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INGRID JERVE RAMSØY

EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EXCHANGE

Migrancy in the Global Market of Care
between Spain and Bolivia

EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EXCHANGE

Dissertation series in Migration, Urbanisation, and Societal Change

Doctoral dissertation in International Migration and Ethnic Relations
Department of Global Political Studies
Faculty of Culture and Society

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Til pappa,
og til Sol

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Malmö, October 2019

PREFACE: GLADYS' WAY INTO MIGRANCY

Gladys was one of the women who took part in *Red de Madres*, the Bolivian cultural association I participated in as part of my fieldwork in Bilbao. Many of the other members were related to one another or had known each other for quite some time, but Gladys had joined through an acquaintance. To me she often seemed reluctant to participate fully in the different activities we did, particularly the folkloric dancing. She was soft-spoken and seemed to prefer to stay on the fringe of both the theatrics of dance, as well as of social life. But she enjoyed the company of everyone, even if it was a bit difficult to get to know her. She lived close to where I had rented an apartment for that particular stint of fieldwork, and so we sometimes ended up walking home together from the different Red de Madres activities, and we went running together by the river on a few occasions, together with another member of the association.

Early on in our acquaintanceship I asked her if I could interview her for my research. She was hesitant. She didn't want to open old wounds by speaking about them. But after walking home together from a *kermés*¹ late one evening we got to talking and she told me about her frustrations. About working three jobs and trying to study at the same time to become a lab technician. That she was a pharmacist but that it would be impossible for her to get a job as that in Spain, so she was re-training herself, while also working in the care sector to support her family in Bolivia and pay her own expenses while studying. When saying goodbye, as I was about to cross the bridge to where my apartment

1 A *kermés* is a sort of fundraiser which in the Bolivian context usually involves organizing a party where

was, I asked her again if she would consider doing an interview with me. That it would be interesting to hear more of her story, and about her experiences and reflections as a so-called high-skilled worker in a sector that usually does not consider the relevance of your qualifications. She said ok, we could do the interview.

A few days later she came to my place. It was evening and it was quite cold. Even though spring was arriving, winter had not quite let go yet, and the apartment was not well heated. I had bought some cookies and I offered her tea or coffee. She wanted tea, but didn't end up drinking much of it. We sat by the kitchen table. She kept her coat on at first. She seemed nervous. In the beginning she gave short answers to my questions and then kept asking 'what else?', like she wanted to hurry things along. I felt that maybe I should not have asked her to do the interview after all. Who was I to pry in people's stories? Pick at the scabs on their wounds? Was my learning about the care work sector more important than Gladys' right to escape whatever it was she had run from? I thought to myself that the answer was obviously no. Still, we kept going, and she soon opened up more, as though it did her some good to talk about her story, even if she kept censoring herself. Seemingly, we both somehow came to terms with our ambivalence towards the situation – she narrated the parts she was willing to share, while I compartmentalized my feelings of guilt and listened:

Gladys:

My parents are from Sucre. My father was born in [a village in] Chuquisaca, but my mother was born in [the city of] Sucre. My dad worked in construction, and later on he went to Argentina. There, he first worked in construction and later in an office, with something that had to do with import. My mother had her own business of knickknacks, a booth in the market.

Ingrid:

When did your father go to Argentina?

Gladys:

While we were still in grade school. When [my siblings and I] were still in school [my family] had some problems and my dad had to leave [for Argentina]. Well, there were a lot of problems. Later on

my mother separated from us. And well, we just had to get on with it.

Ingrid:

How many siblings are you?

Gladys:

We were six. Two women and four men. Now we are five, because one of my brothers passed away.

Ingrid:

I'm so sorry. When did it happen? Was it a long time ago?

Gladys:

What? Yes. I mean, I have been here for seven years, and this was like twelve years ago.

Ingrid:

So before you left, then.

Gladys:

Yes, long before.

[pause]

What more do you want to know?

Ingrid:

Well, you said you studied back in Bolivia, right?

Gladys:

Yes, I studied. All of us [brothers and sisters] studied. I mean, we didn't have a very [extravagant] life. But... we didn't have to, for example, the kids, I mean, to work. My parents never wanted us to work. Always just dedicate ourselves to our studies and all of that. In that regard... And well, I did. I went to university. [I studied] pharmaceuticals. I did that for five years and afterwards I went to work in Santa Cruz. I worked there for five years. And well, I had to come [to Spain] because there were a lot of problems.

There were a lot of problems at home. I mean, I had a good job,

you know. I had a 'good life'. Quote-unquote. But well. My siblings, well, when you are the eldest you have to watch out for your family also, and for your parents. So... That was that. Because in Argentina there were also a lot of problems, with the *corralito* [economic crisis] and all of that. And so my father couldn't send us [money] anymore. And my siblings were studying at the university, they had already started their studies. And I had already finished and had a good job. They paid me well. But we had a lot of expenses.

We were several siblings and they were [all] students. My brother who had passed away... We had a lot of expenses because my brother died of kidney failure. They had to do a transplant, but they couldn't because first he had to do a sort of treatment, before the transplantation. And it was very expensive. It was so expensive because the dialysis machine there in Sucre... there was only... hmmm... There was one where we had our brother insured, and, before we got the insurance we were paying... There [in Bolivia] it was a lot! One hundred dollars. There it was very much at the time. Because now a hundred dollars in Bolivia is nothing [laughing]. Now and back then, I'm telling you, because prices have gone up, and the salaries as well. But back then, when my brother was sick, it was a lot of money. Almost a month's salary.

And so, we had some savings, but we had to spend it all, right? It was... It wasn't much, but well, we had to spend it. We wanted to do the transplant. We had gone to other cities where... we had to see if we could buy him a kidney, because the only person in my family who could give one to him was my mother. But the doctor didn't tell us... I mean, she didn't give us the probability of... you know, when they tell you... that 'with the transplant your brother will recover,' or something like that. She [the doctor] wanted to finish the treatments and then, only after that, then do the transplant. And the transplant would also be difficult because of his blood group. He was group A, and a lot of people are group 0, and so it was more difficult. We were in the middle of all of this... And then he passed away.

Ingrid:

How old was he?

Gladys:

My brother? He was nineteen. He was in university. He was... He was such a good student... Well... I don't want to talk a lot about this. I still feel that pain. But well, I later on had to go to Santa Cruz. It all happened fast. I found a job quickly, only a week after I arrived I found work and it was good.

Ingrid:

In a pharmacy?

Gladys:

In a clinic, yes. I lived and worked in the clinic. In the beginning they didn't pay me very well, but then they saw that I did a good job and brought in money through the pharmacy and they gave me a raise. I liked it there.

Ingrid:

Why did you go to Santa Cruz, specifically? Did you know anyone there?

Gladys:

No, yes... I had girlfriends. And also, in Sucre, since it's a small city... And it's very pretty, Sucre. But it has... There are a lot of university graduates there because it has the most prestigious university in Bolivia. So a lot of people stay on there, and so it would be easier for me to start... In bigger cities there are more possibilities. And Santa Cruz is a big city. Santa Cruz or La Paz. I chose Santa Cruz because I had girlfriends there, and I also had an uncle there. Or two uncles, actually. I didn't know them, but I got to know them [when I went] there.

Ingrid:

Yes, to have some contacts, right?

Gladys:

My friends, yes. My best friend went there. That's when I decided on Santa Cruz. Because, well, since she was my best friend and she was always... She is from there, she lives in Santa Cruz, but she studied

in Sucre. I mean, we were, we knew each other well. We shared many things, and well... We made plans and we went to Santa Cruz [laughs]. And so, there I was fortunate. Because a week after I arrived I went around with my CV and then they called me. And I worked there for five years.

Ingrid:

Always in the same clinic?

Gladys:

Yes, in the same clinic. But, well... A lot of things happened, also. That's why I don't want to talk [about it]. But that's why... directly related to [the things that happened]... One day I went home for vacations, home to my family. Even though I was living in Santa Cruz... Between Sucre and Santa Cruz there's one night of travel, but I didn't go [home] very often, right? Because I was working a lot also. Because it was difficult... On the weekends they would ask me [at the clinic] and I would [stay and] work [laughs]. The thing is, I worked a lot because I went [to Santa Cruz] carrying a pain [grief] with me. Well, many pains.

[Her voice breaks and she starts crying].

[pause]

Ingrid:

So you were working to forget your grief, kind of?

Gladys:

Mhm [affirming]... But well, one day I went...

[takes a sip of her tea]

I went home for vacation. And my tenant told me...

[sobs]

[I hand her a tissue]

Thank you.

My tenant [in the family house in Sucre] asked me 'why don't you go? Why don't you go to Spain?' I had a tenant. I had a house that we rented out. And she told me 'why don't you go to Spain?' and all that. She knew about my situation because [sobs]... Because, there, no matter how much you earn, if you have a lot of siblings... [...]

She saw that I wasn't saving up anything [from my salary] and... I mean [sobs]. I'm crying because I have a lot of history, but I don't want to talk about that.

Ingrid:

Just talk about what you want to. And cry if you want. Maybe I'll cry too, but oh well!

Gladys:

I'm such a crybaby, that's why I didn't want to tell you at first.

Ingrid:

Don't worry, I cry a lot too.

Gladys:

I hate it. I'm such a crybaby. My family would tell you!

[clears throat]

And that's how I came to Spain. Look, I had never considered it! We... I mean, we weren't poor. I mean... [We had] a normal life. Normal... How do I put this? We didn't lack food, or anything. But we had other needs. So, that's how I mustered the courage to come to Spain. My [tenant], well, she told me. Well, her daughter was [in Spain]. She was my cousin's girlfriend. And [my tenant] told me 'why don't you go there? You'll earn well. You go for a few years, you save up money, and then you come back. You can set up your own pharmacy. And look, over there my daughter will pick you up!' So... I don't know. I thought about it, and look, I came without really thinking it through. Because also I had a lot of stuff on my mind. (Interview with Gladys Villca. Bilbao, April 2015)

Gladys' story is but one of many that have crossed paths with mine during my different fieldwork stints in Bilbao, and later in different places in Bolivia. As I will elaborate on throughout this thesis, it is typical in many ways. It tells us about the economic precarity and insecurity that shape people's lives in Bolivia and that pushes many women towards a life in migrancy. It also speaks of gendered family relations in which some women take on the responsibility to solve their family's economic difficulties. Gladys' narrative stands out from many of the other ac-

counts in my research material in that she left a blooming career in the pharmacy sector behind when she left Bolivia, and, so, part of the emotional burden that her migrancy entails is about that particular loss. Still, she shares another form of loss with most of her other peers, that of being separated from the people that matter the most to her for a long period of time. This, along with the way that particular people are circumscribed to particular roles in the labor market on account of their subjectivities, is part of what I in this thesis refer to as migrancy. The dynamics of this state of being and its relation to the global market of care are central themes in the story that I will unpack in the coming pages. What follows here is a multilayered discussion of the experiences and expectations of exchanges that take place in this market, which reveals ways in which social differentiation is made to matter in the lives of the research participants.

1. TELLING STORIES

Introduction

My father was the one who first taught me about storytelling. ‘Always ask yourself,’ he said, ‘which is the story you want to tell?’ He was referring to both which voices speak, and *how* they speak. About which narrative to put forth, and about how you structure that narrative in order to make your audience listen. Much later Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009) taught me about the danger of a single story, and about how there are always *other* voices around us than the ones being listened to. Voices that fall by the wayside of that single narrative, that hegemonic discourse, that particular way of representing certain people and what they do. These representations also have concrete consequences for those persons. I understand research as a particular way of constructing a narrative. In this chapter I introduce the reader to the pillars of the story I will be telling – its aims, which questions it is reflecting on, how I have gone about acquiring answers to these questions, as well as the structure of the rest of this thesis.

Through the past years of posing questions and interacting with people in order to find answers to them, I have continuously asked myself ‘what is this story about?’ The answers to this question have changed multiple times throughout the research, guided and influenced by the people I have met during fieldwork, the books I have read, conversations with supervisors and peers at the university and beyond, and important and life changing events ‘outside’ of research. I have tried to connect with different bodies of theory in order to make sense of what I have seen and heard and felt. The story I present in this thesis is connected to these larger narratives of how the world works, and it lands somewhere in between these bodies of theory; theory that concerns mi-

gration in different ways, anthropological gift theory, decolonial theory, and feminist theory. I rely on texts that help me understand my material and tell a coherent story about it, rather than try to fit my material into one of these meta-stories (for what is theory if not a *story* about how the world is connected and moved?).

So, then, what is this story about?

It is about a set of socioeconomic processes that I have chosen to call the *global market of care*. This market is a product of the way that the care work sector in the Basque Country and Spain is structured, and particularly of its dependency on a labor force consisting largely of migrated women² from Latin America. My thesis attempts to understand the different components of this market through the narratives of care workers who have migrated from Bolivia to Spain, as well as through complementary material.

More specifically, this story is about the parts of the global market of care taking place in the connections between the city of Bilbao in the Basque Country of Spain, and different localities in Bolivia; Santa Cruz de la Sierra, La Paz, Cochabamba, and Vallegrande. In order to tell the story, particular geographically located social structures will be taken into account. This includes looking into local and transnational socioeconomic practices of people who have migrated from Bolivia, as well as of their kin ‘back home’. It also means understanding how these practices are performed within a market of care that is, to a great extent, steered by the discourses and legal structures pertaining to the Basque and Spanish labor market and economy, especially the legal aspects that influence people’s daily lives such as immigration and labor law.

It is a story that asks about what is being expected and experienced in relation to the exchanges taking place within the global market of care, and about whose gains and losses are at stake in which ways when observing its dynamics. Who are the ones to ache and break in order for others to be mended and healed? Who are not there to bury their dead because they must vigil the deathbed of someone else? Who must grieve the death³ of their social relationships in order to supply possibilities for

2 My use of the emic term ‘migrated woman/worker’ instead of the term ‘migrant woman/worker’, common within migration scholarship, will be discussed and explained in detail in Chapter 4.

3 Please note my emic use of death here: Death as transition, not as end.

others to shape their relationships differently and increase their opportunities and abilities for consumption within the capitalist market?

My ambition is to shed light on global connections (Tsing 2005) that take place around us by reflecting on the experiences of particular people in particular places and social spaces, and on the expectations different actors within this market hold. It is a story about the practices of exchange that go on in the periphery of global capitalism, exchanges involving both reciprocal relations of ‘gift’ giving, as well as ‘economic’ transactions (Gregory 2015, Mauss 1990, Carrier 2012). These exchanges tell us about the structures at large in the global economy of care. That which is exchanged, and *how* it is done, speaks to us about how power relations based on for instance gender, race, and class matter when access to different resources is being pooled and distributed in the grand lottery of human life (Maldonado-Torres 2007, Strathern 1988). By ‘resources’ I refer not only to access to economic and material stability, but rather to a more all-encompassing access to a life worth living. Access to a life free from not only structural violence in general, but also free from a ‘violence of the mundane’ (Lee & Pratt 2011). A life that supplies you with tools to take care of your physical and emotional health. A life where you hold the ability to participate in the relationships that matter in a way that sustains and nurtures these relationships. A life where you can grieve when you must, and celebrate when you want. A life where you can access a full range of human emotion and dignity.

Through the analysis of my research material I have come to see that the global market of care is both a (re)production and a (re)producer of a state of being that I have chosen to call *migrancy*, which is closely connected to processes of gendering and racialization. Migrancy, and the global market of care as one of many socioeconomic processes that can produce it, is a social space where lives are lived, construed, and constructed. This space is a multi-dimensional rhomb where lives are made; possibilities are geometrically and geographically limited, and the rhomb is built from the outside in. It is filled with sensorial experiences. Of smells, of touch, of sights to see. Of sounds and tastes. Still, within this confined space there are numerous, if not endless, possibilities made available to individuals through the encounters with others. This story is about encounters between a series of lives, including my own, and about what these encounters can say regarding the rhomb that encompasses us

all. It is about questioning the material of which the walls of this structure are built so that we might understand the extent to which we – ourselves – construct those walls through our governed actions. It is thereby also about the possibility of creating a different world than the one we have at the moment.

Field of Study: The Encounter between Migrancy and Care Work in the Global Market of Care

The preface of this dissertation is based on ethnographic fieldnotes and an interview done with Gladys Villca⁴ in April, 2015. Just like many of the research participants that will be introduced in the coming pages, she arrived in Spain from Bolivia just before Spain closed its borders to Bolivian citizens in 2007⁵. At the time the so-called economic crisis of the Global North was in its infancy, and Spanish politicians had begun considering the extent of, and their lack of control over, the irregular economy where many people who had immigrated from Spain's former colonies were employed. After the crisis fully hit Spain's economy in 2008, employment became harder to come by for the immigrated population. This was particularly the case for men, many of whom had been employed in the construction sector on which a large portion of Spain's recent economic development had been founded, but which was now plummeting in free fall. Less affected was the care work sector, which was growing and increasingly employing more migrated women (especially for the more precarious work regimes), most of whom were from Latin America.

One of these women was Gladys. She and most of the other people who have participated in my research have worked or work within the care work sector in Bilbao where I did large parts of the ethnographic fieldwork that has informed this research. Most of the participants have been from Bolivia, although from different areas of the country. Gladys is originally from Sucre, but had migrated to the urban area of Santa Cruz de la Sierra before she decided to leave for Spain. The research participants have told me their life stories, which have built the story I

4 The names of all research participants have been changed in order to anonymize their accounts and shield their identity. This is with exception of the name of lawyer and activist Isabel Quintana cited in Chapter 6, as the interview with her was done in capacity of her expertise on legal questions, not her personal history.

5 Technically the borders of Spain were not open for labor migration from Bolivia prior to 2007, but since Spain did not require tourist visas from Bolivian citizens many people travelled under the pretense of vacations in order to settle and look for jobs in the large irregular labor market.

will tell here: A story about what goes on in the encounter between people and global structures of inequality, particularly in the encounter between people who have migrated from Bolivia in order to fill a gap in the Spanish quest for a functioning welfare state, and the structural components that (re)produce their migrancy.

The conversation that took place that evening in April 2015 with Gladys pointed to what emerged as the heart of this research, namely the encounter between migratory practices and practices of care work in a globalized economic system. The preface also hints at my analytical concerns: encounters between experiences and expectations, and how these inform ways in which exchange is carried out within the global marked of care. In the following chapters I thus attempt to understand by which socioeconomic and legal parameters these practices of exchange take place. Throughout the remainder of this chapter I expand further on the premises of my research and the structure of this thesis.

Conceptual Premises: Care Work, Migrancy, Market

The first conceptual premise of this dissertation is that of care work. This has been a fundamental part of human lives since the beginning of our existence. In every community, every society, always. Someone has always had to be responsible for cleaning, cooking, and nurturing. There has always been a need for minding children and helping them attain the skills necessary to become functioning parts of society. There has always been a need for tending to the sick and ailing, and for assisting people who are too old or too weak to perform certain tasks to get through day-to-day life with dignity. Nancy Fraser explains that care – as a ‘processes of “social reproduction”’ – comprises both ‘affective and material labor’ without which ‘there would be no culture, no economy, no political organization’ (2016:99).

This type of work has been called by many names – domestic work, reproductive work, women’s work (Federici 2012, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Kofman 2012, Yeates 2004, 2012). For Tania González-Fernández, care is a ‘complex relational activity entailing everything we do to maintain and repair our world, the space of confluence between our bodies, ourselves, and our environment’ (2018:106). As such, ‘care’ encompasses what is referred to by the terms ‘domestic’ and ‘reproductive’ work, but broadens the descriptive and analytical scope of what this sort of labor *does*. González-Fernández specifies that care involves

‘a perceptive disposition to orient oneself towards the other and to contribute to her or his well-being by providing support, recognition, understanding, and a sense of security (Vega 2009:184-191)’ (ibid.). While the term ‘domestic’, then, refers to work done within, or pertaining to, the household, ‘care’ can refer to both this work, as well as the feeling of wellbeing that this work might produce, whether in one’s place of work or in one’s place of origin across the world. The term ‘reproductive’ work, stemming from Marxist terminology, is useful in analytically juxtaposing care work and so-called ‘productive’ work within the capitalist market. As such, it refers to the relational aspect between these sorts of labor. This is what Fraser refers to when saying that ‘[no] society that systematically undermines social reproduction can endure for long’ (2016:99). Not only does she refer to the birthing and raising of the next generation of humans, but also to the reproduction of the socio-economic and cultural institutions that uphold society. Thus, reproductive work is an integral part of the economy that sustains our social lives, and vice versa. This perspective is fundamental when discussing the wider implications of the labor market sector I am studying. The term ‘domestic’ will be used to connect to specific parts and aspects of my material, specifically when this term is used in legal texts I have analyzed. I will generally refer to the work that the participants in my research do as care work in order to better conceptually encompass its scope and implications in both Bolivia and Spain. The ways in which practices of care work are linked to the roles women are ascribed in both Spanish and Bolivian societies will be discussed at length in the upcoming chapters.

Furthermore, important in this thesis is *paid* care work as it is practiced in private Spanish homes by women who have migrated from – usually – Latin America or Central Europe. This care work is not performed in function of familial roles such as parent, spouse, sibling, or daughter. Rather, it is a function within a global economy that seemingly mobilizes people to move from one side of the world to another in order to perform this labor in the families of strangers. At times paid care work involves living with those the worker cares for, as an *interna*⁶, while at other times, it is about working as an *externa*⁷. The following chapters confirm that care work is about more than just exchanging la-

6 A live-in care worker.

7 A care worker who lives by herself, and (often) does care work by paid by the hour.

bor for a salary, perhaps especially when it is an integral part of a transnational ‘chain’ of exchange (cf. Anderson 2002, Ehrenreich 2002, Ehrenreich & Hoschild 2002a, 2002b, Hoschild 2000, 2002, Parella 2007, Parella & Cavalcanti 2009, 2010, Parreñas 1998, 2001, 2002, Yeates 2012, Zarembka 2002). Care work and migration thus become primary components of what I discuss as a *global market of care*, a sector of the global economy that is comprised of multitudes of encounters between migration, care work, and specific contextual circumstances such as national law or economic conjuncture, as well as the sociocultural practices of the people involved.

Feminist scholars have called the series of nodes produced in the encounters between practices of international migration and care work *global care chains* (Parreñas 1998, 2001, 2002, Hoschild 2000, 2002, Yeates 2004, 2012). This visual image of a chain has served as an analytical starting point for my dissertation. Following this image, it is the global care chains running between a number of different localities in Bolivia, and Bilbao in the Basque Country of Spain that I discuss in this text. These ‘chains’ connect the care work sector of the Spanish labor market with the lives of families in Bolivia, as well as with Bolivian society at large. In Spain these chains make possible the illusion of a just division of labor between Spanish and Basque men and women (Peterson 2007), and they facilitate the emancipation of Spanish and Basque women in that they can participate in the paid and regulated labor market knowing that someone else is minding ‘their’ gender-prescribed duties in the home (Federici 2012). These global care chains also enable women from Bolivia to pursue a different way of life than what they might have done had they stayed in the country they were born, and they allow them the possibility of providing economically for the families they (often) leave behind when migrating. At the same time these care chains have a profound impact on how these families live their lives – both locally and transnationally. They affect how children left behind become adults, and they affect how elderly parents are cared for and, eventually, pass away. They affect the ways in which people can make meaning of their losses, and how they maintain reciprocal relations with their kin and loved ones. Ultimately these care chains impact the society around those who have left for Spain, in that the departure of society members influences what people in Bolivia deem possi-

ble, and how they imagine the future for themselves and their children (Bastia 2009, 2011a).

This set of global care chains is problematized both empirically and conceptually, via research material gathered through ethnographic methods and analyzed with an anthropological, decolonial, and feminist theoretical toolkit. My analysis dissolves and integrates these ‘chains’ into a conceptual globalized market. In other words, I explore the social processes that the care chain literature seeks to conceptualize as connected through chains, through, rather, a market. By doing so I focus analytically on the practices of exchange and on how power operates between different actors and different scales of the market. I investigate how the reciprocal dynamics of this market reflect power relations at stake between those exchanging; how giving and receiving, and buying and selling, can expose and reproduce the performative powers of social categorization. I suggest that by focusing on practices rather than pre-conceived social ties, we get a better understanding not only of the complex webs of social relationships that such a market entails, but also of what the ‘laws of the market’ (Callon 1998) are, and of how these ‘laws’ might be tied to different structures of power and social stratification, such as race, gender, and class. Important to note here is my use of the terms *economic*, *economy* and *market* as they are used in anthropology, not in economics. As my background is in social anthropology, conceptualizing the economy as something separate from the rest of society seems counterintuitive. Rather, I see the ‘economy’ and the ‘market’ as social practices (cf. Carrier 2012, Gregory 2015, Tsing 2013). Naming them something other than ‘society’ or ‘culture’ is simply a matter of choosing a lens through which to focus on my research interest.

Lastly, important to underscore in this introductory chapter is my use of the term *migrancy*. As implied above, this is how I have come to understand the state of being and becoming that people live in as a result of the components, structures, and processes of the global market of care. It is a state of being that is reminiscent of, and connected to, what Nelson Maldonado-Torres describes as the ‘coloniality of Being’ (2007), or what Nicolas De Genova (2002, 2005, 2013) and Ruben Andersson (2014a) have described through their use of the notion of ‘illegality’. The state of migrancy is not a descriptor limited to the global market of care, but, rather, potentially addresses an array of other related situations that are linked to migration. What I attempt to underscore by

my use of this term is how the lives made possible in the global market of care are circumscribed by specific experiences, expectations, and exchanges. These, in turn, are (re)produced through categories of social differentiation such as gender, race, and class made visible in the discourses and representations of legislation and policy, as well as in science and other forms of ‘produced’ knowledge; through research methodology; and through practices of everyday life and its performativities. These components will be discussed at large throughout the thesis, while the rest of this chapter presents my research problem, aims, and questions, followed by an overview of my research material and the remaining chapters.

Research Problem and Aims

The chief aim of this dissertation is to address a particular circumstance of global capitalism: that certain backs carry the weight of the continuously more all-encompassing and global economic system that we live with, and under. Care workers make up the spine of the global economy in several ways (Parreñas 2001). They perform so-called reproductive labor that by definition, discourse, and practice has been seen as separate from productive labor (Federici 2012, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Kofman 2012). This distinction is highly gendered, and is, in the Spanish case, also recognizable in the legislation that governs how the care industry takes place (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Peterson 2007). In other words, care workers participate in the capitalist market in that they are paid workers, but the fruit of their labor is regarded as a non-product, since ‘reproductive work’ has historically been part of the private sphere of human life (Federici 2012).

However, this work is what shapes the conditions through which ‘productive’ labor can take place. It contributes to the reproduction of human life. If there were no one to take care of children while parents worked within the ‘economic market’, then either parents would not work, or they would not become parents. If there were no food on the table, no one to nurse the sick or elderly, no one to clean the toilets, and do the shopping, *life* simply would not happen. The human condition depends on somebody performing ‘reproductive’ labor, or ‘doing the dirty work’, as Bridget Anderson (2000) put it. It is this labor that constructs human life. It is this work that is the backbone of society, and thereby also of the ‘economic market’.

The narratives of the research participants reveal what is central to this analogical backbone. Care work – the labor that holds it all together and fuels the machinery of the economic system – is actually carried *physically* by certain bodies. This type of work often entails physical abrasion and exhaustion, skeletal and muscular wear and tear. Care work also entails that affective relations be constructed in a way that they become, at least, bearable, and perhaps even enjoyable in order to minimize the emotional wear that this labor often produces. For example, an employer might ask a worker to care for her ailing father, while the worker herself has left her children and her elderly parents behind on the other side of the world. Part of the emotional exhaustion that watching a person perish entails is thus transferred from employer via the ‘service user’ to employee, while the employee herself is burdened with further emotional wear due to the geographic displacement her job produces. We can thus say that this emotional wear is produced in the intersection between the responsibility of emotional presence that is transferred by the employer to the domestic worker, and the void that is produced in the wake of other transfigured relationships that stretch across the globe. As will be made clear in the chapters to come, this emotional presence, and the empathy that it entails, is an essential part of what the employer expects from her employee. The ways in which this empathy can be understood as both commodity and gift within the relationships of the care sector, is a strong testament both to how capitalism feeds off social relations in order to survive and thrive (Tsing 2013), and to how differently workers and employees are positioned within the global market of care.

In other words, some bodies carry out the work that makes the wheels turn, and the unevenly distributed weight of this labor contributes to a socioeconomic production of livelihoods and lives that is continuously differentiated in terms of social categorizations. Gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, and class all contribute, through their intersections, to create differential life worlds across socioeconomic hierarchies. And these life worlds are inscribed in bodies that are seen as belonging to particular categories of gender, race, and class. For those seen to be on the *Other* side of the somatic norm (Puwar 2004) along these hierarchies, the odds of your life being marked by structural violence in the everyday increases. The stories of the research participants presented in this

thesis reflect how migrancy is a process in which people are reduced to the 'Other' (Maldonado-Torres 2007, Schiwy 2007).

Through this thesis I question the processes and practices that surround the lives of the research participants and people who share their predicament in terms of employment situation and/or migratory status. Although the processes linked to global connections of care, or care chains, have been thoroughly researched in many empirical contexts, the global market of care that is linked to Spain in general, and the Basque Country and Bilbao in particular, has received little attention. Apart from the anthropological value of understanding every empirical context in its own right, I consider the context of this particular market of care of special interest in a global perspective due to the postcolonial connections between Spain as a country and the people that are employed as care workers within this market. This predicament shapes the practices that take place in this market – both in terms of the laws and policies that govern it, and the social interaction that transpires between the actors that comprise it.

This research endeavor is not about capturing what is complete or finite, but about investigating the fragments of the lives that have intersected with my own at the time and place that we have met, through the periods of fieldwork I have undertaken in both Bolivia and Spain. The story told here is based on the research participants' interpretation of their situations – a very different story might have been told had life been kinder, or fouler, to each of these persons, or had they and I met in a different manner, in a different context. The story told in this thesis is thus incomplete, a remnant of positionalities and situated knowledge, as any story is.

Ultimately, the aim of my research is threefold. First, I hope to contribute empirically to research on migration, migrancy, and care. I explore the conditions under which migrated people in Spain and the Basque Country live and work, and how these are connected to how people live in Bolivia, as well as to the shared colonial history between these two countries. Second, I aim to contribute to theory regarding global care regimes, migration and migrancy, by interpreting them through feminist, decolonial, and anthropological gift theory. By including these perspectives in my analysis I hope to show the ways in which people who have migrated from Bolivia and work in the care work sector in Bilbao, as well as I and other people who take part in their lives,

are all global subjects whose subjectivities are constructed through their particular sociocultural trajectories. And last, I hope that my thesis can make a methodological contribution, especially in regard to research on migration, by considering how I as a researcher enter into the exchanges and the connections that take place in the global market of care.

Research Questions

Guiding the analysis of my research material is a series of research questions. Throughout the past years of ethnographic fieldwork, scrutinizing relevant documentation, and interviewing people with stakes in the global market of care, many questions have come and gone. As an anthropologist I find it ethically crucial to pay tribute to the complexity of human life in the rendition of my material. The material one attains through ethnographic fieldwork always holds the possibilities for numerous interpretations – and thus for numerous stories. Part of carving out which story that can and should be told based on the material at hand is finding which questions to ask. The following three questions have come to structure the plot of this thesis and guide my inquiry into how the global market of care is practiced and (re)produced:

How is the global market of care that connects Bolivia and Spain made possible?

What experiences, expectations, and exchanges make up the global market of care, and how are these connected?

What processes and logics of social differentiation are made particularly relevant in this market, and how?

Empirical Material

Most of the empirical material under scrutiny in this thesis has been gathered through multiple stints of ethnographic fieldwork between 2013 and 2016. It consists largely of audio recorded and transcribed life history interviews and written observations from the ‘field’. The latter are both records of my own experiences and emotions regarding different events, as well as records of conversations and experiences shared with the research participants. I also had the opportunity to stay with

some of the participants for parts of my fieldwork, which gave me further insight into their daily lives.

The ‘field’, or the social space of my study, was constituted by the everyday lives of care workers – most of whom had migrated from Bolivia to Bilbao – as well as the (transnational) social relations that matter to them. I met most of the participants by partaking in two organizations in Bilbao. *Red de Madres y Mujeres Bolivianas* [Network of Bolivian Mothers and Women], predominantly comprised of women from Bolivia, is focused on Bolivian ‘culture’ and folklore, while *Mujeres con Voz* [Women with Voice], a larger, feminist organization, engages with migrated women and domestic workers in general. Most of the life history interviews were done with participants from these two organizations⁸.

Apart from life history interviews and participant observation, I have met with specialists whose work is related to my research topic, such as a lawyer and a psychologist who both engage with migrated care workers. As a secondary source of material I rely on documentation from different NGOs who work with these and related issues, and I have looked into Spanish law on immigration and domestic work, and local and national statistics that give an overview of certain structural components relevant to my research field⁹.

Structure of Thesis

The thesis is divided into eleven chapters. *Chapter 1 – Telling Stories* has introduced the reader to the main narrative of this thesis as well as the research aim and questions.

In *Chapter 2 – Locating the Field: Research Contexts and the Global Market of Care between Spain and Bolivia* I give an overview of the geographical places in Spain and Bolivia that became locations of my fieldwork. I briefly look at the connections between the two countries – on a national scale – through their colonial pasts, and show that the global market of care arguably contributes to a (post)colonial reproduction of migrancy.

Chapter 3 – Guiding Scars: Experience, Positionality, Ethnography focuses on how knowledge and the choices we make are produced

⁸ See Chapter 3 for further details on my fieldwork with these organizations. See also Appendix 1 for an overview of the organizations that are part of my research material.

⁹ Regarding these secondary sources, as well academic sources and all ethnographic material, I underline that translations from Spanish to English are my own.

through what happens to our bodies in particular contexts by discussing my own experiences in ‘the field’. I explore how these are informed by my own positionality, my previous knowledge, and by the contingent encounters between the research participants and myself. I consider the possible pitfalls my approach might have entailed, and alternative paths I could have taken. I connect the bodily experiences of both researcher and research participants and thereby show that not only are we as individuals part of the same global economy with its different local expressions, but so is this research and science itself, particularly in how migration and mobility looks different in our different experiences. As humans, our epistemology and ontology are always both informed by the structures around us, and thereby also by our experiences of self, which in turn shapes the encounters and exchanges between us.

In *Chapter 4 – Guiding Stars: Theory, Concepts, Epistemology*, I present further the epistemological and methodological groundwork that has informed the analysis in this thesis, and inspired the choices I have made in the field. I discuss the concepts used throughout the thesis, especially in light of how they potentially are part of the (re)production of migrancy.

In *Chapter 5 – The Meanings of Migration: Gendered and Colonial Scripting of Migrancy* I explore ways in which mobility is and has been a part of the lives of the research participants, and how the meaning of these mobilities change as they travel through different historically conditioned contexts. The ways that value becomes attached to movement, and the dynamics of social differentiation attached to particular forms of movement, is one component that serves to construct the state of migrancy that people experience once they arrive in Spain. In order to understand these dynamics I look particularly at stories of decision making with regard to emigration and how these stories are linked to gendered scripts of care and parenthood in both Spanish and Bolivian contexts.

Chapter 6 – Replaceable, Temporary, Dependent: Reproducing Migrancy through Immigration Legislation focuses on the Spanish state’s immigration legislation and how it contributes to structuring the global market of care. By contemplating the research participants’ experiences of ‘befallen irregularity’ (González-Enríquez 2010, Triandafyllidou 2010b, Triandafyllidou & Vogel 2010), I contemplate what discourses lie behind the laws and its sanctions. I argue that the legal parameters I discuss contribute to signifying migrated care workers as replaceable,

perpetually conscribing them to a precarious work situation, and thereby also a life in migrancy.

In *Chapter 7 – Invisibility in the Name of Domesticity: The Gendered Colonial Subject and the (Il)legalities of Care Work* I scrutinize Basque and Spanish legislations that implicitly or explicitly regulate the care work sector. I argue that the laws constructed to, supposedly, protect care workers, implicitly – and at times explicitly – prioritize the protection of Spanish/Basque family life and its intimacy. These sets of legislations are therefore not only another component of the global market of care, but they also contribute to the reproduction of the *hogar*, or home, as a gendered, private space for which women are responsible, whether these women be Spanish or from Spain's former colonies.

Chapter 8 – Sentiments of Charity and Gratitude: Benevolent Bosses and Dependent Workers explores the dynamics of working relationships that the narratives of the research participants unfold. I focus particularly on confrontations between workers and employers, so-called 'blowups' (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002), as they have been retold by the research participants. I examine what these sorts of encounters can tell us about the power dynamics of exchange within the ground zero of the global market of care, namely the Spanish home/*hogar*.

Chapter 9 – Cutting Costs, Cutting Losses: Gendered Gifts of Absence and Sacrifice investigates further the dynamics of exchange in the global market of care by exploring what takes place in the relationships between the research participants and their loved ones in Bolivia. The absence that migration produces often has unforeseeable consequences for the personal relationships people leave behind. This absence results in loss and grief, both for those who leave and those who stay, and as such it becomes a cost that is arguably unaccounted for in the 'laws of the market' (Callon 1998) of global care. For the workers and their kin, migrancy therefore entails an obstruction of *their* 'laws', their lives, their (moral) economy.

In *Chapter 10 – Responding to Migrancy: Claims for Justice through Gendered and Colonized Positions* I look at different claims for justice made through both political protests and through sociocultural practices of exchange. I look at what these claims tell us about the (re)production of migrancy through the global market of care, in that the *responses* to something arguably tell us about how that something is structured. I especially consider how even intersectional approaches to the plights of

care workers can reveal how dynamics of gender become racialized within the global market of care. I claim that the ways in which many of the research participants rely on their reciprocal social relations and transnational networks to resolve challenges that life in migrancy produce, rather than opting for organized political protest, has to do with the discursive premises of the global market of care. These premises, or ‘laws of the market’, arguably protect the Spanish socioeconomic space in itself, not its precarious workers, and dictates who is ‘allowed’ to partake in reciprocal exchange and who is not. As such, these premises (re)produce migrancy as a form of coloniality of Being (Maldonado-Torres 2007).

Chapter 11 – Subjectivities, Positionalities, and Migrancy as Principal Components of the Global Market of Care sums up the main discussions in this thesis and reflects on the research questions asked in its beginning. In this final chapter I discuss how feminist, decolonial, and anthropological gift theory can shed light on the dynamics of expectations, experience, and exchange and elucidate how the global market of care is operationalized. I particularly consider the importance of understanding the dynamics of reciprocity within the global market of care for understanding how migrancy is reproduced as a form coloniality of Being, and argue that through understanding the gendered and racialized aspects of the ‘spirit of the Gift’ (Mauss 1990) we can reach a better understanding of the forms of exchange within this market, as well as its repercussions.

2. LOCATING THE FIELD: RESEARCH CONTEXTS AND THE GLOBAL MARKET OF CARE BETWEEN SPAIN AND BOLIVIA

Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to the geographical contexts that take center stage in my dissertation – the different localities where I did fieldwork in Bolivia, and in Bilbao in the Basque Country of Spain. All of these contexts, these sociocultural spaces connected to physical places (cf. Massey 2005), have their own complex histories, social hierarchies and dynamics of power that are relevant in order to understand the central axis of my research endeavor; the global market of care that involve these places. These contexts can be understood from different perspectives and on different scales. I focus on their current political and economic composition, and on how they are largely part of the same (colonially) discursive space when it comes to questions of race, gender, and class. I also look into what their experiences of migration and care work have been historically, and I give brief accounts of what my fieldwork entailed in each place.

In order to grasp the global connections inherent in the global market of care and the complexities of the everyday lives at stake in my analysis, I needed to adjust the research methods employed to the participants' transnational reality (Marcus 1995). I therefore chose to have two geographical foci for my fieldwork. First, I examined the context with which I was very familiar prior to starting my PhD education – after having spent several years there as a student and as a young working

adult: Bilbao in the Basque Country of Spain. However, to better understand how ‘sending’ contexts play a role in the making of mobility, migrancy, and adaptation to the ‘receiving’ context (cf. Brettell 2006, Castles 2010, Levitt & Jaworsky 2007, Portes et al. 1999, Portes 2010), I decided to limit my field in Bilbao to the social spaces of people with a shared place of origin. I chose to focus on care workers from Bolivia, and thus Bolivia as a sending context, seeing that Bolivians made up one of the largest Latin American groups in the Basque Country when I first started my research. Migration from Bolivia to Spain was also more recent than that from other Latin American countries, such as Ecuador and Colombia, and was, as such, less researched at the time.

I begin this chapter by reflecting on the interview between the research participant Gladys Villca and me, presented in the preface. Our conversation introduces many of the elements discussed in this thesis as part of the global market of care, and hints at both geographical aspects and academic discussions relevant for the overall understanding of this market. It also illustrates how people’s stories are the *sine-qua-non* of this thesis, and how they are connected to geographies as dynamic spaces: as social practices. It is in the personal histories of the research participants we can understand how geographical contexts *happen*, how they *take place* in people’s lives and in the world. I continue the chapter in the chronological order of the participants’ travels from Bolivia towards Spain, and thereby draw up an outline of the Bolivian research contexts I was a part of and their experiences with migration and care work. I then introduce the reader to relevant aspects of the Spanish and Basque context(s), before looking at the connections Spain and its regions have to migration and Latin America. I end the chapter by commenting on an important aspect related to the coloniality that is part of the geographies of my research; the politics of naming, and how I talk *about* different spaces in this thesis.

The Geographies of Gladys’ Life

As the conversation with Gladys Villca in the preface elucidates, the spaces from which people have travelled to work in Spain have been profoundly shaped by the economic processes at large in Bolivia. Her narrative speaks of Bolivia’s history with emigration, through her reference to her father’s emigration to Argentina the first time the family fell into economic problems. It also speaks of urbanization, in the relation-

ship between centers and peripheries within Bolivia, and in how Bolivia itself becomes a periphery within the ‘world system’ (Grosfoguel 2011) in relation to its former colonial master – Spain. As Gladys shoulders increased responsibility for her family’s economic survival and wellbeing she progressively spirals towards always-larger centers within this system. The same system produces not only a mutual economic dependency between peripheral and central spaces, but also purports that all these spaces adhere to a neoliberal logic when organizing socioeconomic life. This logic is intrinsic to how, for instance, health care is organized in both Bolivia and Spain, where privatization of the access to medical and non-medical care is becoming more prominent. It is a logic at the heart of why Gladys decided to move to Spain – her family was deeply indebted when her brother fell ill and passed away, producing economic repercussions for her parents, siblings, and herself for the rest of their lives. And, as the oldest sister, she is the one who is expected to do what she can to remedy their situation. Tania González-Fernández, who also did her PhD about migration from Bolivia to Spain, points out that

the provision of transnational care may be one of the greatest investments of migration, considering that women often foreground the needs of their extended families over [...] goals they may originally have had in mind – but without completely giving up their dreams (2018:127).

As such, Gladys’ story reveals the highly gendered dynamics of migration-as-care (Baldassar 2011, González-Fernández 2018). Her plans for migrating to Spain were a direct consequence of her family’s need for care, and underscores González-Fernández’ point. Gladys was making a life for herself, following her dreams, when these needs appeared. Tending to them thereby became a way for her to mediate the grief that her brother’s death had inscribed in her body, while also doing what she *should* in regard to her family. The way to accomplish this was to care for them economically by caring for somebody else’s family abroad. The neoliberal logic governing people’s lives thus also figures within the discourses that make the care work sector in Spain possible, and it opened up this sector as a possible destination for Gladys once she

looked beyond Bolivia's borders for an answer to her family's economic problems.

Bolivia: Colonialism and Coloniality in the Construction of Migrancy

Bolivia is multifaceted when it comes to ethnic complexity and historical processes related to power struggles over ethnic divisions. At the same time, these struggles have taken place in a global context within which Bolivia as a country has been one of the most severely affected by capitalist extraction and postcolonial aftermaths. One important consequence of this is the situation for women in general, and indigenous women in particular. Draper writes that 'women experience an extreme form of social and political exclusion' (2008:214), and mentions high illiteracy rates (particularly in rural areas), large gendered gaps when it comes to education and pay level, as well as high fertility and child birth mortality, as some examples. According to Draper, the gender-based exclusion of women can generally be linked to the prevalence of machismo – 'or the belief that men are inherently superior to women' (2008:214). Although a lot has changed when it comes to, among other things, women's representation in politics after Evo Morales came to power in 2006, machismo seeps through the cracks of many of the stories I was told by the research participants. This includes a pervasiveness of domestic violence, which Draper claims is experienced by as many as 70 percent of women (2008:215). While this factors into how and why some of the research participants decided to leave Bolivia in the first place¹⁰, machismo is not the only 'culprit' inciting this sort of movement.

As I suggested in the Chapter 1, what I call migrancy is about social and political relations on both intimate and global scales. These aspects are gendered, but they are also racialized and circumscribed by (post)colonial relations. Migrancy is made possible through, amongst other things, the history of colonization of Bolivia, and its imperialist aftermaths. As such, it is a testament to how coloniality is, in fact, not 'postcolonial', but rather part of current national and international sociopolitical dynamics. Colonization of the geographical areas that are Bo-

¹⁰ See Chapter 5 for a further discussion of how gender figures in the decision-making processes around migration.

livia today began with the Spanish ‘discovery’ of the Potosí silver mines in 1545 (Rojas 1988), and these riches, together with gas and lithium in more recent times, have been the basis for the global extraction of resources from Bolivia (Camps 2013, Specchia & Camps 2013). I will not go into detail on the topic of colonial relations between Bolivia and Spain, as it is beyond the scope of this thesis, but two dimensions should be noted. First, the extraction of people-as-workforce through international migration is, as suggested above, arguably another form of global imperialism when it comes to the relationship between the Global South and the Global North. This has been discussed in terms of both ‘brain drain’ (see for example Raghuram 2009), and – more relevant to my own research – ‘care drain’ in the migration literature (Bettio et al. 2006, Dumitru 2014, Lutz & Palenga-Möllenberg 2012, Vulliamy & King 2008). Both ‘drains’ are arguably connected to what Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) calls ‘coloniality of Being’, a state of being and becoming within which people interiorize the oppression produced by current and historical colonial dynamics, and find ways to live with their precarious predicament. These dynamics will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

Second, (post)colonial relations between colonized and colonizing countries in general, and Bolivia and Spain in particular, have opened particular paths of migration through a wide array of connections. One important factor is the juridical aspect – where many former colonies of Spain have or have had special schemes for immigration into the former imperial center. To some extent this was also the case for Bolivia until 2007, up until which Bolivian citizens could travel as tourists to Spain without a visa. The process for attaining Spanish citizenship through consecutive residence permits is also shorter for people from former Spanish colonies than from other countries, at least on paper.

Another important aspect of these juridical relations is that people who can prove they are descendants from Spanish citizens with no more than two generations back, can themselves obtain Spanish citizenship through the *Law of Historical Memory*. This law was created to acknowledge

the injustice represented by the exile of many Spaniards during the Civil War and Dictatorship. Consequently, the [...] Law allows the optional acquisition of Spanish citizenship of origin by persons

whose father or mother was originally Spanish and by the grandchildren of those who lost or were forced to forfeit their Spanish citizenship as a consequence of the exile (Ley 52/2007, de 26 de diciembre).

While this law was, as seen above, a way for descendants of Spanish refugees during the civil war to reclaim their ancestors' rights within Spanish territory, it has also become a way for people to access 'Fortress Europe'. People from Uruguay and Argentina, former Spanish colonies that received extensive immigration from Spain during the 20th century, have used this legal particularity as a migration scheme.

Another important factor in regard to (post)colonial paths of migration is the fact that colonialism and coloniality have produced a shared ontology of sorts, between the colonial center and peripheries. Language, religion, and many sociocultural customs are therefore similar when it comes to, in this case, Bolivia and Spain, and these similarities become the basis for the 'laws' of the global market of care (cf. Callon 1998). This facilitates communication in, for example, the workplace once people have migrated. At the same time, the hierarchy embedded through colonial ties supplies an unspoken point of departure that already situates Bolivian women in particular positions within the socio-economic landscape in Spain.

A fundamental aspect of these relations are the particularities of the racial hierarchy that was implemented in the Spanish colonial empire, beginning with the *sistema de castas*, or caste system, of what was then named New Spain (generally speaking, what is now the United States of Mexico) (cf. Fonseca Alfaro 2018, Martínez 2009). In this system, which was also implemented in the Andes region, people were categorized according to their racial/phenotypical proximity to the colonial masters – the *Peninsulares* (settlers from Spain) or the *Criollos* (people of Spanish descent born in the colonies). Drawing on Martínez (2009), Fonseca Alfaro (2018) writes that other than the two mentioned above, the main racial categories within the New Spain caste system were *Indio* and *Black*, and the mixes of one of these categories with either *Peninsulares* or *Criollos*, resulting in *Mestizo* or *Mulato*, respectively. An array of other categories also existed, depending on what type of 'blood' had been mixed in particular bodies and places, and these racial categories were organized in a system that prescribed different forms of labor to

different colonized bodies. The contemporary dynamics that are remnants of this hierarchy of racialization are central in my discussions in the coming chapters.

Image 1: Pan-American consciousness on the outskirts of Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

In Bolivia, Evo Morales and his allies have, since 2006 (and before), led a rise against the aftermaths of colonization and imperialism, and against current processes of coloniality (Sofetti 2013, Specchia & Camps 2013). This rise has meant that the voices of people, including women, who had not had access to political power, have been heard to a larger extent than earlier (cf. Jeppesen 2018). Morales' ways of maintaining his political position have, however, come under harsh critique in recent years, and the opposition against him has been fierce, particularly in the Santa Cruz region. Still, some of the research participants underscored how the politics of 'el Evo', confronting structural racism in Bolivia, has meant that taking pride in one's national identity has become easier, despite the circumstances of migrancy. This also includes pride in one's indigenous heritage, which usually varies according to where in Bolivia people come from. Below I succinctly present the different geographical contexts I visited as part of my fieldwork in light of their connection to migration and migrancy.

Fieldsites in Bolivia

Bolivia is not only a diverse country when it comes to its peoples, but also its geography and topography. Aside from not having a coastline – an issue of great national grievance and perpetual conflict with Chile – its landscapes are as varied as can be. According to the *Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas de Bolivia*, the country consists of three different climatic and geographical zones (INE Bolivia 2019). About 28 percent of Bolivian territory is considered Andean, where steep, arid, altitude shapes the climate. This zone stretches along the border to Peru, Chile, and partially Argentina, in the west and is where La Paz, Sucre, Cochabamba, and the Lake Titicaca are located.

The ‘intermediate’ sub-Andean zone covers about 13 percent of Bolivian territory and lies at a lower altitude. It consists of fertile valleys – Los Yungas – and a more temperate climate. The lowlands (los llanos) stretching along the borders to Peru, Brazil, and Paraguay in the north and east, cover the remaining 59 percent of the territory. This zone, where Santa Cruz de la Sierra is located, is marked by lush tropics and humid heat. When it comes to centers of power, these are also spread out in the different geographical regions, and the different administrative departments¹¹. While Sucre, where Gladys is from, is the administrative capital of Bolivia, and La Paz is the center for government and finance, Santa Cruz de la Sierra is the largest city and biggest economic and industrial center.

¹¹ The nine *departamentos*, or departments, are the largest administrative subdivisions in Bolivia.

Image 2: Arriving to La Paz: aerial photo of El Alto.

Santa Cruz de la Sierra

The city of Santa Cruz is located in the eastern lowlands and the municipality has a population of about 1.5 million people, according to the 2012 census (INE Bolivia 2012a). However, if one includes the entire metropolitan area, this number would be significantly higher. A large part of the population in this area have immigrated from other cities and, not least, rural areas of Bolivia. Santa Cruz has had less of an indigenous influence than e.g. La Paz, but due to its current economic importance the population is very ethnically diverse. The city is organized spatially in a growing number of *anillos* – ring shaped main roads that spiral out from the old colonial center of town and circle the city. Generally speaking, the further you live from the center the more you descend the city's socioeconomic ladder. In the outer 'rings' of the city, where people who have migrated from other areas of Bolivia often reside, living conditions become increasingly more precarious. The metropolitan area of Santa Cruz can therefore be considered a migration hub in its own right. It is both a migration destination, and it serves as a starting point for international migration towards either Argentina or Chile, or further on to the USA or Spain. As Gladys described in our in-

terview, the city is a place to move to in order to have better economic opportunities.

While staying in the Santa Cruz area, I spent most of my time with the participant Elia Vargas', whom I met in Bilbao, extended family and friends. I did, however, also have the opportunity to visit the family of Consuelo Vence (see Chapter 10), who lived on the opposite side of the city, and the relatives of Katty Aquino (see Chapters 3, 6, and 9), who lived in Warnes, another town in the periphery of Santa Cruz de la Sierra¹².

Image 3: Arriving in Santa Cruz de la Sierra from El Torno

El Torno

Many of the research participants that I interacted with in both Bolivia and Spain had at some point lived in Santa Cruz, and I spent about half of my fieldwork time in Bolivia living in the outskirts of the city – beyond its system of *anillos* – in a small town called El Torno. It is situated on the old main road going from Santa Cruz towards Cochabamba, next to the Pirai River, and has a population of about 50,000 (INE Bo-

¹² See Chapter 1, Appendix 2, and below in this chapter, for a further introduction of the research participants.

livia 2012b). This road connects the city of Santa Cruz with the valleys of the department of Santa Cruz, for instance Vallegrande. It takes a little over an hour to get from El Torno to the center of Santa Cruz by *micro* – minibuses that are the main form of public transport.

Image 4: Public transport observed from inside a micro.

A farmers' union from Vallegrande founded the town in 1957, and its population has since consisted of a majority of migrated people from this province and other *cruzeño* valleys. People in El Torno and other towns along the same main road mostly live from commerce. Many own farmland either in this area or back in their towns of origin, and sell their own produce at the local market or in the center of Santa Cruz. This was the case of Elia's mother, Doña Verónica, who I lived with during my time there. She would travel every so often back to Vallegrande and either collect her own produce (mainly potatoes) from her land or buy off of other farmers, bring it to El Torno by public transportation, and sell it at the town market. Other people own small restaurants (*pensiones*), stalls (*puestos*) at the market, beauty salons, convenience stores, Internet cafés, or other sorts of small businesses.

Image 5: Bridge across the River Pirai, El Torno area.

Everyday life in El Torno and neighboring towns is to a large extent carried out according to *Vallegrandino* customs. This means getting together on the weekends to eat *Vallegrandino* food like *chicharrón* or *asado colorado*, and drink large amounts of *chicha*, an alcoholic beverage made of fermented maize¹³. It means that at a party, the person serving drinks must do a ‘cheers’ with each person they serve, so that everyone drinks from the same beverage. It means dancing to the music of local bands that play *Vallegrandino* folk music, like *coplas*, a sort of sung ‘battle of the sexes’ between a man and a woman. It means always sharing whatever food or drink is available with whomever is present. It means following a diet that consists of an abundance of different vegetables, especially a varied selection of maize and locally grown potato types. It also means consistently relating to migration, both ‘internal’ and international. Whomever I talked to in El Torno had their own history related to migration: either they themselves had migrated there

¹³ See Appendix 5 for an overview of Bolivian foods/dishes.

from another place in Bolivia, or they had family or friends living abroad somewhere, usually both. As will become evident throughout the thesis, this coincides with the personal histories of most of the research participants, no matter which place in Bolivia they hailed from.

Image 6: Drying meat for preservation at Doña Verónica's house in El Torno.

Vallegrande

Vallegrande is a picturesque town surrounded by green hills in the Department of Santa Cruz. Its altitude is higher than the city of Santa Cruz and the climate is therefore more temperate. Its population is about 17,000 (INE Bolivia 2012c), lives off of agriculture and commerce, and has a long tradition of both in- and out-migration. The local dialect of Spanish is different than the one in the city of Santa Cruz and includes a great deal of Quechuan vocabulary, which at times was a challenge when communicating with *Vallegrandinos*, particularly the first couple of weeks after I arrived in Bolivia, which was when I travelled to Vallegrande together with Elia.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Elia was visiting her mother, Doña Verónica, in El Torno during my first weeks of fieldwork. At that point Elia and I had known each other for about three years, ever since we had

met through her sister Jhoselyn during my first stint of fieldwork in Bilbao in July 2013. Throughout my multiple fieldwork periods both sisters became close friends. When in Bolivia together, Elia and I carried out a pilgrimage to *la Virgen de Urkupiña* in Cochabamba, and we travelled to Vallegrande, where she had grown up.

We did not have time to travel to the actual village where Elia was from, which lies higher up in the hillsides around the town of Vallegrande, but we stayed for a couple of days in a hotel in town. When we laid down to sleep the first night, Elia told me this was only her second time staying at a hotel. I asked when the first time was, and she laughed heartily, almost shouting, that ‘I can’t tell you about that!’ She didn’t end up telling me anything about that stay, nor with whom it had been. But she showed me around town and we went to the local museum with an exposition about Che Guevara’s last days, as well as the hospital where he died. We visited old acquaintances of hers and she told me stories about her youth roaming around those streets and ate at her favorite *puestos* [booths/stalls] at the market. I was introduced to *Vallegrandino* delicacies and watched Elia’s almost disappear into the pleasure of tasting ‘home’ with every dish or piece of baked goods we ate. We bought local foods that she would take back to Bilbao to give to her siblings, their children, and her daughters. And we ordered a wreath at the market that would be picked up by Elia’s cousin and placed on her son’s grave in the village.

Image 7: The town of Vallegrande as seen from the mirador.

Image 8: Mototaxis waiting for their next run in the main plaza in Vallegrande.

Image 9: The main market in Vallegrande.

Cochabamba

A second destination for Elia's and my travels together was Cochabamba, a city of about 630,000 people (INE Bolivia 2012d), but that, just like Santa Cruz, is part of a larger metropolitan area. Elia and I travelled there overnight and returned the next night by bus from the central station in Santa Cruz. Since the new, more direct, route had been closed due to mudslides, we travelled by the 'old' road. After arriving in Cochabamba we took a local *micro* to Quillacollo, a small town adjacent to the city, where the sanctuary of *la Virgen de Urkupiña*, Bolivia's patron saint, is located. I will get back to this visit in Chapter 10.

Cochabamba is also where Katty Aquino, another participant I became close with, is from. Katty was visiting her parents, brother, and daughter for a month while I was in Bolivia, and I ended up spending a week with her and her family in Cochabamba. While the city lies at an altitude of over 2500 meters above sea level, I travelled there from La Paz, and as such my stay there was literally a breath of (more oxygenated) air. The city itself lies in a fertile valley surrounded by mountaintops, and the economy has been based on agriculture, particularly in the villages in the lush hills surrounding the city, but also includes commerce and some industry. Ethnically, Cochabamba has a much larger

indigenous presence than Santa Cruz – both Quechan and Aymaran. Being a native speaker of either of these languages in addition to Spanish is not uncommon, as the case is for Katty and her family, who use both Quechan and Spanish at home. And, like other large cities, Cochabamba is also a migration hub, particularly for the surrounding villages.

Image 10: View of the center of Cochabamba.

La Paz and El Alto

The last destination point during my stay in Bolivia was La Paz. In terms of landscapes, La Paz, with a population of 770,000 (INE Bolivia 2012e), and the altitudinally adjacent town of El Alto, with a population of 850,000 (INE Bolivia 2012f) – which literally means ‘the height/highest’ – are of the most striking places I have ever seen. The arid topography reminds me of how the moon’s landscapes have been portrayed in old movies. The air is crisp, the colors are clearer, and the sun burns differently than it does at lower altitudes. The beauty of La

Paz literally and figuratively takes your breath away. I had long been curious as to how the altitude would affect me, and in arriving to La Paz I learned that the effect was significant. This restricted my mobility and thereby also my fieldwork (see Chapter 3).

Image 11: 'Lunar' landscape in La Paz.

I spent my time in La Paz living with Ana Soto and her two daughters, as well as the eldest daughter's boyfriend, all of whom I already knew from Bilbao. They had moved to Bolivia a few months before and were trying to get their bearings and establish a new 'old' life in the center of the city. Amongst other things, this gave me insights into ideas around return migration (cf. Bastia 2011a, Parella et al. 2017). I also met the children of two other key participants I knew from Bilbao: Blanca López' daughter, Virginia, and María Cabrerías' son and daughter, Marcos and Raquel.

In sum, my stay in these different localities of Bolivia provided me with an understanding of the degree of complexity and diversity of the country in itself, and, more particularly, of Bolivia as a sending context. While the time I spent in the different localities was not enough to grasp all aspects of this context, it did give me an awareness of what had 'moved' the participants that I knew from Bilbao, and led me to comprehend its relevance when researching the care work sector in Spain.

Image 12: Travelling from La Paz to El Alto by teleférico.

Migration from Bolivia

Migration from Bolivia has taken different forms over time as a result of differentially scaled events and processes linked to coloniality and economic imperialism (Bastia 2013, Buxton 2008, Draper 2008, Haglund 2008, Hinojosa 2009, Shultz 2008a, Shultz 2008b, Shultz & Draper 2008, Whitesell 2008). While rural-rural, rural-urban, and regional migrations have been part of Bolivian history for a longer time, the current transnational migration was to a large degree instigated by the country's economic crisis in the 1980s (Bastia 2013). This crisis led to stern structural reform headed by global actors such as the IMF and the World Bank, followed by poverty and disenfranchisement of much of the Bolivian working class. As was reflected in Gladys' narrative in the preface, many people decided to search for new opportunities in neighboring, more industrialized, countries such as Brazil and Argentina.

These movements must be seen in the context of the neoliberal restructuring of the world economy at large with the beginning of the 1980s as a turning point (Mies 2014:xxi). Increased urbanization has been but one result of this restructuring, and has been significant in shaping how migration from Bolivia has taken place. Jeppesen states

that 67.5 percent of the Bolivian population now lives in cities, and that peasants, a term largely synonymous with ‘poor and indigenous’, are by far the most destitute in Bolivian society (2018). This is visible in how, for instance, the most extreme poverty is concentrated in rural areas of the Andean departments of Potosí and Oruro, where indigenous people compose the majority of the population, while Santa Cruz, the most ‘mestizo’ department in terms of ethnic belonging, is the most prosperous (*ibid.*), and where Bolivia’s largest city is found. Thus, within the Bolivian context, urbanization and international migration are closely linked (*cf.* Massey et al. 1999).

According to Benencia (2008:14), people from Bolivia began traveling to Argentina in the mid 1980s to work in agriculture, replacing Argentinean workers who were moving into the larger cities. The national census from 1991, however, shows that Bolivian workers had started to migrate to the larger Argentinean cities themselves. This pattern of urban-ward migration is also evident in the 2001 census (*ibid.*). For some Bolivians, emigrating to the USA was also an option in the earlier days of Bolivian international migration, although this project was both pricier and riskier, relatively speaking, and most people opted to stay within the Southern Cone (Bastia 2013, Hinojosa 2009). Bolivian migration towards Spain in the first decade of the 21st century and onwards has, however, followed a similar pattern to the migration towards Argentina and other neighboring countries. Additionally, when looking at what sort of place people who have migrated from Bolivia can occupy within Spanish society, we see that also in this context they usually work in sectors of the labor market that non-migrated people do not choose (Oso & Parella 2012).

Even prior to current patterns of urbanization in Latin America and Europe, migration, or geographical movement, has been a way of life for Bolivian people for many decades; a way to make ends meet. Hinojosa (2009) points out that even in pre-colonial times there were movements between the mountainous Andes region in the west and the lower tropical climate in the east. This prevalence of mobility as a livelihood strategy through generations has been confirmed through most of my interviews, even if I have not asked about it specifically, as well as through my fieldwork in Bolivia. To move, or migrate, seems to be the most viable way to offer oneself an alternative to a life that is not unfolding according to one’s wishes or needs. This is illustrated by the es-

timization that between 18 and 30 percent of Bolivians currently live abroad (Bastia 2013:1, Hinojosa 2009:43). According to Mandrile (2013), nearly half (48.9 percent) of these emigrants live in Argentina, while Spain and the USA constitute the second and third most important receiving countries of Bolivian migration in terms of volume. The economic resources these people remit back to Bolivia are of great importance to the economy on household, local, and national levels (Hinojosa 2009, Nijenhuis 2010, Yarnall & Price 2010).

In terms of the so-called feminization of emigration from Bolivia, Hinojosa (2009) suggests that although this process can be understood as a reply to the ‘pull’ effects of the Spanish labor market’s need for care workers, it is realized within a context of changing gender and family relations in Bolivia, where single-parent households with women as head of the family are increasingly more common. Bastia argues that Bolivian women within two-parent households have also ‘taken increased ownership of their movements and exercise a high degree of agency in the decision to migrate [...] in relation to their husbands’ (2013:161), although this is done in a context of growing economic precarity within which women are taking increasing economic responsibility for their families (*ibid.*). Following Hinojosa’s (2009) argument above, the fact that women often pioneer Bolivian households’ migration schemes (Fernández García 2009, Tapia Ladino 2010), might thus have as much to do with structural, and gendered, cultural expectations towards her as, for instance, a mother (Bastia 2009, Chodorow 1999), as it has to do with any form of calculated emancipation.

Remittances to Bolivia

When it comes to the importance of remittances, and thereby migration, for the Bolivian economy, an example of this is seen in the particular way in which financial crises have affected the country. Overall, and in comparison to many other national economies around the world, the global financial crisis of 2008 did not impact Bolivia’s economy severely, due to its low degree of integration with the global economy (Jeppesen 2018). The Bolivian GDP did fall from 6.1 percent in 2008 to 3.4 percent in 2009, but had risen again to 6.8 percent by 2013. The same trend was seen in terms of unemployment, which rose from 7 percent in 2007 to 8 percent in 2009, but fell again to 6.5 percent by 2010 (*ibid.*). The volume of remittances did, however, see an impact.

Mandrile (2013:11-12) reports that remittances to Bolivia fell by around 7 percent in 2009, as a result of the global financial crisis. When looking at the effect of the Argentinean economic crisis of 2001, the volume of remittances fell by 23 percent in 2002. This must be seen in a context of the exponential volume and significance of remittances in the last couple of decades when it comes to the Bolivian economy: in 2001 the volume of remittances to Bolivia was of about 107 million USD, which is only 10.6 percent of what the 1,012 million USD it had reached by 2011 (*ibid.*). Mandrile also relays that about 8 percent of the Bolivian population receives remittances, the monthly average being of about 200 USD per household, which constitutes more than twice as much as the Bolivian minimum wage (2013:11). So, although the global financial crisis did not impact the Bolivian national economy in the same way we saw in some countries, it did render visible how the country is connected to the global market through its emigrated people.

This is further underscored by Mandrile's overview of how remittances are distributed in the country as a whole, which follows the same regional socioeconomic differentiations that Jeppesen reports (2018), where, in 2011, Santa Cruz received 40.5 percent of international remittances, followed by Cochabamba (29.2 percent), and La Paz (16.6 percent) (Mandrile 2013:18-19). The same author points out that when it comes to the sources of remittances, the combined level of remittances coming from the two second largest sources – Argentina and the USA – do not reach the level of remittances coming from Spain (2013:17).

Spain and (Im)migration

The relatively recent character of international migration to Spain is associated with a younger body of scholarship compared to the literature for countries with longer histories of immigration. Still, research on migration to Spain has grown significantly the last decade and a half. Demographic trends have been a significant point of interest (Arango & Finotelli 2009), as well as the impacts of policy (Arango 2005, Arango & Jachimowicz 2005, Barbero & Blanco 2016, Calavita 2005, 2007, Finotelli 2011, García Cívico 2011, Solé 2004), especially after the 2008 financial crisis and the return migration this resulted in (Bastia 2011a, Domínguez-Mujica et al. 2012, Parella et al. 2017, Sampedro Gallego & Camarero 2016). There has also been significant research done on the composition of different national groups, and the dynamics at the heart

of their different migration processes. The role of gender in international migration dynamics to Spain, has received particular attention when it comes to migration from Latin American countries, such as Ecuador (Herrera 2011, Vega Solís et al. 2016, Camacho Zambrano & Hernández Basante 2009), Colombia (Vicente et al. 2010), and Bolivia (Bastia 2011a, 2011b, 2013, Escandell & Tapias 2010, Fernández García 2009, Hinojosa 2009, Moré 2011, Parella 2012, Tapia Ladino 2010, Tapias & Escandell 2010). Immigration from Senegal has also received some attention (Ramsey 2013, Vives 2009, 2010), particularly when it comes to the risk-taking involved in the schemes that migration from West Africa has entailed (Carling & Hernández Carretero 2011, Hernández Carretero & Carling 2012).

Other important research points have been the ways in which Spain's fluctuating immigration laws and amnesty schemes influence both how immigration is understood in Spain, and the degree to which migrated people can, in fact, become 'integrated' in Spanish society and primary economy (Calavita 1998, 2003, 2006, 2007, Calavita & Suárez-Navaz 2003, Solé & Parella 2003, Solé 2004). When it comes to care work, Peterson (2007) has addressed how Spanish policy largely ignores the (often) migrated women who carry out the labor of care, and cater solely to the middle class households who employ them. Gutiérrez-Rodríguez' (2010) analysis of Spain and other European countries' treatment of migrated care workers underlines how they are reproduced as colonial subjects through both public discourse and legislation. Research on migration and care work has, in general, been connected to feminist perspectives on gendered and racialized labor market segmentation and migration schemes (Arranz et al. 2017, Aysa-Lastra & Cachón 2013, Catarino & Oso 2000, Ezquerro 2011, Martínez Buján 2007, Oso & Parella 2012, Suárez-Grimalt 2017).

