranger; he can never be the ‘native’, one with roots with the soil – and not for the lack of trying […]. Entertaining a dream of going native can only end in mutual recrimination and bitterness. It is better for the vagrant, therefore, not to grow too accustomed to one place….”

Polish Roma have, in some ways, more in common with the first generation Poles arriving to the UK after WWII, than post-Accession Polish migrants, not expressly because of their diasporic sense of sub-cultural identity state (Cohen, 1997), but more so because of this state of mind - comprised of a synthesis of the politics of location, their identification of heritage, and, their current ongoing conflicts over a share of ‘public space’ (Khayati, 2008).

Steven Castles (2008) has of course already discussed for a number of years, that the sheer complexity and diversity of migratory experiences, together underpin the difficulties in attempting to theorise on the migration problematic. Castles (2008: 2) notes that migration is located within a very powerful current political discourse, which sees it, “as harmful and dysfunctional – something to be stopped”. Migration therefore, “awakens archaic memories of invasion and displacement” (Ibid.). Castles (2008) also notes one other factor which has become a dominant element in migratory discourse, which is discussed in more detail in relation mainly to the Roma in this paper as an instrument of hegemony, and this is on sedentary bias. This ‘bias’ has a historical basis starting with colonial policies, but underpins most present-day immigration policies, via ‘Manicheanesque’ created landscapes “inhabited by ‘insiders’ (Good) and defended from ‘outsiders’ (Evil)”, (MacLaughlin, 1998).

This stance is supported by the media playing its part in creating xenophobic attitudes towards migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, Roma, etc. (Staniewicz & Reading, 2010; Sales, 2008), and more recently post-accession migrants (Frech, 2008). The sedentarist position, as a structural process from within polity itself is far more aggressive in relation to Roma, Travellers, and Gypsies, where they are effectively forced to accept the privileging of a permanent place for maintaining their distinct form(s) of identity, whether they are nomadic or not (EUMC, 2004).
This sedentarist ‘bias’ is therefore one of the prevailing inhibitors in allowing such groups a public ‘voice’, and by extension prohibits both the maintenance of cultural ‘space’ and the provision of physical space of choice, needed in order to live in peace.

I have touched on the notion of how the inter-sectionality of an array of discriminatory processes, play a central role in determining EU citizens’ choices in actually gaining a foothold with even engaging with the host community. I have also provided an illustration of how history provides the context within which Roma, and therefore Polish Roma, have come to regulate their interactions with wider society. The remainder of the paper is set out in the following way. The next section, ‘Background and Context’ is itself divided into three areas of discussion. I start off by providing further context by what I mean here by social capital, and note some criticisms of this concept in relation to Roma in particular. I then move on to discussing the role of public representations of these groups (including the role of the media). The last section is on the pathologising of Roma, setting the context for some of the structural impediments particular to this group.

The following section is the main discussion and aims to examine whether and how, social capital is actually being developed. Here, the examination of these two groups, and exemplified by using elements of their personal narratives, is set across two main areas. This division is clearly arbitrary, as there is some overlap within the two themes. The first one looks at how structural processes from within polity itself in a variety of forms (in this context is meant as any representative arm of formal governance - its public face - police, council, banking, schools etc.), are manifest of how both groups engage with the state and its various instruments. As well as the impact of these on boundary formation, as they respond to the pervasive power of the exclusion - of themselves - from engaging in public spaces. This raises the question whether social capital is sufficient in and of itself, in sustaining community development. There is clearly interplay here between the social networks both groups are part of, including the use of virtual social networks and, the kinds of transnational associations in evidence (Ryan, et al, 2008).

All of these studies were predominantly chosen to exemplify the intersectionality of multiple discriminations, and, Roma engagement - or attempts to engage equitably - within the public arena. These are subsequently utilised for the main discussion, in order to invoke the ways in which Polish Roma and Polish migrants mediate between one world and another, as they attempt to access some gain hold in their new surroundings. The closing section will aim to succinctly filter out the more salient points made within the paper.
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Social Capital

Putnam’s concept of social capital is by no means a recent idea, and he brought these concepts once more to the fore in his highly discussed book *Bowling Alone* (2000). Though not without its critics, this has come to be seen as a key element in any endeavour to generate cohesive (and ethnically diverse) neighbourhoods for the foreseeable future. In relation to migrant communities, the production of social capital is really about negotiating entry to the host society and all its structures, as well as addressing how to access limited resources, earmarked for existing (migrant or host) groups. It forms the cornerstone of current government thinking on achieving a more integrated society (Zetter, et al, 2006).

Putnam’s (2000) construct is essentially a relatively straightforward one, and is concerned with the strength of ties between community and group members, and the nature of relationships (individual or collective) with those outside one’s immediate social networks. The lack of such connections has important implications that go beyond the ‘social’. If one lacks effective links to the world outside - for work, housing, or public participatory needs, life options are considerably reduced. So one’s own community in a more fundamental sense becomes central, in that it provides each member with ‘bonding capital’. These intra-community relationships, networks and organisations may provide useful opportunities for work, etc. However, they may also constrain options, for instance, job acquisition and other interactions are less accessible and inward-looking. One solution then is to generate ‘bridging capital’ (forging links and associations outside of the community), a key element of which is to create ‘connectivity’ with community members to the wider locality (Van Hout, 2010). To optimise a person’s aspirations, however, what is required is ‘linking capital’. This expands their ‘socio-cultural landscapes’, allowing access to the wider world. The caveat, however, is that in so doing and resulting in a higher incidence of interethic mix may undermine bonding capital through a weakening of traditional social networks and ethnic ties. The problem of course is that Polish Roma might rely more heavily on bonding capital as it provides trust, solidarity and support (Hout, 2010).

However, this can cultivate exclusivity within insular and socially marginalised groups such as the homeless (Garapich, 2010). In these ways, it can also act as a substitute for the creation of ‘thick trust’ (in-group trust, and manifested in bonding capital) with wider society, by replacing this kind of trust development,
within the group (Putnam, 2000). The converse form of trust is seen as ‘thin trust’, which Putnam ascribes (Ibid.) as being formed with those beyond the group. This works reciprocally, in a circular fashion and it meant to enhance solidarity, social cohesion and connectivity, eventually leading towards inclusion into mainstream society. Trust is central to Putnam’s social capital accumulation and realised social and economic development.

Significant recent changes in Poland’s history, such as economic and political post-communist transition, brought the question of civil society to the fore, and, the need for robust civil societies, including strong civil participation. The consideration of issues of trust therefore, in the Polish context is very interesting theoretically, especially given the findings from several excellent Polish studies, amongst which Janusz Czapiński’s, Diagnoza Społeczna is perhaps the most known. This study found there to be an extreme deficit of social capital among Poles. Its findings are therefore in conflict with Putnam’s criteria, in that despite there being low levels of recorded trust amongst groups in Poland. Poles are nonetheless content, more mobile, and achieving. Furthermore, the project found that Poland does not fulfil any of the criteria needed for a strong civil society, with Poland scoring the lowest level of interpersonal trust in the EU. Polish Roma are seen to rely on in-group faith-based networks for social and other forms of support, which have helped in some small ways to mitigate their ongoing discrimination (Nowicka, 2003; Mirga & Mróz, 1994).

As with most theories therefore, Putman’s concept has drawn criticisms. Broadly, these have been that Putnam had not really explained the relevance of social capital theory within the context of migrant communities and how they develop networks within pre-existing patterns of association (Zetter, et al, 2006). Other concerns are that there is a presumption of a ‘cure-all’ of an ‘idealised community’ sense of intra-ethnic solidarity, with all groups sharing the goal of achieving, for the ‘greater good’. The complex nature of such communities are seemingly overlooked (Portes, 1998), whilst all vying for the same limited resources (Campbell, 2001). There is no doubt, as I shall demonstrate later in the paper, that Putnam’s concept is of great heuristic value in providing insight into how micro-interactions across groups in society, can develop benefits for the greater good in certain settings. However, Putnam overlooked the crucial power dynamic relationship between ethnicity and power, in the context of differentiated access within ethnic groups. Therefore a differentiated approach to social capital accumulation might be better placed, when applying the differing networks’ access, which Polish Roma and Polish migrants respectively have and their relationships with the networks generating the production of social capital (Coleman, 1988).
All this notwithstanding, Putnam has tried to reconcile this with his later work, but warns this too is a ‘work in progress’. Putman now prefers to use a ‘lean and mean’ definition of social capital, namely “social networks, and the associated norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness” (2007: 137), and returns to his idea, but now in relation to an increased ethnic mix at the local level. He contends that in response to ever increasing global ethnic diversity, new migrant communities have been seen to overcome ethno-cultural fragmentation via creating new “cross-cutting forms of social solidarity and more encompassing identities” (Ibid.), and provides quantitative data on American societies to address the above claim. In neighbourhoods where ethnic diversity has increased, with a resulting diminishing of public trust, there is an initial ‘stepping back’, or “hunkering down”. Trust is even questioned in relation to someone from one’s own background, and both bonding and bridging capital formation become somewhat decreased. Putman maintains that a key to reversing this, over time, is a building of familiarity, and greater interaction with new immigrants, with a need to strengthen ‘bridging capital’ ties, all across ethnic lines, with the help of which with over time, “wise policies (public and private) can ameliorate that trade-off” (Putnam, 2007: 164). As will later be demonstrated in the case of Polish Roma, having access to information in order to facilitate satisfactory levels of familiarity for social action is in and of itself, a costly route (Coleman, 1998). Over time, Roma everywhere have been unable to galvanise the necessary capital to enable the required amelioration. Strengths generally remain located within Roma-related organisations, as a body dealing with the Outsiders’ world.

Public representation of Poles, Roma (and other migrants)

Mass media in its collective sense, has a significant impact on a range of processes in society such as social, cultural, economic and of course, political. The role of media services have come to be known collectively as information or ‘network societies’ (Van Dijk, 1999), which construct and disseminate shared meanings, including that of the ‘Other’. Some discussion on how the media constructed imagery of Poles before their arrival warrants mentioning here, as it provides added context to the political landscapes within which these ‘social actors’ are having to operate in. Such imagery and rhetoric, again Manicheanesque in nature, was often in the form of a warning to the British populace: ‘of a “huge influx” on its way from the East, that the UK is about to be “swamped” by “shameless spongers” ’. New migrants often attract negative press coverage, and post-WWII Poles were no exception (Zubrzycki, 1956; Sword, et al, 1989; Staniewicz, 2001).

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1 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/3673835.stm
So even before post-Accession Polish migrants arrived, this negative (racialised) view of them became imbued within the national daily lexicon of the British public’s understanding of Poles. This caricaturised notion of ‘the Pole’ as the ‘Other’ in terms of a collective threat to ‘us British’, helps in perpetuating a racialised discourse about the ‘Other’ (McVeigh, 1996). It also serves to further discriminate against Polish Roma, for being viewed as both Roma and Polish Roma, by the (racist) British! The relevance of Stuart Hall’s (1981) powerfully written work on constructed media ‘news’, underpinned by a racialised ideology, is therefore all the more valid today, given that we live in an exceedingly media-driven world. He posits that the media was seen to be a main conduit via which ideologically ‘produced’ representations of the social world were visited upon a receptive public audience, and in so doing shape the world for said audiences. It is through such ideologically constructed images (of the Other) that ‘we’ reflexively [re]construct our own understanding of the ‘social’. The sustained usage of this negative imagery therefore, whether depicted in newspapers or via television / internet mediums (Morris, 2000), serves only to further underpin the hegemonic and racialised construction – of groups such as Polish Roma - by state agencies; and by virtue of it not being condemned with sufficient ferocity by independent commentators. The increased vociferousness of Right Wing extremists’ views given media space is evidence of this. These highly ‘politicised spaces, as visual mediums, have come to embody all Roma as inferior to the British public, and thus they are bordered by it, restricting their ability to navigate beyond the rhetoric into neutral unfettered spaces (Boudreau, 2007).

In stark contrast to this however, and as something of a counterbalance, it needs noting that in the midst of the Mława catastrophe one lone Polish media source, rose to the defence of the Polish Roma. This was Adam Michnik, a famous Polish human rights activist, and the then editor-in-chief of the *Gazeta Wyborcza*. In an editorial, Michnik apologised to the Polish Roma community in the name of all Poles. He also appealed to all facets of Polish polity, to follow his own public condemnation.

Popular discourses which disparaged and vilified both Polish migrants (Frech, 2008) and Roma (Morris, 2000) since 2004 are by now well documented.*

2 In it, the Zjednoczenie Polskie w Wielkiej Brytanii [ZPWB] accused a national daily newspaper, the Daily Mail, of a continued pejorative representation of Poles via its coverage of migrant issues. http://polishexpress.polacy.co.uk/art,uk_recession_increases_hate_crimes,3499.html

reminiscent of the demonization that these groups suffered centuries ago (MacLaughlin, 1998). In relation to Poles, perhaps the most prominent public retaliation to this was the Federation of Poles in Great Britain [Zjednoczenie Polskie w Wielkiej Brytanii (ZPWB)], which presented the government with a petition to give voice to the growing negative attitudes manifested via attacks - and viewed as hate crimes - on Poles across the UK. This notwithstanding, and what is important to note here, is that public mainstream arenas which address Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and other form of hate crimes / racialised incidents, do not tend to include Poles, Roma collectively, and other white groups within their own ‘politicised’ discourses, marking out borders of identity in so doing (Fass, 2010). Such ‘excluded’ groups are rarely seen to have a voice in this public and political ‘space’, but occupy ethnically contingent spaces for such discourses. Polish Roma’s efforts to mobilise as a political force have not always been that successful (Sobotka, 2003).

THE PATHOLOGISING OF ROMA - AS STATUS QUO

The Roma are today, Europe’s largest ethnic minority (with a population of about 10 million). They also, significantly, constitute its most marginalised and vulnerable minority. This, as discussed earlier, is their legacy, as a result of the unfolding nature of their ‘criminalisation’ as a group, resulting from their dissimilar outlook and culture to wider society (Nowicka, 2003; FRA, 2009, 2010). Given their history, it is of no surprise that Roma (as well as Gypsies and Travellers), fare worse in comparison to other ethnic groups in terms of health and education, housing access. Life expectancy of Roma men and women is ten years lower than the national average. Absence of reliable information has devastating consequences, leading to conflicting interpretations of the actual magnitude of Roma issues and to distorted representations, especially by the media (as previously noted) and by nationalist political entities (such as Far Right groups), of what is often called the ‘Roma problem’ (Greenfields & Smith, 2010).

The paper has already mentioned sedentarist ideology, and its impact on migratory policies (Castles, 2008), and therefore by extension on all migrant groups whether Polish, or Polish Roma, or indeed Gypsies and/or Travellers (Staniewicz & Reading, 2010). Sustained media-generated, institutional, and public discrimination, as well as successive governments’ aggressive and coercive efforts to assimilate Roma, have led to a dissipation of Roma culture, and other such groups’ traditional family networks (Liégeois & Gheorghe, 1995; Liégeois, 1994). Additionally, the denouncing of Polish Roma by Poles, adds another layer
of discrimination by virtue of this ‘de-Polonization’. Roma are therefore thrice-penalised in this sense – for being Roma, and, for being a migrant. A further point which was borne out in my discussions with Polish (and other) Roma, and lawyers working on behalf of Roma, is that some (Polish) Roma do feel further discriminated against as a result of the accession process. By this they mean that the ‘political space’ and one which gave them a recognisable ‘voice’ which they felt legitimised their inequitable status - as refugees - prior to accession, was removed in a singular stroke post-Accession. The insidious nature of these highly racialised sedentarist discourses, are effectively assimilatory strategies whose sole aim is cultural genocide (McVeigh, 1997).

MAIN DISCUSSION

Polity

The overall lack of Roma representation in both public and community discourses is very much an established position (McVeigh, 1997; Liégeois & Gheorghe, 1995; Sobotka, 2003). This is particularly significant here because social capital is commonly grounded within social interaction, engagement, and civic levels of interpersonal and institutional trust; and as I have already indicated, Roma are generally not socially equipped to be able to engage effectively at these kinds of specific levels. Discussions informally with Polish Roma in Coventry touched on the subject of their dealings - as Roma - with the police, and other state instruments, and revealed much about the contested terrains they inhabited, and how social networking within new geo-political landscapes was inhibited by their socio-historical self-perceptions (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992). What had been the experience of Polish Roma in their interactions with bodies of authority, an emblematic exemplar of dominant hegemony discourse? In their experience such interactions have for the greater part, been negative ones. The following narratives are highly informative.

“It does not matter which one of us [Roma] it is, the police always blames us. If they can’t get hold of one group, they go to another. We all have the same ‘face’ to them. They see only Roma – they don’t see us!”

And:

“They never ask us our opinions about how we want them to deal with people who create problems for us. We are the problem. When I see the policeman coming, I sometimes pretend that I am not at home – they never come for anything good.”” [Polish Roma, female, Coventry – Study 2]
A Roma community representative, who was interviewed for Study 1, informed of the following about how Roma deal with being in the public domain. In relation to how parents, especially mothers and their children passing as non-Roma, when they go to school:

“The children hide their real identity when they go to school.” [Polish Roma representative, female. London – CSE]

Due to the ways in which Roma and their children have been treated over many generations, such statements are not uncommon (Smith, T. 1997), and Roma children routinely try to ‘pass’ as non-Roma whilst at school or other informal associations. Roma children are known to keep personal details (such as real names, contact details for several years, whilst they build up ‘trust’ with outsiders (Staniewicz, 2009).

Discussions with ‘Key Experts’ (Study 1), about Roma and other such groups living in Coventry revealed that whilst other new (whether post-Accession or non-EU) communities would be present at informal information support sessions on education services for them and their children, Roma and Travellers never attended these meetings. Similarly, it was observed by other ‘Key Experts’ (Study 2; Study 3), that Polish mothers were prolific in developing highly intricate informal networks – even transcending language problems - between themselves and selected UK and Irish mothers - to facilitate more control over their new lives and ‘alien’ work routines dictated by either husbands’, partners’, or even their own working lives (albeit part-time). Over time, these arrangements took on a different ‘hue’ for some Dublin-based Polish migrants. ‘Trust’ was built up with out-group contacts, and Polish mothers were invited to network in other (Irish) circles of reciprocity. Putman’s premise is clearly shown to be working in this (Polish migrant) setting.

Another related point here is that research on social capital accumulation shows that women have a greater propensity for creating social relationships, due to being more active in the community setting, resulting in high levels of internal bonding capital, with often the women having accumulated it (Helleiner, 2000; Van Hout, 2010).

These Polish Roma mothers (cited above) do not engage with those informal settings which are well known to facilitate very strong and crucial informal networks of mutual cooperation and reciprocity, such as have been identified within Polish migrants (Ryan, et al, 2008; 2009). A Polish Roma said:
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“One day my daughter came home very upset that the other children did not tell her that school activities meant that for some of that day, they were allowed to wear their own clothes.” [Polish Roma, female, Coventry – Study 2]

Had this Polish Roma female been part of a local network, made up of mothers/carers to service the immediate needs of school related issues, and however informal, she would have been informed by it. For whatever reason Roma do not engage – and this is one of the clear similarities noted across all these studies - as a direct result, they effectively remove themselves from (public) spaces where there are opportunities to access information (Coleman, 1988) in order to mobilise, and this becomes an additional disadvantage in social capital formation. Some Polish Roma clearly have a lack of any tangible ties to the wider community. Others experience better networking and support, such as those involved with the Roma Support Group3 in London. This organization is highly efficient in providing advocacy and other kinds of structural support for (predominantly) Polish Roma, delivered via a range of initiatives.

In stark contrast to the general experience of Polish Roma, is the following. At a conference organised by regional police forces, for Roma, Gypsies and Travellers, members from all these groups were seen to come together and co-exist in shared constructed temporary ‘space’. Boudreau (2007:2593) maintains,

“new political spaces result not only from social movement activities (as in the drive for ‘free spaces’), but also in a dynamic interaction between state and civil society actors.”

Here is one such example, highlighted at the aforementioned conference, of the ‘dynamic interaction’ between state and civil society (Roma groups). An initiative by the Sussex Police Force, has developed a Strategy to engage with Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller groups, and this is mediated via its Gypsy Traveller Advisory Group [GTAG], which includes Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller individuals plus an overall group representative. This has provided such groups with a political space, as well as a formal – public - representative ‘voice’, of which this kind of ‘capital’ there is currently very, very little. The engagement of a Roma, Gypsy, and Traveller representative within this role, as main point of contact for these various groups, is a driver which has enabled Roma, including Polish Roma (in this geographical setting) to transcend existing boundaries, and have access to a shared space, and cultural space, within which they are able to develop new informal networks, as a result of this new forum (Stevenson, 2003).

3 http://www.romasupportgroup.org.uk/
Although this initial point of networking (by strategic invitation of the regional police force’s Equality duty aims), is not in its pure sense an example of what Putnam (2007) means when he cites the importance of developing new cross-cutting forms of social solidarity. However, as a result of this social action and resulting social relations, all of the groups with representation on the GTAG, benefited in this case from ‘information channels’ (Coleman (1988), via which opened access to a range of ‘spaces’ previously denied to them, such as equitable dialogues resulting in improved access to healthcare and education provision.

During discussions with a Polish Roma family, whilst attending another Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller conference, the following was also revealed, when talking about how untenable a current job had become. This male respondent skirted around the issue rather uncomfortably, implying that he was being treated in a derogatory manner, because it was known that he was Roma. At the time of the discussion, this person was working for the local council in London as a support worker, aiding the integration of Roma children within the education system.

“I can’t continue doing my job anymore, it’s become too difficult for me to handle personally. I don’t agree with it, you know - what I witness every day – it’s wrong, but nobody says anything. It’s not just at ----- [name was given, but anonymity preserved], it’s the same everywhere we go.”

He went on to say, in relation to how he was spoken to, as a male:

“I don’t like the way I am treated, because of who I am. I’ve never seen them speak to the others like that…. I won’t do that kind of work again.” [Polish young Roma male, Coventry – CSE]

This lack of trust, and fear of non-Roma (in all the above excerpts), in a world embodied by a discriminatory overview of Roma, only serves to reinforce the boundaries between the Roma world and the other contested terrain, the non-Roma world. The use of ‘them’ and ‘us’, as diametrically opposed serves to confirm the antagonistic relationship here, and once again the Manichean constructs of ‘good v. evil’ are played out. The second excerpt seemed to indicate the respondent’s objection to being treated in a manner which he felt was more appropriate when one spoke with a female, and seemed unhappy to be working in a field where women would generally assume such a role (in the education of children). He felt an acute ‘loss of face’.

The intention of this respondent to remove himself from this quite public ‘space’ diminishes greatly the links and network ties, which his family by extension was
privileged to access. Having access to it therefore crucially also meant not having to rely wholly on ethnic or group-based networks (Ryan, et al, 2008). In losing this tie to information to potential networks of support, creates another boundary between these Polish Roma and the outside world (Coleman, 1988). This is all the more significant, as earlier in the discussion, there was an indication of a lack of any real family or transnational links back in Poland (for this family), nor really anyone which they as a family believed were of benefit to them. It is therefore the added value that such associations bring, and the loss is immeasurable. As Coleman (1988:104) notes, “an important form of social capital is the potential for information that adheres in social relations."

There were many examples of this ‘turning back on society’. I was told time and again, “It’s what we expect, no one listens to us.” [Polish Roma male, Coventry - CSE]. An inevitable consequence of discrimination-driven adversity normalises negative events in the lives of Roma. These are stoically accepted with an enduring fatalism. Across all the studies utilised for this paper, Roma interactions with the police (except for the GTAG example provided above), and other figures of authority, were predominantly negative and adversarial in nature.

I turn now to Polish migrants and their interaction, and, associations with ‘polity’. Polish migrants have for the most part, come to the UK capable of engaging with UK society. Even when faced with that major inhibitor of integration – a lack of adequate language skills – they still managed to optimise their opportunities, in relation to Polish Roma, and mobilise to that effect (Staniewicz, 2010; 2009). This being said however, Poles interviewed in a number of the research studies that these narratives are drawn from, still nonetheless had a series of problems. Some of the Polish migrants see police (via a post-communistic lens), as a natural extension of a ‘coercive’ state, and are wary of them. However, some of this is also because some Poles did not register for WRS, and were, for one reason or another, working in the ‘black economy’, namely not paying any taxes. Polish migrants’ interactive dynamics with the police was on a more equal setting, than that of the Polish Roma, and their dealings more commonplace, rather than contentious. These problems have all been amply documented (Anderson, 2006; Homeless Link, 2006).

What is worthy of noting is that some Polish migrants’ demonstrated a fatalism or resignation to racist taunts in so far as having been victims of racial discrimination (first& second excerpt), but, at the same time, others (no.3) seemed unaware of it (Staniewicz, 2007a). For instance:

“When I worked for Albanians, in Devon in a car wash I experienced abuse; they were laughing that a Poles like me, has no money, no friends, and is dirty
– they were just insulting and for example making me sweep the floor endlessly”
[Young Polish male, London – Study 2]

And, (no.2): “Why expect anything else? We Polish are the newcomers’ here.”
[Young Polish female mother, Dublin – Study 2]

Finally, (No.3):

“That’s [racial] discrimination I thought that was just the way people were treated because they were new. It didn’t bother me – I just ignored them and got on with it. If it got physical, that was different – I wouldn’t put up with it.”

In response to a prompt about what recourse would they take (no.3 said):

“I know where to go for help – I’ve made sure to find things out. I’ve heard a lot of talk about the places to go to when you need help. Some of us are talking to the union representative, and we have joined to show our solidarity. If you like - it’s like a little piece of Solidarnosc here in Ireland” [Polish male, Dublin – Study 2]

This last excerpt is an interesting ‘commentary’ on the racialised notion of the ‘Other’ in Poland. Post-Accession Poles arrived from a country with an exceedingly low ethnic mix, and so are generally speaking, not used to the sheer differences in ethno-cultural demographics they come across in the UK and this comment is a reflection of this (Trevena, 2009; Staniewicz, 2007a, 2007b).

However, what these narratives also inform us of, is that Polish migrants are versatile, forward looking and highly adaptive in all public ‘spaces’; and are willing to exploit new ‘space’ as resource, after identifying such (Burrell, 2010). In the three-site study drawn on here, Polish migrants were seen to be highly innovative in linking up with union representatives and mobilising and successfully appropriating ‘political space’ in this manner, in more than in just an ad hoc way. This served to further legitimise Poles - publicly - as a group, as well as providing ethnic solidarity (Fitzgerald, 2007; 2009). Key Experts [Study 1; Study 2] confirmed that Polish migrants actively sought out all possible frontline advice services (in Coventry and Dublin), and presented even at centres which were set up for other groups, such as asylum seekers and refugees (Staniewicz, 2007a; 2009).

The rise in hate crimes against Poles was noted earlier. A plethora of policy reports covered the impact of the migration at national, regional, and local levels, and despite many finding the positive benefits to the UK from these migratory
waves, such information was juxtaposed with media incited (moral panic) driven campaigns that Poles (and others), were a continued ‘threat’ and danger to community cohesion building in the UK. Once again, the racialised rhetoric about the ‘Other’ seeped in to public discourses on a regular basis in a very divisive manner; challenging the legitimate spaces Poles had (earned) the right to occupy (Bourdeau, 2007). Some Poles’ seemed to ‘miss’ the point about inequitable treatment, which is identified by the use of the word ‘normal’:

“They prefer to take someone who is British, maybe less competent… but they trust this person much more [because he is British]… but I think it’s normal…” [Young Polish male, London – Study 2]

An example of the kinds of racial slurs experienced is:

“I came to Ireland [they had first worked in London] because of the way my wife and I were treated by English people. There are problems here too, but we have our religions in common - at least there is that. No one complains here when we need to go to church - in England, nobody understood about our faith. We are different from the English.” [Polish couple, female & male, Dublin– Study 2]

When asked what kinds of things were said, the response was:

“Eh, they would say, ‘you’re here taking our jobs, our food, our houses – you bloody Poles –f--- off from here, you make me sick” [As above]

Another example is:

“You hear a lot of: f… Poles, go back home, you dirt”. [Young Polish male, London – Study 2]

I now wish to move on to the second area under discussion, namely the level of existing tensions and conflict experienced by Polish Roma and Polish migrants, their subsequent interactions with the host communities; and, the impact of this on social capital production (Robinson & Reeve, 2006). I have indicated elsewhere in this paper how Roma are seen to react by removing themselves from the ‘contested spaces’ in which they find themselves when concerned with a possible threat. A good example of this is in the ways in which Polish Roma and Polish migrants exploited advances in electronic technologies since their arrival, but in differing ways. In keeping with their reputation of high adaptability, Polish migrants were aware of the need to ‘keep up’ with technology; for transnational networking – family, friends, tracking potential jobs elsewhere in the EU, or even beyond
(Australia was cited as one such preferred location). However, what is significant here, is that Polish migrants’ adaptability and risk-taking in new settings (Bauman, 1998), is in concert with the flux-like nature of 21st century migration, and these adaptation ‘skills’ if you will, align themselves with where UK society is also heading. The government’s agenda is to move records and services online, in tandem with society’s aspiration to forward the ongoing digital revolution. On the other hand, many Roma, Gypsies and Travellers still operate within a traditional ‘cash economy’, resisting the bank institution, something considered archaic by today’s 24-hour, and ‘give me now’ culture.

Polish migrants are highly active users of the internet, mobile phones etc., and utilize these as a mechanism - quite ruthlessly, for finding jobs – either within the UK, or even further afield in Europe. For instance:

“I looked for jobs on the internet, and read blogs. This helped me learn about life here. I keep in touch with friends back home in Poland, in Scotland, and London. We look out for each other. If something comes up – you have to be quick – Poles don’t want to wait in case the job goes to another Pole.” [Middle-aged Polish male, Dublin – Study 2]

This notion reflects the new entrepreneurialism spirit that has been identified as one of the markers of the fluidic and flux-like nature of the migratory process (Garapich, 2006; Staniewicz, 2007a, 2007b). To facilitate the arrival of Poles to the UK, a significant array of web-based advice sites and virtual-community organisations (Anna’s Poland), e-newspapers (such as Polish Express), and more formal organisations developed (Poland Street). These were a new and dynamic source of networks from which Polish migrants might draw social capital. More importantly, they were in Polish and English, and reflected the fast moving world and needs of the modern-day migrant, and these have increased the ‘digital activism’ of Polish migrants. London has become an enviable location for serving the Polish community with a range of facilities. Such new virtual networks, linking also the transnational ‘here’ and ‘there’ simultaneously, and are a realisation of several of Vertovec’s (1999) identifiers of the concept. These can therefore be seen as a primary substitute for the need to engage with a community directly in order to enter into the relational situation for bridging social capital production, which might otherwise require a necessary degree of traditional face-to-face networking for future reciprocity4.

4 Here are but a few: http://www.londynek.net/en/; http://www.activepolish.co.uk/e-about_us.html; http://polishexpress.polacy.co.uk/index.php?str=info&id=29
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The increase in the uptake of these worked in tandem with such websites being funded by UK companies, which swiftly capitalised on targeting Polish migrants with adverts for their goods and services. For Polish migrants, highly adaptive as they are, employing new technologies served to strengthen them both individually, and as a group. Utilising these forms of network support systems as regular support systems has changed the cultural and spatial landscape of need for these migrants (Kerr, 2007). Roma generally resist opportunities to engage with civil society, at the expense of being left behind technologically, even when they as a group might benefit. Non-Roma organizations, such as the Migrant and Refugees Communities Forum [MRCF, London], offer IT workshops for all groups. Over fifty ethnic associations are participating. However, no Roma groups are involved in this educational process.

Research has shown that some Poles have been accused of being singularly self-serving, and disinterested with engaging with the British socially (Garapich, 2006). Ironically, the success of such virtual networks, in being able to conduct transnational associations, has changed the nature of networking and ensuring relationships are maintained both constantly and with an immediacy which transcends notions of ‘here’ and there’, by virtue of facilitating a virtual constant transnational space (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992).

In conjunction with the free usage of Facebook and other virtual social networking tools, and Skype which allows visual contact with family still in Poland and elsewhere, have now led to the following point. With the ability now to access a range of cultural, social, and political (virtual) ‘spaces’ without borders, may well pre-empt the partial replacement for a number of presumed modes of transnational behaviour.

“I don’t feel that I need to travel to Poland so much now, as before. My parents and I see each other very frequently on the pc ... I can access all the news and other channels I’m used to from home.” [Polish migrant, male Coventry– Study 3]

Roma on the other hand, appear to have had a very mixed experience with social networking sites. Some Roma’s attempts to engage with the wider community in public social virtual space of Facebook, resulted in a virtual assault of abhorrent racial slurs – in some ways more intrusive and damaging, since these are received in assumed safe personal spaces of the home. An initiative mobilised from within the Roma community, created a project, known as SavvyChavvy, from which a social networking site was developed exclusively for the entire Roma community in England, thus allowing them to ‘avoid’ Facebook.
Rather than borderless space, Roma retreat behind their notion of border, virtual or otherwise – as protection – when any form of discrimination is manifested upon them. This is a prime example of Roma developing parallel ‘space’ in preference to negotiating their place within existing social and other space; by embodying a ‘politics of difference’ they have exercised their right to do so (Gutpa & Ferguson, 1992).

I turn to one last example of the contested nature of inter-ethnic interaction between Polish Roma and wider society, before moving on to the concluding section. Throughout this paper, it has become clear that their experience – at the micro level – mirrors that of Roma globally (Acton, 1994a). The inequities which Roma face on a daily basis are already noted here. The following quotes are examples of these kinds of human rights’ abuses, from an interview with a Polish Roma community representative.

“Everywhere, people hate us.”

“They [Polish Roma family] were in their home. Someone threw petrol through the letter-box, and then lit it. They were lucky this time – no one was hurt.” [Polish Roma, female, community representative – RR: no.1]

FINAL THOUGHTS

Within the climate of the government’s attempts to provide a setting for community cohesion to work effectively, in its current form it is known as the ‘Big Society’, the above quote makes very uncomfortable reading, though unfortunately not altogether surprising. It is inevitable that new migrants will exacerbate (existing) tensions in community relations, and increase local demand for a range of services. However, these issues and the resulting ethnic intolerances are an unacceptable explanation.

This paper has illustrated that these Polish Roma and Polish migrants have both had experience of ‘racial’ discrimination. The difference however, lies in how their sense of ‘identity’ within these contested terrains, has helped them to deal with it respectively. Roma respond differently – they redraw, move on, etc - in terms of their public engagement either formally or informally with the wider society. Within the climate of the dominant sedentarist position in concert with the

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1 Big Society is part of the recent UK coalition government’s changes to the legislative programme. The aim is to create a environment that empowers local people and communities, building a big society that will presumably take power away from politicians and give it to people.
stated historical specificity, this is also not altogether unsurprising (MacLaughlin, 1998). These Polish migrants, though also discriminated against, have mobilised and successfully created those very networks Putman purports are there for the taking, and have most productively exploited the opportunities afforded them by migratory process. In some ways, one might say that Polish migrants embody an ideal type of Putnam’s social capital premise, further serving to underscore its validity as a valid construct.

Zygmunt Bauman’s (1998) notion of ‘liquid’ modernity does not bode well for the Polish Roma discussed here. They are not equipped, unlike the Polish migrants, to change their approach on engaging with others ‘without looking back’, and to move on at short notice, without any social cost, beyond these own created boundaries. Polish migrants seem to be more adaptable at swiftly mobilising new networks (also drawing on new technologies such as web ‘blogs’, and social networking sites). The Polish Roma’s inability to create the necessary political spaces – as a group, which would provide them with a legitimate representation in public and community discourses, continues to hinder any realistic chances of equal participation in civil society. They look ‘inwardly’ and rely on deriving their strength generated from in-group bonding, as a form of resource to ‘deal with’ their alien surroundings (Van Hout, 2010).

This paper utilised Putnam’s notion of social capital (2000; 2007) in order to see how well, as a heuristic tool, it fitted in terms of the real lived situational experiences of these two different groups. In how both groups negotiate trying to gain access to shared – public – space, as well as find ownership of group ‘space’, via utilising their existing corpus of capital (human, cultural) and networks, to enable their equitable participation within civil society. Their various experiences clearly needed to be viewed within the context of the intersectionality of multiple discriminations, as well as the changing nature of the geo-political contexts which directly affect their access. For this author, the intersection of multiple discriminations is the crux in determining the differential mix of opportunity and risk for both groups, as they embarked upon their migratory paths. This paper has shown how disparate these two groups’ understandings of reality can be, even though there are broad similarities of experience, and identical ‘rights’. For the Polish Roma, there is not even sufficient out-group community informal networking engagement at the neighbourhood ‘entry’ level, the necessary foundation upon which trust is formed. Polish migrants have efficiently utilised their various opportunities, and as Putman himself noted, social capital is ‘of’ the people and ‘for’ the people and is fundamental to community networks based on reciprocal relations. In their case, this has been realised.
Putnam’s concept does not readily account therefore for the complex nature of new migrations: how groups for whom migration has had a pathogenic effect, such as those who become homeless, or drug dependent (Van Hout, 2010); and how the intersection of elements which only together explain how they are then able to attempt or willing to engage with the wider society. The Polish Roma under discussion here, have quite clearly remained beyond the benefit of social, economic, and political discourses. They entered the migratory arena with a pre-existing position of extreme disadvantage, having had no say in where they are to be located in the construction of nation states. Their identity within this process is as an excluded group. Their every attempt to access space, within the “appropriation and restructuring of political and social space by hegemonic classes”, (MacLaughlin, 1998: 438) is, for the main part as expected, a fruitless exercise. Bourdieus’s (1990) concept of habitus might better serve to explain the experiences of Polish Roma. Habitus theory acknowledges social actions’ carried out over time, and, that such actions are culturally transferred inter-generationally; and all of this (unconscious) interplay is underpinned within social power dynamics between competing groups, at the neighbourhood level. The power dynamics are clear in the case of these Polish Roma.

How a group relates to the rest of society also affects social capital formation, but in a different manner. Strong internal ties, as evinced here in the Polish Roma can be said to weaken this group’s perceived capital, in the eyes of wider society. Polish Roma have been seen to retreat from engaging, and sought in-group support, by forming in-group social spaces, very much as some post-WWII émigré Poles were seen to do (Zubrzycki, 1956). Post-Accession Polish migrants, on the whole, are unencumbered with an inward-looking state of mind. However, under the banner of EU equality, all citizens have a supposed right to live their lives according to their cultural beliefs.

This paper has looked at the ways in which these two groups have been in a position to accumulate social capital for group empowerment and aid in societal integration, as distinctly different ethnic groups. This has been contextualised via their historical, communal, and personal contexts. What is clear is that because of their respective different outlooks, social capital was accrued more efficiently to the needs of one group – namely the Polish migrant, than to the other - Polish Roma. These discussions have also raised the following question, is social capital a sufficient condition for sustainable community development? The answer, quite clearly, is no. Putman noted that over time “wise policies (public and private) can ameliorate that trade-off.” Whereas his concepts align for the most part with the
experience of Polish migrants, they clearly do not hold for some of the Polish Roma discussed here.

Polish migrants have been shown to be in a position in having the choice to ‘opt-out, co-exit, or join in mainstream ‘spaces’, these Roma do not have that luxury. They behave like a diasporic people, retreating, rather than advancing, and live fragmented lives where borders are more determined and more constraining (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992). Therefore, freedom of movement and social exchange, and fruitfully developing social capital remains beyond their reach, if continued, in such settings.

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1. INTRODUCTION – THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Mobility of the citizens of the European Union has changed the traditional understanding of the concept of “migration”. Legal, political and social changes in Europe are designed to create the “United States of Europe”. Analogically, migrations from one region of the EU to the other are being compared rather to the mobility between the American states, than to the migrations between the traditional nation-states. High-skilled migration plays an especially significant role. Enhancing the circulation of talent in the global knowledge-based economy is one of the basic objectives of the EU migration policies.

Writing about this phenomenon, Adrian Favell refers to the name of the famous train travelling between London, Brussels and Paris – and uses the name “Eurostars” to describe post-national and cosmopolitan migration of the high skilled elites who change their place of living from one to another EU Member State in search for better career prospects. The national borders do not constitute any obstacles or limits to realization of their professional strategies. The high skilled cosmopolitan migrants concentrate in big multicultural cities such as London, Amsterdam, Berlin, where they realize high-quality urban lifestyles; such places constitute transnational environments differing from other places of the EU Member States. In the case of the Eurostars, it is more suitable to talk about the “free movement” than about migration – in accordance to the rights guaranteed by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: free movement of workers, services, goods and capital. At the same time Favell points out that there still exists a traditional labour migration flow between the “old” EU Member States and the States who recently, in 2004 and 2006, joined the EU. The category of such economic migrants reflects the common depiction of the Europeans as not much mobile citizens of “nation states”, who are embedded to where they were born because of the language and culture (Favell 2009: 167-182). Connections and interrelations between these two types of mobility seem to be worth an in-dept
investigation. I will do that on the example of Polish students in Great Britain and their attitudes towards the Polish community, which consists of post-accession labour migration and the “old” diaspora of political emigrants, their children and next generations¹.