Much of the research mentioned focuses, then, on legal matters and on immigration to the areas with the largest concentration of immigrated people, such as the autonomous communities of Madrid, Catalonia and Valencia, but fewer studies have been carried out that assess the everyday lives of 'transmigrants,' that is migrated people who maintain strong attachments with 'home' (cf. Glick Schiller, Basch & Blanc 1995, Ley 2004), and especially by carrying out multisited fieldwork, although some examples exist (cf. Bastia 2011a, 2011b, 2013, Mata-Codesal 2011, 2013). The present study contributes to this literature by closely

scrutinizing migrancy tied to the care work sector of the Spanish labor market. In addition to contributing to a more in-depth understanding of the global market of care and its connections (Tsing 2005), I hope that my research can also serve to elucidate the position of migrated people in the Spanish model of the welfare state, and contribute to a better understanding of the particular and localized practices of this model in the care sector of Bilbao and the Basque Country.

‘Feminized’ Migration from Bolivia to Spain?

Migration from Bolivia to Spain is of relatively recent character and developed as a result of the 2001 *corralito* – the economic crisis – in Argentina and the rising unemployment rate that ensued. Argentina had until then been the preferred destination for many migrating from Bolivia, among them more men than women¹⁴ (Hinojosa 2009, Bastia 2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2013). Spain, which only started to become an important destination for international immigration in the early 1990s, was soon identified as a ‘greener pasture’. However, since a large portion of the jobs available in Spain at the time was within the care and domestic work sector, the migration from Bolivia was in many cases lead by women rather than men (cf. Pedone 2008, Oso & Parella 2012). The intention of some women was to bring their partners and families to stay with them once they were established in Spain, but many also decidedly ventured out on their own (Fernández García 2009, Parella & Cavalcanti 2009, Tapia Ladino 2010, Herrera 2011). It has therefore been common to connect the ‘flow’ to Spain from Bolivia with a so-called *feminization* aspect of Bolivian emigration, and of immigration to Spain. However, the difference in proportion when looking at women and men from Bolivia living in Spain has decreased over time due to, for instance, family reunification. In 2012, the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística de España* reported that 59 percent of people immigrated from Bolivian on the state level were women (INE España 2012)¹⁵. In the Basque Country it was slightly higher, at 61 percent (Ikuspegi – Observatorio Vasco de Asuntos Sociales 2012). Still, more important than looking at percentages of women and men, I underline that what is interesting in this case

14 However, several of the (female) participants in my research had lived in Argentina earlier, prior to coming to Spain.

15 All statistical information has been collected from Instituto Nacional de Estadística de España, unless noted otherwise. Percentage calculations are my own.

are the socioeconomic and culturally grounded processes that are behind the so-called feminization of migration.

The very idea of a feminization of migration is in itself problematic (cf. Kofman 2004). It speaks of the disregard of the roles of women in historical processes and in the world in general, and in this case particularly when it comes to mobility and migration. The concept in itself is an attempt to remedy migration theory's long dismissal of women's existence and subjectivities within migration processes, but it ends up being about sex rather than gender. It is important to talk about the different ways in which migration and migrancy, both in general and in particular, is gendered, rather than merely round up women and men in opposing categories and conclude with tendencies of 'feminization'. What is interesting about these tendencies is how gender affects how, when, where, and why people migrate within particular geographical and sociocultural contexts, rather than simply state that women 'also' migrate. Looking at migration through the lens of gender can tell us about gendered, as well as other, structures on both local and global levels. Studying these processes is not about counting people within territories according to their sex, but about trying to understand how and why changes, or stagnations, in these numbers might occur. When looking at migration and migrancy, it is vital to note that these processes are not only about bodies that travel, but also about the imaginaries of these bodies within a context. It is with such a perspective in mind that the notions of experience and expectations in regards to exchange within a market of care become especially relevant, in that it ties gender relations of the different contexts at stake together, and see how they intertwine, emulate, and play off of each other. As I will discuss in the coming chapters, the particularities of both patriarchal and colonial aspects are paramount to the contexts that constitute my field.

Care as Feminine

In an editorial opinion piece from 2005, renowned Spanish sociologist Vicenç Navarro wrote that in Spain 'when we say family, we should, actually, say women' (Navarro in *El País*, 30 April, 2005). He argued that this is intrinsically linked to the missing 'fourth pillar' in the Spanish welfare state; namely the one dedicated to family services, and that if women held more power in politics and the economy at large, this pillar would be a bigger priority. Several authors call the lack of dedication to

the construction of such a ‘pillar’ a ‘crisis of care’ (Ezquerria 2011, Gregorio Gil 2012, Herrera 2011, Pradas 2010, Unzueta et al. 2013). This ‘crisis’ has come about as a result of Spanish/Basque women working outside the home, essentially starting with the *transición* to democracy after Francisco Franco’s death in 1975. This change generated a gap in the structure of the typical Spanish and Basque family. Spain underwent tremendous economic growth after their entry into the European Community in 1986, and prosperity was rising fast. At the time, Spain’s burgeoning economy was experiencing an increase in female participation in the labor market, which in turn augmented the need for replacing Spanish women’s role as domestic laborers in their own homes with unskilled workers (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010). This type of employment is more common in urban areas and has become increasingly more available in middle class homes as Spanish society has become more affluent. Paid domestic and care work in Spanish homes has historically been carried out by women from poorer, and rural, regions of the state, but with the economy blooming the demand for *chicas*¹⁶ grew, while the societal roles available to Spanish and Basque women gradually increased beyond the familial and domestic sphere. This left the Spanish labor market open for immigrated women, especially those from Latin America, who were preferred employees in the domestic sector due to linguistic and cultural similarities (Tapia Ladino 2010). According to Fernández García (2009:180), domestic labor has been a ‘true door opener’ for Bolivian migrant women coming to Spain, as the work is regarded as unqualified and it is thus an easy sector to enter. In 2007, when the data behind Fernández García’s analysis was collected, an estimated 72 percent of Bolivian women who had migrated to Spain were working in the domestic and care labor sector.

Care and Welfare in Spain and the Basque Country

Staring Europe in the face is the promise of continuously longer-living and aging populations reflecting both improved longevity, and critically, sustained below replacement fertility in most in Western European countries (Kuhnle & Alestalo 2000, Vos 2009). These demographic trends challenge the sustainability of the current pension and public wel-

16 The term *chica* (*chicas* in plural) literally means ‘girl’ and is the term most commonly used for domestic and care workers in the Spanish context.

fare systems in different European states. Not only does an aging population pose an economic conundrum of who will work for the pensions of whom to be paid out as promised, it also begs answers to two very intimate questions: Who will care for your child so that you can work and turn the wheels of society? And who will care for you when you are old and/or sick? Answers to each of these questions are critical for individuals and families, as well as the larger society.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, in most societies around the world women have been the ones to execute so-called reproductive labor, or unpaid care work. However, women's fights for participating in society on equal terms as men, together with the advancement of the capitalist economy, has meant that an increasing number of women now participate in the paid/market economy (Glenn 1992). When it comes to the question of how to uphold a welfare state based on tax revenues despite an aging population, a workforce that includes as many people as possible – regardless of gender, age, differential abilities, ethnicities, etc. – is an important aspect. Still, the fact that women now execute paid work begs the question of who will take care of the care work. As long as 'productive' and 'reproductive' work is not equally divided between genders, how does this play out when women take part in the 'productive' workforce?

A press release from November 20, 2013 by *Eustat* – the Basque Statistics Institute – confirms that the European trend of an increasing life expectancy and a decreasing fertility rate is also taking place in the Basque Country. Life expectancy in this region¹⁷ exceeds that of the European Union in general for both sexes¹⁸, making it one of the highest in the so-called 'developed' world. The fertility rate in the Basque Country – 1.3 – on the other hand, is significantly lower than the European average of 1.57. Additionally, within the region, fertility is at its lowest in Bizkaia, the province where the metropolitan area of Bilbao is located. One of the reasons why the birthrate is so low are the economic difficulties it poses for young families, considering the way parental leave is organized in Spain (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015). Not only has parental leave been short and largely granted to mothers, not fathers or other co-

17 Life expectancy in the Basque Country per 2013 was 85.4 years for women and 78.9 years for men (Eustat 2013).

18 Life expectancy in the EU in general per 2013 was 83.2 years for women and 77.4 years for men (Eustat 2013).

parents¹⁹, but the publicly funded options for having the child taken care of when the parents have to go back to work are very limited. If the total family income does not allow one of the parents to stay at home longer without paid leave (and with the risk of losing their job), then parents of young children must rely on grandparents or private caregivers to mind their child(ren) while they engage in paid work. The latter are typically women, often migrated from Latin America, who are also those who usually work as caregivers for elderly people (Martínez Buján 2007).

The ‘migrant’ characteristic of care workers in Bizkaia is confirmed by ATH-ELE, the Association for Domestic Workers in Bizkaia. As an example, 83 percent of the workers who in 2014 made use of their services held either a non-Spanish citizenship or had dual citizenship (which in most cases means they have immigrated to Spain from outside of the EU and have eventually attained citizenship). In other words, the care work sector in the metropolitan area of Bilbao is to a large degree made up of migrated women, and, as I have learned during my fieldwork, both the sector itself, and the racialization within this sector seem to be growing.

Important to keep in mind is also the two major schemes that make up this labor market sector: the *interna* scheme and the *externa* scheme. An *interna* is a care worker who lives with the service user(s) she is employed to take care of. She is usually paid a monthly salary for a (supposedly) fixed number of hours. However, living with the people you work for usually means being on call for most of the time you are at ‘home’. Those working in this part of the care work sector are almost exclusively migrated women, often newly arrived to Spain, and often-times in an irregular administrative situation. An *externa* is a care worker who does not live with the service user(s), but rather in her own home. She is usually paid either a monthly salary for a (supposedly) fixed number of hours, or per the hour. This sort of work can involve caring for children or dependent people, or, quite often, only doing household tasks such as cooking or cleaning. Migrated people working in this segment of the sector have usually obtained their residence permits, as they have been in Spain longer, while there is also a larger proportion of ‘native’ women among *externa* workers.

19 Parental leave policies are, however, undergoing change, and fathers and other co-parents will now receive 8 weeks of leave in Spain, while those in the Basque Country will receive up to 16 weeks (*El País*, April 2, 2019).

Bolivian Immigration to Spain and the Basque Country

As suggested above, in the larger Spanish context, immigration has often been researched according to national belonging and citizenship, and in this regard the Bolivian population has until recently received less attention than other groups (cf. Bastia 2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2013, Tapia Ladino 2010). Estimates of the size and composition of migration to both Bilbao specifically, and Spain in general, vary, reflecting the effects of regularization schemes, naturalization, befallen irregularity, return migration, and the emergence of new migration streams from other Latin American countries, such as Nicaragua and El Salvador (cf. González-Enríquez 2010, Triandafyllidou 2010b, Triandafyllidou & Vogel 2010). In 2012, shortly before commencing this research, Bolivian citizens constituted the biggest group of Latin American born people in Bilbao, and it is currently one of the Latin American national groups that have been present in the Basque Country the longest. On state level, the population of Bolivian citizens in Spain was at its peak in 2008, counting 242,496 individuals, and had in 2018 been reduced to 99,441 due to return migration and naturalization (INE España 2019). The peak of foreign citizens in Spain was reached in 2011, with a population of 5,751,487 foreign citizens, which in 2018 had been reduced to 4,734,691 (ibid.). When it comes to Bolivian citizens in the Basque Country, the population reached its peak in 2009, with 12,359 people, and had in 2018 been reduced to 6,487 (INE 2019). Bolivian citizens currently account for around 2 percent of the foreign population in Spain, and around 7 percent of the Bolivian population in Spain lives in the Basque Country, and most of them in the metropolitan area of Bilbao²⁰.

The Basque Country as Migration Context

As I will elaborate on at the end of this chapter, the territory under the Spanish state is divided into administrative regions called *comunidades autónomas*²¹. Each autonomous region is further divided into provinces. In the Basque Country these are Gipuzkoa/Guipúzcoa, Araba/Álava, and

20 Statistical information has been collected from Instituto Nacional de Estadística de España (2019). Percentage calculations are my own.

21 Translating to 'autonomous communities' in English, which are the largest subnational administrative entities, or regions, in Spain. Each autonomous community/region is divided into provinces, and then municipalities.

Bizkaia/Vizcaya. Bilbao, which is both a city and a municipality, is the capital of the latter province. The autonomy of the autonomous regions in Spain varies depending on their particular relationship with the central state, but in general the system can be understood as lighter version of federalism. The Basque Country holds a particularly strong position as an autonomous region due to its historical *fueros* – sets of laws that date back to 19th century that ensure the region a high degree of sovereignty in questions of tax administration, police, and particular aspects of civil law compared to most other autonomous regions in Spain. The reason for mentioning this particular historical autonomy of the Basque region is that laws regarding both care work and residence and work permits of foreign nationals vary on some points when it comes to the Basque context in comparison to the general Spanish law. This will be discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

Bilbao and the Basque Country as Destinations for Migration

Bilbao lies at a riverbed between green, now largely urbanized, hilltops. As such, the city resembles both Vallegrande and Cochabamba. The twists and turns of the river once provided raw material and ways of transport for a booming industry and the city attracted workers from far and wide within the state that it is a part of. The river also divided the population. Within the city and its hinterland, gazing in the direction of the Bay of Biscay, the workers' villages were on the left side (*la margen izquierda*), adjacent to the many industrial complexes, and the capitalists' homes and vacation spots on the right side (*la margen derecha*). Bilbao's geography was as if taken out of a romanticized Marxist novel. This division is also part of the current Bilbainan landscape, although some boundaries have become more blurred, while others more prominent.

Image 13: 'La ría' flowing past el Mercado de la Rivera in the center of Bilbao.

At the end of the 1990s Bilbao went through its first economic crisis in recent decades as the until-then so prominent industrial sector was reduced to a shadow of itself. Shipyards, mines, and steel smelters closed down. The landscapes of the city and its surroundings were ingrained by the industry and what once had been. The Nervión River was dirty and foul smelling. The building facades were dark with soot from the industry's contaminating pipes. The workers who had migrated from rural Spain were left unemployed and waiting for the tide to turn. These workers had become increasingly more settled. Tensions sometimes rose, as the definition of who could and should belong to the Basque Country was not always agreed upon. Nor was it settled whether the Basque population thought they should belong to the Spanish state, or if they should become their own independent country.

In the wake of the crisis of the 90s, Basque politicians laid a new plan for the city, about how to make it part of the globalized economy. And so a major cleanup was commenced and the city embarked on massive construction projects involving top-of-the-line international architects and multinational companies. Despite local protests of this immense change, significant projects were carried out – the most famous of which is the Guggenheim Museum designed by Frank Gehry. The effects of

these projects can be witnessed today. This ‘rebranding’ of Bilbao as a cultural, gastronomic, and architectonical landmark (cf. Glick-Schiller & Caglar 2010) attracted more foreign investments; the effects extended to the Basque Country as a whole. The service sector grew substantially, consumption increased, and, particularly, the tourist industry went from practically non-existent to being one of the most important economic sectors of the Basque economy. For better or for worse, the face (and the soul?) of the city changed.

My geographical focus on Bilbao is linked to its postindustrial labor market organization, in the wake of this change in the city landscape. As mentioned, research done thus far on the Spanish (im)migration context has focused mostly on immigration to the largest urban areas, such as Madrid and Barcelona. There is a need for further scholarship on more peripheral immigration destinations, such as Bilbao and the Basque Country, which within the Spanish historical context of state formation displays a different migration experience than many other regions. The city’s past as an industrial center displays a history of continuity both in terms of connections to the international market, but also in terms of histories of migration. Although the sending contexts have changed, Bilbao is a prime example of how capitalism has always shaped migration and mobility.

The change in Bilbao’s urban landscape and its economy also brought with it a change in the Basque population and its understanding of class. While there previously had been little immigration from outside of Spain, the world beyond has become increasingly more present in Bilbao. This is due both to the increased presence of international firms in the top layer of the economy, but also because ‘foreign’ workers increasingly fill the jobs in the bottom layer. This layer consists of those sectors that are largely carried out beyond the formal economy, such as construction, agriculture, hospitality, and the care sector. As will be discussed, international migrated peoples’ confinement to these sectors likely contributes to a racialization of the working classes in Spain, and the care sector is one context within which coloniality plays an important role despite the sector’s vital importance for the rest of the Spanish economy. I now turn to briefly discuss another aspect of coloniality relevant to the contexts of my research, before concluding this chapter.

Image 14: Tearing down to reconstruct bigger and better: the San Mamés football stadium of Athletic Bilbao.

Image 15: 'Across the lines, who would dare to go...?' Train tracks separating Bilbao city center from the San Francisco 'immigrant' neighborhood.

The Colonial Politics of Geographical Naming

The idea of America [...] is a modern European invention and limited to Europeans' view of the world and of their own history. In that view and in that history, coloniality, naturally, was (and still is) ignored or disguised as a necessary injustice in the name of justice.' (Mignolo 2005:8)

The global connections (Tsing 2005) of the care market that stretches between the Spanish and Bolivian state territories are not limited to these states only. First of all, people also depend on and connect with people in other places, and although this is not something I will expand extensively on in my analysis, it is part of why I analytically focus on connections and practices, rather than fully engage with the (more linear) concept of global care chains. A second way in which these connections are not limited to these state territories is in that both field contexts are made up of territories that in themselves are highly problematized by many of their inhabitants. While this is beyond the foci of this thesis, I do wish to underline my awareness of, and sympathy for, the civil and social movements involved in different processes of emancipation in both geographical contexts, which, in my mind, represent efforts of decolonization.

In Bolivia, Evo Morales and his supporters have since 2006 been leading a new form of politics in which the plurality of Bolivia's ethnic groups has been underscored. Morales' methods have been duly questioned on many occasions, and one such occasion took place during my fieldwork in Bolivia – namely the 2016 constitutional referendum that would have allowed the country's president to run for a third consecutive term. This was voted down by a small majority (51 per cent) (*The Guardian*, Feb 14, 2016), but has later been overrun so that Morales is in 2019 up for election for a fourth term (*The Guardian*, Dec 3, 2017). Despite these problematic manipulations of Bolivia's democratic system, the impact he has had on raising people's awareness of their rights both as citizens and as indigenous groups, has been grounds for an important political turn in Bolivia's recent history, particularly when it comes to questions of race and class (Astelarra 2014, McNeish 2013, Schiwy 2007), but also gender (Jeppesen 2018).

In his book *The Idea of Latin America*, Walter Mignolo (2005) makes similar arguments to those used by Morales and other indigenous activ-

ists and politicians around the world; namely that discourse, including language, shapes our ideas of what the world looks like and what it is. Mignolo makes this argument through dissecting the history of the colonization of Latin America, or Abya Yala, as the Kuna people called the region prior to colonization. It was not until it was named as America that it actually became a geographical entity: a place containing vast pluralities and forms of government, and a place that was both physically and culturally destroyed and deconstructed in order to fit into the European epistemological paradigm at the time of the Conquista. The same sort of performative politics of naming has arguably taken place also on peninsular Spanish territory, such as the Basque Country.

Although I consider Mignolo and other decolonial scholars to make vital points, I have in this thesis decided to continue using the colonial naming of both the region of Latin America, and of the nation states within the region. This is both to avoid getting into empirical territory that I do not cover in this thesis, and also because an important aspect of my analysis will entail looking at details of law and public administration that govern the relationship between Spain and its former colonies. These details are defined through existing borders and bordering practices, and in order not to make the analytical fields of this thesis even more complex, I see it fit to continue with the geographical terminology currently in use on most administrative scales in these countries.

When it comes to the Basque Country and Spain my acute awareness of how the Spanish state's centralized politics, and even state violence, are understood and lived by many has come from living in Bilbao for nearly six years prior to starting this research. Basque struggles for independence have been notorious in international media through the attacks carried out by ETA, although the ways in which different people sympathize (or not) with these struggles vary enormously across the Basque political landscape. One of the ways in which sympathy to either side of the centuries-long conflict between the Basque Country and the Spanish state is expressed in the Spanish language is through how you name the geographies in question. If one sympathizes with the Basque struggle for independence it is customary to not call Spain *España*, but rather *el Estado Español* – the Spanish state, or just *el estado*. The autonomous region – *la comunidad autónoma* – of the Basque Country is called either *el País Vasco* or *Euskadi*. However, many refer to the Basque Country as *Euskal Herria*, and as such include not only what is

now an administrative entity of the Spanish state (*Euskadi*), but also other regions in both Spain and France, namely *Nafarroa/Navarra* and the French Basque Country (*Iparralde/les Pays Basque*)²² in what is considered the ‘real’ Basque Country.

Had I written this thesis in Spanish (or Euskara!) these linguistic subtleties would be followed carefully. I take neither the Bolivian or Basque struggles lightly, but I do not wish to draw attention away from what is actually at stake in this dissertation, namely the workers within the global market of care that involve these geographical contexts. Understanding how coloniality is a part of these particular global connections is at the center of my analysis, while I leave the analysis of the connections between semantics, discourse, and the power of geographical naming to other researchers. Additionally, since this text is in English, and will have an audience that perhaps is unfamiliar with the details of the Spanish/Basque contexts, I have chosen to uphold the English use of the geographical toponyms. Henceforth the Spanish State is called Spain, and the Basque Country refers to the autonomous region that is an administrative entity within Spain. At times, and particularly when considering legal matters, the particularities of the Basque context will be made clear, but in general the use of Spain and Spanish will also refer to where I did large part of my fieldwork, namely Bilbao. Bolivia will be referred to with this name, as will Latin/South America. The relevance of indigenous struggles and identities will only be brought up where it is called for in the research material.

²² *Iparralde* includes the French administrative regions of *Lapurdi/Labourt*, *Behe Nafarroa/Basse-Navarre*, and *Zuberoa/Soule*.

Image 16: One of the largest political marches in Bilbao in recent years on January 11, 2014: a (largely) pan-political march 'for peace'.²³

As the quote above by Mignolo states, coloniality is continuously justified through particular logics. In the case of the Basque Country and other autonomous regions on Spanish territory that hold ambitions of secession, the logics employed are usually about social order and/or historical belonging. When it comes to the coloniality at stake in the relationship between Spain and (particularly the migrated people from) its former colonies, the discourses of power are less overt, since officially there no longer exists a political hierarchy. But as Mignolo has pointed out, ‘colonies take different shapes at different points in history’ (2005:8). Sometimes it is there in the naming of people and places, while at other times is more subdued and indirect. How coloniality is part of the operational logics in the global market of care is one of the central themes of this thesis.

Concluding Remarks: Contextualizing the Field

This chapter has delineated my ‘field’, by introducing the contextual ‘building blocks’ of the global market of care between Bolivia and Spain. Although I have focused primarily on the geographical contexts

²³ For more information (in Spanish), see: *Eitb.com*, January 11, 2014.

that this market connects, the discussion of Gladys' story suggests the importance that different socioeconomic processes have in constructing this market. I have – textually – ‘travelled’ through the localities of my fieldwork and presented central contextual features that serve as the backdrop for the stories that will be told in the coming chapters.

I have also presented the argument that the global market of care would not have emerged were it not for global capitalism (with its colonial heritage), organizing the international financial market in a particular way, and allowing for the exploitation of the Global South by the Global North. It would not have emerged were it not for this capitalism permitting the extraction of resources from particular parts of the world, for the use within and profit of other parts. Were it not for the colonial logic of the Global South being a space from which natural and human resources are freely extractable for the benefit of and use by the Global North, then the global market of care would not exist. Moreover, if general and academic knowledge about the world were not constructed on the premises of the same economic system, then the global market of care would probably not exist either. It takes accepting and taking for granted a certain order of things for a labor market sector to be organized in the particular ways that this thesis will discuss. This also means that were it not for the coloniality of the world order, the dynamics of academic knowledge production would most likely be entirely different, and the taken for granted research topics within both anthropology and migration studies would probably look very different, or not exist at all.

So, when exploring my research field, the colonial economic and academic structures that are at its core need to be kept in mind. The social relationships that have emerged as the grounds for my analysis in this thesis have, in other words, been built within, and shaped by, a myriad of already existing global connections (Tsing 2005). Gladys Villca made decisions about her life within this same myriad of global connections, emplaced within the same structures of coloniality and capitalism and the geographies they produce. In the next chapter I pick up on some of the methodological questions that have been sketched in this chapter and connect them further to ‘the field’.

3. GUIDING SCARS: EXPERIENCE, POSITIONALITY, ETHNOGRAPHY

[It] is not enough to stand on the opposite river bank, shouting questions, challenging patriarchal, white conventions. [...] All reaction is limited by, and dependent on, what it is reacting against. [...] At some point, on our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between the two mortal combatants somehow healed so that we are on both shores at once, and, at once, see through serpent and eagle eyes. [...] The possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not react. (Anzaldúa 1987:100-101)

Introduction: The Significance of our Scars

The narratives that are presented throughout this dissertation tell a story of how categories of social differentiation affect people's lives. Implicitly intersecting these narratives is the story of my own life, both as a 'private' person and as a researcher. Through these intersecting narratives I seek to excavate and explore the *how* of socially constructed difference; how it is 'naturalized', performed, and internalized by different actors, and how it is resisted and made meaning of in the stories of our lives (cf. Butler 2004, 2011, Maldonado-Torres 2007). Why is it that some, myself included, seemingly have more of a right to a *full* life than others? Not only the right to survive, but the right to love, the right to loss, the right to narcissism and self-discovery? Why are some people's narratives made into a representation of something other than themselves, while others, like myself, are allowed to simply tell their story?

This chapter reflects on my own position as a researcher and subject vis-à-vis both the ethnographic ‘field’ and the participants in the research, as subjects themselves. I discuss research as an iterative process in which the researcher as subject, the theory that informs her, and the narratives of human lives that her material consists of, all are in continuous communication with each other. As such, reflecting on my own positionality is part of contextualizing and situating the knowledge that has been produced through my research. Contextualization is not only about where interlocution takes place, as discussed in Chapter 2, but about who is communicating, and on what grounds. On the one hand, interlocution takes place within a discursive context, which regards what is going on around the speaker. On the other, communication happens according to the positionality or location of the speaker, which contextualizes the speaker vis-à-vis others (Alcoff 1991-1992). What is being communicated therefore springs in large part from the reflexive and relative position of whoever is speaking. ‘Facts’, theory, emotions, and ‘empirical material’ are, in other words, all constructed in dialectical processes. Painful and gratifying as this is, it means that the options of how to construct the narrative of a particular text are endless. It implies a continuous scrutiny of oneself, and of ‘the other’. At the same time it involves continuous attempts to ‘get somewhere’ with this scrutiny by adding to theoretical understandings of how the dynamics of social life works, all the while being a part of this life yourself. My way of doing this is through ethnography and its analysis.

Ethnography as methodology holds great potential for understanding, deconstructing, and theorizing intimate connections between the experiences that people go through and talk about, and the structures around them that contribute to producing these experiences (Marcus & Cushman 1982). However, as the notions of both *guiding stars* (see Chapter 4) and *guiding scars* suggest, ethnography is not without pitfalls, and the ethnographer does not enter the field as a blank slate. This chapter explores how particular components of my own slate have been made clear through encounters in ‘the field’, and the advantages and disadvantages these have led to for this particular research. What has been ethically problematic? What might I have been blind to? And what might I have been especially exposed to in terms of research material? How have my choices in the field been influenced by who I am, and who I am becoming, as a person? These questions are methodologically

important, but they also matter ethically and politically. Linger in the background throughout this thesis, are the same two questions I kept asking myself during the interview with Gladys, cited in the preface: who is actually constructing the knowledge that is being produced? And whose story am I telling?

The notion of *guiding scars* used here is thus about bringing forth the role of bodily experience in research. My point of departure is that the experiences I have had prior to and as part of this research inform how I have approached, understood, and analyzed my material. I emphasize the significance of our *scars* for guiding our research, while I also reflect on how they might challenge the preconceived ideas we have as researchers going into the field. Furthermore, throughout this chapter I ponder what kind of knowledge construction becomes possible when we take into account the scars, and stars (see Chapter 4), that guide our research processes, particularly when it comes to the ethnographic ‘experience’ and its inherent (colonial) power relations. Relevant to the discussions in this chapter is therefore also how I as a researcher and subject enter into reciprocal relations of exchange with the research participants; relations that infer certain expectations between the people involved (Maldonado-Torres 2007, Smedal 2005).

I start by contrasting my own experience of having migrated to Bilbao to that relayed to me by the research participants. I show that my own situation was not about migrancy, as it is defined in this thesis, despite experiencing outsidership. The disparities between my situation and that of the research participants thus speak clearly of migration and positionalities in relation to each other; of how citizenship, class and ‘race’ matter. I continue by presenting my methods, the social spaces of my field, and selection of research material. As the field consists first and foremost of social relationships, I discuss how these have been negotiated during fieldwork on account of different influencing factors from within and beyond the field. I end this chapter by discussing the role of language in my research, and conclude with a reflection of what taking an ‘ethnographic stance’ (Ortner 1995) has meant in my study.

Contextualizing Migration and Migrancy: Race Class, and Gender in Spain

When living in Bilbao for several years prior to starting my PhD education²⁴, I became aware of how class, gender, and race played out in a different way than what I was used to from Scandinavia. According to my personal experience these ways of differentiating people are made more explicitly conspicuous in social interaction than in the Scandinavian context, and perhaps especially through patterns of consumption. A significant way in which class, race, and gender intersect in the Basque Country, and in Spain in general, is precisely in the consumption of domestic and care services by a certain part of the population, and the performance of it by another part. This consumption is widespread and, in my experience, goes mostly unquestioned by those who consume it. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, this is a growing sector in the Basque and Spanish economy, and a common way for the middle and upper class to structure their everyday lives. Although care work is also a matter of class and race in Scandinavia (Bikova 2015, Cox 2015, Stubberud 2015), it is more institutionalized and thus not as blatantly so to the observing eye. In the Basque Country, and in Spain in general, hiring a care and domestic worker is often a matter of personal choice and consumption, especially when it comes to outsourcing domestic tasks such as cleaning and cooking. It is a choice you make in and for the privacy of your own home, and it is a service you purchase. As will be discussed throughout this thesis, it is poorly regulated in terms of worker's rights, and it often involves the employment of migrated people in situations of 'illegality' (cf. Andersson 2014a, Calavita 2005, De Genova 2002, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Triandafyllidou 2010a, 2010b, Triandafyllidou & Vogel 2010). Power within the sector belongs mostly to the employer, not the employee, who is both the provider of the good being consumed, and, in a sense, the good itself – a commodity.

24 The longest continuous period I lived in Bilbao was the almost three years between finishing my masters degree and starting this present research. This experience carved a series of memories into my body, heart and mind that I deem formative for how this research came about. At the time these experiences made me uneasy, but I didn't delve further into them analytically beyond the personal frustrations and guilt that these events produced in me. In retrospect and juxtaposed to the experiences the research participants have shared with me from the same geographical context, I was able to contextualize my own experiences more and draw from them ideas not only about who I am and who the participants are in the societal scheme of things, but also how this scheme of things is constructed and construed on a more general, and global, level.

When living in Bilbao prior to doing my PhD research, observing the mere existence of this sector made me uneasy, and I often found it awkward when I was faced with this reality when visiting people in their homes. I particularly recall going to visit the family of a friend in a gated community on the outskirts of town. The house was a modern maze of white walls, functional functions, and minimalist design. Each ‘piece’ of the inventory was carefully selected, or so our host told us. She was looking for a new picture to hang on the living room wall, but it takes time to find the right one, she said. I felt like I was sitting in a showroom of an expensive furniture store.

Dinner was served and the whole family sat down around the dining room table. The door to the kitchen was closed off. Our host was the one who had cooked the meal – she ‘*loved* to cook’. She had recently finished a Cordon Bleu course, she told us. It had taken a long time, but it had been enjoyable activity outside of her role as homemaker (while her husband worked in a top position within finance). Then *la chica* came through the door, and started serving the different dishes. I felt awkward. Nobody had ever *served* me before when not in a restaurant. I didn’t know how to act. *La chica* was a middle-aged woman. She was from Peru, I was told, and had been with the family for over a decade. When our host gave us a tour of the house upon arrival I had also been shown her room. It was in the basement next to the pantry.

The visit to this house was one of the experiences that made me bodily aware of these stark social differences at play in Spanish/Basque societies. When reflecting on my own awkwardness in facing all these symbols of racialized class superiority – designer furniture, restaurant style food at home, a servant in the kitchen – I reflected on my own class and race positionality in a way that I had not done before. In a way it fascinated me to think about all the positionalities thrown together in that space (cf. Alcoff 1991-1992). It also provoked me to no end to know that some people, in this day and age, still had other people living in the basements of their homes to serve them, and perform the work that they did not want to do themselves. And it made me angry how natural this was to them; it was as though that person was yet another commodity, and the consumption of her labor did not bear any social shame. This fascination and anger ignited an interest in this situation as a possible research topic, while remembering it has also made me reflect

on the conditions for my own migration to Spain and its stark contrast to the migrancy of *la chica* of this house.

The (Invisible) Migrancy of la Chica

Katty:

It's been difficult to accept working like this. In such precarious conditions. And, in the end, to meet people who have made me feel so bad... The worst, you know? That they look at you with disgust, you know? And they tell you 'this one can even clean the shit that I eject' [exasperated laugh]. Yes, there are people who make you do things that... pah! That I didn't think... Never in my life had I thought I would be cleaning a toilet with my hands... I mean...

Ingrid:

Clean the what? What did you say?

Katty:

Put your hands in the toilet bowl.

Ingrid:

Your hands?

Katty:

Yes. I mean, it reaches that point. And that made me... I asked myself 'what am I doing?!' I mean, *here*. Cleaning these things. I mean... I felt bad. And the uniform, too.

Ingrid:

You have to wear a uniform?

Katty:

Yes, it quite shocked me. I can clean the house, but... Then they make me put on this ridiculous uniform! That looks like it's from the [nineteenth] century... I don't know!

Ingrid:

What are they like? The ones with skirts and stuff?

Katty:

[Yes,] the ones that come with aprons with buttons. And with this little diamond squared pattern... I don't know! [laughs] All that is missing is the little cap!

Ingrid:

Yes, I've seen them in a shop window, but I thought they were costumes or something.

Katty:

Yes! To me they look like costumes. I felt like I was playing dress-up. Totally. Oh well. But I said 'as long as nobody sees me I can come into this house and I can play dress-up, but when I go out on the street I said 'no way!' [laughs] Because I did feel bad! [laughs]. It was horrible! [laughs]. (Interview with Katty Aquino. Bilbao, March 2015)

My use of the term *migrancy* was introduced in Chapter 1 – a state of being scripted through social categorization within a geographical context, that circumscribes you to always being regarded with, at best, temporary belonging, and thereby as an 'Other'. I – a white middle class Scandinavian with a Norwegian passport – can only partially relate to being differentiated in some way, since the legitimacy of my presence in Bilbao and elsewhere has seldom been questioned, and at least not scrutinized. On the contrary; it has (mostly) been welcomed, although sometimes in the way one would welcome a peacock in a pen of pigeons – as an exotic specimen to observe and comment on. The migrancy of *las chicas* in Spain, however, is something different – it is not made as visible. It is hidden from public view; in basement rooms by the pantry, their bodies dressed in old-fashioned maid uniforms. Katty's story is not unique, nor is it the only story. She also told me about work experiences in other houses where she was treated with more respect and as more of an equal, and not forced to wear clothes that to her, seemingly, symbolize an adscription to the bottom of Spanish class hierarchy. However, and as will be made clear throughout this thesis, the migrancy experienced by the participants does not change on account of positive encounters with benevolent employers. The laws and norms in place that legitimize – both socially and juridically – an employer's will and right

to ask another person to put on an archaic maid uniform, live in a small room in the basement, and wash toilets with her hands instead of a toilet brush, are still in place. And it is Katty that is asked to do these things, not I.

Experiencing Difference

Migration has in many ways been a part of anthropological methodology since its beginning, in that fieldwork in itself has been understood as a sort of rite of passage – ‘a movement ‘away’ from one’s ‘home’ and into an Other place [...] (Gupta & Ferguson 1997)’ (Wilding 2007:332). The fieldwork I have done in both Spain and Bolivia has had a deep impact on me personally, and I have, to an extent, learned to understand the world in a different way. However, particularly for the reasons discussed in this chapter, I do not reflect on my fieldwork experience, nor my prior experience of living in Spain, as that of migrancy. Still, my personal experiences with migration, both in Bilbao and later as a Norwegian citizen living in Sweden, have been valuable in this research process.

I especially want to underscore two ways in which this personal experience has guided my research. The first is in a very practical manner – as a bridge in the field. The fact that I, too, was a foreigner in Bilbao, and had the experience of living in Spanish/Basque society *as* a foreigner, gave me – simply put – something to talk about with the research participants. It was thus something I learned to emphasize as I was getting to know, and in interviewing, people. It was a trivia about myself that seemed to make the process of building rapport with people run more smoothly. I believe this is partly due to the fact that I could not be fully ‘placed’. Where, and if, I belonged in Spanish society was unclear, and so I was not associated directly with people’s employers and their peers. I, too, was an outsider, even if my predicament as an outsider was starkly different from theirs.

The second way in which my experiences of migration have helped me in writing this dissertation is more analytical. While the emotional connection I have felt to the participants’ stories, and they to my story, has in many ways underlined our shared humanity, it has also brought forth and made clear to me exactly what my research problem consists of. While the research participants and I have all gone through an array of different emotional experiences tied to our migrations, the ways in

which our migrations came about, and the options available to us to deal with our outsidersness are vastly different. The figure of my body is not perceived as a ‘migrant’, in any context, in any place in Spain.

My body is for the most part a site of privilege. Those who are ‘de facto “migrants”’ are perceived as such, and due to this perception deal with entirely different circumstances, particularly experiences of negatively connoted representations. My own body and being, on the other hand, usually bore positive connotations in the geographical contexts I found myself, even if they produced in me feelings of outsidersness and at times of being interpreted as a stereotype of how people understand Scandinavian identity. I was seen, I was visible, and I was considered to represent something desirable for Spanish and Basque society. These differences determine the limits and repertoires in which one can practice one’s agency as a human being. The terms of our agencies are tied to what ‘sort of’ human being the world deems us to be. Nationality, citizenship, race, ethnicity, gender, and class all play crucial roles in determining this, as the contrasts between my own migration experiences and those of the participants make abundantly clear.

Delineating the Field: Texts, Contexts, and Relationships

I have gathered the material for this thesis mainly through ethnographic methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews. As secondary, and contextualizing, sources I have looked at legal texts, newspaper articles, reports from different NGOs, and manifestoes written by some of the local organizations I have been in contact with during fieldwork (see Appendix 2). The reading of these texts has been included in my interpretation of the main research material and of the field as a whole, following the idea of Ortner’s (1995) ‘ethnographic stance’ as a sort of role the researcher adopts vis-à-vis the participants and upon interpreting her material. While ethnography is considered to be an ‘on the ground’ approach, in this thesis I aspire to go beyond the description of ‘everyday life’ in that I engage in migration trajectories as part of both national and global structures and processes. My analytical focus on experiences, expectations, and exchanges aids me in this. Through ethnographic methods I engage with people in a particular context – i.e. the transnational social space between lives in Bilbao and lives in a number of places in Bolivia. Through this engagement I stitch together

the elements that make up the encounters of the global market of care (see also Chapter 2).

My ethnographic fieldwork has included a large spectrum of social interactions and observations thereof. For instance, participating in family gatherings, listening to conversations and observing the interactions of those around me, has at times clarified ideas that have only been implicitly touched upon through interviews. I have observed how people organize formally in associations, as well as informally in other social settings, and in participating in these everyday activities I have listened to what their main concerns in daily life were about. This has painted a nuanced picture of life within the research setting, including about how people relate to each other. After all, power relations happen in the interplay between people, not merely in the mind of the individual (Anthias 2012, Best 2003, Farahani 2010, 2013, Puwar 2004). An important strength of ethnography's bottom-up approach is the ability to explore how both intra- and extrafamilial power relations play out in everyday lives.

I undertook six stretches of ethnographic fieldwork in Bilbao, starting in July 2013, then again in October and November 2013, a brief visit in December/January of 2014, then from February to May 2015, and, finally, in August and September of 2015. In total I have done approximately nine and a half months of fieldwork in Bilbao, followed up by a sixth stretch of fieldwork in different locations in Bolivia from February to May 2016, about three and a half months in total.

During one of the periods in Bilbao I stayed with Angy Cuellar and her family for approximately three weeks. In Bolivia I visited the families and places of origin of some of the research participants I had gotten closest to. As mentioned in Chapter 2, I spent approximately a month and a half in El Torno on the outskirts of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Elia Vargas, whom I knew from Bilbao, was visiting her mother, Doña Verónica, there when I first arrived. Together we stayed at Doña Verónica's house, and when Elia returned to Spain I stayed on with her mother for a few more weeks. I also met with the families of other participants from the Santa Cruz area for shorter visits. The second half of my fieldwork in Bolivia was spent in La Paz, where I stayed with Ana Soto and her daughters. I also took a shorter trip to Cochabamba, where I visited Katty Aquino and her family. In these places I met up with people I knew from Bilbao, as well as with their families.

The in-depth interviews done throughout my fieldwork have mostly been with people who have performed care work in Bilbao, most of them from Bolivia. Furthermore, I have interviewed some people involved in associations that somehow engage in resolving domestic workers' and/or migrated women's plights, as well as some Bolivians not engaged in care work. Important to note is that I did very limited fieldwork where I participated in or observed the actual work of the research participants²⁵, and I did not interview employers. Because of how fieldwork unfolded, I sensed that crossing this 'line' would have affected my rapport with the participants/care workers. Information about employment relations and work situations has therefore been gathered through the narratives of the workers, and through the associations they took part in. While my first-hand knowledge of what takes place in the participants' workplaces is limited, my focus here is specifically on their experiences of this work and the social relations it entails, more than observing and characterizing the work itself.

Most of the interviews with the approximately 45 interviewees were recorded, and usually lasted at least two hours. I interviewed some people more than once. The topics of conversation I prepared regarded participants' personal history, particularly in regard to work and migration. I loosely followed an interview guide, and in this sense the interviews can be understood as semi-structured. However, most interview situations ended up as conversations where those being interviewed discussed topics they deemed relevant. My interview material therefore touches upon a wide range of subjects that vary in depth and reach – from personal accounts to more political ponderings of the situation of migrated people and care workers in general.

Selecting and Presenting the Material

When selecting which parts of the material to present in this thesis, I have relied especially on the narratives of the research participants who I got closest to personally, and whose families I also got to know through my fieldwork in Bolivia. The reasons for this closeness varied, but common for these relationships was that the participants somehow took me 'under their wing'. They showed an interest in me and/or my work, and we shared our stories not only through interviews, but

25 An exception is that much of the time I spent with Consuelo Vence was in the company of the autistic child she cared for.

through hanging out in everyday life. These participants are: Angy Cuellar, Dilmer, and their daughter Liseth, whom I stayed with for part of my fieldwork in Bilbao; Katty Aquino and her family in Cochabamba; Elia Vargas, her mother Doña Verónica, sisters Jhoselyn and Mariabel, as well as their extended family in El Torno, Bolivia; Blanca López and daughter Virginia; Ana Soto and her two daughters; Consuelo Vence, and María Cabrerías and her daughter Raquel and son Marcos. In addition to the stories of these families, I share interview excerpts from other participants that are particularly relevant for the different topics discussed. See Appendix 1 for short presentations of all participants mentioned in this thesis.

Besides anonymizing the participants' names, I have at times altered and omitted specific details that can potentially reveal their identity. While I am certain that people who are unrelated to the research contexts would not be able to deduce the identities of the participants based on the material presented here, my other main concern has been to anonymize them vis-à-vis each other, so that I do not reveal things said to me in confidence in a way that could harm people's relations with their friends, family, and peers. I believe the efforts I have made are enough to safeguard the integrity of the participants, as well as of the research material.

The Social Spaces of my Field

As discussed in Chapter 2, my fieldwork in the metropolitan area of Bilbao has explored the social spaces where migrated women, particularly from Bolivia, live their lives. More concretely I have participated in the activities of (mostly) two organizations – *Red de Madres* and *Mujeres con Voz*, while also doing in-depth interviews and meeting socially with their members and other Bolivian women not pertaining to these organizations. Most participants in my fieldwork have been from Bolivia, but I have also spent time with and interviewed some women from other countries (Paraguay, Venezuela, Guatemala, and Morocco)²⁶.

Red de Madres consists of Bolivian women and their daughters, and a small number of 'supporting' men who are either partners or sons of the women who run the organization. It is one of many Bolivian 'cultural' organizations in Bilbao. According to their official lists *Red de Madres*

26 To limit the scope of this thesis, I have not included this material here. These stories are, however, implicitly present in my analysis.

have around 50 members, but the number of people that were participating on a regular basis during the time of my fieldwork varied between 15 and 20. Although the original idea behind the organization entails other endeavors, the main activity undertaken to date has been dancing Bolivian folk dances and performing these at different events.

As touched upon in the previous chapter, Bolivia as a country is very multifaceted when it comes to ethnicity, race, class, ways of life, languages, dialects, and so on. As many research participants pointed out to me, part of the complexity of the country's history is represented through its art, folklore, and dance, both in its intrinsic detail and in the sheer number of different dances with their particular costumes and 'casts' of performers. The dances originally hail from particular regions, but are performed by people who are not necessarily from those regions. While I was active in the organization, *Red de Madres* concentrated on *la morenada*, a dance from Oruro, although most of the members are from the region of La Paz.

The dancing and the activities around it are important to many of the people I met during fieldwork in Bilbao. For *Red de Madres* dancing is also part of a bigger mission where they would like to fund local 'development' projects in Bolivia, but it is perhaps mostly (at least for now) a way to meet others in a similar situation as themselves, reminisce about 'home', and catch a break from their daily lives consisting of heavy workloads both in their own homes and in those of others. I participated in most activities organized by *Red de Madres* that took place when I was in Bilbao. This meant dance practice every Saturday evening, dance performances on some weekends, participating in different social events with other Bolivian organizations where *Red de Madres* have been expected to attend, etc. Apart from this I also interviewed many of the members, and met with them during the week, either to have a coffee, go running together, or other social activities.

Mujeres con Voz is an organization located in Getxo, a municipality in the Bilbao metropolitan area that is also one of the municipalities with the highest number of domestic workers per capita in Spain. The organization caters to *mujeres migradas* – migrated women – and care workers. It is more of an activity based than a member based organization in that it does not have regular meetings, but rather organizes events and workshops to offer migrated (and non-migrated) women spaces to meet with others in a similar situation and exchange ideas and experi-

ences regardless of place of origin. It also offers services to migrated women with particular needs, such as access to a lawyer or psychologist, or the help to find housing in some extreme cases. Together with other organizations they also gather data and write reports on the situation of migrated women and domestic workers in the Bilbao metropolitan area. My involvement with *Mujeres con Voz* was mostly through the participation in their events and workshops, either as a visitor or volunteer worker, while I also interviewed some of the regular attendees.

A number of participants in my research did not belong to either of these organizations. These are women I met through friends and acquaintances, through ‘snowballing’ via other research participants, and through other organizations I contacted but in which I did not participate actively due to time restrictions. With some of the interviewees I developed friendships²⁷. This is also true for some of the members of the aforementioned organizations.

As mentioned above, for part of my fieldwork in Bilbao I lived with one of the Bolivian families I had gotten to know. During my fieldwork in Bolivia, I spent nearly all of my time living with research participants and their families. These experiences allowed for a different intensity of, and context for, participant observation. Aside from the actual participation in everyday life – from when we got up in the morning until we went to bed at night – it allowed for informal conversations and discussions around many topics that might not have occurred to me as relevant for my research had it not been for the opportunity to stay with these families and share the everyday with them. It also contributed to renegotiating the meanings of relationships in the field.

Negotiating Boundaries: The Body and Subjectivity in the Field

In ethnographic fieldwork it is not possible to separate yourself from the research that you are doing. This is an essential part of the ethnographic methodology (Ortner 1995). You enter the field as yourself, and you engage fully with what is going on, albeit with a keener awareness than what might be necessary in everyday life outside of the field. Apart from this awareness, ethnographic fieldwork also often entails putting yourself in uncomfortable, and sometimes risky situations that you would

27 See below for a discussion of friendships in the field.

avoid in your layman life because they would not be deemed necessary to engage with. The fear of missing out on important moments – situations and conversations that will somehow unlock the conundrums you entered with – drives you to continue, and to sometimes push beyond what can be deemed healthy or safe.

Implications of Falling Apart in the Field

While doing fieldwork in Bilbao I was more ‘at home’, and I did not live with the research participants for most of the time I was there. There were moments where I felt insecure as a woman, but for the most part I perceived the situations I found myself in as safe. When I was in Bolivia I was much more physically immersed in the field in that I spent most of my time with the research participants and stayed in their homes. Here the issue of my physical health turned out to become an unexpected consideration. Personal safety was less of a concern for I did feel safe most of the time (not counting traffic and transport), as my hosts were generally very protective of me and made sure to give me good instructions whenever I ventured out alone.

What could not be controlled in Bolivia, however, was my body’s physical reaction to its new environments²⁸. In advance I was mentally prepared for some discomfort and reactions to the food and water, but unfortunately my health was more affected than it usually is when I travel. The main issue became *chikungunya*, a mosquito-borne disease I contracted while I was in sub-tropical Santa Cruz. I was aware of the risk for this disease, but despite heavy use of mosquito repellent, I was stung numerous times a day, and after a month and a half I fell ill²⁹. The period of acute sickness did not last for many days, but the aftermath was quite severe with strong arthritis-like symptoms and fatigue. This, combined with several stomach infections as well as height sickness once I got to La Paz, made the last half of my fieldwork both physically and mentally challenging, and ultimately influenced my physical and geographical mobility. In retrospect, I should perhaps have ended my fieldwork sooner, but there, with the ‘research first’ hat placed firmly on my head, the thought did not even strike me. However, my aching body, and the risk of becoming re-infected, did stop me from going to one of the areas where I had planned to go – Los Yungas. It also made me bed-

28 I put this in plural as I changed whereabouts in Bolivia several times.

29 This was a couple of days after leaving Doña Verónica’s house to travel to La Paz.

ridden for part of the time I was in both Santa Cruz and La Paz, and, once I was back in Europe, it stopped me from doing another stint of fieldwork in Bilbao, which I believe could have been fruitful.

These bodily changes were draining, and affected my mental wellbeing and strength, which certainly are important resources in the field. The experience of losing control of my body, of not being able to move properly and doing everyday tasks like washing the dishes, opening a door, or even dressing at a normal speed was psychologically difficult, especially since I already found myself in a context where I did not feel in general control of my everyday life. Furthermore, falling sick in the homes of people you are visiting can influence the social situation and the relationship between researcher and research participants. This was noticeable in different ways. With one of the families I stayed with certain annoyance was noticeable when I declined invitations of going out to parties during a particularly bad period in which many different illnesses collided in my body.

With Katty's family in Cochabamba it was different. Their care for me when I was sick was such that I felt completely at home – it could just as well have been my own parents taking care of me. I had first met Katty back in March 2015 through a workshop with *Mujeres con Voz*. At the time I was just getting started with the first stages of my fieldwork in Bilbao. I was still uncertain about how I should approach people to learn about their situation, but Katty gave me a reassuring smile and said she'd be happy to talk to me. 'You can also interview me if you want!' she exclaimed. I breathed a sigh of relief at her friendly encouragement, and felt like we were on the same wavelength. The week after we met for the interview, and for the remainder of my fieldwork periods in Bilbao we hung out at the different gatherings organized by *Mujeres con Voz* and other organizations. Our conversations were usually effortless and relaxed, and through them I was made to understand many of the unspoken nuances of power that the care work sector reproduces. When it turned out she would be in Bolivia at the same time as me, I was very pleased to be able to get to know her family, despite the visit coinciding with my reduced health.

Subjective Experiences and Oscillating Relations of Power

My ill health altered the dynamics of the personal and intimate relationships that ethnographic fieldwork entails by changing the premises

through which we exchanged knowledge. This situation influenced the power dynamics between the research participants and myself, in part because I was forced to let my researcher's 'guard' down. This must be understood in a context in which I, as 'the researcher', in one sense hold a subject position of absolute power: It is I who after-the-fact interpret all that has taken place during my fieldwork; all the encounters and all the stories told. It is my lens that the reader is invited to see through, no matter how hard I might try to 'correctly' represent the lens of the research participants. But what happens in situations in which I as researcher, and human being, in different ways find myself disempowered by circumstance while in the field? This disempowerment certainly does not erase hegemonic power relations at large in the world and that position researcher and participants in relation to each other. In forcing me to step beyond my researcher persona and exposing my vulnerability,

Another such situation, which profoundly impacted the twists and turns of fieldwork, was the illness and then death of my father in the first semester of 2014. I had planned the first longer stint of fieldwork in Bilbao from February 2014 and on, when we got the news in January that he was terminally ill. I postponed fieldwork, and in the process I let all the people I had told I would be in Bilbao know about the delay and the reason for it. The response was very compassionate, and I received a great deal of support from many of the participants. When I eventually went back to do fieldwork in Bilbao a year later, the rapport and relationships with some people had seemingly grown stronger since I had chosen to share part of my grief with them. It also opened up for conversations about, precisely, grief and death, especially in combination with migration and migrancy. This devastating human experience thus opened up for a mutual trust between the participants and myself, and thereby contributed to create a social space where more personal and intimate experiences were put on the table, and exposing the vulnerabilities of both researcher and research participants. I will return to the significance of death and grief in migrancy in my discussion on reciprocity in Chapter 9.

Gender, Age, and Sex in the Field

Another fundamental aspect of the body in the field, as well as of any social encounter, is that of gender. The fact that I am a woman, and perceived as relatively young, has mattered at every turn during my field-

work. From probably being understood as fairly harmless and therefore invited into spaces that I might not have been able to enter otherwise, such as meetings between the Bolivian consul and other men of power among Bolivians in Bilbao, to my womanhood being found attractive by men³⁰, both married and single – gender has been a major dimension of my experience in the field (as it usually is for women when we move through the world). The fieldnote excerpt from Santa Cruz below illustrates one such situation.

A large group of (drunk) men were sitting around a table in the middle, and they started shouting and whistling as we (I) walked in. I assume it was for my benefit. We sat down at a table along the wall opposite where they were serving, and close to where [Elia's cousin] Francisco's band mates were sitting. One, the youngest (Wilmer, I think, was his name), was quite drunk already and immediately took an interest in me. But he was nothing compared to one of the men from the first table that soon came over and sat down next to me after having made several failed and loud attempts at making 'salud'[cheers]³¹ across the room (attempts that I had ignored). He kept serving me beer and trying to see what I was writing on my phone. He wanted my number. He went to get another phone, a smartphone, and started recording a video of me. In the end I got angry and said 'YA! Ya está!'[ENOUGH! That is enough!]. My companions had also been observing the situation and immediately reacted when I did. They asked him to leave, and Elia changed places with me, so that I could sit between her and Rosa, Francisco's wife, protected between the women. Soon after the three of us went to the bathroom and the guy followed us down to where we paid [for the entrance and for toilet paper]. Apart from toilet paper they also sold snacks, and suddenly he was there asking me where I was going and if I wanted caña (sugar cane), which they sold in small portion sized bags. I said no thank you, and Rosa and Elia pulled me away and said we were just going to the bathroom, that he needed to calm down. I exclaimed my anger on the way over to the bathroom 'joder que pesado! [dammit, how obnoxious!]', and Rosa said something

30 Homophobia was quite prevalent within the contexts of my fieldwork, and so I rarely experienced this sort of attention from women.

31 An important part of social drinking in Bolivia, and which socially 'must' be reciprocated.

about him being out of line. (Fieldnotes. El Torno, February 25, 2016)

While nothing beyond my own aggravation happened in this situation, this is just one example of what took place every time, usually multiple times, I attended a festive social occasion. Especially during my time in Bolivia, gender and my own visibility as an outsider became factors at times difficult to navigate. In Bilbao I was more ‘at home’ and norms operating between the participants and I were drawn from different cultural contexts. In Bolivia, particularly when alcohol was consumed (which it was quite frequently and often in great amounts), I became a significant point of attraction for men at social gatherings. During one of the parties I attended in Santa Cruz there was an actual queue of inebriated men I did not know lining up at our table to talk to me. But suitors also often included men I knew personally and with whom I was friends, and whose wives I was also often friends with. I seldom felt unsafe in these situations, but I found them very socially uncomfortable. It seemed, however, that this behavior was something that women expected from men once they had had too much to drink. Finding the balance between not being (too) rude to the men by e.g. declining their incessant quests to dance with me or serving me alcohol by making *salud*, and not being disrespectful to their wives by doing anything that might seem as encouraging their husbands’ behavior, was challenging. On occasions, when these situations occurred with people whom I deemed I would not depend on socially in the future, I did explode and tell them to ‘f... off’. Quickly, however, I did perceive that this was not considered to be the proper reaction of a woman; harassment in general, was something I, and women in general, should simply bear.

These sorts of situations indicate the position women are, as a rule, placed in within Bolivian social life, at least in the circles where I spent most of my time during fieldwork. In terms of power relations, my interpretation of these events is that my body was understood as a sort of woman-on-steroids because of my difference and whiteness. This sort of behavior is also directed to Bolivian women in the same sort of situations, but in that my presence represented whiteness in all its connotations of prosperity, wealth, beauty, and so on, many of the men who were present decided to direct this behavior towards me at the same time.

I wish to underline that these kinds of experiences are not unique to the Bolivian context – similar experiences take place in different shapes and forms all over the world. This has been made abundantly clear through both feminist research and through the *#MeToo* movements. As in any context, these sorts of experiences shape the way women, in this case I as a researcher, act and react. As mentioned above, I did most often feel safe, but this is also because I played by the internalized rules that I as a woman have learned throughout my life: to not ‘overreact’, to not venture out alone, especially after dark, to not pursue situations where I would be alone with men that could not be held accountable if they would ‘do’ something to me. These implicit rules influenced what sort of material was available for me to attain. My management of these situations has, for instance, probably contributed to building rapport with many women, because I did not ‘act on’ their husbands’ pursuits of me. On the other hand, my access to men’s narratives has been more limited. Considering my research topic, however, I believe that a greater access to this sort of material would not have influenced my conclusions to any significant degree. Overwhelmingly, it is the relationships I developed with other women that have informed the analyses in this thesis.

‘Friendships’, Ethics, and Reciprocity in Ethnographic Fieldwork

Apart from the centrality of bodily experiences, the story with Katty and her family above depicts another set of relationships that I developed through fieldwork. I consider how one is to reflect on and ‘define’ relationships of the field as perhaps the most ethically and methodologically challenging part of ethnographic fieldwork. What does it mean and what does it entail to ‘study’ someone through developing a personal relationship with them? Who holds the power to define what that relationship means, and what can be exchanged through it? Can that power relation be altered through any form of agency, or is it set in stone through the roles of researcher and research participant, even if there is ‘more’ to it? This leads to questions of what I, both as a researcher and a ‘friend’, owe the participants, particularly in the cases when they themselves might not fully understand what kind of research I am doing. Ultimately, what kind of knowledge is possible to attain through such relationships when we are all emotionally invested in each other?

On the one hand it is clear that from the moment I stepped into ‘the field’, I began developing social relationships that carry meanings beyond the ‘scientific’, for both myself and for the participants. Some of these relationships have remained unambiguously research based, and have not gone beyond the interviews and a few meetings. Other relationships have entailed more emotional involvement on my part, both empathetically due to the circumstances of particular people and how these have affected me, but also sympathetically, because spending time together and sharing experiences eventually leads to a deeper mutual understanding of how we are as people, and also of caring for each other. Hence, I regard several of the relationships in which both the research participants and myself have become emotionally invested to have passed from being solely for research purposes to become different forms and degrees of ‘friendship’.

I put ‘friendship’ in quotation marks because, for the most part, these relationships differ from my friendships ‘at home’, and this difference matters. The difference is first of all based on the privilege of my positionality vis-à-vis the participants, and the fact that my nationality, citizenship, ‘race’, and class background grant me the economic, personal, and political security I have. But such differences can arguably also be part of other friendships and ‘friendships’ that are not related to research. There is also a different side to my position as a researcher that goes beyond my perceived class-related, gendered, and racialized positionality. The role of researcher in itself entails distancing oneself emotionally from ‘the field’ and the subjects of research, while also holding the power to interpret and translate the stories of the ‘ethnographic other’ to a world that is often unknown to them (namely, the academic world). ‘Being in the field’, and writing about it afterwards makes breaking the researcher/research participant barrier essentially impossible. The ‘ethnographic stance’ stops me from behaving as I would were I not ‘in the field’, which puts a boundary between me and ‘them’ when it comes to getting to know one other. For me, this boundary derives largely from my reiterative analytical position, while for the research participants, it may consist of, for instance, skepticism regarding how I might use the information I gather from our encounters. In other words, even if the ethnographic stance implies engaging sensorially and emotionally in the lives of the ‘ethnographic others’, the constant *contextualization* that this form of research presupposes (cf.

Alcoff 1991-1992, Comaroff & Comaroff 1992, Geertz 1973, Ortner 1995), establishes distance between researcher and research subject.

In practice, when it comes to the position of researcher, this means behaving differently in certain situations than what I would if I were not 'in the field'. I accept behavior from others that I would normally not accept, and I hold back behavior of my own in situations where I would normally intervene more directly. One example of such a situation has already been discussed above – situations where I have felt subjected to different degrees of sexual aggression by men. This acceptance – or, at times, lack thereof – in turn shapes how the participants view me. There is therefore an instrumentality to the 'friendships' in the field that does not allow me to be completely 'myself', as the research always stands between us. As I will discuss further below, the social barrier of the research has much to do with positionality, and the aspect of instrumentality works both ways. Also, the degree to which this barrier is upheld is both about context as well as how external factors might renegotiate the power balance of the relationship.

Returning to the discussion of vulnerability and power relations above, the experience with Katty and her family when I fell sick during fieldwork, underscores a very concrete way in which both context and external factors play a role in the relationship between researcher and research participant. First of all, the relation between the research participants and myself was to a large degree renegotiated when 'the field' was taken from Spain to Bolivia, and, second of all, when I myself was weakened by illness. This change was particularly noticeable in the relationships with people that I already knew from Bilbao and whom I later met and spent time with in their respective homes in Bolivia. As a result I was dependent on the participants to a much larger degree in the twists and turns of daily life, not only for the purpose of 'researching them'. I had not been to Bolivia before, and I did not know how to go about daily life there. They were the ones to show me the ropes, and I was comparatively culturally at a disadvantage. This does, of course, not reduce the privilege ascribed to my positionality in the grander scheme of things, but it underscores the role that also relative contextual knowledge can play in the power balance within personal relationships. My visit to Katty's family also underlines how important this access to contextual knowledge is in situations such as my illness in the field. My deteriorated health resulted in me becoming further dependent and more

emotionally open towards my participants, as it tugged at the methodological barrier set up between ‘them’ and myself.

Expectations of Reciprocity and Social Differentiation

Keeping in mind that the notion of exchange is central in this research at large, it is essential to also emphasize how ethnographic fieldwork in itself is a form of exchange. As I enter into relationships in the field, be they ‘friendships’ or friendships, the issue of what is expected from me as ‘friend’, friend, and researcher enters into play. I am dependent on these relationships in order to carry out my research. How might the participants perceive what this dependence entails in terms of my obligations towards them?

An important consideration here is the possibility of different emic³² understandings of the idea of friendship³³, and of what sort of exchanges are made socially possible through such relations. The meaning of this term can vary according to individual experiences, as well as culturally. I come from a cultural context in which the use of this word to describe relationships is comparatively less frequent than what I experienced as a researcher in the Bolivian cultural context (both in Spain and in Bolivia, and independent of which region in Bolivia people came from). People were quick to label our relationship as a friendship, and to call me *amiga* when introducing me to others, even if we had only met a couple of times. However, I gathered that the emic way of applying the ‘friendship’ label in the Bolivian context has more to do with people’s *intentions*, rather than a radically different ontological understanding of what a friendship entails. When hearing people talk *about* other people, they often differentiated between ‘friends’ and ‘acquaintances’³⁴, while usually calling them ‘friends’ when talking *to* them. It thus seems reasonable to assume that this label had more to do with what sort of relationship people wanted with me, than what relationship they actually perceived we had, at least when we had only just met.

32 In anthropology the notion of emic is used for concepts that are taken directly from the research context itself. In anthropology it is common to use emic concepts in order to discuss the field on its own terms, instead of applying etic concepts – more general, theoretical concepts usually from Western epistemology. This is why I in many cases have left Spanish terms used by the participants in the text, with translations and explanations in brackets.

33 *Amistad* in Spanish.

34 *Amigos* and *conocidos* in Spanish.

This invocation of friendship through naming it as such, brings forth the question of *why* people would want to establish a friendship with me, and it is here that the issue of our differently placed positionalities becomes central. The issue of race is a particularly pertinent discussion in regard to this, as well as how it is connected to class, both in the Spanish and in the Bolivian context. My *whiteness*, and what it was understood to represent, could arguably be a key reason for why many of my relationships in the field developed so ‘smoothly’. I was observed, seen, and understood as different, and my difference was perceived as positive. As mentioned above, this difference was both about an ‘otherness’ vis-à-vis *Bolivianness*, but also in regard to *Spanish/Basqueness*. The judgment about my difference was made on the basis of both physical appearance and what I ‘am’, for instance a non-native Spanish speaker, and it is these components that made up my ‘whiteness’ in this context.

In Bilbao, many of the research participants expressed pride in the fact that I became engaged in their organizations and in their lives. On several occasions I was asked to dress in clothing representing a certain geographical area and ‘showed off’ at different events, and I was even asked to speak on the radio to promote a fundraiser for a research participant’s organization (not the one I belonged to myself). I often found myself in situations where I became the center of attention to a larger degree than what would have been natural, I believe, would I have been Bolivian and/or carried in my appearance ‘typical’ signifiers of Bolivian identity, such a darker skin color than my own, or a Bolivian dialect in Spanish. In Bilbao I was also told continuously that they considered me *buena* – a good person – particularly because of my (seemingly surprising) interest in the lives and conditions of people ‘such as them’.

Race and Gender in Postcolonial Bolivia

The connection between these experiences and whiteness became further underscored during my fieldwork in Bolivia. In Bilbao people talked less openly about race and skin color, even if the general hegemonic beauty standards operating in Spain (and Europe) apparently also operate among Bolivians in Bilbao. In Bolivia, on the other hand, my phenotypical whiteness was often blatantly underscored in conversation as though it was a universal truth that whiteness was more beautiful than brownness, and that this degree of beauty is also connected to your

worth as a human being, especially when you are a woman. Elia's niece, a 16 year old girl with the insecurities this age entails, told me continuously how pretty my (blond) hair was, that she wished her skin was lighter, that there was a girl in her class who was white like me and all the boys were in love with her. On one occasion she came to me and said that she 'had heard' that now guys had started liking *morenas* better than *rubias*³⁵; what did I think about that? I was also often asked why I didn't find myself a boyfriend in Bolivia, so that I could stay on there and get married. In one such conversation one of the participants told the others present that maybe I didn't like *morenos*. His wife immediately intervened and said 'no, I don't think she is "like that"!'. I agreed with her and said that I didn't think that how attractive people were had anything to do with their skin color, and that I just didn't have enough time there to 'find someone', that I was there to work. The content and implications of these conversations were certainly uncomfortable and painful to take in. More importantly, however, they were telling about how discourse on race and gender becomes internalized all over the world, much like what Nelson Maldonado-Torres calls the 'coloniality of Being' (2007), what Judith Butler talks about when discussing 'naming' and performativity (2004, 2011), or what Beverly Skeggs (1997) shows in her analysis of how working class women in the UK educate themselves through 'caring courses' and become nurses in order surpass the working class stigma they experience via the gaze of both themselves and others. Skeggs' work shows clearly that how a person regards herself vis-à-vis others, or how discourse becomes embodied, is important when trying to understand the crisscrossing gazes and experiences present in the encounters between vastly differently positioned individuals, like that of research participants and myself.

Lastly, the conversations in the field on 'race' also told me about the practical outcomes of these discourses. These outcomes include the aspiration of women for acquiring a man on the basis of their beauty relative to other women; the worth of a woman, in deserving a good man depending on the degree of her beauty, including 'whiteness'; and the implicit relationship between goodness and race. And, finally, they told me that should I consider all this to be true, this would be accepted (even if it would not necessarily be liked or appreciated).

35 *Morena* means a girl with dark complexion and/or hair color, while *rubia* is a girl with blond hair and relatively lighter skin color.

Rapport, Race, and Loyalty in Organizations

The acceptance, and sometimes resignation, before racializing and gendering discourses was also present among research participants in Bilbao. My whiteness also factored into my fieldwork there, perhaps especially among the research participants in *Red de Madres*. During fieldwork I decided to commit my time to this particular organization, since it became difficult to juggle a ‘membership’ in more than one organization at once. This was due to time restriction (most of the Bolivian organizations have their practices, meetings, and events on the weekends since that is when people have time off from work), and because of conflicting interests among Bolivians in Bilbao.