Of course, the division between educational migrants and labour migrants is not a sharp one, both groups intermingle with each other. In the classical work by William Glaser it has been pointed out that graduates of foreign universities tend to remain in the receiving country for some time after the graduation (even if they intend to return to the sending country at last). Taking up employment in the sending country is seen as another means of improving one’s professional skills and qualifications. At the same time Glaser observed that the educational immigrants form a particular sending country usually opt for one or two specified countries of destination; this facilitates the emergence of the constant educational migration channels (Glaser 1979). The topic is especially worth an in-depth investigation, because student migrations between Poland and the United Kingdom constitute a relatively new phenomenon.

In the PRL period (Polish People’s Republic), due to the political circumstances and Russian taught as a foreign language at schools, student willing to migrate for educational reasons often chose the countries from the Communist Bloc (Soviet Union, communist states of Eastern and Central Europe). The decline of the communist regime and the afterward political changes led to the reversal of the functioning trends in educational migrations. Due to i.a. Poland’s accession to the European Union, the most popular directions of educational migrations from Poland overlap with the directions of labour migrations of Poles. Students use the migration chains created by economic migrants (those from before 1989, as well as those who migrated after 1989).

The headcount of the Polish diaspora is estimated at over four hundred thousand people (Grabowska-Lusińska, Okolski 2009: 89), with a significant number of return migrations. On the other hand, the number of Polish students at British universities is rapidly growing. There were about eight thousand students in academic year 2007-2008 and over nine thousand Polish students enrolled at British universities in 2008-2009 (HESA). Every year circa two thousand Polish students apply to British universities; the UK-wide system of registration UCAS receives 1800-1900 applications from Poland each year (UCAS Report 2009).

¹ I define „diaspora” as a community of immigrants and immigrants’ children (some of them born and raised already in the UK), who present different levels of assimilation with the host society, but try to maintain their social and cultural ties with the home country. (A more detailed definition of a “diaspora” as an “imagined community” of immigrants and their descendants in various receiving countries to be found in: R. Cohen “Global Diasporas”, 1997). The term diaspora encompasses both the pre-accession migration with their descendants, as well as post-accession migration. On the other hand, the post-accession Polish migration can be distinguished under the separate term “immigrant community”.

However, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service is only designed for candidates applying for full-time courses; moreover, many postgraduate courses do not use this form of registration. In effect, the actual number of the applicants from Poland is higher. The United Kingdom is the country which receives the largest number of educational migrants in Europe, and the second most popular aim of student migrations in the world (after the United States) (OECD Report 2007). London is the city with the highest number of foreign students (from EU and non-EU states) in the UK.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

My research was conducted in London in the academic year 2009-2010. My principal method were interviews: I conducted 25 in-dept interviews, which were assisted by a short questionnaire. All parts of the research were carried out in Polish (the conversations quoted below in English were translated after the transcription – they are NOT the original version). The interviewed group were students and graduates of Metropolitan University, Westminster University, City University London and, above all, the biggest school - University of London, which incorporates colleges such as London School of Economics, Queen Mary, King’s, Imperial, University College London. The goal of the research was to find out the subjective points of view of the immigrants on the migration experience; since my interviewees were well-educated and self-aware people, their answers to my questions often presented a very high level of self-reflexivity and maturity.

In addition, I also used Internet sources (forums for current and prospective students, who share their experiences of university education in the UK: www.ang.pl; www.londek.pl; forum.gazeta.pl). The other supplementary method was the participant observation: as I was a postgraduate student myself (I studied law), I took part in many associations and meetings organized by the migrants, I celebrated religious, political, nation-oriented events and anniversaries with them (Polish Christmas, meeting the presidential candidate Komorowski, lecture with Prof. Balcerowicz…). Some of the students knew that I was doing the research for my PhD thesis; others treated me as a colleague from the university.

The relations between the Polish students and the labour migrants have been investigated on the basis of a number of factors. First, I asked my respondents to describe their circle of friends and people with whom they socialize during their stay in London. Second, I asked about their relationships (past and present) during their migration and the nationality of partners. Third, questions about the accommodation situation and flat mates were asked. Besides I analyzed the students’ participation in associations and societies (Poland-related and others),
their opinions and personal views on the labour migration from Poland, and their family ties in the Polish immigrant community.

The questionnaires indicated that the students originate from other regions of Poland than the labour migrants: before coming to London they had lived mostly in big cities. In consequence, one should point out the validity of the observation that migrants from the peripheries (in this case, labour migrants) take advantage of their social and cultural capital in a different way than persons from the central regions, such as Warsaw (in this analysis – educational migrants). Namely, the inhabitants of peripheries use the social capital in the form of family bonds, migration ties, help of friends. On the contrary, migrants from the central regions more often refer to their skills and professional knowledge (Koryś 2001: 204). However, two factors disturb this regularity and make the picture more complicated. First of them is the bonds between educational migrants and the old pre-1989 diaspora; the second one is the fact that some students of London universities originate from the community of labour migrants and have strong ties with this group.

3. MOST COMMON MODELS OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN POLISH STUDENTS AND LABOUR MIGRATION: SUPERFICIAL CONTACTS AND DISTANCE TOWARDS THE MIGRANTS WITH THE DIFFERENT SOCIAL STATUS

People who leave Poland with the specified focus on taking up studies in the UK originate from other social background than the majority of labour migrants. They come from big cities; the most popular places of residence in Poland before migration to the UK were Warsaw and Tri-City (popular mainly because of the prestigious high schools with the International Baccalaureate programme), from wealthy families where usually both parents have university degree and are employed as white-collar workers. They are “high-quality children” of the middle and upper-middle class families determined to invest in their university education even until the age of 30.

The most common category of students are migrants who have previous educational experience with the foreign language of instruction (usually, although not always, in English). This group consists of: Poles graduating from IB programmes in high school (in Poland and other countries worldwide); Polish graduates of British high schools who passed A-Level exams; and third, children of Polish emigrants (sometimes having a second parent of another nationality), who usually have a dual citizenship, and used to participate in the educational systems of the country where they lived as kids and teenagers (for example

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2 I use the word “status” in accordance with Bourdieu’s understanding of the term, as determined by a specific degree of social, economic and cultural capital.
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The growing number of students of Polish descent facilitates establishing relations between each other, with persons of a similar social background, biography and experience. This fact is conducive to the segmentation in the diaspora and disintegration between its various groups. For these reasons, contacts with the Polish economic immigration (which has an utterly different social and professional profile) are limited and superficial.

Students emphasize their respect for the diligence of the labour immigrants. From the interviews emerges a picture of superficial, but polite contacts with the working Poles, especially those met in occasion in pubs and restaurants, the ancillary workers and the administrative staff of the universities. Polish students clearly recognize the distinction between unskilled economic migrants who aim to work in the secondary sector of the labour market, and high skilled labour immigrants who take up positions in the primary sector. Although the contacts with both those two groups are rather rare and casual, they aspire to the second group and point out that the number of Polish professionals working in London increases:

*Everyone working here at LSE in the cantina, in the restaurants is actually from Poland, so they are always very nice, they give us coffee, or salad, or chocolates for free. And they always chat with us, they are extremely nice. All my colleagues have plumbers from Poland, or Polish builders (...) But it is also nice to see that finally there are workers from Poland in banks, or similar good companies. So I think it is very positive, because it is not the point just to have builders from Poland [here]. But also workers on better job positions.*

[M, female, London School of Economics]

On the other hand, student talking about the everyday behaviours of the Polish immigrants are often very critical of Poles who abuse alcohol and misbehave. Either a feeling of shame, or sympathy for their helplessness appears in the students’ voices:

*I feel stupid when I have to say that, well it does not happen always, but there is a big group of Poles who curse, even aloud and in public, because they think that nobody would understand them. (...) One lands at Luton and so many Poles are totally drunk. This may be a cliché, but in fact many people suit that stereotypical picture.*

[B., male, London School of Economics]

*So many Poles have come here, and my work as a medical interpreter enabled me to see how their situation looks like – from the worst side. People who need an interpreter are people who do not manage on their own in basic*
everyday situations, such as going to the doctor, or shopping. (...) I translated for the victims of violence, for people who applied for benefits, social help. I translated for a large groups of alcoholics and homeless persons. (...) We are distinguishable for ourselves. Other Poles easily recognize their natives. However, in the crowd, there is nothing special, so that somebody could recognize the Polish [A., female, Imperial College]

In most cases, the experience of being Polish in a foreign country is not an important element of an identity of the educational migrants from Poland, neither it is an aspect which distinguishes them sharply from other students. Many students of London universities come from other countries (at postgraduate courses, the percentage of such students sometimes reaches even 70%); they share a common experience of being a so-called “international student”, and they do not refer to their particular national identities. Being Polish is an identity attributed to the migrant by the others, outside the university environment, and the students themselves sometimes even deny it – for example, they speak in the underground with other Poles in English. The fact that they are often identified with the Polish community of labour immigrants, irritates some of them. It evokes attempts to distance themselves from the group. The students, for whom the category of being Polish constitutes an important element of their identity, frequently declare that they want to change the negative image of the Polish diaspora. The image of Poles and Poland, existing in the receiving society and observed by the students, interferes with their own image of Poland and their self-perception:

The British, you can notice that they experienced the mass Polish migration and they are aware of that, they read in the newspapers about the Poles who eat swans, because [when I mention my nationality] it’s like “From Poland?... Oh! Cool!”; they try to hide what they really think about the Polish... But we are here to change it [M., male, London School of Economics]

Contacts based on the national criteria are often initiated by the economic migrants themselves, because they perceive Polish students as persons who are better integrated with the host society, and who have higher language skills. They are seen as symbols of social advancement in the UK:

It was an older (...) about 60 year old woman, who just came from Poland with her son. And she wanted, without the knowledge of English, she wanted me to find her a job. Where to go, in what place in London, in order to start working immediately [R., male, University College London]
On the other hand, students often point out that their social circle is created on the basis of similarity of social statuses and not on the basis of the nationality (students befriend mostly with other students, regardless of their nationality). The language and cultural skills facilitates the Polish students to participate in social groups and circles not based on nationality criterion. Besides, the feeling of self-determination and self-esteem connected with the positive social image of students facilitates becoming independent of the Polish migrants groups. It enhances individualization of the students’ professional strategies and migration strategies.

_I think that here [at the university] my social circle is very international simply because people do not pay attention to one’s nationality, they just befriend each other, and other things are not important._ [J., female, London School of Economics]

_I am lucky because my contacts with the labour migration are mainly well-educated intelligent people. But I have also met the so called typical migration, you know, people who come to blue collar jobs rather than to work at the office. (...) And simply four, five years [have passed since] Poles are here, they came, found jobs, made children, and one can see how these parents, mothers treat their kids [quotes Polish curses]. And this creates a very unfair label of Poles, of our cultural and intellectual level. You can see this stereotype in newspapers, in common views that Poles are plumbers who drink vodka._ [M, male, King’s College]

To sum up, two factors significantly facilitate the students’ gradual detachment from the rest of the Polish community. First, it is the size and mass character of the diaspora and definite divisions between various groups in the diaspora. Second, high social and cultural competences of the students themselves, which facilitate establishing numerous relations and friendships beyond the immigrant community.

4. EDUCATIONAL MIGRATIONS AS AN ELEMENT OF FAMILY MIGRATION STRATEGIES: “PRE-ACCESSION” DIASPORA AS A MAIN POINT OF REFERRAL.

The majority of educational migrants come to London without any support or assistance from the already settled immigrants. They rely mostly on their own academic and language skills. However, in the cases where the immigration is connected with activating or renewing migration chains, the students have support
from the emigrants or their descendants from the “old”, settled pre-accession diaspora (formed before 1989). About one fifth of the interviewees had relatives in London before they came to take up their university education. Their relatives came from the pre-1989 diaspora. Students benefit from their help in various situations such as accommodation, finding a job, initial acclimatisation:

*When I was twelve, I went to school in London. I was [in London] with my mum and sister. I have an uncle, a far cousin of my parents, he had been living in London since the 1950. We took the opportunity, when my uncle went to Australia for a year or so, my father suggested that we should go for a year and go to school here... I was so afraid... But that is how it was. And we came here for a year, we lived at my uncle’s [M., female, Queen Mary University of London; during my research she lived with another Polish family – acquaintances of her cousin – also stemming from the pre-1989 migration]

My grandmother’s brother settled here after the war – he was in the Polish army in the West and he married an English woman. He started a family and his son – that is, my uncle – is a lawyer like me, he has his own law office in London and during the first three months I lived with them. (...) When I had already decided that I wanted to study here, it was just helpful that they are living here and could offer me the accommodation at the beginning of my stay in England. But they don’t speak Polish at all [R., male, University College London]

*My aunt is an emigrant from the 80s, her husband was British, he died recently... Because of her difficult situation I do my best to spend as much time with her as I can. She has children as well, I am the godfather of one of them, but Konrad is sad, how to say it, absolutely British. He speaks Polish, but not fluently. He rather chooses English so I learn from him. (...) I used to come here during holidays when I was a student [at Polish university] to work here and earn extra. Especially when the pound was stronger and in two months’ time I could earn my pocket money for the whole year [K., male, London School of Economics]

In general, as one can see – in each particular case where there are intense profound links with other groups of the Polish diaspora – they connect the students with the old pre-accession diaspora, and not with the new post-2004 labour migration. These interrelationships mean the complex interdependence, including help with the accommodation, getting a job, and family ties at the same time. These networks may be the consequence of the socio-demographic profile of
the Polish emigrants: students, contrary to the rest of the post-accession migrants, come from big cities and middle class families (in almost all cases both parents have university degree). Similar structural features were observed in the Polish migration flow before 1989 (Radzik 2001: 152 and 156-166). Second, in the case of links between students and post-2004 labour migrants, it is rarely or never a situation of obtaining help – but rather a mutual support, which results from the fact that labour migrants are not in the more advantageous situation than students (concerning their social networks, or opportunities to find a job which is attractive for a student).

5. ECONOMIC MIGRANTS TAKING UP STUDIES IN THE UK: PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE IMMIGRANTS FROM THE SECONDARY SECTOR OF THE LABOUR MARKET

A separate trend is the phenomenon of migrants who combine work and study. It is useful to refer to Michael Piore’s theory of the segmented structure of labour markets: primary sector with the attractive wages, security of employment and good promotion prospects, and secondary, with low remuneration and weak promotion prospects. The last sector is dominated by the groups interested in temporary employment – for example immigrants, as well as students.

How does it relate to the topic of this research? First, some immigrants decided to take up studies after some time of their stay and work in the United Kingdom. A large part of the post-accession migrants are people who obtained university degree, but work in the UK below their professional qualifications (Grabowska-Lusińska, Okolski 2009). This incoherence of the determinants of a social status of Polish migrants in London displays similarities with the communist society, where a university degree and prestige of a professional position was not always connected with high wages.

Such situation evokes the ambition of the economic migrants to raise their vocational qualifications on the British labour market. Second, a part of my interviewees have been persons who worked in Britain in the past, but came back to Poland because of unsatisfying salaries and job prospects; their next migration is rigorously connected with the objective of university education. Raising academic qualifications is particularly important for the group of people who think about staying in the UK long-term and do not plan to go back to Poland; for example, because of being in a relationship or raising children with a partner of another nationality.

It was hard. In Poland I graduated as first in my academic year, I got my diploma with distinction, my friend started solicitor or barrister trainings.
And I put on my apron in London, and worked in the restaurant [M. I., female, Queen Mary University of London]

My friend [a Pole] used to work there and assisted me in getting this job. First I worked as a waitress and after six months I got promotion to a supervisor. (...) Let’s say, it is definitely not my target job, which I want to do in the future. But in this particular moment it is a rather comfortable solution. To make a living in the UK. And this allows me to carry on here. It is not a question of like, or dislike, but rather a necessity [A., female, Westminster University]

I came here and realized that my English is not good enough (...) I spent a year working in the herbs and vitamins shop, I was supervisor and I learned English, I went to an English course, I prepared my portfolio in order to take the exam [entry exam at the university] in June or July [K., female, Metropolitan University]

I studied [in Poland] English philology and I wanted to spend some time living in the English speaking country. After a few years in England I decided to change my job and do additional degree. (...) After graduation I was promoted to a position which requires university degree. My company sponsored my studies. [A., female, City University London]

Labour migrants do not enroll for undergraduate degrees. Such migrants - if they decide to take up education in the United Kingdom - always have academic degree obtained earlier from a university in Poland. In London they choose postgraduate (Master’s or doctoral) courses; the duration of such studies in the UK is relatively short in comparison to other countries (1 years for a Master’s degree, 3 years for doctoral degrees).

Labour migrants who did not obtain university degree in Poland do not apply for undergraduate courses usually because of the fact that their language skills are too low. As a substitution, they take opportunity to register to the so called “Polish universities” in London (schools with Polish language of instruction who are licensed in Poland as branches of Polish universities):

I have been living in the UK for two years. My English is not good enough to study at a British university. That’s why from the beginning of my stay here I have been studying at PO [Polska Akademia Otwarta] in London. If one is ambitious, one may start studying in Polish, in order to not waste time, and at the same time one may try to improve English. (...) I don’t understand those who criticise immigrants studying in Polish, they would never dare!!!
It's better to invest in yourself than sit in Poland after graduating from a technical high school, and fix bikes!!! [quoted from: http://www.londek.pl/forum/watek/2726/?p=1, 15 X 2010]

Economic migrants taking up studies at British universities have most comprehensive networks of contacts in the community of labour migrants; they include common work, friendships, accommodation, spending free time together. There is also a tendency that such students know many Poles employed in the secondary sector, but not those from the primary sector. It may be the consequence of the fact that Polish high skilled migrants working in the primary sector do not need to invest in their academic qualifications in order to achieve satisfying job position, so they do not take up studies in the UK. Second observation is that those Polish graduates of British universities who are hired as white collar workers in London usually do not know other Poles working in their closest environment (e.g. company department).

Organisation of activities at British universities facilitates combining work and studies; it is a typical model of student life, embedded in the British culture. Research suggest that it is even more often realized by British students than by the students coming from abroad (UKCOSA Report 2004). In the case of foreign students, combining work and study is more common among the EU citizens than among those coming from outside the EU (for formal and legal reasons – no obligation to obtain work permission, convenience for employers). A student who combines work and study is perceived better than a student who focuses only on the university education (both among his peers and among the employers). In consequence, a separate category of Polish educational migrants are people who came to the UK with the explicit aim of taking up university education, but combine it with temporary work (which they start usually after enrolling to the university). Student works are convergent with the types of employment offered for immigrants (hotels, restaurants). This is the reason why such work increases the probability of contacts with the labour migration:

I work part time in a French restaurant in London and practically 30-40% of people employed in the kitchen were from Poland. There were also three waiters from Poland. Then I worked at the bar – again, three barman from Poland… [R., male, University College London]

When I decided to start studies in England, I came three months earlier – to find a job, save some money which would suffice for a year (...) My first work was in the kitchen, I could not cook, so I started from washing the dishes. Then I prepared salads and deserts, and ended up frying cutlets. (...) Then I
applied for a job as a waiter, barman, which I liked more because it was less stressful, cleaner. (...) Now I teach economy, I have classes with the second year students. It suits me best, because I like sharing my knowledge and experience with other people [M., male, London School of Economics]

If you are not looking for a very sophisticated job, it is easy to find something. Very easy for students. (...). For example at the university, in a student pub. There are many offers, emails [from the university] are being sent constantly. But if you ask about getting a serious, real job, I still don’t know [if it is easy] [A., female, Imperial College London]

In consequence, labour immigrants constitute the most (professionally) mobile group in the diaspora. As students, they mostly take up temporary jobs in sectors dominated by the labour migration. On the other hand, they have an opportunity to participate in the internship programmes and then obtain a job in the primary sector of the labour market.

6. PARTICIPATION IN POLISH ASSOCIATIONS

In the questionnaire students were asked about their participation in associations and organisations in London. The interviewed persons enrolled in one year postgraduate courses usually did not hold membership in any associations. However, a majority of undergraduate students declare that they belong to student associations – both those which are based on the nationality criterion (“Polish societies”) and others (student sport and leisure societies, cultural societies and organizations aiming at career development). Associations of Polish students often serve as a platform to obtain professional opportunities; for example, students from London School of Economics arranged a system of summer “internships for Poles” in a prestigious international financial concern. The students emphasize the solidarity and assistance which is observed in such associations:

Poles are much better for themselves than the Polish in Poland. And I like it, generally. Because when we are far from homeland, everyone helps each other [M., male, London School of Economics]

At London universities, participation in students organizations is perceived as a significant and necessary element of the student life, some schools treat it with almost an equal consideration as lectures and classes. Most probably the participation in Polish students’ associations is a consequence of the functioning
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model of students’ associations, and not just the result of the personal needs of immigrants to keep in touch with their natives.

The frequency of contacts with the other Poles depends mostly on the college and university attended. The largest Polish group of students in the UK capital are the students of London School of Economics. These students more frequently than the other answered that their social circle consists mostly of Poles. LSE is the most popular university among Polish students with the IB certificate. For the graduates of Polish high school with English language of instruction, applying to LSE is the most common academic path. In consequence, almost whole classes of high school students from Poland attend here. This college has also the most active Polish organizations (LSE Polish Society, Polish Business Society). Students of other colleges more often stated that their social circle is international and consists of people both European and non-European descend.

It was a kind of a natural choice, because generally people who attend IB classes want to study abroad. (…) Many people from my high school came here to London, so the first day after I arrived, we just went for beer together [M., male, London School of Economics]

If somebody comes here and doesn’t have any Polish acquaintances, it is easy [to befriend with British and international students], because one must do that. You must do that because otherwise you would be sitting alone in your room. However, I didn’t need this, because I came here with my girlfriend, I had lots of friends from Poland, so I didn’t do that. It depends n the circumstances, really. It is hard to be here alone and in such a situation one’s determination may be higher: [M., male, London School of Economics]

In general, those who prefer socializing with other educational migrants from Poland are usually those who had already knew many Polish students before coming to London (because of their relationships, or due to the fact that their high school colleagues also study in the UK). The preference towards staying in the circle of Polish students is higher in the cases where a student is enrolled in the UK university for a short period of time, and in the cases where a student did not have previous migration experiences. Those students who used to live abroad earlier, emphasize their distance towards Polish environment and constant trials to integrate with the international student community:

You can always limit yourself to the social circle of Poles, but it is never a good solution. Generally, if somebody is from Poland, it does not necessarily mean that you will get on with this person well, or that you will have a lot to
Katarzyna Andrejuk

One may conclude that the smallest social distance appears in the case of relations with the students of very similar life trajectories (e.g. other students of Polish descent). If a student from Poland does not encounter other Polish migrants at his or her school, (s)he is more prone to befriend with students of other nationalities. However, regardless of the access to the circle of the other Polish students, educational migrants rarely initiate contacts with the community of labour migrants. More close relationships and friendships between the two groups: students and workers exists only in the cases where students themselves originate from the community of economic migrants.

7. HOUSING STRATEGIES – „IMMERSION” IN THE MULTICULTURALISM AS A FORM OF EDUCATION

Above two thirds of the interviewed migrants live (or used to live at the first year of their university education) in the student halls. Such results of my survey about the Poles are confirmed by the general trends for international students and the official statistical data, which indicates that 51% of students (and 70% of those in their first year in the UK) stay in the institution-managed accommodation (UKCOSA 2004). London universities provide first year international students with the cheap academic accommodation; in consequence, such lodging is a much more common solution in the case of educational migrants than in the case of home students. Usually students of the same nationality are located in separate apartments, so the flats are shared with the mates of other (non-British) nationalities, stemming from various cultural backgrounds.

Other students usually choose private housing, shared with immigrants of various nationalities. In both cases – student halls and private accommodation – students emphasize the benefits of multicultural housing. The interviewees often praised the possibility of learning another culture directly from its representatives. The behaviour of part of the Polish students may be described as a deliberate strategy of extending contacts with other cultures and limiting the contacts with the Polish group. Such students perceive contacts with other Poles as a mistake and wasting the chances of multicultural education which one has in London:

One of the motives why I wanted to study here is that I wanted to speak English fluently. And I know that you can live abroad for ten years, for example in
London, and work in a pub with Polish co-workers, living with other Poles, reading Polish newspapers, and after ten years you don’t know the language. (...) That’s why, when I looked for a flat, I absolutely avoided the Polish. I would never choose, under any circumstances, the accommodation with other Poles. (...) We had a deal that my Turkish flatmates did not want anyone from Turkey and I said no, absolutely, no flatmates from Poland. [A., female, Metropolitan University/London School of Economics]

Most of my friends and acquaintances are [non-Polish] foreigners. (...) I think it is my deliberate choice, because such people seem more interesting. They have more to offer. [M., male, London School of Economics]

The probability of immense contacts with the Polish labour migration (most importantly – common housing) increases in the cases where such migrant was earlier an educational migrant. In the case of students, who took up university education while being already labour migrants (and in case of previous labour migrants who came back just for the purpose of the university education), the accommodation is often shared with other Poles – either those working or studying. There is often a feeling of disappointment or regret in their statements; they tend to suggest that living with other Poles deprives them of the chances of personal development connected with living with non-Polish flatmates.

I live with the Poles, unfortunately. For me – unfortunately, because I wanted to exercise my language skills, that’s why „unfortunately”. (...) My [Polish] friend used to live with them earlier, and I that’s how I learned them. They work. They graduated from Polish universities, too, but they are not employed in jobs connected with their profession. [S., female, Queen Mary University of London]

I live in the house where most people are Polish, there is only one girl from Columbia. Three Poles, me, a girl and a guy, and this Columbian girl. And at work, it is a well known fact, when you work in a restaurant, most people you meet would be from Eastern Europe. So among my friends... I always feel attracted to Poles, Slovakian, people from Czech Republic. And I also have very many friends from Brasil, Spain, southern Africa, some from Australia. I would not say that the Polish dominate, but if I had to decide, the Polish are closest to my heart. [M2, female, Queen Mary University of London]
8. PARTNERS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Thirteen people – out of the twenty five in my sample - stated that they were (at the moment of the interview) or had been in the past in a relationship with a foreigner. They had mostly partners from other European countries, often their partner also came from the university environment. It confirms the hypothesis that the main motive of making acquaintances and friendships is the feeling of common life experiences; along with the improving linguistic and cultural competences of the individual, the significance of the nationality criterion radically decreases.

Eight students or graduates in my sample stated that their current partner was Polish. Usually those relationships had started in Poland and were continued during the migrants’ stay in the UK. Of course in case of students whose life partners stayed in Poland, the plans of return migrations appeared more frequently. In the cases where both sides of the Polish-Polish relationship were in London, the partners usually stemmed from the university environment. None of my interviewees had a relationship with a Polish partner who was a labour immigrant.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The increasing (after 2004) number of Polish migrants in the UK and the heterogeneity of the diaspora community led to the loosening of intra-community ties and weakening of the integration based on the nationality criterion. The diversity of community groups manifests itself in variety of social statuses and origins of immigrants, various – not only economic – motives of migration. The community feelings are constructed through the factors others than national identity, or belonging to the Polish immigration flow in a foreign country.

The lessening importance of the nationality criterion is visible especially in the case of educational migrations. This group has particularly high cultural skills (in the context of understanding British society and culture), including language skills, and for this reason it is less limited than other migrants in the possibilities of participation in the groups not founded on the national and linguistic criterion. The Polish students feel equally comfortable in the acquaintances and relations with the other Polish and with British or international inhabitants of London. One may even draw a conclusion about the deliberate strategies of europeanisation and internationalisation. Sometimes the students intentionally restrict their contacts with the migrants from Poland, because the acquaintances with the foreigners from various cultures and the opportunity of the active participation in the British multiculturalism is perceived as an important value per se.

Contacts with the Polish community (especially the labour immigrants) are more frequent on the first stage of the student’s stay abroad. Migrants who
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have been studying in London for a long time rarely have immense ties with the economic migration. The connections with the labour migration are more frequent and deeper (common accommodation, same circle of closest friends) in case of the students of one year Master’s programmes. The analysis of contacts and acquaintances between educational migrants of same (Polish) nationality shows that they are typically initiated in the framework of formalised university structures (Polish societies).

The phenomenon of separation of the educational migrants from the rest of the Polish community is triggered by the politics implemented by the British universities, which goes beyond simple offering educational services. Universities reinforce the intra-university integration, which is not always based on the nationality criterion. First and foremost, they facilitate obtaining cheap accommodation in the multicultural student halls. Second, they promote participation in students’ organisations, which facilitates establishing relations and development of professional contacts with the students – both those from Poland and those from other states.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the issue of homelessness and rough sleeping among migrants from Accession States, most notably from Poland, reflected in recent homeless services agencies’ statistics (Homeless Link 2006, 2008, 2010) the media attention (Ramesh 2010), increased local and central government funding for reconnection projects (Thames Reach 2010) and intensification of forced removal practices undertaken by British immigration police (UKBA) is one of the consequences of the opening of the British labour market to 10 Accession states in 2004 and 2007 that has been overlooked for some time. It took a dramatic increase in number of rough sleepers in the last two years for alarm bells to start ringing. The fact that one in four London rough sleepers is now from A8 EU states (Homeless Link 2010), and in some day centres in the capital half or more clients are from A8 countries (Garapich 2010), with a striking dominance of Polish nationals, really begs an explanation as to why this is occurring. With turbulent times ahead in terms of both the economy as well as public spending cuts, conceived and implemented by the British coalition government, the crucial question would thus be: is this a steady cumulative growth which will get worse or just a one-off rise which will eventually level off in time, in similar way as homelessness in London in the mid-80s was dealt with rather successfully (Fitzpatrick 2000) although mechanisms employed then were of an interventionist and aggressive nature designed to ‘remove’ the undesirable people from urban spaces (Cloke, May, Johnsen 2010; May 2000).

This article attempts to answer that question from the perspective of social anthropology, by looking at the relationship between structural constraints faced by homeless Polish migrants and their own perceptions of the social world, their

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1 I wish to thank Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Joanna Krotofil, Derek McGhee and Teresa Staniewicz for their very valuable and encouraging comments on earlier drafts of this article. I would also like to thank Jon May for inspiration in coming up with the title.
meaning-making practices, norms and values, their behavioral patterns – in brief, the cultural factors. As I will show, focusing just on structural and economic determinants not only offers a simplistic and one-dimensional picture, but it also fails to give an explanation and prediction what happens if these constraints and exclusionary policies are removed, and homeless migrants gain the same set of social rights as the rest of British and EU citizens (which in theory will happen in May 2011). An anthropological approach to the functions, roles and cultural meanings of homelessness, group bonds, masculinities, alcohol consumption, perception of the state and dominant society as voiced by homeless migrants I ‘hung around’ with, reveals that structurally rejected, people with particular backgrounds reconstruct communities and form strong ties despite (or because of) a hostile, exclusionary and hegemonic social environment of the neoliberal order.

Two conclusions are drawn from this analysis, an empirical one and a theoretical one. In the case of the former: taking both structural and cultural factors into account, the levels of homeless among that group is going to rise, at least in London. In the case of the latter, the set of cultural forms of behavior and social practices described in academic literature as the *homo sovieticus* syndrome (Wedel 1986, Sztompka 2000, Morawska 1998) is not a static feature but one that is learned and acquired and proves not only valuable and resourceful in highly individualized, neoliberal and capitalistic society, but may in fact be reinforced under a new set of conditions being a productive – socially and culturally - counter-reaction to the neoliberal ordering of social life in the global city.

2. BACKGROUND AND DATA

Statistical data indicates that over the last six years there has been a steady increase in the number of rough sleepers from Eastern Europe and those with problematic alcohol consumption and street drinking. Homeless Link, a national organisation for agencies working with people who are homeless, state in their 2010 report that: *In recent years, our members have reported an increase in demand on their services from Eastern European clients and other migrant groups, many of whom have limited or no access to welfare support and as a result find themselves homeless and without basic resources* (Homeless Link 2010: 4). According to Homeless Link in 2006, the percentage of A10 nationals sleeping rough stood at 15%, whilst in 2008 this had jumped to 25%. At the local level the numbers can be even more striking, as during the study this article is based upon, some Day Centres or agencies reported that around half of their client group comes from Eastern Europe and in some cases, Eastern Europeans comprised up to 80% of their clients.

In identifying the reasons behind such a dramatic rise in the numbers of rough sleepers, most of agencies working with the homeless point to structural
exclusion of A8 migrants from some provisions of the social security system stemming from transition arrangements imposed on citizens of A8 states in 2004. Broadly speaking, migrants gain access to welfare assistance only when they have registered on the WRS (Workers Registration Scheme) and can show evidence of 12 months uninterrupted employment. This state of affairs drastically reduces avenues of immediate assistance a homeless migrant can access, and as one service provider bluntly remarks: there is simply less for them out there (Garapich 2010: 46). This is mainly because immediate temporary shelters are available only to those entitled to Housing Benefit. Coupled with the fact that in general migrants from A8 states occupy positions within London’s secondary labour market, with all the inherent, and well described, features of uncertainty, low pay and lack of employment rights (Wills, et al, 2010), the structural conditions seem to explain the rise in numbers and why this particular section of migrant population is prone to finding themselves in destitution, without accommodation and eventually rough-sleeping. In British government reports it is explicitly recognized, as the Audit Commission states: The few [migrant workers] who fail to find accommodation or work, or are made redundant, or become victims of domestic violence and leave their homes, may not be entitled to Housing Benefit. Because hostels often depend on this, they may not be able to accept such people [and these] individuals can drift into squatting, rough sleeping and street drinking. (Audit Commission, 2007: 24). Unlike the indigenous population or migrants from older EU states, these migrants cannot apply for benefits or can do so under strict conditions which people working in black economy - cannot fulfil. Furthermore, given their frequent substance abuse problems, they cannot access rehabilitation programmes for alcohol addiction. Another crucial structural factor which drives people into rough sleeping, is one of housing shortage and the generally recognized fact that London always has had a sizeable homeless population due to its high rental prices and a lack of availability of social housing (Fitzpatrick 2000).

Since scholars in general agree that it is the combination of individual and structural factors that determine the routes into, and time spent rough sleeping, in a scholarly overview of issues related to homelessness policy in the UK, the authors remark that among the homeless population of migrants from Accession States, two types of individuals can be distinguished (Fitzpatrick, Qullgars, & Plevce 2009: 81). According to Fitzpatrick et al, the first came with pre-existing conditions, with a troubled history of institutional confinement, prison, unemployment, homelessness and most importantly substance abuse. The second is composed of people, who have descended into poverty and subsequent substance abuse after migrating to Britain and their descent into homelessness is linked more to the structural factors resulting from their precarious position in the labour market; due to bad luck, economic downturn or personal circumstances they run into difficulties, cannot pay rent, lose work and end up sleeping rough.
In general, this view is shared by people working in agencies for homeless and reflects attempts to determine the best ways to assist these individuals, and address their special needs. Specifically, there is a tendency to pick up the issue of overt, public, and visibly destructive alcohol consumption as the underlying or contributing reason behind homelessness and persistence in engaging in street culture. The pressure group Alcohol Policy UK notes that: an increasing number of authorities are becoming aware of migrant workers from A8 countries who have not successfully found employment and are engaging in street population activities including street drinking, rough sleeping, begging and associated Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and low level crime. These individuals, like existing street populations, are vulnerable to a range of threats including ill health, exploitation, crime and often have histories of alcohol problems, homelessness or mental health issues. For social policy provision, the main problem with this view is that it obscures the dynamic of becoming homeless and fails to perceive this as a process rather than a state and assumes a neat division between individuals who for some periods of time are actively engaged in street culture and rough sleeping.

As I will demonstrate in the course of this article, there are a number of other problems with this approach, both theoretical and empirical. The failure to recognize the roles and functions of alcohol consumption, and the social significance of masculine related cultural meanings defining the nature of bonds between homeless men, results in an inability to explain why the people in question continue to live their lives as homeless for years, and why the numbers keep swelling and why both types co-exist together to the extent that it becomes artificial and rather arbitrary to distinguish two types on the ground. In other words by not taking into account individual meanings making practices and attitudes, norms and values of people in question, we end up with a simplistic and non-sociological notion of people passively responding to structural changes and experiencing powerlessness without active dissent, manipulation and some form of contestation. Following Clifford Geertz’s understanding of culture I argue that we should view individuals as attempting to interpret social situations in order to act (Geertz 1973) hence any study of homeless needs to see how they make sense of the above mentioned structural exclusionary hegemonic forces they do not have control over, and, how this affects their agency. Capturing this understanding, offers a culturally sensitive explanation on what are the hidden dynamics of homelessness populations in London, especially among migrants and also may give an idea for innovative social policies addressed towards them in order to improve service delivery and quality. Simply looking at that group as

2 http://www.alcoholpolicy.net/2007/08/the-barka-pilot.html
a victim of structural exclusion or destructive substance abuse habits reifies and objectifies factors which are very fluid, subjective and negotiated in the complex relationship between individuals and institutions they deal with. This distinction fails to recognize the interplay between structure and agency (Giddens, 1991) and how peoples’ adaptation to unfavourable conditions may influence structures of domination and exclusion and how their resistance is being produced (Scott 1990; Gupta and Ferguson 1992).

This article is based on a study funded by the Southlands Methodists Centre at Roehampton University and carried out in London between autumn 2009 and summer 2010. Over these months, participant observation and life story interviews were the main tools of data gathering; the interviewees were selected from two categories of people, I spent considerable time with. The first consisted of Day Centre users, often homeless, or in some cases residing in shelters, or squat dwellers. Fieldwork was carried out in thirteen Day Centres/service providers/organisations across London, or places where Soup Kitchens were organised. Specifically for this study, in order to facilitate entry into the group and gain trust, I spent approximately one day per week for seven months in one of the Methodist-run Day Centres acting as a translator and mentor to some of the Centre’s clients. In addition, informal, less structured conversations and talks were conducted with around 20 individuals, who were approached while drinking in public spaces, such as parks, high streets or in front of churches. These drinking meetings were a separate fieldwork experience more akin to spontaneous focus group discussion than interviews. The second group consisted of members of two Polish-speaking AA group, which meets on a weekly basis in the Polish Church in London. Six people from these groups were interviewed. In addition, twelve interviews were carried out with people directly involved in service provision and work with Eastern European migrants in various agencies across London. These were individuals who anonymously talked at length about the difficulties, challenges and their perceptions of their Eastern European clients.

This combination of sources – in-depth interviews, AA meetings, observation of open-air drinking session among street drinkers, following homeless daily routine, casual conversations with Day Centres users, interviews with staff – offered a three dimensional and rich source of data on social and cultural factors behind problematic alcohol consumption and associated problems with homelessness. It offers an actor-centred perspective on how people, who experience destitution, homelessness and addiction, articulate and conceptualizes their situation, how they contest and resist dominant structures of power, form social relationships and survive in a global city. In brief, these multidimensional sources give an insight in to how migrants experiencing particular problems, view life and society in Britain.
The majority of respondents were Polish (27 from total of 35) and male; this article focuses on that group (in total 24 men). Almost all (22) of the respondents were from working class or rural backgrounds, born in small to medium towns and had poor command of English. They were mainly in their late 30s and 40s with several individuals in their 50s and three in their 20s. The interviewees demonstrated a high variety of accommodation arrangements and to call them simply ‘homeless’ may be sometimes misleading as their accommodation status was in actual fact, in constant flux. They have been either rough sleeping, living in a temporary shelter provided by various religious organisations in London, in churches, living in squats, garages, parking lots, building sites where they had temporary employment, sleeping in friends’ place, sleeping in night buses or in tents around the capital’s many parks – during the course of the study, some individuals actually moved from one type of dwelling to another several times. A small minority who had access to social welfare were staying for some periods of time in shelters. In conjunction with this, their migration history was quite uniform and confirms findings of previous surveys on homeless and destitute Eastern European migrants (Homeless Link 2006, 2008; Broadway 2007; Mills, Knight,& Green 2007; Garapich 2007). Most have been the victims of high unemployment in their countries of origin, were unsuccessful businessmen unable to pay off their debts, workers of large state owned industries made redundant or long-term unemployed. In a few cases they were people with a considerable amount of time spend in Polish criminal justice system. Overall, they were all individuals for whom the economic transition in Poland brought sudden degradation of status, poverty, insecurity and unemployment. This is most definitely a section of Polish society which can be described as having essentially lost due to their country’s transition to a market economy (Rakowski, 2009, Stenning 2005).