Red de Madres consists largely of people from the *Altiplano* – the Andean highlands – who are generally regarded as more ‘indigenous’ than those from the *Oriente*, the Eastern part of Bolivia³⁶. Whenever I socialized with my acquaintances from the latter in plain view of the research participants from my (*Altiplano*) dance group, sarcastic comments were made about me ‘getting lost’ among *los cambas*³⁷. Had I not been so loyal in terms of which organization I danced with at events, I believe my access to the participants from el *Altiplano* would have been much more limited. The fact that I engaged with them – from La Paz – instead of others, was often brought up as something they felt proud of, perhaps because of the social and political differentiation that has been made historically in Bolivia. I will discuss this further below when addressing the issue of language. Outside of my fieldwork with this organization I did, however, engage socially with people from different parts of Bolivia, as well as other countries. This way of conducting fieldwork gave me a broader understanding of the different economic, geographical and sociocultural backgrounds of women working in the care and domestic work sector in Bilbao, while it still maintained rapport with members of *Red de Madres*.

Building and Sustaining Research Relationships through Reciprocity

This rapport between us – as researcher and research participants, and as members of the same organization – implies the promise of a relation-

36 See Chapter 2 for an overview of geographical areas in Bolivia.

37 People from the *Oriente* are popularly called *cambas*. The equivalent name for people from the *Altiplano* is *collas*, although this often holds a more pejorative tone.

ship sustained over time. My presence in only one organization, and my continuous returns to Bilbao, seemed to be interpreted as loyalty and contributed to making me trustworthy. The temporality of our relationships is also noticeable in the interviews. Some people, like Gladys, changed their mind about letting me interview them at all. Second, those I interviewed in the last stretches of fieldwork usually spoke more candidly than those I interviewed in the beginning. This candidness, however, also carried a different sort of expectation towards me as a person and as a researcher.

Expectations of reciprocity in the field were at times explicit. For instance, I was asked to make economic contributions to particular events, and also do favors for people, such as giving their children English lessons. While these instances had to do with my positionality, for example, people regarded my knowledge of language as a resource, other people were also expected to make contributions in different ways, and these requests were also made explicitly. The more complicated aspect of expected reciprocity is thus what is implicit in the relationships, and how they are defined. By evoking ‘friendship’ as what binds us, the participants tacitly stated certain intentions and hopes for what they might ‘get out of’ me and of our relationship. This is also a reflection of the perception of how we as individuals hold different places within social hierarchies. Had people not perceived that I as a differently positioned person could potentially influence their lives positively in one way or the other, they might have been more hesitant to engage with me at all.

Many stated their appreciation and admiration of my endeavor – of writing ‘a book’ about them and about things that they did not feel society at large paid attention to. In addition, I believe that many enjoyed being listened to through our interviews. In listening to their stories I also underlined *their* understanding of our relationships as friendships; even if I listened in the interest of research, while their insight into my life was less extensive. As noted above, I did share certain parts of my story with people, particularly regarding my father’s illness and death. All in all, an expectation of our relationships to be sustained beyond my role as a researcher, beyond fieldwork, and being able to personally rely on me in the future, makes sense. The relatively frequent communication between us after completing fieldwork, usually via social media, is a testimony to these expectations, as well as to the mutual empathy marking these relationships.

In summary, the participants and myself invested differently in our relationships because we defined them differently from the start. Even if my role as a researcher was made as clear as possible, the way in which ethnographic research is done often implies stepping over a threshold of intimacy, which others understandably interpret as a more personal relationship. The boundaries within these relationships change according to both time and place, and personal situation. In important ways, this level of intimacy affected me as researcher. The question of reciprocity, friendships, and ‘friendships’ is a central and critical ethical and methodological consideration in any ethnographic research (cf. Povrzanovic Frykman 2004).

Bordering and Bridging through Language and Translations

Another significant element of my ethnographic endeavor has been that of language and translation. Ian Chambers has argued that translation is a way of transforming:

It always involves a necessary travesty of any metaphysics of authenticity or origins. We find ourselves employing a language that is always shadowed by loss, an elsewhere, a ghost; the unconscious, and ‘other’ text, an ‘other’ voice, an ‘other’ world (1994:4).

As will become clear in the coming chapters, I consider attention to linguistic detail of great importance when it comes to heeding the role of language and its translation in ethnographic knowledge construction. Chambers has argued that ‘knowledge is constructed, produced through the activity of language [;] [...] it is constantly re-written, re-cited and re-sited’ (1994:33). In other words, language – like a person – always speaks from somewhere, and so do, then, my translations of all that I have heard and understood through my fieldwork.

Ethnography, and science in general, is in itself an act of translation-as-contextualization. But the use of language in ethnographic fieldwork also entails other aspects. Below I discuss which spaces were seemingly created between the participants and myself through the communicative use of language, as well as how language makes power relations visible.

Language is, of course, central to research as a communicative tool, both in how it is used to transfer knowledge to the academic and non-

academic world through texts and presentations. It is also important in how it is used to attain knowledge by, for instance, building relationships in the ethnographic field, or reading texts relevant to the research context. But another component of language is how it matters in shaping the research context through the values that are placed upon language as symbolic entity. It is these latter two functions of language that will be discussed here.

First of all, my fluency in Spanish was undoubtedly not only an advantage but also a requirement to be able to carry out this particular research. Not only does a shared linguistic knowledge between researcher and research participant diminish grounds for misunderstandings, it also supplies better grounds for acknowledging and interpreting the complexities of what is communicated. In this way a shared language is a strong bridge by which one can commence to construct knowledge. But a common language does not erase the different degrees of access to power and resources held by the different actors in the research. Even if Spanish is the mother tongue of many of the research participants, and not my own, our spoken words can still accentuate our different positionalities.

Linguistic Hierarchies

Right before we parted after the interview, Katty made a comment about the word 'vale'.³⁸ 'It's a word you have to use here,' she said, 'or people think you haven't understood what they've said to you.' She said: 'You have to speak with the words from here. You have to say 'vale' – if you don't say it they will keep asking you. They think you haven't understood.'³⁹ She acted out the imagined conversation with a mocking voice: 'You have to do this, you have to do that... Yes? Vale? Vale? Have you understood?'⁴⁰ She continued: 'And even if you say 'sí'/yes', they don't believe you have understood until you say 'vale'.'⁴¹ (Fieldnotes. Bilbao, March 12, 2015)

38 Vale is an interjection used very widely in Spanish in Spain. It means 'right'/'ok'/'I understand', or just 'yes' (*sí*). In other Spanish speaking places other words like *bueno/dale/ta* (from *está*)/*ya* are used for the same purpose. What Katty is pointing out is that even when replacing vale for its equivalent *sí* (yes), employers will pretend that they believe you have not understood their directions until you confirm with the word used in Spain.

39 *Tienes que hablar con las palabras de aquí. Tienes que decir 'vale' – si no lo dices te siguen preguntando. Creen que no has entendido.*

40 *'Tienes que hacer esto, tienes que hacer lo otro' – 'Sí? Vale? Vale? Has entendido?'*

41 *Y aunque digas que sí no creen que hayas entendido hasta que digas 'vale'.*

As Katty's rendition of a typical workplace situation shows, Spanish is not just Spanish. It is the first language of 470 million people, and it is spoken in many different ways. As with other forms of knowledge and forms of communication, spoken language is an identity marker that can communicate your place within a socially constructed hierarchy. In Spain I have, throughout my years as a resident, observed a clear hierarchy of dialects. The vantage point is that Castilian Spanish, especially from Madrid, followed by the dialects of other centrally and northerly located cities, is considered purer and more 'correct'. Often when talking with Spanish nationals, Latin American Spanish dialects seem to produce different connotations, which can be perceived in how these are spoken of, imitated, or even mocked. These connotations seem to also follow a 'racial' logic. For example, Argentinean Spanish is regarded as charming and attractive, good enough to be spoken by TV hosts. Andean Spanish, on the other hand, which in the Bolivian context is spoken mostly by people with indigenous heritage, is infantilized when it is imitated. The feeling of 'racial' and linguistic abjection (cf. Ferguson 1999) that this infantilization produces was inferred in the accounts of several Bolivian research participants, as reflected in the snippet of my field-notes above from my interview with Katty.

Similar linguistic hierarchies, with their own racial logic, are also present within the Bolivian community. There is a stark difference between the way Spanish is spoken in the *Altiplano* and the *Oriente*. The mocking is mutual, but the hierarchy of the spoken word is still implied in how the *Altiplano* Spanish is more influenced both phonetically and lexically by Quechua and Aymara, and how this influence shows *who* speaks what dialect. In the Bolivian national narrative those from the *Oriente (los cambas)* are associated more with the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, a booming economic center, a sub-tropic climate, a more stereotypically 'Latin' culture, and 'whiteness'. The dialect they speak in this region holds many similarities to how they speak in 'Caribbean Latin America', and other tropical places, and is thus probably not immediately recognized as 'Bolivian dialect' by Spaniards; both due to the dialect itself and because of the relative 'whiteness' of those speaking it. In contrast, people from the *Altiplano*, called *collas*, are seen as more indigenous, darker, timid, and colder, like the arid climate of the region.

My ‘dialect’ of Spanish resembles that of a ‘standard’ Spanish person from Spain, after having spent many years in Bilbao, although certainly carrying a Norwegian accent. Still, after having spent months in communication with Bolivian, mostly *Altiplano*, Spanish, and after my fieldwork in Bolivia, I notice the influence in my syntax, grammar, and certain choices in vocabulary. This has meant a return to my linguistic roots of sorts, as it was in South America I first started learning Spanish two decades ago.

How my research participants interpreted my level and form of Spanish is difficult for me to assess, but I imagine that the access to certain economic, social, and cultural resources my linguistic knowledge presupposes was picked up on. Still, the shared outsidership in Bilbao came up, also when it comes to language. It was pointed out that it was ‘funny’ that I speak with a Spanish (in contrast to Latin American) accent. Many participants were eager to explain to me the differences of vocabulary between Bolivian and Spanish dialects, and the confusions and frictions this might cause in, for instance, the workplace. How people deal with these reminders of social differentiations in their everyday lives has thus also informed of my analysis.

Language as Geographical Marker

During my fieldwork in Bolivia yet another component of my knowledge of Spanish became apparent. Especially in my first field site, El Torno in Santa Cruz, it seemed that many people were not familiar with European geography. While I was there with Elia whom I knew from Bilbao, people often assumed I was Spanish. As part of my efforts to explain who I was and *what* I was doing there I often found myself trying to explain where I was actually from, and that Spanish was not my mother tongue, particularly when there were words I did not understand. In this sense, both my knowledge and sometimes ignorance of the Spanish language (especially when it was mixed with Quechua vocabulary), was more taken for granted during my fieldwork in Bolivia. The identity aspects connected to the language issue became more about explaining my complicated personal geographical history: Norwegian living in Sweden, but having lived in Spain previously and thus knew some of their family members and friends in Spain; and whose own family members lived even further away than Spain. The challenges of communication thus became about imagining how geography is per-

ceived when you are not very familiar with the Western system of mapping and international borders. Elia, who witnessed many of my attempts at explaining this, would sometimes make irritated and exasperated comments, asking me to ‘just tell them you’re from Spain!’ In sum, the ways in which language matters in the research context is dependent on geography – both people’s perception and knowledge of it, and how the geographies – as social spaces – of particular places are shaped. One’s spoken language is one way in which identity is placed upon bodies, both in and outside of ‘the field’. Language is thereby as much a vessel for positioning people within categories of social differentiation, as it is a tool for rendering these categories visible through, for instance, ethnographic research and writing.

Concluding Remarks: Ethnography as Experience, Contextualization, and Translation

Sherry B. Ortner insists that ethnography goes beyond the classical anthropological fieldwork – it is about the *ethnographic stance* – about *thickness*. She provides a general definition of ethnography as ‘the attempt to understand another life world using the self – as much of it as possible – as the instrument of knowing’ (1995:173). As I have shown in this chapter, my methodological approach lies in this ethnographic stance – in attempting to understand the research problem on the terms of the people I interact with through fieldwork, and make sense of it through the knowledge I already carry, and that I attain throughout the research process. As is widely recognized within anthropology and feminist theory, this always takes place in relationship to how I as a researcher am constructed through my own personal history, within the same global structures in which the research participants live. In a sense I am myself a component of the context that must be interpreted as part of their narratives.

When Ortner (ibid.) evokes the term *thickness*, she pays tribute to Geertz’ (1973) ‘thick description’, but moves beyond the holism many of his contemporary anthropologists were searching for (cf. Gregory 2015, Marcus & Cushman 1982). In order to explain her position, she relies on Jean and John Comaroff, who wrote:

If texts are to be more than literary topoi, scattered shards from which we presume worlds, they have to be anchored in the processes

of their production, in the orbits of connection and influence that give them life and force (1992:34).

If the written word must be contextualized, then so must the narratives of the research participants, and so must my presence as listener to their stories. It is this latter contextualization I have sought to establish here.

This chapter has discussed how personal experiences inform the contextualization and the ethnographic stance of the researcher, and thereby the analysis of the research material. This way of reflecting on my *guiding scars* – my contextualizing and contextualized experiences – both ‘in the field’ and outside of it, is important to my methodological and theoretical approach when ‘constructing knowledge’. My critical reflections have addressed several dimensions of my research process. Migrancy must be understood in relationship to intersecting processes of social categorization that result in the different positionalities of my research participants and myself within the field, as well as different experiences of representation and embodiment of discourse in- and outside the field. I have discussed the reciprocal relationships of exchange that we engage in through the lens of ‘friendship’, which includes taking on different roles according to factors such as geography, contextual knowledge, and health issues. The lens of friendship informs the differential, although contextualized, access we have to power and agency, and I have shown that this access is about ‘race’, class, and gender, amongst other social categorizations. Ultimately I have reflected on how language is one way that illustrates how differently we are positioned, especially when it comes to the Spanish context, a place we have all migrated to.

The stories the participants have chosen to share with me, and how they are narrated, hold meaning beyond the story itself. These narratives are also ‘texts’ within a context, or, perhaps in this case they can also be texts *out of* context. I am the one taking these stories beyond their contexts, translating them – both figuratively and linguistically, and bringing them into the context of academia. These stories thus become performances of identity presented towards and meeting with my own performance – that of a researcher (cf. Butler 1990, 2004, 2011). As I have discussed above, the ways in which these stories are told is therefore both about how the research participant interpret my body in the field, how I interpret their bodies and their stories, and how I ultimately rely

on my own experiences and acquired knowledge to translate and re-narrate what I have experienced in the field. Ultimately, ethnography becomes a work of translation through contextualization.

Fieldwork is thus about gazing both outward and inward at the same time, through my own (colonially) positioned body. Through the same body I meet other differentially positioned bodies and try to make sense of and bring their stories forward into a different context and question what I see – both in others and myself. Ethnography is, then, about filling the gaps, finding the connections and overlaps between perceived and performed bodies, and attempt to understand what it all says about the world. In doing so – in doubly recognizing perception and performativity in both self and others through our positionalities in different geographical spaces – I, the ethnographer, can hopefully more easily speak not ‘about’ or ‘for’ others (Spivak 1988), but rather speak about the world-as-context and the power relationships it contains and sustains. Ultimately, ethnography should surpass the challenge of only ‘reacting’, as Gloria Anzaldua (1987) so eloquently puts in the quote at the beginning of this chapter. In this thesis, I look at the connections between knowledge production and politics, in order to bridge the analytical gap between myself, as both researcher and individual, and the research participants.

4. GUIDING STARS: THEORY, CONCEPTS, EPISTEMOLOGY

[We must] recognise that the construction of the ‘other’ has been fundamental to the historical, cultural and moral reproduction of our ‘selves’ and *our* particular sense of the world, of the centre, of knowledge, of power. To name is to possess, to domesticate is to extend a patronage (Chambers 1994:30).

*

[The premises of the feminist debate] are not those of an incomplete project, an openness to the diversity of social experience that presents itself for description. Its openness is of a different kind, its community of scholars differently constituted. After all, the idea of an incomplete project suggests that completion might be possible; feminist debate is a radical one to the extent that it must share with other radicalisms the premise that completion is undesirable. The aim is not an adequate description but the exposing of interests that inform the activity of description as such (Strathern 1988:22).

Introduction: Vantage Points

In this chapter I elaborate on the analytical concepts that have helped me make sense of my material. The title – *Guiding Stars* – refers to the role these concepts have in telling this story. They have guided my analysis, and thereby guide the reader through the text. The title also refers to the role these concepts, and the many minds that together have fashioned them, have played in the dissertation writing process. They have served

as guiding lights when gathering, analyzing, and writing about my material. They have shaped my understanding of what research entails regarding self-scrutiny, ethics, and the ways in which the researcher herself enters into experiences, expectations, and exchanges with the research participants within the global market of care. My guiding stars are therefore connected to both the theoretical and methodological approaches that build the premises of this specific scientific inquiry, for my understanding of knowledge construction in general, and for operationalizing these premises in the interpretation of the research material.

The two citations above point to the feminist and decolonial epistemological and theoretical vantage points of my research endeavor. These are the lenses I see through, in order to explore what I see if I turn the coin to the other side. It is all about perspective. What do we see if we question the practices before us? Why are they done the way they are done, and, specifically, by the particular people who do them? The theoretical tools I use to answer these questions are taken from feminist and decolonial epistemologies, but also in large part from economic anthropology, especially (but not exclusively) gift theory. The complexity and multifacetedness of the research material have required me to draw on concepts from different epistemologies in order to construct an understanding of the connections between the different empirical scopes that I move among analytically. It is through this framework I examine how exchange takes place, and what this tells us about social (power) relations in the global market of care.

I start this chapter by placing myself in the field of International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER), which is the disciplinary field within which this thesis is written. Thereafter I examine theoretical conceptualizations of the relationship between women, femininity, and labor, before discussing the global care chains framework. I end the chapter with explaining my use of the notion of a global market of care and its relation to anthropological gift theory.

Migration, (Im)mobility, Migrancy

This dissertation is written within the vast field of International Migration and Ethnic Relations, a field that includes an array of different methodologies, methods, and theoretical approaches. Some ways of researching migration, its causes, and its consequences are methodologically situated very far from how I myself approach research and

knowledge construction (cf. Boyle et al. 1998), while others explore migration in a more similar way to what I do here (cf. Kearney 1994). Important to my understanding of migration as a social phenomenon is that it must be understood through its embeddedness in, and relation to, other social phenomena and processes (Castles 2010), and this is also where I see my contribution.

This thesis clearly shows some of the ways in which (international) migration is connected to, amongst other social processes, that of ethnic relations. My analysis discusses and inherently problematizes understandings of migration that conceptually streamline or simplify this complex and multifaceted social phenomenon. It shows that while statistical abstractions help reveal general tendencies of people's movement on local, national, and international scales, they cannot fully explain and account for the reasons for and the consequences of those movements. It is arguably in the stories revealed through both oral and written accounts that scientific inquiry can attempt an in-depth understanding of how migrations and social categorizations are connected through the global economy, and also problematize the discipline's reproduction of categorizations that can deeply impact the lives of people in migrancy.

My in-depth analysis of the connections between migration and social categorizations is tied to my use of economic anthropology's conceptualization of the 'market'. While the market and how 'economic' and 'cultural' practices are embedded in it, and in each other, have been discussed in many ways within economic anthropology, what I carry from this field into that of International Migration and Ethnic Relations, is how the market is conceptually a point of encounter between different sociocultural practices within which values and value regimes are negotiated (and often contested) (cf. Callon 1998). When I conceptualize the migration related processes at stake in my empirical material as belonging to a global market, I also maintain the analytical foci on 'social' and 'cultural' processes visible in the research material. Economic anthropologists have pointed to the 'economizing' of social analysis in general, particularly by economists, but also within other disciplines on account of the position that economics holds vis-à-vis other social sciences (Graeber 2001). This, in turn, means that 'economizing' analyses are present also in the theorizing of migration and its related social dynamics (see, for example, Hare 1999, Hollifield 2006, or Zimmerman 1996). While the embeddedness of migration practices has been addressed in

different forms, for instance by a reconceptualization of push and pull factors as ‘migration drivers’ (Van Hear et al. 2018) or as ‘aspirations and abilities’ (Carling & Schewel 2018), I contend that as long as migration and its role in particular markets is not discussed in depth through its connection to, and embeddedness in, different structures of social stratification and inequalities, our understanding of why and how migration and its consequences happen will be limited. It is thus the economized understanding of inherently sociocultural practices related to material circumstances that I challenge through my anthropological, decolonial, and feminist analytical foci in this thesis.

Consequently, in the study of both migration as a socioeconomic phenomenon and as a subjective experience of ‘being a migrant’, it is important to consider that the very history and historicity that have produced the processes of mobility we see today have also brought forth particular ways of thinking about, writing about, researching, and *being in* and moving around, the world, and that this history is tied to colonization (Mains et al. 2013). The knowledge (re)produced by the Global North not only represents a particular perspective of historical rhyme and reason (Gilroy 1993, Loomba 2009, Lowe 2006, Mignolo 2005). It also contributes to particular scientific practices and methodologies that contribute to the same hierarchization many social scientists seek to deconstruct and destroy in the first place, and it ultimately produces a particular way of *experiencing*. In other words, Eurocentric knowledge production has not only produced particular universalities of *knowing*, but also of *feeling* and of *being* (Maldonado-Torres 2007), and this is also a part of knowledge production on migration and ethnic relations. In employing a decolonial lens in my analysis, by paying particular attention to how the global market of care is embedded in structures of ‘race’ and gender present in both ‘sending’ and ‘receiving’ contexts, I further underscore the importance of grounding theory on migration in empirical particularities.

Finally, I also contribute to the field of International Migration and Ethnic Relations in my anthropological use of the term *migrancy*. While this term is used frequently within the field, it is usually not employed in a theoretically deliberate or poignant way, but rather to describe ‘the state or condition of being a migrant’ (Crawley & Sklepari 2018). In their introduction to the special issue on ‘Tracking Transnationalism: Migrancy and its Futures’, Harney and Baldassar (2007) argue for draw-

ing on the anthropological usage of *migrancy* to remedy some of the critique that recent foci on transnational processes within International Migration and Ethnic Relations have received. By using it not only to describe someone's status after having crossed an international border, but also to discuss and problematize the ramifications of this crossing, as well as the social processes that condition and produce this status in the first place, the notion of migrancy can help us recognize that although migration is a dynamic social process about mobility and movement, it is also about the places connected through these processes. Harney and Baldassar draw on Chambers (1994) in arguing for understanding migrancy as a 'contemporary cultural trope to examine our existence' (Harney & Baldassar 2007), while Baldassar (2007), in the same special issue, contends that migrancy also must be construed as a 'social field'. The analysis of my research material via feminist, decolonial, and anthropological lenses, demonstrates how this 'field' is constructed in the case of the global market of care between Bolivia and Spain: through the dynamics of power expressed in legal structures, economic inequalities, and social relations. Below I elaborate further on these perspectives.

Making Meaning of Migration and Mobility

Hardt writes that '[h]umanity and its soul are produced in the very processes of economic production' (1999:91). Global capitalism distributes resources unequally across states, and according to, for instance, class, race, and gender. At the same time a person's position within the intersections of these structures shapes her identity as perceived by others and as well as her identification of self. Being a care worker 'of color' and of postcolonial descent is one such position, and it influences how you are viewed, how you view yourself, and how you view the world. It also shapes the desire you might have to migrate, your possibilities for shaping your own mobility, as well as the meaning you make of mobility and migration in themselves (Adey 2006:83).

Cresswell defines mobility as the entanglement of movement, representations of meaning, and practice. Movement is thus 'the raw material for the production of mobility' (2010:19). Mobility can be measured and mapped by studying its rhythms, extensions, trajectories and frequencies. Through time and space, the physical movement of migration connects places through the biographies of individuals and groups. Howev-

er, although ‘people link horizontal or geographical mobility almost automatically with vertical – economic (financial), social (status), and cultural (cosmopolitan) “climbing”’ (Salazar & Smart 2011:ii), the ‘value’ of being mobile or immobile is not clear-cut. Because mobility and the representations of it differs from context to context, and according to how people from particular places understand their own relation to global structures, as well as colonial pasts.

Migration and (Im)mobility as Global Connections

While migration happens over both long and short geographical and temporal distances, researchers have mostly focused on international migration: people crossing international borders and the economic, political, and social dynamics that surround this process (Massey et al. 1993). In this thesis, international migration plays an important role, in that it is a *sine-qua-non* for the construction of the global market of care. However, equally important to understand how such connections might unfold are processes of human mobility and immobility on local and regional levels. My empirical material shows how mobility – and the imaginary of it – is an important aspect of life of the people who have ended up taking jobs within the care work sector in Spain, often long before ever planning to make an international move. Geographical dimensions of migration and mobility, such as time and distance, will be discussed in chapters to follow.

Despite understanding migration and mobility as terms applicable to local, regional, national, and international processes, I underline here how I understand these processes to always be globally linked (cf. Tsing 2005). By this I mean, on the one hand, that the global capitalist political economy plays a fundamental role in shaping which mobilities are made possible and impossible for people in different places bound by economic, political, and sociocultural constraints and conditions. On the other hand, globalization is also understood to be locally configured and something that has come to be an inherent part of people’s lives almost regardless of where in the world they live. In sum, when someone acts upon the world, it is always from their own localized position, but these actions can have global repercussions.

Both migration and global connections of care are imperative topics of my research. Migration in that it is the process which moves people from ‘sending’ to ‘receiving’ contexts, and global connections of care in

that they are a way of conceptualizing migration and migrancy in regard to power relations and the global economy involving care work. Both of these notions inherently address the issue of globalization, and thus of global capital, both of which are important backdrops to the social relations and processes that I study. At the same time *migration* is in itself often treated as an empirical truth, and not as a concept in its own right. However, it is a term that understands movement from a particular perspective; as something significant, something out of the ordinary, as a dichotomy to the norm – sedentarism (Cresswell 2006, Feldman 2017, Freeman 2001, Glick Schiller & Salazar 2013, King 2012, Malkki 1992, Salazar 2010, 2017). When considering the impact migration is having in today's world both as social phenomenon and as a political battlefield, it is particularly important to scrutinize both how we study migration, and how we theorize it. Diana Mata Codesal (2016) and Janine Dahinden (2016) have both asked what it will take to 'demigrantize' migration studies, and Bridget Anderson recently urged migration research to go further and employ a 'de-nationalist' methodology (Anderson 2019). In order to do so, one important aspect is to understand the many ways in which migration – and the global market of care as one result of migration processes – is linked to capitalism and the global economy. Migration scholars have discussed these connections in many ways, arguably by 'economizing' the phenomenon of migration to a lesser or larger degree.

The theoretical models that have been used in parts of the field of International Migration and Ethnic Relations, such as the neo-classical model or the notion of push and pull (cf. Massey et al. 1993), can be valuable to understanding certain aspects of migration as empirical fact. However, what I deem most central to migration is often not accounted for by economizing analyses of the social processes that migration entails. This sort of theorizing largely ignores the normative component of science itself – that in naming something as a particular 'thing' it also becomes that thing (Butler 2011, Dahinden 2016, Mata Codesal 2016). Crawley and Sklepari provide a powerful example of how categorization impact people's lives. Their inquiry into the 'politics of bounding' – 'the process by which categories are constructed, the purpose they serve and their consequences' (2018:48) – shows how the use of the contested terms 'migrant' and 'refugee' by both policy makers and in media's coverage of migration-related issues and events in the wake of the so-

called ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015 impacts the ways in which people on the move try to legitimize their arrival and presence in Europe. For these people, negotiating their belonging to one category (‘refugee’) instead of the other (‘migrant’) can be a matter of life and death. This study thus blatantly underlines the scientific community’s responsibility for continuously discussing and attempting to clarify how we use scientific concepts and jargon, and for openly problematizing how people outside academia understand and employ these same categories. When it comes to my own research, what is foregrounded in my analyses of migration is therefore how it is a dynamic social process linked to other dynamic social processes, and that these processes together connect people to places through global capitalism.

As already implied, Anna Tsing (2005) would perhaps conceptualize migration as a set of ‘global connections’. Her book *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* analyzes the encounter between various social actors and their struggle for resources, in this case a part of the Indonesian rainforest. Tsing shows how these encounters and interactions between different actors can bring about change in unexpected ways – groups that hold different degrees of power over a situation and context, and with seemingly different aims and motivations, can at times reach a common goal through their vested interest in the same territory, be this a physical territory or other. Tsing calls the energy – the capacity of generating change ‘on the ground’ – that these multi-actor encounters produce, *friction*. She uses this concept to connect the global with the local, and the distinctive nucleuses of power operating on different scales with each other. My perspective on globalization is greatly informed by Tsing’s book, and I understand the practices of mobility and care work that I study to fall under her understanding of global connections. The global market of care that I study is precisely about ‘spatially far-flung collaborations and interconnections’; interconnections made possible by cultural diversity, and which bring to these global connections a ‘creative friction’ (2005:ix-x). Implicitly, my analysis will show how this friction⁴² is also part of individual everyday experiences of migrancy, and that workplaces within this market of care are also sites for global encounters, just like an Indonesian rainforest facing deforestation.

42 I say implicitly because the concept of friction is not one I employ extensively in my analyses.

Localizing Migration

Experiences of migration and migrancy are particular and they are localized (Adey 2010, Cresswell 2010, Glick Schiller & Çağlar 2010, Urry 2007), in this case for the most part in Bilbao, and in different places in Bolivia. But they are nonetheless reminiscent of stories that have been told by others, living other lives, localized in other places. In the next chapters I show that these stories are not only about a particular place and time, but also about the globalized social dynamics taking place in the current era of late capitalism (Gupta 1992). People are no longer bound to their place of birth in the same way as in earlier generations, but they are still stuck in place, so to speak, in that the type of body they carry through life is expected to perform certain activities no matter where they find themselves geographically.

Kitty Calavita (2005) calls this the *economics of alterité*: economics that thrives on ‘Othering’. It is within this economics that what I here call migrancy can be sustained. In her book *Immigrants at the Margins: Law, Race, and Exclusion in Southern Europe*, Calavita shows how policy and legislation in Spain and Italy contribute to perpetuate the dichotomy of insiderness and outsiderhood, where the ‘immigrant’ body is kept in a certain societal (legal) space in order to perform certain forms of labor, all the while maintaining a discourse of promoting ‘integration’. Nicolas De Genova (2002, 2005, 2010, 2013) draws on Calavita when discussing how this type of migration politics creates an industry in its own right: an industry of illegality and deportability. Ruben Andersson calls it *Illegality Inc.* (2014a) – an industry where people are permitted and tolerated within a particular national economy as long as they keep their heads down and perform their work at the margins to the benefit of those who are seen as legitimate presences within the country. Border controls and policing are a part of this industry and are involved in making the up-keep of the status quo profitable for both political actors and for the private interests that cater to them in the form of surveillance and policing technologies and services. Both Andersson (2014a, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c) and De Genova (2002, 2005, 2010, 2013) have pointed out that much of the same dynamics are happening in Europe, particularly in the wake of the ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015, dynamics that De Genova calls the Border Spectacle (2013). This is similar to the theatrics that European or US politicians do in order to deal with momentary ‘cri-

ses'. What they end up doing is feeding the machinery that reproduces this sort of 'illegal' migration.

Bordering is but one symptom of this industry of illegality (Calavita 2005, 2007), and the *economics of alterité* is another dimension of the same processes. An important part of this economics within the Spanish state is the prevalence of a private care sector that is highly irregular when it comes to both how workers are treated as well as the employment of migrated workers who have yet to receive residence and work permits. The intersection of Spanish legislation on immigration and integration, and that on domestic and care work, contributes to the material conditions for the 'Postcolony' to prosper, and thereby also to the construction and reconstruction of a coloniality of self, or of Being (cf. Maldonado-Torres 2007, Mignolo 2007a, 2007b, 2010, Schiwy 2007). The power dynamics and relations that scholars such as Calavita, Andersson, and De Genova study are part of what produces the plethora of migration schemes and trajectories seen in the world today, and they are part of what I call migrancy. In Chapters 6 and 7 I address the above-mentioned legislations and how they are linked to migrancy, while the 'coloniality of Being' in regard to migrancy will be discussed further in Chapter 5 and 8, in particular.

Migration and Coloniality

As has been pointed out by Wimmer and Glick-Schiller (2003), research within the field of International Migration and Ethnic Relations, often carries with it tendencies of methodological nationalism, which foregrounds the nation-state as primary entity and point of departure for analysis when it comes to processes related to migration. This implies an analytical practice by which the 'migrant', often implicitly, becomes the 'Other'. As both Dahinden (2016) and Mata Codesal (2016) have argued, this sort of analysis contributes to a (re)production of knowledge that might very well reproduce the dichotomy of 'us' and 'them' also empirically.

Walter Mignolo (2005) claims that the ways in which individual subjects are constructed and self-constructed is informed by centuries of knowledge production and particular representations of the knowledge produced, much in the same way Judith Butler (2011) conceptualizes the construction of gender. In the case of colonial subjects, Mignolo argues, this is done deliberately in order to keep them striving for inclusion in

the 'History' that by definition excludes and erases them. He draws on Eric Wolf (2010 [1983]) in saying that

History is a privilege of European modernity and in order to have History you have to let yourself be colonized, which means allowing yourself, willingly or not, to be subsumed by a perspective of history, life, knowledge, economy, subjectivity, family, religion, etc. that is modeled on the history of modern Europe, and that has now been adopted, with little difference, as the official model of the US (Mignolo 2005:xii).

Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) draws on a central notion within decolonial studies, namely Quijano's 'coloniality of power' (2007) in delineating how the construction – or Becoming – of self in a world where politics, economics, and culture at large have been colonized, entails the colonization of one's Being. Being a colonial subject within the capitalist and globalized order of today's world means being socialized through the colonization of one's consciousness (cf. Mignolo 2003). This plays a role in what I conceptualize as migrancy, since care workers' tolerance for the conditions they are made to endure has to do with both economic need and the (often reluctant) tolerance of the social hierarchies the global market of care entails. Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, in her seminal book on global care work, *Servants of Globalization* (2001), describes this as tolerating the 'scripts' of domestic work, in situations where workers usually only hold the capacity to engage in 'immediate struggles', and not large-scale projects of resistance that hold the potential to fundamentally change structures. While I will discuss Parreñas' work further below, it here serves to underline how the relationships between employers and employees in the global market of care exemplify the coloniality inherent in the lives made possible within this market.

While scholars like Quijano and Mignolo point to the 'coloniality of power' present in scientific knowledge production at large, it has also been pointed to in studies of migration and ethnic relations more specifically. For instance, Grosfoguel and Cordero-Guzmán (1998) have argued that sociological paradigms on immigration to the US have given analytical privilege to the concept of ethnicity, while also centering the European migration experience to the US. This led to the teleological sociological schools of 'assimilationists' and 'cultural pluralists', mod-

els based on the specific historical experiences of European immigration to the US. These models were eventually replaced by other models, of which the transnational approach has been one (cf. Glick Schiller et al. 1995, Portes et al. 1999). While its focus on global and international dynamics has been a welcomed progress, Grosfoguel and Cordero-Guzmán have considered that the transnational approach still fails to fully account for different ways in which migration flows, processes, and experiences are linked to dynamics tied to particular social and physical places and positions. Furthermore, Mains et al. (2013) delineate ways in which postcolonial and migration studies could benefit from each other. They argue that migration studies often conceptualize migration as movement between a ‘here’ and a ‘there’, rather than pointing to the shared postcolonial terrain between these different spaces, while postcolonial studies have also contributed to understanding diasporas as ethnically ‘bounded’, and thereby contributing to a problematic and essentializing understanding of ethnic identities. Overall, however, Mains et al. argue that postcolonial (and decolonial) perspectives are important in migration research not only because migration trajectories are often linked to colonial histories. These perspectives are also useful in dismantling the binaries often present in analyses of migration, and can thus serve to ‘to question how we construct knowledge about migration, and whose interests this serves’ (2013:140).

My contribution to producing decolonized knowledge on migration thus lies in centering the narratives of people whose ‘colonial wound’ (Mignolo 2005) is tied to expectations and experiences of migration, specifically care work within conditions of migrancy, and explore their complexities. The exchanges taking place through gendered and racialized scripts within the global market of care show how migration becomes part of the contemporary dialectic between modernity and coloniality. Moreover, in my analysis I underscore how these exchanges are both monetary and non-monetary, thereby contributing to a counter-narrative to the abovementioned economizing scientific accounts on migration, mobility, and markets. Below I discuss this further, before considering the link between migration and modernity and their place in the imaginary of the abjected (cf. Ferguson 1999).

Remittances and the Economization of Migration Research

Migration is often conceptualized as a quest for the accumulation of economic capital (Domínguez-Mujica et al. 2012, Kearney 1986, Massey et al. 1993, Taylor 1999). The great empirical and theoretical interest in ('economic') remittances within migration research is one case in point (cf. Carling 2008, Carling & Hoelscher 2013, De Haan 1999, Glytsos 2002, Taylor 1999). Although 'the social' has been brought into migration theory in different ways, especially through qualitative, and particularly ethnographic, research, there is still a way to go when it comes to understanding migration as social and cultural – both as process and practice.

The concept of social remittances has been of particular importance to filling a vast empirical and theoretical gap that to a large degree 'economized' the idea of migration as a simplistic conceptualization of push and pull factors – a chain of quid-pro-quo exchange where people and commodities flow freely according to a greater (market) need (cf. Abrego 2009, Carling 2014, King et al. 2006, King & Vullnetari 2009, Levitt 1998, Levitt & Lamba-Nieves 2011, Mata-Codesal 2013, Mazzucato 2009, Taylor et al. 2006). This is in line with the ways in which social and cultural practices in general have often been understood as 'economic' within social science, particularly when studying 'the Other' (Graeber 2001, Gregory 2015). The concept of social remittances underlines how remittances are socioculturally embedded, and that it is not only money that is transferred transnationally between migrated people and their families, but also other resources such as ideas and know-how. In this sense the 'economic rationale' is arguably only one of many factors in the decision making process around migration. Not only might the decision to migrate stem from factors such as domestic violence or other life crises, as many of the research participants bear witness, but the decisions continuously taken to remain in migrancy are also embedded in affective and emotional experiences and imaginaries, which in themselves are informed by global capital and politics. In continuing with the economic language of remittances, however, there remains the danger of economizing theory that sets out to understand migration-related social processes from a more holistic approach.

Such an approach is important, even if the focus of a study is on processes that are largely ingrained in economic practice, such as those taking place within the global market of care. Kabeer (2000:328) has ar-

gued that '[i]deology and culture do not merely operate as externally-imposed constraints on people's choices; they are woven into the content of desire itself'. Economics, and its rationale, is woven into emotion, and vice versa. What we have been taught to desire becomes part of the quests we set out for in life. In the same way that distinguishing between culture and the economy of society is artificial, so is dichotomizing rationale and emotion. Not only does my research material show many examples of 'irrational' decisions being made throughout people's migrancy; decisions that in themselves endanger the viability of continuing in migrancy, it also shows how migration and migrancy themselves are part of a cultural imaginary informed by economic needs, but experienced through human encounters. This is another way in which my thesis contributes to the field of International Migration and Ethnic Relations: by adding an account that breaks with prominent dichotomies within knowledge production both in general and on migration specifically, such as those of the 'social' versus the 'economic', and the rational and objective versus the emotional and subjective.

Decolonizing Migration: Modernity and Abjection

When studying how the immigration debate is framed within particular countries, it is possible to conceive of that country's understanding of 'the Other'; of who belongs and who does not (cf. Calavita 2005). What stands out about the Spanish context in regard to many others in the Global North are the direct historical linkages between present-day migration patterns and the Spanish empire's colonial past, and how this history has been carried in social relations from the colony to the post-colonial present. This is visible in how migration from Hispano-America is, together with migration from Romania and Morocco, the most prevalent in numbers over the last two decades. The lack of Spanish policies on immigration prior to the economic boom in the second half of the 1990s made the practicalities of mobility relatively easy for Bolivians once they decided to make the journey. As has been mentioned in previous chapters, a result of the shared violent history between Spain and Hispano-America has been a common language and sociocultural practices, which has contributed to making women from the latter context desirable workers in the domestic and care labor sector. The familiarity of belonging to the same colonial hierarchy arguably

makes communication, interaction, and exchange easier in many ways, for both employers and workers.

Although in general not dealing directly with migration studies and its challenges, the ‘school’ of *decoloniality* (Escobar 2007, Mignolo 2005, 2007, Quijano 2007, Schiwy 2007, de Sousa Santos 2017, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010) is helpful in making sense of the dichotomies that coloniality (re)produces. The concept of (de)coloniality is a result of recent developments in Latin American scholarship. This perspective is of both academic and political ambition, and seeks to create a dialogue between Eurocentric academic knowledge and other knowledge systems by looking beyond the epistemic hegemony of the former. The basic idea of the decoloniality school is that although we live in a postcolonial world, this world has yet to be decolonized. In the dialogue between academia and politics certain ontologies are presented as real, and the result is a hegemonic epistemology that excludes the possibility of other knowledge systems from writing, amongst other things, their own history. This is because the reproduction of coloniality does not only take place in the lives we live, as ‘the dark side of modernity’ (Mignolo 2011), and thus in the lives social scientists study. It also takes place in science itself, in its (re)production of knowledge and in how this knowledge is reflected and absorbed into the world it seeks to describe and analyze. Within migration studies such a process can perhaps be seen more clearly than in other research fields as the names and categories researchers use are re-applied outside of the academy, often in less nuanced ways than was originally intended (cf. Dahinden 2016, Crawley & Sklepari 2018).

Mignolo (2005: xv) states that ‘to complete the incomplete project of modernity means to keep on reproducing coloniality’. In this thesis I show how migrancy contributes to this reproduction – it is, in fact, a form of coloniality. The decolonial perspective is thus of both analytical and methodological importance in a context where my role as a researcher becomes that of ‘translating’ the gendered and racialized experiences of postcolonial subjects into a language understood and accepted by academia. The decolonial project is about allowing other forms of knowledge to take up space in the consciousness of society. It is about finding alternative ways to (re)construct that same society, in that the modernity under which we live is a paradigm of colonial descent where the idea of ‘development’ as perpetual economic growth despite its im-

pacts on human and non-human life originates. The latter includes people's personal quests for modernity, through e.g. migration, despite these quests resulting in feelings of abjection (Ferguson 1999) and the reproduction of coloniality itself.

Migrancy and Migrated People

What is, then, my take on the concept of migrancy? While this will be clarified in my discussion of the research material in the following chapters, here I briefly summarize what I have discussed so far as elements of migrancy. To be clear, I consider that migration is one 'thing', while migrancy is another. Migration is the process through which a person moves from one geographical space to another, while migrancy is the state-of-Being that is produced when migration is imbued with meaning related to different social hierarchies – when it is used to differentiate between an 'us' and a 'them'. Migration is only imbued with this sort of meaning for certain people, not for others. As I discussed in Chapter 3, despite having migrated myself several times during my life, my life has never been circumscribed to a state of migrancy due to the way that my body is discursively placed in hierarchies of social differentiation, such as race and class.

Migration is thus used here strictly to address a (geographical) process. In using the term in such a way, the logics of talking about, for instance, second or third generation 'migrants' fail vehemently. A migrant is only a person who is in the process of migrating. A person who has migrated, and is now settled somewhere, is no longer a migrant, nor would their children be migrants (unless they carry out migration on their own to a different place). Migrants are considered in this thesis as people who are in a process of migration; other people will be described either as 'migrants' (where there is a discursive or political point to be made), or as having migrated, when this is relevant to mention. The notion of 'migrated people', as opposed to 'migrants', is an emic term used (in Spanish) by activists and organizations that fight for migrated people's rights, such as *Mujeres con Voz*. Using this term academically is a way of showing political solidarity with the work of these activists. I also consider that this possibly simplified way of understanding the term migration makes it easier to distinguish between empirical facts – that people move – and the meanings circumscribed to these facts – that that movement is politicized in different ways.

The term migrancy is, moreover, about different forms of circumscription. It is about how migration is often understood as a provocation, in that it returns the violence of the bifurcated system of colonialism from the periphery to the center (Chambers 1994). Because when people migrate from the Global South to the Global North, the center is faced with what it has done through the bodies of those it has exercised its violence on. These bodies carry the symbolism of all that ‘we’ are not – these bodies are the Others. They are sensed as different by the majority population – they might have a different skin color, dress differently, they might practice their everyday lives differently. And what matters is not that these differences exist, but rather the symbolism and resulting emotions that these differences are charged with. Although other bodies might also behave according to their visible difference, it does not bear the same consequences, since these bodies do not represent the same narratives as the bodies of the Other. Furthermore, these bodies are to a much larger extent understood to represent nothing more than the personal narratives of the person in that body, as was the case for me while living in Spain – not the narrative of an entire collective. This is a product of colonial history and, as this thesis will show, is reproduced through contemporary legal and social practices.

Finally, migrancy is part of a colonial and capitalist system that reaps (economic) benefits through differentiation (Calavita 2005). My analysis of how the global market of care works seeks to make this point. There are reasons for why there are many vested interests in keeping up the structures and systems that produce migrancy – there are people, institutions, and organizations that gain from this – personally, economically, and politically. These gains mean that migrancy, for the people who are subjected to it, more often than not entails immobility – it becomes a way of being stuck – geographically, socially, and politically. Because even if people who have migrated manage to resolve some aspects of their migrancy, such as their administrative situation, other aspects remain almost unalterable, such as the body one carries and what it signifies in certain contexts (cf. Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010). Migrancy – and how it is (re)produced through experience, expectations, and exchange – is at the core of my analyses in the coming chapters. In the remainder of this chapter I present some of the guiding stars that will help me in these analyses.

I continue this chapter by discussing how care (work) is signified as feminine – thereby unproductive – and therefore devalued. I then discuss the notion of global care chains as an important way in which care work, migration, and globalization have been theoretically conceptualized, and delineate concrete and implicit ways in which I use this framework in my analysis. I end this chapter by further showing how I draw on concepts from economic anthropology to analyze my material as part of a global market of care, rather than of care chains.

Women's Role in Capitalism

Important to the understanding of care work is the function of femininity in society. Philosopher Silvia Federici writes in the preface to her book *Revolution at Point Zero* – a collection of essays that represents her long trajectory of writing on housework, reproduction, globalization, and the feminist struggle – that ‘attributes of femininity are in effect *work functions*’ (2012:8). She explains her view of housework – as she calls it – as the way in which women have been kept enslaved by men throughout the history of capitalism. In the essay from 1975, ‘Wages against Housework’, she claims that housework has not only

‘been imposed on women, but it has been transformed into a natural attribute of our female physique and personality, an internal need, an aspiration, supposedly coming from the depth of our female character. Housework was transformed into a natural attribute, rather than being recognized as work, because it was destined to be unwaged’ (Federici 2012:16).

Federici is effectively expressing one way in which power is made performative through gender (cf. Butler 2004, 2011, Parker & Sedgwick 1995). She further claims that by turning housework into a natural attribute, and even a desire, of women, capital has transformed housework into an ‘act of love’ – capital has created ‘the housewife to service the male worker physically, emotionally, and sexually’ (Federici 2012:17). Following Federici, this is one of the reasons for gendered violence: women become the objects on which men can take out their frustrations, loneliness, and anger, which are emotions that are a result of men’s own oppression as part of the proletariat. The enslavement of women through housework, as a support to the male worker, has also lead to men and

women being separated in their struggle against capitalism, much in the same way as women have become divided through race and class in their fight against the patriarchy (Hill Collins 2000). If housework were to be remunerated, Federici claims, it would become visible. It would not only be seen, and thereby valued by capital, but also valued by men. This work ‘contributes to the production of the labor force and produces capital, thus enabling every other form of production to take place’ (Federici 2012:8).

What is under scrutiny in this thesis is not unpaid housework in Federici’s use of the term, namely reproductive work, or ‘women’s work’, that is done for free. Rather, I have researched paid work done by women so that other women might be released of the duties that their roles within their families entail. The premises for understanding the conditions and ‘nature’ of this work are therefore different. However, the discourses on why this work is seen as different to other work, also by the law that regulates it and supposedly protects the workers in question, follows the same logic as the one pointed out by Federici for housework. Namely that it somehow should be free. It should be about love. It should be about voluntary sacrifice in order to create a home; *hogar*. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

In her later work, Federici focuses more on the global struggle of the proletariat, or precariat, including struggles that entail migration and care work. She underscores that ‘the struggle of immigrant domestic workers fighting for the institutional recognition of “carework” is strategically very important, for the devaluation of reproductive work has been one of the pillars of capital accumulation and the capitalistic exploitation of women’s labor’ (Federici 2012:12). The expectations held towards women by themselves and others, especially in regard to work, will be discussed at length throughout this thesis. As will be shown, these expectations become experiences and they are part of the exchanges taking place in the global market of care. Before further discussing my understanding of this exchange, I show the reader how I have come to conceptualize these exchanges as taking place within a *global market of care*.

Global Care Chains and Connections of Care

The ‘push and pull’ perspective adopted by some scholars as generating migration is about extracting resources from one place in order to bring

them somewhere else to make a profit (cf. Chambers 1994). Migration and migrancy is thus a question of distribution of resources, because labor is one element that feeds capital. When descaling the locus of analysis, as ethnographers usually do, the ways in which this extraction of resources is done and influence families and societies at large, become visible. The global care chain framework is an important way in which migration in relation to care (work) has been discussed within the social sciences. It addresses how care and domestic work is one of the resources extracted through capitalism, coloniality, and patriarchy in the name of economic development and welfare. When conceptualizing my locus of research as the global market of care, the global care chain literature has been imperative.

Rhacel Parreñas (1998) and Arlie Hochschild (2000) developed the idea of global care chains, defined as ‘a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring’ (Hochschild 2000:131). Hochschild was inspired by Parreñas’ dissertation (1998) on the ‘international division of reproductive labor’ in the case of Filipina domestic workers in Rome and Los Angeles, which resulted in her seminal book *Servants of Globalization* (2001). The ‘series of personal links’ is conceptually construed as a chain internationally connecting the lives of a string of individual women. As an example, one endpoint of such a chain can be in the Global South, where a woman leaves her child in custody of someone else – usually either a female relative or another woman poorer than herself – to leave for a country in the Global North. In the country she migrates to she performs care work for a middle class (heteronormative) family where both parents work outside the home. According to global care chains theory the care worker from the Global South replaces the woman of the household in the Global North in her socioculturally prescribed duties, such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for the family’s children. The result is that care is continuously extracted from the families where that care ‘belongs’: from the family of the woman who is taking care of the migrated woman’s children in the Global South when she travels abroad, to the migrated woman’s children themselves who are missing their mother’s presence, and to the children in the Global North who are being cared for by somebody else than their own parents in order for them to work as part of the capitalist market. In this way, the dynamics of global care chains

lead to a ‘care drain’ in the Global South (Bettio et al. 2006, Dumitru 2014, Lutz & Palenga-Möllenberg 2012, Vulliamy & King 2008).

Global care chain theory was developed within an academic context that increasingly focused on the globalized world and capitalist market. With the globalization of capitalism came new ways of organizing life, and new forms of social reproduction (Friedman 2002). Not only have many urban centers in the West passed from relying on industry as the principal sector for economic growth to relying heavily on the service sector as a way of generating capital. Additionally, this central pillar of the economy has been heavily influenced by processes of transnational migration and other forms of global connections (Tsing 2005), to the extent that particular labor market sectors can be seen as being restructured in terms of gender, race, and class. As reflected in the recent report by Emakunde, the Basque Institute of Women on *The Multiple Discrimination of Immigrant Women Working in the Domestic and Care Services in the Autonomous Region of the Basque Country* (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015), this is also the case for the Basque Country in particular, and Spain in general, where women of Spanish and Basque origin have long-since entered the workforce. This is an important factor that has caused an increase in both the domestic and care work sector itself, and in its racialization, or ‘ethno-stratification’ (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015, Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014). These authors point to the heavy increase of the use of domestic and care work services, as well as a substantial growth in the proportion of ‘migrant workers’ performing this work, particularly coming from Latin America. With a high number of individual care workers comes an even higher number of personal global connections that can be traced through individual stories across great geographical distances. The Spanish care work sector is, in other words, a clear example of a hub of sorts for ‘global care chains’, and of global connections of care. It has therefore been critical for me to figure out the most comprehensive way to account theoretically for my empirical field, and the global care chain framework has been important in this regard. Below I relate important work within and connected to the global care chain framework to my own research.

The Spanish Care Work Sector and its Global Connections

I start by delineating some of the previous scientific work that has informed my understanding of the empirical context of Spain’s care work

sector, as well as of the global connections between Bolivia and Spain. First, Diana Mata-Codesal's PhD thesis *Material and Social Remittances in Highland Ecuador* (2011) served as an inspiration for the multi-sited ethnography I undertook as part of my study, and for my understanding of remittance as part of the global market of care. Mata-Codesal's thesis focuses on remittances and their importance for the socioeconomic lives of people in two distinct villages in Ecuador. While I in my analysis do not extensively emphasize this topic, economic remittance transmissions have been, for most of the participants in my study, the stated reason for why they decided to migrate. My account of how the expectations and practices around their transmissions are linked to gendered and generational relations of power, build on Mata-Codesal's detailed rendering of how social relations and remittances are intertwined in specific ways dependent on migration 'sending' and 'receiving contexts'.

A second important study I relate to is Tania González-Fernández' PhD thesis *Feeling Across Distance: Transnational Migration, Emotions, and Family Life Between Bolivia and Spain* (2018). The fieldwork for this comprehensive work on Bolivian transnational families was done in similar places and nearly in parallel to my own fieldwork, and it explores different aspects of our shared empirical field. While González-Fernández relates to care work in her thesis, she does so in order to explain one of the important structuring factors of the transnational family life she studies. In my own thesis I center this work and the workers' relation to it, while the narratives of their social relations, often with their kin in Bolivia, provide evidence as to how the care work sector in Spain is made possible by the transnational relations González-Fernández studies. Although González-Fernández also writes from an anthropological perspective, she draws extensively on affect theory in addition to studies of transnationalism and family migration in her analysis, while my theoretical toolbox, as discussed in this chapter, contains more feminist and decolonial theory in addition to perspectives from economic anthropology. As such, González-Fernández' study and my own complement each other and shed light on different aspects of the same migratory processes, while also adding to related, but separate, theoretical discussions.

A third important study that has informed my understanding of the Spanish care work sector and its global connections is Encarnación

Gutiérrez-Rodríguez' *Migration, Domestic Work and Affect: A Decolonial Approach on Value and the Feminization of Labor* (2010). This book is based on a large ethnographic study of female Latin American workers and their employers in Germany, the UK, Austria, and Spain, and analyzes how the figure of the domestic/care worker is signified in particular (racialized and gendered) ways within these different contexts. Like González-Fernández, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez employs affect theory in her analysis of social power relations, paying special attention to embodied experience and how this comes to play in sensations and reactions between individuals. The study also shows the relevance of employing decolonial theory in the analysis of the global market of care, visibilizing how embodied experiences are connected to social differentiation based on, for instance, race and gender. While Gutiérrez-Rodríguez' field consists of four European care work sectors, mine comprises the social space between the Spanish sector and the social relations connected to it through Bolivian care workers. As such, my study holds a different empirical scope and, to a much greater degree than Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, I rely on narratives and my own experiences of the 'sending' context of the workers in understanding both the gendered and racialized components present in the global market of care. Additionally, my use of economic anthropology provides a different theoretical take on value in relation to domestic work and its social relations, and shows how gift theory, in particular, can reveal important components of asymmetric power relations of this sort of labor.

Cornerstones of Care

After Hochschild's coining of the global care chains term (2000, see also 2002), it has been employed and developed further by Parreñas herself (1998, 2001, 2002), Barbara Ehrenreich (2002), Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (2007 [2001]), and Bridget Anderson (2000, 2002). In *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work* (2001), Parreñas carries out an extensive comparative ethnographic study drawing on fieldwork among Filipina domestic workers in Los Angeles and Rome. Through her comparative perspective she manages to elucidate conditions of globalized care work that seemingly is present regardless of where it is carried out because of the ways in which the global capitalist system operates. These conditions lie precisely in how this labor is organized internationally, and is dependent on other women

in the Philippines doing the work of those women who have travelled to Rome or Los Angeles to work. Parreñas' groundbreaking work ultimately shows how this contributes to an international racialized division of labor, and has laid the base for further research into global care chains. In my own study, Parreñas' use of the notion of 'scripts' has inspired my analysis of the relationship between care workers and their employers. Just like in Parreñas' fieldwork contexts, care workers in Spain talk about being 'part of the family' of their employers. Like in Los Angeles and Rome, the tacit power relations that this expression entails are in Spain also connected to the 'benevolent' role that many employers act out towards their employees. However, I extend the notion of scripts to the 'sending' context in my research, in looking at how and why people decide to migrate from Bolivia to Spain, and I rely on decolonial and feminist theory in doing so (see Chapter 5).

Pierette Hondagneu-Sotelo's *Domestica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence* (2007 [2001]) is another central study that I relate to in my analysis of these power relations, which focuses on 'domestics' from Central America working for families in Los Angeles. I use her notion of 'blowups' – the moments of culmination of conflict within the employee/employer relationship – to talk about how gender and race figure in these work relationships. Hondagneu-Sotelo recognizes that these blowups take place within a work relationship marked by a stark power imbalances. I argue that the analysis can be taken a step further in looking at how blowups and other conflicts can mirror context-specific racialized and gendered dimensions of these relationships.

Bridget Anderson's *Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour* (2000), another paramount contribution to studies on care work within globalized capitalism, provides insight into how care work relates to migration in different contexts of the Global North and poses many of the questions that this thesis also deals with. Like Parreñas (2001), Hondagneu-Sotelo (2007 [2001]), and Gutiérrez-Rodríguez (2010), Anderson highlights different tensions within paid care work regimes, for instance the contradicting notion of employers' speaking of care workers as 'being part of the family' while in practice denying the workers' personhood. The jargon of family belonging is an attempt to 'manage the contradictions of intimacy and status that attach to the role of the domestic worker' (2000:124), while it also 'emphasises

the common humanity of employers and workers' (ibid.). These contradictions open up questions of how domestic and care work is valued, monetarily and otherwise, and in regard to what, which is one of the central concerns in this thesis, and also where it stands to make a contribution to research regarding care work in the global economy. In Chapter 8 I discuss blowups, employers' 'benevolence', and being 'part of the family' further, and I connect these ideas analytically.

Another cornerstone within the care work literature is the volume *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers* (Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2002), which accounts for different ways that reproductive and care work is brought into the capitalist market. It presents aspects of this work that reveal the global power relations governing it. Missing from *Global Woman*, however, is a broader empirical scope representing other geographical constellations of care chains. The chapters are largely US-centric in terms of where the starting points of the global care chains analyzed are located. Neither Spain nor Bolivia are represented as empirical contexts. This has, however, been remedied to a certain extent, as the global care chain perspective has been applied in the analysis of the domestic work sector in Spain (cf. Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010; Herrera 2011, 2013; Parella 2007, 2012; Parella & Cavalcanti 2009, 2010; Peterson 2007; Unzueta et al. 2013; Yeates 2004, 2012).

In sum, the global care chain framework illustrates how Western middle class women's liberation has come at a price (Tronto 2002), and that the liberation 'we' have achieved is, in the grander scheme of things, forcing other people to make particular choices about the way they might live their lives within the context of a globalized capitalist system (Anderson 2000). Furthermore, Yeates points out that as one analytically 'moves "down" the chain', the 'value ascribed to the labor decreases' (2012:137), until it becomes unpaid at the very end of the chain, where for instance an older sister will care for her younger siblings in a rural area of the Philippines. Yeates thereby addresses how care labor enters into the equation of capital's extraction of resources from the Global South. The global care chain literature has also contributed significantly to 'bringing gender in' (Pessar & Mahler 2003) to migration research, and it has laid the ground for much of my understanding of care work and how it is and has become part of a globalized division of labor generating complex systems of remittance exchange.

‘Feminization’ and Female-led Migration

Another key contribution of the global care chain literature has been to bring forth important theoretical and empirical findings that have opened a different way of understanding so-called female-led migration. First of all, and as Barbara Ehrenreich points out, the tendency to explain the growth of the domestic/care sector as an almost ‘natural’ part of the ‘push and pull’ of the labor market and of migratory processes hides the fact that the hiring of a domestic worker is often a choice, not a necessity (2002:90). It is part of a larger economic system where class is a fundamental factor, and where certain parts of the population are at liberty to rid themselves of intrafamilial challenges by paying for someone to come from the outside and fix them. Nogueira and Zalakain (2015) call this ‘externalization of care’.

An important point in regard to this externalization lies in the distinction of the different tasks involved in domestic/care/reproductive work. The literature on the subject of domestic work underlines the difficulty of separating so-called housework/cleaning from other care work because in many cases it is the same people executing these different tasks. This is because there is also *care* implicit in typical housework since this, too, contributes to the social reproduction of a family or household (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010). But as lawyer and advocate for domestic workers’ rights Isabel Quintana, whom I interviewed during fieldwork in Bilbao, pointed out, it is one thing to be able to afford a ‘luxury service’, i.e. that somebody else cleans your home and does your dirty dishes. Quite another issue is someone’s need for a person to look after their aging parent with Alzheimer’s disease while they themselves go to work. Quintana was of the opinion that the former should be taxed for what it is – a luxury good –, while the latter needed to be organized through the public welfare system.

While having someone ‘external’ to take care of one’s elderly parent or child is necessary when the working adults of a household enter the labor market, having dinner ready made and a clean house when you get home from a day at the office is not. As Ehrenreich (2002) argues, the hiring of ‘help’ can be as much about saving one’s marriage from quarrels about whose turn it is to do dishes, as it can be about making up for the lack of public policy and spending on care facilities to lighten the load for double income households. It is a way of maintaining the reproduction system, that is, the middle class household, and thereby the pro-

duction system the middle class workforce of the service sector in cities of the Global North (Ehrenreich 2002, Parreñas 2001, Truong 1996, Williams 2010, Yeates 2012). This ‘microdefeat of feminism’ (Ehrenreich 2002:90), where the domestic workload is externalized instead of divided between the partners at home, has allowed a particular labor market sector to become continuously more rooted in Basque society, a sector that commodifies care and that makes the home into an actual ‘workplace’. In Ehrenreich’s words, a new door has opened for women, only that ‘this time it is the servants’ entrance’ (2002:90).

The framework of global care chains paints a clear picture of the general global connections between the different contexts that are afflicted by the global market of care. However, the picture is not complete. Critically, the number and degrees of social relations involved in these chains are infinitely larger and more complex than what the image of a chain can depict. At every junction of a global care chain there are composite and multifaceted nodes of social relations that overlap and intersect and that influence the processes that take place in the global market of care, and how exchange can be carried out. I therefore proceed to point out some of the nuances which I deem lacking from the global care chain framework, and that an analytical focus on the junction between migrancy and a global market of care might help redeem.

‘Crises’ of Care and Western Epistemological Dichotomization

The global care chain model arguably entails a conceptual dichotomization reminiscent of the one present in parts of migration theory, and in other Western-based epistemologies (cf. Dahinden 2016, Mata Codesal 2016). One example is how research from Spain and the Basque Country conceptualize the research contexts I am also addressing. Unzueta, Vicente and Martínez (2013) call the failure of the global economic model to put social reproduction at the center of so-called development a *crisis of care* in the Global North, and a *crisis of social reproduction* in the Global South. They point out that these crises produce certain migration flows that are to a large extent dominated by women’s participation (2013:52). This dichotomization arguably hides how the ‘crises’ lived in different places around the globe, and which are connected by migration flows, are in fact, one and the same. They are more than crises; they are integrated parts of the world economy as it is presently

constructed and construed – an economy that thrives on ‘crises’ (De Genova 2012).

However, the fact that these ‘crises’ are structural is not to say that there is not a crisis happening in Western society and economy. As Nancy Fraser (2016) has pointed out: the world is in crisis due to this system. This crisis is one that will inevitably lead to an extinction of our world as we know it, and, according to Fraser, it is very much linked to how we conceptualize care in an expansive sense. How care and social reproduction is devalued in the current economic system is indicative of how the ‘economy’ is not serving people, but that people are serving the ‘economy’. Fraser argues that ‘the ‘crisis of care’ is best interpreted as a more or less acute expression of the social reproductive contradictions of financialized capitalism’ (2016:99). But she elaborates further by specifying that this sort of crisis is part and parcel of capitalism as a system, not only in its current form. She says that ‘on the one hand, social reproduction is a condition of possibility for sustained capital accumulation; on the other, capitalism’s orientation to unlimited accumulation tends to destabilize the very processes of social reproduction on which it relies’ (2016:100). Therefore, dichotomizing an analysis of global care by talking of crises of ‘here’ and ‘there’, or as cause and effects within a conceptually enclosed social system, does not make sense. Binaries such as ‘crisis of care’ and ‘crisis of social reproduction’ (Unzueta et al. 2013) only add to migration studies’ catalogue of dichotomies (Mains et al. 2013), and are unhelpful in understanding the multiple and intersecting processes and practices that make up our global economy and the mobilities and immobilities it creates to the advantage of the maintenance of global capitalism (Urry 2007).

Care, Age, and Dependent People

Another important component of care chains, and care work in general, especially when it comes to the Spanish context, is the prevalence of elderly people in need of care. Although literature on care of the elderly is increasing (cf. Martínez Buján 2007, 2010, Tapia Ladino 2010), the focus within studies of global care chains has generally been on children’s care needs. Not only are elderly and other dependent people important recipients of care in the receiving contexts of migration, they also fall victim to ‘care drain’ in sending contexts when their grown children migrate. Additionally, workers who leave their children behind in their

country of origin might send them to live with their own parents, often the grandmother of the children (Baldassar & Baldock 2000, Bastia 2009), and migrated care workers also age themselves, so that they will end up in need of care at some point (cf. Oso & Suárez-Grimalt 2018). The importance of researching these aspects of care work and care chains increases, particularly in Europe, as the aging population intensifies the need for care in all ends of the ‘chains’.

Men and Masculinities as Part of the Equation

A last important aspect that I will mention here, and which has been largely omitted in the global care chain framework, is the role that men and masculinities play in the (re)production of care chains (Kilkey 2010). Despite care work being epitomized as feminine – which will be discussed further below – femininity and female roles do not take place in a vacuum. Continuing the argument above, a way of expanding the analysis of gender and gendering in regard to care chains, is by diverging from the Western epistemological world of conceptual dualities. Although it is beyond the foci of this thesis, a critical analysis of conceptual dualities would require consideration of how fluidity of gender identities and roles play out in care work, locally and globally, and how it contributes to boundary making within this market. What is more central to my analysis is the missing role of men when it comes to looking at how to ‘solve’ the ‘crisis of care’ that many authors point to in different ways (Bofill-Poch 2017, Ezquerro 2011, Fraser 2016, Pradas 2010). As Pérez Orozco (2006) has pointed out when it comes to the Spanish context: the so-called crisis of care is a structural, and gendered, problem, and it would therefore take a complete restructuring of the economy, and arguably then also of gender relations, to reconceptualize *who* does care, and how. Ultimately, it is a question of how to value care work and which power relations are involved. In this thesis I have built on the global care chains framework and moved to the concept of a global market of care in order to better analyze my material.

Complexities and Power Relations Beyond the Linearity of Chains: A Global Market of Care

Although power relations are addressed in some ways within the global care chain framework, especially when it comes to discourses on gender, this arguably needs closer scrutiny. Coloniality and racialization are

central to how global connections between places unfold, in that these connections are often grounded in extensive histories of colonization and what these have produced. While the global care chain framework's focus on care chains as an 'international division of reproductive labor' (Parreñas 1998), and thereby implicitly on class as central to the analysis, racialization and 'race' are arguably equally defining components, at least when it comes to care chains starting in Spain.

In the same regard, researching global care must entail being open to the abundance of temporally and spatially crisscrossing narratives that the connections between people in a 'care chain' inevitably contain. In other words, the lives within these 'chains' do not happen in a linear fashion – people do not always go from A to B –, and there are no clear-cut ends to the stories that are told on account of these chains. People move back and forth, and then back again. They come and they go. Their loved ones come and go. Some die. Some become estranged. And sometimes new people that end up mattering more come into people's lives. The analogy of chains, in their linearity, arguably paints a picture of temporally and developmentally set figures, where things happen in a certain order, and each event leads to the next. It therefore becomes difficult to fully consider people's own agency within this economy, how it is practiced, and how these practices are part of one's Being (Maldonado-Torres 2007).

As this thesis will demonstrate, shifting the analytical focus from a metaphorical 'chain' to a 'market' arguably opens for a better scrutiny of the intersecting and crisscrossing processes, practices, and events that happen in the economy of care. The social 'maps' that can be drawn from such an analysis remind us more of complex webs, rather than linear chains where people and stories are tied together one by one. As implied in Chapter 1, Michel Callon (1998, see also Callon & Muniesa 2005) has inspired my approach to understanding the economy of care with his notion of 'laws of the market'. This approach conceptualizes the care economy as an accumulation of global 'networks', rather than 'chains', and it focuses on understanding the logics, or 'laws', through which actors within a particular market act and relate towards another.

Important to note is that Callon, together with other anthropologists such as Bruno Latour (1996, 2005), developed the framework of Actor Network Theory (ANT). While this framework is especially interesting when studying markets, I have found it necessary to include notions of

power in my analysis, and am therefore not following an ANT methodology. As will be discussed below, my understanding and approach to the 'market' and its exchanges take the existence of structures of power as a point of departure. As Maldonado-Torres argues (2007), it is through the possibility to engage in exchange that we become part of the ontology that surrounds us. It is through social relationships, and the power dynamics that they include, that we produce and maintain practices of exchange. Including feminist and decolonial theory in my approach has therefore been particularly helpful, and I have chosen to go beyond Callon's and Latour's understanding of 'networks' when examining the field of care work in this analysis.