Crucially for subsequent analysis, most of them have been working in the UK for some time and their decline into homelessness had a fairly similar trajectory – they had been laid off suddenly without compensation, lost jobs in the construction industry due to end of (formal or informal) contrast, were thrown out by their landlords or had been victims of unscrupulous employers and gangmasters extorting money and documents. This employment history may have been formally documented or in the black economy, but overwhelmingly these people were economically active immediately after arrival into the UK sometimes for years. In few important instances, the interviewees were also economically active during this study although this was mainly casual, cash in hand work, or self organised labour (scrap collecting being the main source). All respondents (except the AA participants) were active drinkers at the time of the study; several individuals were self-admitted alcoholics and in three cases – during this study - were admitted into hospitals after being found unconscious on the street after
suffering an alcoholic seizure. At least four respondents were engaged in heavy drinking of antiseptic liquid stolen from hospitals, which obviously presents a serious health hazard. Almost all respondents from the homeless group had a history of broken personal and family relationships: they were divorced or separated, not seeing their children for long time, or, in court disputes with their respective spouses over property in Poland.

3. BEING ‘OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM’ AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Starting with an analysis of respondents’ general perception of the migratory trajectory, social changes in Poland and their individual attitudes towards the social world in UK and Poland, homeless migrants’ view doesn’t differ from what other groups of Polish migrants state, as documented in other studies (Eade, Drinkwater, Garapich 2007). That perception of social change matches also perfectly the views expressed by other groups whose position dramatically deteriorated after the collapse of communism in 1989 (Buchowski 2001, Rakowski 2009). Basically, these people would agree with Zygmunt Bauman’s famous statement that the social forces which led to the downfall of the communist power ... [were] not those that [would] eventually benefit from the construction of the new system (Bauman 1994: 33) and that ‘they’, ‘the thieves in the government’, ‘them’, ‘politicians’ have ripped the benefits, ‘robbed the nation’ while the ordinary people bore the costs of transition. This radically polarized view depicts in broad strokes a social world divided into a small elite circle which did not change substantially after the end of the communist system on one side and vast amount of those at the bottom on the other. There is no place for the middle class or for any nuanced view on various pros and cons of the transition – the forces beyond their control but having distinct human face (‘them’, ‘communists’, ‘politicians’, ‘they’) are in direct confrontation and engage in a state of hostility with ‘the people’, the ‘ordinary Poles’, ‘normal people’, ‘working class’, ‘us’, ‘the poor’.

One of crucial aspects of narratives collected during the course of this study was that this polarization, the view of the social world radically divided is extended and re-applied to new, different circumstances with structural exclusion and economic uncertainty, as the main features. In general, the respondents understand the structural constraints on accessing the British welfare state systems, and they often discuss these amongst themselves and with the agency staff. These discussions are marked by a deep sense of injustice and unfairness, entrenching their perception that ‘they aren’t wanted’ and essentially, the authorities would like to get rid of them. In consequence, the welfare state and social assistance in Britain in their view becomes a part of the generalized ‘system’, which discriminates against them and keeps them in their state of destitution and poverty.
and what it really wants is their physical removal – the latter not being far from the truth considering increased attention given to homeless A8 citizens from UK immigration enforcements. This perception extends to the system of help as well - despite the dedication of workers in Day Centres, they too became part of the alien world the homeless have to struggle against.

It is, then, not surprising that most of the respondents’ world views are dominated by a sense of mistrust, angst, fear and being overwhelmed by forces they cannot control. The experience from Poland partially re-lived and reinforced in the UK, has resulted in the reinforced perception of ‘the system’, the economy, the authorities, police, market forces and so on, forming a highly hostile mix about which one needs to be aware and one needs to defend oneself against – otherwise – as one migrant said: you'll get screwed, no freedom, no work, no respect; they will get you. In some cases this feeling is given clear political articulation, as in the words of this migrant from Poland, who after years of working as a carpenter decided to stop working altogether and lives on the streets of London, usually camping in parks: A human being doesn’t count these days; Poles and others that sleep on the street and drink aren’t just lazy – it is simply helplessness, no resources, no help….The system is sick. Politicians and bankers just lie and fuck us – why then we should play this game?

In numerous accounts of homeless migrants during this study, the ‘system’ out there, extends to the formal world of established norms of operation on the labour market – the formalities related to tax, work, employment law, social benefits, accommodation, rules of capitalist relations, certificates, CVs, interviews, norms of conduct – all this was treated with a deep suspicion and unease. This respondent for instances reflects on the complexities of applying for benefits in order to get a place in a shelter: ...it is so complicated, really all that stuff is overwhelming. I don’t trust it... Poles are on the streets because they do not know how to function in all this: they don’t know the law, the system. It is easier to drink than to ask.... Similar attitudes were frequently voiced during numerous occasions while I assisted in filling out forms for various agencies – Job Centres, employment agencies, support organisations etc. The formal side of the ‘system’ with paperwork being its embodiment frequently provoked hostile, cynical and distanced reactions: what’s this for? This is useless, just for them [staff of the day centre] to do something; all this is fucked up, what does it [filling up the form] do? – said one respondent. On a cultural level then, the experience of structural exclusion reproduces and reinforces tested means of adaptation to an unfamiliar situation and reaffirms a world view which basically sees the social world divided between ‘us’ and ‘them’, a world engaged in constant exploitation and dominance of the powerful over the weak, especially if the former use the tools related to modern forms of knowledge – ability to understand institutions, fill out complex
forms, read and comprehend complex instructions, IT skills, comprehension of how law works etc. Moreover, the perception is that these tools of modern life are used but also created by those in control and power – including those that are supposed to help them. The language of life under post-communist Poland and London streets is thus similar; it is a language of struggle, war, suffering, mistrust, suspicion and survival in dire circumstances against an alien and incomprehensible world of the new neoliberal order. This is the cultural meanings of homeless’ narratives describing the life on the streets as a ‘jungle’, ‘war’, ‘fight’, ‘struggle’. It is a jungle out there... it’s dangerous... you need to stick together – as one of them said. Almost all respondents eagerly engaged in describing similar stories depicting violence, theft, intimidation, extortion, modern day slavery, beatings, even killing. These stories are synchronized in their meaning with an overall perception of the outside world as hostile, ruthless and full of dangers and unpredictability. The fault line is also synchronized with the line dividing the ‘formal’ with ‘informal’ the institutionalized world of labour, capitalism, anonymity, rationalism and bureaucracy and the social, intimate, face-to-face, passionate, personal, known and trusted realm of ‘true’ human relationships.

4. ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND MASCULINITY

Life under such Manichean black and white world view would seem psychologically difficult to bear hence I argue that this meaning doesn’t carry much power on its own, its force lies in the practical application and relationship with other meanings related to gender and community thus the power of social construction of these dichotomies dividing the social realm between ‘us’ and ‘the system’, lies in its direct effect on individuals’ social networks and survival skills. The direct outcome of this polarized view is a clear creation of the ‘us’ that is, of the group of people sharing similar fate, background, norms and values (culture in brief) in harsh conditions. In the complex world of the urban jungle, capitalist market and unequal welfare provisions, where anyone can be a thief or a threat and the system is dehumanised, and essentially hostile; and taking into account the omnipresent experience of family breakdown shared by all homeless I spoke to, the value of honest, simple, personal, face-to-face based, egalitarian and trustworthy human relationships increases. I argue that the sense of fear and uncertainty towards the complex and sometimes incomprehensible world of the capitalist labour market and the global city on one side and family breakdown on the other pushes homeless migrants to seek simpler, tested, known means of finding trust, friendship and companionship. And it is no surprise that they find it in drinking group sessions among men who share similar characteristics. In the process of a positive feedback once they do find companionship – however brief
it may be since strong bonds often turn into mutual violence – the isolation from the system increases. This functional relationship between group formations and isolation from institutions is what makes that group particularly prone to alcohol abuse from one side and hard to engage with the administrative system of help – however little is there for them – from the other.

One of the primary functions of alcohol intake noted by anthropologists is its role as a social bonding mechanism and symbolic marker of intimacy. People establish the terms of their relationships and emotional bonding through collectively consuming alcohol (SIRC 1998, see also Mandelbaum 1965). Among the Day Centres and homeless services’ users interviewed, the dominant pattern of drinking is social and communal, where typically a group of three to ten people meet in a park, in a back alley, or a parking lot, and consume, mainly the most affordable drink – cider, or when funds permit, vodka, and rarely with food. In most cases the alcohol is drunk from one cup or directly from the bottle – increasing the symbolic closeness of drinking session participants. Sharing resources is a moral obligation and solitary drinking strongly condemned (although occurring). Alcohol consumption, as a way of creating bonds between people, becomes paramount in the light of the fact that almost all people interviewed at the centres live apart from their families, wives and children. As noted almost all interviewees have a history of separation as a result of their migratory experiences, (or the other way round - they migrated as a result of family breakdown) and their urge to seek companionship in drink can be interpreted as a desire to rebuild a broken sense of belonging and community – in brief, this is a mechanism to cope with solitude and lack of companionship on one side and deal emotionally with the sense of isolation and hostility of the generalized ‘system’.

Group drinking sessions are most often an occasion to reaffirm and demonstrate affective friendships and relationships formed out of common fate and situation. During meetings with members of drinking groups a constant topic of conversations is the fate of mutual friends and drinking companions: where they are at the moment, how are they, where they drink, if they have a job, where they sleep, whether they have been recently arrested or hospitalized, what are their plans. Discussants often emphasize the need to keep track of each others because people die out there, you need to stick together – as one told me. This information seems to be of primary importance hence their dominant presence in conversations – but it isn’t just the content of information (particular news about a particular person) but the fact that they are told and retold all over (some stories kept resurfacing) builds a sense of group and shared experience which is of crucial significance here. These bond-making mechanisms are worth emphasizing and it is safe to say, that these groups form closely knit communities with emphasis on norms of reciprocity and rules of conduct (for instance: never leave your drinking
Of alcohol and Men...

companion unconscious – as I was repeatedly reminded). The closeness is borne out of mutual interests and collective actions undertaken – in most cases when the group resources are pooled, information shared, plans coordinated and detailed knowledge of one’s’ lives circulates; but these bonds are also established, and reproduced through symbolic action emphasizing collective fate which carries strong egalitarian features of these communities. This sense of community is strengthened by a sense of equally sharing the same position as homeless, destitute people who are somewhat “outside” of the normal world, “outside” the hostile system that rejected them. As these people stress: Yes, we are a group here; look all friends here we drink from one cup, we talk and drink because we are all equal, all the same; somewhat separate from the world out there... Or as in one other case: You need to stick together; it doesn’t always work but to survive here you need to stick...

Even more crucial is the fact that service providers often recognize that these people form tight groups, which support themselves and can be quite resourceful; in this way communities are also reinforced by outsiders. This service provider for example notes:

The Poles stick together and they form little communities, very cohesive; they are always together, in two, fives, sixes...this gives them support, but it isn’t the right kind of support. It is destructive support... everybody share the same misery, they know they have a common problem; they haven’t got any money, they haven’t got a job so they stick together and look out for each other. So if they’re begging, if they’re stealing one party will look out and cover.

The group bonds – however short lived, since in-fights are quite common – are strengthened since communal alcohol consumption also reinforces the perception of ‘being outside the system’ the act reinforces the boundary dividing the close and intimate ‘us’ and hostile ‘system’. Here, the wider and more historically embedded cultural meanings of alcohol consumption have to be taken into account particularly relating to links between collective consumption of alcohol and power relations.

Anthropologists generally distinguish between societies with overall positive beliefs and expectancies about alcohol (variously defined as non-Temperance, ‘wet’ or ‘integrated’ drinking cultures) and those whose beliefs are more negative, inconsistent and ambivalent (defined as ‘ambivalent’, ‘Nordic’ drinking cultures); (SIRC 1998); and a few points need to be made. Historically, in Eastern Europe, as in the case of Poland, drinking has been strongly associated with its rural cultural roots where serfs and peasants engaged in frequent and excessive drinking bouts
and drinking was predominantly a male activity, marking transition into adulthood (Zielinski & Moskalewicz, 1995: 220). But drinking had also a distinct political aspect since perceived dependency on alcohol of large section of population in the 19th and 20th century was frequently constructed by the socialist and temperance movements as the way in which the oppressed classes or nations were controlled by the dominant classes and/or foreign occupiers. The long history of the state’s monopoly over spirit production – both in pre-socialist and socialist period – meant that there exists a strong tension between individuals and communities’ patterns of culturally significant drinking behaviour and constant attempts by states and elites to control consumption, production and meanings constructed around alcohol. Socialist states have often elevated the drinking of its population into a national problem with massive campaigns and educational programmes to reduce consumption and associated problems – usually with no success. The widespread existence of black market economy in alcohol in Poland (production, smuggling and sale), meant that alcohol consumption in itself – due to states attempts to control - has been elevated to a political act and seen as an aspect of citizens’ freedom from state control, as a form of civil disobedience. This theme has been discussed in detail by Polish anthropologist Roch Sulima, who writes about anti-systemic potentials in alcohol consumption; in his ethnographic accounts of Polish labourers drinking in state factories at work, he describes this social action as producing a thrill of ‘stolen time’ - a perception by workers in state-owned industries that they manage to steal the employers’ time and enter – via alcohol intoxication – into a different dimension of reality and time, thus resisting and contesting the dominant social and economic constraints and power relations in socialist Poland (Sulima 2000).

The accounts of my respondents living rough, along with drinking have similar meanings and are often constructed as anti-systemic acts, an act of resistance against the dominant forces of the modern world. Alcohol consumption, as the antithesis of productive work in a mechanistic society, becomes a statement - a culturally significant act of defiance that serve mutually reinforcing functions – strengthening the bonds between men and giving meaningful explanation for their current position by erecting and entrenching a boundary between the ‘us’ and the hostile ‘them’, the ‘system’.

And unsurprisingly, these social practices are performed mainly by men. In fact it is a rarity to find a female being part of these groups, and sometimes men in discussions over the issue stress that women aren’t welcome in these circles, that they bring potential friction and tensions, especially in squats. Thus the strength and significance of these practices relate to the relationship between bond making activities, alcohol intake, survival, and perception of gender and masculinities. As scholars such as Zielinski (1995) notes, one of the most important cultural aspects
of drinking is its direct association with manhood and socially constructed role man plays in societies migrants come from. In case of Poland, it has been noted by previous studies that alcohol initiation traditionally is a purely manly affair and especially in rural areas it is one of the most powerful symbolic ways a man asserts its role in society. It is clearly linked with the public display of drinking and its social acceptance - a drunken man on the streets provokes radically different reactions than a drunken woman, as Zielinski notes: *drunkenness on the part of a woman is not acceptable, and a woman who drinks alone in public may be regarded a prostitute* (Zielinski 1995: 230). This tendency obviously is a generalized one and rapid changes in Polish society had their impact also on the diversification of drinking patterns, but as far as female members of the AA groups were concerned, this traditional view still holds (for more detail see Garapich 2010: 39-40)

Since groups of homeless in this study were formed almost uniquely of men in their 30s to 50s it is crucial to look at this aspect in more detail as it offers important insights and interpretations of their actions. As noted respondents attitude towards drinking linked strongly to their need of creating social bonds, but these were mainly bonds between men. The way they talked about drinking had a distinct flavour of masculine pride in the amount drank, the type of drink they ingested and colourfully described behaviour they exhibited while intoxicated. Whenever drink was mentioned, it was usually as something men simply had to do, otherwise they would be regarded as socially inadequate and not complete, thus not fulfilling their social roles, their manhood could be subject to doubting, jokes and ridicule usually with homosexual connotations. It is crucial to note here that a frequent account of alcohol initiation mentioned in the interviews emphasized the role of the army as the place where ‘man were made’ and large, prolonged alcohol consumption sessions was practiced as a form of initiation into adulthood:

*I began to drink in the army; at home there wasn’t any drink; my parents were strict on that, they didn’t drink at all. The problem began in the army; in the army you have to drink, drink is part and parcel of being a recruit. You have to drink but why? I don’t know, where army begins, logic ends; this is part of bullying and ways to control the younger ones. The older know how to drink heavily; they taught the young ones…*

*In the army men had to drink it is normal; you are out there, no family just others like you…*

*It’s all started in the army…*

The association of the homo-social structure of the army, the group of men and the drink is further emphasized when the accounts and casual talk about the
life in the streets of London described above are recalled. As noted earlier, a very common reference is to frame it in the language of struggle, war and constant threat of violence. Group drinking discussions are full of stories about the realities of the life on the streets as it was a war-like situation, with death, injury, blood spilled a commonplace among their drinking-mates, with beatings and violence experienced on regular basis. Here again drink potentially bonds people together in that struggle and makes them almost a brother-in-arms group:

It is a fight, struggle, it’s a war here [among the homeless]… people die on the street and you have to be really careful with whom you talk; that’s why it is so important to have friends. But in order to have them, you need to have a drink sometimes or just buy one for the guys who may help you.

Others make the comparison with reference to the male-centred companionship and drinking as an obvious outcome of this:

But here I just drink like in the army… it is the same stuff really… you drink because everyone around you drinks…and here it is like camping a bit...

As the quotes above demonstrate, these narratives have a double function aimed at achieving a similar effect: they increase the sense of threat from outside which simultaneously increases the need for trusted relationships and companionship among members of the drinking group; at the same time these bonds have a more practical gain. Through collective drinking people can also get necessary information about resources vital to the homeless – for example squats, places with free food, odd jobs, quality of service in Day Centres or an information about a group drinking session that takes place nearby. From anthropological perspective this masculine discourse of war and struggle on the streets of London has additional functions – it gives meaning to the everyday survival of a homeless person with drinking problem and gives meaning to the omnipresent sense of insecurity and unpredictability; second it reinforces a bond between men who share similar fate; third it lifts person’s self-esteem as someone who ‘knows the tricks’ of life on the streets. The third aspect is crucial for homeless men I spoke to for several reasons: it parallels very well with the overall stereotype of Polish migrants represented as hard working, resourceful, smart and street-wise. The narrative of struggle on the street is evoked not only to describe the hostile world out there, but also to show how the individual overcomes that hostility and despite all the odds, makes it. So evoking the hardship is aimed at presenting how successfully the interviewee did overcome it. The pride in ‘making it’ despite all provides a sense of pride in ‘beating the system’ and a source of self esteem which
for a person in a position of structural powerlessness, is of crucial importance. The system is equated with dominant power, so all a humble individual can do to ascertain his agency (and consequently humanity) is to dodge it and cheat it in small, mundane ways; a strategy well known from other studies of resistance by subordinate groups (Scott 1990).

To recapitulate the argument: in face of structural exclusion stemming from both the welfare regimes, neoliberal restructurisation in Poland and current position on the secondary labour market in global city, homeless Polish migrants form highly functional in economic terms groups of people that reproduce and reaffirm egalitarian bonds between men through symbolic means associated with alcohol consumption, value put upon ‘informal’, ‘beat the system’ attitudes and norms drawing on anti-institutional world view, tested in previous historical times. The relationship between cultural meanings associated with masculinities, alcohol consumption, economic sustainability of living on the streets through petty theft, scrap collecting, shop lifting, begging and finding things, and dichotomised anti-institutional world view is a functional one. This means that no one factor may be treated as dominant, it is rather a combination of all which strengthen the bonds between these men, giving them means to long term social and economic sustainability to survive on the streets – which in some cases, means years and years of rough sleeping or living in precarious conditions. This sets of attitudes explain also the stubbornness and unwillingness to engage with social services – something the service providers interviewed for this study frequently noted, highlighting the ‘passiveness’ of migrants and their disengagement: self-reliance [means for them] that they don’t need your help, ’I’m on my own’ kind of stuff. And that’s how they survived. And this is a very strong mentality...They rely at the same time on who they know on their networks; this is how they survived in Poland and this is how they survived here... they don’t want to get engaged in bureaucracy, they don’t care...They don’t want to make themselves visible as well; ‘the state needs not to see you’ - that’s why they like to stay out of the system, staying invisible is the best course of action. [NGO worker, West London]. In other words, homeless Poles respond actively to their situation of powerlessness by reinforcing and re-enacting tested means of survival in the face of dominant power – be it a hostile communist regime, inequalities of the transition era, or exclusionary practices of the British welfare state. The socially constructed meanings of masculinities, anti-institutionalism, value of egalitarian bonds between a group of men consuming alcohol in public, and pride in ‘beating the system’ attitude, and resulting resourcefulness explain why these people remain in their current state for years. It also helps in explaining why the numbers of homeless Poles have swollen in London in the last few years. For a marginalised group and those that seem not have much to lose this action brings some slight balance to the unequal relationships between labour and capital.
An important point needs to be made here. This isn’t to argue that the homeless fully ‘choose’ their lifestyles and romanticize their plight as an anti-conformist act, something that researchers on homelessness rightly warn against (Fitzpatrick 2000, Oliwa-Ciesielska 2006). It is simply an anthropological explanation of how people defend, explain, and make sense of the structural constraints and barriers they face. On a daily basis, having to deal and contain forces beyond ones’ control – the economy, legal framework, systems of help provision, unfamiliar/foreign contexts, state policies – individuals with little cultural capital and limited resources need to retain some degree of self-autonomy and agency in order to keep some basic levels of self-esteem. Explaining the world as essentially alien is a self-defence mechanism that helps people in such groups to feel that they still have some control over their lives. Engaging in some activities that are ‘theirs’ – like group drinking, squat finding, scrap collecting, stealing, shoplifting - and surviving for years on the streets of London – and being proud about it - is another part of that strategy. This isn’t easy as often people that took part in this study were suffering from poor health, chronic alcohol-related illnesses, depression, bruises from fights and often hunger. However, the argument made here is that how people explain and rationalize their life and situation has to be regarded as a response, contestation and negotiation of the structural barriers migrants face. Again, this anthropological interpretive explanation, ought not to be seen as arguing that the people who are homeless and engage in street drinking, have deliberately chosen this as their lifestyle. It is to demonstrate how people try to make sense of what is happening to them and why and how the powerless try to carve some level of cultural autonomy into their lives.

5. CONCLUSION: HOMO SOVIETICUS REVISITED

The set of norms and values that emphasize the moral worth of anti-institutionalism, ‘beat the system’ attitudes, the functionality of informal connections, bending the formal rules and hostility towards the elites as expressed in a polarized view of the social world has been often described in the literature and popular commentary as essentially a ‘hang over’ from the communist times and an undesirable obstacle on the road to happy modernisation project in Poland and Eastern Europe more generally. Embodied in the notion of the *homo sovieticus* syndrome numerous social scientists in the 90s rushed to describe what went wrong during the transition period and why it may be so. Piotr Sztompka for instance writes about the ‘cultural lag’, ‘civilizational incompetence’ or ‘socialist mentality’ which prohibits vast numbers of Poles to internalize the dominant values of modernisation and neoliberal project – individualism, creativity within market rules, rational planning, meritocracy and hard work ethic (Sztompka 1993, 2000).
The ‘bend the rules’ and ‘beat the system’ attitudes of the homo sovieticus syndrome, in his view are the cultural residues of a system that promoted passiveness, anti-institutional attitudes, disrespect for law, excessive egalitarianism and suspicion towards individual wealth (Sztompka 2000; see also Wedel 1986). This then needs to be eradicated sooner rather than later, if Polish society is to follow the Western model on the path to modernisation. This perspective has been strongly criticized, most notably by Michal Buchowski who describes it as anti-sociological, ahistorical, elitist and laden with ideological undertones. Buchowski points that the tendency of Polish elites and distinguished sociologists, such as Sztompka, to construct the socialist mentality ascribed in to particular sections of citizenry leads to essentializing and stigmatizing the lower classes, who are more often than not, the poor or the rural class; in effect this intellectual manoeuvre reframes the East-West boundary from being a geographical one to a cultural one, and divides post-communist societies from within, which is a classical case of occidental orientalism. The identification of the homo sovieticus syndrome with particular, sections of Polish society constructs the ‘other’ in close proximity. Otherness is dissected from an exotic content and brought home, thus displaced primitives can be found on our doorstep [...] and they place them in local pockets of poverty and rural areas. In any case, the spatially exotic other has been resurrected as the sociologically stigmatized brother (Buchowski 2006: 476) where in the eyes of the elites those demoralized, corrupted and orphaned victims not of current practices but of the past, have to learn new standards, change their mentality in order to join the progressive part of humanity. If they cannot do it, they remain “Easterners and should indict themselves for being alienated. Any failure is ascribed to their “oriental nature” (Buchowski 2006: 475)

As Buchowski also notes, sources of classifications and the production of meaning- among various groups of Polish society, stretches back several generations and often show strong continuities, and needs thus be seen in a Braudelian longue durée perspective. Furthermore, these perceptions should be viewed not just as symptoms of problems with social and cultural change but as known and tested strategies of survival in the face of uncertain future and contestation of power relations. As Buchowski states in the case of the Polish rural class faced with the post-1989 change: What appears to scholars as systemic transformation, for rural people it is just a link in the chain of history (Buchowski, 2004: 174). In a similar way, I argue that for homeless Poles, their current situation makes sense and is made socially acceptable through the use of tested and known categories evoked to explain the realities of the neoliberal global city. By this I mean: its inequalities, chaos, unpredictability, uneven access to welfare, and subordinate position vis a vis various forms of authority, repressive practices of the state and revanchist attitudes of urban planners towards homelessness (May 2000).
The role of egalitarian relations symbolized in war-like references emphasizing the value of bonds between men sharing the same social position and showing resourcefulness in ‘beating the system’, is not just a reaction to adverse conditions, but a legitimate cultural response that offers a coherent, deeply significant and historically meaningful world view divided into the *gemeinschaft* of personal, face-to-face relationships of drinking companions and *gesellschaft* of the hostile, dehumanised, modern and complex world ‘out there’. In consequence, the reinforcement of the *homo sovieticus* syndrome with all its moral validation of various forms of ‘bending the rules’ and promotion of activities on the borders of the law or explicit acceptance of illicit behaviour (such as petty theft, forging of papers, having numerous IDs or aliases, lying to authorities, lying on CVs, various forms of social mimesis and so on) has to be put in the context of modern capitalist social relations and seen as a defence mechanism, a creative adaptation to the neoliberal project producing inequalities rather than a passive residue, a ‘cultural lag’ inadaptable to modern conditions. In fact, as Ewa Morawska notes in her analysis of the income seeking Poles to Berlin in early 90s, numerous features of the so called *homo sovieticus* syndrome may be seen as perfectly compatible with the neoliberal, de-centralized, flexible, network-oriented capitalist labour market. As she notes, *capitalism based on transnational, decentralized, flexible production of consumer services in areas/sectors of the economy unregulated by legal-institutional frameworks renders some features of the accustomed *homo-sovieticus* syndrome into effective strategies of economic action in the new situation* (Morawska 1998).

In looking at, and making sense of, homeless Poles’ discourses and meaning-making practices, I propose to take this point further and argue that the specific position of the homeless migrant from a post-communist society in a global city renders the set of norms and values referred to as the *homo-sovieticus* syndrome effective not only economically but also socially and culturally as they present a way with which subordinate groups retain a level of autonomy, self-esteem and relative power in dealing with service providers, the state authorities and the wider public. The frequent boastings by my interviewees’ of the ability to survive despite the odds, their ability to cheat the authorities, avoid deportations, dodge the UKBA (between April and December 2010 UKBA stepped up ‘administrative removals’ of A8 rough sleepers from certain central London boroughs), find food, clothes, money, shelter and ‘get by’ despite the ‘war’ where they were often targeted, points to the importance that these activities have for individuals on both social and cultural levels. This serves to reinforce both the masculine notions of pride, self-esteem, resourcefulness, as well as symbolic value of egalitarian and communitarian notions of fairness, justice and equality. By radical rejection of the institutional ‘system’, homeless Poles remain in a known, tested, and familiar
territory of homosocial environment where trust, friendships, mutual help and reciprocity have a stronger and emotionally – at least relatively – fulfilling role. Where my argument differs from Morawska and also Sztompka’s perception of the *homo sovieticus* syndrome is that these attitudes and cultural reactions are learned and developed in the process of gradual social and economic decline into poverty. Thus, these sets are not a feature that exists in isolation from the general social and economic environment – it is a learned, adopted and used set of strategies in response to structural subordination and position of powerlessness. This explains why the two ‘types’ of homeless (the ones with ‘pre-conditions’ and ones without) as perceived by British scholars in time merge into one and after shorter than longer time on the streets among the community of homeless represent and articulate sets of norms and perceptions described above.

Again, this isn’t to romanticize or politicize the lifestyles these people lead – they are all too well aware of the dysfunctional, hazardous and dangerous aspects of rough sleeping and drinking. They themselves critically reflect upon the value of friendships cemented by alcohol consumption, as one philosophically remarked: *Vodka connects and divides people at the same time. It makes them come together to break that bond later...* Friendships and relations observed among the homeless were punctuated by frequent in-fights, mutual accusations of thefts, aggression and outbursts of rage especially while intoxicated; the bonds between men were made of both care as well as aggression. The violent conflicts (quite often witnessed during fieldwork) were sometimes a sign of strength of bonds these people share, as animosities were usually forgotten and men involved were friends again in few days time. What’s crucial, my observations show that arguments most often broke because an individual had high moral expectations about other group member behaviour, expectations borne out of the above mentioned dichotomy between the trusted circle of friends and the ‘system’ out there. Nevertheless, when pressed, interviewees had little doubt that they lead a very risky and unhealthy lifestyle. The average life expectancy for a rough sleeper in London is 42 years and there is no denying that these people do sometimes try to improve their situation – by looking for work, occasionally quitting drinking and exiting their friendship networks, thus recognizing the destructive influences which they may have collectively had on them, and so forth. To be honest however, in the course of this study these instances were a rarity (or constituted a break in rough sleeping rather than a conscious decision to end it altogether) and it became clear to me at the end of the study, that although it is relatively easy for Polish migrants to become homeless – due to above mentioned structural constraints and general precarious social position they are in, it becomes much harder to cease to be one because of much more deeper, subtle and cultural specific factors. This answers the question posed in the introduction – as we see the growth in numbers has a cummulative effect.
Adding to this picture the increasingly difficult structural conditions on the labour and housing market and public spending cuts affecting provision for homeless it is reasonable to argue that the growth of homelessness among Polish men in London will continue to accumulate over the next years as it did in the last 6 years. The end of transition periods in terms of access to welfare from May 2011 will not solve the problem as due to a functional combination of both structural and cultural determinants homelessness will become an experience shared by more and more Polish migrants. This means that any social service provision for homeless in the coming years will have to be particularly open minded as structural inclusion doesn’t necessary mean inclusion on social and cultural levels.

The compatibility and cultural functionality of the many features of the so called *homo sovieticus* syndrome in the world of modern capitalist global city raise some crucial questions not only about the nature of social relations in post-communist societies such as Poland but about the wider aspects of migrations from A8 countries to Western Europe and its impact on social relations. It also raises fundamental questions on the nature of contemporary capitalism. If norms and values regarded by the elites as antithetical to modernisation are in fact an integral and functional part of the capitalist relations in 21st global city, if they consist of the necessary arsenal of social and cultural tools for survival of the modern proletariat, then we may be keen to revisit again an old Marxian argument that capitalism carries with itself the seeds of its own destruction.

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ANNE WHITE

MOBILNOŚĆ POLSKICH RODZIN W ZACHODNIEJ ANGLII – TRANSLOKA-LIZM I STOSUNEK DO POWROTU

W niniejszym artykule analizuję, w jaki sposób rodziny polskie pochodzenia robotniczego utożsamiają się z nowym miejscem zamieszkania i mimo ograniczonych możliwości komunikacji w języku angielskim, budują nieliczne, ale ważne więzi z anglojęzyczną społecznością – np. czytając listy wysłane przez szkoły do rodziców czy uczęszczając niekiedy na anglojęzyczne msze święte. Mimo luźnego charakteru tych więzi, rodziny mieszkające od kilku lat w Bristolu czy w Bath czują się dość silnie związane z tymi miejscami i nie są specjalnie zainteresowane dalszą mobilnością w obrębie Anglii. Pragnienie zapuszczenia korzeni i pozostania na miejscu jest dodatkowo wzmocnione przez pamięć o wyczerpującym okresie mobilności poprzedzającym migrację całej rodziny, kiedy w Wielkiej Brytanii pracował jedynie ojciec. Jednocześnie rodzice – zazwyczaj pochodzący z tych samych miejsc w Polsce – utrzymują ścisłe więzi społeczne z rodzinnymi miejscowościami, są to jedyne miejsca, które biorą pod uwagę, rozważając możliwość powrotu do Polski.

AGNIESZKA IGNATOWICZ

PODRÓŻUJĄC DO DOMU – MOBILNOŚĆ I „NOWI” MIGRANCI Z POLSKI W ANGLII

Mobilność emigrantów od dawna budzi duże zainteresowanie współczesnych badań emigracji. Badania i publikacje poświęcone temu tematowi pojawiają się w ostatnich latach coraz liczniej i przynoszą głębsze zrozumienie procesów mobilności zagranicznych. Dziś nie ma już wątpliwości, że współczesna mobilność daje możliwość osiągania przede wszystkim wyższych dochodów (Cyrus, 2008; Diminescu, 2003; Morokvasic, 2004). Tym niemniej, w konceptualizacjach, mobilność postrzegana jest jako zjawisko uniwersalne, wskutek czego obserwowany jest brak badań nad indywidualnymi doświadczeniami i przeżyciami mobilnych emigrantów. Opierając się na osobistych narracjach osób, które wyjechały do Wielkiej Brytanii po przystąpieniu Polski do Unii Europejskiej w 2004 roku, artykuł ten analizuje jeden z aspektów mobilności, mianowicie wizyty emigrantów w Polsce. Swoboda poruszania się w Unii Europejskiej, postęp w transporcie i komunikacji lotniczej sprzyjają i ułatwiają rozwój nowej mobilności, której podstawą stanowią częste pobytы i wizyty w kraju. Zgromadzony materiał empiryczny pokazuje, że
dla wielu polskich emigrantów w Anglii ta nowa mobilność ma kluczowe znaczenie. Wizyty w domu traktowane są nie tylko jako przedłużenie i utrzymanie kontaktów z rodziną, ale także jako forma zyskania prestiżu i negocjacji awansu społecznego. Co więcej, wizyty w Polsce stanowią ważną fazę pertraktacji samego procesu emigracji. W tym artykule sugeruję, że figuratynwa odległość pomiędzy Polską a Anglią oraz swoboda migracji w Unii Europejskiej daje emigrantom poczucie kontroli i uprzywilejowania odnośnie ich mobilności.

KATHERINE BOTTERILL

MOBILNOŚĆ I „NIE-MOBILNOŚĆ” W UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ: DOŚWIADCZENIE POLSKIEJ MŁODZIEŻY ZAMIESZKAŁEJ W ZJEDNOCZONYM KRÓLESTWIE

Mobilność to zeitgeist Unii Europejskiej. Poszerzenie UE i zniesienie granic w Europie Wschodniej i Środkowej odrodziło skalę mobilności; jednocześnie liberalne reformy mają teoretycznie zapewnić możliwość mobilności społecznej nowym populacjom. Prawo do przestrzennej i społecznej mobilności w obrębie Unii opisywane jest często jako poszerzające przestrzeń wolności, możliwości i wyboru; jednocześnie jednak dla sporej liczby mieszkańców Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej rzeczywistość jest nieco odmienna, nadal nienaznaczona biezą, niepewnością i nie-mobilnością. W jaki sposób możemy pogodzić ów dysonans między „swobodą przepływu osób” a równością szans? W niniejszym artykule autorka omawia różne teorie mobilności, które wpływały na dyskursy dotyczące mobilności i nie-mobilności w Europie. Artykuł przedstawia również wstępne wyniki jej własnych badań w Edynburgu i Krakowie, ukazujące różnorodność codziennych doświadczeń migrującej polskiej młodzieży która negocjuje niewidzialne granice społeczne i kulturowe w celu poszerzenia przestrzeni możliwości.

PAULINA TREVENA

PROBLEM KLASY? POLSCY ABSOLWENCI WYKONUJĄCY PRACE NIEWYKwalifikowane ZA GRANICĄ

Od lat 90. narasta fala (tymczasowej?) emigracji młodych, wykształconych Polaków do Wielkiej Brytanii, gdzie większość z nich podejmuje prace znacznie poniżej poziomu posiadanym kwalifikacjach (Drinkwater et al. 2006: 18). Do tej pory jednak niewiele uwagi poświęcono społecznym aspektom tego zjawiska. W jaki sposób wykształceni migranci postrzegają swoje środowisko pracy? Jak widzą swoją pozycję klasową w odniesieniu
klasy średniej i posiadające odpowiedni kapitał kulturowy, by osiągać pozycje zawodowe jej przypisywane, nie są w stanie zdobyć tego „zasłużonego” statusu społecznego. Jest to jednak znacznie szerszy problem, mający zakres globalny i odnoszący się do wielu wykształconych osób – zarówno migrantów jak i nie-migrantów – które nie mają możliwości realizowania swojego potencjału poprzez odpowiednie pozycje zawodowe.

Bogusia Temple

CZYNNIKI WПŁYWANIE NA INTEGRACJĘ – OPINIE POLAKÓW NA TEMAT INNYCH SPOŁECZNOŚCI ETNICZNYCH

Badacze zajmujący się integracją ostrzegają przed pomijaniem w badaniach kwestii różnic i nierówności między grupami w danym społeczeństwie. Badanie efektów kontaktów między różnymi społecznościami etnicznymi wskazują, że mogą one być silnie zróżnicowane. W dodatku niedawne napięcia związane z polityką dyskursu ekonomicznego związany się z migracją (np. słowa brytyjskiego premiera Gordona Browna o „brytyjskich miejscach pracy”) wskazują, iż można również rozpatrywać relacje międzygrupowe jako formę konkurencji. W artykule autorka przedstawia wyniki swoich badań (finansowanych przez ESRC), dotyczących percepcji innych grup etnicznych przez Polaków. Autorka rozpoczęła analizę od ukazania sposobu, w jaki Polacy definiują samych siebie, oraz strategii konstruowania „innego”. Sprawdza też jak różni ludzie definiują integrację oraz analizuje pozytywne i negatywne opinie na temat innych grup i wpływ, owych opinii na nawiązywanie konkretnych interakcji społecznych. Autorka sugeruje, że to założenia dotyczące wartości wyznawanych przez inne grupy etniczne decydują o kontaktach, jakie ludzie nawiązują oraz na ich decyzje dotyczące integracji. Percepcje innych społeczności były silnie naczynione pojęciami związanymi także z klasą społeczną i płcią kulturową, co podważa i komplikuje przydatność upraszczających pojęć w rodzaju „wspólnoty” czy „integracji”.

Bernadetta Siara

CIAŁO, GENDER I SEKSUALNOŚĆ W KONTEKŚCIE OSTATNICH MIGRACJI POLAKÓW DO WIELKIEJ BRYTANII

Artykuł ten skupia się na ciele podlegającym procesom kulturalizacji i seksualizacji w kontekście niedawnej emigracji Polaków do Wielkiej Brytanii. Polacy emigrują, jak się wydaje, z otoczenia, w którym przeważają bardziej konserwatywne wizje płci kulturowej i seksualności, niż w liberalnym otoczeniu w Wielkiej Brytanii. Niniejszy artykuł korzysta z perspektywy feministycznej i bada wpływ tej emigracji na dyskursy konstruowane wokół ciała i na możliwość liberalizacji konserwatywnych dyskursów.
Określenie intersekcjonalności do analizy kwestii związanych z ciałem i tego, jak kategorie społeczne takie jak „pleć kulturowa” czy seksualność, postrzegane jako „procesy społeczne”, wpływają na konstruowanie tych kwestii (Nash 2008). Artykuł skupia się na ciele jako angażującym się w relacje, także natury seksualnej, ciele jako starającym się zapobiec nieplanowanej ciąży przez stosowanie antykoncepcji i ciele jako rozwiązującym kwestie łączące się z niezapisaną ciążą przez dokonanie aborcji.