Inspired by Czarniawska's (2004) article on laboratory studies within STS (Studies of Science and Technology), I envision the collection of global connections present in what I call the global market of care more as what she calls *nets*, rather than chains. I have set my analytical scope on the nodes of these nets, and thereby on how these nets are constructed through social practice and global connections (Tsing 2005). Czarniawska argues that the way in which Latour, among others, used the laboratory and factories to develop theory on work organizations has been invaluable, but as these types of work places are increasingly less common in today's economy there is a need for looking beyond these types of organizations when thinking about work organizations. Czarniawska therefore employs the notion of 'action nets' as 'an "institutional order," a set (not a system) of institutions (not necessarily coherent) prevalent right then and there' (2004:780). Seeing as the idea of global care chains stems from the same historic understanding of capitalism as that of Latour's use of factories for theory development, a time in which chronological time and sedimented organizational structures were a prominent part of industry and the economy, Czarniawska's way of moving forward is analytically relevant for the global care chain framework. An analytical focus on practices of exchange in a globally connected market of care, as well as on the experiences and expectations that involve them and that make up the 'laws' by which they unfold, will arguably contribute to this way forward.

Expanding the Global Care Chains Framework: Contributing to the Valuation of Care Work

I return to my citation of Nicola Yeates (2012) above, where she claims a progressive devaluation (referring to monetary value) of care work takes place the further away one analytically and geographically moves away from the Global North. While monetary (de)valuation of care work is an important aspect of care studies, part of my contribution to this field lies in how I reflect on value exchange in regard to this labor. While it may be true that care work pays less and less the further ‘down’ the care chain we move conceptually, this also has to do with the global economy and the relative salary level between different countries. This thesis shows that the valuation of care work is much more complex, and that the presence of the Global South through care workers in the homes of the Global North arguably contributes to devaluing care work both monetarily and socially. In ascribing a racialized layer on the already gendered labor of care by outsourcing this labor to ‘Other’ women, the socioeconomic valuation of care work stagnates, at best, or even decreases (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010).

When it comes to my contributions to research on care work, I regard the empirical development related to global care chains essential. It is in investigating the particularities adherent to different localities that we can develop theory by bringing different perspectives to what has already been conceptualized (Otto & Willerslev 2013). In this regard, I see my contribution to this research field as both theoretical and empirical. I provide a detailed account of how the global chains of the Spanish care market play out in people’s everyday lives, studied through how exchange is practiced within this context. Via the optics of anthropological gift theory and theory on value (Graeber 2001, 2013; Otto & Willerslev 2013), in combination with feminist and decolonial perspectives, I also show how power relations between those who are taking part in this market are negotiated and reveal more general gendering and racializing structures. I consider that these perspectives can add to our understanding of care work and its position in the global economy, while it at the same time allows us to contemplate how care work and migration are connected to migrancy as a state of Being (cf. Maldonado-Torres 2007).

Economic Anthropology and Practices of Exchange

Despite my concerns about the reductionist economic lens present in parts of migration research that I discussed above, my scientific interest lies in what takes place within the global *market* of care. As mentioned, my understanding of the market is, however, grounded in anthropological understandings of the economy as an integral part of society. I do not separate the economy analytically from other social processes, but rather see it as *one* name for what might otherwise be called society or culture – a name that is employed when scrutinizing social relations and practices tied to exchange. Here, the economy is about exchange as social practice, which may or may not include money and labor. At some points the exchange at hand might only be about subtle transactions of emotionally loaded words or gestures. But these practices all happen within the context of the global market of care, and therefore participate in constructing the logics – or ‘laws’ – of this market. It is from this perspective that my use of anthropological gift theory should be understood.

Circulation of Gifts and Commodities

The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies by Marcel Mauss (1990 [1950]) is one of the cornerstones of social anthropology, and the discussion of gift versus commodity – and what the exchanges of these entail in different cultural contexts – has been key in anthropological research ever since his essay was first published in 1925⁴³. In *The Gift*, Mauss makes an inventory of different forms of gift exchange recorded by ethnographers up until his time, as an attempt to show how exchange in certain forms can and is about other aspects of human life than the ‘economic’ (Smedal 2005). The most prominent and cited example is Malinowski’s (2002 [1922]) rendition of the *kula* exchange in the Trobriand Islands, and the trade that happens around it, as well as the North American Indigenous custom of the *potlatch* – the ‘creative destruction’ of wealth where chiefs of different tribes show their grandeur in that they have the sufficient excess of resources to incinerate their possessions and organize lavish parties where everyone is invited to consume as much as possible. Through his discussion of ethnographic material from many corners of the world, Mauss argues that

43 It was later republished in French in 1950, and this version was translated to English in 1954.

in societies living outside the capitalist system, exchange through gifts is a ‘total social phenomenon’ in which the creation of reciprocal relations through these gifts is fundamental for social life and lays the ground for other (economic) exchanges, including marriage, and reproduction (Mauss 1990). The reason for this is that in giving somebody something the giver’s subjectivity – the ‘spirit of the gift’ or the *hau* – becomes ingrained in the object bestowed upon the other, and thereby the giver becomes socially ingrained in the receiver. This passing of human subjectivity between givers and receivers through objects creates social bonds and relationships *over time* (Smedal 2005). The way that the subjectivities of the actors involved in an exchange are carried through in reciprocal practices is central to my understanding of how the global market of care works.

Exchange through Reciprocal Relations in the Global Market of Care

Mauss’ collection and comparison of vast sets of empirical material is interesting in its own right, but his project also holds great theoretical value. By showing how exchange took place in (at the time) non-capitalist economies, he showed that exchange was indeed about social relations, and so the capitalist economy was, in fact, also socially embedded. C.A. Gregory developed this discussion further. His book, *Gifts and Commodities* (2015 [1982])⁴⁴, is, after Mauss (1990), one of the cornerstones of economic anthropology regarding theory on gift and commodity exchange. In the new edition Gregory explains his ambitions for the book, an ambition that has at times been misinterpreted. He explains how he through merging two paradigms of value – that of political economy and that of economic anthropology – sought to, on the one hand, make sense of the economic practices taking place in Papua New Guinea as a result of colonization, and, on the other, to offer a critique of a third paradigm of value, namely mainstream economics.

According to Gregory, these three different paradigms of value center their theoretical discussions of economic practices on three distinct notions. Researchers pertaining to a marginalist utility theory of value, such as the neoclassical development economists, towards whom

⁴⁴ I have read the second edition from 2015, but the first edition (1982) has been widely discussed and referenced within anthropology, as is visible here in Marilyn Strathern’s (1988), among others’, discussion of Gregory.

Gregory aims the critical analysis of his book, use the notion of *goods* as a centerpiece of their discussions. Political economists focus on theories of commodities, and include in their analyses a labor theory of value hailing from Marxist theory of material and human reproduction. Economic anthropologists, on the other hand, had until the 1970s focused their analyses largely around the notion of the *gift*. Their scientific project was about understanding what Mauss had listed as the three moral obligations around the gift, namely the obligation to give, to receive, and to repay. This, in turn, led to the notion of *reciprocity* being at the heart of economic anthropology's theory of value. It is mainly the notion of reciprocity that aids me in the analyses of the dynamics of exchange that the global market of care entails.

Building Reciprocal Relations through Time: The Global Market of Care as a Moral Economy?

As mentioned above, Smedal (2005) sees the temporal aspect as crucial to the anthropological understanding of the gift because, contrary to what happens in commodity exchange, this counter-gift does, and should not, happen immediately, but rather *at some point*. In gift giving there is an expectation of reciprocity, but of a *delayed* reciprocity. And it is in this delay that the 'magic happens'; it is here social relationships grow. Should the receiver not abide by the customary temporal expectation of return, the relationship might never develop, or it might end abruptly. If person A makes the counter-gift too soon person B might interpret A's return as a statement of her understanding of their relationship to be strictly transactional. And should person A delay too long in returning the gift, this will probably be understood as, at the least, very rude, all depending on the nature and previous interaction entailed in the relationship at hand.

Important to underline here is that the norms for how, when, and by whom gifts and counter-gifts should be offered, depends on (cultural) context. These are the norms that Callon (1998) arguably refers to in his 'laws of the market' – the implicit rules for how exchange should take place, whether it is about 'gifts' or 'commodities'. When it comes to my use of this idea in my analysis, it is also reminiscent of what James Scott (1976) and E.P. Thompson (1971) have called the moral economy. In their discussion of the moral economy concept Palomera and Vetta contend that

the structural inequalities generated by particular forms of capital accumulation – mediated by particular kinds of state regulation – are always metabolized through particular fields constituted by dynamic combinations of norms, meanings, and practices (2016:414).

The moral economy perspective is then, arguably, about practices of exchange and the discourses that steer them. As such, it is about gift economy, but with a greater focus on power relations. Furthermore, Wutich, drawing on Scott, explains that a

moral economy is a kind of alternative social order based on two fundamental principles: the right of everyone to have access to the means of subsistence and survival, and the accompanying obligation to give and receive, thus obeying the norms of reciprocity (2011:5).

While this perspective, then, aids in scrutinizing particular aspects of the global market of care, it arguably does not cover the market I am analyzing in its entirety. While it can be useful in juxtaposing certain reciprocal practices hailing from the Spanish versus the Bolivian context, it makes scrutinizing the dynamics between these practices more complicated. When discussing particular Bolivian practices of solidarity and reciprocal exchange in Chapter 8, I revisit the concept of moral economy, as it helps in understanding these exchanges. In general, however, I use the terms expectation, experience, and exchange to be able to engage analytically with the global market of care in its entirety. This perspective of exchange is more in line with Maldonado-Torres' discussion of the coloniality of Being, where he argues that the dynamics of giving and receiving are what make us human. It is, in a sense, an all-encompassing aspect of our existence, since it is in recognizing the other person as a worthy partner of exchange over time (in both material and immaterial form) that people become part of the same world; the same ontology. If one, on the other hand, is excluded from exchange, then this reduces the other person to an 'Other'.

Controversies of Gift Theory

To the readers not familiar with the anthropological canon, what might resonate more than Mauss when talking about 'the gift' is Derrida's dis-

cussion of the term. Smedal (2005) understands Derrida's discussion as reducing the gift to being either 'actually' a commodity, or to not existing as a social phenomenon at all. In his *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money* (1992), Derrida picks Mauss' essay apart and accuses the 'anthropological gift' of being about nothing more than the economization of social life, precisely in disaccord with one of Mauss' main arguments; that not all human life can be reduced to economic transactions. According to Derrida, a gift cannot ever really *be* a gift. Smedal (2005) supplies us with an anthropological answer to Derrida's account of *the gift*, and also underlines the anthropological community's perhaps surprising silence on the matter, considering both the severity of Derrida's critique and the impact his ideas on gift-as-theory have had on the social sciences in general. This is not something I will delve too much into here, as my aim is not to revolutionize gift theory in neither anthropology, philosophy, or general social science, but rather contribute to research on migration and care work by applying this kind of analysis to my material. I will, however, briefly account for the difference between the 'anthropological gift' and of Derrida's understanding of the gift so that it is made clear to the reader why I abide by the former interpretation in my analysis.

The most important distinction between the two understandings is that Derrida sees the gift as an *ideal*, while anthropology sees the gift as a *practice* (Bourdieu 1977). In other words, all exchange is social, even when it is done through what economists call 'the market'. Smedal elaborates his argument showing how Derrida does not account for the temporal aspect of gift giving, in the way it is practiced socially, but rather talks about how the gift is about the intention of the giver within an enclosed temporal circularity. It is through this circular temporality that Derrida can argue that the gift, as such, can actually never be real, because it is always about *reward* from the giver's perspective. In *Given Time* Derrida uses a short story by Baudelaire, *Counterfeit Money*, to explain how the gift is not, in fact, a gift because the giver only gives because it benefits her or himself. A gift can only be a gift if the giver did not intend to receive a reward by giving, even if that reward is only their own satisfaction of feeling gracious and generous.

Within anthropology it is precisely the intention of this reward – or the expectation of reciprocity – that makes a gift a gift, since it is the time that passes between the giving and the retribution from the other

that can (re)produce, and when repeated, constitute, a social relationship. It is thereby not said that this relationship might not bring on or entail intentions of ‘economic’ exchange – of commodity exchange, or even of profit making. The difference between ‘anthropological’ commodity and gift exchange is that the former happens instantly, circularly, as a matter of quid-pro-quo – precisely the way that Derrida imagines *gift* exchange. The anthropological gift, on the other hand, takes for granted that the gift stands for something – that it contains a message (Smedal 2005:8). It is this ‘message’ – or the distinctive understandings and expectations that different actors have of the exchanges they are a part of that I address in this thesis. And it is these ambivalences, about what the core of the reciprocal relationships within the global market of care is, that expose the ways that the subjectivities of the givers and receivers matter when they exchange, for instance, care for money.

Value in Exchange as Practice

In using anthropological gift theory in my analysis people’s practices are underscored as significant and meaningful within the global economy in general, and within the global market of care in particular. Had my analysis focused solely on the expectations and intentions of the Spanish state regarding this economy, a Derridian perspective might have proven more meaningful for the discussion. However, since I aim to scrutinize how care workers and those who enter into different social relationships with them understand the exchange going on in this market, as well as the impact this understanding – and the form of exchange in itself – has on people’s lives, I deem the anthropological focus on practices of exchange more pertinent when it comes to gift theory analysis. Because, as Smedal summarizes:

The important thing in differentiating between commodity and gift is looking at what kind of relation the object conveys. The meaning does not lie in the object itself, but in the relation – which is projected into the object – in the way that it is interpreted by those who constitute it (Smedal 2005:14, my translation from Norwegian).

It is the *practice* of exchange that produces the value of an object or ‘thing’. When it comes to commodities its (economic) value is, from a Marxist perspective, created through its alienation from the persons who

produced it. Through labor the worker sells her claim on the object *a priori*, and the subjectivity of the worker is thereby removed from the object, making it exchangeable as a market commodity. The gift, on the other hand, is precisely that because it includes the subjectivity – or the *hau* (Mauss 1990) – of the giver and thereby (re)produces and manifests the relationship between the giver and the receiver. This does not mean that the commodity produced through alienation cannot become a gift or that a gift cannot become a commodity (cf. Tsing 2013). This depends on the practices that take part in the exchange of the object and thereby creates different forms of value. Also, particularly when it comes to gifts, the object of exchange might very well be abstract – a dinner invitation, for instance, which, at least where I grew up in the world, always includes an expectation of at some point being reciprocated (cf. Smedal 2005). As is visible in the research material, objects of ‘economic’ exchange – commodities – can also be abstract, since when it comes to care work, the ‘product’, or outcome, is in fact, a social relationship, just as though the process of exchange at hand was actually a matter of gift exchange.

My analytical focus in this thesis is, in part, on the relations of exchange operating in the global connections of care that I study. Gift theory and economic anthropology in general are arguably relevant for understanding how global capitalism functions, and thereby also this specific market. Commodity exchange unlocks vast socioeconomic processes and serves as the skeletal structure on which other structural components – and processes of oppression in the interest of capital – are built. Gift exchange matters also in understanding globalized commodity exchange because capitalism is dependent on social relations to produce commodities, and it is through the exchange of these commodities that capitalism survives as a system (Tsing 2013). In other words, capitalism depends on human practice in general, including human practices of (gift) exchange and social reproduction. It feeds off social life in that it converts what has been created through social relations into objects stripped of those relations. Commodity exchange becomes possible because the *subjectivity* (or the *hau*) of objects is removed through capitalism, making that object exchangeable as a commodity (ibid.). However, when the ‘object’ to be exchanged on the (labor) market is either a person or the emotional labor of a person, how is it made exchangeable?

What does it mean to remove subjectivity from a human being? Or is subjectivity, in fact, not removable?

Concluding Remarks

As mentioned above, Federici (2004, 2012) argues that what in the Marxist tradition is called reproductive work serves as the basis for capitalism. This is because capitalism requires constant primitive accumulation in order to be sustained, and care work – or reproductive work – is a resource that is accumulated and fed into the capitalist system. This is in line with Tsing's (2013) argument on capitalist production in general – that social (gift) relations are one of the basic resources from which commodities are produced. It is in the conversion of gift relations into commodity relations – in the alienation of the worker from her product – that capitalism is made possible. When these relations of exchange happen over large distances, such as in the global market of care, the distance itself plays a part in the conversion of relations of exchange. My aim in this dissertation is to untangle the global connections of care that stretch between Bolivia and Spain and that fathom social relations of both commodities and gifts.

This chapter has introduced the reader to the main analytical concepts – or *guiding stars* – that are used throughout my dissertation, and has attempted to show how they are interconnected. These connections are what constitute my theoretical approach, and the ways in which they are important will be made clearer in the discussions of my empirical material. In the chapters to come I scrutinize what takes place in a particular market, at a particular time as a means to understand how the research participants contemplate their own situation and their relation vis-à-vis others in this market. By scrutinizing the experiences and expectations involved in the exchanges of this market, I investigate what these relations and the interpretations of them tell us about the power relations that structure this market and its global connections.

5. THE MEANINGS OF MIGRATION: GENDERED AND COLONIAL SCRIPTING OF MIGRANCY

Elia also has experiences of abuse. This is why she left for Spain in the first place. She showed me a picture of herself from before she left. She was unrecognizable. Her face looked almost like that of a corpse; a blank stare in sunken eye sockets and hollowed out cheeks. Now she takes great care of and pride in her appearance. She dresses youthfully, wears make-up on most days, and enjoys buying clothes that accentuate the shape of her body.

She considers herself divorced, even if it is not true on paper. When she at first told me the story of the relationship between her and her (ex) husband, the status quo was so hidden in the narrative that I didn't understand that they were still living together. Her migration from Bolivia was an escape from him. So much had happened. Beatings, separating her from her family, not letting her see her mother or sisters, daily insults and humiliation, disregard of her and their children's needs to the point that their youngest – a son – had died. Her mother saw, but there was nothing she could do. Still, it wasn't until he humiliated her in public by blatantly pursuing another woman in front of her at a party in the village that she fell out of love with him. Since then it has never come back. And she decided to leave.

Two of her sisters were already living in Bilbao, and she bought the tickets for her and her two daughters in secret. One day when Walter was working in the field she took them and left. She didn't let

him know until they had arrived in Spain. A couple of months later he showed up on their doorstep; a father should be with his children, he said. That was seven years ago. 'He thinks he can win me back, but my love for him is dead.' Still, she does not leave him. She side-steps his anger, she maintains the household economically by working triple jobs. He sometimes works as a gardener for the municipality of Bilbao, but other than that watches TV. And watches her. Her eldest daughter is now studying engineering, and the youngest is finishing high school. Maybe one day, she says, she will be able to leave. There are many places she could go, she says. But not while her daughters are still living with her. (Fieldnotes. Bilbao, September 2015)

Introduction

When examining how it is that people from Bolivia become care workers – *chicas* – in Spain, coloniality and gender are fundamental circumstances. This chapter is about the choices people make within the circumstances at hand, within their emplacement in time and space. It outlines trajectories that are detectable in the stories I have been told by the research participants, and shows how contextuality and positionality are products of those circumstances. This thesis examines how gender, among other forms of social categorization, is structured as a circumstance within the Spanish market of care work. In this chapter I explore how gendered bodies travel and are emplaced within certain trajectories from geographical and everyday contexts that lie beyond, but are still contextually adjacent to, the Spanish care work sector. In order to understand the mechanisms of a global market of care, the gendered and (post)colonial circumstances that feed into the experiences, expectations, and exchanges that take place in regard to care work, must be considered in depth.

Although the stories about how and why people made the decision to migrate are as many as there are migrated people, some more general narratives can be read in between the lines when it comes to those working in the care work sector in Spain. This is particularly in regard to people's vision of what the migratory experience entails – a *change* of some sort – as well as how they make sense of the results of that change in life course once it has manifested. The continuous experiences of

Othering that shape people's lives manifest in particular scripts (cf. Butler 1988, 2011, Maldonado-Torres 2007, Parreñas 2001), which include narratives of sacrifice and loss. These scripts will also be discussed in Chapters 8 and 9.

Most of the empirical material discussed in the following pages regards Bolivia as geographical context, or the relationships the research participants have carried with them from there. It is drawn from either my notes from fieldwork in Bolivia or from the stories told about that context during interviews done in Bilbao. In a sense, this chapter represents a point of departure in the typical time-line of the research participants' stories around the global market of care, and examines underlying reasons for why people decide to venture off into the unknown – towards Spain, and towards a life in migrancy. These reasons are often rooted in gender relations.

As presented in Chapter 3, in Bolivia I observed and experienced being a woman in some of the same contexts the research participants hail from⁴⁵. The contexts I experienced through my fieldwork varied greatly from family to family, and from place to place – also in how gender and racialization figures as part of the reality. In Katty's home, her father had always worked more in the house than her mother, since she was the one with the more stable job outside the home. In Elia's family, on the other hand, the siblings had grown up with a mother who did practically all the work necessary for them to survive, since their fathers had either died or had not been taken on as a husband by their mother. Additionally, divorce has been quite prevalent amongst the research participants in general, some before they left for Spain, and some after. Many have had difficult, even traumatic, experiences with men. Many have experienced gendered abuse and violence, and for some this was their stated reason for migrating in the first place.

All in all, this chapter approaches how gender, in addition to other forms of social categorization, is practiced and understood by the participants in general. It aims to draw lines between these practices and understandings and those that take place as part of the work they exercise, through (post)colonial globalized relations for Spanish and Basque

45 As always, participant observation can only be done from the positionality the researcher holds within each context, and in my case this varied greatly from the positionality people around me held. I therefore underline that I do not claim to have lived *their* experiences, only my own within these shared contexts and moments in time.

families. I do this by reflecting on two of the many gendered aspects that have stood out in the narratives I have been presented through fieldwork. These aspects are conspicuously present in the research material first and foremost due their repetition. In some form or another most of the research participants refer to at least one of these aspects in their interviews, and they are also often discussed by the same person several times. In other words, these are gendered aspects that often become pivotal in people's lives. The first aspect is about how power relationships between women and men are structured, particularly when it comes to violence, while the second considers how relationships between women are structured, particularly between mothers and daughters. Through these aspects I examine how migration becomes a way for women to take responsibility for themselves and others when faced with the often constricting or violent consequences of practices and discourses of masculinity.

Important, also, to underline is how gender and masculinity/femininity are part and parcel of the coloniality of Being (Maldonado-Torres 2007). The way that gender is practiced in the world today is equally a part of colonial-capitalist hegemony as dynamics of racialization are. Discourses that ascribe particular roles to binary gender categories, i.e. women and men, differ from, for instance, discourses on gender and gender roles that were part of the Andean cosmology long after the *conquista* (Choque-Quispe & Stephenson 1998, De la Cadena 1992, Rivera Cusicanqui 1997, Schiwy 2007). As will be discussed below, these discourses differed in that in some cosmologies gender was construed as more fluid and/or included more than two categories, and overall the roles ascribed to gender were about complementarity rather than dichotomy.

Desire, Difference, Abjection: The Gendered Coloniality of Being and Becoming the 'Other' through Migrancy

Gladys:

I think it's gone well for me. It's gone well because I've been working... Well, I've done what I had to do, and well, in other things maybe things haven't gone all that well [laughs]. But oh well... hmmm... In some [things, I've done well]. I believe that. Here I've been working too. Because when I came [to Spain] I already knew

what I would be working as, right? I knew that it would be domestic service, that your degree didn't make much of a difference.

Ingrid:

Had people told you [beforehand]?

Gladys:

I already knew. I knew because, for example, I have my uncle and aunt who've gone to Argentina. And in Argentina, even if it's so close [to Bolivia], your degree doesn't matter either. You have to take courses. [...] For example, my uncle, who was a doctor, had to start working as a nurse... or a hospital porter! [laughs quietly] Later on he did a specialization, and only then, when he did the specialization... [...] But being able to work directly, no. Well, I think that here [in Spain] as well, for example. A degree that you do here and then you want to go to another country, you have to get it accredited. And you might have to do a course of some sort. Especially language and those things.

Ingrid:

Yes, at least where I'm from you have to do language courses. But it also depends on where you are from, or rather, where your degree is from. Some are accepted, others not.

Gladys:

That's what I mean, it's the same thing. Even when talking about neighboring countries, for example, not even then, eh! For example Argentina, which is so close to us. That your degree isn't good for anything. And here, even less so, because this is Europe! [laughs] And... I already knew. (Interview with Gladys Villca. Bilbao, April 2015)

James Ferguson defines the notion of abjection as the 'combination of an acute awareness of a privileged "first-class" world, together with an increasing social and economic disconnection from it' (2002:559)⁴⁶. Nicolas De Genova reflects on the same process in relation to migration

46 See also Ferguson (1999) for an in-depth discussion of the term *abjection*.

and ‘illegality’ within Fortress Europe, through what he calls the Border Spectacle (2013). ‘Abjection’ is a part of what I call migrancy in the Spanish context. From the perspective of those leaving Bolivia to go to Spain, abjection is founded in a desire to escape being the (global) othered, and therefore moving from ‘periphery’ to ‘center’ (Appadurai 1986, Mignolo 2007a, 2007b, Scott 1998). The migration taken on by the research participants can thereby be understood as responses to their own desires to overcome the material and discursive difference that their postcolonial and gendered structural emplacement in the world has imposed on them. Some, like Gladys, are aware that part of that difference will be sustained across time and space. For others the awareness appears once they have arrived in the Spanish context. The dynamics of Othering is only changing shape – it does not disappear. It depends on context and one’s position within it. As such, even before one migrates migrancy is a state of continuous becoming, in that it is linked to what Maldonado-Torres and Mignolo call the ‘coloniality of Being’.

Maldonado-Torres, relying on Mignolo’s coining of the term in his 2003 book *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*, maps the relationship between coloniality at large – being the coloniality of power in all its implications – and how it ‘lands’ in the person and her or his experiences as a human being:

[C]olonial relations of power left profound marked [sic] not only in the areas of authority, sexuality, knowledge and the economy, but on the general understanding of being as well. And, while the coloniality of power referred to the interrelation among modern forms of exploitation and domination (power), and the coloniality of knowledge had to do with impact of colonization on the different areas of knowledge production, coloniality of being would make primary reference to the lived experience of colonization and its impact on language. (Maldonado-Torres 2007:242)

The coloniality of Being is thus about how everyday life affectively becomes scripted in certain ways – through both practice and ways of communication/discourse – due to (post)colonial relations. Scholars such as Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) and Freya Schiwy (2007) have underlined ways in which colonization has contributed to how gendering is practiced in most parts of the world. Schiwy (ibid.) explores how gender

was and is construed differently among Aymara and Quechua peoples in the Andes than what the Western gender scripts usually purport. She shows how pre-colonial imaginaries of gender as relations dominated by complementarity rather than dichotomy are currently being activated as part of decolonial political projects in this region. However, as is emphasized by the analyses of Choque-Quispe and Stephenson (1998), De la Cadena (1992), and Rivera Cusicanqui (1997), among others, the ways in which this gender complementarity is incorporated into contemporary decolonial political projects, are contested. Despite the Andean indigenous conceptualization and practice of gendering being more dynamic in terms of gendered roles and work, complementarity does not necessarily mean a lack of hierarchy between people gendered as men and women, nor does it prevent men's violence against women.

The indigenous practices of gender in the Andes are relevant to the practices I address in this thesis, as they are arguably part of the overlapping geographical and cultural contexts I study. However, I will not go further into the specifics of the practices in the Andes. Certain articulations of gender relations and practices are also likely to differ between the Andes and *Oriente* areas of Bolivia. Suffice it to say that the many ways in which gender is contested and practiced, in both everyday life and in the Bolivian political landscape, underscores Butler's depiction of gender as constructed through practice and discourse, and made visible via performativity (Butler 2004, Mc Glinn 2018). Another, and related, point brought forth by Schiwy, is that the centrality of gender in both colonization as well as decolonization has long been ignored by scholars. This critique is adjacent to that of my own when it comes to many studies of migration's incorporation of the notion of gender into their analysis. One example is Massey et al.'s (1993) classic overview over theories of migration, which fails to mention gender at all. The way in which this sort of migration research is done fails to take seriously the ways in which gender is a central ordering principle of our lives as human beings (cf. Donato et al. 2006). As discussed in Chapter 4, care work and global care chains have been one of the central ways in which gender has been 'brought in' to migration studies (Pessar & Mahler 2003). So by discussing care work and migrancy in relation to each other, I strive to make another indentation in the ways in which gender is often treated as merely another box to check off in the aspects to consider in social analysis (Donato et al. 2006), and elucidate how gender in

fact structures migration (cf. Mahler & Pessar 2001, Silvey 2004), and thereby, at least in part, also migrancy.

Everyday Movement towards Care Work and Migrancy

[The] modern migrations of thought and people are phenomena that are deeply implicated in each other's trajectories and futures. (Chambers 1994:6)

The bodies that move from Bolivia and into states of migrancy (of care) in Spain carry with them stories that are already part of defining what makes things (im)possible in terms of mobility and everyday life within the Spanish context⁴⁷ (cf. Butler 2004, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Massumi 2002, Schiwy 2007). Due to the stories continuously being inscribed in them and other bodies deemed similar to theirs in both Spain and Bolivia, they are potential 'migrant' bodies, even before making their move towards Europe. Colonial history and gendered scripts of performativity therefore play a large part in the production of migrancy⁴⁸. The everydayness of these scripts, and how they are embodied, is visible in the fieldnote excerpts below.

Tia Inma works in Chile as a domestic worker. She has been back here now for some time because she needed an operation. But now she is better and she should go back soon. She needs to cross the border before the 17th of March, because of her visa. She will take the bus. While Elia was packing her suitcases she told the story about how she crossed the border to Bolivia (I don't know if it was last time or on an earlier trip). She had also had two big suitcases, like Elia. When exiting Chile the border guards asked what was in them and she answered 'in this is a chileno [a Chilean man], and in this one is un trozo de mar [piece of the ocean; a joking reference to the standing historical and political conflict between Chile and Bolivia]'. Everyone laughed a lot. (Fieldnotes. El Torno, Thursday, March 10, 2016)

47 See Chapters 6 and 7 for a closer discussion of how the legal parameters of the care work sector in Spain .

48 In Chapter 4 I discussed my use of the notion of migrancy, and underlined how it differs from my use of the term migration. The way in which spatial mobility is part of everyday life for many of the people I met in Bolivia underlines the need for keeping these two terms separate.

*

When Doña Verónica was in the shower I asked tía Inma if she would be travelling soon. She said yes, that she wanted to travel on Tuesday. She needed to go back to Chile to get her things. They were stored in the house where she had been working. But since now she couldn't work for some months the family had found a new person to work there. She was hoping her daughter Alma would be able to go with her because she couldn't lift heavy things now because of her operation. So she needed Alma to carry her suitcase for her on the trip back. If not she would just go and move her things and come back, if Alma cannot go. (Saturday, March 12, 2016)

*

When we were finishing up Alma arrived. Doña Verónica had called her earlier to ask her to come help with the baking, but Alma was then on her way to Santa Cruz with her mother, Inma, to send her off to Chile. She had to take the bus to Cochabamba first, and from there to Arica in Chile. Inma had told me she wanted Alma to come with her on the trip, and Doña Verónica asked about that now. Alma said she hadn't wanted to go because it was too expensive. It would cost 500 pesos each way, 1000 for the return trip. It was money out the window. Later Doña Verónica said she would have lent her the money for the trip, but Alma insisted that even if she could have borrowed it, it was still money. Yes, said Doña Verónica, but her mother's life was worth more than money and Doña Inma estaba delicada de salud [she was in a delicate state health-wise]. Alma said that yes, that is true. They left it at that.

Alma also said that her mother would only be gone for a few days. She only needed to cross the border so that she would get her visa renewed and not have to pay a fine later when she went back [to work there]. And she would pick up a few things from where she had worked. She wanted to go back to work in Chile later when she had recovered from her operation. Alma said she hoped she would be back [home] by Friday. The trip took two days – first to Cochabamba, which takes 12 hours, then on to Chile from there, at dawn. Later she said that if her mom came back on Friday she would go to [the

village] on Saturday morning because Saturday is father's day and the best party is there [in the village]. (Monday, March 14, 2016)

My fieldnotes about tía Inma show how geographical and spatial mobility, including international migration, is a part of everyday life for many people in Bolivia. These excerpts are from the first half of my fieldwork there, in the transit town El Torno, which connects the peripheries of Santa Cruz de la Sierra to gradually more rural areas. As mentioned in Chapter 2, from my conversations with people in El Torno I gathered that most who lived there were not from this particular place, but had moved there from other, more rural regions – many from Vallegrande. Doña Verónica, Elia's mother, was one example. She moved to El Torno from a village in the province of Vallegrande when the last of her six (adult) children had moved to Spain a few years ago. Doña Verónica still owns land in her home village, and goes there frequently to harvest potatoes and other vegetables that she sells at the market in El Torno. When her daughters were twelve years old they travelled from the village to Santa Cruz to work as domestic workers. Now the five of them, as well as their younger brother, all live in Bilbao, and work in the same field. In other words, the family has always been 'on the move' and connected across extensive geographical distances. In contrast to Gladys and her family, it has also been common among the female family members in Elia's family to work in the care and domestic sector, even before travelling abroad.

Tía Inma, Doña Verónica's sister, also lived in Spain for a short time, and now one of her daughters lives there while Inma herself has worked in Chile for a few years. It is closer and cheaper to go back and forth from there. Due to her travels I did not get the opportunity to interview Inma about her experiences of migrating back and forth to Chile, and therefore I cannot say much about whether this context might produce states of migrancy in the same way that the Spanish context does. However, my interest in the contrasts between migration and migrancy lies in how the former is understood as something 'neutral' and everyday in one context – the way it is for many of the people I talked with in Bolivia, while in another context this movement becomes imbued with meaning, and therefore becomes about power relations as they are expressed through social differentiation.

Part of people's approach to movement and migration as something everyday might rely partially on a differential relation to geography, as well as temporal and spatial distances, than the one purported by Western standard education and imaginary. Precisely how the general ontological vision of what the world – and its relational distances when travelling it – looks like was difficult to grasp. However, it was clear to me all through my fieldwork in Bolivia that many people held a different vision and imaginary of the world than that of the standard Mercator map. The understanding of how people relate to their loved ones' departures and residence in places that are 'far away' came into view through daily conversation during my fieldwork in Bolivia, particularly when talking to people who hadn't themselves travelled abroad. As discussed in Chapter 3 there was often a confusion of where I was from, especially since I was there as a result of my relationship to people they knew in Spain. Some thought maybe I could be from the USA, since they also knew of people who had gone there to work, while many just assumed that I was Spanish. Then there was the idea that maybe I should stay on in Bolivia, find a husband there and settle down. This indicated to me that, on the one hand, people might not understand how far I actually was from 'home'. On the other, even though I surely was far from my family, since people they knew in Spain moved back and forth, then so could I – the spatial and temporal distance could not be insurmountable since everyone else already travelled it, in the same way Doña Verónica travelled back and forth to the village, her daughters travelled back and forth to Spain, or tía Inma travelled back and forth to Chile.

When considering the 'everydayness' of geographical mobility among the research participants, it is evident that migration per se is not understood as a political act. 'Migration' is not about power relations in every context. This sort of movement becomes imbued with a different meaning once it is interpreted within a context that understands it as something *contestable*, as a marker of difference. It is this transition of meaning of the act of migration that I wish to underscore with my use of the term *migrancy*. It is when migration is no longer simply about movement, but rather about what one's body means in a geographical context that is deemed as not belonging to that body, that geographical mobility becomes *migrancy*, which in many ways is a state of immobility. In the case of people like Elia and Gladys – women who end up working in the care work sector in Spain – this transition is done

through the global market of care, with all the discursive and legal intricacies this entails. These are discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

Escaping Masculinity: Gendered Practices of Bearing Violence

One aspect of daily life that is thoroughly scripted by gender is that of intimate relations between women and men. How people relate to each other – romantically, sexually, violently, and as friends and acquaintances – is circumscribed by gender at all times. This is also so in Bolivia, as well as among Bolivians in Bilbao, and it is an aspect that stood out to me on many occasions during fieldwork, such as the situation described below in my fieldnotes from living with Doña Verónica.

Doña Verónica herself is what I would describe as a kick-ass woman. She has fended for herself throughout a lifetime. She has had children by three different men who have either left her or died. She has worked relentlessly for her and her children's survival. Now all six of them have migrated to Bilbao. They all want her to move and live there with them, but she has visited them there and she prefers her life in Bolivia. She lives by herself in El Torno, and misses her children dearly. Part of daily life, however, is the frequent visits of friends, extended family members, and neighbors. One of these visits turned out to be as if witnessing Elia's history, which I elaborate on below, in real time.

In the afternoon, when I came back from the city after having met with the family of one of the participants I knew from Bilbao, Pati was visiting from next door. Her right eye was swollen. She was crying, she had her baby in her arms. She was telling the story of how her husband had sold all their belongings to buy booze, and that when she had confronted him about it he had beaten her. They were being left with nothing and all he did was drink, and find things around the house to sell so that he could drink more. That was the reason Pati had come over in the first place; her husband had sold their cooking gas so that now she needed to borrow an axe and go look for firewood to light up the outdoor kitchen. Doña Verónica and her friend listened to her and tried to console her, saying what a bad man he was. But, such was life. She would just have to bear it. (Fieldnotes. El Torno, March 2016)

This visit from Pati became one entry point for understanding how gendered power works in the everyday. As I listened to Pati's story I felt powerless. What could be done to help her out of the situation? Doña Verónica and her age mate remained seemingly passive towards what was happening next door, and I realized that this is how things are handled. While they helped Pati with what she urgently needed – an axe to cut firewood – and offered her something to eat then and there, they could not change her situation. In the same way Doña Verónica did not intervene when Elia was beaten and mistreated by Walter, she did not intervene now. These situations are seemingly something women are expected to endure. Because what could Pati do? Where could she go? In order to escape, she would mostly likely have to go far away, at the very least to a different city. Or a different country, like Elia. But even that might not be enough.

Love, Desirability, and Scripts of Violence

Ingrid:

Because when you left you thought that that would be 'it'?

Elia:

Yes. Yes, I had gotten used to the idea that he, since he had gone to stay with his family⁴⁹, that he would stay there. He called me on the phone and when we saw each other [back] there I told him I didn't want to live with him any longer. That he should do what he wanted with his life, but that when he wanted, well, he could go where his daughters were – I wouldn't say anything about that. And he said yes. Well, I [was] pleased.

I came [to Spain]. I [said] 'well, he will stay there, or we will see... Let him do what he wants.' I didn't call him or anything. And one day he called me and he tells me that he is coming. I told him 'Look, Walter,' I said to him, 'don't think that you can come here and be with me like before,' I tell him. 'No,' he tells me, 'I'm not going to say anything to you, I'm only going [to Spain] for the sake of my daughters,' he tells me. 'I promised I would help with their studies and I won't leave them on their own, so I will go for the sake of my daughters.'

49 By this she means that when she left Bolivia, her (ex-)husband went to live with his mother and other family members.

And I always remind him ‘you said you came for your daughters’ sake, you didn’t come for me, because I had already told you that I didn’t want to be with you.’ It’s that I don’t feel like, I mean it doesn’t come natural to me [anymore], well, to even talk affectionately to him. Because, I mean, sometimes we would go to the bar⁵⁰, when he had just arrived – I would stay for a little while, I would feel bad, I would leave and [go home]. I would go home or to Jhoselyn’s place, or my other sister’s – I would stay there. It’s that I didn’t feel like being at home. I mean, I was... I don’t know... I was afraid of him. I would look at his face and I was terrified of him. Yes.

Well, now... Now I cannot throw him out [of the apartment]. He’ll grow tired one day, but... I don’t, I mean, my feelings, they won’t change at all. To feel something for him. Not anymore. (Interview with Elia Vargas. Bilbao, September 2015)

Situations that took place during my fieldwork in Bolivia, such as the one with Pati described above, shed light on aspects of migration and migrancy that had already been relayed to me by participants whom I had interviewed in Bilbao. Elia had told me about the violence she had endured before coming to Bolivia, but meeting other women like her, as well as hanging out with her in a different context, made me understand her story differently. It made it clear to me how ingrained those experiences were in the options she considered viable for her to pursue in her life, as well as how she was relating to her (ex-)husband⁵¹ after she had left him.

Part of what makes women bear the work that is ascribed to them is because they bear so much more. We are taught not to question that load, that responsibility. It is we who are responsible for boys and men’s actions, whether they are our sons, our brothers, our lovers, or our fathers. We are taught to love them regardless; their anger and violence towards us can always be seen from another perspective than the pain it causes; it is because they find us beautiful, they desire us, they love us (Federici 2012). They just do not know how to manage and show their

50 One of Elia’s sisters holds a lease to a bar/café in Bilbao where the whole family usually meets up on the weekends to eat and drink together.

51 Elia speaks of him as either her ex-husband or ‘the father of my daughters’, creating discursive and emotional distance between him and her. However, they are still sharing an apartment in Bilbao.

emotions in a less aggressive way. Pati was not advised to leave her violent husband; she would have nowhere to go. Elia did not fall out of love with her husband until she saw, with her own eyes, how he disregarded her for another woman. His beatings, his controlling behavior, and the death of their child due to his negligence were not enough for her to change her feelings for him. Only when she truly understood that he did not in fact love only her, was it enough. And even so, as the interview excerpt above shows, it was impossible to fully escape him, despite running to the other side of the world.

The exchange between man and woman entails him bestowing upon her the recognition of her desirability so that she might feel worthy as a person, as a human – you are nobody ‘till somebody loves you. By attaining a man’s attraction you might prove to yourself and the world that you are beautiful, you are good. You exist within patriarchy’s scale of lives worth living. In return a woman gives him her all. Her labor, her body, her life. It was not until Elia understood that Walter did not bestow his desire solely upon her, that she had enough. That she decided to break free, and take away her love and her labor from their relationship. She could not stop him from setting up camp within her new life in Bilbao, but she managed to stake out a larger degree of autonomy. While she still cooks for him and cleans the house he lives in, she earns her own money – more than him, she is able to support her daughters economically on her own, and she is surrounded by her sisters and their families in her daily life. She is more protected and freer than in Bolivia, even if this entails working in a precarious and racialized sector of the labor market.

Elia’s Trade-off: Structural for Physical and Psychological Violence

Now I’m also [working] with an elderly woman, but now I barely do the ironing. They let me just care for the lady. I mean, bathe her, take her out on walks. [...] [The employers] are very good. Sometimes they go out of town for weeks, a week, and leave me as an *interna*. And I stay, do the cooking, the shopping... Just the two of us. I cook for both of us and then I take her out for a walk. Three days a week it’s bath time, I bathe her, I change her clothes. Well, I clean and iron her clothes. [My employers – the elderly woman’s daughter and son-in-law] do their own ironing. Both of them are retired. [...]

And well, I'm doing good. [...] For now, I'm managing with this job. The father [of my daughters] has worked three days [a week]. And I have to pay for rent, electricity, water, and my daughters' [education]. [...] Why should I complain anymore... I came here, and well, I arrived and after a month their father came too. I left him there because I didn't want him to come. [...] I told him 'you can have everything [we own], I don't care, I'm going, I'm leaving with my two daughters and that's it'. They were the only thing I had during those years. 'They are the only thing that has made it worth it [to be with you],' I told him. Because the rest... The rest... I don't even want to remember because, I've lived in such a bad way that... [...]

He was violent. Or he got drunk, and he would hit me. I mean, in my house, it was worse than... I don't know. Well, sometimes at work she'll tell me 'you go do the shopping, eat what you want, call your daughters. She says that, my *jefa*⁵², because she doesn't know that the father of my daughters is here. And I... There [in Bolivia] I was worse [off] than *una empleada*⁵³, like we say there. I was [even deprived of] the house. We had animals – cows, chickens, everything... I mean, but he was the owner. I didn't have anything. If we had money, it was the same – everything went in his pockets. I didn't have anything. [...] He was the one who had to do the shopping, or when we had to buy clothes for the girls, or buy something for me, *he* would do it. And he came here. And here, the very first day, I told him I didn't want us to be working together [like before]. 'You work your job, it's up to you what you want to do, and I will do my [thing],' I told him. (Interview with Elia Vargas. Bilbao, September 2015)

Silvia Federici (2012), in line with Rita Segato (2003), argues that productive and reproductive labor has been gendered, ordered, and hierarchized through capitalism. Segato has done extensive research on violence and femicide, and has been part of international committees and legal processes working to fight this phenomenon. Like Federici, she argues that violence in itself is not simply a matter of the relationship between a man and a woman, men and women, or gender relations at

52 (Female) boss. Most of the research participants referred to their employer(s) by this word, indicating that it is the woman of the household they usually relate to when it comes to their work.

53 The word used in Bolivia for domestic worker.

large, but an expression of how capitalism works. Gendered violence is produced through historical relations that instill a logic in us that not only allows for, but also fosters, violence as a response to the precarity that the capitalist system generates. Federici and Segato have a common understanding of violence and gendered division of labor as intrinsic and connected expressions of a global system of capitalism that has been produced historically. In pointing to how the individual stories of some of the research participants have been produced, I underline this systemic connection to global processes – their lives and how they pan out are also expressions of a global and (post)colonial capitalist system.

During the interview when I asked Elia about her work and how she felt about it, she kept circling back to the story of her (ex-)husband, the father of her daughters. What she went through, and in part still goes through, with him fades in comparison to any problem she might have at work or in other aspects of life. She spoke of a complete lack of economic autonomy, as well as physical and emotional violence. But it seems it is especially the lack of autonomy that has scarred her. The way he would control every aspect of her life, and especially how she had no control over or access to the resources she needed to provide for and nurture her daughters. And now she does. She insists she lives her life separately from her ‘sergeant’, as she calls him. At least as much as possible. Even if he followed her to Spain and lurks in the shadows of her life. Insists on being part of it. He lives behind a curtain they have set up in the living room. He watches her. Goes to the bar that Elia’s sister owns, and where Elia does a couple of shifts a week. He plays the guitar with Elia’s brothers in law. And he insists it’s all for his daughters, although he hardly provides for them economically.

Suffering as Relative?

Whatever exploitation might take place is no cause for suffering in comparison to what Elia has already lived through. This sort of reasoning was a common trope in most of the interviews I did – that suffering is relative. Another example of this was given by María Cabrerías when I asked her whether she had sustained racial discrimination.

I had to endure things like that. Or sometimes, many times, in some workplaces, harassment, right? And... But I knew... I have always known how to bear those things, right? And I said, ‘well ok, I have

already lived what I lived through in my childhood. This is nothing.’ To me it was nothing, right? An insult of that kind that... happened. I’d say ‘He’s stupid, I won’t pay him any mind,’ like that. Those things, you see? (Interview with María, Bilbao, July 2013).

When I in Chapter 8 discuss the relationships between employers and employees, and the sacrifices and losses care workers articulate as part of migrancy in Chapter 9, the circumstances that many care workers have left behind when they migrated to Spain are highly meaningful. This is not in order to in any way justify the structural violence in place within the Spanish care work sector, or the global market of care, but rather in order to understand why it is that people decide to bear the burdens they bear, and from where they reap their resilience. There are often more urgent issues operating in the life of care workers beyond what takes place in the workplace itself. It is therefore important to note that these circumstances are in themselves also created within a global system of socioeconomic difference that holds local particularities, but in which patriarchy has its stronghold no matter where you look. In effect, those who become care workers in Spain through migration, arguably do so by escaping one circumstance of patriarchy and entering another.

Mothering and Daughtering: Gendered Roles of Caring

During the month that Elia and I spent together in Bolivia she talked often about her (ex) husband and the situation she was living when it came to him. She reflected on the violence of the relationship – often with a touch of irony. On one occasion, the two of us were heading to a *kermés*. Elia was in a good mood, looking forward to hanging out and having drinks with her cousin and his wife, who were picking us up:

Elia did her make-up in the mirror hanging under the roof in the patio. She put on green eye shadow and she laughed towards me, exclaiming ‘mi mamá me pregunta por qué me pinto los ojos de verde y yo le digo “para no perder el costumbre” [‘my mom asks me why I put green make-up on my eyes, and I tell her “in order not to shake the habit”]’. She laughs again. She says that back then her mom knew all the while, but she never interfered. ‘Mi mamá lo sabía todo,

*cuando yo venía con el sombrero sabía que venía con los ojos verdes*⁵⁴. *Mi mamá sabía todo y no se sabía*⁵⁵ *meter. Y aún así... [My mom knew [about] everything – when I came with my hat on, she knew I was coming with my black eyes [from the beatings]. My mom knew [about] everything, and she didn't interfere. And still...]. She says that even if her mom never interfered he didn't let her see her, almost. (Fieldnotes. El Torno, February 23, 2016)*

The translations of the phrases in Spanish are addressed in brackets, with comments in the footnotes, due to the intricacies and pitfalls of translating the meaning of what Elia is expressing here. She is saying that her mother tolerated her husband's treatment of her daughter – she did not try to come between them or try to influence Elia's feelings for him. Just like she tolerated Pati's husband's violence towards his wife. Elia is, however, not expressing any feelings of blame for this. On the contrary, throughout the time I spent with Elia and her mother, Elia's love and affection for her mother was nearly tangible in its presence. It was expressed both verbally and through her actions. Elia tries to travel back to Bolivia as often as possible to visit her, and bring her to visit all of them in Bilbao. The other siblings do not travel back as often as she does, and this was pointed out by both her and other family members living in the El Torno area. In other words, the unwritten rules of how women handle the type of abuse Elia has lived, and still lives, with do not seem to entail other women stepping into and attempting to change the situation. What happens within a (heterosexual) couple stays between them. This is in line with how Doña Verónica, her friend Alejandra, and tía Inma discussed what had happened with Pati:

Doña Alejandra and la tía Inma visited in the morning, and we had eggs and humintas for breakfast. They started discussing the issue of domestic violence (my term for it). They said that before it was allowed, but now you are just tonta [stupid/dumb] if you let it happen. There are laws now that say that a man cannot beat a woman. Well,

54 To have a green eye in Spanish translates to having a black eye/a shiner in English.

55 The verb *saber* in Spanish translates to 'to know' in English. However, in the Bolivian context it is also used to indicate habit. Therefore, when Elia says that her mother 'didn't know to interfere' (*no se sabía meter*) she is not blaming her mother for not going between her and her husband, but rather stating the fact that despite her mother 'staying out of it' her husband did not let Elia and her mother visit each other; he kept controlling their relationship.

before there was also a law, but nobody enforced it, now they do. Women have to learn to defend themselves. Tia Inma told a story about somebody she knew who let herself be beaten time and time again until one day she got so angry and she grabbed a ladle and beat her husband back. Over the face, across the shins, and the knees. She hurt him a lot. And after that he respected her. You have to fight back. (Fieldnotes. El Torno, March 10, 2016)

Responsibility for resolving the abusive situation is thus seemingly left with the woman/the victim in the relationship; she herself must fight back. She herself must break free, which is what Elia attempted to do when she left for Spain. When her ‘sergeant’ followed, there wasn’t much she could do. And so she stays, because he stays.

Being ‘Both Mother and Father’

Many of the people I interviewed in Bilbao were working mothers. A notion that was repeated in many interviews, as well as in casual conversation, was that they considered themselves ‘both mother and father’ of their children. When I asked about what was meant by this expression, the answers often circled the ‘traditional’ roles of provider versus carer – of economic versus emotional support. While my impression from the fieldwork in Bolivia is that these roles are, in practice, intermeshed in most families, the *ideal* roles are arguably explicitly gendered. These ideals inform the decisions people make regarding moving abroad. The responsibility bearing on women to care for each other intergenerationally is circumscribed by masculinity in different and significant ways. Although how relationships between men and women develop – with or without aspects of violence – is one important way in which masculinity shapes relationships between women, another significant aspect is that of how mothering, both locally and transnationally, is circumscribed by men’s (prescribed) role vis-à-vis their children.

Emerging from Elia’s narrative is also the contextual, and cultural, expectation of a father financially caring for his children, as well as exercising some form of authority. Her (ex-)husband’s failure to fill this role, rather than his abuse of her, is what Elia criticizes ‘in public’ when she talks about why she no longer considers them a couple. He doesn’t contribute to paying for their daughters’ education, pay his share of the rent, or contribute to the household economy by buying groceries or

paying the electricity bill. During the last week of Elia's stay with her mother in El Torno she got news from Bilbao that the washing machine had broken; 'of course' Walter had done nothing to get it fixed. Elia cried from exasperation when she said that this chore and expense would be waiting for her when she got back. Not only does Elia's frustration regarding his lack of economic contribution, and people in Bolivia's outraged reactions to her stories, speak of the gendered expectations people hold regarding division of labor within a traditional family structure. It also speaks volumes of the economic precarity that Elia, and many others like her, lives with. As does the fact that this precarity takes center stage in Elia's rage and people's outrage regarding Walter's behavior. When life is so centered on surviving economically, there is not enough energy left to fight against gendered violence.

The resolve involved in the decision to migrate for the sake of one's children therefore often has as much to do with 'economic' issues as it has to do with, for instance, escape from violence. This is not because people are simply looking for ways to make an easy 'buck' abroad. Rather, if a woman is to transgress the gendered scripts assigned her body and carry the economic responsibility for her family, then being able to earn more than what she would be able to do in Bolivia can become a major motivating factor, regardless of whether her family accompanies her to Spain or not. Another example of this is Gladys and how she, despite being well educated and holding a job she enjoyed and earned 'well' from, still decided it would be best to leave for Spain. This was despite her knowing that she would lose the possibility to practice her trade.

Coloniality of power is, according to Maldonado-Torres (2007), founded on economic dominance, and so Bolivia's disenfranchised place within the global economy becomes part of Bolivian people's everyday socioeconomic practices and life decisions. It becomes part of how gender can be practiced. My research material speaks of how economic practices are embedded in gendered and colonial relations and discourses, and vice versa – and together they structure the room for maneuver available when one attempts to create a viable living situation for oneself and one's children. It is, then, in part through patriarchy that the coloniality of Being manifests itself in the bodies of the research participants. It makes women enter into a relationship of dependency with (their) men, in order to hold social value. And, as will be discussed

further in upcoming chapters, it allows for women to take on the role of carers within Spanish families. So once Elia moved to Spain, dynamics of both patriarchy and coloniality took on a different guise, although the overall basis for exchange between particular bodies remained the same.

A Choice in the Matter, or a Matter of Choice? Induced Migration through Gendered Scripts

Ian Chambers argues that ‘the induced, often brutally enforced, migrations of individuals and whole populations from “peripheries” towards Euro-American metropolises and “Third World” cities’ are ‘set in train by “modernization”’ (1994:5-6). I would add that migration is also induced by locally scripted practices of social differentiation. As I have begun to show in this chapter, scrutinizing gendered practices and discourses is particularly relevant to understanding care work related migration from Bolivia to Spain. Emigration has become a solve-all solution for many Bolivian citizens due to (embedded) economic circumstances, but my material reveals that this way of problem solving entails scripts of gendering within many spheres.

Butler’s (2004) notion of performativity helps us understand how representation and practice come together to produce an ontology of self. This goes for gender as well as other forms of social differentiation; performativity is as a way of continuous *becoming*. Malin Mc Glinn also draws on Butler in calling this process ‘social magic’, ‘a social process in which, for example, women are produced as women’, through ‘the magical transformation that occurs when someone becomes or performs what is expected of that someone’ (Mc Glinn 2018:18). As discussed above, this ontology of self is also produced through the coloniality of Being (Mignolo 2003, Maldonado-Torres 2007), where who and what people are produced as is connected to how they are placed within globalized and localized hierarchies of (post)colonial power relations.

Tania Bastia (2005, 2007, 2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2013) has done extensive research on migration and mobility within and from Bolivia, and towards Spain. She argues that while one might understand women’s choice to migrate from Bolivia as a form of autonomy, the decision to do so is not made in a vacuum. Rather, it is a response to structural challenges largely prompted by neo-liberal policy reform (Bastia 2013). She refers particularly to ‘the structural adjustment programmes implemented [by the IMF] during the 1980s and 1990s, which led to women

shouldering a greater share of families' financial responsibilities' (Bastia 2013:161). So while women do seem to increasingly make important life decisions autonomously, these decisions are made 'in a context of decreasing control over their own lives' (ibid.).

Elia and Gladys' stories are therefore not about whether or not they were able to make choices when it comes to their own international mobility. We all make choices. What must be considered is rather whether or not other options would be plausible when facing these different challenges, and thereby what possibilities they held when attempting to construct a different life for themselves. In addition, it is vital to underscore the reasons for which changing one's direction in life seemed as a necessary thing to do. While these are only two of the stories about decision-making I was presented throughout my fieldwork, the issue of choosing to leave Bolivia was something I discussed with most of the participants, either in interviews or informally in conversation.

As indicated by Bastia (2013), structural adjustment programs, amongst other neoliberal policy interventions based on (post)colonial power relations, have produced increasingly precarious living conditions for a large majority of Bolivian citizens. In the conversations with participants the economic component of their decision-making processes was thus underlined time and time again. 'Everyone' left Bolivia with the intention of achieving a higher and more stable income, and (most often) thereby be able to re-establish themselves economically 'back home' after a few years of hard work. Many aimed to earn enough to pay family debts, start a business, buy land, and/or construct a family house, and then return to Bolivia. Nevertheless, their decision-making processes regarding emigration were not purely 'economic'.

Choices regarding migration or anything else are always circumscribed by positionality and thereby perceptions regarding what options are the most viable in particular situations. From a moral economy perspective, choice is about how much adversity is bearable (Palomera & Vetta 2016). The question that contributes to making the global market of care possible would therefore be about where the research participants drew the line. At what point did they decide that enough was enough? What did Spain represent to them in order for them to consider migration as a solution to their adversities? While the concrete answers to these questions vary for every person, it can safely be assumed that as women, the circumstances leading up to the point of unbearability will

most likely be tied to the how masculinity circumscribes our lives. Spain as a destination then provides some form of hope – a hope for difference.

Chapter Conclusions: Gendered and Colonial Scripts of Migration

This chapter has addressed how subjective gendered and colonial experience has shaped the decision-making processes of workers within the global market of care. Personal history, plans, and dreams, and the effects of these on individual subjective experiences of choice stand out from the narratives above. From an economic perspective migration is put forth as a way of acquiring resources, the need and desire for these resources are produced by historical processes involving abysmal differences in power relations on micro, meso and macro levels. Ultimately, we are all taught to live certain lives, to draft particular experiences for our lives, to make certain decisions, and to feel certain emotions. This is taught by those who raise us, and by the society that surrounds us, which again is shaped by historical and sociopolitical processes (cf. Bastia 2013, Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Massumi 2002). However, economic exchange involves emotion and subjectivities, and these emotions become ‘laws of the market’ (Callon 1998). Choices are based on these laws, these emotions, but which emotions trigger which decisions depends on the experience and expectations of the particular actor, whether we are talking about choices made by migrated workers, or by the state as an actor through e.g. legislation. For Elia it was the fear and heartbreak triggered by her (ex-)husband that thwarted her agency, while for Gladys it was her family’s loss of her brother and the ensuing economic misfortune.

I have drawn on experiences lived and reflected on by the research participants that elucidate how the scripts of gender at hand in the contexts they have moved away from not only makes migration possible, but also induces migration as a choice. In this sense gendered relations, particularly local and global practices of and discourses on masculinity as a pivot around which women must make their life decisions, become a fundamental building block of the global market of care, and of the state of migrancy that becomes the everyday for migrated people from the Global South in Spain. Migrancy at large is historically produced through colonial relations that the current global economy is a remnant

of (Mignolo 2005). The migrancy constructed in the relationship between Bolivia and Spain, specifically, is generated through both racialized and gendered scripts and plays out in particular ways through, for instance, language, culture, and religion (see Chapter 3 and 9). Consequently, the bodies that are carried by the research participants into the realm of the workplace are already part of defining what makes things (im)possible. In a sense, they autodefine themselves, and they are inevitably interpreted in different ways in different contexts.

Additionally, the journeys of people who migrate ‘are as much about those who stay and the contexts from which they begin as they are about mobility and relocation’ (Lee & Pratt 2011:225). By entering into a life of geographical mobility one does not necessarily leave relationships behind – one continues to be a mother, a daughter, a friend – but the circumstances through which one has to manage the relationships tied to these different roles change. The sociopolitical context that shapes daily actions and emotions changes, not only in terms of the geographical distance between those who have migrated and their loved ones at ‘home’, but also in terms of their status-producing experiences of migrancy in the receiving context. Women who were not born in Spain carry with them experiences and emotions that are linked to personal histories mostly unknown or ignored by those who employ them in the country of destination. But these experiences are still expressed and exchanged through affection in the place they reside and work (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010:6), and in their interaction with Bilbao-as-context in general.

As I will discuss further in the coming chapters, anthropological gift theory can help us understand exactly how the particular economy of the market of care is embedded in (global) society, and thereby how exchange is imbued with emotions (re)produced through experiences and expectations related to exchange. Because exchange (or economy) is about reciprocal relations, and these can never be ontologically separated from the power relations at large in society. This is regardless of which scales we are contemplating – whether it be the intimacy of the relationship between husband and wife, mother and daughters, employers and employees, or state legislators within a globalized labor market. The gendered scripts that have contributed to these experiences are, however, not dissimilar from those governing the gendered experiences of women in Bilbao, or any other European context. The global connec-

tions (Tsing 2005) that take part in the global market of care, are bound by the understandings of gender that serve capitalism, as they have served colonialism and still serve coloniality (e.g. Federici 2012, Schiwy 2007). These scripts are therefore part of the colonial legacy present in the everyday lives of workers within the global market of care, both before and after they leave Bolivia for Europe. Women who employ other women to do what they are expected to do themselves in their own homes, arguably contribute to uphold the postcolonial and capitalist system that also take part in their own oppression. Ultimately these scripts are about a global economic structure in which people's functions are largely scripted according to gender, race, and class.

6. REPLACEABLE, TEMPORARY, DEPENDENT: REPRODUCING MIGRANCY THROUGH IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

YES, there is violence here in Getxo.

[The fact] that domestic employment is feminized and thereby [badly] paid IS VIOLENCE.

If your job is for 12 hours [a day] and you are paid for 6, 7, or 8... IT'S VIOLENCE.

If they ask more of you [at work] than what they hired you for IT'S VIOLENCE.

If they do not let you receive medical assistance IT'S VIOLENCE.

To let you die in the house of your employer and choose to ignore you IS VIOLENCE.

That they pay you €2.50 an hour IS VIOLENCE.

Not giving you paid vacations according to the law IS VIOLENCE.

Making you pay ALL of your social security in order to regularize your 'papers' IS VIOLENCE.

That the authorities turn a deaf ear to the reality of domestic employment IS VIOLENCE.

That part of your domestic work is to do sexual favors IS VIOLENCE.

That they tell you that in your town this does NOT happen IS VIOLENCE.

I am your employee, NOT your slave. I have the right to live with dignity.

Precarity IS VIOLENCE. (Mujeres con Voz, November 25, 2015)⁵⁶

Introduction

The message above was posted on *Mujeres con Voz*' blog on the International Day for Violence against Women, November 25, 2015. This was shortly after a care worker of Nicaraguan origin – Verónica del Carmen Serrano Martínez – died of a heart attack on October 13 while working as an *interna* in a municipality adjacent to Bilbao (*El Correo*, October 21, 2015, *La Prensa*, November 5, 2015). Del Carmen was only 28 years old and had been living in Spain for four years when it happened. Her daughter was four years old when she left her in her own mother's care in Nicaragua, and she had not seen either of them since then. Del Carmen was in an irregular administrative situation when she died, and therefore had neither work contract, paid social security, the ability to travel home, nor repatriation insurance. The family she was living with and working for did not take any responsibility for the actions needed after her death. They turned her belongings in to the police without letting del Carmen's family know she had died. This was left to her cousin and a friend, who were two of the few people she knew in Spain. They also organized to raise the funds to repatriate her body so that her mother and daughter would be able to bury her and say their goodbyes (*Mujeres con Voz*, October 18, 2015). Verónica del Carmen was finally buried in Somoto, Nicaragua, on November 1, 2015. The text above was one of several protests voiced on the International Day for Violence against Women against the structural violence that takes place in the global market of care – a structural violence that often takes the shape of socioeconomic precarity in the Spanish labor market.

While Chapter 5 discussed the gendered and racialized structures, discourses, and practices in place that shape the decision-making process around migration for Bolivian women who work in the Spanish care work sector, this chapter considers how precarity is constructed through Spanish legislation, and becomes a part of what I call migrancy. I focus in particular on immigration law – *Ley de extranjería* – and how

⁵⁶ Taken from *Mujeres con Voz*'s blog.

it is connected to the global market of care, contemplating the encounter between the law and migrated women. Apart from the interview material with care workers in which they explain experiences regarding the law and its practices, the material I draw on includes an interview with lawyer Isabel Quintana, and reflections on the legislation itself. I argue that the role immigration law plays in the global market of care underscores the notion of the replaceability of women in two ways. It makes it possible to replace Spanish and Basque women for ‘Other’ women in their own homes. It also facilitates quick replacements of workers that do not ‘work out’ by always supplying new migrated workers in ever more precarious situations, and continues to support Spain’s secondary economy and labor market through ‘befallen irregularity’ (González-Enríquez 2010, Triandafyllidou 2010b, Triandafyllidou & Vogel 2010). A result of this is that workers must to a large extent comply with whatever is asked of them – and as such diminish their own needs and subjectivity – in order to keep their job and regular or irregular residency. The social power play that this entails will be discussed further in the next two chapters. I start this chapter by discussing the global market of care in relation to the Spanish welfare state, before delving into my discussion of Spanish legislation of immigration, including family reunification. I argue that this legislation and its consequences (re)produce migrated workers as replaceable and temporary within the care work sector in Spain, while it also contributes to a mutual dependency between workers and the state through Spain’s dual economy (Bhabha 2004).

Substituting Some Women for ‘Others’: The Emergence of the Spanish Welfare Regime

Here, until ... the seventies, eighties... [care work] was an issue which was placed completely [...] with the families. I mean, it was the family who had the responsibility, to the extent that a woman who did not want to [do care work], for example, was... little less than the devil! I mean ‘look at her, she doesn’t want to do care work!’ ... Well, sure, you were a monster!

And of course, what happens? That to the extent that the woman starts to rebel against that... destiny... that imposition of what ‘I have to do’, and she begins to go into employment, beyond the domestic sphere... Who will tend to those tasks? Certainly, if the institutions, the [public] administration, do not take ownership, and the women

say ‘enough! I can’t!’, or ‘I won’t’, or ‘it’s impossible to reconcile [work and family life]’⁵⁷! If nobody takes responsibility for all of this, it is not my responsibility – it is a collective responsibility!’ Then what do we do?

What we do is [that] we substitute some women for others. I mean, we get out [of the domestic sphere], and others come to occupy it. But the structure remains the same. It remains unchanged. It hasn’t been altered one bit. We have exchanged some women for others. But neither the [public] administration, nor the men, have taken responsibility. I mean, no piece has been moved! What I’m saying is that everything else stays exactly the same. No downfall [of the system] has been generated, nor a debate. (Interview with Isabel Quintana, March 2015)

The citation above is from my interview with lawyer and care workers’ rights activist Isabel Quintana. She articulates how local particularities of the architecture of the ‘European welfare state’ are important to consider when examining the practices regarding care and domestic work in the Spanish context. As was discussed in Chapter 2, compared to that of other countries, the Spanish welfare state did not really gather momentum until after the so-called *Transition* (to democracy), beginning with the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975. Despite there being certain social benefits made to ‘the poor’ during post civil war Spain, it was only with the Transition that the groundwork for a comprehensive welfare system was laid (Fuentes & Callejo 2011, Moreno & Sarasa 1993, Navarro 2004). In comparison with other parts of Europe, the Spanish system can be characterized as a Mediterranean or ‘Southern’ welfare state (cf. Esping Andersen 1990, Ferrera 1996). It is relatively limited in its public funding of services that in other places are considered part of the public welfare system, within, for instance, health, education, and child and elderly care. Part of these sectors, as Quintana pointed to in our interview, is covered by a privatized and individualized care regime, where families hire workers to cover the care needs of family members within the family home. At the same time, Spain has a strong tradition of labor unions that has led to a highly protected labor market for those

57 The notion of *conciliación* in the Spanish context is used to talk about the reconciliation between work and family life, and is an important topic on the political agenda addressing gender equality. See for instance Peterson 2007.

sections encompassed by the unions. However, the parallel prevalence of a strong secondary economy and labor market (cf. Triandafyllidou 2010a, 2010b) means that many workers stand on the outside of this protectionism, especially those in sectors commonly dominated by an ‘immigrant’ workforce, such as the care work sector.

In our interview, Quintana explained how the Transition led to an inclusion of Basque and Spanish women in the workforce, but failed to redefine what care actually means in the Spanish context, and place the responsibility for it in the hands of the public system, not individual women. Partly for this reason, the care work sector has traditionally been immersed in the secondary economy, while it legally has seemingly also been considered as nearly non-economic. This has to do with how the sector is signified as non-productive, in that the work carried out within it is the (feminine) work ascribed to the family home (cf. Federici 2012). As will be discussed in Chapter 7, while attempts have been made to regulate the sector, this has not been sufficiently followed up in practice by the authorities.

Quintana also underlined a second important dynamic that many feminist scholars of care and domestic work have discussed, and which is part of the main argument of this chapter. This regards how gendered division of labor, and of the public and the private, can remain so by relying on other social inequalities, such as those based on class and race. Rosie Cox (2006) calls this the ‘servant problem’; and states that the growing tendency of hiring domestic and care workers ‘is at best an individual solution to a social problem. At worst [it] is the use of another human being to enhance and display wealth and status’ (2006:3-4). As is visible in Quintana’s explanation, these different perspectives are both employed in the Spanish context when attempting to frame the issue of care. Depending on how you define the care ‘problem’, and where you place the responsibility for its solution, you will come to different understandings and solutions. Quintana argues that if care work were viewed as the responsibility of society at large, not of individual women of individual families, then the labor market sector where it is carried out would look very different.

So.... When this [care] holds a different position, another vantage point. That it is something collective, that is public, well the type of politics, of legislation, you do it with a different ambition. When you

base the idea [of care] on that it is, first of all, a personal or private responsibility, and then later we will see if we can do something about it in the public sector, then the construction is completely different. Of course, then ‘if you don’t want to do this, then that’s fine, I will respect you. By all means, I will not impose this on you with a hammer! But let’s see how you manage this. Find a solution. Because it is your personal problem.’ (Interview with Isabel Quintana, March 2015)

This personal problem of who will mind the kids, clean the home, or care for disabled or elderly people, is often solved by outsourcing the work to other (or ‘Other’) women who are willing to take on the reproductive work that is originally assigned to Spanish or Basque women. The care and domestic work sector has therefore been marked profoundly by class in most contexts (Anderson 2000, Bush 2000). It is a sector that prescribes economic inequality as a basis for its existence, particularly prior to when women began working outside their own households. Evidently, this has been the case also in Spain. As long as it was only the upper classes that could afford care and domestic services, the workforce that serviced them was mostly drawn from the rural areas of Spain and into the cities (Arango & Finotelli 2009, Escrivá & Díaz-Gorfinkiel 2011, Fuentes & Callejo 2011). However, as is seen in numerous other contexts, caste and race are equally prevalent factors marking this sort of labor. The caste system in India and slavery in the Americas and its aftermaths are prime examples (Bush 2000, Barua et al. 2016). As such, the Spanish care work sector becomes not only about a gendered, but also about a global and racialized, division of labor. As middle class women in Spain have become an increasingly active part of the labor market, the development and maintenance of the care work sector is becoming continuously more dependent on ‘migrant’ labor, and in post-colonial Spain this ‘new’ division of labor arguably holds an important racial component (cf. Pradas 2010).

While the legal practices leading to the racialization of the Spanish care work sector rely heavily on the concrete ways in which the law itself has been written, it is important to note that these practices are done within a particular historically scripted cultural context (see Chapter 2). I now turn to the *Ley de extranjería*, and to the experiences that it has caused for the research participants.

Ley de Extranjería: Temporariness as a Means for Precarity

I don't know how to tell you... The following is what happened: I sent in the papers, or well, the restaurant where I was working sent them. They wanted me to stay on. [...] And, well, they [the authorities] declined [my request]. The papers... And I was worried, because they send you an expulsion letter, and they give you ninety days to get out [of the country]. And I said to myself 'they won't catch me if I'm an *interna*'. And that's why I left and I looked for a job as an *interna*. But even there... Because they'll catch you wherever, right? And with the person with whom I was working, with the elderly man, his children are lawyers. And, look, I was working there and they saw that I was worried. And I said 'any moment now they will come and... I don't want to go outside because the police will come and... they will send me back to my country'. (Interview with Ana Soto, Bilbao, July 2013)

Ana Soto came directly to Bilbao by airplane prior to 2007, back when Bolivians could still travel without tourist visas to Spain. With her assertive nature she was able to pass immigration control without being questioned too long or extensively about the motives for her trip and she established herself within the Basque labor market without too many obstacles. She explained to me that the Spanish labor market was still in demand of foreign workers back then. She first worked in a restaurant, but was unable to get papers through that job. Her application for regular residency was denied and she feared deportation. She then looked for a job as a live-in maid, an *interna*, for an elderly man, thinking she then would avoid being too 'public'; too visible, and thus not run into the police who would expose her illegitimate presence on Spanish territory. These experiences would seem familiar to most of the research participants. In one way or another, their arrival and lives in the Basque Country and Spain have been shaped by irregularity and illegality. Irregularity therefore shapes what options seem most feasible to migrated people when it comes to rooting oneself in Basque and Spanish society and labor market, and thereby their ways of filling their roles as providers and care takers for their families either locally or transnationally.

Spanish legislation on immigration in part delineates the terms under which Spanish and Basque households can integrate foreign-born work-

ers in their family life. This law on foreigners – *Ley de extranjería* – has been conceived within a postcolonial context that, arguably, reaffirms the relationship between Spain and its former colonies. It facilitates migration to Spain from particular areas of the world, especially Latin America, while it also reincorporates migrated people into an existing logic of racialized scripts that in turn influences labor market dynamics.

Ana's migrancy is but one of many within the Basque care work sector. Her story was made possible by the encounters she had along the way. Ana was, in a sense, lucky. After a while she was offered the chance to marry her employer as a way around the bureaucratic paper mill. His children, already adults at the time, helped with the process. Overcoming irregularity through marrying a Spanish citizen also enabled Ana to bring her two daughters to live with her, as part of this new family arrangement. Transforming her role vis-à-vis her employer from that of care worker to wife, did not suppose much change in the relationship between them, nor in her responsibilities in the house. As such it was a good arrangement, despite further emplacing her life within the Spanish domestic sphere, and underscoring the seeming replaceability of women in general on account of some of their reproductive labor. Encounters shaping care workers' lives, such as the one between Ana and her care receiver-cum-husband, can seem arbitrary, but are in fact constructed by parameters such as the economic conjuncture and Spanish law on paper and in practice. Ana's story of marrying the person she was hired to care for is not the most common way of overcoming irregularity, but neither is it uncommon. Both the legal parameters that granted her residency on these grounds, as well as other, more frequent grounds are part of the parameters of the amnesty program within Spanish Law on Foreigners that is especially important to migrated people working within the secondary labor market.

Perpetuating Precarity and Migrancy through Temporari- ness

Triandafyllidou defines befallen irregularity as 'the case of irregular migrants who have managed to legalize their status temporarily through an amnesty programme, but who [have] shifted back into irregular status because they were unable to fulfill the conditions for renewing their permits' (2010:8). This dynamic is particularly prevalent in Southern Europe, including Spain (González-Enríquez 2010, Triandafyllidou

2010, Triandafyllidou & Vogel 2010), where regularization, or amnesty, programs have been a common policy tool in the ‘fight’ against irregular migration (Boswell & Geddes 2010, Andersson 2016b, Triandafyllidou 2010a). For the research participants the *arraigo* scheme has become the most common way to regulate their status. Meanwhile, and because this form of amnesty ties a person’s residency regularity to her labor regularity, the secondary economy in Spain has become closely entangled with a ‘migrant’ labor force. As mentioned, this conditions immigrated workers to depend on their employers not only economically, but also in many cases legally.

The pervasiveness of befallen irregularity in Spain means that it is important to distinguish between different variables of irregularity, and constellations thereof, particularly when it comes to residency and labor. Within migration studies, irregularity tied to migration is most often discussed in regard to whether or not people have attained the right to stay within a particular sovereign territory. However, Boswell and Geddes outline four different variables of irregularity that often intersect and that produce different constellations of irregularity that can have vastly different outcomes for a migrated person, depending on the context and her resources to resolve her situation. These are: (ir)regular entry, (ir)regular residence status, (ir)regular status of employment, and (ir)regular nature of employment (Boswell 2010 & Geddes). They give examples of different possible combinations of these variables that hold very different outcomes for the person in question. A person can, for instance, enter a territory according to the law, attain a regular status, but work irregularly within a regulated sector, i.e. without paying taxes. Another person might enter a country in a regular way, but overstay their initial residency or tourist permit and thereby live irregularly and be forced to work irregularly, either within the regular or irregular labor market. This has been the most common trajectory for the people I have worked with through my research, as it is for most migrated workers within the care sector in Spain (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015).

These legal practices arguably result in a supply of a growing racialized and precarious working class from Spain’s former colonies within which individuals fall in and out of irregular administrative statuses (Calavita 2005). They also contribute to reestablishing a balance of class and gender relations ‘as they were’, with the reliance on the colonial ‘Other’ to execute the work that Spanish and Basque women (and men)

no longer engage with. The circumscription of the colonial Other to a particular part of the labor market and economy, is arguably a factor in the construction of migrancy as a state of Being.

Regularization on the Grounds of 'Belonging through Social Ties'

The *LO (Ley Orgánica) 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social* includes both rights and restrictions of foreign residents in Spain. It is a reformed version of the 1985 law. In comparison to the latter some progress was made in terms of migrated people's access to 'social resources', which Nogueira and Zalakain (2015:92) credit to Spain's pending entrance in the European Union. These resources were ensured rights to assembly, association, labor unions, strike, education, and so on. After 2000 the law has seen several minor and major reforms, responding to economic conjunctures, global events, and migration 'waves' from different countries and/or regions. Important here is the mentioned 2007 reform targeting Bolivian citizens, where new tourist visa requirements effectively closed the borders for them.

When it comes to the terms under which a person enters Spanish territory, there are different approaches, as immigration for high-skilled workers or asylum seekers⁵⁸ is a different story than the one told by most of the people who have contributed to this thesis (González-Enríquez 2010). For the latter, who often aimed at low or unskilled jobs in the secondary labor market, migration to Spain has meant some sort of irregular scheme. For most people migrating from Latin America, such a scheme entails arriving as tourists either directly to Spain or to another EU member state, and then overstaying. Most of the participants in my research entered Spanish territory in this way and have later opted for obtaining residency through Spain's permanent regularization scheme – *Residency Authorization on the Grounds of Exceptional Cir-*

58 Spain has historically received a very low number of asylum applications due to the relative leniency of its immigration law and its practice. This has meant that even people who have had grounds for applying for asylum have usually preferred to stay in Spain in administrative irregularity before applying for residency through the amnesty program, in the same way as the participants in my research. After the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, the number of asylum seekers has increased, and so have the public outcry and polemics around asylum and refugees, comparable to other countries in Europe. One symptom of this is the entry into Parliament of the far right-wing party Vox after the general elections in April 2019. For more information see, for instance, *El País*, April 29, 2019.

cumstances (Autorizaciones de residencia por circunstancias excepcionales).

Most migrated women in the care work sector in Spain who obtain a residence permit do not directly attain a permanent right to stay in Spain. Rather they acquire a temporary residence permit, which, according to the LO 4/2000 can last from between 91 days and five years. Nogueira and Zalakain (2015:95) point out that there are particularly three types of residency permits issued to migrated women within the care work sector, based on the fact that most of these women migrate to Spain alone and with the intention to work. These permits are as follows: temporary residency based on ‘non-lucrative intentions’, on ‘paid employment’ (*trabajo por cuenta ajena*), or on the grounds of ‘belonging’ (including family reunification).

Of the three grounds for amnesty above, application for residency on the grounds of *arraigo*, or belonging, is the most prevalent among the research participants, as well as for other workers in the care work sector (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015:97). These grounds are by far the most commonly used within Spain’s regularization scheme. Legally, ‘belonging’ can be proven through labor, social, or family ties. Labor ties are proven by submitting evidence of having worked irregularly for at least six months, and having resided irregularly in Spain for at least two years. This would most often entail reporting one’s employers to the authorities, and is therefore seldom used within the care work sector as grounds for rights to stay in one’s application for residency and work permits (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015:97). The same goes for grounds based on family ties, as this would mean proving that you are economically and socially in charge of a descendent family member with Spanish citizenship, which is seldom the case among migrated people working in the care work sector. Ana’s story above is an exception – when a person can prove a marital relationship with a Spanish citizen, this would also be classified as belonging on the grounds of family ties. However, as will be discussed further below, as an increasing number of migrated care workers manage to become Spanish citizens, family reunification is increasing, even if this does not necessarily change how the global market of care is constructed and construed.

Legal Residency through ‘Social Belonging’

A particularly notable part of this amnesty scheme is that migrated people who seek to regularize their residency do so based on official municipal census records – the so-called *padrón* – where they are advised to register themselves upon their (irregular) arrival in Spain, once they acquire an address. It is the certificate of this registration that is used to prove that one has the right to, in fact, regularize one’s residency after (at least) three years of living and working irregularly. This means that, by and large, Spanish officials have access to information on who and how many people live irregularly on Spanish territory at any given time, but do not engage with that information to take control over the irregular labor market. The reasons for this disengagement with available information, combined with political discourses on the importance of, for instance, integration, have been discussed by Kitty Calavita (2005) and Carlota Solé (2004), among others. They both argue that the economic interest in maintaining the secondary labor market and economy trumps the interest of both controlling Spanish borders, and of undertaking efforts of so-called immigrant integration that would actually move Spanish society in a more egalitarian direction (cf. Peterson 2007).

In one sense, Spanish law on foreigners is relatively lenient compared to its counterparts in other European countries (Triandafyllidou 2010a, González-Enríquez 2010, Calavita 2005). It is precisely its tolerance for irregularity and its consequent generous regularization schemes that have proven beneficial to many people wishing to establish new lives in Spain. Still, this leniency has its costs. Calavita (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2007) has argued that Spanish immigration policy claims ‘immigrant integration’ as one of its main objectives, but that it in fact aids the further exclusion and ‘Othering’ of immigrated people. Solé and Parella (2003) argue similarly that immigration control prevails over ‘immigrant integration’ among Southern European policy makers. All three scholars focus on the laws regarding ‘migrant’ residency permits, and, as I discuss below, legislation on family reunification paints much of the same picture.

Of the legal grounds for ‘belonging’ stated above, the most common way among people working in the care work sector in Bilbao to apply for residency and work permits is through ‘social ties’. This means proving continuous (irregular) residence in Spain for minimum three years and a preliminary work contract from an employer with an assur-

ance of employment once the permit is granted. In the case of the research participants this has often meant continuing in the same job where they were already employed, only in a (more) regular capacity. It is therefore common to prove 'social ties' through a so-called *informe de arraigo*, a report from the regional authorities. In order to obtain this report the following requirements need to be fulfilled:

- valid passport
- proven sufficient economic means for residency, usually through an employment contract of at least one year with at least minimum wage (*SMI – salario mínimo interprofesional*)
- have family with residence permit. In case of having family members with authorized residence in Spain, prove family ties through documentation such as marriage certificate or birth certificate
- other elements, such as proving the participation in any programs of employment, social integration, education, training, participation, and learning of the official languages of the Basque Country (Euskera and/or Spanish)
- documented stay in the same municipality of at least three years, proven through a census certificate (*certificado de empadronamiento*)

The requirements within both family reunification and the *arraigo* scheme are mainly economic saliency and the access to 'adequate' housing. Both processes are arguably guided by politicians' economic priorities; on the one hand by market forces and stakeholders' interest in cheap labor, often for the secondary economy, and on the other hand by the resulting economic wants of migrated people themselves who for that very reason are not able to obtain family reunification, and thus not 'integrate' fully (Calavita 2005, 2007). The Spanish and Basque care work sector, and what becomes (im)possible within it, is therefore produced through the intersection of legal text and practice, as well as economic interests.

Differentiated Rights to Stay

As was mentioned in Chapter 2, Spain, like many other countries, have differentiated approaches to immigration depending on the country of

origin. People from former Spanish and Portuguese colonies, Portugal, Andorra, the Philippines, Equatorial Guinea, as well as Sephardim people can apply for citizenship after just two years of continuous (legal) residency (Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union, and Cooperation Plans 2019).

However, the residency permits granted through the permanent amnesty scheme are usually granted for one year at a time, meaning they would need to be renewed after one year. This means that if someone from Bolivia manages to obtain each residence permit without any (of the frequent) bumps in the bureaucratic road, that person could, in theory, attain Spanish citizenship after living in Spain for five years – three years irregularly, plus one year of regularized residency, plus another (renewed) year of regularized residency. However, considering both the time it takes to process each application for residency, as well as the prevalence of befallen irregularity, obtaining either permanent residency or citizenship has taken much longer than five years for most of the participants in my study.

Willing to Give it All? Fostering Worker's Dependency on Employers through Irregularity

Katty:

No, I didn't have papers for about four years. I was working in houses, without a contract. Well... Without social security or anything. I mean, the only thing I had was the medical card, but nothing other than that. Four years waiting to receive the first [residence] card.

Ingrid:

How did you obtain the first residency permit, after those four years? Were you working as an *interna* or *externa*?

Katty:

As an *externa*. Yes, I didn't know, either [when I first arrived], that there was such a thing as work as an *interna* and *externa*. I mean, everything, everything, everything, was strange. It didn't occur to me that... those type of jobs, you know? And oh well, I got work paid by the hour. [...]

In order to obtain my first [residence] card I also had to pay the social security fee myself. I mean, I had to spend money [to get that]

card. It made me excited, because with that card, I don't know, it was like saying 'listen, I now have the chance to travel and come back, and I can see my daughter.' I don't know, it's like that pass, that [they] give you, right?

Ingrid:

How long did it take before you went back to Bolivia to visit?

Katty:

I think I went back after about six years. Because also, I started [my daughter's] legal procedures... I started my own procedures in the fourth year after, and they took another year before giving me the first card. The first [residence] card took at least a year. I went back after nearly six years. [...] In the beginning the [residence] card is like 'oh, I need that card! It's like I need to obtain a contract, no matter what, where it says that I'm working 100 percent'⁵⁹, right? (Interview with Katty Aquino. Bilbao, March 2015)

One of the most important consequences of Spanish immigration legislation is visible in the excerpt from my conversation with Katty above. It is the dependency of migrated workers on having a work contract for obtaining residency, and thereby their dependency on the goodwill of their employers. This arguably a continuous oscillation between regularity and irregularity, which, in turn, facilitates the (re)production of a precarious working class based on immigration, and it is an important aspect the global market of care.

María Cabrerías arrived to Bilbao on Christmas Eve of 2006, just a short while before the closing of the borders for Bolivian citizens. She left her violent and alcoholic husband and two young children behind in La Paz. She had been with her husband for ten years, but had finally decided to leave. Her mother in law was left in charge of her children, and María snuck out in the middle of the night without saying goodbye. She couldn't bear it. For the first years all she could do was work to try to keep her longing for them at bay. She soon got work as an *interna* with an elderly couple, where the man was severely ill. They paid her very well – 1300 euros a month – and also allowed her to work for other em-

59 Before the legal reform of 2011, one of the requirements for obtaining a residence permit was holding a contract proving you were working 100 percent.

employers in the morning while living with them, and so she made extra money. Most of this was remitted to her children, and to save up to go see them once she would attain her papers. During our interview in 2013, she talked to me about how these employers helped her get her papers as soon as she had been registered in the *padrón* long enough. In the same way that Katty underlined the *need* she felt for obtaining the first residence permit, and how she did not mind paying her own social security fee in order to obtain it, María characterized the people she worked for at the time she obtained her first residence permit as someone who seemingly were concerned with ‘legality’, despite not, actually, following the law.

María:

So, I was pleased. I was working, I didn’t have time for anything, not even for thinking, right? I was working, working... And that’s how, look, they even gave me... Through them I got the papers. They gave me the contract. They wanted everything to be legal, they didn’t want anything illegal, I mean... The family that... they liked to work [legally]. So they told me, ‘how long do you have left before you can get your papers?’ he [my employer,] told me. ‘I have one year left.’ ‘Oh, ok, ok. Once you’re there you come tell me, because right now I’m also in danger of the law coming for me,’ he told me. ‘Don’t worry, I won’t get myself in trouble,’ I told him, ‘don’t worry.’ Like that...

And at some point I cut myself – look at the scar I have here [she shows me her finger]. It’s because I was at his house, I was tinkering and fixing things there [laughs]. And he got scared, ‘Oh, you’re not going to tell anyone that you cut yourself here?’ ‘No,’ I told him, ‘why would I say that? I’ll tell them I’ve done it...’ Look, I made something up! ‘At home,’ right? ‘at my sister in law’s!’ Something like that. If I’d say that I had hurt myself there [where I was working], and I wasn’t there legally, then maybe...

Ingrid:

You weren’t paying into the Social Security there?

María:

[No]... So, no there wasn’t a problem with that, right? But he got

scared, and he told me ‘we have to get you those papers right away’, and he helped me with that. They helped me get the papers as quickly as possible. The only thing, of course, they didn’t want to pay my social security; they discounted that from [my salary]. But I didn’t care because with those papers I would be able to travel, and then come back here. (Interview with María Cabrerías. Bilbao, July 2013)

What emerges from these narratives is that the desire – the *need* – to be able to return to one’s country of origin, and particularly if one has children or other close family members living there, becomes the pivotal center of existence, and of pushing through the first years in the care work sector. The conditions one works under become less of a concern, as long as the possibility of a return is within sight.

Changing Plans, Changing Prospects

The majority of the research participants went to Spain or the Basque Country by themselves and was only later able to bring other family members to stay with them. This is in line with Nogueira and Zalakain’s findings: that once workers have obtained their own residence and work permits it is common to attempt to bring other family members to Spain (2015:100). This often goes against the initial plans that people have when leaving their country of origin. Like Blanca, many of the participants told me that they initially planned to only stay in Spain for a year or two to, for instance, pay off family debt, buy a house, or save up for their children’s education. But once they grew accustomed to their situation in Spain, and once they went through the arduous ordeal of obtaining their residence permits, they feel like it would be a wasted opportunity not to stay on for a while longer. As plans for their own stay changes, so do often intentions about reuniting with family. From planning to reunite ‘back home’ in the place of origin, many decide to opt for reuniting in Spain and thereby be able to live a life that contains more than work and remittances. In other words, a life that somehow surpasses the state of *migrancy* (cf. Lee and Pratt 2011).

The Primacy of ‘the Papers’ over Suffering

Around three years passed... You have to be here in Spain three years to get the [...] first papers. Of ‘belonging’. And then... I got a contract, I did my first papers. Then I could travel there [to Bolivia]

for three months! Ooooooh! That was what I had been waiting so anxiously for! I was saying ‘when will they give me [the papers]?!’ I waited almost three and a half years for that. And the moment I got them, I bought the ticket to travel to Bolivia, and I went to Bolivia to see my children. (Interview with María Cabrerías. Bilbao, July 2013)

When it comes to the workers themselves, their attitude towards this dynamic is similar to what was discussed in Chapter 5 with regard to how migrated people consider their situation in Spain in comparison to the reasons for suffering that made them decide to leave Bolivia in the first place. María underlined that with the ‘papers’, she would be able to travel. By this she meant that she would be able to go see her children, whom she hadn’t seen for three years. In the same interview she also talked about how she only wanted to work caring for elderly people because it hurt too much to care for other children. That she tried to work as much as possible – as an *interna*, but then taking on extra work during her free time – in order not to think about what she was missing out on in Bolivia, and to be able to send as much as possible home to her children in La Paz. This is reminiscent of Verónica del Carmen’s story presented in the beginning of this chapter. While we can only try to imagine what her story might have been, what is clear was that she, too, was willing to sacrifice a lot, perhaps too much, in order to provide for her family and work towards getting to see them again. During my interview with María she elaborated several times on the desperate feelings she endured while working to be reunited with her children.

María had planned to bring the children with her back to Spain the first time she went to see them in Bolivia, but because of the economic requirements of family reunification (see below) she was not able to do so. The second time she went, she felt just as desperate to see them as the first. By then she was in the process of renewing her residence permit. But, as she explains in the excerpt below, she made a mistake.

I was going to renew the next [residence permit] here [before leaving]. Right? But I was so desperate to go there [to Bolivia] again. I was saying ‘I want to go there again, I want to be with them,’ right? [...] Look, the second time I went there... because I was in such a hurry, I left, without having fulfilled the working requirements to be able to renew the second residence permit. I said, ‘I’ll be able to do it

when I get back.’ Very sure [of myself], right? I went [to Bolivia] again, and I was there for three months, I came back, and... To renew my permit, then to get the one that lasts five years, right? And they tell me ‘you cannot, because you haven’t fulfilled certain requirements of [the immigration law] [...] ‘You cannot renew because you haven’t complied with the regulations about work to renew that permit.’ So, but I got hold of a lawyer, I did everything to be able to renew, and not lose out, right? To have to do everything from the beginning, right? Which is what they were asking of me. It was exasperating! I had lost my residency! I had lost everything because of travelling [to Bolivia]. And I said ‘now what do I do?’ Right? So then I had gotten a deportation letter [laughs]. And I said ‘noooo, it can’t be! Once again starting from zero!’ right? It brought me to despair! And that, I said ‘what do I do, what do I do?’ (Interview with María Cabrerías, July 2013)

As a solution, María ended up marrying an elderly man that she had befriended during her first years in Bilbao. He expressed his affection for her, and she did care for him as well, and appreciated his company. This helped her escape the befallen irregularity that had taken control of her life, and almost deported her. It also brought more stability to her situation and she was able to attain Spanish citizenship and travel to Bolivia more frequently and for longer periods of time.

Considering the importance of the emotional bond between mothers and children, as well as other familial bonds that stretch over vast distances through transnational migration, it is arguably a foreseeable outcome that people who live and work in (often very) precarious situations in one country, would not only long for ‘home’ even more if they were working under better conditions, but also be able to accept those same conditions only because the promise of ‘home’ was kept within sight, as long as one complies with these terms of labor market exchange. Short stints of happiness in combination with the fear of deportation, are seemingly exchanged for a working life in precarity with a pay that can be remitted to those you are longing for back at the place you left behind. I would argue that not only is the life situation created through Spanish immigration law part of migrancy, it is also a prerequisite for the (re)production of the global market of care, and therefore also the care work sector in Spain. A way, then, to remedy parts of the condi-

tions of migrancy as described above, is to be able to be reunited with the people you have left behind. While this does not mean that other conditions of migrancy are erased, it can bring about a fuller life for those otherwise living with the precariousness of work in the care sector. I proceed to look closer at how family reunification might be brought about.

Family Reunification Legislation and Practice

Blanca López had spent over six years in Bilbao at the time of our first interview, far away from her daughter in Bolivia. During this interview, and in the conversations that followed during the years, she conveyed a sense of perplexity, almost dizziness, at how rapidly time had passed.

Everything happens so fast. The years pass... The years... I came to just stay for a little while. To give you an idea: 'I will go... I'll go for a couple of years'. Something like that. And I go... And I say... But no, those couple of years, you suffer. Those couple of years... you are not doing well, eh! I've suffered very, very much. Afterwards I chinned up, I said 'I will get the papers and then I'll see if I go [back] or not. And the years passed. And after I got [the papers] I said 'I'll go back to my country, I'll go back to my country!'. And I went back, but having returned [there] I said 'I'll go [to Spain] for a while longer'. And I don't know... It keeps getting postponed. Later I said 'I will obtain citizenship, and with that I'll go to my country, and when I want I come back...' (Interview with Blanca López. Bilbao, November 2013)

At the time of our first meetings Blanca was in the application process for citizenship, and when we met again in the spring of 2015 she had obtained this. At the same time her request for family reunification with her daughter, Virginia, had been processed for the fourth time. During our first interview she says that was one of her main objectives; to be able to bring her daughter to Spain so she would 'know what this is'.

I've been trying. For a long time! To bring her here. It's probably three years since they told me 'no', they denied me [the reunification] the first time. And after I sent in the application again... I sent them, and again they denied it. I'm now on a waiting list, and

possibly... they will give me a positive reply. I have hope. We will see. [...] I think they will tell me by the end of the year. The thing is that it's urgent for me to bring her here because my daughter will turn eighteen next year. She will [reach legal adulthood] and to be able to reunify you can only be under eighteen, that's what matters. (Interview with Blanca López. Bilbao, November 2013)

She says that even if she has had relative success when it comes to work 'you suffer, you miss a lot!' When we met again in 2015 her request had finally gone through, after having resorted to going through, and paying for, a legal trial. The grounds for the last denial were that she did not live under the proper housing conditions for receiving her daughter, who by that time had turned 18 years. Although the apartment she lived was officially a two-family dwelling, this had not been reflected in the municipal inspector's report due to bureaucratic negligence, and nearly another year went by in paper mills and the trial before she was able to bring Virginia to live with her.

Legal Requirements of Family Reunification

So I arrived [to Bolivia to visit]... I see my children and... so big, right! Four years had passed, and I left my daughter when she was only six years old, and [my son] when he was eight. So when I returned, he was twelve, almost, and she... also... I mean... My daughter cries and says 'mommy, mommy... such a long time!' and she starts crying. I... I... The only thing I tell her, I control myself, because I don't want to cry anymore. I tell her 'my baby, don't cry' I tell her, 'don't cry, because from now on we will be together! Now we will be together much more.'

My objective was to bring them with me. Bring them both with me. But it became too difficult because of the paperwork they ask of you, and other things. I mean... Maybe you have a salary between 800 and 1000. Something like that, right? You wouldn't be making more than that. And back then I didn't have any solid support so I could say 'I will rely on this person, they can write an invitation letter for you or something.' [Few] people would do that for you. And, so, I failed because of that. I couldn't bring them. (Interview with María Cabrerías, July 2013)

The possibilities for family reunification depend on the relationship between the people who already hold a residence permit in Spain and those they wish to bring to live with them there. Spouses and children under 18 years of age at the time of applying for reunification, or older children who, due to illness or disability, depend on the person residing in Spain for care, are the ones most commonly ‘brought’ through reunification. Parents who are above 65 years of age and in proven need of socioeconomic care by the applicant are also eligible, as well as people whom the applicant is legally responsible for. Should the potential subject for reunification fulfill these requirements, the requirements for a migrated person residing in Spain to bring one or more of her family members are principally two-fold⁶⁰: She must be able to provide for them economically, and she must have appropriate living arrangements at her disposal (Ministry of Labor, Migrations, and Social Security 2017).

When calculating how much is needed to provide for the family unit in question, the Spanish state uses a measure called IPREM, which stands for *Indicador Público de Renta de Efectos Múltiples* – Public Indicator of Multiple Effect Income. This measure is used instead of that of minimum wage, which can increase greatly from one year to the next, when determining whether someone should have access to different public benefits and social schemes. An immigrated person earns enough to reunite with one family member when she (or the family unit) earns more than 150 percent of the IPREM of the year in question. For every additional person the immigrated person wishes to bring to Spain, the family unit’s monthly income needs to increase with 50 percent of the IPREM. In the time period I did my fieldwork – between 2013 and 2016 – the IPREM was set to 532.51 Euros (Ministry of Labor, Migrations, and Social Security 2019). This means that a care worker wishing to bring one of her children, or a spouse, would have to earn 798.77 Euros, and another 266.26 Euros for every child. Many of the research participants have reported salaries around 800 euros, which have often not been (fully) paid taxes for. These numbers thus speak of a significant obstacle for family reunification; the salary level in itself, but also that part of people’s salary is often paid ‘off the record’.

60 Apart from the requirements of economic solvency and the access to an appropriate housing, there are other more minor requirements that have to be in place but which I will not discuss further here.

This income must be proven via for example paychecks, tax return documentation, work contract or bank transfers. Of course, this again underlines the importance of being employed within the primary labor market, and of attaining regular residency status (cf. Calavita 2005, 2007). As discussed above, the precarious conditions that the care work sector more often than not entails, arguably contribute to making migrated people's residence in the country perpetually temporary (Calavita 2003, 2005, Solé 2003). This precarity thereby also influences people's access to family reunification.

When it comes to the second requirement, an appropriate living arrangement is considered to be one where the migrated person does not share living quarters with individuals outside of the immediate family, in addition to a certain standard of the living space itself. This in itself might pose a problem for many, as it is not uncommon for many (mostly co-national) people to share housing. Reasons for this are an unfavorable ratio between rent costs and average income, and, in some cases, the difficulty of entering the housing market because of one's social status as a 'migrant' and the biases and prejudices this entails. Even when shared housing is not a factor, things can still be interpreted in the wrong direction, which is what happened to Blanca when she applied for reunification with her daughter. Whether or not the living arrangement is appropriate is determined by a municipal inspector or, if the person applying for family reunification can afford it, by a privately hired notary. For Blanca this turned out to mean yet another application process until she finally managed to bring her daughter to Bilbao.

The dependency on economic capital for initiating both one's own process of regularization and the one of family reunification makes migrated people particularly vulnerable to the economic fluctuations of the Spanish economic market. In the interview excerpt above, María points to how difficult it can be to earn enough, especially within the primary labor market, to apply for reunification. She also suggests that in her case, she might have tried to bring her children to Spain in other ways, for instance by them applying for their own residency permits. For this they would have needed a letter of invitation from a Spanish citizen, but at the time María did not have anyone who she felt close enough to ask for this. María's children have therefore ended up staying in La Paz, which is where I got to meet them in 2016. More from this encounter will be considered in Chapter 9.

As for Blanca, the years of distance, waiting, and continuous disappointments, as well as the economic hardships this legal process led to, took their toll on the mother/daughter relationship. Virginia did end up coming to Bilbao, but the time she spent there with her mother was difficult for them both. She did not quite find her place, and both women were frustrated by the other's way of relating to one another. Virginia returned to Bolivia, and I met her in La Paz during my fieldwork there. However, her and her mother's stories of migration have yet to settle (see Chapter 9 and 11).

These sorts of ruptures and changes in (transnational) relationships will be further reflected on in Chapter 9. The account of how Blanca Lopez' case for family reunification was stretched out in time, both through her own uncertainty about what choices to make for her life when considering her own precarious situation, and through the legal battle she had to lead in order to bring her daughter to Spain, reinforces the argument of Spanish *Ley de extranjería* contributing to a state of migrancy for those working within the global market of care. As I have conveyed through the stories above, it is within dynamics of temporariness and its ensuing replaceability, that care workers are made to negotiate their existence in Spain.

I now return to the initial idea of how the Spanish welfare state is constructed, and the question of who is understood as being responsible for caring for others? And how is it that a full life with their loved ones is denied, or severely postponed, for those who end up doing much of the reproductive work within Spanish society? Is it that the denying of this full life to some, is what makes a 'full' life – where both productive and reproductive work are kept at a manageable level – possible for others? And if so, how can the exchange that takes place within the global market of care ever become reciprocal, or just? If what I give you is your freedom, and your freedom depends on my subjection, then our exchange can never become equal.

A Racialized Global Division of Labor: (Re)Producing the Spanish Welfare State through a Postcolonial Dual Economy

In his foreword to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (2004 (1963)), Homi K. Bhabha writes that:

Dual economies create divided worlds in which uneven and unequal conditions of development can often mask the ubiquitous, underlying factors of persistent poverty and malnutrition, casts and racial injustice, the hidden injuries of class, the exploitation of women's labor, and the victimization of minorities and refugees (2004:xii)

Although referring to the conditions within former colonies of the West, rather than what is taking place in what was once the center of colonial empires, the same statement also rings true for the sort of economy(/ies) that the global market of care is an example of. The Spanish welfare regime is arguably built upon the backs of migrated women and their labor. So while the skewed power imbalance of the care work sector is heavily tilted towards employers and Spanish authorities, it is nonetheless clear that the Spanish welfare regime is, in fact, dependent on its immigrated workforce. Spain is facing a rapidly aging population, to an even more severe degree than many other European states where combining family and work life has been more facilitated by public welfare services, although public fear of what immigration means for the saturation of public welfare services is also prevalent (Calavita 2005). When looking at projections for the European and Spanish populations, there is no doubt that maintaining its current size without immigration would be a challenge (Kuhnle & Alestalo 2000). Low birthrates and a growing number of elderly and other care-dependent people have been on the political and public agenda for years. Declining birthrates are challenging the very institution of the welfare state in many European countries (Vos 2009). When considering the disparaging ratio between active workers and non-active residents it would seem only reasonable to contemplate immigration's potential for resolving this imbalance in European countries in general, and Spain in particular.

Immigration adds to the stock of working-age residents. This can generate tax revenues to further support institutions of the welfare state, such as retirement pensions, care-taking facilities for children, the elderly, and other dependent people, as well as publicly funded parental leave that makes having children a viable option for young adults. If we consider Europe's history of (im)migration during the second half of the 20th century, this was by and large how immigration was 'used' – as labor feeding a protected internal market, and thus indirectly the public sector. In order for this to happen, other societal institutions were also in

place. This created what Triandafyllidou (2010a) calls a ‘triangular’ model of the labor market with a strong state, large companies bound by the borders of the nation state, and strong trade unions negotiating the conditions for both ‘native’ and immigrated workers. As capitalism has gradually become more globalized and gone beyond direct state level governance, the control and intervention mechanisms available to regulate not only the flow of capital, but also the flow of, and the conditions for, workers have been weakened in the interest of global capital (Zizek 2008). Immigration’s potential for ‘saving’ the welfare state has therefore taken another turn.

Another way in which the Spanish welfare regime can be seen as dependent on immigration is, then, by maintaining the informal economy. How, and the degree to which, this takes place varies across Europe, but in the case of Spain the link between migration and the informal economy and labor market is, as discussed above, arguably very strong. Calavita (2005) argues that both Italy and Spain create immigration policies that by and large only address the discursive level of so-called integration, while the (ir)regulation of the economy and labor market upholds stark differences between immigrated people and ‘natives’ when it comes to access to rights and resources, and thereby also reproduces the process of ‘Othering’ that immigration law and policy claims to be combating. In other words, migrated people are left to do society’s ‘dirty work’ (Anderson 2000) within a new working class consisting of people who are often in limbo in terms of their residence permit, and who therefore have no other choice but to accept the type of jobs and the conditions that the informal labor market offers them.

Spanish immigration law and the country’s strong informal economy thus provide a convincing example of how immigration can support both the ‘first tier’ economy and labor market (Peterson 2007) by providing a workforce willing to perform labor that *feeds* the formal market, but is kept outside of the taxed economy. This system, then, indirectly creates revenues that can further sustain the Spanish public sector and welfare state. Also critical for my research is how the welfare state itself also directly benefits from the informal economy and labor market by facilitating the use and exploitation of irregular immigrated workers within the care and domestic work sector. Spanish laws on immigration and labor (which will be discussed in the next chapter) provide this possibility and thereby set the conditions for people’s liveli-

hoods and lives. These legislations and the market relations that circumscribe them arguably contribute to the creation of the global market of care and its global connections running between Spain and, especially, Latin American countries. The laws' framing of care work as essentially different than other types of work, a difference underscored by social differentiation, is further strengthened through its enforcement and practice by both authorities and employers.

Ultimately, migrated care workers can be seen to inhabit a sort of symbolic borderland through their exteriority (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010). Their work, and thus their existence, is hidden and made invisible by the fact that they embody the feminized and racialized connotations of domestic work – they are women and they are 'migrants'. For, as Gutiérrez-Rodríguez states, 'migration policies do not just account for the control and management of people's entry and settlement aspiration within the EU-zone, but also for the organization of the modes of production' (2010:44). In other words, 'migrants' are, within EU and Spanish migration policy, not signified as 'human', but as something else, be that for instance 'asylum seeker', 'threat', 'terrorist', or 'benefit scrounger' depending on their utility in the place of destination. This is because even if these migration policies do not specifically '[denote] racial and ethnic differences, [they] operate on the epistemic grounds of 'colonial difference', [which] entails the hierarchical differentiation and racial classification of populations from 'the' European perspective' (2010:39). In the case of migrated care workers they are often signified as 'workforce'; as a mode of production, although, as Gutiérrez-Rodríguez explains, as a mode of production *outside* the market and thus not of value for the creation of capital. Inherent in Spanish law on immigration is thus the binary of colonial difference (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010:20), and, as will be discussed in the next chapter, this binary is extended through its practice and intersection with the law on care work.

Spain is therefore becoming an increasingly clear example of what can from a postcolonial perspective be called a dual economy (Bhabha 2004). The workforce within the secondary economy consists of a growing number of immigrated people, and, as such, fuses what was once global, transnational relations between the center and the periphery of a colonial empire – between masters and servants – with relations located specifically in the very center of that former empire, but equally de-

pendent on the same workforce of servants. When looking at Spanish law on immigration, the center arguably counters its dependence on the periphery on an individual scale – by controlling its peripheral population through migrancy. It is by legally marginalizing individual workers, making them – in turn – dependent on their masters/employers, that workers from the periphery are kept symbolically, if not geographically, in their place. As pointed out by activist Isabel Quintana, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, they are used to replace the work formerly done by Spanish and Basque women, while they are also made interchangeable – replaceable – between themselves. In reducing their full subjectivity by limiting their access to socially and economically full lives, Spanish law on immigration, and its intersection with laws on care work, reinforces this dependency and (re)produces migrancy.

Concluding Remarks

The blog text by *Mujeres con Voz* at the beginning of this chapter points to much of what is produced through migrancy for the individual person working in the domestic and care work sector in Bilbao and Spain. In the coming two chapters, I reflect on some of the same expectations visible in the laws on care work – expectations that workers stay invisible and inaudible; that they are complacent and work to (re)produce the domesticity of the family home they are employed in. That, just as the women who came before them – the women who were actually part of the families they worked for – express affection and gratitude for the place that they are allowed to hold within that home, and, by extension, within Basque and Spanish society.

In this chapter I have explored how the global market of care between Bolivia and Spain is, in part, (re)produced through the Spanish legal framework governing immigration. I have examined what the research participants' experiences of irregularity/illegality (Andersson 2014a, De Genova 2013), on the one hand, and the law itself, on the other, can tell us about how the global market of care is made possible. The material presented shows that temporariness, replaceability, and befallen irregularity (Calavita 2005, Triandafyllidou 2010) are important parts of the global market of care, and that these factors, in turn, contribute to producing a state of migrancy for its workers. The *Ley de Extranjería* not only affects the lives of migrated workers in how it regulates their own status and the possibilities they have to live their life together with their

children and other family members, a person's residence permit also intersects with her work permit in an often peculiar way (Calavita 1998, 2003, 2005, 2007, Solé 2003). This intersection has both its positive and negative consequences from the point of the view of the workers, but their narratives paint an overall picture of these policies as producers of insecurity, precariousness, and instability. Despite this unwelcoming legal structuration of migrated care workers' situation, which will be discussed further in the next chapter, the fact that Spanish law leaves a loophole for irregular entrance and stay, as well as irregular work, has encouraged many women to travel there in the search for 'a better life'. And the need for care workers in the Basque Country and in Spain in general is, as mentioned, in many cases urgent (Unzueta et al. 2013).

7. INVISIBILITY IN THE NAME OF DOMESTICITY: THE GENDERED COLONIAL SUBJECT AND THE (IL)LEGALITIES OF CARE WORK

I'm like a robot. I come, I go – home, from home to work, from work to home, like that! Like a robot, like that... Programmed for that, and that's how I am, how I go about... (Interview with Blanca López, Bilbao, November 2013).

Introduction

The experiences of the research participants, such as those reflected on by Blanca above, point to how unevenly positioned the workers in the global market of care are vis-à-vis their employers. In this chapter I discuss how this unevenness is consolidated through Spanish legislation on care work in that it underlines the primacy of the home and (women's) domesticity when it comes to how care work is organized and construed in Spanish and Basque societies. I examine how the narratives of care workers themselves reflect (on) the role they are assigned within this economy. I argue that these narratives show how employees must exert themselves to minimize their subjective presence as individuals within the home-as-workplace, complying with the domesticity that this space idealizes. By making themselves invisible, workers experience an eras-

ure of selves, and of their rights, all the while they support the individual emancipation of their *jefas* from the patriarchal chains that bind her.

In this chapter I ponder the implications for the workers of the replaceability I discussed in Chapter 6, and how it is strengthened further through the regulation of care work. I argue that what it takes for care workers to hold on to the space they are permitted to inhabit within the global market of care is to a large degree spelled out in other legislations (ir)regulating the care work sector in Spain and the Basque Country, particularly the RD 1620/2011 – regulating the *Special Labor Relations of Services of the Family Home*⁶¹, and its predecessor RD 1424/1985⁶². I also consider the Law 39/2006, *Promotion of the Personal Autonomy and Attention towards persons in a Dependency Situation*⁶³, its Basque regional counterpart Law 12/2008 of Social Services⁶⁴, and the International Labor Organization’s *C189 – Domestic Workers Convention* (ILO 2019). To understand how these laws regarding care work are construed, I rely on my own reading of these legislations, as well as on the report *The Multiple Discrimination of Immigrant Women Domestic and Care Workers in the Basque Country* (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015), published through *Emakunde* – the Basque Institute for Women. This report compiles the many factors that, from the Basque/Spanish sociolegal space, contribute to the construction of the global market of care. In addition to the mentioned ethnographic and legal material, I draw on statistics gathered by ATH-ELE, the Association of Domestic Workers in Bizkaia. Through this material I reflect on how the intersections of the Law on Foreigners and Spain’s legislation of care work influence the situation of migrated care workers.

The C189: Legislating the Global Market of Care?

Considering the global scope of Spain’s care and domestic work sector, I start by reflecting on how its legislation and governing are mirrored in international legal frameworks. Recognizing that care and domestic work is a global issue tied intrinsically to international migration and

61 Real Decreto 1620/2011, de 14 de noviembre, por el que se regula la relación laboral de carácter especial del servicio del hogar familiar (BOE-A-2011-17975).

62 Real Decreto 1424/1985, de 1 de agosto, por el que se regula la relación laboral de carácter especial del Servicio del Hogar Familiar (BOE-A-1985-17108).

63 Ley 39/2006, de 14 de diciembre, de Promoción de la Autonomía Personal y Atención a las personas en situación de dependencia (LAPAD) (BOE-A-2006-21990).

64 Ley 12/2008, de 5 de diciembre de Servicios Sociales (BOPV-miércoles 24 de diciembre de 2008).

struggles for labor rights, the International Labor Organization (ILO) issued its *Domestic Workers Convention* – C189 in 2011 (ILO 2019). This entered into force in 2013, and has been ratified in 24 countries, but not in Spain. The convention acknowledges the important role care and domestic work plays in the world economy and in the maintenance of society. It points out the significance of this work for how workers with family obligations can contribute to the economy, and how it increases elderly, children, and disabled people's abilities to themselves contribute to society, with the assistance of care workers. It also underscores the power this work holds to transfer monetary value internationally, between countries in different socioeconomic situations. The C189 recognizes

‘the special conditions under which domestic work is carried out that make it desirable to supplement the general standards with standards specific to domestic workers so as to enable them to enjoy their rights fully’ (ILO, C189, italics added).

Thus, the C189 acknowledges that the conditions under which domestic and care workers perform their work are essentially different than those of other workers in that

‘domestic work continues to be undervalued and invisible and is mainly carried out by women and girls, many of whom are migrants or members of disadvantaged communities and who are particularly vulnerable to discrimination in respect of conditions of employment and of work, and to other abuses of human rights’ (ibid.).

However, as the italics I have added in the former citation underscore, ILO does consider that domestic and care work should hold the same rights as other types of work. As will be shown below, this is where the C189 differs from the Spanish legislation, as the latter does not explicitly, nor in practice, recognize the significance of such work. The ILO's C189 underlines how care work should be treated as other types of work, while Spain explicitly states in its own legislation that it should not. The C189 states that all countries should have specific measures of protection for migrated people working in these types of jobs, considering the general prevalence of migrated workers in this sector around the

world. As such, these workers should have special protection through bilateral, regional, and multilateral agreements between countries to prevent abuse and fraudulent practices in terms of hiring, placement, and employment.

As will be shown, this is contrary to what Spain practices – instead of protecting migrated domestic and care workers due to their vulnerable positions in a system they often do not have full knowledge of when first entering it, the legislation itself allows for taking advantage of this position through the Spanish *Law on Foreigners* (2000/2003/2009)⁶⁵. There is no mention of having migrated as a prevalent factor among domestic workers in the law that regards them. The coinciding factors of having migrated and working in precarious conditions in the care work sector are ignored by the legislative parties, and, knowingly or unknowingly, this creates an opening for severe degrees of exploitation of workers who are vulnerable to their administrative situation.

Caring for Dependent People

The majority of the research participants have worked mostly with so-called dependent people. Often this will mean living with the service user; working as an *interna*; and it is the type of job many migrated women do when they have just arrived in Spain. Once they become more established in their new place of residence, and learn about their rights, they often transition into working as *externas*; working by the hour and living on their own. The *interna* work thereby passes to the migrated women that are newly arrived⁶⁶. This work can entail working with elderly who still live by themselves, people with disabilities, or people who suffer from chronic or terminal diseases. Part of the work can therefore be about enduring the suffering of others, and it might involve the inevitable death of the service user. When I asked María Cabrerías about her experience working as an *interna* she told me about the last place she worked before deciding to become an *externa* instead:

65 Código de Extranjería, including Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre Derechos y Libertades de los Extranjeros en España y su Integración Social, modified through LO 8/2000, 14/2003 and 2/2009.

66 Most Bolivians in Spain have now lived there for several years. *Interna* work – the most precarious labor, is at the time of this thesis (2019) done by Central American and Paraguayan women, according to both the research participants and organizations such as ATH-ELE.

I didn't suffer with them, you see... The only thing, of course, is that you suffer a lot in the sense that they are ill, right? You become fond of them because you make them feel good, and they make you feel good. [...] [Later on] I looked for more sporadic employment because I no longer wanted to work as an *interna* because it is overwhelming. The illness the elderly have overwhelms you. You have to be very strong because... It's the psychological aspect, more than the physical, maybe, right? [...]

Cancer as an illness has left me traumatized. Because I saw his throat... A hole developed here, little by little, and you could see his throat, what is inside it. The hole was like this! And it was... it was rotten. It had a very strong smell, right? [...] And you had to treat him for it, right, with a lot of tenderness, a lot of affection. Especially affection, right, so that he could live with the illness. And I had done all that, and it is a lot of psychological investment. It is a lot of sadness. And I sometimes said 'I want him to die now. I don't care if they pay me less, just let him die!' Because you suffer. You suffer, right? Because here you are, you don't have your family. And there is this emptiness that... when you go to work with someone and they treat you well, that emptiness – you fill it up with those people. That's what has happened to me. (Interview with Maria Cabrerias. Bilbao, July 2013)

María's account tells us about how grief becomes part of the exchanges that are made within the global market of care. Sometimes it is exchanged within the workplace – replacing the absence of one's own close relatives with the presence of others. As discussed further in Chapter 9, sometimes it is about grief as sacrifice – about giving one's family what they need through one's own absence.

María's experiences as an *interna* implied undertaking tasks for which she was not trained. Gladys, on the other hand, told me that even if she had been used to seeing sick and dying patients through her work as a pharmacist in the clinic in Santa Cruz, being so far away from home made her more susceptible and sensitive to the suffering of others. Treating the elderly man with Alzheimer that she, as an *interna*, was employed to care for made her very sad, while it also disgusted her, she told me:

It was, of course, very hard. As I told you earlier, when I first arrived here I didn't think I'd manage to endure it. I thought I wouldn't be able to work. Washing the *señor* [mister/elderly man]⁶⁷ [I was caring for] even made me vomit and everything. I mean, [it was] really bad, eh! Really bad. Even the wife of the *señor* thought I wouldn't endure it, she told me later. (Interview with Gladys Villca. Bilbao, April 2015)

María, however, managed to renounce whatever feelings of apprehension, disgust, or sadness in order to do what had to be done. While she underlines that this was not 'suffering', because she was not mistreated by her employers, the situation described above led her to opt for other types of caring, such as cleaning and cooking, once the service user died. She could no longer endure to be fully immersed in another person's needs all of the time. While these situations require the kind of care María provided, how society and its legal structures should go about to provide it, is a question of both priorities and justice. The law in Spain and the Basque Country guarantee such services, thereby creating spaces in which the need for María and others' labor should be exercised. What this legislation contributes to, however, is to define these spaces through what I here call domesticity, in that they center on the integrity of the Spanish/Basque home, rather than the rights of the people who work to sustain it.

Spanish and Basque Legislation of Care: Legal Safeguarding of 'Dependent People'

Nogueira and Zalakain identify several sets of legislations that contribute to the 'multiple discrimination of migrated women' (2015:7) in the Basque Country, which according to them is built on:

the fictitious role changes in the traditional family structure, the social needs concerning reproductive work, public policies designed to provide for dependent individuals, immigration legislation, and the regulation of work carried out in private homes (ibid.).

67 The use of this term here instead of, for instance, *hombre* (man), implies social distance and/or hierarchy.

As Nogueira and Zalakain (2015) establish, the discrimination and oppression at hand in the lives of migrated women in Bilbao is part of a gendered and ‘ethno-stratified’ structural problem visible in public policy and legislation. There are, in other words, multiple social and historical processes that intersect in order to produce the structures within which care workers live their lives. The ways that these legislations intersect produce a labor market sector in which the (migrated) care worker is to a great extent without legal protection against exploitative working conditions.

Other than the *Law on Foreigners*, which was discussed in Chapter 6, two other sets of legislation are the ones principally influencing the situation of migrated care workers in the Basque context (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015). The first one is the federal law 39/2006 *Promotion of the Personal Autonomy and Attention towards persons in a Dependency Situation*, which will from here on be called LAPAD for its abbreviation in Spanish. The second law discussed is the federal law regarding domestic and care work, namely the RD 1620/2011 – regulating the *Special Labor Relations of Services of the Family Home*, and its predecessor RD 1424/1985. Below I discuss expectations towards care workers, their labor, and their workplace, transmitted through these legal texts.

The LAPAD legislation came about as a result of various political programs at the beginning of the 21st century aiming to guarantee public financial participation in tending to ‘dependent’ persons, such as elderly or disabled people. It aims to ensure that dependent people have personal autonomy and receive adequate assistance in their daily lives. According to the first article of the law, personal autonomy is defined as the ‘capacity to control, manage, and make, by one’s own initiative, personal decisions regarding how to live in line with one’s own norms and preferences, as well as undertake daily basic activities’ (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015:77), and significant steps have been taken to set a law in place that guarantees the personal autonomy of dependent people.

It is the regional⁶⁸ level’s responsibility to provide the system, institutions, and services necessary for dependent people to attain their autonomy. In 2008 the Basque Country introduced the Law 12/2008 of Social Services that followed up on the federal legislation. This law establishes a network within Social Services that will organize the social security

68 By ‘regional’ I am referring to the administrative level of the *comunidad autónoma*. See Chapter 2 for an explanation of Spain’s administrative organization.

benefits and services of belonging to the federal level Social Services⁶⁹ within the region. The law of 2008 was not the first of its kind (it had predecessors of 1982 and 1996), but its reform was due to the ‘change in social context’ observed by policy makers.

These changes are specified in the text of the law itself. First, it states that not only has the number of dependent people increased, but due to the debilitation of informal social support that had earlier been provided by families (i.e. mothers, daughters, and sisters), the qualitative needs of dependent people have also changed. The weakening of the informal social fabric around children, elderly, and disabled people is largely due to the ‘increased incorporation of women in the labor market and the failure of many men to take on informal care roles’ (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015:78). Second, policy makers also observed an increase in care needs rooted in social exclusion and marginalization from society. These needs were particularly frequent among young women and migrated people, as well as elderly people who had become lonely and isolated from society. Third, it is observed that Social Services need to adapt their organization and services to the progressing move towards gender equality, particularly by offering assistance to the family-based networks that are usually in charge of informal care work, and which is usually led by women. All in all, the Basque law clearly acknowledges both the growing care sector and the gender imbalance that reigns in Basque and Spanish society when it comes to care work, and, on paper, recognizes the public institutions’ responsibility in mending this problem. However, the root of the problem is also represented to spring from the fact that women no longer practice care in the same way and to the same extent as they used to within their families.

These sorts of changes have, as mentioned in Chapters 2 and 4, been discussed as culminating in a ‘crisis of care’ (Ezquerria 2011, Gregorio Gil 2012, Herrera 2011, Pradas 2010, Unzueta et al. 2013). Ezquerria (2011) points to how this crisis, or these changes, is systemic, in that it is symptomatic of how capitalism in Spain is taking its neoliberal shape. This is in the same line as Silvia Federici’s analysis of how the world economy currently is intersecting with patriarchy – we are, in fact, living a world scale systemic crisis where our natural and human resources are reaching ‘point zero’ (Federici 2012). As the world economy contin-

69 Sistema para la Autonomía y Atención a la Dependencia (SAAD).

ues in this direction, human (re)production is being challenged (cf. Federici, 2012, Fraser 2016). Federici argues that while this crisis is taking place, women are gradually taking up more space in the world economy. We are becoming continuously more autonomous in our productive work, and, by and large, continuing our position when it comes to reproductive work. In other words, women are increasingly becoming less dependent on men because we no longer rely on them for sustenance and shelter, all within a socioeconomic world and ecology in free fall towards the bottom. Men, on the other hand, by and large experience a loss of the position they once had within the global and local economy. Although most men have also been exploited as laborers through this economy, they used to hold power over women – over reproductive work. The fact that this is changing, argues Federici, has led to a general increase in gendered violence. As discussed in Chapter 5, both increased economic responsibility and autonomy, as well as the escape from gendered violence, are contributing factors as to why women decide to leave Bolivia and go to work in Spain. In other words, the changes picked up on by Basque policy makers are part of a global picture of systemic change, in which responsibilities for care and reproductive work are increasingly more often being signified as outsourceable in an attempt at keeping it within the capitalist system, and thereby under control.

The question remains whether those who actually meet the challenges these changes bring about in the Basque and Spanish contexts are seen as equally deserving of the same rights and services as those whose autonomy is being restored through publicly and privately financed assistance and care work. Nogueira and Zalakain underscore how the turn in Basque and Spanish policies regarding care work has opened for ‘new formulas of employment regarding care, [as well as of] the figure of the care worker – both professional and non-professional’ (2015:79). In other words, the emergence of the migrated care worker as a public institution is not a fluke, but rather a result of policies that have targeted gender inequality in Basque and Spanish homes at a time when Spain was receiving vast amounts of irregular migration from its former colonies. And just as Spanish and Basque society’s ‘need’ for migrated workers, the migration that brings these workers about is in itself tied to the neoliberalization of local and global economies.

In one important sense, the LAPAD legislation externalizes the responsibility for dependent people's right to autonomy beyond the family sphere by promising to dedicate daily services in people's homes or in residential institutions, or – as an extraordinary measure in the beginning – to attribute economic benefits. These measures will guarantee that the service users will be able to remain in the social context that they are accustomed to (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015:79). Put differently, these measures aim to make sure that service users will be able to stay in their own *homes*, keeping 'normalcy' intact for the family in question. So the LAPAD puts the responsibility for dependent people's autonomy onto paid care workers instead of on kin, thus shielding the Basque/Spanish home and women from a disproportionate amount of work – when considering both the productive and reproductive work women usually take on. However, this guarantee is part of what opens for the many exploitations that are visible in my material, and that are reported on by different domestic and care work associations all over Spain. This is in spite of the fact that the organization and implementation of these judicial promises are left largely up to the regions themselves, and could therefore in theory result in an array of different ways of organizing the services offered to dependent persons. The proliferation of migrated workers as care providers has nonetheless been extensive throughout Spain (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015).

LAPAD Economic Measures in the Basque Country

As indicated, LAPAD states that the organization of care services should be done through public centers and/or private centers accredited by public authorities. In the Basque Country, however, considering the lack of a network of such institutions and the time required to build one, the implementation of the law is in practice left largely to go through the so-called extraordinary measures that, according to the law itself, should only be used as an initial response to provide services to those in need of them (see Appendix 3 for an overview of these measures). This is reflected in numbers supplied by ATH-ELE, who report that since they started surveying this information in 2013 from the workers using their services, between 89 and 98 percent of *internas* are employed to primarily care for dependent persons, while they usually also do housework as part of this employment. When it comes to *externas*, there is more variation. Between 2013 and 2018, the proportion of workers who tend to ei-

ther children or dependent people as part of their work as an *externa* has decreased from 66 to 51 percent. However, of those who do exercise care as part of their employment, the percentage of people employed to care for dependent people (i.e. not childcare), has increased significantly, from 44 percent in 2013 to 71 percent in 2018 (ATH-ELE 2013, 2018). The increasing need for this type of care work in the Basque Country and in Spain is therefore clear, and reflected on by both policy makers (see above) and those advocating for workers' rights.

The three Basque provinces (Bizkaia, Araba, and Gipuzkoa) underline the importance of posing certain requirements to the person employed as a personal assistant. In Araba the requirements go as far as to demand an official title or certificate proving that the person is professionally trained to do the job, whereas in the two other provinces the requirements are limited to regularized working conditions for the employee, both in terms of residence permit and in terms of employment contract. The Basque Country thus holds a unique position among the Spanish regions in how they have organized the assistance given to dependent people (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015). As a region the Basque authorities can be seen as contributing, at least discursively, to the professionalization and regularization of this sector of the labor market. The authors of the mentioned report muse that the legal requirements stated in the law might also serve as a 'way out' of irregularity for migrated workers, who are often employed in the underground economy before they are able to attain their residence permits.

However, both the LAPAD law itself and the numbers from ATH-ELE indicate a growing need for provisions of paid care work. ATH-ELE also underscores that paying for an elderly family member's stay at a nursing home is more than twice as expensive as paying for an *interna* care worker to stay with the elderly person in their home 'under unacceptable conditions' (ATH-ELE 2016). In other words, even if some parts of the care work sector might become professionalized, the 'outsourcing' of care beyond the family is increasing among families with and without 'dependent' members. In addition, even if Basque legislation does hold a potential for 'professionalizing' this specific part of the care work sector, it is clear that in practice, employers often do not follow this when choosing whom to hire, assumedly because of cost differences. Lastly, what is foregrounded in this legislation is not how to organize this work in order for both the service user and the care worker to

be able to lead autonomous and satisfactory lives. Rather, it situates the autonomy and ‘full’ life of the service users within the realm of their homes, and thereby ties the service worker to this particular place as well. Without offering an alternative of creating ‘home’ someplace else, such as a specialized institution designed to cater to the specific and differential needs of dependent people, this legislation is arguably far from allowing for a professionalization of this particular kind of care work. I now move on to look at the legislation of care work on a more general level, beyond that which caters explicitly to dependent people.

Experiencing Work and Accessing Rights and in the Care Sector

Katty lives in one of the small towns adjacent to Bilbao. It is one of the more well-to-do places of the Bilbao metropolitan area and has a large concentration of care workers. Many people there employ care workers not only when they are needed to care for children and dependent people, but also to do the cooking, cleaning, and other everyday tasks of any household. For our interview, I went to meet Katty there. It was Thursday evening, and she had just finished work. She met me at the metro exit, and took me to a bar⁷⁰ in the center of town. It was raining and the place was dark and stuffy with humidity from outside. Inside, they were setting up for a concert, and, as we sat down by a table, one of the waiters warned us that we would be interrupted in a while to move to a different one because of the gig. We decided to stay there in any case, instead of venturing out into the rain to find a different place.

When I asked Katty about her migration experiences, she told me that when she first arrived in Bilbao, the prospect of working as an *empleada* [the term used in Bolivia for domestic worker] caught her completely off guard. She had left Bolivia in order to help pay off family debt, and with the idea to return in order to finalize her studies to become a teacher. She left her daughter, who was three years old at the time, behind to be cared for by her parents and brother. When I met them in Cochabamba, Clarisa had just turned thirteen. I asked Katty what she had imagined she would be doing in Spain when she first left Bolivia.

70 A *bar* in the Basque/Spanish context is usually a place where you go to for any number of social gatherings – to get a coffee, a quick bite to eat, a beer, or a cocktail. Usually when meeting research participants ‘at a bar’, particularly for interviews, it was in the context of ‘getting coffee’, not to ‘have a drink’.

Katty:

I don't know... Work with other things, but never this, never cleaning houses, you know? Because sometimes, because back there [in Bolivia], your family... [...] You don't usually have that. At least in my house we didn't have anyone who would clean it [for us]. I knew some [about cleaning], but in the end I've learned here [laughs].

To cook, to clean, to take care of... well, to mind children... But it's not like I came here with a master's degree in that – in cleaning and caring and all of that. It's that... I came with the idea... I had no idea about what kind of work I would be doing. It's not like... Back there, when they tell you things about here [in Spain], they don't tell you what you will be working with. At most they will mention the word 'nanny' and well...

Ingrid:

Yes, it doesn't sound so 'bad'..?

Katty:

Yes, so bad... or... I don't know... So low, like one can feel about it there. Well, right? Oh well, you keep going with it. In the beginning you say 'well, until you're more stable', but then, you don't have a different space, either, in which to unfold and develop yourself. If you don't have an accredited degree and all that.

As I have already relayed (see Chapter 6), I asked Katty whether I was right to assume she had not had 'papers' during her first years in Spain, since she did not try to find job in a different, more 'regular' labor market sector. She underlined her lack of knowledge about the type of work she would be doing and what rights she had, despite her 'illegality', to the point that her employers reduced her salary when the new law of 2011 came about.

Katty:

Yes [,they've reduced my salary]. And also because, well, there's still quite a lot of migration happening, right? And so you still notice that now there are people arriving from Central America. I know because I still have a girl at home who arrived, well, three days ago, from Honduras. In the end, information is power, but also, I don't

know. It's like... If you earned more before, and now you earn less it's like 'oh lord!'. But you obtain other things, right? Like that they pay the social security fee for *all* of the hours you work.

Ingrid:

You mean with the new law [of 2012]?

Katty:

Yes, [it came] three years ago, I think. That it was organized, that [care work] became part of the general workers rights regime. Something like that.

Ingrid:

Yes, I think that before you only had to [pay into Social Security] if you worked full time, right? But now it's whenever you work in someone's home.

Katty:

Yes, and you could also... If you were working full time, you could renew your papers, I mean your residence permit, when you did a full time job. When you were only working per the hour, you couldn't. [...] In the beginning the thing about the residence permit is... It's like 'oh, I need that permit! I need to obtain a contract, it doesn't matter [how], but it must say I'm working full time, right?'

Ingrid:

Yes, and to get the residence permit you have to be here for three years, right?

Katty:

Registered for three years in the municipality census, yes.

Ingrid:

And then a contract?

Katty:

A contract, yes. And your information. Yes. But it needs to be three continuous years [registered in the municipal census], also. Plus the

year it takes [to do the paperwork]...

Ingrid:

So [calculating the years, that means] you still haven't obtained citizenship, then?

Katty:

No, it's being processed now. But, actually, when I arrived, I didn't register with the municipality until after six or seven months. Or ten almost. It was in September... Eight, Nine! Nine months. That I was here without being registered.

Ingrid:

Because you didn't know [what it meant], or what?

Katty:

Because I didn't know, and because... Because I didn't think that it would help me regularize my situation. Yes, because, of course, nobody tells you what it is you have to do, and what rights you have. When you arrive... [...] Including the thing about having [the right to] a contract, and being able to start processing your papers. (Interview with Katty Aquino. Bilbao, March 2015)

Katty speaks of the lack of information she experienced both before and after her arrival in Bilbao, while her account also shows how interrelated legislations on care are with the legislations on immigration. She didn't know exactly what sort of work she would be doing, and for her it turned out to be a shock. Others, like María, had already experienced working as an *empleada* while growing up in Bolivia, and so she had more of an idea of what her working life would be like when coming to Spain. As María explains below, it was challenging to negotiate one's place and access to rights within work situations that were, at times, blatantly racist, sexist, and humiliating.

Look, just a while back... I went to do a replacement for a month, for a *señor* that was also sick with cancer. He was... This one was an architect. He had money, eh! And, the cancer was in the brain. And according to what his wife says, that made him... He desired women

a lot! He was, well, terrible! [The wife] said ‘he doesn’t want fat *chicas*, or ugly *chicas*,’ but ‘so I find him Bolivian girls because you are nice/pleasant,’ says the *señora* [the ‘missus’, or woman/wife of the house], right? And, well, one of my friends, she ran scared out of his room, ‘Ayyy, that disgusting man! He has.... He wants me to touch him and I don’t know what!’ Woooh, she ran out like that. And I said ‘can it really be that bad?’ I said, right? And I needed to work. [...]

I don’t have bad memories from here, no. I don’t. In my work, from time to time, they have tried to take advantage of me, but it’s not because they [the service users] have wanted to. Rather because... Since I’ve been working with elderly people, they let themselves be steered by their children. So they themselves would like to pay you more, let’s say, but no. The children sometimes say ‘no!’... Sometimes I’ve even heard them tell me ‘listen, as a teacher I earn less than you – you earn more than I do!’ they told me. I said [to myself] ‘maybe it’s true, maybe it’s not true.’ But... It’s like they make you feel a bit uncomfortable. But not the elderly [service users], but rather all the people that have to pay up. I think it hurts for them! [laughs] And they don’t value, let’s say, what you do. In the sense that... you pamper them [the service users], you care for them, you treat them well. Because I... all the way from the toes! I’d say ‘come here, I’ll wash your feet, because you’re in this state... The nails, look, a little massage! Look, your hands are like this! Look at your hair, I will curl it for you’. I mean, like they were my dolls, right? [...] But they don’t see. The children, or kin, [of the service users]. They don’t see what is around them, they don’t see those things. So they think that... that many of us don’t have the right to be recognized for [our work], right? And of course, there are probably other people too, that I don’t know how they treat [their employees]. You hear a lot of cases like that, right? That they mistreat them, to say it like that. (Interview with María Cabrerías, Bilbao, July 2013).