Artykuł wykorzystano dyskusje internetowe jako źródło danych. W ramach analizy zidentyfikowano różne opinie na temat ciała, które zawierały mieszankę nastawień nacjonalistycznych, patriarchalnych, konserwatywnych i liberalnych. Dyskurs naśladowczy dominuje w Polsce i analiza ta pokazała, że ten dyskurs w pewnym sensie „podróżuje” z emigrantami. Jednakże inne dyskursy zostały stworzone w procesie liberalnym, który daje kobietom wybór w odniesieniu do ich życia i nie nakłada restrykcyjnych ról płciowych i seksualnych. Artykuł pokazuje, że ciało podlega procesom kulturalizacji i seksualizacji w przestrzeni migracyjnej (Jackson i Scott 2001). Analiza uwidoczniła, że ideologie dotyczące płci kulturowej, a także konteksty, w których odbywa się proces kulturalizacji, wpływają na poglądy ludzi na temat ciała, szczególnie kobiecego. Analiza wskazała też, że ideologie i praktyki związane z kulturalizacją i seksualizacją płci podlegają negocjacji i ulegają zmianom w procesie migracyjnym (Mellwaine et al. 2006; Datta et al. 2008), gdzie współgrają różne poglądy na temat płci kulturowej i seksualności, także w połączeniu z kwestiami etniczności.

**Emilia Pietka**

**Formy relacji wewnętrzgrupowych w polskiej społeczności w Glasgow**

Poniższy artykuł ma na celu analizę form kształtowania się wspólnoty polskich migrantów poakcesyjnych w Glasgow. W szczególności dotyczy ona analizy znaczenia konceptu „wspólnota” wśród polskiej grupy migrantów oraz różnic defini-cyjnych wynikających z wewnętrznych podziałów społeczności migrantów pod względem wieku, płci, klasy społecznej oraz innych form stratyfikacji społecznej i wzajemnego poczucia zaufania lub jego braku. Zebrany materiał wskazuje, iż polscy migranci poakcesyjni w Glasgow nie tworzą jednej zintegrowanej wspólnoty, lecz wiele personalnych społeczności, które różnią się pod względem wzajemnego poczucia zaufania, zobowiązania i bliskości więzi społecznych. Mimo iż wśród polskich migrantów poakcesyjnych w Glasgow widoczne jest znaczenie roli polskich sieci społecznych w kształtowaniu poczucia wspólnoty w obrębie wąskich grup znajomych i rodziny, to jednak badani migranci rozdziela owa więzi społeczne od więzi z polskimi migrantami spoza najbliższego grona, którzy z kolei traktowani są z dystansem, a nawet nieufnością.
PAUL LASSALLE, MICHAEL HUGHES, EWA HELINSKA-HUGHES

POLSCY PRZEDSIĘBIORCY W GLASGOW: STRATEGIE MIGRACYJNE I BIZNESOWE

Niniejszy artykuł opiera się na badaniach prowadzonych w Glasgow i okolicach i koncentruje się na doświadczeniach polskich przedsiębiorców w kontekście migracyjnym. Jak na razie stosunkowo małego uwagi poświęca się zagadnieniu przedsiębiorczości i przedsiębiorstw zakładanych przez imigrantów w Europie Zachodniej. Stąd celem niniejszego artykułu jest zbadanie głównych czynników wiodących do emigracji, procesów towarzyszących osiedlaniu się i zakładaniu przedsiębiorstw przez Polaków w Szkocji oraz ich relacji z polską społecznością. Autorzy sugerują nowe podejście do zagadnienia działalności gospodarczej prowadzonej przez mniejszości etniczne oraz do ich innowacyjnych zachowań. Niniejsze badania podkreślają również istotę przyrostowych strategii migracyjnych. Okazuje się bowiem, że przed podjęciem decyzji o założeniu przedsiębiorstw większość polskich emigrantów objętych badaniami miało zapewnioną pracę w Wielkiej Brytanii dzięki kontaktowi z agencjami zatrudnienia działającymi na terenie Polski. W wielu przypadkach jednak ten rodzaj zatrudnienia nie spełnił ich oczekiwań i nie zapewnił wymaganego standardu życia. Stąd, w odróżnieniu od przedsiębiorców pochodzących z innych mniejszości etnicznych, Polacy zakładają przedsiębiorstwa za własne oszczędności, a nie dzięki środkom finansowym oraz poradom polskiej społeczności zamieszkanej w Szkocji. Co ważniejsze, polska społeczność jest postrzegana jako potencjalny rynek dla produktów i usług w ramach tzw. rynków enklawowych. Jednym z ostatnich problemów poruszanych w artykule jest rola gospodarstw domowych w podejmowaniu decyzji o samozatrudnieniu, co w konsekwencji prowadzi do decyzji o długoterminowym osiedleniu się w Szkocji.

DAWN B. JUDD

UDZIAŁ POLSKICH MIGRANTÓW W SEKTORZE OPIEKI SPOŁECZNEJ

W dzisiejszym zagłównym świecie dla wielu ludzi korzystających z opieki społecznej w Wielkiej Brytanii interakcje z migrantami z krajów akcesyjnych, pracujących w tym sektorze, stanowią codzienną doświadczenie. Niniejszy artykuł analizuje udział polskich migrantów w sektorze opieki, zwłaszcza usług dla dorosłych z uposądzonymi umysłowo – grupą, która rośnie zarówno w sensie liczbowym, jak i demonstruje coraz większe zróżnicowanie potrzeb. W Wielkiej Brytanii opieka nad tą grupą w coraz większym stopniu organizowana jest według modelu ścisłego zaangażowania lokalnych wspólnot i mieszkańców (tzw. community based services) w odróżnieniu od modelu polskiego, gdzie nadal klęsze się nacisk na opiekę instytucjonalną. Korzystając z teorii feministycznych, artykuł stara się pokazać, co różne dyskursy migracyjne wnoszą do naszej percepcji opieki społecznej, co z kolei może otworzyć nowe możliwości dla dalszej
analizy polityki społecznej w tej dziedzinie. Artykuł analizuje sposób, w jaki migranci po-akcesyjni stają się częścią globalnej rekonfiguracji poszczególnych sektorów państwa opiekuńczego wraz ze stosunkami rodzinnymi. Autorka artykułu zastanawia się także, w jaki sposób doświadczenie nabyte przez polskie migrantki pracujące jako opiekunki osób niepełnosprawnych umysłowo może wpłynąć na ten sektor opieki w Polsce.

JOANNA KROTOFIL, HALINA GRZYMAŁA-MOSZCZYŃSKA

WEEKEND Z DUCHEM ŚWIĘTYM – CHARYZMATYCZNE DOŚWIADCZE-NIA POLSKICH KATOLIKÓW W WIELKIEJ BRYTANII

Pierwsza część artykułu przedstawia w ogólnym zarysie zjawisko ruchu charyzmatycznego, które stanowi kontekst dla rozważań dotyczących doświadczeń polskich migrantów uczestniczących w kursie Filip. W drugiej części podjęto próbę opisu i analizy trzyniowego wprowadzenia w religijność charyzmatyczną – kursu Filip organizowanego przez wspólnotę Cor Lumen at Christi. Analiza formy i treści kursu skupia się na perspektywie uczestników. Celem jest tutaj ujęcie społecznie konstruowanych znaczeń, jako osadzonych w społecznym i instytucjonalnym kontekście migracji i kształtowanych przez strukturalne rozwiązania pojawiające się w obrębie Kościoła katolickiego w odpowiedzi na potrzeby religijne polskich migrantów w Wielkiej Brytanii.

HALINA GRZYMAŁA-MOSZCZYŃSKA, DAVID HAY, JOANNA KROTOFIL

MIĘDZY UNIWERSALIZMEM A ETNICZNYM PARTYKULARYZMEM – POLŚCY MIGRANCI W WIELKIEJ BRYTANII; PERSPEKTYWA PSYCHOLOGII RELIGII

Analiza roli religii w procesie akulturacji Polaków w Wielkiej Brytannie wskazuje na kluczowe znaczenie, jakie w tym procesie ma osoba polskiego księdza w parafii rzymskokatolickiej, do której uczęszczają badani. Ze względu na ten fakt, artykuł jest po-święcony dokładnej analizie percepcji sposobu funkcjonowania polskich duchownych z następujących perspektyw: 1) polskich duchownych pracujących w Wielkiej Brytanii; 2) polskiej hierarchii kościelnej; 3) brytyjskiej hierarchii kościelnej; 4) polskich parafian; 5) brytyjskich parafian; 6) brytyjskich duchownych pracujących w tej samej parafii, co polski ksiądz. Artykuł wskazuje na trudności w realizowaniu oczekiwań tych grup, konfliktowy charakter tej roli oraz wymogi, jakie muszą być spełnione w procesie rekrutacji i przygotowania polskich duchownych mających pracować w parafiach na terenie Wielkiej Brytanii. Zaplecze teoretyczne, na którym jest oparta analiza materiału empirycznego, jest Interaktywnym Model Akulturacji (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, Senecal 1997), wskazujący na znaczenie jakie dla wyniku procesu akulturacji grupy przybywającej na dany teren, mają postawy społeczności przyjmującej.
ALESSIO D’ANGELO, LOUISE RYAN

PRZESTRZEŃ SOCJALIZACJI – POLSCY RODZICE I DZIECI W LONDYŃSKICH SZKÓŁACH

Jedną z nieprzewidzianych konsekwencji wstąpienia Polski do UE w maju 2004 roku był szybki wzrost liczby polskich dzieci zapisywanych do angielskich szkół. Według danych rządowych, w 2008 roku do szkół w Anglii uczęszczało ponad 26000 dzieci, których pierwszym językiem jest polski. Jak wiadomo, szkoły są nie tylko placówką edukacyjną, ale również przestrzeniami socjalizacji i społecznych interakcji. Społeczne normy, wartości i oczekiwania przekazywane są i przyswajane zarówno w formalny, jak i nieformalny sposób – w klasie, na boisku czy przed szkolną bramą. Dla migrantów i ich dzieci szkoła jest również miejscem doświadczenia zróżnicowania społeczeństwa docelowego, w całym jego skomplikowaniu i nowości; szkoła może być miejscem bezpiecznego przyjmowania wiedzy, jak również miejscem niepokojącym i niezrozumiałym. Rozmowy przy szkolnej bramie mogą być okazją dla rodziców do nawiązania kontaktów, przyjaźni lub zdobycia informacji. Jednocześnie jednak, szkoła może być miejscem kulturowych spięć, reprodukcji negatywnych stereotypów, poczucia izolacji czy nawet ataków na tle rasistowskim. Korzystając z badań polskich migrantów oraz polskich dzieci w czterech londyńskich szkołach podstawowych, niniejszy artykuł analizuje powyższe problemy, skupiając się na kwestiach strategii adaptacyjnych, negocjacji i konstruowania tożsamości, a zwłaszcza na sposobach konstruowania tożsamości polskiej w kontekście edukacji.

TERESA STANIEWICZ

NEGOCJOWANIE PRZESTRZENI, KONTESTACJA GRANIC I TRANSNARODOWOŚĆ: ADAPTACYJNE ASPEKTY „NOWYCH MIGRACJI” WIDZIANE PRZEZ PRYZMAT KONCEPCJI KAPITAŁU SpołECZNEGO: PRZYPADEK POLSKICH ROMÓW I MIGRANTÓW Z POLSKI

Jedną z uderzających cech zjawiska określonego „nową migracją” jest dynamiczny sposób, w jaki nowi migranci poakcesyjni z Polski korzystają ze swoich sieci społecznych i transnarodowych, będących źródłem kapitału społecznego. Jednocześnie, zastanawiające jest, że podobne możliwości są poza zasięgiem innych grup migranckich. Niniejszy artykuł przedstawia różne wzory doświadczeń migracyjnych, wykorzystano w nim badania dwóch odrębnych grup migrantów z Polski – polskich Romów i etnicznych Polaków. Artykuł analizuje procesy tworzenia kapitału społecznego wśród obydwu grup, zwłaszcza w kontekście publicznego zawłaszczania przestrzeni kulturowej i konstruowania społeczeństwa obywatelskiego.
**KATARZYNA ANDREJUK**

**STUDENCI POLSCY NA UCZELNIACH BRYTYJSKICH I ICH RELACJE Z DIASPORĄ POLSKĄ**

Artykuł analizuje badania dotyczące stosunku polskich studentów do różnych części społeczności polskiej, czy ogólnej mówiąc – diaspyry. Autorka argumentuje, że rosnąca po 2004 r. liczebność diaspyry i jej wewnętrzna niejednorodność (różny status społeczny i pochodzenie imigrantów, rozmaita – nie tylko ekonomiczne – przyczyny migracji) doprowadziły do osłabienia więzi wewnętrz społeczności migracyjnej oraz dążenia do integracji opierającej się na kryterium etnicznym czy językowym. Wyniki badań wskazują, że poczucie wspólnoty budowane jest na podstawie wypracowanych innych niż tożsamość narodowa czy doświadczenie bycia Polakiem na emigracji; wspólnoty budowane są głównie w oparciu o podobieństwo statusów społecznych i doświadczeń życiowych.

**MICHAL P. GARAPICH**

**O ALKOHOLU I MĘŻCZYZNACH – STRATEGIE PRZETRWANIA, MĘSKOŚĆ I ANTYINSTYTUCJONALIZM POLSKICH BEZDOMNYCH W GLOBALNYM MIEŚCIE**

Artykuł przedstawia wyniki badań terenowych przeprowadzonych w Londynie, a dotyczących kwestii bezdomności, zwłaszcza w kontekście nadużywania alkoholu. Badanie za pomocą obserwacji uczestniczącej i wywiadów pogłębionych traktowało bezdomność oraz konsumpcję alkoholu z perspektywy antropologii społecznej i miało na celu wskazanie głównych przyczyn – kulturowych i strukturalnych powodujących duży w ostatnich latach wzrost liczby polskich bezdomnych w brytyjskiej stolicy. Jak argumentuje autor, strukturalne bariery dostępu do opieki społecznej nie dają zadowalającej odpowiedzi na to pytanie. Interpretacja znaczeń i zachowań polskich bezdomnych wskazuje na zaskakującą funkcjonalność i społeczną przydatność zestawu norm, wartości i zachowań kojarzonych z syndromem *homo sovieticus* (Sztompka 2000; Buchowski 2001) do współczesnych warunków ponowoczesnego kapitalistycznego globalnego miasta. W tym sensie syndrom, o którym od 20 lat dyskutują polscy socjologowie, mający jakoby być przeszkodą na drodze do dojrzałego kapitalizmu i modernizacji okazuje się kreatywną odpowiedzią i formą samoobrony kulturowej ludzi wykluczonych.
ANNE WHITE

THE MOBILITY OF POLISH FAMILIES IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND:
TRANSLOCALISM AND ATTITUDES TO RETURN

I explore how working-class Polish parents come to identify with their new localities despite their limited command of English, building just a few, but necessary bridges into the English-speaking community, e.g. by learning to decipher letters from children’s schools, or attending English masses in the weeks between Polish ones. Despite the apparent sparseness of these ties, parents who have lived in Bath or Bristol for a few years already feel quite strong attachments to the local area and are not interested in moving elsewhere in England. Feelings of wanting to stay put are enhanced by parents’ exhaustion after the period of intense mobility by all parties while only the husband was working in the UK. Simultaneously, parents – usually both from the same place in Poland - maintain close ties with their original home locality. This is the only place to which they would consider return. Different family members are attached to that Polish locality to different degrees, but it seems uncommon for one to persuade the rest of the family to go back.

AGNIESZKA IGNATOWICZ

TRAVELLING HOME: PERSONAL MOBILITY AND “NEW” POLISH MI-
GRANTS IN ENGLAND

This article is concerned with issues of travelling home in narratives of migration, drawing particular attention to the journey itself, which I examine as an increasingly important aspect of overall personal mobility. Freedom of circulation within the European Union made the borders inside the EU space less important to those who have the right of free movement. More recently, the expansion of the EU in 2004 and the availability of cheaper, more frequent and more accessible air travel connections, has allowed for new forms of mobility, based on more frequent return visits for Eastern Europeans, who have gone to work and live in Britain. In recent years, the “visiting friends and family” (VFR) mobility type has been the fastest growing segment of inbound air traffic in the UK, accounting for almost half of all trips within European Union (CAA Passenger Survey 2006). Drawing on the narratives and interview data with “new” Polish migrants in England, this paper argues that the social content of migrant mobility and visits home is of increasing importance. Many Polish migrants in England are now dependent on this form
of mobility not only for sustaining social ties, but also in case of negotiation of their social status and displaying the achievements of migration. I argue, amongst other things, that the visit home is also a fundamental part of new mobility patterns and a crucial stage in the negotiation of migration itself. I am suggesting that the ways in which the journey home and the distance between England and Poland are encountered by Polish migrants, are critical to their understandings of migration. Because of the figurative proximity between Poland and England and “when desired” nature of their movement, Polish migrants are placed in a position of privilege and control regarding their mobility.

KATHERINE BOTTERILL

MOBILITY AND IMMOBILITY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG POLISH PEOPLE LIVING IN THE UK

‘Mobility’ is a zeitgeist of the European Union. European enlargement and the removal of borders in Central and Eastern Europe has reinvigorated geographical mobility in Europe while the extension of neo-liberal economic reform across the region has been said to offer opportunities for social mobility to a new demography. The right to spatial and social mobility in the EU is described as enhancing freedom, opportunity and choice for large numbers of people living in Central and Eastern Europe, yet the reality for many people living and working across borders in the EU is marked still by poverty, uncertainty and immobility. How do we conceptualise this inequality within a discourse of ‘free movement’ and ‘equality of opportunity’ in Europe? In this paper I will discuss theories of mobility that have shaped the discourse on mobility and immobility in the EU in recent times. I will explore the ways in which this discourse has contributed to an almost immutable acceptance of the EU as a ‘mobile space’. Adding to this I will present some early empirical findings from case studies in the Edinburgh, Scotland and Krakow, Poland to show that the everyday experiences of young Polish people who negotiate the invisible borders of the EU to find ‘opportunities’ has many dimensions, raising further questions about how ‘mobility’ is perceived and enacted by young Polish people living and working in the UK.

PAULINA TREVENA

DIVIDED BY CLASS, CONNECTED BY WORK: CLASS DIVISIONS AMONG THE NEW WAVE OF POLISH MIGRANTS IN THE UK.

By now, it is a generally known fact that the majority of ‘new’ Polish migrants to the UK are carrying out simple, low-skilled work. At the same time, however, many of these migrants have considerably high levels of education (Anderson et al. 2006, Drinkwater et al. 2006, Fihel et al. 2008, Pollard et al. 2008). Up till now, this problem has been framed predominantly in terms of issues of brain drain, brain overflow and/or brain waste
(Kaczmarczyk and Okolski 2005, Kaczmarczyk 2006). However, little attention has been given to the social world the ‘overqualified’ Polish migrants are living in. For the ‘overeducated’ migrants the world of work is often also one of class divisions. The values and general outlook of these (potentially) middle-class people often clash with those of their co-workers, i.e. working class Poles and Britons, resulting in a particular tension within the social environment of work as well as internal conflict. What is, therefore, the migrants’ perception of this situation? How do they view their class position in relation to their occupational and social standing in the UK? This article will be devoted to an analysis of these issues based on qualitative material gathered on well-educated Polish migrants working considerably below their level of qualifications.

**Bogusia Temple**

**Influences on Integration: Exploring Polish People’s Views of Other Ethnic Communities**

Researchers interested in integration have cautioned against ignoring issues of difference and inequality between groups in society. Research about the effects of contact between people from different ethnic communities suggests that outcomes can be mixed. Moreover, recent tensions about ‘British’ jobs have suggested the need to address competition between groups. In this paper I explore results from ESRC funded research with people who describe themselves as Polish and focus on views about people from other ethnic communities. I begin with an examination of the different ways in which being Polish was defined, who was seen as ‘other’ and discuss the significance of contestations over ethnicity. I examine the different ways in which people defined integration, discuss positive and negative views about members of other ethnic communities and then go on to examine the ways in which these views influenced the kinds of contacts people established. I suggest that assumptions about the values of people from other ethnic communities affected decisions about integration. Perceptions of other ethnic communities, including English ones, were also ascriptions of gender and class and challenge any simplistic notion of community or integration.