María’s story of indecent proposals is followed by a description of how she through her work has bestowed thorough attention, even affection, upon the people she has been hired to take care of, without feeling that she has been recognized for this. Her description of the kind of work she had to do as an *interna* was also presented above. María’s account, to-

gether with those of Blanca and Katty, speak of the structural adversities that are part of the sector they work in, even when what is taking place as part of one's work is not overtly or physically abusive. As I will discuss in the Chapter 8, this failure to recognize reproductive labor is indeed a concomitant part of the patriarchal and capitalist economy in itself. What is in the case of paid care work used as a means of recognizing-without-recognition is the trope of the care worker as 'part of the family'. But what María is demanding is not, in fact, to receive affection back in exchange for the one she bestowed, but, rather, that the employers 'pay up' without transmitting how it hurts them (or their wallets).

Loss and the Costs of Care

Blanca, in contrast to María, did not reflect on salary levels in our first interview. Her focus was almost entirely on the legal procedures she was going through with trying to bring her daughter to stay with her in Bilbao (see Chapters 6 and 9). Her account of experiences in the care work sector became a reflection of her trauma of being separated from her daughter and her mother. As quoted in the beginning of this chapter, she told me she had become like a robot. She just went back and forth from her different jobs as an *externa*, and back to the room she was renting. She spoke on the phone with her daughter, and she had been back to see both her and her mother, who at the time of our first interview in 2013 was severely ill and passed away during Christmas of 2014. As will be discussed further in Chapter 9, in Blanca's renditions of her experience as a care worker, the focus is on what she has lost as a mother and a daughter. While Maria's implicit claims for a more just salary is something that can, in theory, be redeemed, the kind of loss experienced by Blanca (and María⁷¹) has changed her life and who she is forever, as loss does.

Katty's account above is centered on her feelings of alienation. In a sense, this is also about loss. When taking on the role as a care and domestic worker, she crosses a line that to her is about class. Her failure to foresee what being a 'nanny' in Spain would entail, could imply that people in her social circle who had been to Spain before her and relayed their experiences did not want to share the truth of their situation in order to avoid the shame they might associate with care and domestic la-

71 See Chapter 6. María has, in fact, sustained a similar loss as Blanca when it comes to the relationship with her children, but she deals with this loss differently.

bor. In another citation from our interview (see Chapter 3), Katty tells me about employers who make her wash the toilets by hand and wear old-fashioned uniforms with skirts and aprons. She is, to my understanding, talking about being branded. She feels like she is being reduced to a function of servitude within a household that is not her own, and which strips her of her subjectivity. This household does not recognize that she was just a few months from holding a university degree as a teacher when she left Bolivia. That had it not been for her parents' overwhelming economic problems as a result of a large debt, she would perhaps have had the funds to finish her education and stay in there. It does not see that she has a daughter who is growing up in her grandparents' care, without her mother's physical presence. A daughter whom Katty is forced to say goodbye to and grieve every time she goes to see. Instead, this household and the structures around it tell her that her place is where this work is. She does not have access to anything else, or more. She belongs within the gendered walls of Spanish and Basque homes.

What seems to be taking place in the interactions between workers, service users, and employers in the global market of care, is a disregard for the worker as a full person in her own right, with her own life, emotions, and rights. I now proceed to discuss how the discourses that contribute to (re)producing these interactions in this way, are arguably present in the legal texts that govern them.

Legislating Domestic Service: Maintaining the Hogar/Home through Domesticity

For two and a half decades the existing legislation regarding care and domestic work had remained unchanged in the RD 1424/1985 – regulating the *Special Labor Relations of Services of the Family Home* – until reforms were made in 2011⁷² and 2012⁷³. What is noticeable in the original text of 1985 is first of all how it targets domestic work as something qualitatively different than other forms of labor. The rest of Spain's labor law applied to the majority of possible professions and labor in general, while care and domestic labor (domestic service) was categorically separated from other forms of work. This differentiation was confirmed

72 Real Decreto 1620/2011, de 14 de noviembre, por el que se regula la relación laboral de carácter especial del servicio del hogar familiar (BOE-A-2011-17975).

73 Real Decreto-ley 29/2012, de 28 de diciembre, de mejora de gestión y protección social en el Sistema Especial para Empleados de Hogar y otras medidas de carácter económico y social (BOE-A-2012-15764).

in the proclaimed aim of the law itself, which stated that even if the ultimate goal of the law was to equate domestic and care work with other forms of labor, special consideration needed to be given to the former due to the fact that it is labor carried out within the ‘family home’ – *el hogar familiar*. Due to where domestic and care work (mostly) takes place, it was considered that the working relationship between employer and employee was of a different kind than that of other work places, in that working within the family home

determines the need for that this relation [should be] based on mutual trust of the parties involved, balancing the respect for the workers’ basic labor chores with the necessary flexibility that should be given so that the employer and the employee might determine the conditions for the provision of services through mutual agreement (RD 1424/1985, BOE-A-1985-17108).

The paragraph continues by stating that we should not forget that ‘in the context where this labor takes place, constitutional rights regarding personal and familial intimacy are promulgated’ (RD 1424/1985, BOE-A-1985-17108)⁷⁴. In other words, what has arguably held primacy in terms of rights when it comes to domestic and care work is not, then, the rights of the laborers, but of the employers and their private space-cum-workplace. What was to be protected was the domesticity of the sphere within which the worker did her chores, not the extent to which her chores influenced her physical and mental health and how she was economically compensated for her work.

In 2011 and 2012, the law from 1985 was significantly reformed through the §38 of the *Spanish Code of Labor and Social Security* (RD 1620/2011, BOE-A-2011-17975). This meant, first and foremost, that the ‘special regime’ regulating domestic and care work became included in the general regime regulating labor, even if not all rights included in the latter were bestowed upon the former. The most important of these rights is the right to unemployment benefits, which is still not given to care workers if they lose their job. Considering how common it is to be

74 See Appendix 3 for original text in Spanish.

come unemployed due to, amongst other factors, the death of service users or their admittance into nursing homes⁷⁵.

Many advances were made in terms of legislation of labor conditions, however, particularly in regard to the formalization of contracts, remuneration/salary, periods of rest (in between shifts), severance payments/termination benefits, and membership in Spain's Social Security scheme. However, the reasoning behind the law itself has seen little change. It continues to emphasize the supposed intimacy of the relationship between employer and employee as an obstacle for ensuring the formalization of a particular standard of working conditions similar to those of other forms of labor. As is stated in the reformed law from 2011 it takes 'the convenience and necessity of maintaining the labor relation [of the care work sector] as a particular kind' as a starting point, and from there aims at 'dignifying the working conditions' (RD 1620/2011, BOE-A-2011-17975) of the sector. The law states further that

the personal link [of the working relationship] is based on a special relationship of trust that presides, from its very beginning, in the labor relationship between the owner of the family home and the domestic workers, that do not necessarily exist in other types of work relationships (ibid.).

Again, the workplace – the family home – is considered to be

very much tied to personal and familial intimacy and completely detached from the common denominator of labor relations that are carried out in contexts of productive activity governed by the principles of the market economy' (ibid., emphasis added).

Domestic and care work, despite being accepted as part of the labor market, are seen by the very law that is to protect the workers within this market, as a non-productive activity. This last citation points to the reasoning behind regarding domestic work as qualitatively different than other forms of labor, namely that, even when it is paid labor, domestic work is 'reproductive', and can therefore not be understood as part of the market economy and its laws in the same way as 'productive' labor.

75 As an example: ATH-ELE reports that 26 percent of workers who they collaborated with in 2018 had lost their job from one day to the next because of their employer's death or admittance to a nursing home.

Due to the history and the Marxist use of the terms productive and re-productive (and by association unproductive) the mentioning of the term productive – and thereby inherently also its counterpart, reproductive – implies that the work in question is in itself highly gendered, even in the eyes of the law.

The ways in which care, in general, and care work specifically, is gendered in the Spanish, as well as the Bolivian, contexts, is described by González-Fernández (2018:106):

Spain and Bolivia share – although with nuances – an understanding of care tightly linked to the family as the space traditionally, and preferably, lodging this type of exchange. The assimilation of care as a woman-centered activity is thus interspersed with gender and kinship relations that simultaneously constitute care both as a gender imposition and a family obligation.

The fact that both of these contexts purport a family-centered notion of care-as-feminine, and as women's responsibility, arguably aids in the care workers' adaptation to their places of work, in that the logics at hand can seemingly be taken for granted. However, as I show in this thesis, these similarities can also serve as a sort of discursive pitfall that glosses over the power relations in place, and that come to show when conflicts of interest emerge in the workplace.

The legal text makes the domestic and care worker responsible for maintaining the domesticity of the home, in lieu of the person understood as in charge of that home, most often the woman in a heterosexual couple. Seeing that the care worker is usually a woman as well, domesticity thereby becomes reproduced as feminine through the legislation on care work. The role of the care worker becomes the ultimate feminine 'domestica'. By this I do not only refer to Hondagneu-Sotelo's (2007) use of the term – in lieu of the term care and domestic worker – but to the absolute ideal of womanhood as the embodiment of reproductive, rather than productive, work. As Federici (2012) implies, 'women's work', such as domestic and care work, is seemingly understood to involve a higher degree of emotion, and thereby voluntariness, goodwill, and even love, and must therefore not be regulated in the same way as other forms of labor if we wish to allow this love to flourish. All that is needed to find balance within a 'family home' is the mere compassion

and goodwill of the involved parties; love will find a way. While advances have been made in the recent reform of the law, the fundamental discourse that it is based on remains the same.

Exploitation as an Integral Part of the Care Work Sector: Changes through the 2011 and 2012 Reforms

Ingrid:

And when you were working, were you paying into Social Security?

Alma Quispe:

Yes, I was paying, but not the full amount. And also, when I was let off, since care workers don't have the right to unemployment benefits, I didn't have the right to anything. It was like I hadn't been paying anything at all [into Social Security]. I had to ask for [welfare benefits], because I could no longer [survive economically].

Ingrid:

But the thing about care workers paying contributions to Social Security is quite recent... Or there was always an option, but...?

Alma:

But... yes, there was a change. For example, the care workers who were working less than 18 hours a week, didn't pay social security. Or they could pay it themselves [voluntarily], but now it's obligatory – even if she is just working one hour – that the employers pay the social security for her. And of course, because of that new law, people no longer give you a contract. Not for an hour, not for anything. Because they are afraid of getting caught⁷⁶. Unless you have a job [from before]. I, for example, in the place I work on Tuesdays, I don't pay social security. But of course, because I was working [there] before the new law began. She [my employer], when the new law came about, was afraid, but I told her that if there's no complaint, if there isn't anything... they won't know, no one will know. But of course, when the law came, she was afraid. And she was thinking about letting me go. In the end I talked with her and everything, and she [said ok] and I kept [working there] without paying

76 The repercussions for employers who do not abide by this law are usually limited to fines and/or reparations to the employee.

social security. (Interview with Alma Quispe, Bilbao, October 2013)

With the reforms, written contracts became obligatory by law in any work arrangement lasting for over four weeks, and the specificities of the job must be clearly stated in this contract, such as the precise salary, and the amount and distribution of the working hours agreed upon, as well as the payment for these hours according to time of day and type of shift. In terms of retributions – retributions made from the worker's salary in kind, such as via meals or rent should the worker be living with the family who has employed her, can no longer account for more than 30 per cent of her salary⁷⁷. These retributions can no longer impact the salary level so that the amount paid in cash falls below minimum wage. The worker also has the right to paid vacations through the so-called *pagas extras*, or 'extra payments'. This is the standard Spanish system for salary payment which divides up the annual salary of a worker in 14 months, and pays out double monthly payments two times a year, usually in August and December – the two main vacation months. With the law of 2011 these extra payments cannot fall short of the minimum wage.

As Alma's rendition of the change shows, the transition from one working regime to another has not worked according to the policy makers' intentions. Much of care work is still done within the secondary economy, and people find ways of working 'around' the established legal ways of doing things. In Alma's case she and her employer landed on not paying into Social Security at all; i.e. not paying any taxes. That way, the job Alma was doing was completely off the grid. And, as she herself pointed out to her employer – as long as she herself does not report her employer to the authorities, chances are very small of their informal working relationship ever being discovered. Considering Alma's economic dependency on her employer, the probability of her ever reporting her is quite small. Should conflict occur, the more common outcome is that the working relationship comes to an end, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

The duration of the workday and required rest between shifts are also specified in the law of 2011. Employers are now required to pay for hours on call. These are hours when care workers – usually those who

77 While with the law of 1985, it could account for no more than 45 percent.

live with the employing family – are not on duty, but are still present in the home, on call, should there be a need for her. According to the law of 2011 these hours should now be paid for equally as those that are her official working hours, and they cannot exceed an average of 20 hours per week, calculated per month. Resting hours between shifts have increased from a minimum 10 to 12 hours. However, ATH-ELE's numbers show that the limitations of working hours are often not respected. This is especially so when it comes to *internas*, according to numbers from 2018. According to ATH-ELE, 73 percent of *internas* worked more than the (legal) 60 hours per week, and 28 percent were not permitted to leave the home they were working in every day, unless it was for work related reasons. In addition, 22 percent of *internas* had no free days during an average working week, whereas the law stipulates a minimum of 36 hours continuous rest. In terms of night shifts, 42 percent did not rest 10 hours or more between each workday, even when the law stipulates at least 12 hours. Only 4 percent had more than a 12-hour break on average between workdays. When it comes to *externas*, part-time contracts are the most common. In 2018, 78 percent of the workers who used ATH-ELE's services worked under 40 hours per week. Still, among the 16 percent who worked more than 40 hours weekly, almost all did so without the required breaks, according to the 2018 statistical report (ATH-ELE 2018).

Employers must now communicate dismissals to employees in writing. The compensation that they are to pay, depending on the time period that the employee has been in the current position, has slightly increased. There are two valid grounds for firing a domestic and care worker; on disciplinary grounds – for reasons stated in the general *Estatuto de los Trabajadores* [Worker's Statute]; and on grounds of the employer's withdrawal from the contract. In the latter, the employer must give notice at least 20 days prior to the final employment day, while in the former 7 days are sufficient.

Lastly, the change in the legislation that many of the research participants indicate has had particular impact in their lives came about one year later than the new law of 2011. In 2012 significant alterations were done regarding the taxation regime used for domestic and care work in the RD 29/2012 (BOE-A-2012-15764). Prior to this law there had only been one overall quota used for all employees in this sector. In other words, the employers would pay the same amount of taxes regardless of

how many hours, under which arrangements (*interna* or *externa*), and which type of care service they were contracting. The exception was that the employment of care service under 18 hours a week was considered tax-free. Additionally, the enforcement of this law by employers, and the sanctioning by authorities, were seldom done, so that domestic and care work was often maintained within the secondary economy. According to the reform of 2012, RD 29/2012, employment tax should now be paid according to number of working hours, which is the way that other types of work are taxed. Nevertheless, as is implied in its title, this labor market sector is still considered different from other forms of employment. Its legislation is a ‘special system’. The most important difference between the employment in the domestic work sectors and other sectors is that the former does not, via the taxation of their work, contribute to their own unemployment benefits, just like Alma pointed out in our interview. Should domestic workers lose their job they do not have any rights to economic support for unemployment⁷⁸. In general, workers within other labor market sectors, whenever these are kept within the primary economy, are supplied with an economic buffer and hold a much larger degree of security than any domestic or care worker. This important difference is yet another indication of how Spanish policy makers understand domestic work to be qualitatively different from other types of work, despite its fundamental importance for reproducing the economy at large. How this taxation regime also influences the salaries of care workers will be discussed below.

Blurry Working Conditions and De Facto Reduction of Salaries

Ingrid:

But when you were taking care of that *señora*, for example, was it more about cleaning [the house] or was it about washing her, and so on?

Maribel Vargas:

It was cleaning [the house], let’s say. I would get there at nine [in the morning], then it was cleaning the house... But it was very little, because her sister would make the bed. She also did some cooking. I

⁷⁸ Other types of economic support might apply depending on the worker and her family’s general economic situation.

cleaned the house, and another woman did the thorough cleaning of the house. She had been there for many years. I mean, they had her [there] because... She was very old, I mean, you know... She cleaned the plates thoroughly, the closets quite thoroughly. But little. I was the one to do the vacuuming, and then the house. And later [the service user and I] would go out, at around eleven [o'clock], ten thirty, we went out to have a coffee, to take a walk, do some shopping, things like that. We'd get back at around one, one something. And then I'd go home. So it wasn't very... let's say... Cooking, really cooking. I'd cook something simple, some potatoes in *salsa verde*, or green beans, or lentils. And I'd help her make macaroni. I'd pour the tomato sauce on. I'd make the macaroni, and she would make the final touches. And... Really, it was very good. The work was good, the *señora* – good. And sometimes on Saturdays as well. Since she, in the end, had to be in a wheelchair. I would go on Saturdays to take her out, and they'd pay me separately.

Ingrid:

And they made you a contract?

Maribel:

Yes, I worked with a contract with her. Ever since I started there. She was very... That part was very legal with her. I had a contract for five hours, or four and half to five hours [a day], and they paid social security for me. I mean, the time I spent with her I was paying taxes. And when I was... when I [was applying for] the papers, through the place I was working [earlier], three times a week, they made me a contract so I could apply for the papers.

Ingrid:

Right, because you needed a contract to...

Maribel:

Yes, for a year. So, of course, they made me [a contract for] eight hours [a day]. I paid the social security. They made me an agreement that they would sign my contract and I would pay the social security, let's say.

Ingrid:
Which job was that?

Maribel:
That was also cleaning [a house]. I mean, only cleaning the house, nothing more. They made me that type of contract. And I paid the social security for a year. Afterwards, of course, after a year I deregistered from Social Security because it was a [big] expense! And that's when I found [work with] this *señora*. [...] Until the *señora* died and I stayed [to work] with her sister, I mean, I worked with a contract. So... So, of course, in between my [work] and that of my husband, I mean, we were more or less ok. We survived! [laughs]
We survived. (Interview with Maribel Vargas. Bilbao, March 2015)

The taxation of domestic and care work is organized so that the employer is the one who is responsible for registering and unregistering the employee in the Social Security system according to the contract she holds with the employee. Should a worker have multiple employers, and not work for more than 60 hours per month with either of them, she herself becomes the one responsible for the registration, but she needs to get her registration signed by each employer. In any case it is the employer who should pay the majority of the taxes (23.6 percent of the gross salary), not the employee (who should contribute 4.7 percent of her gross monthly salary to Social Security).

The employer's tax quota cannot legally be deducted from the worker's wages, but, rather, are to be paid by the employer in addition to the salary they pay to the worker. Many of the research participants nonetheless report that deducting the cost of the employment taxes from the workers' salary has become increasingly more common after the 2012 law. Whereas before the reform few workers were actually registered in the Social Security scheme, unless it was to get their 'papers', it has now become more prevalent, as Maribel implied, since the inspection and sanctioning of employers who do not pay their taxes have increased. As discussed in Chapter 6, paying into Spain's social security scheme is also one of the necessary steps in attaining one's work and residence permits. This is reflected in the interview with Maribel, Elia and Jhoselyn's sister, above. Maribel is no longer working in the care sector, but rather as a server in her sister Sandra's bar. She works there most mornings

during weekdays, until lunch. Then she goes home to cook for and feed her two sons. During my different fieldwork periods I would sometimes spend my mornings there, hanging out at the bar, sometimes writing, sometimes waiting for Jhoselyn to finish work to have a coffee with her. This is also where Maribel and I did our interview.

I asked Maribel to describe her work experiences prior to that of the bar, and she told me about the elderly lady she had worked for during several years, and about the family whose house she cleaned and through which she obtained her residence permit. She described the different tasks she held with these employers, showing how care work often entails both concrete care – or social – activities, like taking a walk and making conversation over coffee, while it most often also includes more domestic tasks, such as cooking and cleaning. This conflation of tasks, making care work and domestic work effectively interchangeable terms, is also perceivable in the law itself. When considering what the relationship between employer or service user, and employee should entail, Chapter I, Article 1.4 of the RD 1620/2011 (BOE-A-2011-17975) pronounces that:

The purpose of this special labor relationship is the services or activities provided for the family home, which could include any form of household chores, as well as the management or care of the entirety of the home together with or of some of its parts, the care or support of family members or the people who take part in the home or family environment, and other tasks that take place as part of the domestic tasks as whole, such as childcare, gardening, the driving of vehicles, and other comparable tasks.

What is expected from the care worker is, thereby, often their acceptance of blurred boundaries between what the work does and does not entail, much like the working relationship in itself often oscillates between legality and illegality (cf. Andersson 2014a). What Maribel's account also reveals is the common story of many care workers – that even when the working relationship is 'legalized', it is usually tinkered with in order to somehow manipulate the system. This manipulation is normally about somehow reducing costs for the employer, but can also benefit the worker in different ways. In Maribel's case the employer agreed to register her in the Social Security scheme so that she could

apply for her ‘papers’ after having lived and worked in Bilbao irregularly for more than three years. However, it is Maribel who had to pay for that registry. This is also why she decided to unregister after she had obtained her ‘papers’, since, for a care worker, there is no direct financial benefit to keeping one’s membership in Social Security.

Furthermore, Katty’s account above speaks of how working lives in the care sector are often built around misinformation and lack of information. This lack of information is to the advantage of both employers and the Spanish welfare state as a whole, since it keeps monetary care costs low. Katty mentions that when the law on care work was reformed in 2012, employers did seemingly also access more and better information. This did, however, not only bring about positive changes. It has increased the access and contribution of care workers to the Spanish Social Security Scheme: ATH-ELE reports that this has gone from 52 percent in 2011 to 73 percent in 2018 for *externas*, while it for *internas* has remained around the same; oscillating between 73 and 83 percent among those who do have a residence permit (64 percent in 2018). They also recount that among *externas* the percentage of workers receiving their salary under the table, i.e. without taxes being paid for it and thus as part of the secondary economy, has decreased from 62 in 2013 to 48 percent in 2018. For *internas* the same number was 56 percent in 2013 and 38 percent in 2018. Still, as Katty mentions, the increased access to information also for employers, has meant that many of them have, de facto, lowered their employees’ salaries. Some because of the increased visibility of how low salaries can, in fact, get and still be accepted by workers, some because they continuously replace employees with those who have recently arrived in Spain from increasingly poorer countries, and some because they insist on their employees, like Maribel, paying their own Social Security fee in full, and thus deducting this from the gross salary stipulated in the working agreement between employer and employee.

According to ATH-ELE, deducting the Social Security fee from the workers’ salaries is common practice. The dire need for a residence permit that most persons without one feel, makes it easier to accept these sorts of terms. In their statistical report from 2018, ATH-ELE relays that

some of those who come to us for counsel, had worked as carers for years without any rights in exchange for the promise of an offer of

employment to present at the Immigration Office and thereby obtain papers (ATH-ELE 2018:11).

For many care workers the official offer of employment never comes once their three years ‘in waiting’ are up, and they are replaced by another, newly arrived, person. For those who do receive their contract, then, being asked to – in effect – pay for their ‘papers’ does not seem like much of a sacrifice. When looking back at Katty and María’s stories, the limited attention they pay to this arrangement, confirms this attitude, which, in turn, can even make employers seem especially ‘good’ when they do employees this ‘favor’.

Being registered in the Social Security scheme is not only important to attain the first residence permit, but also at each renewal of one’s regular status. Workers who do not hold a permanent residence permit need to prove that they are officially employed, so that when they apply for an extension of their permit they can prove this through their membership in the Social Security system and thereby avoid a state of befallen irregularity. This dependency of the employee on the employer is, as discussed, easily exploitable. Several of the research participants report a decrease in wages since the new laws of 2011/2012, or rather, that the wages have remained the same, but now that the cost of the employment tax are taken out of their salary, their net income per month has decreased. Many therefore end up signing contracts that stipulate less working hours than what they actually do, so that taxes are kept to a minimum. Apart from the decrease in cash, the participants also justify this by the fact that there is not much to gain from actually paying taxes – it is not much more than a big expense, as Maribel expressed it. The lack of unemployment benefits is certainly a major factor in such an argumentation, even if these taxes do contribute, on a grander scale, to benefits and rights such as education and assistance for housing. An awareness of the workings of the welfare state are difficult to keep in mind when you are trying to make ends meet on less than the minimum wage.

The Continuous Arrival of New *Internas*

Although becoming part of ‘the system’ through regularization can be regarded as positive, this feat is not always easy, nor does it always significantly change a person’s situation since becoming ‘regular’ often in-

volves an economic cost. In addition to the decrease in net salary due to their Social Security membership being deducted from their paycheck once workers become ‘regular’, de facto wages have also decreased, according to some participants. Katty, above, pointed to how people keep arriving to Spain from countries that are poorer than, for instance, Bolivia. She herself was living with a woman from Honduras at the moment of our interview.

ATH-ELE reported that 34 percent of non-EU citizens working as *internas* in 2018 did not have ‘papers’, and that most of them had come from Nicaragua, Honduras, and Paraguay. Due to the even more precarious situation of these workers than that of migrated people who have been in Spain for several years, they are likely to accept jobs for even lower pay and in worse conditions than those who arrived before them. Put differently, one might say that care workers in Spain can gradually obtain better working and living conditions, but that the system stays the same, so that there is always someone new occupying those same positions. This is also part of the replaceability I discussed in the previous Chapter 6. Additionally, we might tentatively speak of an increase of people occupying the very worst conditions within this labor market sector, since ATH-ELE reports that one fourth of the *internas* whose cases they treated in 2018 were in an irregular situation, a percentage that had increased by almost 10 percent from 2017⁷⁹. In sum, although advances have been made in regard to the regulation of specific working conditions in the reforms of 2011/2012, in practice care workers’ situation in Spain remains similar to what it was before the change. As I will discuss below, the fundamental discourse of the law itself remains the same, and the intersection of this law with that of the Law on Foreigners allows for the perpetuation of precarious working conditions and the state of migrancy that many care workers live in.

Legal Domestication: Truisms and Silences Speaking Loudly

[The new legislation] should [help] attain a progressive equalization of the juridical armory of this special labor relation with that of the

79 As mentioned, the numbers ATH-ELE reports are based on the cases they have assisted with during each passing year. They may or may not offer the correct statistical representation of what is happening in the care work sector. What is certain, however, is that these breaches of the law, and of common decency, are taking place to a large degree.

regular one. In this sense, the strong feminization of domestic employment is particularly relevant (RD 1620/2011, BOE-A-2011-17975).

The introductory text of the new law on domestic and care work from 2011 spells out why it was time to refurbish the law from 1985. One of the main reasons mentioned is that the domestic and care work sector has been ‘feminized’. The intended meaning of this term here can be discussed⁸⁰. It can be understood to mean that the ratio of women versus men in this labor market sector has increased, which is unlikely, since care work has always been ‘women’s work’, and it has always been signified as feminine (Federici 2012, Fraser 2016). Another interpretation is that it is, as it has always been, work ascribed to women. I would argue that the text does not point to the, perhaps most important current characteristics of care work in Spain. Because the way this work is organized and practiced in Spain has changed over time, particularly through its so-called externalization (Nogueira & Zalakain 2015). As was discussed in Chapter 6, this reorganization is about lifting the burden of care work from the backs of Spanish (white, middle class) women and onto the backs of migrated women in exchange for a meager salary, precarious working conditions, and the loss of life lived with one’s loved ones (cf. Glenn 1992, Yeates 2004, 2012). But no matter how it is organized, and whose gendered and/or racialized bodies it is being assigned, it has always been ‘feminine’. Paid and unpaid – care work has always been predominantly done by women.

It is therefore difficult to understand why this ‘feminization’ is seemingly treated as new information in the RD 1620/2011 (BOE-A-2011-17975), while another, equally demographically visible fact, is, deliberately or unintentionally, ignored. Because what also stands out when it comes to the law’s reasoning is a particular silence, namely the provenance of migrated people in the care/domestic work sector, and, as a result, the racialization of the sector in itself. If it is considered relevant to mention the prevalence of women workers, why is it not relevant to mention that the majority of these women have come from abroad? Considering how important Immigration Law is in guiding the practices taking place in the care work sector itself, mentioning the prevalence of

80 See Chapter 2 for my discussion of the term feminization when used about migration.

‘migrant workers’ in the sector when redacting the new law, in the same sense as the prevalence of women workers were mentioned, would seem reasonable. This prevalence is, on the contrary to what the policy makers have called ‘feminization’ – an indication of a large change in the demographic composition of the sector. Not only is the sector itself growing, it is doing so *through* immigration, so that the women doing reproductive labor within Spanish domestic spaces are to a much higher degree than a few decades ago, women who at some point have migrated to Spain.

Concluding Remarks: Domesticity at the Intersection between Immigration and Care Work Legislation

This chapter has discussed Spanish and Basque legislation of its globally connected care, first, by looking at ILO’s convention on domestic work, C189, followed by discussing Spanish and Basque legal frameworks on the rights of dependent people and of care workers. As I have shown throughout this and the previous chapter, the legislation of care work and immigration intersect in the global market of care in ways that reproduce the patriarchal and colonial social order the laws are built on. The outcome of this is arguably that the colonial subject is effectively erased as, precisely, subject within the Spanish care work sector. She becomes but a function of the system, a tool with which to manage the domestic sphere of Spanish and Basque families.

There are several elements that stand out as specific for those placed in the crossfire between the two sets of laws. First, depending on at which point in the paper mill of (in)documentation you find yourself, you are dependent on keeping a job, and its contract, in order to attain the requirements for (continued) residency. Considering this, migrated domestic workers might think twice about quitting a job, even if she is treated poorly or paid too little, because of the complications this might entail for her paperwork. Second, the low (and seemingly *de facto* declining) salaries often mean that one has to work more than full time, and that free time outside of work is limited, as has been reflected in the statistics from ATH-ELE. If care workers live with their family, the time with them is limited, and should they wish to dedicate time to gain future access to other types of work through training or education, the options are also limited because of these time restrictions. Third, after the reformed law on domestic work from 2011 and 2012, authorities have

come down harder on employers who do not have their employees registered in the public social security scheme. While this should have worked in the domestic worker's favor, it often means that her wages are lowered in order for her employers to 'afford' to pay her social security membership. This results in many preferring not to be registered, or to be registered for only part of their working hours, since the benefits of being registered are limited. One example is that there are no unemployment benefits included in the domestic workers' rights scheme, arguably underlining the general political (dis)regard for the value of domestic work. Last, the changing nature of these laws and their practices means that one's 'legal' future always holds a certain conundrum.

Spanish legislation has been shown to explicitly differentiate care work from other types of work, precisely because it belongs to the domestic sphere. This is done discursively, and through economic and legal practices. An especially conspicuous element of this differentiation is found in how the privacy of the home is used as a juridical starting point for why general workers' rights for care workers cannot be ensured. It is visible in the two main employment schemes regarding domestic and care work, and particularly when it comes to the *interna* scheme. In this scheme the worker becomes an institution within the household and is in practice often on call 24/7, as though she were a robot, like Blanca expressed it in her interview cited in the beginning of this chapter. This differentiation also has repercussions on a practical level that affects all care workers no matter which employment scheme they are working by, namely in how this work is taxed, what benefits are given to workers in different situations, and ultimately in the enforcement of the law itself in that it is common for workers to lose out on their income, *particularly* when abiding by the law.

The way that the care work sector is legislated thus contributes to erasing the worker as a subject. Even if the law stipulates particular rights for the worker, it arguably does not center on her, but rather her place of work. She is reduced to the function she holds within the domestic sphere of Spanish and Basque families. This function presupposes a role within which the worker must act as though she is complacent to what is asked of her. Should she choose to dismiss this expectation, conflict is likely to occur, as will be discussed in the next chapter. As long as she subdues her own subjectivity and does not take up social space beyond the role she is prescribed, then she can expect certain de-

grees of 'goodwill' from her employers. When it comes to workers' rights and compensation, this goodwill is often no more than the employer adhering to the law, or at least parts of it. When it comes to more inter-subjective and social dynamics, this goodwill is about constituting an image of the employer-employee relationship as one of 'family'. However, as the stories of conflicts and blowups discussed in the next chapter reveal, the 'family' relations created through the domestication of the colonial subject are fragile and based largely on the fulfillment of the employers' expectations towards the employees.

8. SENTIMENTS OF CHARITY AND GRATITUDE: BENEVOLENT BOSSES AND DEPENDENT WORKERS

It's Saturday night and Jimena, Flavia and I are walking home from practicing football with Red de Madres. We talk about the interview I have just done with Jimena earlier in the day, about her life and work, and the two of them start talking about salaries. Jimena complains that it is impossible to find a well paying job anymore. Before she would earn well, even as an externa, but now she is working as an interna to pay off some debts from a failed business venture, as it is the only way to earn enough per month to pay her bills. 'I have returned to my imprisonment!' she exclaims laughing. 'Who would have thought that after all these years I would still be working as an interna!' Jimena also complains that her experience and skills are not valued – she is a very good caregiver, she says. When she lived in Buenos Aires she learned about nursing and physiotherapy from her work at a clinic there, and that is something she has applied in her jobs here. Flavia says that she needs to stand her ground vis-à-vis the employers; that 'the people from here like it when you value yourself'. I ask Flavia how much she earns per month, as she is working as an externa. Secretive as always she doesn't really answer my question, just says that she 'earns well', but that she had to talk to her bosses about it. But now they pay her well and they also pay her extra whenever she works overtime. When we reach the bridge Jimena crosses the street to continue on her way home, and Flavia and I walk in 'our' direction. Once we are alone she tells me that she

has had three big clashes with her employers about her salary or related issues. She works taking care of three girls, and also cleans the family's house. She tells me that her jefe [boss, in masculine form], the father of the house, has studied business management and that he thinks like that; he is 'very cold'. She has been working there for five years and had to stand her ground and ask for a raise because her salary never increased. He told her that 'you can't just come asking for more money; what would my [said with emphasis] boss think if I did the same thing?!'. I make a comment to Flavia about 'isn't that how salary negotiations usually work?' She says yes, but that he doesn't see all that she does, he doesn't value it, because his work is different. (Fieldnotes. Bilbao, March 2015)

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the relationships within the home-as-workplace, drawing mostly on the narrative material gathered through interviews and informal conversations with the research participants I did fieldwork in Bilbao. I ponder what happens 'between the lines' of human communication, considering how the discourses observed in the Spanish legal frameworks of the global market of care are also present in the relationships that ensue within the places where care workers perform their labor; the homes of Spanish and Basque families. Most of the time the focus is on the relationship between the worker and her employer – who is mostly portrayed as a woman in the narratives of the research participants. This does not mean that men are not a part of the equation of these homes-as-workplaces, but rather that it is the women of the household who are usually in charge of employing the 'help', maintaining a relationship with her (woman-to-woman), and, if needed, ending the work relationship. Additionally, I use this chapter to contemplate how the relationship between workers and the dependent persons in their care fuel the dominating relationship between employers and employees in the workplace. While not all the research participants worked directly as care takers of dependent persons or children – some exercise care solely through doing household chores to accommodate family life, such as cleaning and cooking – the narratives about these relationships do reveal how the exchanges that take place within the home-as-a-workplace usu-

ally entail particular power dynamics embedded in global colonial trajectories.

The dominating presence of *la jefa* in these narratives mirrors her image – a feminine domestic presence – in the legal texts discussed in Chapter 7. She reflects how the global market of care is managed, organized, and practiced through female bodies, and as such consists of an array of encounters between women and the embodied experiences they carry with them. By fulfilling these expectations – present in both legal frameworks and in societal discourse – both workers and employers take on the expected roles intended for female bodies; those of carers. As the actual work implicit in these roles is transferred from one woman to an ‘Other’ in exchange for (amongst other things) money, particular dynamics of power are revealed – dynamics that are arguably tainted by the postcolonial context within which they take place. Still, as the material below shows, these power dynamics do not exclude feelings of affection, and even love, between care workers and those they work for. Rather, these feelings become part and parcel of the work itself.

I begin by discussing different relationships Silvia has had with her employers over the years – both ‘good’ and ‘bad’. I continue by considering the invisibilization of care work, and how the perceived benevolence, or tolerability, of the employers is negotiated by care workers through criteria of illegality and morality. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the notion of ‘blowups’ through Angy and Mery’s stories, and what these narratives reveal about the power dynamics of the employer/employee relationship.

Preparing Saturday’s Kermés: Silvia Talking about her Employers

I arrived at Silvia’s house at around 17h, and was presented with the chores; i.e. the different foods that were to be prepared for the kermés the next day. It was my first time at Silvia’s house. The kitchen was quite small and was filled with big restaurant size pots and pans, as well as plastic containers of different sorts and sizes – all with foods in them. Some dishes were already cooking, while a lot of the meat was only to be prepped for the next day. We were making chicharrón, picante/sajta de pollo, charque, and fricasé, to be served with arroz con queso, chuño, mote, and/or potatoes and humintas,

and llajua, of course⁸¹.

We started by cleaning chuño. This is done by scraping away what is left of the potato peel and any dirt or little knots the potato might have. We had to change the water of the chuño and, when we were done peeling, leave it in clean water until the next day when it was to be boiled. At first it was Flavia and I peeling, and [her boyfriend] Gustavo also helped us for a while until he had to run some errands. Soon, [Ana Soto's niece] Tanya, and Angy arrived as well and sat down by the table. I had brought a knife from my place to peel with. It was pretty lousy so a lot of the time I ended up scraping off the potato skin with my fingernails.

As we sat in the living room, peeling, we chatted away about different things; about cooking, about what we liked to cook and how we usually did things when we do, and so on. Silvia and Ana were in the kitchen while we peeled, but later on Silvia joined Tanya, Flavia and I in separating the meat they had boiled to make charque. By that time we were so hungry and we kept eating little scraps of meat, since working while you were hungry and with the delicious smells all around was quite a challenge. In the beginning I didn't dare to eat from the meat. I noticed Silvia was doing it, but she was the head chef and I didn't know if it would be frowned upon if I did the same. But then I soon noticed that Tanya and Flavia were doing the same, so after a while I did so too. Different personal stories about family relationships and work emerged during the hours that we were working.

Silvia chatted away as we were working with the meat. She started by talking about the fact that many of her (girl)friends here had gotten married to elderly men in order to obtain their papers, but that she could never do that. I thought about Ana, out in the kitchen, and wonder what she would say about this considering her story of how she obtained papers⁸². She said that many of these men even want to consummate the relationship. Flavia chimed in as Silvia started telling this story, that an old man had once asked her to marry him but she had refused. But once Silvia made the comment about the consummation of the relationship Flavia underlined that 'her' service user had not wanted that, that he was a 'good person' and he had

81 See Appendix 5 for explanations of different foods.

82 See Chapter 6.

just wanted companionship.

Silvia told a story about an elderly man she had worked for on an hourly basis in Las Arenas⁸³ soon after she arrived [to Bilbao]. He had asked for her hand in marriage by arranging for a 'romantic' (my word, not hers) dinner. One day he had asked her if the next day she would have dinner with him, but without getting paid for the time she would spend consuming the meal. Silvia protested and said she would agree to eat with him but that her time was valuable and 'de esto vivo' [I live off of this]/'This is how I make my living'], so she would have to be paid. At the time she had not yet been able to bring her children from Bolivia to live with her, and that was all she could think about in those days. She said she would work all that she could and save as much money as she could, even to the point of not eating properly, so that she would be able to be reunited with her kids.

The man gave her money and asked her to pick up a nice fish from the fishmonger on her way to his house. The fish was prepared (I assume by Silvia herself) and they commenced the meal. During dinner he started to talk to her about marriage, saying that he would provide for her and for her children. He had a beautiful apartment with extra bedrooms in Las Arenas, looking onto the beach. He said he would help her get her children here. But he did ask for her to abide by certain rules, for example she should not leave the house without his permission. Silvia declined his proposal. She says she could not be married to someone just for papers, without love. She had been married before, she didn't need the experience of marriage again, and especially not without love. The man was upset by her turning him down and refused to let her leave. He blocked the door, hindering her from leaving, and had her locked up in his apartment for hours, way past her set working time. In the end she was able to contact her sister, saying to the man that she was expecting her. Her sister came to the house and got her out of there.

Silvia also talked about how she worked as an interna when she first arrived, but only for four months. This was not a good experience. The woman she worked for, an elderly widow living off of the pension of her deceased husband who was a doctor, was an eminent micro manager and also treated her poorly through her house

83 One of the most expensive and 'upper class' neighborhoods of Getxo, where many of the so-called Basque oligarchy – i.e. the richest families in the Basque region – lived and live.

norms. She was very stingy and would not allow Silvia to shower more than once a month in order to save on hot water, nor wash her clothes more than every second week. Nor was she allowed to use the dishwasher or wash dishes in hot water. She counted every scrap of food she bought to control that Silvia did not eat more than (the little) she was allowed to eat.

She only stayed in that house for four months. Later she learned that the neighbors had been impressed by how long she had stayed because the chicas that the woman had had in the past had all left very quickly; nobody could put up with her for very long. The only reason Silvia had done so was because of the money; she wanted to save up as much as possible to get her children there with her as quickly as possible. But one day she could not take it anymore, as another 'episode' occurred. Silvia was putting salt in the dishwasher and her employer was observing her. She corrected Silvia, saying she was doing it wrong, even if she had put salt in the dishwasher many times. It ended with the señora throwing salt in Silvia's face. Silvia got very angry and thought 'I can't stay here anymore'. She was afraid what she would do to that skinny, fragile body because of her own anger. So she left, but the señora refused to pay what she owed Silvia (she was earning about 700 euros/month in that house). It was normally the woman's daughter who arranged these things, but she wouldn't come to the house. Silvia stood on the stoop of the stairs outside the señora's apartment, not knowing what to do, when the woman next door found her. It was then that she said she was impressed at how long Silvia had put up with her neighbor. The woman called the señora's daughter and made her come and pay Silvia what they owed her.

After this Silvia went to work per the hour at another woman's house in Algorta⁸⁴. This señora was very nice and a good person. Silvia had now moved into an apartment provided for her by Cáritas, but she was hardly spending any money, not even on food, in order to save up for her children's trip. The señora saw how malnourished she was and prepared food for her and made her eat. She even prepared little packets for her to take home and eat in the evening and on days off so that she wouldn't starve. Still, the señora warned her

84 A predominantly upper middleclass neighborhood of Getxo.

that she would have to let her go once her children arrived because she needed someone who would be available all the time, and not having to suddenly take a day off because of her children. Silvia understood this, and so once William and Miriam came she was let go.

Silvia also talked a bit about her relationship with the señora she is working with now. This seems very relaxed. [...] She told us about an episode that happened the other day where she had been watching TV with the old lady and they had both fallen asleep, one leaning on the other. Later she woke up and it was late and the lady's daughter was there. She laughed and said she had not wanted to wake them because they looked so serene together. (Fieldnotes, Bilbao, Friday March 27, 2015)

Expectations of Morality and Legality towards Employers: The Good, the Bad, and the Tolerable

Other than the worker herself, the employer – *la jefa* – is one of the central roles within the global market of care. The expectations that workers hold towards their *jefa* therefore reveal dynamics of what the ‘laws of the market’ (Callon 1998) are, or, put differently, what the moral economy of this market looks like (cf. Fassin 2005, Palomera & Vetta 2016, Wutich 2011). These expectations also tell us about how these power dynamics are negotiated within the market, and thus which exchanges are made possible. Which criteria do care workers use to deem whether their employer(s) are ‘good’ or not? Where is the line drawn between what sort of practices are tolerable and which are not? How much can a worker expect from their employer, when it comes to being able to build an integrated life that includes work, but also other elements, such as family, friends, and fun?

From Silvia’s narrative, we can gather that there are at least as many different stories about employers as there are relationships between them and their employees. Silvia has seemingly experienced everything from severe abuse, including being illegally detained in the house of an employer for refusing his romantic/sexual advances, and being refused food and basic hygiene, to a relationship where it feels natural to fall asleep propped up against her *jefa* on the couch. Apart from the more extreme components of Silvia’s renderings of her working relationships, one thing that stood out to me from her narrative was the fact that even

with the employer she recalls as especially ‘good’, limits to her workers’ rights are still an imminent part of the relationship. This employer showed her affection and cared for Silvia by providing her food when she was malnourished and overworked, but still warned her employee that their relationship would not sustain Silvia being reunited with her children, even if she were not working as an *interna* at that point. Silvia’s lack of full flexibility and availability to her *jefa* was where the line would be drawn for their working relationship.

This line was discussed in the previous chapter: the working relationship, and thereby the exchanges that take place within it, is premised on the employers’ needs and convenience. Within what is both legally and socially construed as a reciprocal relationship, the ‘benefits’ the worker actually reaps from it, are steered by how ‘good’ the *jefa* is – by her *benevolence*. The basis on which the employees judge the employers as ‘good’ is to a large extent about whether the latter abstain from breaking the law ‘too much’, sometimes even committing severe crimes against them. If employers do uphold (most of) their end of the bargain, and even show a degree of reciprocal affection, they are considered one of the ‘good’ ones, as worthy of the workers’ trust and understanding. This is also in line with how Maribel talks about the working relationship she had with one of her employers as ‘very legal’ (see Chapter 7), indicating that within the care work sector legality can be a question of degrees, rather than either-or.

Degrees of illegality and degrees of morality are seemingly what steers the workers’ expectations towards their *jefas* and service users. Silvia’s stories about her former employers touch to a great extent on what the limits of an acceptable working relationship in the global market of care looks like, making it clear that these limits are not based on what the law purports, but rather on the social dynamics between employee and employer. It is seemingly the extent to which the employee feels she can regard her *jefa* as benevolent, and thereby trust her – at least to a certain extent – that defines the relationship. Trust and benevolence in the working relationships in the global market of care seems therefore based on a deficit of malevolence on behalf of the employers. In order to understand this further, I turn to narratives of conflict.

Drawing the Line: Angy's Blowup

The solution to disagreements within the home-as-workplace often ends up with the worker removing herself from the situation by leaving the job. Below is an excerpt from notes taken during my fieldwork in Bilbao in August and September in 2015. At first I was unable to find a place to live during this period, and I was offered to stay for a few weeks with Angy, Dilmer, and their daughter Liseth. As explained in Chapter 3, living with them opened for insight into more of everyday family life and the input of important stories through casual conversation. Angy's story described in the fieldnotes below illustrates what Hondagneu-Sotelo (2002) calls a 'blowup', a culminating conflict in the relationship between care worker and employer. It also reveals power dynamics of this same relationship.

While watching TV we started chatting a bit about work and Angy told the story about why she had just quit her job, or lost it, depending on how you see it. Her (former) jefa was una abusadora [an abuser, but in the sense that she took advantage economically]. She had worked there for two years and been quite compliant. Her jefa would take advantage of this and ask her to do whatever she felt like she needed. Many times Angy would be sent to pick up 'las niñas' ['the girls']⁸⁵, the daughters of the house whom she had been hired to take care of, at their grandmother's house; i.e. her jefa's mother's house. This would end in her cleaning the grandmother's house and all the mess 'las niñas' and their cousins made. The grandmother had not hired anyone to clean for her and seemed to rely on her daughter's 'chica' to do the job. Then, Angy would take 'las niñas' home and be expected to clean up their house as well.

Last summer la jefa had told her to take her vacations in July because that's when she herself would be with her daughters. Then later she told her that she wouldn't have work for Angy in August because her mother had hired an interna, so then apparently she would do the job for both of them, like Angy had been doing. She was also sent to do her job in Mundaka⁸⁶, where their summerhouse is, without getting paid extra, and her jefa 'forgot' to reimburse her for the

85 A term generally only referring only to children, while *chica*, as mentioned, also refers to (adult) care and domestic workers.

86 A seaside village about an hour's drive by car from Bilbao, where many people have summer houses.

transport. She would have almost two hours on the bus each way. And not only would she go to Mundaka, but she would sometimes be taken to Bermeo to clean the grandmother's summerhouse there, too. Her schedule would be rearranged constantly and without compensation.

This summer Angy asked well in advance what things would look like so that she might find herself an extra job in August should she be made expendable again this year. Come late July the jefa still hadn't given her an answer, so she asked again. She was told she would be needed and would keep on working the way she had been, going to Mundaka three (longer) days a week (instead of only the afternoons every day, like the rest of the year). Then last week came, where Friday was a public holiday, and Angy was supposed to work that day according to the schedule. So she got that day off, at least. Then she and la jefa discussed which of the other days Angy would go to Mundaka. They agreed on Tuesday and Wednesday. On Wednesday Angy should meet up by the garage in Bilbao and la jefa would drive her to Mundaka. That way she saved on the bus fare to Angy, that she supposedly was supplying, since she was going to Mundaka herself.

Angy showed up at the agreed time, and even cancelled another in-between job to accommodate la jefa. But la jefa never showed. Angy tried calling her twice, she went to the house in Bilbao and rang the bell and nobody was there. She waited for hours, in the rain. She tried texting her from her husband's phone when she eventually went home. She didn't hear back from la jefa until 8 or 9 in the evening who then claimed she didn't have any missed calls from Angy, and she didn't apologize or offer any explanation what so ever of what had happened. She simply asked her to show up the next day, Thursday, so that her husband would take her to Mundaka because she herself couldn't make it.

Angy was infuriated. She told her that the next day she already had plans and couldn't make it. She told her she also had things to do, that she had a husband and a daughter. To me she said that she also works for the aunt of this woman and that this aunt had told her the reason for la jefa not picking up the phone that day, which was that she had had a fight with her sister. Everyone in the family had tried calling her and she didn't pick up for anyone. But as Angy told

me 'I also sometimes have fights with my husband, or am angry with my daughter. It doesn't mean that I don't go to work, or that I forget to do the things I am supposed to do.'

During the blowup la jefa had also complained about Angy's work in general – the one she does during the year in Bilbao. Pick up the girls, feed them, wash their clothes, prepare their school uniforms every day for the next morning, and their backpacks. And then wash, iron, clean, etc. But la jefa doesn't notice, she just sees things when they are the way they are, she doesn't see the process behind it.

So she quit her job and is now looking for work in the afternoons. She went to collect her pay from la jefa, and was given 50 euros less for this month – 350 instead of 400 – because she missed that day in question. She was also not given any compensation for having been let go, as she should have had according to the law – 15 days' pay per year of employment or something like that, Angy said, which would be a month's extra pay in this case since she had worked there for two years. Nor did she get her travel reimbursement – Angy forgot to ask about it, and la jefa didn't say anything. In the moment, la jefa had explained why she got less money, and Angy had replied that 'fine, that is on your conscience'. La jefa had looked away and could not look Angy in the eyes. (Fieldnotes. Bilbao, August 2015)

Angy's employer does not seem to hold much regard for the life of the worker in her home. The sort of constant rescheduling Angy told me about is not uncommon, nor is it uncommon for a worker to be sent between the homes of family members, and to suddenly be asked to stay extra hours after their 'shifts' supposedly have ended. Maribel's criteria of degrees of legality – and of morality in conceptual parallel – can be applied here. While Angy's work situation might have included a contract, Social Security payments, breaks, and vacations, she is shuffled around by her *jefa* as though her free time and responsibilities outside of work were irrelevant.

Angy's story also speaks of the invisibility of care work, even when it is paid for. The fieldnotes on a conversation about work conditions that took place between Flavia, Jimena, and myself in the beginning of this chapter also relay this. I have included this excerpt here despite later realizing that the way I asked Flavia directly about her salary level in front

of her peer was ethically problematic, in that I put her on the spot, and she therefore (naturally) avoided answering the question. However, as the excerpt shows, she does openly complain that her (male) boss does not understand the work she does – he does not see it and can therefore not value it, neither monetarily, nor socially. While this is hardly surprising to most women who have lived with men⁸⁷, the dynamics between Angy and her *jefa* are arguably more explicitly about coloniality and racialization. In Flavia's case, it can be argued that it is gender which erases the result of her work to the eyes of her boss, while it with Angy and her *jefa* it is both her 'race' and gender. Angy's *jefa* is a woman, and thus discursively the 'default' person to know of what housework entails. It still seems, however, that when it comes to the work carried out by an 'Other', keeping in mind the time and effort it takes to get tasks done becomes a challenge. It is only what does not get done that gets noticed. As Angy herself expressed in another conversation, 'why would it take me shorter to iron a mountain of clothes than it would take her, *mi jefa*?' In a sense, the invisibility of their work contributes to invisibilizing them also as subjects.

Beyond showing what happens when care workers 'step out of line' and invade (social) space (Puwar 2004), stories such as these also illustrate how migrated care workers are arguably signified solely as workforce, and thereby not fully human (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010:44). This lack of seeing the 'Other' and her needs as one sees oneself and one's own needs is reinforced by Spanish legislation (see Chapters 6 and 7). The practices that follow the logics of these laws are thereby not socially sanctioned, but, rather, seen as normal, and, even by the worker, as acceptable to some degree. As will be discussed in Chapter 10, the same divide is perceivable also in the claims for justice made by the feminist collective on the March 8th protest. There seems to be an ontological disconnection between those who, by class and ethnicity, or 'race', outsource the care work needed done in their homes to people who have migrated from a different country, and those who have travelled from somewhere else in order to provide for their families. Stories such as Angy's outline the 'laws of the market' (Callon 1998) of care – or the sort of moral economy (cf. Fassin 2005, Palomera & Vetta 2016, Wutich 2011) at hand. This economy allows employers to tow the line

⁸⁷ See feminist literature on the second and third shift for women, such as Gerstel 2000, Gerstel & Gallagher 2001, and King et al. 2013.

for both sociality and legality, if they manage to create a certain degree of trust and an image of benevolence in the relationship with the employees. In return, the workers' expected performance is about complying to, and even anticipating, the employers' needs, while not behaving in a way that makes her own subjectivity too visible. To further understand how such a dynamic of performativity might take place, below I discuss Mery Gonzalez' rendering of her relationship with her *jefa*.

'Part of the Family': Trusting Mery Gonzalez

Mery Gonzalez lives in a small town on the outskirts of Santa Cruz de la Sierra in Bolivia, but lived in Bilbao for almost nine years until 2016. I visited her for a day after we first met in Cochabamba. She is Katty's cousin, and they shared an apartment for part of the time Mery lived in Spain. They even worked for the same family there. While I was visiting Katty in Cochabamba, Mery and her three-year-old son were also there for the weekend, after having returned from Bilbao to Bolivia just a few months before. When I later returned to Santa Cruz, I visited Mery and interviewed her about her experiences of migration and of work in Bilbao.

During our interview she spoke amply about her return process to Bolivia, as well as of how, all in all, she had enjoyed her life in Bilbao. I asked her to elaborate on the contradiction between seemingly feeling quite settled in her life there, but still making the decision to return to live with her mother in small-town Bolivia. She explained that because her sisters were planning to move out, her mother wished for her to come home to live with her. However, what finally pushed her to buy the ticket home was what happened between her and her employer.

She spoke vividly about the comfortable relationship between her and her employers, especially her *jefa*. She regarded her as a friend – she confided in her about her life, about her problems, about her family back home. She had worked for this family for most of the time she had lived in Spain – in the mornings she worked for her *jefa*, her husband, and their, at first, one, and later on, two children. In the afternoon she would work for *la abuela*⁸⁸; her *jefa*'s mother-in-law; an elderly woman who lived a couple of blocks away. Mery felt that her *jefa* trusted her fully,

88 *Abuela* means grandmother in Spanish, and is sometimes used for elderly women in general. In the interview Mery used the word to denominate the elderly woman she cared for in the afternoons (while *la jefa*, her employer, remained the same – *la abuela*'s daughter in law).

and that she had earned that trust, and so she trusted her in return. This was despite the fact that her employers spied on her in the beginning of her time with them. *La jefa* later admitted that her husband had been following Mery on the street and to the playground when she went on the expected daily outings with their then nine-month-old son. The husband had hid behind corners to check that Mery was not mistreating their son in any way.

They mistrusted [me], eh! Well, it's normal, eh! [laughs] Since I was a different person... a stranger and everything, well. *El señor*⁸⁹... *la jefa*'s husband spied on me. And I didn't notice, but afterwards she told me. [...]

Well... I usually went to the park/playground. And she told me 'after you do the morning chores, you go to the park with the boy, and later you come home and give him his food,' she said. And I 'yes'... Later I did everything quickly, I would prepare the food and everything, and then I went with the boy to the park. Maximum until... until noon, because the child would eat at noon sharp. [...] I... I think that I raised those children better than how I'm caring for my son! (laughs) Really! Right now my son... well! [laughs] Back there [in Spain] I would play in the park with the child... He would 'make me tea' and would make me sit there [with him]. I was like another child, sitting there and playing with him. Between my legs there, swinging, like this! [She shows me how she would go on the swings with the child].

And *el señor* had... he had gone to spy... well... He was spying on me, *la señora* said. I never found out. But after having been there six-seven months, she told me. She told me 'the thing is we distrusted [you] a little, because he is our first child... We love him very much... And we were afraid you would let him fall, or that you would mistreat him, or hit him...' 'No, how would you think that?!' I said. And I adored that boy; he was so good. He was calm, that boy. He wouldn't bother you, or anything. He didn't cry much. He ate very well! [laughs] [...]

So well... After she told me she gave me 300 euros. In addition to my salary, she gave me 300 euros. 'Please forgive me, I can see that

89 Mery noticeably uses *señor* (mister/man) to talk about her *jefa*'s husband instead of calling him *el jefe* – the (male) boss).

you take good care of my son, please forgive that he [*el señor*] was out there looking at you' [laughs loudly].

Mery underlined the seemingly mutual trust in the relationship between the two parties, and that she felt as though she was part of the family, after having passed the test she had been put through by her employers. After she told me about the surveillance she continued by telling me that they treated her 'very well'. They would 'always' give her 'something' when she was leaving for the day.

They would bring home oranges, and then say 'take [home] some oranges!' 'Thank you,' I would say. [laughs]

This reminded me of what the mothers of my Basque and Spanish friends would do. A common topic of conversation among my friends was precisely the way in which their mother never let them step foot outside their childhood home empty handed whenever they would go visit their parents – they would always need to take home leftover dinner in a plastic container, some fruit, or a pack of yogurts. During my fieldwork in Bolivia I observed that this was a common practice also there – whenever you would visit someone, you would often end up bringing home an edible gift of some sort, regardless of family ties to the person you were visiting. I therefore understood why Mery would take this as a way in which her *jefa* underlined the familiarity of their relationship. As several scholars on care work have underlined before, familiarity and trust can contribute to the care worker performing her work beyond what is expected of her (Anderson 2000, Parreñas 2001). Mery conveyed that she gladly took on extra tasks in the house because she felt as 'part of the family'.

Mery's employer's decided to come clean about the surveillance, assumedly to mend the breach of trust that she knew this implied. Understanding that Mery would probably react negatively to being mistrusted a-priori, her *jefa* tried to facilitate a clean slate of their relationship by adding a 300-euro bonus onto Mery's monthly salary of 650 euros. Despite justifying her mistrust of Mery by pointing out the fact that it was her first child she was in charge of, she admits to wrongfully assuming Mary to be untrustworthy through her confession and monetary compensation.

Revealing Discourse through Conflict

Subjects are constructed through interpellation. In *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (2011) Butler argues that words, and particularly those that put people into discursive boxes, have performative powers. She uses the term *queer* to illustrate this, as she follows how it has gone from being used as a ‘paralyzing slur’ to its ‘refunctioning’ to ‘signify a new and affirmative set of meanings’ (Butler 2011:169). However, in order to address the power dynamics circulating between the participants in my research and their employers, it is also necessary to look beyond merely ‘naming’. The social categorization taking place in the relationships in the global market of care is not usually done explicitly. On the contrary, like many of the other participants, Mery describes being treated as, and, precisely, named as ‘part of the family’ until conflict occurs, and the dynamics between the two actors change. Situations of conflict and the workers’ stories about them therefore become important to my analysis.

As a racialized woman in Bilbao one’s presence produces certain emotions in those around her and in herself, as she is not oblivious to the gaze cast upon her by other human bodies. As Puwar (2004) shows in the book *Space Invaders: Race, Gender, and Bodies out of Place*, not all spaces are designated for all bodies. While she writes on MPs in the British Parliament and their experiences of being women and/or persons of color in this context, the participants in this research are people whose jobs inherently keep them in the background, within the domestic sphere, hidden from the public eye. Speaking in terms of decolonial and world system theory, they are arguably ascribed to the periphery of everyday life in Spain. A parallel can be drawn between the private, gendered, sphere of domestic everyday life in Spain, and the colonial socio-economic periphery occupied by workers who do care work within it.

In Puwar’s case the subjects are people on the ‘wrong’ side of the binaries of male/female and white/of color taking up space that discursively is not regarded as theirs. In the case of racialized care workers in Bilbao, the space they work in is both ‘theirs’ and not. Theirs is the expected job for a person of such identities (woman of color); they are the ‘somatic norm’ (Puwar 2004) when it comes to this sector of the labor market. At the same time they are within a physical space that is also someone’s home, a home that in most cases would not invite someone like them in for a visit. As long as the care worker is but a means to an

end, she only belongs within the household until she steps up and shows herself as a subject beyond her expected role, for example by making demands, showing discomfort, or contributing to the ‘blowups’ that often ensue between worker and employer in such cases (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002). This became clear to me after Mery continued her story about how she decided to leave her job in Bilbao to go back to Bolivia.

When I asked Mery about this decision, she told me that she had promised her mother to return at some point, after having paid off the family debt. But, really, what convinced her to leave was the breach in the trust between her and her employer that took place after Mery’s own son was born. Being a single mother without a family network nearby, she needed to take her newborn son to work. She would put him in his baby chair and he would sleep most of the morning while she did the cleaning she was expected to do. After some time *la jefa* came to Mery and complained that her work had not been the same ever since her son was born.

I don’t know... But oh well, she complained a bit to me after... But she didn’t really complain for *her*, but rather she complained about... She said ‘oh Mery, well you have to realize that at *la abuela*’s house you shouldn’t really go with the boy [your son],’ she said. ‘She is elderly,’ and I don’t know what... And I told her ‘why are you making complaints for *la abuela* when she has never complained about anything to me?’ I said.

Mery asked Katty, who was working for *la abuela* in the mornings, whether she had heard her say anything about Mery bringing her son to work, and Katty insisted that *la abuela* was not bothered by it at all. Mery told me that she never skipped any of her work because of her son – ‘I would even go do the shopping in pouring rain, with my son and everything...’

She told me that when *la jefa* ‘threw these accusations in her face’. Her employer had expressed forcefully that Mery had not been doing her job properly ever since she had her son, and had warned that other employers would not let her bring her son to work, Mery did defend herself:

‘Yes, yes *señora* Begoña,’ I told her, ‘but you knew that I was going to have a child, and if you did not want that, then well...’ I told her immediately. Because... I don’t know... From where [did these accusations come]? Why was it that she complained about me? ... And, well, sort of after that, then I felt a bit bad. I said ‘oh well, [I won’t be] here no longer. What would I do here [working in this house]?’ I said.

Mery explains that it was after this that she actually decided to hear her mother’s request that she return home, and she bought a ticket to Bolivia soon after. She told me that even if the relationship with *la jefa* was smoothed out and seemingly mended after a little while, it just did not feel the same anymore. She was afraid she would be accused of other things in the future; the trust was broken for her.

She [*la jefa*] had never said anything [before], and that she would just come out with this, well... It was a bit... That was sort of what... I didn’t trust [them] the same way anymore. And I worked, until the last day, but well, like ‘I won’t do more than what I have to do’. Because of that I began to not do all the extra things I would do before. Because, well, if she was complaining about me, and I was trying to do everything – as if it was my own home; take care of it, clean it, paint it, and all that... But [still] she complained, then well... And I said ‘no’... And... that is what hurt. I said ‘no, I will leave’ [...] That is the main thing that made me return [to Bolivia].

Naming and (re)producing the ‘Other’

The narratives presented here do not reveal explicit ways in which ‘naming’ (Butler 2011) moves employers to act in certain ways towards employees when the latter makes demands. The naming that does take place – calling the workers ‘a part of the family’, as if to smooth over the power dynamics that exist within one’s own home, is arguably positive and pleasant. However, the prevalence of stories of ‘blowups’ and failed negotiations when the relationship reaches conflict draws a picture of the disregard for care workers’ demands, and subjectivity – their *hau*, in Maussian (1990) terms. Although other examples exist, such as that of Flavia’s salary negotiation with her boss, these sorts of open con-

flicts usually culminate in the worker leaving her job. Up to a point the worker tolerates her situation, but at some point the scale tips.

How demands are met arguably depends on how you perceive the person making them. These stories thus tell us about how the social space within the Spanish home can be transformed through the actions of the worker. When she abides by her role, the 'home' remains a home, and she is but a prop within in it. But when she shows her subjectivity the home is transformed from a private to a public sphere; it is no longer only a home, but also a workplace where people make demands and negotiate their position and employment conditions. The social discomfort that this can create between worker and employer indicates that the latter person is aware of the awkward dynamics in place. As mentioned, this does not result in a structural change of the roles at hand, but rather, and most commonly among the participants, the replacement of one care worker for another, and thus another, yet similar, employer-employee relationship.

What is taking place in the global market of care is therefore something beyond what happens in the interaction between symbolically charged utterances and real, material, emotional, and physical experiences. Experiences charged with emotion are the result of the categorizations taking place in law and policy, where particular 'sorts' of people are actively named and singled out as those who must be understood as different. As seen in Chapters 6 and 7, Spanish laws on immigration and care work, are two such entities of naming. These bodies of law point to who 'the Other' is – one in terms of geographical belonging, the other in terms of class and gender – and to who thereby belongs to a particular stratum of society.

Also at stake is what happens through everyday encounters between people. When we meet others, we assign their bodies meaning, and they assign our bodies meaning. This is more than 'naming'. It is that our bodies become symbols in themselves, through the gaze of the other person, but this symbology is arguably more complex, and more intimate, than 'naming'. It is done to individuals, by individuals. Symbols of social categorization are evoked in a body through someone else's gaze, and each person's gaze is constructed through personal history. It has to do with discourse, but it also has to do with emotions and experiences that have molded that history, and that produce certain expectations towards certain bodies. As such, the performativity implicit in par-

ticular social roles, such as those of employer and employee within the global market of care, manifests as ways of becoming and being for the subjects involved.

Butler (2011: 171) argues that

If the power of discourse to produce that which it names is linked with the question of performativity, then the performative is one domain in which power acts as discourse [...] Importantly, however, there is no power, construed as a subject, that acts, but only [...] a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability. This is less an 'act,' singular and deliberate, than a nexus of power and discourse that repeats or mimes the discursive gestures of power.

Butler is underscoring that action beyond speech acts (cf. Alcott 1991-1992) is an intrinsic part of questions of performativity; that speech acts are but one element of performativity and one way in which repetition and thereby reification of discourse is carried out. She also mentions mimicry as a component of power: power regenerates itself as acts are repeated, or mimed. Power imbalances stay intact because people repeat their actions according to the structures they have always understood as being there. The way in which blowups are a structural component of how relationships in the global market of care are practiced serves as a clear example of how structural power imbalances cannot be remedied through individual negotiations. Structures are social constructs, but they are nonetheless real – because we all act, mime, and mimic according to the social categorizations we imagine as real. One's body becomes the physical manifestation of the way structures and discourses work, while the manifestations of these structures and discourses are also felt in the body. Mery's narrative renders the performative powers of interpellation visible. It shows how the interaction between her and her employer has both emotional and socioeconomic consequences, in that it becomes defining in her decision making process regarding her and her son's life. At the same time, this narrative, along with those of Silvia and Angy's, gives glimpses of the structures that makes that very sort of interaction possible, and thereby hints at the how social categorization operates on both societal level and in the seemingly intimate relationship between two women.

Ascription to Migrancy: Becoming ‘the Other’ through Expectations and False Reciprocity

Through Mery’s story I have shown how naming, as discursive action, is a form of becoming (Butler 1990, 2011). Naming can contribute to making *somebody* into *something*, and thereby contribute to different forms of violence, as well as to producing privilege for people ‘named’ in a particular way. It is often done according to categories of social stratification such as gender, race, and class, or according to other hegemonic discourses of the society in question. What is expected of your body is carried *in* that body as a measuring stick of how you think that body should look, act, speak, and express itself. The behaviors and characteristics belonging to the categories emplaced on the body of ‘the Other’ are thus seen as ‘natural’ to them. As discussed in Chapter 3, in Bolivia, my ‘white’ female body was often expected to channel certain resources, be that money, social status, sex, or migration. The stories presented here speak of how the research participants’ ‘brown’ female bodies in the context of Bilbao are understood as default providers of care and domestic service, even when they are initially named as ‘part of the family’ or in other ways discursively addressed as significant for the home-as-workplace.

In that they are constructed through the global market of care, and the practices, regulations, and norms that govern it, the relationships between employers and employees are deeply inscribed by intersecting social categories of gender, race, class, and ethnicity. However, as is visible in Mery’s and Angy’s renderings of the interactions between them and their *jefas*, these categories are not addressed explicitly; they are neither voiced, nor named. What becomes clear, particularly through Mery’s narrative, is how she herself regards the relationship between them to have transformed. The space within her place of work, that she had considered as good as her own, has now been converted to something else, merely a workplace instead of a home she was caring for.

The premises for exchange changed the moment Mery conveyed too much of herself upon the entity she considered herself to be exchanging with her *jefa*. She mistook their relationship for a relationship largely defined as one of gift exchange, not realizing it was, in fact, the illusion of such a relationship that her *jefa* was purchasing from her. Her *jefa* did not desire an actual gift exchange. She did not want Mery, now with a child of her own, to be able to demand reciprocation for the care she ex-

exercised through her employment. She did not wish for Mery to invoke the 'spirit' of her gift (Mauss 1990), and thus of the relationship between them, and thereby force *la jefa* to grapple with Mery's subjectivity.

The deciding factor in the continuation of the working relationship between the employer and employee therefore lies in whether the employee is made to feel that her giving of self, of subjectivity and emotion, is somehow compensated, so that the illusion of gift exchange – of familiarity – can be maintained. Mery is made to feel as part of the family by being bestowed small gifts upon in daily life, by being 'trusted' with the care of the employers' children, by being confided in by her employer regarding her personal life and being invited to share her own personal concerns back. But in the moment conflict occurs, this exchange, construed as reciprocal on part of the *jefa*, disintegrates.

Mery trusted her employer, who chose to betray that trust in claiming that Mery did not do her job well anymore after her personal circumstances had changed. Mery, who always felt that she had been treated as part of the family after having proven her worth through her work and by passing the accountability test she was put through at the beginning of her employment, now considered that her *jefa* did not keep up her end of the bargain. The choreography of their relationship was disrupted by those hurtful complaints, and revealed that the relationship was, in fact, never that of neither 'family' nor friendship. When considering how Mery's employers spied on her before 'deciding' to trust her, it is quite clear that she was never considered 'one of them'. They never regarded Mery to play by the same rules as they did (cf. Hill Collins 2000, Skeggs 1997). Off the bat they feared she would be negligent, or even violent, towards their child. Speculating on the reasons for this fear would mean drawing on my past experiences of living in Spain and listening to upper middle class people talk about 'Others' as violent, lazy, stupid. While this is not a part of my research material, I do sense clear racial and class-based scripts emerging from Mery's story.

By seeing Mery's narrative from this angle it is possible to recognize in it that 'there is no power, construed as a subject, that acts, but only [...] a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability' (Butler 2011: 171). Power is about performance and who is in the position of deciding which show to put on, and from Mery's narrative it is clear that between her and her employer, it was always *la jefa* that was

in this position. Their relationship only took on the guise of family while *la jefa* was content with the state of Mery's performance. Once Mery's son became a part of the picture, the stakes for Mery's role in the household changed – her mere presence within it demanded more; more leniency, more humanity, more consideration. In this sense Mery's motherhood – and thereby her subjectivity – meant that she was taking up more space within the household. This position did not fit well into her expected role as the epitomical (invisible) care taker that she was supposed to hold, according to *la jefa's* script (cf. Parreñas 2001).

Concluding Remarks

bell hooks writes that 'being oppressed means the absence of choices' (1989). Common in the narratives of the participants in my research is the feminine gendering of 'the boss'. Seemingly, it is the woman within the (heterosexual and heteronormative) family that is usually put in charge of hiring, managing, and firing 'the help' of the household. In this sense, the household is these women's space; their relationship plays out at the center of it, while other relationships – as the one between Mery and *el señor* – usually become more peripheral to the definition of that space. Mery's work thus becomes an almost parody of the representation of 'women's work' – despite being made 'public' because it is care and domestic work that is salaried, the worker herself is still kept private, she is still dependent of familial relationships in order to feel safe; she is still kept out of spaces where she would have real power to define what happens in her (work) life.

As such, she is reduced to her nurturing femininity – taken for granted as a 'vassal' (De Beauvoir 2014) of not only the patriarchy but also, through colonial power relations, of *las jefas*. De Beauvoir claims that women live dispersed among men. We lack our own space (ibid.). Although the space between the walls of *la jefa's* home is defined by the patriarchal realities of the society that surrounds it, it is arguably a space that is largely defined and negotiated by women, and especially *la jefa* herself. Undeniably, the scope of such an analysis is that of the private sphere, despite the fact that Mery and her peers are laboring within the capitalist economy. They are a part of the (public) labor market, but they are still stowed away behind the closed doors of the household, of the private lives of women and men who participate in the labor market beyond the home. Mery's choices are thus circumscribed not only by the

gendered scripts governing her own life, and the scripts governing the relationship between the colonial Center and Peripheries, but also of the scripts governing her *jefa's* life – her responsibility of managing the household space, and of keeping that space private, intimate. This entails enforcing the ‘laws of the market’ (Callon 1998) that patriarchy and coloniality have installed in that space. By definition Mery’s demands cannot be heard, because they do not exist, ontologically, as part of the exchange. In order to maintain her own dignity Mery ultimately decided to remove herself from that space, despite the fact this that meant embarking on the return to a life she until then had considered as left behind – a return to the geographical colonial Periphery.

What is clear from Silvia, Angy, and Mery’s narratives is how the encounters among bodies, the exchange of gazes, and the implicit interpellation between actors in the spaces where care and domestic work takes place have both emotional and socioeconomic consequences. Each of these processes is informed by both discourse and interaction: the beholder of the gaze makes meaning by interpreting the body of her interlocutor. This happens regardless of the hierarchies at play in the encounter – my body in the field was also interpreted through the gaze of the research participants, even if the discursive power relation is skewed in the opposite direction. As shown above, the participants in my fieldwork in Bilbao told me stories of encounters between them and their employers, often about the times this interaction culminated in some sort of conflict. Experiences like these become embodied memories that shape people’s becoming and being in the world. At the same time these experiences have influenced the decisions these care workers make about their lives going forward, for example about whether they should continue their migratory life project or decide to go back ‘home’. Ultimately these experiences become part of how care workers negotiate their presence in the world – at work, and in the spaces they consider home.

9. CUTTING COSTS, CUTTING LOSSES: GENDERED GIFTS OF ABSENCE AND SACRIFICE

I felt like [it was like] what had happened in my own childhood, with my own mother. That the bond breaks, and you can't get it back. I was feeling like that, like it was breaking. That my children were no longer going to love me like [that]. And I still think that my children feel very... very independent from me. It's no longer 'mommy, I love you!' Not anymore. Even if my son is getting closer, and my daughter as well. But it's not so much like that anymore, like I would have liked it to have been, right? It breaks, yes it breaks. But.. I always tell them: 'I never left you. That's not it. I didn't leave you. I have been fighting a lot over there, and I keep fighting.' And that's that. (Interview with María Cabrerías. Bilbao, July 2013)

*

I had been here for two years when [my father] died, and I couldn't go back because of the 'papers'. They [first] called me in the morning, and in the night they told me he had died. They hadn't told me anything. He had a garden... He had diabetes... He had something in his foot, and he went to the garden and the wound got infected. When they found him he was already unconscious. Sometimes I think that I will go and I will find him there alive. I have no memories of him in his casket, of having seen him for the last time. When I dream of him, I don't dream that he is dead. (Interview with Aracely Pérez. Bilbao, July 2013)

Introduction

While preparing, serving, and consuming dinner one evening together with her husband and daughter, Angy Cuellar told me about a rite that she had missed out on in Bolivia. She told me that they had unearthed the bones of her grandfather in order to lay them to rest in a smaller casket, and for this they celebrated mass and had a small social gathering reminiscent of the actual funeral many years ago. She told me that the following year they would do the same for her mother, who died when Angy was only twenty-one years old. All the while we were talking about these circulatory rites of life and death, where reciprocal consumption of food and drink is a social obligation, I was also consuming what Angy was offering me. She gave me her stories, her knowledge of self, her interpretation of her experiences. She and her family were – in that very moment – also engaging me in the everyday consumption of food and drink: Just as I would experience later on when living with Doña Verónica on the outskirts of Santa Cruz; as Mery did when her *jefa* offered her oranges to take home from work, or as Elia, her family, and I would offer wine, *chicha*, coca leaves, and tobacco to Pachamama so that she would bless Elia's newly constructed house off el *sexto anillo* in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Or like *la Virgen de Urkupiña* would receive beer from Elia and me when we visited her in Cochabamba, in anticipation of her gifts to us of 'silver' and other worldly goods.

When you visit somebody in their home they are socially obliged to offer you some form of consumption, and you are socially obliged to accept. Giving is also part of ceremony and rite; it helps us demonstrate our joy, our sympathy, our grief. It is a way of welcoming and of saying goodbye. And so, an all-encompassing premise of exchange made up the very backdrop for the situation that took place between Angy, her family, and me – a global market in which people leave the lives they know behind in order to exchange their labor within a new socioeconomic context on the other side of the world. A market where researchers can enter 'from outside' to acquire the knowledge from those within it, use it to amplify the voices of those who aren't listened to, as well as to build their own careers. While grander narratives are at play, it also seems apparent that this market is somehow premised on all the smaller everyday forms of exchange that the story about and by Angy implies, and on the voids that these exchanges generate.

This chapter delves into the ways in which exchanges within the global market of care are understood by the research participants. I pay particular attention to how these exchanges contribute to (re)producing migrancy, while they are continuously being justified and made sense of by the research participants as a way of making the lives they have chosen tolerable to themselves and others. This sense-making was often conveyed to me by the participants as a sort of defense against what seemed to be hegemonic discourses ‘out there’ accusing them of being bad mothers, bad daughters, bad women. Although emigration can be aspired to on a personal level, the consequences of it are often frowned upon in the contexts that people relate to through their migrancy. The gaze behind that frown is seeped in gendered scripts of what womanhood should and should not entail, and might produce feelings of guilt and bereavement. Emerging from these scripts is the contradiction of a patriarchally defined womanhood that prescribes both absence and geographical proximity: a woman should do whatever it takes to provide for her children, parents, and other family members; but a woman should also never leave her loved ones behind. The latter seems to dominate the narratives of the research participants.

The citation above from my interview with Aracely reflects how her circumstance contributed to multiplying her loss. Her father died while she was ‘stuck’ in Bilbao. She missed out on life with him, and she missed out on his death. She wasn’t there. She also missed out on saying goodbye, of giving him his final send-off. Because of the time difference and everything going on she did not learn about his passing until the day after it happened. They would already have held his wake when her mother finally called her. Her illegalized administrative status at the time, and the geographical distance between her and her family, immobilized her. It also immobilized the memory of her father: Aracely was never able to process his parting by seeing his body, attending funeral rites, and being present with her family. By not participating in these rites, the relationship between Aracely and her father did not evolve or transition. In her subconscious he was still alive, and she would see him in her dreams.

Aracely’s story and the narratives below express emotions of loss and the pertaining grief that this loss entails. The research participants talk of absence as a way of giving something up for a greater good – a gift of sorts. It enters into the economy that arguably steers the research partic-

ipants' ontological experience. A mother must sustain whatever pain it takes in order for her children to thrive. It is her contribution to the relationships that life in migrancy entails. This loss-through-absence can be the result of different processes, such as leaving one's children behind in a different country, missing out on important family events, not being present when loved ones need you or when someone important passes away, and so on. All the while that the narratives frame this absence as a form of sacrifice, it is also an act of giving, and thereby a way of investing in social relationships, both 'here' and 'there'.

Gift-giving does not only entail expectations of reciprocity, when understood from an anthropological, and Maussian (1990) point of view. Maldonado-Torres eloquently underscores how giving and receiving is also a fundamental component of *Being*:

[...G]ift-giving and reception are fundamental traits of the self. Giving is first and foremost [...] a metaphysical act that makes possible the communication between a self and an Other – as trans-ontological – as well as the sharing of a common world. Without giving to an Other there would be no self just as without receiving from the Other there would be no reason. In short, without a trans-ontological moment there would be no self, no reason, and no Being. The trans-ontological is the foundation of the ontological (Maldonado-Torres 2007:258).

When we give – and our gift is included in the reciprocal circularity of a social context – then we become part of that context. Exchanges between people produce a common ontology, a common (moral) economy. This is what Maldonado-Torres means by trans-ontological: that these exchanges constitute ways of socially becoming. Important to this process of becoming is the gendering that takes place through giving (cf. Strathern 1988). In this chapter I therefore explore further different ways in which dynamics of giving and receiving – of reciprocity – are at work in the global market of care. This includes the mentioned dynamics of sacrifice and loss at hand between individuals, but also senses of emancipation through distance. The gendered gift of migrancy arguably both binds and frees migrated women care workers through their continuous struggle to reproduce the social relations in their lives.

Migrancy: a (Gendered) Gift of Absence and Loss

[...] men's and women's ability to transact with this or that item stems from the power this gendering gives some persons at the expense of others, as does the necessity and burden of carrying through transactions. To ask about the gender of the gift [...] is to ask about the situation of gift exchange in relation to the form that domination takes in [...] societies (Strathern 1988:xii).

Although anyone who decides to live far away from their family and the place they grew up might experience how one's own absence from the place of departure changes the relationships one has left behind, when it comes to migrancy this absence becomes part of a global system that surpasses the individual experience. As the citation by Marilyn Strathern above points to, absence as a gift is made possible by the way gender is 'done' both in Bolivia and the Basque Country/Spain. At the same time, the migratory movement that this absence is a result of, is done within a temporal context where women have gradually been practicing more 'autonomy' in regard to their own mobility (Bastia 2013). As such, women-led migration has contributed to both a 'feminization' of the migration stock in Spain (Bastia 2009, González-Fernández 2018, Oso & Parella 2012), and it is arguably linked to a partial renegotiation of what gender roles should or must contain within the Bolivian context.

When the options available to deal with life's toils and challenges are continuously pointing in the same direction, then the consequences of these options – these 'choices' – also turn out to be similar for the people involved. While I on many occasions heard people in Spain who were in the socioeconomic position to hire a care worker in their own home marvel at 'these women's ability' to leave their children behind in a different country, the systematic structures that incite in people's decision-making power were seldom considered. While I was not a parent during the time I did my fieldwork for this research, I did become one before finishing this thesis. Reviewing interview transcriptions and fieldnotes with the eyes and emotions of someone who has recently carried a human in her body, and is now experiencing that human grow into herself, has also made me understand my research material differently.

Because how *can* you leave your child?

The answer is that you cannot, but that you do.

Even if I can empathetically imagine the love that the research participants hold for their children (and other family members) through the emotions that my own experiences have inscribed in my body, there are other emotions I cannot access. I can project the love I hold for my daughter onto the stories told by the participants and cry at the prospect of not getting to see her for years, of losing my relationship with her, of her forgetting me, of her only seeing me as a symbol of sacrifice, but not feeling my arms around her and my nose against her cheek. What other emotions must be there if I were to make a decision of accepting that loss – for both my daughter and me – in order for her to be able to have a better life? The question to ask is therefore not how someone can leave their children, but, rather, what is taking place in the life of a person in order to make it possible for her to do the impossible? Taking this perspective opens for a better understanding of the dimensions of loss that migratory absence can involve.

Mothering at a Distance: Gendered Scripts of Absence and Care

You go there with so much excitement... that in the end... you don't imagine that... at least that is what happened to me, you know. That... that change. It didn't seem like so much time had passed. At least in my head it was like not that much time had passed. That I had missed out on a year, or I don't know... just a little while. But, when I saw my girl, for example, so big... Well I didn't imagine. [In Spain] I was still buying her clothes in size three-four [years old], but she was eight! [laughs]... And... I don't know... What was difficult about that first trip [back home] was the return, you know? Because you know you have to go back [to Spain]. And you know the things you have to come and do to 'keep going'. Quote-unquote! [laughs] And yes, that return was difficult to overcome, that's the truth. A... depression, I don't know. I felt bad. To be here [in Spain] again, that change had me... These changes, they make me... I don't know... They are not good for me! [...]

I was there [in Bolivia] for two months. Two months... Two months were like nothing, in the end. Also... Two months pass like this [snaps her fingers], without... Like [time is] flying! You enjoy it but at the same time you are with your head still here [in Spain] and you are trying to get into the life there [in Bolivia]... and then you

have to go back. It's very difficult. But oh well... I think what was the most painful was the departure. Yes. Leaving them again. And... And, well... At least, I don't know... I tried to be strong, for my parents too. But... Sometimes the emotions get to me. And, but, you know your responsibilities are there [in Bolivia] too, right? As a mother, for example. That... my girl can go to school, and all the expenses related to that, right? (Interview with Katty Aquino. Bilbao, March 2015)

In Chapter 4 I reflected on my own positionality in regard to my experiences in the field. One of the central ways in which the importance of experience and emotion for knowledge construction was made clear to me through fieldwork was when I fell sick with *chikungunya* in Bolivia, and I became more dependent on some of the research participants there. As mentioned, Katty and her family contributed greatly to this methodological understanding – the relatability and the contrasts of our situations became much clearer under the guise of their care. When we said goodbye at the airport in Cochabamba at the end of my stay, it was surrounded by families who were sending off their loved ones. Only a week later Katty would bid her daughter, brother, and parents goodbye in the exact same place as we were standing in that moment. When I later sat down with transcriptions from the interviews I had done in Bilbao, Katty's own account of her goodbyes with her family jumped out at me. Every time I have read them again after the birth of my daughter, it is like I am touching her pain.

The account above is about when she was able to visit her family for the first time. In her pragmatic tone she described how this absence was necessary: her family was in great debt and as the eldest child she felt she needed to step up. This meant leaving her daughter behind, but she knew her parents would take care of her, and throughout the first years living abroad she grew accustomed to the distance, and her daughter to her physical absence. But the first return back to visit revealed what it was she had given up. Her daughter was suddenly halfway to adolescence. Later on they would all have smartphones and would video call frequently, but during the first years of Katty's stay in Spain their contact would mostly be through phone conversations made from Internet cafés. Her first visit back in Bolivia with her daughter and the rest of her family became a race to catch up with what she had been missing out

on, before suddenly returning to the life as a ‘migrant other’ in Spain. As she implies when telling her story – it took this trip back and forth to Spain for her to truly become conscious of what it was she had sacrificed as part of her migrancy.

Losing Care, Losing Connection

Katty’s experiences of loss and sacrifice are mirrored in the interviews with many of the other research participants. While Katty’s narrative is quite emotionally muted, emotions tied to these experiences are often described in dramatic terms. Among some of the participants who live their lives separate from their child(ren), the temporal and spatial distance between the two parties seem to make life in Bilbao into a temporal vacuum where all they can do is wait. This vacuum freezes the imagined space on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean and coaxes the parent living abroad into two lives parallel to each other – one physical life and one taking place in her mind. In one sense, time stands still. Life happens far away and you cannot follow. You know about it but it does not seem real. A life of senses sensed and not sensed, emotions felt and not felt; lives lived and not lived. Put differently, she has traded in this time of ‘non-life’ for economic stability and a more prosperous future, for both children in need of education and parents in need of healthcare. This paradoxical aspect of migrancy – where what you give (up) is also what you get – is what attracts people to this life in the first place, and thereby contributes to making migrancy as a system possible.

In the seminal volume on transnational care work, *Global Woman*, Ehrenreich and Hochschild point out that this is part of what we can call the ‘female underside of globalization’ (2002:3), i.e. global care chains (Hochschild 2000, Parreñas 1998, Yeates 2012). The absence felt by both parents and their children, or other loved ones far away, within such a ‘chain’, arguably holds a sort of affective or emotional value, and the contact and communication practiced to cope with this absence somehow feeds the motivation for persisting in the parent’s migrancy. González-Fernández has also indicated how migration in itself becomes a way of practicing care, in that care chains ‘highlight profound deficits in the social organization of care on both ends of the stream; for they make visible growing inequalities between the different care regimes involved’ (2018:107). She furthermore argues that women in many sending contexts, such as Bolivia, actually migrate *in order to* ‘fulfill

their role as caregivers rather than to free themselves from their family responsibilities' (ibid.). Despite this, the hegemonic expectations towards mothers of the ones who stay geographically close to their children and other kin, and care through closeness, contribute to feelings of shame and guilt for those who leave (cf. Parella 2012).

When I talked to Blanca López about the distance between her and her daughter, her pain was nearly palpable. In Chapter 7 I quote the same interview where she told me that she felt like a robot, that all she did was work. That she was not fully living. She said it was different for those who have their family 'here', but that she was living more 'there' than 'here'. Even if she had been fortunate when it came to finding work and staying employed, she said it was only about 'surviving'.

I say surviving, because it is not living [*Digo sobrevivir, porque no es vivir*]. [...] Work has gone well for me, but you suffer. You long a lot. I long quite a lot. I say that my body is here, but my mind is there. My thoughts are there. I say [to myself] 'What do you think they are doing?' (Interview with Blanca López. Bilbao, November 2013)

Blanca was continuously waiting, but time passed, and she did not even know exactly what she was waiting for, or if what she was waiting for (still) existed. She was longing for her daughter, who was 10 years old when Blanca left, and was, at the time of our first interview, nearly 18. A young woman, who has grown up without her parents and who for the last couple of years prior to our interview, had to see how the health of her grandmother, who she was living with, deteriorated, yet another sign that time had passed. Blanca's mother had been transformed into something else. She was in need of constant care, which Blanca was providing for economically from a distance, while her two brothers were the ones exercising it. She could not be present to take care of her mother and her daughter, and for this she was burdened by constant guilt, since it seemed her daughter was traumatized by her grandmother's failing health and her own solitude.

It pains me because she has matured so much during this time. She has matured significantly because [she is] alone. She has to cook for herself, get up by herself, go to school... Many things like that. And

sometimes I say that perhaps, as a mother, I have come to fail. Coming here, wanting to give her the best, so that she can study, so that she will *have*, so that she won't lack anything. But she... She thinks differently. She says it's not necessary, the money. Yes, it's important, in life, but the affection is more important... that you feel... Meaning that you have a mother there waiting at home, at least to [be able to] see her. 'I need a hug,' my daughter tells me, 'I need someone to talk with... Not to come home and no one is there. I go to my room and no one is there. I want to tell someone something and there is no one! If I want to eat I have to make it myself.' I mean, she feels a tremendous emptiness... loneliness, she says. And that, too, kills me. I say 'it can't be!' (Interview with Blanca Lopez. Bilbao, November 2013)

In the same interview Blanca said she was hoping her daughter would understand when she grows up, when she herself becomes a mother, or when she came to Spain. If she would come to Spain. Then she would see that the life Blanca was living was not about having it easy, it was about work. Like María expressed in the interview quote at the beginning of this chapter: it has been hard, and she has suffered. 'Some people come here and forget about their children,' Blanca says, 'but not me. I could never. I can't.'

Blanca was burdened with conflicting emotions when she thought of her daughter and her mother. Because of her illness, her mother's hearing had been significantly reduced. Therefore, they no longer spoke much on the phone, as they would not understand each other anymore across the distance. But Blanca did speak to her daughter, usually daily. She needed to know what was going on, she told me. It was the only way she could manage to maintain the relationship, despite the years living apart from each other. She was aching to be with her, but she still kept postponing the return she eventually hoped to undertake. Every year she would tell herself the same thing: 'Next year I'm going back!' But next year has yet to arrive.

In that first interview Blanca told me that she tries not to make too many plans because her future is so uncertain. She had certain goals: to obtain Spanish citizenship and, most importantly, to bring her daughter to Spain for her to 'see this'. Blanca has obtained both, although things did not turn out the way she had hoped. Perhaps the way her mother de-

teriorated physically, and with this also their relationship, made Blanca's need to maintain her relationship with her daughter even more acute. Her mother's health, or lack thereof, was a clear sign of time's eroding force, both on the human body and on human relationships. But Blanca told me she does not know whether she has made the right choices in life. Whether it was good or bad to come to Europe, whether she had practiced motherhood in the right way.

Distant Daughtering

When I went to La Paz in April 2016, I met Blanca's daughter for lunch. Virginia was studying to become a chef and was enjoying life, living in El Alto with her uncles. She told me she was excited to meet me, since Blanca had told her a lot about my research and me. Blanca had in turn underscored to me that I should meet with Virginia. She wanted her daughter to also contribute to my study, which she finds important, she told me. Meeting Virginia gave me the opportunity to better understand the perspective of children 'left behind' for migration.

I met with Virginia at 11.30 in front of la Basílica de San Francisco. We walked down towards where I had come from, in the direction of la Plaza Isabel La Católica, through el Prado, and ended up at a little restaurant after the big roundabout where Avenida 6 de Agosto begins. While walking we talked about different things, but it mostly concerned migration, travel, and my book [thesis]⁹⁰. I explained what my book was about, about what I had studied, and about how I felt about travelling so much and living far away from my family.

In turn, she told me she had been back in Bolivia for around two months, after having lived in Bilbao for about a year. She also told me Blanca is moving back here [to La Paz] in October. I was a bit surprised that she had finally decided, and I said to Virginia that I thought it was good she had finally made a decision about [what to do]. I told her I had known her mom from the beginning of my research, for three years now, and that she had always expressed dudas [doubts] about whether to return [to Bolivia] or not. Later,

90 Depending on the context I would, during fieldwork, talk about my research and the thesis that would result from it as writing a book about migration, care work, and Bolivia. To those who had not been involved in academic circles this was often more relatable than talking about doctoral degrees. With Virginia, however, I ended up explaining the academic side of things more in detail, as she was keen to learn more about my academic background.

when we were sitting in the café, [Virginia] told me that she 'knew her mother' and didn't trust that she would stay put [meaning come and actually stay in Bolivia].

Sitting across from Virginia in the café I asked about what it was like to grow up with her uncles. She said at first it was strange. She didn't really know them. When they were living all together there, her uncles, her grandmother, her mom and her, then Blanca and Virginia had shared a room and lived quite separate lives from her uncles. When Blanca left Virginia was ten years old. She said that the first two years she missed her mother a lot, but later she got used to it. It was basically like growing up alone, even if she had her grandmother it was not the same. And she started to actually get to know her uncles only when her mother left.

The fact that she grew up that way also affected how she and her mother related later on when Virginia moved to Bilbao. She tells me that whenever Blanca would visit Bolivia all would be nice and rosy. It would be for a month or two and it would be wonderful to be together. But when it was time to live together again, ten years after Rosa left, the difficulties arose. They no longer knew each other's tastes and ways. They had to start from scratch, she says. Empezar de cero. For example, her mother always used to dress her in pink when she was little, and she used to love pink. When she arrived to Bilbao her mother gave her a pink shirt and said 'oh don't you like it, it's pink!', but Virginia doesn't really like pink anymore. They had to get to know each other all over again, and grow accustomed to each other. Blanca wouldn't let her daughter go out; she was afraid for her. Virginia says her mother didn't realize that she had been practically living alone for years; that she would go out by herself all the time in El Alto. But after a while her mother became softer in her ways and they found a compromise.

Virginia talks about the things she misses from Bilbao. She says living abroad changes a person. You learn more about yourself. Even if both good and bad things happen, what comes out of it is something good. And there are many things she misses from her life in Bilbao. The friendly people. Here [in La Paz/El Alto] everyone is stressed and pushes you in the street. There [in Bilbao] people are calm, take their time. And she misses tortilla de patata [potato ome-

lette⁹¹. The taste is something different, something special. Her mother and her used to go to this bar vis-à-vis the central train station in Bilbao. There they had tons of different types of tortillas – with jamón, espinacas, atún, todo [ham, spinach, tuna, everything]! Each time they went they would try a different one. And she misses taking walks along la ría⁹². All the space. She would walk from la Ribera⁹³ all the way to the last bridge. Every morning she would walk her mother to work, at six o'clock, when she would start. And after she would go down to la ría to take her walk.

She said in the beginning everything was fine. For the first month or so everything was new and exciting; she was getting to know her new place. Then the second and third month came with a bajón [psychological slump]⁹⁴. She disliked everything and missed home a lot. But time passed and she started to like it more and more. She found her routine. She began studying to be a veterinary assistant. I asked her about why she decided to go back, since she says she did eventually grow accustomed to her life in Bilbao. She said her studies were a big part of the reason. That she couldn't start to study at an official school in Bilbao because it took such a long time to get her Bolivian high school (baccalaureate level) diploma officially approved, so that she might enter university level education in Spain. So she had decided she wanted to study to become a chef instead, where she wouldn't need a high school diploma to enter. She also tells me that Blanca had actually planned to go back to Bolivia the year before, before her mother had died. In January or February she had planned to go, but then everything changed. Virginia's grandmother died, and at the same time her papers [for family reunification] came through. And so they decided [Virginia] would go to Spain and Blanca would stay there. But as part of the decision for Virginia to go back [to Bolivia], they also decided that Blanca would go back later on in the year, in October.

I asked if her mother still works as much as she has been doing all

91 A typical and staple Spanish/Basque dish, served in almost every bar/restaurant, often with different toppings.

92 In Bilbao people refer to the Nervión River running through the city as *la ría* rather than *el río*, because the former refers to the mouth of a river, and Bilbao is situated close to the coast, where the Nervión and Ibaizábal rivers join the Bay of Biscay.

93 The roofed market along la ría, selling fish, vegetables, as well as ready-made food.

94 *Bajón* literally means a downturn, or slump. It is often used in Spanish in Spain to talk about becoming (suddenly) sad/down/depressed.

this time, but fortunately Virginia says she is working less now, ha bajado el ritmo [she has slowed down her rhythm]. She has started planning her return, buying things she wants to bring back to Bolivia, packing her suitcase. (Fieldnotes. La Paz, Tuesday, April 26, 2016).

Virginia's told me her story quite matter-of-factly. To her, growing up 'on her own' was quite simply what life was. She never knew another reality than being left by her mother at ten years old, and growing up with her uncles and grandmother. Although she remembers having been sad at the time, now she is a very independent young person who seems confident and content. When it comes to her mother, the most challenging thing was, perhaps, their attempt at a reunion in a, to her, foreign place. Not only did Virginia have to try to adapt to a new way of life, in a place where she for administrative reasons did not have access to the kind of schooling, and therefore not the life, she had wanted. She also had to grapple with her mother's skewed expectations towards her, that were mainly based on the relationship Blanca had left behind when she had moved from La Paz all those years ago. It took some time before they both understood the grounds for the conflicting feelings between them. Blanca's need for still mothering her daughter who was almost an adult. Virginia's longing for independence and for her mother to accept that she had already grown up. For Virginia, it was too late for pink shirts and curfews.

They did find common ground, although this meant separating ways once again. Because Virginia was right – she does, in a sense, 'know her mother'. Things are more different, however, than either of them expected. At the time of finishing this thesis, in 2019, Blanca is still living in Bilbao. Virginia has also returned to Bilbao, but not in the way Blanca would have wanted. Rather, Blanca recently told me, all the savings she had sent home, distributed to persons she trusted, had disappeared. She was therefore forced to return to Bilbao to regain some of her economic capital. As for Virginia, she did not finish her studies, to her mother's big disappointment and frustration. Her daughter's education was one of the most important reasons for her migrating to Spain in the first place, since Blanca herself did not have the chance to study. But Virginia met a man and decided she wanted to live with him and work instead. Due to economic hardship, Blanca agreed to let them come to

Spain to live with her, and after their arrival she learned that her grandson was on the way. Little Aitor⁹⁵ was born in December 2018 and is the ‘joy of the house’. Blanca is still questioning her life choices, feeling she has lost so much. Her daughter is now grown, and disappearing into her own life, and she herself has to start from scratch once again, working several jobs under unacceptable conditions in order to provide for her daughter, her partner, and her grandson. I will return to this in Chapter 11.

María’s Independent Children

Although María Cabrerías, whom I have cited at the beginning of this chapter, seems to carry her losses differently than Blanca, she also expressed that migrating had come at a cost. Her children, 15 and 13 years old at the time of our interview in 2013, had by that time lived alone in Bolivia for several years. She told me that for her coming to Europe ‘has been a great blessing. [...] Now I can say that my children live comfortably,’ but that she felt that to a certain extent she had reproduced the relationship she had with her own mother, who sent her off to live with and work for a upper class family when María was a little girl. This allowed her to finish high school but to a large degree severed the ties she had to her own family. She explained to me that that was why she was so desperate to return and see her children when she finally obtained her Spanish residence permit, and thereby permission to travel, after three and a half years.

The absence of those who have left is also felt by those who did not go. In our interview, María also told me about how the relationship with her children had changed over time – how they matured more quickly than what is expected for their age because emotionally they were largely left to their own devices in daily life. When I met her children in La Paz during my fieldwork in 2016, my impression of them resonated with what she had told me. Marcos, by then almost 18 years old, admitted that the way they had grown up had made him a bit ‘cold’, as he put it. He said he does not express his emotions very much. Raquel, his sister, who was almost 16 when we met, is more lively and talkative, but also expressed that she does not share how she feels about their experiences

95 Aitor is a typical Basque name – Virginia decided to carry on her mother’s and her own experience from living in the Basque Country in the name of her child.

of being ‘left behind’ with just anybody. Raquel’s closest friends and confidantes tend to be others who are in a similar situation as her and Marcos. Still, both Marcos and Raquel underscored the necessity of their mother’s distance – that if it hadn’t been for her, they don’t know what would have happened to them or their family.

[...] they are not angry with their mother, [Marcos] says. She has missed out on many things. Like his high school graduation. But if it wasn’t for her they don’t know where they would be. It is difficult to imagine. Raquel says it is sometimes difficult when there are things like Mother’s Day celebration at school. Then she and others who are in a similar situation will stand together and sort of laugh it off, but it does affect you, of course.

*When Maria [first] returned after six years, Marcos says that at first he didn’t recognize her. Raquel laughs and said neither did she. She hid behind her grandmother in the airport. But after a few minutes that ‘afecto de madre’ [mother’s affection/love]⁹⁶ returned, Marcos says. It is always there. [...] They moved to a different place with Maria when she came back, and after that they didn’t return to live with their grandparents [as they had been until then]. They lived in an apartment by themselves in this same neighborhood, but Raquel’s *madrina de comunión*⁹⁷ would come look after them. She would cook for them and also sleep there. But little by little she no longer did that and they fended for themselves.*

I ask if they know others who are in a similar situation as them, and they say yes they know a few. Raquel says she has some close girlfriends that also have one or two parents abroad. In fact her best friend is in the same situation as her. She says that she has realized she tends to get closer to those who have the same experiences as

96 This expression is usually used to talk about a mother’s affection for her children, but here Marcos seemed to use it the other way around – that his and his sister’s affection for their mother was there all along, even if they hardly remembered what she looked like, and that it returned after a few minutes.

97 The person who was a godmother for Raquel’s first communion. The functions of *madrina* and *padrino* are frequently used for different important life events in Bolivia. It is yet another way in which to enter into relationships of reciprocity. You can be *madrina* or *padrino* for a particular religious function, for example the person carrying the baby to the altar during a christening ceremony, but you can also be the *madrina* or *padrino* of different smaller functions and things that are part of important celebrations. If you are asked to be *madrina* or *padrino* for instance for the cake at a wedding, this means that you are expected to provide economically and organize all things related to the cake – picking it out, ordering it from the bakers, getting it delivered, etc. It is, then, important to demonstrate both affection and generosity through which cake you pick, if not people will talk and when it is your turn to celebrate something you will see the consequences of your own investment.

her. But Marcos is not like that. He says yes, he doesn't share much of himself in that sense. He says he is not shy, but he is not like Raquel who will talk to anybody about anything. He keeps 'sus cosas' [his things/issues, referring to his private feelings and thoughts] to himself. He doesn't talk much about such things with his friends. Even when they are walking in the street sometimes he doesn't talk at all. They just walk. It is just to get to a certain point, you don't necessarily have to talk while you walk, he says. But he insists it's not like he doesn't talk at all, but about his childhood and their situation... that is not something he shares with just anybody. [...]

Several times during our conversation they both repeat that 'I don't know what will happen if something should happen to our mother'. Marcos says 'if she were to get sick or something. We depend completely on her. Our father doesn't give us anything. According to the law he is obliged to give us 500 bolivianos per child, per month, but he doesn't give us anything. My mother just lets it pass'. [...]

They have kept in line. They have kept themselves in line. They don't drink. Bebidas alcoholicas [alcoholic drinks]⁹⁸. They don't like that. Marcos says he doesn't like to go out. He prefers going to the mountains to hike with his friends. [...] They have always kept in line with their studies. Marcos practically by himself. Raquel had some help. Both from her brother; he will tell her what to do. And when they were living with their grandparents her grandma would revise her homework every night. So when they went to live alone they had a good routine. (Fieldnotes. La Paz, May 2016)

Just like Virginia, Marcos and Raquel have both become seemingly well functioning young adults, and have been acting this way since very early in their lives. The sacrifice that Maria has made in leaving them has paid off in that they have grown up to be responsible and well taken care of. But from both sides of the relationship, a sense of disconnection is underscored, and, especially Marcos, implies that he suppresses the loss he has experienced by, simply, not talking about it. Having to become independent from both their parents, Marcos and Raquel have a different relationship with their mother than many of their peers. While this rela-

98 As is visible in Angy's account further below, alcohol can be a significant and difficult component of many people's lives in Bolivia.

tionship works well, it has to a certain extent fulfilled Maria's prophesy of it turning into a similar relationship to the one between her and her own mother. Their poverty, the violence of the children's father (see Chapter 5), and geographical mobility have affected the emotional bond between parent and children.

Mothers Left Behind

Also for Doña Verónica being left behind has taken its toll. As I have mentioned in previous chapters, all of her children are now living in Bilbao. She has friends and siblings living close by, and while I was living with her she still had her mother⁹⁹. Her nieces and nephews come to visit quite often, but it is not the same as having your children there. Despite it being common for grown children to move out of their parents' house if they marry, in Bolivia it is uncommon for elderly people to be living alone. One child usually stays or brings the elderly mother or father with them.

Below is an excerpt from my fieldnotes where Doña Verónica talks about how she has trouble eating when she is alone, and about the sadness she feels regarding the fact that all her children live so far away. As in other fieldnotes, in my notes here I cited directly some of the expressions Doña Verónica made when talking, and I have decided to keep them in their original form – with translations in brackets – in order to give a fuller depiction of her subdued way of speaking. To me this way of speaking illustrates her pragmatic yet sensitive demeanor¹⁰⁰.

Doña Verónica asked me if I wanted to eat and I said yes. She said wait a bit, she would heat up the food. Elia left and I wrote a bit more. Then Doña Verónica called me to eat outside at the table. I sat down with her. It was the same soup as the almuerzo [lunch/midday meal], and with mote, queso, etc.¹⁰¹. I was thinking the conversation would be difficult since I have trouble understanding her a lot of the time¹⁰². But it ran quite smoothly.

99 Doña Verónica's mother, Elia, Jhoselyn, and Maribel's grandmother, passed away just a few months after I left Bolivia in 2016.

100 Her syntax and vocabulary are also examples of Bolivian Spanish more in general, which for the readers who speak Spanish themselves, is illustrative, as mentioned in Chapter 4, of the colonial relations and hierarchies that are involved in the global market of care.

101 See Appendix 4 for explanation of Bolivian foods.

102 Doña Verónica's dialect of Spanish is from the rural area the family is from originally. This dialect has a heavy quechua influence in terms of both pronunciation and vocabulary, and it therefore took me quite a

She talked about eating, that 'la comida entra mejor en compañía [food goes down better in company/when eating with someone else]'. No le gusta comer sola [She doesn't like to eat alone]. She ate alone often, and she doesn't like it, so some days she will go to la pensión [a make-shift restaurant serving homemade food] to eat. There they give you two platos [dishes/courses] for ten bolivianos [pesos bolivianos; Bolivian currency], it's a very good price. It's a lot of food and sometimes she will take the second dish home with her to eat in the evening. But a lot of the time she won't manage to eat it, because it's not good to eat alone. So the chickens will get her dinner. I chuckled saying that those chickens are very well fed! She laughed too. I asked if her mom doesn't come to eat with her too. She said that antes venía mi madre pero ahora está malita del corazón, le duele el pecho cuando camina [before my mother would come, but now her heart is sick, her chest hurts when she walks]. So she doesn't come so often. Before she would come in the morning and they would drink tea. And then they would cook and have lunch as well. La comida entra mejor en compañía, she repeats. Se come y se charla. Con la charla entra mejor. [Food goes down better in company. You eat and you chat. With the chatting it goes down better]. All of a sudden you have eaten a lot. When you are alone it's difficult to eat. She is alone a lot and then she won't manage to eat much. She will cook a little bit, a few potatoes, and eat them with cheese, but often she will leave the food. 'A veces me hago unas papacitas, trecitas no más, un poco de queso [Sometimes I will make myself some potatoes, only three, not more, a little cheese].' And she will put it in the fridge and it will go bad.

She said she is very sad that all her children are so far away. Me da mucha pena tenerles todos alla. Solita estoy, she says. Harta pena me da [It gives me a lot of pain/sadness to have them all over there. I am [quite] alone. It gives me a lot of pain]. She has been living alone in this house for eight years now, that's since the last one left. Daniel¹⁰³ left eight years ago. Then she moved from her house in the village to this house. Before she only had the old house by the

while to grow accustomed to Doña Verónica's way of speaking. There are many people from her area living in El Torno, but the younger generations seem to have adapted a dialect closer to the Santa Cruz dialect, which is closer to 'standard' Spanish (to the extent that one can say that this exists).

103 Her only son and youngest child.

gate, but later they constructed the newer house (the one we sleep in). It's a very nice house, but she is alone. I ask if her other family doesn't come to visit when none of her kids are visiting from Spain, and she says they come sometimes but they don't stay long. Like her niece, she will come, but she only stays for a little while. *Solita estoy* [I'm (all) alone].

She says she would like to go 'allá [over there]'¹⁰⁴, she doesn't understand why the papers [are taking so long]¹⁰⁵. And all the lawyers are taking advantage, too... I ask if she would like to go to stay. She says she would like to stay for a year, then come back. Last year she had stayed for two months but then she had wanted to go back. But now she would stay longer. Later she said it wasn't actually last year, it was the year before that she had gone to Spain. Last August they had tried to arrange her travels again. Annie¹⁰⁶ had been here and she was going to take her with her there again, but the papers hadn't come through and the lawyer that they had had, had taken advantage¹⁰⁷ a lot. She had taken so much money. The one they have now is better, at least she does some work. But she doesn't understand why it doesn't work out. Elia has said that maybe in April. That's when they have the appointment at the [Spanish] embassy.

She says she is also sometimes afraid when she is alone. She is afraid to sleep, afraid that the *maleantes* [criminals/robbers/burglars] will come. Sometimes she sleeps outside, she is less afraid then. She says if the *maleantes* come and she is sleeping inside then nobody will hear you, but if you are sleeping outside you can scream immediately when you see them coming in and then people will hear you. (Fieldnotes. El Torno, February 26, 2016)

Doña Verónica clearly dislikes living by herself. She gets scared that somebody will break into the house, but most of all she talked to me

104 *Allá* is the word she uses most often to refer to Spain/Bilbao.

105 One of the things Elia was doing while staying with her mother on this visit from Bilbao was to try to organize a trip for Doña Verónica to come visit them for a few months in Bilbao. During my time with them in Bolivia there were therefore many visits to lawyers and offices of different entities of public administration to try to arrange this. When Elia left after a month, the papers – a visitor's visa – had still not arrived. Another one of Doña Verónica's daughters came to visit after I left Santa Cruz, and before I returned there at the end of my fieldwork in Bolivia, Doña Verónica had left with this daughter to go see her children in Spain.

106 Another of her daughters, whom I have not interviewed.

107 In Spanish Doña Verónica uses the term *aprovecharse* when she talks about the lawyers. By this she means that they pay them to do things that later take too long, or they never do them at all.

about how daily necessities such as eating become a struggle when she has to do it alone. Her children attempt to be with her in different ways – most of all they would like her to come live with them in Bilbao. But she has experienced the life there and it made her unhappy – she couldn't work, there was so little space, and she couldn't understand a lot of how things functioned¹⁰⁸. She therefore prefers to stay in Bolivia, even if it means that she is lonely. In a sense Doña Verónica's loneliness has become the sacrifice her children have made so that they can all live more prosperously. So even if migration has not been a decision that Doña Verónica has made for herself, she has had to sacrifice her role as elderly mother in order for her children to be able to move to Europe and provide for their own children there.

Despedidas, Rites, and Emancipation

I slept for quite a while this morning. Because of yesterday's events it took time before I fell asleep as many metaphysical thoughts were running through my head. About what a soul is. Whether the self – as our soul – disappears when we die, or whether there is a core that stays or passes onto some other existence. I thought maybe our impact in those around us is our soul – the memories they have, what we have meant to them, their longing, their grief, their sorrow, and their love. Maybe that is all. And it is still much, even if little. In any case, I finally fell asleep and I woke up, still tired. (Fieldnotes. Bilbao, Monday, August 15, 2015)

Migrating means saying goodbye to people, places, ways of doing, ways of being. By giving to people before and after migration you inscribe yourself in their memories, in their lives. By continuing to take part in the circularity of reciprocal social relations you manifest the relationship between you and others. You manifest a shared ontology. Above I have cited a fragment of my fieldnotes that was written while staying with Angy, Dilmer, and Liseth in Bilbao in the summer of 2015, the morning after my mother's sister passed away. They reflect thoughts that I had in relation to what is a universal human experience, namely loss. As I have discussed elsewhere (see Chapter 3), fieldwork had already been deeply

108 Doña Verónica was not able to go to school as a child and has not learned to read and write, which makes travelling and living abroad more challenging for her than for her children.

influenced by my father's passing the year before, and the fact that my aunt's passing happened while I was physically present in the field lead to long talks about death rites, and the emotions involved in such experiences in the following days.

The conversation changed to funeral rites in Bolivia. Angy told me that there are several steps to el duelo [the grief or mourning; here it refers to the socially ascribed process of mourning], and several misas [Catholic mass(es)] and rites. When the person dies a funeral/entierro [funeral/burial] is held soon after the death, usually the next day. You do not wait for relatives and friends that live far away. Velas el muerto toda la noche [you keep vigil over the dead [body] all night], and the next day you bury her or him. In the misa everyone has to wear something black out of respect. The close family keeps wearing all black for one year after the death. After the misa everyone who attended are invited back to either the family house or some local that has been rented for the occasion. Often misas are announced in the radio or on TV so that as many people as possible are notified. Should you hear it and you know the person you should consider yourself invited, people are not usually personally invited and the family of the deceased expects you to show up when they make a public announcement like that. During the gathering food is served to everyone. During the event made in Angy's mother's honor, that was held at the family house, they had to rent plates, glasses, cutlery, etc. because a normal household doesn't have enough for this kind of event. They also hire waiters – garcones – to tend to the guests. The family usually sits in a corner somewhere and everyone comes to greet them and give them their condolences. While other attendees might take these gatherings more as parties and play cards or other games and get drunk. Angy remembers that this bothered her during her mother's funeral event. There were some men that got very drunk and just stayed and stayed. You cannot throw them out either, you have to wait and keep being a host until they leave on their own.

After nine days another misa and another party is held, and then again after six months. Finally the last misa and party is held after a year of the death. During that entire year the family of the deceased should not listen to music nor dance, and they should wear black.

During the last party they finally put music on and dance, and they change to colorful clothing and throw away the black clothing.

Angy says that what bothers her a lot about the way things are done in Bolivia is that during these events people drink a lot. The same type of events/gatherings/parties are held for other occasions too – weddings, christenings, quinceaños, finishing la mili [military service], etc. And you have to attend everything you are invited to or people will start to talk about you. At these events you are supposed to eat and drink, and the host ‘invita a todos [invites/treats everyone]’¹⁰⁹, but the guests can also ‘invitar’¹¹⁰ other guests when it comes to drinks. There is usually some sort of bar set up where you can go buy drinks and then go to a table where someone you know is sitting and invite them for a round and say ‘salud’ [cheers]¹¹¹ with them. This is a way for the hosts to also recuperate some of the money they need to put out for the gathering, although you never get everything back, the costs are way too high for that. But if you don’t organize such events people will say you are tacaño [cheap/stingy]. And if you don’t participate in other people’s events then people won’t show up when you organize something. (Fieldnotes. Bilbao, Saturday, August 15, 2015)

Angy’s detailed account of funeral rites was one of the first things that made me start reflecting on the connections between care work, migration, and reciprocity. ‘There is something there,’ I thought to myself as I was writing out my fieldnotes that evening. Not only were these the important social events and personal vehicles for digesting one’s emotions that people might miss out on when their loved one’s die and they live far away. Aracely’s story above came to mind. Not being able to say goodbye – *despedirse*. But what also stood out to me from Angy’s descriptions were her clear conflicted feelings around these rites. On the

109 Here, Angy is explaining to me that the hosts of this sort of events are the ones who pay for everything. They treat everyone – they ‘invite’ everyone – and thereby expect to be invited and treated to other similar events.

110 At these large parties the hosts also sell drinks (and sometimes food) in order to cover some of the costs. Guests at the party are expected to contribute by ‘inviting’ other guests to e.g. drink beer or chicha with them. Once a round of drinking is initiated it is expected that one of the other participants in the round will contribute with the next round.

111 Rounds of drinking are often initiated by serving a drink to someone, and to yourself, looking them in the eye, and say *salud*. If I am hosting a party the customary thing to do would be to walk around with a bottle of alcoholic beverage and serve each one of my guests. After every time I have served a guest I should serve myself, and then say *salud*.

one hand, she felt she needed to take part in them. Organizing a funeral is socially and emotionally obligatory, as is participating in it and contributing economically to it. You need to say goodbye, and so do others. Organizing this in the manner expected, is also obligatory. This means providing an arena for people to meet, eat, and drink. For those who were closest to the person who has passed, this might feel violent and confronting – the expectation of the community for a big event in which to have a good time, even if it is a way of showing solidarity with the family of the deceased.

The rites, however, are also a way of being present in what has happened. It is that very presence you lose when you migrate. For Angy, the funeral was a way of facing the loss of her mother, and the rites that have followed during the years after her death, are a way of remembering. As the fieldnotes below show, written the following day, Angy herself made the connection between her life in migrancy and the absences and losses it causes.

After la comida [lunch/midday meal]¹¹² Angy and I did the dishes. First we talked about what it was like to live far away from one's family and the life we once knew. That you miss home, but still, when you return there you're missing another place. When you have lived abroad for many years you will always miss another place, no matter where you end up living. She was thinking about this when it comes to moving back to Bolivia¹¹³, she knows she will miss Spain and the ways things are done here, her life here, how easily things are done here in comparison to there. Even if it was difficult to be away from the family, to know that she was missing out on the lives of her loved ones, to know that time was passing.

She started telling me a bit more about the funeral rites, in that respect. Next year they will unearth the remains of her mother. [...] Angy will have to travel to Bolivia 'sí o sí' ['yes or yes' (literally), meaning 'no matter what']. Either they [Angy, Dilmer, and Liseth] will have already moved there, but if they haven't she will have to go anyway, she has to be there for this.

Angy tells me about when her mother died, all those years ago.

112 The word used in Spain for the midday meal, while in Bolivia the same meal is called *almuerzo*.

113 While staying with Angy and her family, they often talked about their plans of moving back to Bolivia. This, however, has yet to happen.

She was just twenty-one years old, and was the oldest child, and daughter. Her siblings were all 'jovenes' [adolescents]. Angy stayed with them, with her family, for the entire year she was expected to after the death, and participated in all the rites. Then, about six months after that, she decided to leave home and go to Argentina. This was in January a year and a half after the death. She went to Buenos Aires to stay with her aunt who was living there and she worked there as a seamstress. She was content in this new life, but soon she started feeling anxious about how her siblings were doing. She felt responsible. She knew they were having a difficult time dealing with life without their mother, and she knew that her father was being quite absent as well. Eventually she decided to go back home; she thought to herself that she wouldn't be able to deal with the guilt should something happen to one of her siblings and she hadn't been there.

Back home she dedicated her life to her siblings, keeping them out of trouble and being a second mother to them. And they all turned out all right. She had just two friends then, and she didn't do what other girls her age were doing. She never went out with amigas [girlfriends], she never went out dancing. Her friends and her madrina [godmother; in Angy's case, a close friend of her mother's] said to her that she had to start living her own life, she couldn't dedicate everything to her siblings and her father. They had to take some responsibility themselves as well. After a few years, her madrina convinced her that she should leave home and come with her to Santa Cruz to work there as a seamstress. Her madrina said that if she left they would be forced to be more responsible and her father would realize he also had responsibility. By then she saw that her siblings would be able to take care of themselves, they were reaching adulthood, and her father was doing better. So she left. Sometimes her father talks to her about that time, and about how grateful he is to her for having taken the reins back then, that without her things would probably not have gone so well. This usually makes her cry. (Fieldnotes, Bilbao, Sunday, August 16, 2015)

Angy's account speaks of the connections between the relations she was and is a part of in Bolivia, and about how they stretch across time and distance. Even across death. It speaks of the expectations towards her as

the eldest child, and the oldest sister, when her mother passed away. It speaks of the understanding held both by her and others that it would be she who would take on her mother's duties of raising her siblings and tending to the household. It tells us about her father's gratitude towards her, that she did abide by these expectations when he was suffering the loss of this wife. And the story also tells us about how she did try to escape the premises of her being. She went to Buenos Aires. She explored a different life that was available to her, but she could not escape the expectations she had embodied, and returned to fulfill her duties until she became convinced that she could leave once again. Angy's story thus also reflects the potential emancipation from obligation that migration can entail, and what it means to those who pursue it. Distance can loosen the ties that bind. Responsibility can be redistributed by absence. Freedom and guilt can go hand in hand.

Exchange as Reciprocal Practice

In the global market of care between Spain and Bolivia, migration often means migrancy, and absence and loss become the currencies through which one accesses particular goods. In Angy's case the goods in question were material, as they were for most of the care workers I did fieldwork with, but there were also other outcomes of the exchanges she engaged with through the global market of care. By migrating, first to Buenos Aires, then to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, and then, together with Dilmer and their daughter, to Bilbao, she shifted the weight of responsibilities within her extended family. She left her siblings and father to face everyday life without her. However, she is still bound to them through reciprocal exchanges that extend over longer time, such as the rites around her mother's death. Angy's participation in, and concern for, these rites show that the ontology of her family's relationships was transported geographically together with her own body. In migrancy she is still responsible for her family's wellbeing and bound by their expectations towards her.

Looking at Gregory's (2015) theorization of exchange, his project was about bringing political economy and economic anthropology into dialogue, as a result of observing the coexistence of both a gift economy and a more capitalist market in the field of his study. Rather than focusing merely on exchange, which he claimed most of his contemporary anthropologists did when investigating economic practices, he wanted to

bring the more inclusive notion of *reproduction* into the discussion. According to Gregory, the problem of the reciprocity theorists was that they elevated “‘reciprocity” to the status of explanatory variable’ (2015:xxiii), which in turn is tied to this theory of value’s depiction of exchange as a general category independent of production, distribution, and consumption (2015:xxiv). The research material clearly shows how reciprocal practices are connected to – or embedded in (Polanyi 2001) – other ‘economic’ and social practices.

By reproduction Gregory refers to ‘the dynamic circular process of production, consumption, redistribution, exchange, and reproduction of things and people’ (2015:xxii). Reproduction is, in other words, about what Maldonado-Torres calls ‘creating a common world’ (2007:258). Gregory argues that his perspective allows an approach to economic practices that includes the role of labor when talking about exchange. He admits that the reciprocity theorists and himself arguably have had the same ambition, namely to challenge Marx’s distinction between material and human reproduction, but Gregory tries to merge the theories of value around gift and commodity by bringing in political economy in order to solve this conundrum, rather than focusing solely on the reciprocal obligations of (gift) exchange. Considering that both labor and social reproduction are important notions within my research context, a perspective akin to that of Gregory’s is enticing to my analysis. However, it is the practice of exchange in combination with experiences and expectations of the global market of care that is the conceptual pillar I invoke. The processes of production, distribution, and consumption take the backstage, while exchange and the practices that directly create it or are a result of it take center stage together with the workers’ own understandings of these practices (Carrier 2012). While I focus on practices of exchange, it is critical to recognize that these processes are all closely linked. The ways in which people consume goods, emotions, labor, and other values are part of reciprocal practices.

There is more, however, than my focus on exchange that challenges an attempt to merge Gregory’s analytical framework with my empirical material. Much of this lies in what Maldonado-Torres is describing when talking about the ‘coloniality of Being’ – the experiences of people and the differently scaled expectations that premise both the latter and the former dynamics. In other words, this has to do with the symbolic and representational dimensions of the bodies that exchange them-

selves, their labor, and other values through the global market of care. Exchange and reciprocity have to do with power relations through performativity and this performativity is linked to sociocultural and geographically embedded practices, that in themselves are established and reproduced through patriarchal and colonial discourse.

From my research, it is apparent that the participants *give* to both their loved ones as well as to the employers and service users they work for. But they do it at a cost, and at a loss. It is these gifts that justify their absence, and that at the same time are understood as investments in a possible future of proximity. These gifts are argued for as a sort of sacrifice, as though they were ‘Derridean gifts’, but they nonetheless entail expectations of reciprocity, of exchange, and of transaction. Important to underline here is therefore my understanding and use of gift theory. I conceive *the gift* to be, at its very core, *about* reciprocity and *about* exchange. While a Derrida’s (1992) take on gift giving implies understanding the gift as an ambition of a selfless act, in my (anthropological) use of the term it is precisely the opposite. The act of giving is done with the expectation of receiving something in return, and it is done to build a relationship with those you give to. It is therefore important to keep in mind that in the global market of care, although the work performed is a sort of ‘economic’ exchange, this work and the consequences of it are imbued with strong social and emotional meanings for everyone involved.

Finally, an important dimension of reciprocity that emerges from this research is how the gift is gendered (cf. Strathern 1988). A gift is not a neutral object. The gift is imbued with the spirit – the *hau* (Mauss 1990) – of the giver. It transfers some of me to you, as I dote on you. Circling back to my fieldnotes on my aunt’s death and on what a soul is – maybe it was, in fact, the *hau* of gifted emotions and memories I was reflecting on. And our souls, our beings, are gendered – they are gendered in us, and they are gendered as they are passed on. When migrated workers in the global market of care give economic stability through absence to their loved ones, it is not only they themselves who have a gender and who are acting according to it. Their gift in itself has a gender – it is feminized by the fact that it is women who are giving it, it is women who are migrating to work in the Spanish care work sector. The understanding of this gift, and its consequences is shaped through its femininity. The absence felt by children left behind is felt in a specific way

because it is their mother who has left them – because this absence breaks with the normative script of motherhood. The loneliness felt by elderly mothers living in solitude is felt in a particular way because it is her daughters who are not there, and she, as a mother, is the one living alone. And the emancipation that some might feel when dismantling some of the family obligations towards them through distance, comes at the cost of being considered not fully woman.

Concluding Remarks

As has been discussed at length in this and previous chapters, the notion of reciprocity is paramount in my analysis of the dynamics of exchange in the global market of care and in therefore in making sense of how migrancy happens. The quote by Maldonado-Torres in the introduction of this chapter reflects how exchange is about much more than quid-pro-quo, even when looking at the so-called economic market. It is about exclusion and inclusion according to different premises, or according to what Callon would call ‘laws of the market’. And as the quote by Marilyn Strathern underlines – these premises or ‘laws’ are gendered, just like the ‘objects’ of exchange in themselves.

The research material presented here reveals multiple aspects of exchange, reciprocity, and social reproduction in the global market of care. First, it shows the complex, gendered, emotional charge with which decisions about migration, labor, and life in migrancy are made. While Katty, Blanca, and María are all burdened by the absence between them and their children, they have found ways of living with that absence. Despite all of them now having attained Spanish citizenship, and having plans of go back ‘someday’, they have yet to return to Bolivia on a permanent basis. For different reasons they continue their lives in migrancy, and their children are now practically adults. The sacrifice has already been made, and so the loss is sustained. It is permanent.

Second, the material also points to how loss is not only lived by those who leave – it is equally a part of the experiences of those who are left behind. International migration creates children who become adults early on, and it reproduces class-based and racialized patterns of generational connections, as seen in the case of María and her children. For both those leaving and those being left, loss is exchanged for (the idea of) increased economic stability and prosperity, as well as the chance of achieving a different life (see Chapter 5). However, as my discussion of

local and transnational networks of solidarity and other reciprocal practices in the next chapter will show; migration does not ensure neither stability, nor prosperity. As what happened to Blanca shows – even when you have long experience with the precarious conditions of the care work sector and plan ahead, life can still be unpredictable and force you to start all over again.

Third, this chapter has shown that relationships beyond those between parents and children are important in the dynamics of the global market of care. Particularly significant are, seemingly, the bonds between the migrated women and their parents, often their own mother. These elderly women are often recipients of economic remittances and care from their migrated daughters – sometimes to tend to their health, but often because that is part of unspoken generational pacts of care. It is a longitudinal reciprocal relation in which children repay their parents for the care they received when growing up. The conversations I had with different participants about losing out on their parents' old age and on their death, indicate that migrancy also change the dynamic of these sorts of exchanges. Even if it is expected for a (grown) child to move away from their parents at some point, the long distances hinder the more intimate care that grown daughters would bestow on their mothers. Absence also obstructs those last goodbyes, when that time arrives. Both daughters and mothers suffer the consequences of these situations.

The material presented in this chapter has helped me explore ways in which gendered gifts steer how migration and migrancy are practiced. The gifts discussed here – of loss and absence – thus influence how the global market of care is constructed and construed. So while migration and migrancy contribute to the reproduction of 'Bolivian' lives through different forms of remittances, it also challenges that same reproduction through enforcing the practice of a gift economy based on (gendered) absence and loss. Not only are these absences and losses outcomes of gendered scripts of being, they are also felt in particular ways because they – as gifts – are gendered. What this material has also shown is that the reciprocal practices of the research participants are often hindered or intervened in by the hegemonic practices of exchange discussed in previous chapters, i.e. those of pertaining to the care work sector in Spain. In other words – the ways that exchanges are done within the Spanish labor market sector interrupt the flows of reciprocity in Bolivian daily life, both locally and transnationally. As will be expanded on in the next

chapter, I argue that it is precisely this point that reproduces both migrancy and a coloniality of Being.

10. RESPONDING TO MIGRANCY: CLAIMS FOR JUSTICE THROUGH GENDERED AND COLONIAL POSITIONS

What is the meaning of *damné*? The *damné* is the subject that emerges in a world marked by the colonality of Being. The *damné*, as Fanon put it, has non-ontological resistance in the eyes of the dominant group. The *damné* is either invisible or excessively visible. The *damné* exists in the mode of not-being there, which hints at the nearness of death, at the company of death. The *damné* is a concrete being but it is also a transcendental concept. [...] [The] term *damné* is etymologically related to the concept of *donner*, which means, to give. The *damné* is literally the subject who cannot give because what he or she has has been taken from him or her. This means that the *damné* is a subject from whom the capacity to have and to give have been taken away from her and him. The colonality of Being is thus fundamentally an ontological dynamic that aims to obliterate – in its literal sense of doing away completely so as to leave *no trace* – gift-giving and generous reception as a fundamental character of being-in-the-world. (Maldonado-Torres 2007:257-258)

Introduction

Throughout the previous chapters I have discussed ways in which forms of exchange take place as part of the global market of care, and how these exchanges contribute to (re)producing migrancy. While the previ-

ous chapter presented stories about what gets lost as part of the exchanges that the care work sector in Spain incites, this chapter looks into what is claimed, gained, and received within this context. While claims for justice are made both directly and indirectly, officially and unofficially, publically and privately, and consciously and perhaps subconsciously, I will not be examining these claims according to their degree of political deliberateness. Rather, the aim of this chapter is to understand what these different claims can tell us about the structures that are in place as part of the migrancy that the research participants experience. On the one hand, then, I shed light on how people mobilize in order to deal with migrancy, while on the other I argue that this mobilization can further show us how migrancy works. In revealing the reactions to something, we can understand what there is, in fact, to react to.

Emerging from the research material are two categorical political claims that are made in regard to migrancy and the care work sector – the claim for time and the claim for space, particularly with the people you hold dear. Both claims have to do with becoming visible and audible in society at large, and thereby transitioning from a state of migrancy into a state of full subjectivity where one's everyday life is structured in the same fashion as that of non-‘migrants’, where you go from being a *damné* to becoming a fully ontological being within the social landscape and the economy that surrounds you. The claims for justice are made through different channels, and it is these channels I will focus on below.

People organize and mobilize in a variety of ways – through political organizations and visible protests. They rely on organizations that have experience in fighting for the rights of women, workers, minorities, and migrated peoples. People who have migrated also organize through their diaspora, and people of Bolivian origin in Bilbao seem to be gradually taking up more public space through the different celebrations, parties, and cultural mobilizations that are organized through the many cultural and folkloric associations present on Basque soil. Some also make more subtle claims for time and space. They fight daily battles to bring children and other family members to stay and live with them. They develop a sort of gallows humor and joke with their friends about the things that go on in their place of work. They protest employers' unfair treatment by arguing back, quitting, and even leaving the country. And they maintain the transnational relationships with their family and friends in Bo-

livia, making claims of belonging also ‘back home’, despite years of separation.

The material I present in this chapter is of three different kinds. I explore how resistance and mediation of migrancy is expressed through practices that are not explicitly presented as political. The first practice is that of organized events of solidarity, such as *kermeses*. These events often include dancing, which is an important part of everyday life for many people who have migrated to Spain from Bolivia, and they are often tied to religious beliefs. Not only does this practice provide an informally organized form of social security among people living in migrancy, but it also contributes to claiming space within Spanish and Basque society. *Kermeses* and similar practices become ways of remedying challenges of precarity and migrancy through local and transnational reciprocal relations.

I then go on to discuss an organized protest I took part in for International Women’s Day, March 8th 2015, showing photos depicting how this protest was carried out. My analysis centers on the texts on the posters that the photographs show, rather than analyzing the pictures as images in themselves. I use these texts to reflect on the differently formulated interests and political claims that seem to divide women’s claims for justice into groups of ‘us’ and ‘them’ within the global market of care. As such, this protest reflects the premises of exchange that rule within the Spanish care work sector.

Lastly, I turn to a practice through which the research participants respond to the premises that migrancy offers their lives on a more intimate level. This is the personal relationship between people and their deities. These relationships arguably show how religious practice is about insuring oneself and the ones you love against malice and misfortune through reciprocal relations with higher powers, while also it is about investing in a future worth living.

Hoy por tí, mañana por mí: Kermeses and Solidarity

The exchanges going on in the global market of care must be understood against a backdrop of two fundamental social structures: patriarchy and (colonial) capitalism. These constructs not only produce particular flows of migration and ways of practicing economy, they also establish the possibilities for how people might mediate and react towards the structures and the personal predicaments they produce. Such predicaments

vary over geographical contexts, and, as such, so do the ways in which people typically deal with adversity. From this perspective I underscore how reciprocal relations beyond the workplace shape the research participants' lives in migrancy, including the ways in which they respond to the precariousness of their working lives and economic situation, as well as the difficulties they face through illegality (De Genova 2002, 2005). In Chapter 8 I described how I participated in preparing a *kermés* held by *Red de Madres* at Silvia's house to raise funds for the association. Such events are also often celebrated to carry out solidarity with one's peers. It becomes a way to contribute and *colaborar* [collaborate]¹¹⁴ with others. As I will discuss below, this is done much in the same way as the Saints and Virgins do with the people who enter into social contracts with them. Just like the celebration of a deity, a *kermés* is an event where consumption of food and drinks, as well as dancing, take center stage.

During my fieldwork in Bilbao invitations to *kermeses* were frequently sent out through social media such as Facebook or Whatsapp. These occasions were usually organized by one of the many Bolivian organizations in town to help out friends or acquaintances that were going through a difficult time. As mentioned in Chapter 8, these occasions could address illness or death in the family, having to return a deceased body to Bolivia to be buried there, amongst other things. The different organizations would contact each other through their boards to have them invite their members to attend these events, as well as have them sell vouchers for food beforehand. The invitations would include a list of the dishes sold at the event, usually dishes from the region of the particular organization. Normally you would buy your voucher beforehand so that when you arrived at the event you turned it in in return for food, and only had to buy drinks then and there. Since many of the same organizations also practice dances from their regions they would usually ask the other organizations to make a contribution through entertainment – by dressing up in the relevant *vestimentas*¹¹⁵ and dance for the guests.

At a *kermés* I attended while doing fieldwork in Bolivia, the entertainment was that of local music groups and a DJ rather than folkloric

114 This is the term used when sending out invitations to these events: asking people to 'collaborate' by assisting (and thus contributing economically).

115 The special clothing used for the different dances. For particular dances you should wear the corresponding clothing, as these different outfits represent characters within the world you are representing through dance.

dances. Still all of these events, in both Bolivia and Spain, the slogan of *hoy por tí, mañana por mí* was either implicitly or explicitly stated. This phrase translates literally to ‘today for you, tomorrow for me’, implying the circular reciprocal network that people consider themselves part of, and that they rely on. This slogan represents what I understand to be a fundamental component of the economy and social lives of the research participants and their families. Investing in, and owing to, each other makes life move forward, while it also is how you can move forward in life (Carling 2008, Carling & Hoelscher 2013, Safri & Graham 2010). This includes the ways in which people access migration schemes – by borrowing money and favors from kin, friends, and acquaintances. Someone who can pay for their plane ticket, set them up with a job at their *jefa*’s sister’s house, give them a room to sleep for a couple of weeks upon arrival, and so on. When you have a ‘blowup’ with your *jefa*, you do not necessarily feel the need to resolve your situation by going to associations like *Mujeres con Voz* for legal help or political support. You ask the people you know to put word out that you are looking for a new job. And complying by someone’s request for assistance is to a large degree expected. As already noted, when someone asks you to lend them money or other resources, you accept. When someone dies you attend their funeral. When someone offers you food or drink, you consume it. When they ask you to dance, you dance. When you are invited to a *kermés* you should attend. This is how trans-ontological relationships are made; how social life is (re)produced. It is also how you can ‘work the system’ while living in migrancy. These expectations towards others and self are arguably integral to the moral economy of Bolivian society, and are therefore central components in the global market of care.

Image 17: Invitation to a kermés sent out on social media during my fieldwork in Bilbao in 2015.