**Bernadetta Siara**

**Body, Gender and Sexuality and Recent Migration of Poles to the United Kingdom**

This article focuses on the constructions around body as gendered and sexualised within recent migration of Poles to the United Kingdom (UK). Poles migrate, as it appears, from an environment in Poland characterised by more conservative views on gender and sexuality to a more liberal environment in the UK. This article uses the feminist perspective
and examines the influence of this migration on discourses around body and its potential to liberate conservative discourses. It also utilizes intersectionality framework as lens to examine issues around body and analyses how specific social categories such as gender and sexuality, seen as ‘social processes’, simultaneously influence construction of these issues (Nash 2008). This article uses internet forum discussions as data. Different views on body were identified through the analysis and it was found that debates contained a mixture of nationalist, patriarchal, conservative and liberal attitudes. The nationalist discourse is dominant in Poland and this analysis showed that this discourse in a way “travelled” with migrants. However, counter-discourses were created in the process such as the liberal one, which gives women choice in relation to their lives and does not prescribe strict gender and sexual roles. This article showed how bodies are becoming ‘gendered’ and sexualised within migration space (Jackson and Scott 2001). The analysis demonstrated that gender and sexual ideologies and environments have a great impact on people’s views on body, particularly on women’s bodies. It also demonstrated that gender and sexual ideologies and practices are negotiated and reshaped as part of the migration process (McIlwaine et al 2006; Datta et al 2008), where different views on gender and sexuality as well of intersections of these with ethnicity come into play.

EMILIA PIETKA

ENCOUNTERING FORMS OF CO-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG POLISH COMMUNITY IN GLASGOW’

This study is aimed at exploring the dynamics of EU post accession Polish communities’ formation within the Glasgow area. In particular, it will concentrate on an analysis of the meaning of ‘community’ among groups of post accessed Polish migrants living and working in Glasgow and how this varies in relation to gender, age, and social class and other social divisions, including internal structures of marginalization and feelings of trust or distrust. It suggests that Polish migrants do not constitute a single migration community in Glasgow but a range of diverse personal communities that can be understood as a range of dense, relative autonomous relations that vary in terms of trust, obligation, and strength. As such, the Polish migrants maintain close and dense co-ethnic ties with specific groups of friends and family members simultaneously distinguishing them from the general, ethnic Polish community in Glasgow which was perceived as competitive and threatening.

PAUL LASSALLE, MICHAEL HUGHES, EWA HELINSKA-HUGHES

POLISH ENTREPRENEURS IN THE GLASGOW AREA: MIGRATORY AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES

Based on case studies conducted in the greater Glasgow area, the paper focuses on the experiences of Polish Entrepreneurs in a migration context. Very little is known about
Polish immigrant businesses that have been set up in Western Europe in this latest EU post-enlargement era. The aim of this paper is to examine the key factors leading to emigration, business start-ups and settlement by Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland; including the relationship with the Polish Community. The paper proposes a new understanding of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship and innovative behaviour. This research highlights the importance of incremental strategies for emigration, business start-up and settlement amongst Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland. Prior to venturing into a business start-up, most of the Polish new-born Entrepreneurs interviewed had secured a job in the UK using employment agencies from Poland. However, this employment had failed to meet their standard of living expectations. In addition, the Polish Entrepreneurs studied, unlike other Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs, rely solely on their own savings rather than benefitting from financial resources and advice from the Polish community. The Polish community is seen as a market and Polish Entrepreneurs are able to spot opportunities within the enclave-markets. Finally, the role of the household in the decision to become self-employed will be highlighted to better understand longer-term settlement amongst Polish Entrepreneurs.

DAWN B JUDD

THE CONTRIBUTION OF POST ACCESSION POLISH MIGRANTS TO ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

In an increasingly globalised world, for many people who are using the UK adult social care services, interaction with post accession migrants as paid carers now represents an everyday encounter. This paper explores the contribution being made by post accession Polish migrants. It focuses on the role that these workers are playing in services for adults with learning disabilities in the UK. People with learning disabilities represent a service user group that continues to grow both numerically and in terms of complexity of need. Service users who rely on adult social care represent some of the most vulnerable and dependent members of society, whose needs are now largely met in community based services. This model of service delivery stands in sharp contrast to services for people with learning disabilities in Poland, where even though there is a growing shift and political commitment towards community care, most provision remains mainly orientated towards institutional care. Drawing on feminist scholarship it attempts to understand what can be learnt about care through migration discourse. The focus on social care provides opportunities for both analytical and comparative social policy analysis, while also considering the needs of adults with learning disabilities. In particular it focuses on how post accession migrants employed as care workers are key elements in the global reconfiguration of welfare systems and familial relationships. It briefly considers how the experiences and knowledge being gained by these women working in the UK could potentially impact on Polish services for people with learning disabilities.
JOANNA KROTOFIL

‘HOLY SPIRIT WEEKEND’ – CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE OF POLISH CATHOLICS IN UK

The first part of this article aims at locating the experiences of Polish migrants attending Philip course – a three-day event run by the charismatic group Cor Lumen at Christy - within wider context of charismatic movement. The second part is an attempt to describe the course and to analyse its form and content with a focus on the experiences of people participating in the course. The aim here is to capture the socially constructed meaning of that experience as embedded in the social and institutional context of migration and structural developments of the Catholic Church catering for religious needs of Polish migrants in the UK.

HALINA GRZYMAŁA-MOSZCZYŃSKA, DAVID HAY

ROLE OF RELIGION IN ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES OF POLISH IMMIGRANTS IN UK

Detailed analysis of the research results pertaining to the role of religion in acculturation process of Poles in UK clearly points to the fact that Polish priest become a key person for understanding dynamic of acculturation process of both groups: immigrants and host population. Therefore the following perspectives on the role of Polish priest will be provided:

Perspective of Polish priests working in UK
- Perspective of Polish parishioners
- Perspective of British parishioners
- Perspectives of Polish church hierarchy
- Perspectives of British Church hierarchy
- Perspectives of British priest with whom Polish priest shares work in the parish

Paper points to various difficulties in fulfilling expectations of different groups towards Polish priests, conflictual characteristic of priest’s role, and deficits in proper preparation of priests for their work in UK. As the theoretical background of the process The Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, Senecal 1997) will be employed. The model points to the influence of host population on the final outcome of acculturation process of newly arriving group.
ALESSIO D’ANGELO AND LOUISE RYAN

SITES OF SOCIALIZATION - POLISH PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN LONDON SCHOOLS

Poland’s accession to the EU in May 2004 brought many new possibilities and opportunities for Polish migrants to Britain. In the period from May 2004 to June 2008, over 500,000 Poles registered with the Workers Registration Scheme as employees in Britain. One unforeseen consequence of this rapid increase in migration was the large numbers of Polish children arriving in British schools. According to government statistics, there are over 26,000 school pupils in England whose first language is Polish (DCFS, Schools Census, 2008). Schools are not only places of education but also sites of socialisation and interaction. Social norms, values and expectations are taught and learned through both the formal and informal curriculum – in the classroom, playground and at the school gates (Adams and Kirova, 2006). For newly arrived migrant children and their parents school may be the place where they encounter the diversity of the host society in all its complexity and newness. While school may be regarded as a safe place of learning, it can also be daunting and confusing. Conversations at the school gates may provide parents with a valuable opportunity to acquire new information and make friends (Ryan, 2007). However, school can also be associated with culture clashes, negative stereotypes, feelings of isolation and even racist bullying. Thus, for newly arrived migrant children and their parents, school provides an array of opportunities and challenges. In this paper we explore these issues drawing on our research with Polish migrants in London (Ryan et al, 2007; 2008) and on Polish children in London primary schools (Sales, et al, 2008). Based on interviews with parents and teachers at 4 London primary schools, as well as some additional data from Polish children, we explore processes of adaptation, accommodation, negotiation and identity formation. In particular, we analyse the ways in which Polish migrants construct notions of Polishness in the context of education.

KATARZYNA ANDREJUK

POLISH STUDENTS AT LONDON UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE POLISH DIASPORA IN THE UK

Integration of the European Union has modified the traditional understanding of the notion of “migration”. As Adrian Favell puts it, currently - after the EU enlargement – migration from the Eastern European to the Western European states takes 2 forms: one is traditional immigration into European nation-states; the other one is “elite migration” of the EU citizens whose career strategies are cosmopolitan and post-national. Educational migration may be described as the second form; students are moving temporarily and they are open to decisions to further migrate. It is interesting to examine the links between
these two types of migration; I will do this on the example of the Polish society in the UK, where both the labour migration and the educational migration has significantly increased after the Poland’s accession to the EU. My study is based on in-depth interviews, followed by a short questionnaire. The query took place in London in the academic year 2009/10 and included students and graduates of the four London universities: Westminster, Metropolitan, City University and colleges of University of London. In addition, I pay attention to government reports and statistic surveys.

Teresa Staniewicz

NEGOTIATING SPACE AND CONTESTING BOUNDARIES: THE CASE OF POLISH ROMA AND POLISH MIGRANTS. MIGRATION AND ADAPTATION AS VIEWED VIA A SOCIAL CAPITAL LENS.

Over the last two decades, globalization has resulted in an unprecedented level of migration flows due to the freedom of movement, and, social exchange, due to the improvement of both telecommunications and increasingly affordable travel. A striking feature of what has come to be termed the ‘new migration’ is precisely the dynamic ways in which some arriving migrants, such as the Poles, have capitalised on their transnational associations, via a most efficient ‘exploitation’ of existing/new social capital networks. On the other hand, such benefits appear to remain beyond the reach of other arriving groups, such as the Polish Roma. The paper focuses on narrativising the differing patterns of migratory experience, by utilising data from research on post-Accession Polish Roma and Polish migrants arriving to the UK. It examines social capital formation in urban settings, juxtaposed with their respective relationships’ to the ‘wider world’. Also, their respective mechanisms adopted in order to ‘appropriate’ contested space as a basis for individual / group interaction with the wider society, and, the differential levels of success in securing such. The paper also analyses how the groups’ culturally determined public and private activities (such as boundary observation) can inhibit their public representation, and resulting ownership to shared public space. This analysis is intentionally contextualised; set within the geopolitical and cultural contexts of each group. It explores the contingent nature of existing social / cultural capital, and the negotiation of space for the ‘self’, as well as for the group. The detailed personal experiences, illustrated via personal narratives, exemplify the situational realities – that social capital can be seen as both an enhanced provider [as in the case of Polish migrants], or an inhibitor [as in the case of Polish Roma], of equitable representation within public space in civil society.
OF ALCOHOL AND MEN – SURVIVAL, MASCULINITIES AND ANTI-INSTITUTIONALISM OF POLISH HOMELESS MEN IN A GLOBAL CITY

This article looks at the issue of the dramatic raise of street homelessness among Polish men from the perspective of social anthropology looking at the relationship between structural constraints faced by Polish migrants and their own perception of the social world, their meaning-making practices, norms and values, behavioral patterns. As I will show, focusing just on structural and economic determinants not only offers simplistic and one-dimensional picture but it also fails to give an explanation and prediction what happens if these constraints and exclusionary policies are removed and homeless migrants gain same set of social rights as the rest of British and EU citizens (which in theory will happen in May 2011). An anthropological approach to the functions, roles and cultural meanings of homelessness, group bonds, masculinities, alcohol consumption, perception of the state and dominant society as voiced by homeless migrants I ‘hanged around’ with, reveals that structurally rejected, people with particular backgrounds reconstruct communities and form strong ties despite (or because of) a hostile, exclusionary and hegemonic social environment of the neoliberal order. Two conclusions are drawn from this analysis, empirical and theoretical: first taking both structural and cultural factors into account the levels of homeless among that group is going to rise, at least in London; second the set of cultural forms of behavior and social practices described in academic literature as the homo sovieticus syndrome (Wedel 1986, Sztompka 2000, Morawska 1998) proves not only valuable and resourceful in highly individualized, neoliberal and capitalistic society but may be in fact reinforced in new conditions being a productive – socially and culturally - counter-reaction to the neoliberal order of social life in the global city.
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Katherine Botterill is currently undertaking a PhD in Geography at Newcastle University, UK. Her research interests centre on qualitative interpretations of social and spatial mobility in Europe, with particular focus on Polish migration to Scotland, UK. She has a background in social and political research working for high profile research centres in the North of England. She is an experienced qualitative researcher with a keen interest in engaging with and developing innovative methodologies for social research. Her current project uses biographical narrative interviewing, photo elicitation exercises and an interactive blog for online participation.

Alessio D’Angelo is a Lecturer in Social Sciences at Middlesex University. He has extensive experience in conducting both quantitative and qualitative research on a wide range of areas, including migration, ethnic diversity and identity, social exclusion and discrimination, service provision, community organisations and social networks. Recent research projects include large grants from the European Commission, the Fundamental Rights Agency, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), as well as research commissioned by Local Authorities, public bodies and charitable organisations. Alessio has also been working on a number of partnership initiatives with Third Sector and community organisations, including events, consultations and evaluations. He has published widely on migration policy, migrants’ integration and identity as well as on social statistics at both national and European level.

Michal P. Garapich is a social anthropologist and a Research Fellow at CRONEM (Centre for Research on Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism) at Roehampton University specializing in the issues of migration, ethnicity,
nationalism, homelessness, substance misuse, street culture and history of migration from Poland. His research was funded by London local authorities (among others: Hammersmith & Fulham, Redbridge, Lewisham, Waltham Forest, Greenwich), Research Councils (ESRC), media (BBC Newsnight, Channel 4), think tanks (IPPR). At the moment his work focuses on homelessness, poverty, alcohol consumption and Eastern Europeans’ perception of state and civil society institutions in Great Britain.

Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska, is a Professor of psychology at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow and the School of Social Psychology in Warsaw. Her research focuses on religious experience in various religious contexts, the role of religion in the process of cultural adaptation of immigrants and the response of local communities to refugee reception centers and immigrants. She conducts multiple cultural training’s for international companies and NGO’s. She is a member of many national and international professional organizations and serves on the editorial boards of several professional journals. She has published 7 volumes as well as 45 articles and chapters that have appeared in national and international journals and edited books.

David Hay is the former director of the Religious Experience Research Unit in Oxford and the first Reader in Spiritual Education to be appointed in Nottingham University. He graduated in Zoology at Aberdeen University, where he first met Alister Hardy (Fellow of Royal Society), Professor of Zoology at Oxford University and Founder of the Religious Experience Research Unit. David also spent fifteen years as a visiting Lecturer in the Institute for the Study of Religion at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Currently, he is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Divinity and Religious Studies at Aberdeen University. He also holds an Honorary Research Fellowship in the University of Wales at Lampeter. His latest book (2011) is a biography of Alister Hardy entitled “God’s Biologist”.

Agnieszka Ignatowicz is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology, Aston University, Birmingham, UK, where she is completing her doctoral thesis exploring issues of gender and changing experience of mobility amongst post-2004 EU Enlargement Poles in England. Her research interests include migration, gender, mobility and transnationalism.
Joanna Krotofi works as a Researcher at CRONEM, Roehampton University. Since joining CRONEM in 2007 she has been working on few projects related to migration from A10 countries. She has also participated in a study conducted by the University of Aberdeen and Jagiellonian University which focused on Polish priest and parishioners in UK and Ireland. Joanna graduated at the Institute of Psychology at Jagiellonian University, currently is finalising her PhD at the Institute for the Study of Religions (Jagiellonian University). Her thesis is focusing on the role of religion in the presses of identity negotiation among recent Polish migrants in UK. Joanna has published few articles on migration and religion in Przegląd Religioznawczy, is also author of few chapters in book publications.

Dawn Judd is currently employed as a senior lecturer in social work within the School of Social Work at the University of Central Lancashire. She trained originally as a registered general nurse but left nursing to pursue a career in statutory social work. Dawn has variously worked directly in social work as a practitioner or in further and higher education settings teaching around various aspects of social care and social work practice. Her social work career has focused on working with disabled children and adults with learning disabilities. She has been employed as a manger in children’s social care services, managing a range of services for disabled children. Aware of the need for highly skilled and motivated staff to work in learning disability services she became interested in the role of migrant workers in filling vacancies that were often hard to recruit into. This led to her initial research interest which has subsequently been extended to include the position and wider social welfare requirements of A8 Polish migrants within the UK, including an exploration of their wider needs as parents and those of their accompanying children. Interested in comparative social welfare she has developed links with the University of Lodz and facilitated a number of study tours to social welfare establishments in the city and other parts of Poland. She has published in Poland and is keen to promote the needs of disabled people in an international context. She has recently co-edited a book ‘Polish Journeys: Through Social Welfare Institutions’ published by the Polish Social Policy Association.

Ewa Helinska-Hughes is a lecturer in the Centre for Contemporary European Studies at the University of the West of Scotland. She has published in the area of regional development and entrepreneurship. Her recent research focuses on entrepreneurship and Polish migration post-2004.
Biography

Michael Hughes is Professor at the University of Aberdeen, he is currently the Chair of Management and was Head of the Business School between 2005-08. He has held posts at the Universities of Lancaster, Strathclyde, and Stirling prior to joining Aberdeen; and has published widely in the fields of International Business and Organizational Theory. Recent research programmes have included the areas of SMEs and Entrepreneurship, and Change Management in the Public Sector.

Paul Lassalle is a PhD student at the University of the West of Scotland Business School (UK). He specialises in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship. He conducts research on Polish Entrepreneurs in Scotland, their relationship with the Polish community, their experiences of starting-up and their business strategies.

Emilia Pietka is currently a PhD student in the School of Education at Strathclyde University, Glasgow. Prior to that Emilia received an MPhil in Sociology from Strathclyde University and MSc in Migration in Refugee Studies from Strathclyde University. Emilia has worked as a researcher for over 3 years, completing work on Eastern European migrants looking at the effects of family migration on migrant children’s experiences of living in Scotland, dynamics of social networks within and between migrants communities as well as migrants’ access to and experience of using public services (health, education, housing) within the Glasgow context, ethnic minority parents’ experiences of involvement in their children’s education and attitudes to formal schooling, and EU post-accession labour migration from Poland.

Louise Ryan is Reader in Gender and Migration and co-director of the Social Policy Research Centre at Middlesex University. She has published widely on various aspects of migration including social networks, family reunion, children and schooling. She has a particular interest in the interconnections between migration, ethnicity, religion and gender. Louise has received funding from the Economic and Social Research Council to research recent Polish migrants in London (2007) and Polish migrant children in British schools (2009) and most recently French highly skilled migrants in London’s financial sector (2010). She has also extensively researched Irish migrant women in Britain. Her publications have appeared in Sociology, Sociological Review, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. Her book, co-edited with Wendy Webster, Gendering Migration: masculinity, femininity and ethnicity in Post-War Britain, was published by Ashgate in 2008.
Biography

**Bernadetta Siara** is currently preparing her doctoral thesis on gender and sexuality within recent migration of Poles to the UK at City University London, United Kingdom. She is a visiting lecturer at City University London, where she has been teaching sociology and research-related modules. She has spent a number of years working as a researcher at the University of Westminster, where she was involved in research projects focusing on diversity, employment and educational issues. Previously, she had worked at Middlesex University on a project related to recent migration of Poles to London. She completed Master level courses in research methods and applied research at City University and the University of Westminster. Beforehand, she did her BA and MA in Cultural Anthropology at Warsaw University in Warsaw, Poland.

**Teresa Staniewicz** is a Senior Research Fellow in the Sociology Department, at the University of Warwick. She is also the Centre for Rights, Equality and Diversity [CRED] Manager, which includes overall responsibility for a number of projects on behalf of the Fundamental Rights Agency [FRA, Vienna]. Additionally, Teresa Co-Convenes modules in the Department, at undergraduate and MA levels. Research interests broadly include: ‘Race’ and Ethnicity discourses; citizenship and other rights of migrants, and disenfranchised groups (Roma, Gypsies and Travellers); and, the intersection of ethnicity and health.

**Bogusia Temple** is Professor of Health and Social Care Research at The University of Central Lancashire, England. She has a long standing interest in Polish communities in the UK, partly as a result of her experiences as a child. This has also led to a more general interest in research with minority ethnic communities and across languages. She has published extensively in this field in journals and books, including in Sociological Review, Qualitative Research and Sociological Research Online. Her other academic interests include disability, methodology generally and narrative specifically, and quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. She has also published in these fields.

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Anne White is Senior Lecturer in Russian and East European Studies at the University of Bath and has published on numerous aspects of social change in Poland, Russia and Hungary. Her recent work focuses mostly on migration, regional differentiation, livelihood strategies and gender roles. She is the author of four research monographs, the latest being ‘Polish Families and Migration since EU Accession’ (Bristol: Policy Press, 2011). Anne has also taught English at the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, and currently teaches English to parents at the Polish Saturday School in Bath. She organises the Polish Migration Website, http://www.bath.ac.uk/esml/polish-migration/.