The *kermeses* are, effectively, a way to practice solidarity, and to give so that you can get. In Bolivia, where access to public health services is limited, this can be a do-or-die way of attaining the necessary funds if one happens to, for instance, have an accident that forces you to be hospitalized for a longer period of time. In Spain Bolivians (and other immigrated people) usually have access to public health care no matter what their administrative situation is, but such solidary measures are still necessary for people to get by. Not only is it a way for people to enter a larger web for exchanging favors, it is also a way of – then and there – practicing these exchanges as a way of manifesting that web of circularity visually and socially.

The transnational relationships that feed into the global market of care also enter into adjacent, and often interconnecting webs of exchange. While the webs of more altruistic solidarity become practical and concrete in that they involve consumption through event organization, danc-

ing, and eating/drinking, these transnational relationships are marked by more than what is most commonly described in migration theory as remittances (Carling 2014, Ramsøy 2016, Levitt 1998, Levitt & Lamba-Nieves 2011, Nowicka & Šerbedžija 2016). As such, the solidarity practiced through, for instance, *kermeses*, is a way of not only stabilizing someone's economic situation in migrancy, it is also a way of contributing to the future economic wellbeing of that someone's family 'at home'. These networks of solidarity and exchange between people of Bolivian origin might in part be based on the Andean *ayllus*, socially organized groups based partly on kinship wherein which resources such as water and land are treated and shared as 'commons', between both people and deities (cf. Burman 2011, Sikkink 1997, Ødegaard 2011).

The exchanges taking place within the reciprocal practices of solidarity that migrated people from Bolivia undertake in Bilbao arguably challenge outcomes of the power relations at large in the global market of care. As such, they are a way of responding to migrancy and coloniality. They create space for other solutions to the premises that migrancy produce, as they reproduce ways of surviving adversity that are practiced in Bolivia. However, there are structural components of migrancy and the global market of care that these practices do not address, patriarchy in particular. This way of mobilizing socially therefore contrasts with how political claims that concern the care work sector in Spain more concretely are made through other organizations that involve migrated care workers. I will now take a look at how claims for (gendered) justice were made through one such organization.

Feminist Mobilizations in Gran Bilbao

Several associations in the metropolitan area of Bilbao engage with migrated domestic and care workers in different ways. Most of them work from an explicitly feminist and/or antiracist perspective, and their activities vary from political protests, social meetings and intercultural encounters, economic, psychological, and social support and counseling to individuals, education, labor rights support, and so on. In terms of members and participants many of these associations overlap, and they collaborate in many of their more far-reaching activities and political enterprises.

Position of the Feminist Movement in Bilbao and Spain

The feminist movement in Spain has recently gained more general traction as a result of the aftermaths of the extensive media coverage of the *Manada* case¹¹⁶, the international *#MeToo* movement as well as other related political processes and events. In Bilbao alone, on the 8th of March 2018, more than 60,000 women carried out a strike from both paid and unpaid labor, including care work, and took to the streets to manifest the importance of women in different societal sectors, such as work, education, and consumption (*El Correo*, March 9, 2018). This was part of a countrywide women's strike which was organized for the first time in 2018, inspired by the Argentinean women's strike in 2016 (García et al. 2018). The strike gained enormous attention, also in corporate media, but was by the latter represented as largely organized around the topics of 'salary inequality' and 'violence'. This 'reduced its radicalism', according to García et al. (2018:37). Although an important focus in the protests were on the eradication of violence against women through slogans such as *ni una más* [not [even] one more'] and *ni una menos* [not [even] one less]¹¹⁷, and the importance of domestic and care work and women's 'traditional' roles as care givers through both paid and unpaid labor, the questions of reproductive labor and the daily violence suffered by migrated women were pushed into the peripheries of media's attention (ibid.). During the periods in which I did fieldwork in Bilbao, these issues were generally circumscribed to the core of the feminist movement, and were not as visible in public debate and mass media. I participated in the 8th of March protests in 2015, although in Getxo, not Bilbao, and both the number of protest participants and onlookers were, in comparison to the 2018 protests, very limited.

116 *Manada* in Spanish means pack (as in wolf pack), and is a reference to what a group of men who gang raped a young woman in an alleyway during the Sanfermines festival in 2016 called themselves in their Whatsapp group chat. After the rape they used this group chat to share videos of the deed with each other. Despite this evidence of the assault, the victim's behavior both prior to and after the event was questioned throughout the trial – and thereby whether she actually 'wanted it' or not. This sparked outrage among many people in Spain and large demonstrations were organized in support of the victim all over the country. Two years after the event, all members of 'la manada' were convicted of 'sexual abuse', instead of 'sexual aggression' (meaning rape), resulting in a lighter sentencing. The verdict was appealed and in 2019 the Supreme Court changed the conviction to rape. The latter court also criticized the prior's handling of the case, and assured that the proceedings and premises for the case should have been very different. See the following newspaper articles for more information: *The Guardian*, November 29, 2017; *El País*, November 30, 2017; *El País*, June 21, 2019.

117 Both slogans are part of a feminist movement that started in Mexico and Argentina to make claims for justice regarding the many disappeared and murdered women in both countries.

International Women's Day with *Mujeres con Voz*: *Los trapos sucios NO se lavan en casa*

Mujeres con Voz has their main meeting premises and office in Getxo, a town that belongs to a separate municipality from Bilbao, but that is a part of the city's metropolitan area¹¹⁸. The events they organize range from protests on specific dates, such as the 8th of March, 1st of May, or 25th of November – International Day against Gendered Violence, to movie screenings, workshops on self care, individual psychological counseling, cultural celebrations to mark the independence days of different (usually Latin American) countries, and the list goes on. Below I present one of the protest events the association organized during the time of my fieldwork with them – on International Women's day, March 8, 2015.

Apart from the usual march through the streets, *Mujeres con Voz* organized a protest where they hung 'clothing lines' across the main public square in the town they have their offices. Big tables were set out across the square and women from different organizations in town, who were all participating in the march, were divided into groups to discuss and take notes on what they associated with caring and care work. The women who participated in the protest were both from Basque and Spanish feminist and/or women's organizations (and thereby predominantly of Basque or Spanish origin), and from organizations, such as *Mujeres con Voz*, that focus more on migrated women's predicaments, and thus have participants from a wider geographical specter.

After the discussions on caring and care work, the main ideas were written down on 'clothes' made from different colored cardboard that carried messages about the plights of both 'local' women in regard to care giving and care work, and of migrated domestic and care workers in Spain and the Basque Country. Most of the time people passed by without looking too closely. The slogan for the protest was *los trapos sucios NO se lavan en casa* – 'The dirty laundry should NOT be washed at home [behind closed doors]'. This is a negation of a Spanish saying which refers to how people's problems should be dealt with 'at home',

118 Getxo functions as both a small town in itself, as well as a suburb to Bilbao, and is one of the municipalities in Spain with the biggest concentration of domestic and care workers per capita due to the high median income of its population. Historically speaking it has been a wealthy town for centuries, and many from the so-called Basque oligarchy have resided here. See also Chapter 2 for more information about this geographical context, and Chapter 3 for a further overview of the organization *Mujeres con Voz*.

or in private, and not be aired in the streets for others to see and notice. When drawing this analogy to care work, it is to comment on the invisibilization of this type of work in society in general, as well as on the invisibilization and silencing of the people working in the labor market sector this work upholds. The ‘dirty laundry’ hung on clothing lines across the town square therefore carried messages regarding what concerns women, care workers or not, when it comes to the issue of care (work). As can be appreciated in the photographs below¹¹⁹, the concerns expressed seem to vary by whether the people were paid care workers or held another job.

Pointing out Problematic Aspects of Care Work

The statements on the signs in Image 18 resonate with the works of Federici (2012) and Gutiérrez-Rodríguez (2010, 2014), amongst others. They signal how women’s role in society historically has been linked to the reproductive elements of the social economy, but that this goes beyond what can be deemed the economic make-up of society. In other words, reproductive work – or care work – is not only about creating a base from which productive work can be carried out, but, rather, is woven into what womanhood is and continuously becomes (Federici 2012). This is how this form of exploitation is made possible, whether it is through (badly) remunerated work in the care work sector, or whether it is through social obligations of being a ‘good’ daughter/sister/wife/mother. Women are expected to *care*, and as such expected to *give* in the Derridean (altruistically understood) sense of gift giving (1992). Discursively, then, care work should be understood as sacrifice – as a gift with no expectation of return or reward. This idea(l), however unrealistic and untrue, becomes a premise for how an entire labor market sector and a global market is organized, and thereby also opens for the dependency and exploitation through ‘benevolence’ discussed in Chapter 8.

¹¹⁹ All photographs were taken by author during the protest.

Image 18: green skirt, pink vest.

Image 18 shows:

A green skirt with the text:

El cuidado y la responsabilidad SIEMPRE recae sobre las MUJERES /

Care [work] and responsibility ALWAYS fall on women

A pink vest where it is written:

Los trabajos de cuidado está [sic] vinculado a las Mujeres / Care work is linked to women

Sin reconocimiento / Without recognition

Invisibilizado / Invisibilized

Mal remunerado / Badly paid

The signs in the next photograph (Image 19) highlight some of the ways in which we can define *care* – *los cuidados*. The purple cardboard pants make reference to the practical labor that has been feminized – such as cleaning, doing the shopping, and organizing the household economy and chores. The sign also points out the emotional work that women are expected to carry out as part of being women, providing emotional, mental, and physical safety and security to those around them by responding to their needs.

Image19: purple pants, blue vest.

Image 19 shows:

A pair of purple pants carrying the text:

¿Qué son los cuidados? Respuestas a las necesidades / What is care giving? Responses to needs:

Limpieza casa / Cleaning of home

Compras / Shopping:

alimentación / food

ropa / clothing

medicamentos / medicine

Organización / Organization

Acompañamiento / Companionship

Salud / Health

Seguridad / Safety

Economía / Economy

Equilibrio / Stability:

emocional / emotional

físico / physical

mental / mental

In the pant legs:

SUPERVIVENCIA / SURVIVAL

EDUCACIÓN / EDUCATION/TEACHING/RAISING

A blue vest saying:

Cuidados no reconocidos sociedad / Care [work] not recognized [in] society

Nos cuidamos nosotras mismas / We [in grammatical feminine form] take care of ourselves [in grammatical feminine form]

Cuidados = Mujeres estereotipadas / Care [work] = Stereotyped women

Discriminación social cuidadoras / Social discrimination care [workers] [in grammatical feminine form]

In the second piece of clothing in the second photograph (Image 20), the makers of the sign point out both what was said in the signs Image 19, but also further underline how care [work] is tied to femininity. Care is equivalent to a female stereotype. At the same time women who do care work are arguably socially discriminated against. How the authors of these signs connect two dichotomous hierarchies – type of work (productive versus reproductive) and conglomerations of personal and emotional attributes (masculinity versus femininity) – is thus made clear through the claims.

These signs also communicate the silence of those who are being paid to carry out care work. This reflects the same tendencies as Peterson (2007) points to in her study of how discourses on care work and gender equality are framed in Spanish policy regarding these issues. She points to a clear normative aspect in political debates that homogenize women as ‘mothers and workers’, but that the policies in question are in fact directed towards middle class women, silencing the needs and voices of working class or racialized people, as well as the role of men when it comes to sharing the burden of care work. Furthermore, Gil Araujo and González-Fernández (2014) underline how domestic workers’ right to family life – or *conciliación* – which Peterson’s (2007) analysis concerns, is completely absent from political and academic debates. The practical ‘impossibility’ of combining the working conditions within the care work sector with a stable family life, even when family reunification has been achieved, makes the position of migrated women in the care work sector doubly vulnerable. The reproductive work they are expected to do at home (whether ‘home’ is in the country of origin or in Spain), and the reproductive work they must do at work, are, in fact, incompatible.

Making Claims for Change

Image 20: purple dress, pink skirt, blue shirt, brown shorts.

In Image 20 the same sort of claims as in the signs from Image 20 are made. The purple dress in the foreground of the photograph states that women are always the ones to do the care work. But the same sign also makes claims for change, in line with a more intersectional political stance, in saying that everyone – *todos* (in grammatical plural masculine form)¹²⁰ – must do their share of care work.

120 In Spanish grammatical plural masculine form is used for nouns and adjectives to encompass a group of individuals consisting of solely male members, but also to signal a group that consists of both male and female members. When using grammatical masculine plural here the authors of the sign are therefore making claims that all genders must involve themselves in care work, not only women.

Image 20 shows the following cardboard clothing with different texts:

The purple dress shows the text:

Las mujeres siempre cuidan. Todos tienen que implicarse en cuidar. / Women are always the ones caring. Everyone must involve themselves in caring.

The pink skirt asks:

¿Quién cuida a la cuidadora? / Who takes care of the care giver?

The blue shirt says:

'Mi tiempo es mío'. Mi vida me pertenece. No he nacido para estar al servicio de los demás / 'My time is mine.' My life belongs to me. I have not been born to be of service to others.

The brown shorts say:

Sentimientos de culpabilidad por ingresar a los mayores dependientes en una residencia. Queremos residencias de día en cada pueblo para estar cerca de la familia y los amigos. No debemos criticar a las mujeres que toman la decisión de optar por esta solución a esta dependencia. Hay mucha soledad en las casas de las mujeres cuidadoras. Debemos unir nuestra voz para ser reconocidas y escuchadas.

/ Feelings of guilt for admitting dependent elderly people in nursing homes. We want daytime nursing homes/centers in every town in order to be close to family and friends. We should not criticize the women who make the decision to opt for this solution to dependency. There is a lot of solitude in the homes of women who [do] care [work]. We must unite our voice in order to be recognized and listened to.

The first sign from the left in the background, a pink cardboard skirt, asks 'who takes care of the care giver', emphasizing that when everyone – *todos* – does not participate in caring, then certain members of society are often left without care. This problem is pointed out in global care chains theory (Herrera 2011, Hochschild 2000, 2002, Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002, Parreñas 1998, 2001, 2002), where the effect of this inter-

national division of labor is seen to be a *care drain* in the Global South. Although I regard the linear care chain model to not fully cover the multifaceted complexity of the global market of care (see Chapter 4 for my discussion of global care chains theory), it does point to the effects that this market has on transnational social relationships (see Chapter 9). The answer I would propose to the question on the pink skirt is therefore not ‘no one’, but, rather – ‘another woman’. Typically it is women who give care to women, as well as to other genders.

As Federici (2012) argues, it is the *feminine* that is constructed to care for others, and so it is the bearer of femininity who must also deal with the violence contained in the dichotomous hierarchy of the feminine and masculine. On the one hand, she claims, this violence can be physical – where emotional repressions that the masculine counterparts of women in society and the home are taken out on the persons who are seen as responsible for the emotional stability and survival of the masculine, namely women. Elia’s relationship with her (ex)husband, discussed at length in Chapter 5, is one such example. On the other hand, the violence of this dichotomy is rooted in the ‘self-inflicted’ burdens that women carry by always expecting of themselves to ‘take on’ other people’s strife, and putting their own needs on the backburner. Examples of this are visible in Chapters 5 and 9, in how many research participants struggle to make sense of the choices they have made as part of their migration. Although migrating can, as discussed in Chapter 5, be a decision made to pursue one’s own agenda, such as the escape from violence, the decision to migrate must seemingly also be defended by highlighting the ways in which it can be read as a sacrifice in the interest of their children or other dependent people women ‘should’ be caring for. The blue cardboard shirt in Figure 3 underscores the problematics of these ‘sacrifices’ in making a claim for care givers to own their own time, and thereby their own lives. The service you can be of to others is not what should define your purpose, nor you as a person.

Lastly, the brown shorts in the far right of the third photograph describe some of the emotions that may arise when those who are supposed to carry out care work go against the grain of how this is to be done within a particular cultural context. Although I do not know who wrote this particular sign, from the text it is quite apparent to me that this must have been written by women who consider themselves belonging to Basque/Spanish culture and society. They point to an aspect

which is an intrinsic part of how the care work sector in Spain is (re)produced – the social shame that is associated with not letting ‘dependent’ people, especially the elderly, live in their own homes until they die. Ideally, people are supposed to pass away at home; in the care of their (female) family members until their last breath. Placing elderly people in nursing homes is therefore often not considered a proper option for care. As discussed in Chapter 6 and 7, in the many cases where the women who ‘should’ be the ones caring for the elderly or ailing either work outside the home or do not deem themselves fit to take on these care duties, the solution is to hire a replacement for the woman in question (cf. Gil Arujo & González-Fernández 2014, Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2010, Martínez Buján 2011). As is further indicated by the sign above – this transference of care duties from one woman to another through remuneration also implies a transference of the solitude felt by those who are designated to care. This sign thereby underscores the same feelings of abandonment and loneliness that is indicated in the question asked on the pink skirt (see above). In other words, care work in itself implies an emptying of self in order to allow for a void to be filled by the responsibility for the emotions of others.

The signs in the fourth photograph (Image 21) transmit similar sentiments as some of the signs described above. The green cardboard sock in the middle of the picture points out, once again, the solitude of (female) caregivers, while the blue tie exclaims that ‘they’ must not drown ‘us’. Due to the theme of this protest I assume this sign is making reference to the sentiment of continuously trying to keep one’s head above water, so to speak, both emotionally and economically, that care work often entails¹²¹ – pointing out the precarity that this labor market sector (re)produces.

121 Due to the historical time in which this protest took place – at the time when the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ was taking full force in Europe – the use of the word drown also brings associations of people physically drowning on Europe’s borders. However, the migrated people working within the care work sector in the Basque Country and Spain are mostly from Latin America and have arrived in Europe by airplane as tourists and then overstayed. I have therefore made the assumption that the drowning referred to here is of a more metaphorical character.

Image 21: white shirt, blue tie, green sock.

Image 21 shows:

A white shirt saying:

Convivir nos hace mejores! / Living together makes us better!

A blue tie saying:

que no nos ahoguen / don't let them drown us

A green sock with the text:

La soledad de las cuidadoras / The solitude of the care givers [grammatical feminine plural form]

The white shirt in the foreground of this photograph proposes one aspect that is necessary in order to remedy the problems stated in the other signs, namely *convivir*. This word can be translated in different ways: to cohabit, to coexist, to live together. The latter is perhaps the most appropriate translation in this context – in order for the burdens of social and economic life to be more equally divided amongst society's members, we must learn to not only coexist, but to *live* – with all that which

human life entails of responsibilities and collaboration – together. This is reminiscent of Maldonado-Torres' (2007) claim that the only way to surpass the 'coloniality of Being' is to produce an ontology in which we all have an equally valued place. As I will reflect on in more detail below, the different ways in which migrancy is dealt with among the research participants, reveals that such an ontology has yet to be established. When it comes to the global market of care one might say that only when the burdens of care (work) are more equally distributed across different societal hierarchies, such as gender, race, and class, can we all *care* in the more compassionate sense of the word – through solidarity and love, rather than obligation and exploitation.

The signs presented here point at some of the problems of the care work sector in Spain and the Basque Country. Although the gendered division of labor is recognized by the general feminist collective, it is by some of its members framed as a homogenous issue where the plights of local women are seen as the core of the problem. The role, and the plights of migrated and working class women, who generally are the ones doing paid care work, are often silenced. So, as Gil Arujo and González-Fernández (2014) have implied, this entails ignoring the ways in which care work is tied to migrancy – as motors of mutual (re)production. While working together to change the status and the conditions for care work across intersectional social divisions is paramount, ignoring the heterogeneity that upholds the socioeconomic inequalities linked to care work and migrancy only serves to perpetuate them, and the imbalanced ways in which exchange is taking place across the global market of care.

If we understand the activists' writings above to represent tendencies in Spanish/Basque society, then they arguably show that there does exist a claim for an increased political visibility of migrated women, but also that this claim is often intercepted by other women's needs and interpretations. The claims for justice that this particular political protest produced suggest that the Basque feminist movement is first and foremost protesting patriarchy, rather than coloniality. Although this is an unintended consequence, and one that many actors do try to remedy, such a priority runs the risk of reproducing the 'laws of the market' established according to Spanish patriarchal and colonial logics. These logics arguably exclude the migrated care worker as an ontological Being. She is not there. She is not reckoned with. These protests do thereby not ad-

dress some of the factors that pertain to the global market of care, but that surpass the political concerns that regard the organization of care work. These factors are more a question of ontological visibility, and are as such more complex than the (re)organization of the Spanish welfare state and care work. They concern who gets to make claims and in what ways, and they concern how people are made to listen.

In the beginning of this chapter I discussed how many of the research participants made claims for justice, or petitions for covering their needs through organized solidarity. As mentioned, these ways were not directly political, in that they were not made through public protest, group legal battles, or public outcries (because, who would listen?). Rather they were about being heard by one's peers, who were the ones who could and would do something about concrete problems. I now turn to another important way in which people in migrancy make themselves heard, namely by tending to their relationships with God, Virgins, and Saints. It is these deities who ultimately hold the powers to fulfill dreams and resolve life's greater challenges.

God, Saints, Virgins: Reciprocity through Dance and Devotion

Religion is an element that is usually an important, although sometimes implicit, part of both everyday life and of bigger events in Bolivian sociocultural contexts. Catholicism, with its syncretisms, is the most commonly practiced faith in this context, but the last couple of decades have seen a steady growth of membership in evangelical (Protestant) churches across all of Latin America, including Bolivia (cf. Cleary 2018, Hale 1997, Hallum 2003). This is also true for migrated people from Latin America in Bilbao. Since the large majority of the research participants were Catholics, when I in the following paragraphs discuss religious elements and reciprocity, I am referring to Catholicism. I do not rule out, however, that similar reciprocal practices take place among those who practice evangelical Christianity, both in Bolivia and in Spain.

Image 22: Street party and parade in honor of the Patron Saints in La Paz.

Most of the research participants have underscored their belief in a higher power in one way or another. Faith is a fully integrated part of how they speak, think, and act. Many post daily motivational quotes on Facebook about God's or different Virgin or Saints' teachings – or about how to live a righteous life according to their will and example. When someone is sick or in trouble in any way, people pray for them, and make offerings to particular Saints or Virgins. Connecting with deities is a concrete and practical way to show and practice solidarity, while it is also a way of connecting spiritually with God and maintain a reciprocal relationship with 'him' or with the Saints and Virgins.

Throughout my fieldwork I became acquainted with several different Catholic Saints and Virgins through the relationships between them and the research participants. When people spoke of 'their' Saints, it was often as though they were speaking of an old friend or relative. I would get a feeling of getting to know these deities through the participants in the same way as I was getting to know their loved ones on the other side of the world through their stories told to me in Bilbao. And when I finally 'met' them it was, in a sense, like when I met family members in Bolivia of the people I had gotten to know in Bilbao. Like pieces of a puzzle falling into place.

Image 23: Statue of Jesus welcoming pilgrims to the Cathedral in Quillacollo, where people come to honor la Virgen de Urkupiña.

Consuelo and San Jorge

Consuelo Vence, one of the key participants in Bilbao, is thoroughly dedicated to *San Jorge*. In many conversations Consuelo would talk about all that she owed him – he had saved her and her children from being deported, and made her ‘papers’ come through in the nick of time many years ago. As a result of this experience she vowed to do a *novena* in *San Jorge*’s honor every year, followed by a big party on his official day, the 23rd of April. During a novena, the devotees pray to the chosen Saint for nine days. In 2015, when I participated in this with Consuelo, we would go to the house of a friend of hers in Bilbao who was also a devotee and who had set up an altar in his living room. At the end of the nine days she organized a celebration in *San Jorge*’s honor in a public park at the outskirts of Bilbao. Consuelo asked me to ask *Red de Madres* to partake in the celebration and offer our dance to *San Jorge*. Below is

an excerpt from fieldnotes from when Consuelo and I met for coffee to chat and plan the celebration.

Consuelo said that the cura [Catholic priest] who is going to lead the sermon in [the park] was the one who got her to see San Jorge the first time, nine years ago. This had to do with a crisis she had – her whole family was about to be deported, but a miracle happened. She never really finished this story, but [...] she has told me about this before.

Consuelo was talking about the celebration and whether she would be able to drink alcohol that day, due to a stomach infection she was having. Her boss has given her eight bottles of reserva wine for those of us who will be dancing for San Jorge. She said she would bring the little shot glasses she had taken from the bar where we went with her friend Irina and give out wine to all the dancers. She was saying she would probably not be able to resist, that she would 'have to' drink as well, even if she wasn't supposed to. I laughed, thinking she was talking about whether she would be able to resist considering the celebration, but it soon became clear that she was not the one who would make that decision; San Jorge would. Just like he had done when she drank that bottle and a half of whiskey in Erandio at the planning event for the celebration last week. She said that her Santo liked his drink, but that he wasn't really a man of beer or any such things, but of 'trago' – of liquor. 'Me abre el pico' ['he opens my beak], she says. He makes her drink, but the drink doesn't make her drunk, it just makes her keep going. Her devotion to her Saint makes her drink and then dance all night, and that is probably what will happen the day of the celebration. She said that day I will have to go with her the whole day and go out with her at night and we will dance all the dances, and practice our salsa and bachata. [...] 'That is what devotion does to you,' she said. (Fieldnotes. Meeting with Consuelo for coffee. April 15, 2015)

From what Consuelo describes, the relationship she has with *San Jorge* is very personal. He is a close friend as well as a guardian. He has his personal preferences – liquor instead of beer, and he likes a good party. She often talks about him in diminutive form – her *Santito* – implying familiarity. All the while he has the power to influence not only her ac-

tions – making her drink much more than she plans to, but also to do miracles, to drastically alter her life. That is why she has done these dedicatory novenas and celebrations for him for (at present time) over a decade.

Visiting *la Virgen de Urkupiña*

While Consuelo's friendship is with *San Jorge*, Elia is a devotee of *la Virgen de Urkupiña*, patron of Bolivian national integration, whose shrine is situated in a small town outside of Cochabamba. Elia had promised *la Virgen* that she would go to visit her during her trip to Bolivia in 2016, and she asked if I wanted to join her. Together we took an intercity overnight bus from Santa Cruz to Cochabamba, and from there we took a local bus to arrive at the shrine located in Quillacollo, about 15 km from Cochabamba. Here a monumental cathedral with icons of *la Virgen* is located, and the streets around it are filled with sales stalls, shops, and restaurants that cater to the pilgrims that come from all over the country, and even from abroad, to visit *la Virgen*.

In one of the booths near the church Elia picked out an icon in the image of *la Virgen de Urkupiña*, which I then paid for. When she had told me on the bus to Cochabamba that this was one of the things she wanted to achieve during our visit, as she had promised her family in Bilbao she would bring back such an icon for them, I had asked whether I could gift them this as way of thanking them for their help with my research. She had agreed with seeming appreciation. We went to the mid-day mass at the church to get the sculpture blessed by the priest there, and then we picked up some supplies – flowers and streamers – in the booths around the church before continuing on to our next task. From the center of town we took yet another bus to get to the Cerro Cota, the hilltop where *la Virgen* is said to have appeared many times with her baby in her arms before a local girl who was herding her animals.

At the bottom of the hill several people who are able to communicate things to *la Virgen* have set up shop. Elia and I went to the second sales stall and she asked if the man working there would be around later on when we came back with our gifts from *la Virgen*. He confirmed. We walked up the hill, passed the monumental entrance that was set up at its bottom, and we stopped at a small shop halfway to the top. There we bought two one-liter bottles of beer, and we got to borrow a small glass and a sledgehammer so that we could *picar plata/picar piedra*. Translat-

ed from Spanish this means to ‘mine for silver’ or ‘mine for rocks’. Elia explained to me that this would be our gift from *la Virgen*, but I did not fully understand what she meant until later.

Image 24: Booth with icons of la Virgen

As we came closer and closer to our destination, I was reminded of Angy’s story about being in the same place Elia and I were in that moment – many years ago. During my stay with her, Dilmer, and Liseth, Angy had told me about her experience with *la Virgen*. For Angy, celebrating *la Virgen* was a memory that tied her to her parents and her relatives back in Bolivia.

August 15th is Día de la Virgen [the Day of the Virgin (María)] in Spain, and Día de la Virgen de Begoña in Euskadi. And in Bolivia it’s when la Fiesta de la Virgen de Urkupiña starts, and it lasts for three days, according to Angy. After la comida she told me a bit about this celebration in Bolivia. People gather from all over Boliv-

ia, and America, to pilgrimage to the cerro [hill/hilltop, here referring to the Cerro Cota] where the Virgin appeared. Angy had only been there once as an adult. It was the same year her mother died, just a few days after the fiesta [of la Virgen]. Several of her tios [uncles, here – through masculine plural – referring to both aunts and uncles] had gone, they had started driving from [the village] in the middle of the night – at three o'clock in the morning. They wanted to get there early because the later they went the more people there would be. They were up all night cooking, and then at three o'clock they left. They had to park quite far away and then walk all the way up el cerro to where the Virgin is. There they prayed and after they ate around there, the food that they had brought. She had only been there as a child, earlier, with her parents. And after she has never gone. She told me on the first day there is a lot of dancing and festejo [partying] in la Virgen's honor, while the last day is the 'calvario' [the Calvary, a biblical reference used as a metaphor for adversity, challenges, or trials] where people carry rocks and build little constructions with them. As far as I understood people leave things in these constructions that symbolize what they are praying for, like if you need a car you will leave a little toy car in one such construction. (Bilbao, Saturday, August 15, 2015)

I did not ask Angy why she had not returned to el Cerro Cota after that time with her *tíos*. It might be that she is simply not as devoted as Elia is, and therefore does not prioritize a visit when she is in Bolivia. It might be because it brings up memories that she would rather keep buried – memories that feel good, but that still hurt because they are about a life that no longer exists, and about people who are no longer in this world. In any case, Angy's story about her visit to *la Virgen* had given me some guidance as to understand her importance in people's lives and her ability to grant them what they needed. Walking that hill together with Elia meant mentally illustrating Angy's story with the images that were appearing before my eyes. This was where little Angy had walked as a child, her mother probably dragging her by the hand, telling her not to complain. Before *despedidas*, before migrations, before paid care work. And this is where she had stepped on the dawn of August 15th a decade and a half ago, a young woman mourning her mother's death, about to celebrate *la Virgen* together with her mother's siblings. This

hill was inscribed with so many stories just like Angy's, and now Elia and I were inscribing it with ours.

We came upon a small chapel as we walked to the top of the hill, and went in to light candles. I lit one for my father, and she lit several more while silently praying. I did not ask whom they were for. It felt too intimate. Then we went to see the statue set up at the exact spot where *la Virgen* had appeared the last time she was seen by the herder. By the foot of the little garden around the statue were piles and piles of rocks, some thrown directly on the ground, others thrown there in small and large bags. Some of it might have been from the *calvario* of the year before. Elia told me that this was the *silver* that people had come to return to *la Virgen*, as we would have to do ourselves.

We continued walking, away from the main premises of the chapel. We found a spot at the top of the hill where Elia thought we would be able to mine for our silver. First we opened the beers and drank, letting drops fall from the glass to the ground – to Pachamama/Mother Earth – as always when consuming alcoholic beverages – *chayando*¹²². Then Elia shook the bottle and sprayed beer on one of the large rocks we were standing by. Afterwards she proceeded to hammer on the rock – mining off a couple of pieces. Then it was my turn to do the same, and after a few trial hits I was successful in clobbering off a piece of 'silver'.

After attaining our silver we walked back down the hill, returned the sledgehammer and the glass to the little shop, and then went to see the man at the bottom of Cerro Cota. From his sales stall we bought amulets symbolizing the kind of things we wanted to ask *la Virgen* for. Apart from the general packet of objects symbolizing prosperity and wealth, Elia picked a red car that she was hoping to receive once she managed to get her driver's license. I also picked the general packet and then a plastic envelope with objects that symbolized success with my career related endeavors. He wrapped our objects in an *aguayo*¹²³ together with the rock/silver we had mined and the streamers we had bought at the market in town. He opened a beer to *chayar* the objects and Pachamama – who seems to be an integrated whole of both Mother Earth and *la Vir-*

122 To *chayar* means to pay tribute to Mother Earth/Pachamama by giving her an offering, usually drops from the drink you are having. This is something people do at parties, when just drinking with friends, but perhaps especially on ceremonial occasions when you depend on the benevolence of higher powers.

123 An *aguayo* is a piece of woven cloth used by indigenous people in Bolivia and other Andean countries for many purposes – you can carry babies in them, firewood, produce from the farm, or your shopping from the market. You can also use them for ceremonial purposes, as the man did in this case.

gen – and all of us drank to both of them. Afterwards he took Elia's hand, and then mine. He read our palms and told us about who we were and about our destinies. When we left Elia told me that now *la Virgen* would grant us what we had asked for, but we had also made an implicit promise to return to her and give her back the 'silver' she had lent us.

Lying in a drawer in my apartment in Malmö is my piece of silver. Hopefully *la Virgen* will see to that this thesis is accepted, and more. As for Elia, now, three years later, she has received both her driver's license and has bought a car which she often posts pictures of on Facebook.

Image 25: Statue of la Virgen de Urkupiña and its surrounding garden. The sign says 'Holy Place'. At the feet of the garden wall lie mined rocks/silver, 'money', and other gifts reciprocated to la Virgen.

Image 26: Booth of the indigenous man that blessed our silver. Here we could pick objects symbolizing both general and very specific requests for la Virgen.

(Religious) Reciprocation

For both Elia and Consuelo their relationships with their *Santo* and *Virgen* are important guiding lights in life. They are interveners who help them in dire times of need, and they are someone to go to ask for assistance with specific tasks, or to manifest their personal goals. They work together with them to keep their families safe and help them ensure prosperity for themselves and their loved ones. By doting on their *Santos* and *Virgenes*, people invest in their protective powers and generosity. Consuelo is certain she would not have the life she has if it was not for *San Jorge* – he was the one who bestowed upon her the ‘papers’ in the nick of time and made it possible for her and her children to stay in Spain. She now lives in Bilbao with her three children, one of whom has gotten married and had two children. *San Jorge* protects them every step they take.

The Saints and Virgins also provide occasions where families and friends can get together to honor them, and thereby supply joy and festivity, as well as opportunities to raise money when necessary. Although neither Consuelo’s yearly grand celebration of *San Jorge* or Elia and her

family's celebration of *la Virgen de Urkupiña* are done to raise money for particular purposes, the celebrations are seen as an investment in the wellbeing and prosperity for all those involved. Donating food, time, dance, or money to 'the cause' allows for goodwill with the *Santo* or *Virgen* in question.

In the same way that the Saints and Virgins hold power over how life turns out for Elia and Consuelo, so do the employers of care workers in the global market of care. By this I am not implying that employers are in any way perceived as deities by the workers, but rather that, contrary to what the workers would want, their employers' 'benevolence' matters in how their lives play out (see Chapter 8). Correspondingly care work in itself can be understood as a sort of gift from the position of the workers. Just as they invest in the relationship with higher powers, they invest in the relationship with people holding power over their legal situation and everyday life. One of the main differences between these two sorts of relationships is that in the one between employers and employees, the social (and legal) contract between them is often broken, and the exchange ceases. Between people and their *Santo* or *Virgen*, reciprocity is guaranteed.

Concluding Remarks: Migrancy Divides up Common Ground?

The anthropological understanding of reciprocity helps us move beyond exchange as a solely 'economic' practice and, rather, look at the market as a social space where relations of power and dynamics of social differentiation – including the social, economic, and symbolic value tied to different bodies – are continuously being (re)produced. Reciprocity helps us see how the economy, and the economic, is in fact social and cultural practice. When looking at the material above through economic anthropology, and particularly from a moral economy perspective, we can say that the global market of care contains two parallel moral logics, or rationalities. The first is that of employers and Spanish society, that through the care work sector seeks to protect the domesticity of Spanish homes, society, and market (see Chapters 6, 7, and 8). The other is the one of the employees, in this case with a background from Bolivia, who operate according to an understanding of far reaching reciprocal social relations as the most sound and secure way to protect and (re)produce both one's own interests and those of society at large.

Maldonado-Torres (2007) suggests that power relations circumscribe practices of reciprocity. If you are defined as ‘Other’ in any context, then the full range of reciprocal practice between you and those who belong to that context is excluded from that relationship’s social repertoire. With this perspective in mind, how do practices of reciprocity take place in the global market of care? In this chapter I have looked at material linked to both local and transnational practices of reciprocity that arguably deal with the situation of migrancy, as well as practices which are more overtly political.

First, the different responses to migrancy and its adversities that have been presented in this chapter reveal that issues within the global market of care that require some sort of response are many and diverse. Migrancy is produced in this market, through patriarchal and colonial legislations, discourses, and practices. It is reflected in the many difficulties that migrated women who work in the Spanish care work sector face. Judging from the political protest on the 8th of March described above, so-called autochthonous women from the Basque Country and Spain share some of these challenges, while others are more particular to the situation of being a ‘migrant’. Political activism’s claims for justice can therefore both exclude and include the people they are advocating for, depending on how it is practiced. ‘Autochthonous’ and migrated women’s fights are connected, as coloniality and patriarchy are interconnected structures, but these structures are articulated differently in people’s lives depending on factors such as administrative situation, gender, the color of your skin, and the dialect you speak.

Second, the material shows that the global market of care and life in migrancy, are, in part, built on and sustained by reciprocal practices that connect the research participants with larger social networks. These are necessary because this often entails a life in precarity. These networks are similar and connected to those back in Bolivia, and are a way of spreading risk through solidarity. In this sense, they can be a more stable form of social security than the public scheme one pays into with taxes on the Spanish labor market. This entails consumption of each others’ foods, goods, favors, and other values, and it means reciprocating these when one is called on. When it comes to life in migrancy the reciprocal practices of, for instance, *kermeses*, become ways of insuring oneself against the precarity and instabilities this life usually entails. It is also a

way of connecting to people in a similar situation, and who have migrated from the same place as you.

Third, the same sorts of exchange that the research participants do with other people in their social networks, they also practice with 'their' deities. The position of *Santos* and *Virgenes* in people's lives is strikingly personal. It is a way of negotiating one's own destiny, and of investing in one's future. It is a way of reinforcing one's own 'laws of the market' (Callon 1998), one's own rules for reciprocity, in the face of precarity and illegality within the global market of care.

The discussions in this chapter show that the global market of care encompasses different forms of conducting reciprocal exchanges, and that the ways in which these are practiced through the research participants' rationalities shed light on the hegemonic 'laws' of the global market of care. When the research participants' forms of, and expectations towards, exchange are contrasted with those of the labor market sector where they work, dynamics of gendering and racialization become more visible. This is an important point, as working for justice from this perspective would mean decentering the Spanish 'laws', and understanding what is happening in the global market of care through the perspective on exchange as it is practiced and understood by those who actually do the work within the Spanish care sector. Failing to take their perspectives and practices into account is, for one, to ignore the reality of the exchange as it happens in this market. It is a labor market sector in which personal (power) relations are put front and center, and which therefore produces encounters between different rationalities concerning the rules for reciprocity. Additionally, by ignoring this fact and only telling the story of those who employ, not those who are employed, the reciprocal relations and practices that are connected to those within the Spanish labor market sector are encumbered, and often even impeded. As was discussed in Chapter 8, workers are left to rely on the benevolence of their employers, and therefore accept the latter's disproportionate use of their time, trust, and resources. And as was discussed in Chapter 9; social relationships are lost, some are broken, and many are left behind. Returning to what Maldonado-Torres describes as the foundation of the ontological (2007:258); the impediment of the research participants' reciprocal exchanges through the enforcement of their labor market sectors' 'laws of the market' (Callon 1998), not only disconnects them from their loved ones. This obstruction of the trans-

ontological also obstructs social life-as-they-know-it for migrated people in Spain at large, and it is through their relations with deities and with people in the same situation that they challenge these obstructions.

As the material presented in this chapter conveys, migrancy sets boundaries between people who in many ways have important claims for justice in common. Particularly when it comes to women's placement within patriarchal structures, migrancy arguably contributes to pinning the less favored of these structures – women in general – against each other. By (re)producing one collective of women as the 'Others' within the Spanish context – through a racialized and class-based division of labor instead of a division based on gender – the premises for negotiation, exchange, and collaboration within what could potentially be a common feminist struggle are threatened. Migrancy is thus arguably produced through distinctions, through *difference*, and these distinctions make exchange – in the sense of Maldonado-Torres' understanding of exchange as contributing to a common ontological grounds-for-Being – impossible. In a sense exchange – as communication across equally valued, but socioculturally different, positionalities – is arguably non-existent in the global market of care.

11. CONCLUDING: SUBJECTIVITIES, POSITION- ALITIES, AND MIGRANCY AS PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS OF THE GLOBAL MARKET OF CARE

That's what happened. Summarized. They treated me like a slave. That's the idea they have about people who come from abroad to work. And they don't care, they don't care if I have papers or not. They don't care about that. But, look, in order to work, look... The first thing they ask of you when you go to work is requirements, references, if we have papers, you know? [It's not about] rights or anything like that. And I'm tired of this. (Follow-up interview with Blanca López, July 2019)

Introduction

The citation above is from a conversation I had with Blanca López while I was in the last weeks of writing my thesis. While I frequently have superficial contact with her and several of the other research participants over social media, it is seldom that we talk at length about things that really matter. I wanted to check in and see how life had unfolded for her and her daughter. We ended up in a lengthy conversation of voice messages, as Blanca had a lot on her mind. Things had, per usual, not turned out the way she had intended. Her daughter, Virginia, had had a child. But Blanca shared with me that things had not gone according to

plan work-wise either. She felt she had regressed, she felt treated like a slave. In this chapter I summarize the different mechanisms that allow for Blanca's working life to transpire this way.

This thesis has considered dimensions of the global market of care. Through my research material I have explored how this market is structured and what dynamics reproduce its structures. Feminist and decolonial lenses have guided the questions I have asked throughout this thesis, and economic anthropology on exchange and the gift has been my primary theoretical tool for analysis. In the introductory chapter I posed the question of what the story told here was about, and I proposed three research questions to guide me in structuring this story:

How is the global market of care that connects Bolivia and Spain made possible?

What experiences, expectations, and exchanges make up the global market of care, and how are these connected?

What processes and logics of social differentiation are made particularly relevant in this market, and how?

This chapter will summarize my answers to these questions by drawing on the main discussions from each previous chapter, and it will provide some concluding reflections on the global market of care, its exchanges, and the migrancy produced through it.

Components of the Global Market of Care

Referring to my field of research as a 'market' infers the existence of some form(s) of exchange. It is these exchanges I have discussed throughout this thesis: their forms and practices, the rationalities behind them, and their implications for the people involved.

After introducing my research contexts in *Chapter 2*, I used *Chapter 3* to show how I as a researcher took part in the market that transpires between these contexts. Arguably, research, and particularly ethnographic research, is greatly dependent on exchange. I was cared for by the research participants in many ways throughout fieldwork, and I cared, and care, for them. We interchanged empathy for each other's experiences, and we built relationships on the experiences we shared.

As I argue further throughout the thesis, how exchange is done depends on who does it and how they are perceived by those they exchange with. In *Chapter 3*, I showed that my subjectivity influenced the relations and rapport developed in the field in particular ways, and thereby also the knowledge that this research has generated. Not only did I interact with the research participants and the contexts that surrounded us in subjective ways, but these interactions can in themselves be understood as exchanges. The participants gave me of their time, their stories, their interest and attention. In exchange, I was at times asked to represent them in different settings, through for instance dance, or by speaking on the radio. I was asked to be a friend, to do favors, and to listen. And I also vowed to tell this story, which involves their stories, in the most sincere way possible. Chapter 3 therefore showed that, just like Mauss (1990) explained through the notion of the *hau*, when we give and when we exchange, part of us is transferred with the ‘object’ that is given. I am a part of the research contexts, and thereby of the global market of care, and the research participants are also participating in creating the knowledge here presented to the readers.

In *Chapter 4* I unpacked the different theoretical strands that have aided my analysis in this thesis. I will return to this theory below. In *Chapter 5* I returned to my research material and explored the ways in which gender matters to a particular component of the global market of care, namely the exchange of life together with one’s loved ones for economic gain. The stories of the research participants show that gendered scripts influence why and how migration is carried out by women from Bolivia. These scripts are about gender roles; about the expectations of different forms of care, both intimate and economic, in the relationships between women and their loved ones; about what women can expect to reap from their relationships with others, particularly with men; and about what women of different generations expect from each other.

Chapter 5 showed that patriarchal structures and the relationships that these structures shape, generate needs and desires for migration among Bolivian women from different walks of life. These relationships take place within a postcolonial context of economic precarity and insecurity, which are factors that are certainly also highly influential in the decision-making process around migration. However, as my research material relates, the ways in which women are socialized to take responsibil-

ity for their children, parents, siblings, and partners – often at the expense of themselves, their prosperity, and even safety – are instrumental in the molding of a global market of care. While many women emigrate to survive the constraints of masculinity in their lives, most also emigrate in order to care economically for their families. In the receiving context their societal function is also to, precisely, *care* for other people's families. As such, gendered scripts of how caring is done are part of every context of this global market.

In *Chapter 6* I showed how the global market of care also involves the exchange of some women for others. I argue that Spanish immigration legislation works to ensure that the secondary labor market, of which the care work sector is a significant part, is continuously supplied with irregularized workers. This is because of the prevalence of irregular employment (in different ways) in the Spanish economy; because of the particularities of the Spanish amnesty scheme for irregularized immigrants, which allows people to apply for work and residency permits after three years of irregular stay in Spain if they manage to obtain a work contract; and because of so-called befallen irregularity (Triandafyllidou 2010a), where a person's regularized administrative condition can easily be reversed should they not manage to stay employed the required amount of time. As a result, workers who are not yet regularized, or who are in danger of falling into irregularity again, are particularly dependent on their employers. However, as Blanca's story below demonstrates, precarity and migrancy are in themselves factors that make care workers depend greatly on their employers.

While Spanish immigration legislation can be seen as more lenient than those of many other countries in the Global North, and therefore be understood as advantageous for people seeking to migrate to the West, it also contributes to (re)producing a precarious labor market, cementing the role of the immigrated worker in the secondary economy, particularly workers 'without papers'. They can easily be replaced by the 'next' worker, which therefore allows for another form of exchange, namely one's freedom for employment. This, in turn, arguably allows for a labor market sector in which what, by and large, is weighted are the needs and rights of the employers. When looking at the characteristics of the care work sector in Spain and its legislation, this is particularly clear.

In *Chapter 7* I considered how the replaceability of some women for others, and some workers for others, in the care work sector in Spain is

consolidated further through the gendered scripts propagated in its legislations. I argue that these legal texts reveal ideas about the role of women in their families, or in the families of others: that they are the ones responsible for reproducing and protecting the domestic sphere – the domesticity – of the (Spanish) home. These ideas shape the ways in which the care work sector is regulated, in that less rights are bestowed on its workers than that of other sectors in order to protect the privacy (or sanctity?) of the employer's home. Furthermore, this legal protection of domesticity means invisibilizing care workers and their plights. Throughout Chapter 7 I showed how care work often entails tasks well beyond what can, or should, be stipulated in an employment contract, and which the dynamics of this sector simply prescribe the workers as predicaments to endure. As such, the global market of care also involves the exchange of the domesticity of the Spanish home, for the visibility – or subjectivity – of the workers within it.

Chapter 8 unpacked this exchange further. Through stories of the research participants' 'blowups' with their employers, I examined the ways in which social categorization, particularly gender and race, come to matter in the relationships within the Spanish care work sector. These blowups reveal where certain lines are drawn in these work relationships, and can therefore tell us about how workers construe the 'laws of the market' (Callon 1998) that they participate in. The care workers' stories show that while employers often include these workers in their narration of the home and its family, this narrative unravels once conflict occurs. These conflicts are often about a worker asking for what are arguably her workers' rights, and, through them, her right to live a full life. This revealing of subjective experience and expectations is perceived as an infringement upon the domesticity of the employers' home, exposing that being 'part of the family' is dependent on playing one's role of service correctly. In other words, the exchanges taking place within the home-as-workplace, where one woman exchanges her care labor for a monetary return, is contingent not only on the employer's benevolence, but also on keeping the façade of that benevolence intact. Once the trust – or 'trust' – between worker and employer is broken, and the employer can no longer be construed as 'good' and the worker as 'family', the outcome is often a termination of the relationship.

In *Chapter 9* I investigated components of the global market of care that lie beyond the care work sector in Spain. I turned the analysis once

again to the relationships between care workers and particular people they regard as their responsibility to care for. In other words, to how workers' practices of 'mothering' and 'daughtering' are part of the global market of care. These are arguably the relationships that bear the heaviest costs within this market. Not only is their importance disregarded, as if the parent-child relationships sprung from the peripheries were not as significant to those they involve as those found in the World center, but the gendered scripts that the global market of care so greatly depends on in both law and practice also (re)produce the notion that this is what women from particular parts of the world can and should stomach.

And so women who go to work far from their children and aging or ailing parents negotiate the losses of these relationships as sacrifices made for their families. It is as though they gift their loved ones their absence in order for their family to receive prosperity in return. People negotiate the meaning of this gift, this sacrifice, in how they tell their stories, but also in how they strive to maintain their relationships, and, often, to reunite with their loved ones. Chapter 9 therefore also reflects on how these relationships have developed over time, when, for instance, children grow up without their parents. Arguably, some gifts cannot be ungiven.

Chapter 9 and the previous chapters have shown how the exchanges taking place in the global market of care carry with them the 'spirit' of the giver, their *hau* (Mauss 1990), and this 'spirit' is arguably made up of the positionality that the giver holds in different social structures, such as race, class, and gender. At the same time, the receivers of the gifts exchanged also hold their own positionalities, which become the *hau* of the counter-gifts given in the continuous exchanges taking place among the actors within the global market of care. The exchanges within this market therefore arguably reproduce global power relations on an intimate level – in the personal relationships between workers and their employers and between migrated women and their family members. They also feed the reproduction of the same power relations on state level, through how labor and immigration law is written and practiced, and internationally, in that workers from countries of the global periphery feed the labor markets of the global center. The ways in which exchanges are practiced and defined (re)produces what I have called migrancy – a precarious state in which workers of the global market of

care are conscripted to legally, discursively, and economically, and which ultimately impedes them from living full lives with those who matter the most. Both the significance of the *hau* and the dynamics of migrancy will be reflected further on below.

This migrancy does not, however, go uncontested. *Chapter 10* discussed how the research participants have dealt with this state of being in different ways. Some rely on Virgins and Saints to deal with their predicament, and enter into reciprocal relationships with them. Some rely on their Bolivian peers for support through solidarity when difficulties occur and funds need to be raised to confront them. Some ally with other workers and other women in similar predicaments as themselves to act politically and publicly to change the structures that surround them, negotiating and exchanging positions, stories, and visibility with their collaborators. Some even participate in research about the situations they live in. All of these approaches involve exchanging with others, and are, as such, also part of the care market in itself.

These contestations speak of the difficulties in disturbing the structures upholding the market and altering the conditions of the migrancy it produces. The fact that people who have migrated to Spain from Bolivia rely on deities and their peers for resolving their difficulties elucidates the very conditions of Otherness that they live with through migrancy. It tells us that migrancy has to do with, precisely, that Otherness, including the racialization that this entails. It tells us that for some people, other ways of contesting structures than the ones they brought with them through migration are not easily available. When you stand on the outside of the social structures looking in on the adversities that control your life, what becomes the most plausible way to confront these adversities is to form an alliance with others on the outside (or ‘above’). At the same time, the political collaborations between (some) migrated care workers and other feminist women in the Basque Country and Spain, speaks of the need for, and attempts at, finding ways to fight the structures from within. While *Chapter 10* discusses some of the challenges that these alliances face – in that different women and feminists do not necessarily define their plights in the same way just because they share particular traits –, it also underlines the powerful surge of this movement which is being felt in both Spain and different parts of Latin America. How we might conceive of a more feminist future within the global market of care is discussed below.

The Construction of Migrancy in the Global Market of Care

[We] consider that, for decades, a large part of the international migration to Euskal Herria has been about labor and has been feminized. One of the reasons that explain this issue is that certain local needs encourage and combine a gendered and international division of labor. Also within the Basque territory – through multiple oppressions; gender, sexuality, class, race, geographical origin, administrative situation, amongst other factors, [that] mix and come into play in the ways of life, work, relationships, interaction and recognition from and for migrated women. Being migrated and working women represents a sort of (common) starting point from a personal and collective identity that shapes an important part of our subjectivity as women – migrated here and now. (Brujas y Diversas 2015:16)¹²⁴

As I have discussed throughout this thesis, migrancy is the term I use to depict the circumstance under which the research participants live and exist. My use of this term follows the same logic as that of De Genova (2002, 2004, 2013) and Andersson's (2014a, 2014b, 2016a) use of the term illegality – it is about a prolonged situation in time determined by legal frameworks, but also by social norms and discourses that together compose the global market of care. Migrancy is a state of being where the fact that you are foreign-born in particular places is made to matter. De Genova defines 'illegality' as a status akin to citizenship, in that it 'entails a social relation to the state' and is 'as such, [...] a preeminently political identity' (2002:422). Migrancy is also about social relations and power, but more about a perceived social relation to territory and nation, than to the state per se. While the two statuses are very much intertwined, in that a perceived 'migrant' is often interpreted as always mobile and therefore not belonging, neither legally nor socially, it is particularly the person's relationship to the geographical context that is at stake in my use of the term migrancy. The term refers to a status and a set of experiences lived by people who are Othered within a specific context on account of their perceived affinity to spatial and national belonging, as well as the practices towards them that derive thereof. Mi-

¹²⁴ See Appendix 4 for original text in Spanish.

grancy is played out through scripts of gender, race, and class to a large extent, both socially and politically, since – as was indicated in Chapter 6 – the ideal foreigner in the Spanish and Basque context can be interpreted to be the one within the silences of the current *Ley de extranjería* – Spanish immigration law. That foreigner is whatever the current ‘migrant’ is assumed not to be; middle class, European, highly educated. A resource for Spanish and Basque society, not a poor benefit scrounger. Migrancy is thus constructed and construed through interplaying legal, economic, political and discursive dynamics.

One example of how this is done is through Spanish immigration legislation. Although most of the participants in this research have come to obtain either citizenship or permanent residency status, the state of migrancy is still prolonged in time. Living in migrancy means that one’s life continues to be defined by one’s geographical origin in different ways, even when one has surpassed the ‘limbo’ of illegality. This limbo, or ‘befallen irregularity’, is a prominent outcome of the way the Spanish state legislates immigration (Calavita 1998, 2003, 2005), and it is part of how workers in the global market of care become signified as replaceable. Temporariness and befallen irregularity have become structural components of how migration is regulated and governed in Spain, and thereby of how the secondary economy is fomented and supported politically (Calavita 2005, 2007, Peterson 2007, Solé & Parella 2003). Migrancy is thus a central dynamic of the global market of care, and this thesis has shown ways in which this dynamic plays out.

Racial components, class, and whether or not you are from (particular parts of) Europe, matter in the Spanish context in terms of your degree of experienced migrancy¹²⁵, much in the way that can be recognized in the citation above. This text is from *Brujas y Diversas*’ manifesto *Juntas y diversas: Compartiendo propuestas. Mujeres migradas en Euskal Herria* (2015), and outlines many important components of migrancy: it entails multiple oppressions since it takes place within structures of differentiation based on ‘gender, sexuality, class, race, geographical origin, administrative situation’ (2015:16) and so on. Also made visible in this citation is a semantic manifestation of resistance against how migrancy is construed as a form of oppression in the Basque Country and beyond.

125 Although my research is limited to the context of the global market of care between Spain and Bolivia, I am quite certain similar dynamics of migrancy can be found in many, if not most, other places in the Global North that receive a significant number of migrated people.

The term *mujeres migradas* – migrated women – is used by *Brujas y Diversas* and other politically adjacent collectives, instead of the terms ‘immigrants’, ‘migrants’, or ‘migrant women’¹²⁶. The past tense of ‘migradas’/‘migrated’ expresses the idea of belonging that such collectives try to foment within Spanish and Basque society – the notion that even if you have come from abroad your mobility – your migrancy – should not be perpetual; your journey ends here and you are welcome to engage economically, politically, and emotionally with this place. As already discussed, this emic term is a way of negotiating migrancy. It is a semantic ‘twist’ that places migrancy within a person’s history rather than her present. As noted in Chapter 4, I have practiced this twist throughout this thesis as a way of participating in the research participants’ negotiation of their existence within the parameters of the global market of care.

This thesis shows that the making of migrancy through care work is by both the law itself and by employers understood as a sort of Derridean gift through its gendered script of belonging to the construction of womanhood. The implicit sacrifice of self that this implies is, however, not enough to allow those who give this gift to surpass the state of migrancy. In order to rightfully be able to demand something in return for your gift – your labor, and yourself – you cannot be ‘the Other’ (cf. Maldonado-Torres 2007). The exchange you can engage in as long as ‘Other’ is what you are reduced to, not only treats your gift as a sacrifice, in that it is never fully reciprocated, neither as gift nor commodity, but also makes your body into a commodity of sorts. The function that the migrated care worker fills within both the market and society at large becomes a sort of commodity – a service that makes the gendered wheel of Spanish homes turn.

(Gendered) Power Relations and Performativity as Parts of Reciprocity and Exchange

The material presented in this thesis also demonstrates that sociocultural complexity is an important component of the contexts I have analyzed. These are contexts consisting of webs of social relations, within which money, gifts, labor, and commodities play important roles, and within which these components are exchanged. I have explored my material on

126 In Spanish: *inmigrantes*, *migrantes*, or *mujeres migrantes*.

exchange reflecting on the ways in which reciprocity is construed within the power relations present in the global market of care. Gregory (2015) argues that reciprocity theory lacks the aspect of, precisely, power relations. This is why he regards the Marxist approach of *reproduction* a possible way to disentangle the complex reality of colonial Papua New Guinea. In contrast to Papua New Guinea, the contexts I have examined are not bound to one place, and they cannot be understood as culturally homogeneous, nor can they be divided into components of ‘pre-capitalist’ and ‘capitalist’ – or ‘pre-colonial’ and ‘post-colonial’ elements, which further increases the complexity. They are also contexts that are often highly politicized, both in the everyday and in their analysis by e.g. feminist scholars and activists. The introduction of power as an element in exchange is therefore a *sine qua non* of understanding my research contexts and material. Marshall Sahlins (1972:134) himself said that ‘everywhere in the world the indigenous category for exploitation is “reciprocity”.’ When it comes to the context(s) that I have studied, the performativity tied to gendered practices is a paramount component of how exchange and reciprocity take place.

Marilyn Strathern was the one who brought gender into the analyses of Papua New Guinea contexts. While her male peers focused on, for instance, the lavish gift exchanges made by the ‘big men’ of the island in order to increase their power through ownership of pigs and women, Strathern showed how these exchanges were made possible by the labor performed largely by women. Women were the ones who farmed and grew sweet potatoes, and then fed them to the pigs so that these would grow big and strong, reproduce, and increase the herd. In her book *The Gender of the Gift* (1988), Strathern expands on Gregory’s analysis and theoretical framework. According to her, Gregory understands commodity exchange to belong to class-based societies, while gift exchange is a characteristic of ‘clan-based’ societies. In other words, commodity exchange is a trait of capitalism, while gift exchange a trait of non-capitalist societies. This, however, as she points out, does not mean that non-capitalist societies cannot hold characteristics belonging to capitalist principles of socioeconomic organization, or vice versa. With regard to my research material, a clear-cut distinction between gift and commodity does not help us understand what is actually going on in the global market of care. In order to understand the practices of exchange taking place in this (arguably) capitalist market – as well as in the pro-

cesses that circumscribe them, I include in this last chapter an attempt to define what gift and commodity mean in this specific empirical context, as a way of addressing my research questions.

Gifts and Commodities in the Global Market of Care

‘Gift economy’, as a shorthand reference to systems of production and consumption where consumptive production predominates, implies, in Gregory’s terminology, that things and people assume the social form of persons. They thus circulate as gifts, for the circulation creates relationships of a specific type, namely a qualitative relationship between the parties to the exchange. This makes them reciprocally dependent upon one another. Some dependencies are conceived of as prior to transactions, while others are constructed during the course of the transaction itself (Strathern 1988:145-46).

Strathern’s explanation of the gift above implies that commodities would be part of a system in which things are things and people are people, and in which these cannot be exchanged for one another, nor can things be interpreted as carrying the spirit of the giver. Or, put in Mauss’ (1990) words, things cannot carry the *hau* of the giver.

In the research presented here, these distinctions are not possible to make, as shown in, Mery’s narrative in Chapter 8, as one example. It is through this blurred line between gifts and commodities, and their different interpretations, that much of the power relations at hand in the global market of care are revealed. On the one hand, it is apparent that what is dealt with is a system of commodity exchange, in that it belongs to the capitalist market. However, as is even stipulated in Spanish law (although arguably from a different standpoint than my own feminist one), care work lands in a sector of the market that is often understood as operating according to a different logic than the one of the market economy in general (see Chapter 7). Following Tsing (2013), I would argue that no sector – no form of exchange – actually fully adheres to the logics of market economics. There is no exchange without meaning making and power relations. This is what economic anthropology teaches us; that the ‘things’ exchanged in any sort of market must be understood as ‘an expansive term’ (Carrier 2012:4): ‘It includes material objects, but also includes the immaterial: labour, services, knowledge and myth, names and charms, and so on’ (ibid.). What is clear is that when

care work is exchanged for something-else (be that money, another social relationship, favors, social or legal status, or some sort of payment in kind), then social relationships, and the exchangers' understanding and experience of these relationships, matter.

All exchange, whether defined as gift or commodity exchange, involves some form of expectation of reciprocity. No one gives up something for nothing, even when the giving is presented as a sacrifice (cf. Derrida 1992, Smedal 2005). When looking at the global market of care and how it takes part in constructing migrancy in the Spanish context, what becomes clear from the reading of my material is that rather than focusing on whether or not the type of exchange made visible is 'capitalist' or 'gift-based', what is important is understanding what premises are revealed in the material. Once again I turn to Maldonado-Torres and the significance of the 'coloniality of Being' (2007). Because the type of reciprocity expected in any exchange is different in regard to how you stand in the hierarchy of society – and by extension whether or not you are considered a part of this society, and its ontology, at all. It is here that the notion of expectations comes into play. Because, in the same sense that the gift has a gender (Strathern 1988), it also holds other subjective components; other positionalities. It carries with it the social differentiation communicated between the giver and the receiver in the moment of their exchange. We could therefore also speak of, for instance, the class, race, nationality, or caste of the gift.

In Chapter 8, when using gift theory to ponder the workers' demands in the 'blowups' discussed, it is as though the worker asks her employer to reciprocate her gift – a gift which, of course, has included her subjectivity; her 'spirit' or her *hau* (Mauss 1990). But the reciprocation is not practiced according to the same 'laws' (Callon 1998) as the original gift was given. What the worker gets in return is the reciprocation of a commodity transaction, although disguised as a gift exchange up until the moment of conflict. When looking at Mery's narrative, we see that she thought that the personal relationship between her *jefa* and herself would mean more leniency and goodwill when Mery ended up in the challenging situation of combining work with life as a single mother. She had, after all, been lenient and flexible for a long time when it came to her tasks. To her great disappointment, the laws of the relationship between her *jefa* and herself did not take her interpretation of their relationship into account, and so the only option available to Mery if she

wanted to feel like she kept her integrity, was to retreat completely from that relationship, to remove her ‘spirit’ from the equation.

Mimicry as the Hau of Care Work

In the discussion of gift theory vis-à-vis the analysis of migrancy and the global market of care, what remains analytically problematic is that the ambiguity of care work is not limited to whether or not it is treated and interpreted as a (gendered) gift or commodity within the economy (or social field) it is a part of. Care (work) is exchanged as a service, as a favor, or as a duty, within social relationships. At the same time it is, when it comes to the global market of care, anchored in local and transnational relationships between people and between people and their faith, and is as such much more than a component of economic transaction.

Care work is, although tautologically put, also a form of labor. It is itself producer of its own product; care. Within the capitalist logic it reduces its producers to workers who create surplus value – not for the owners of the means of production, since the workers of this sector are by legal definition free human beings, but for those who employ them – Spanish and Basque families who free up time and emotional liberty to pursue other social and economic projects. This means that the surplus value produced in this economy is not only monetary, but also temporal and emotional. Following Strathern’s (1988) and Gregory’s (2015) understandings of gift and commodity relations, the question then remains what the ‘thing’ that is exchanged in the global market of care actually consists of. Seeing as the worker performing the labor, and thereby the service, sold in the exchanges of this market, is both the producer and the raw material of the product, so to speak, then is she not also the product herself? Is she not, or at least her empathetic capacity together with her completing of the physical tasks assigned to her, the ‘thing’ itself that is being exchanged on the market?

The labor she performs, in a real sense, assumes the social role of a person. Seeing as the very economy she is a part of, and at the same time sustaining, ascribes her the role of *substituting* somebody else – the body of the woman who was (‘biologically’/‘naturally’) supposed to be in the role the care worker occupies, what she is paid to do is to produce a satisfactory mimicry of motherhood, daughterhood, sisterhood, and so on (cf. Federici 2012, Ferguson 2002). She is paid to remove herself, her

hau (Mauss 1990), from the work that she does, and *become* the role. In this sense, the production of care is not about production at all – about bringing forth something, but rather about removing. This is where it overlaps with the production of other commodities – other ‘things’. The capitalist market alienates the worker from her product. By removing the *hau* from the ‘thing’, the ‘thing’ becomes exchangeable on the market; it is no longer imbued with personhood, no longer a gift, but a commodity (Tsing 2013). Only that in this case, the product is, in a sense, the worker herself. In order to become productive, she must detach herself from her herself.

This mimicry is what the role of the care worker demands, but at the same time it is what is questioned, and even loathed, by some employers. Seeing as it is, in fact, impossible – nobody can detach themselves from their body – employers are left with a product that is only partially impersonalized. This is what makes the role function – that workers induce their own stories into those of the service users, that they exchange parts of their own stories for the present practices of care. They empathize with them, they care for them, they even – sometimes – love them. Without this ‘personal touch’ the relationship, and thereby the product to be exchanged – would not hold the same value, and would in itself be reason enough for letting a worker go. This mimicry – this stepping into the role in an adequate way; not too far, not too little – is the key to the success of the working relationship. The question then remains what success means in these circumstances. What are the limits to this success? How much of an illusion of *hau* is too much, and how much is too little? Is it only the worker who is expected to induce the exchange with an illusion of her *hau*, or does the employer also contribute to this configuration of the relationship at hand?

If we again reflect back on the conflicts of the workplace described Chapter 8, we see that what they expose is the *hau* of the worker and her labor. The conflicts – the ‘blowups’ – reveal that what was supposed to be mimicry is actually the work of a person. And this work evokes reactions and emotions in the service users, sometimes positive and sometimes negative. In some cases parents might feel jealous of the care worker who daily tends to their children. In others, adult employees might worry that the care worker argues with, or even mistreats, the elderly parents that she is hired to tend to. In any case, the surge of emo-

tion from either party involved in these exchanges shows that the mimicry can never be complete.

What becomes the exchange is the worker's ability to adjust her performance to the implicit expectations of her employers, and that these expectations are often wrought by gendered, class, and racialized scripts of ability, trustworthiness, and personality of the 'Latina woman'. As long as care work carried out by migrated women is expected to include this form of mimicry upon its exchange, then delinking migrancy from this labor is difficult, if not impossible. By giving this performance of care, migrated care workers sign off on their own continuous becoming as 'the Other', since their performance reproduces the expectations that are already there as part of the global market of care and the gendered and racialized scripts that operate within it. Although the mimicry is at times surpassed, it seems that this surpassing does not make a big enough indentation in the master narrative of who the people working in this labor market sector are. In other words, the ways in which they can enter into exchange within the global market of care continues to be as an 'Other', through their own coloniality of Being (Maldonado-Torres 2007). Blanca's story below is an extreme example of this.

Regressing with Blanca

When I contacted Blanca to get an update about her life I assumed she would be in a better situation than earlier. She told me that things were complicated, and that she would explain. As mentioned, she ended up sending me several long voice messages explaining the situation and answering the questions I asked her to clarify along the way. What her story revealed was that even for somebody who is well settled in her life in Spain, who knows 'the ropes', who has obtained citizenship, and managed to reunite with her child, migrancy ensures that one's economic and social stability is fragile. Below are excerpts of our conversation where Blanca talks about her current employment situation with an overtly racist and abusive elderly man, and why she feels she is forced to stay on in that job.

El señor [the service user,] is very racist. He thinks that we are his slaves, that we have come from other lands, other parts of the world, like we were asking for alms, for a handout. Like... He treats us, I mean, he treats me... horribly, you know? He treats me like I were

his slave. One day he was even about to hit me, and I said to him: 'what are you doing? You can't hit me! If you hit me...' And he stopped himself, he contained himself. And I said to myself 'I'm quitting,' and I was about to. I told his son 'I'm leaving'. And he told me 'calm down, Blanca, I will talk with my father, please stay.' And I needed the work, and I decided to stay, and *el señor* didn't act like that again. But his words are very, very... degrading, offensive. He has abused me psychologically, this man. I mean, he thinks we are... you know... like slaves... like animals... [...]

I have suffered a lot in this job on account of that. Because I've had tough job situations [before], but not like this, like the treatment by this man. I'm telling you, this is a house where I can't even drink a glass of water. Sometimes he'll say to me 'is there a yogurt missing [from the fridge]?' But I didn't take it, his daughter did. I mean, look, to that extent, you know? I can't, I mean... He's always following me. He loses a nail clipper and he tells me... I mean... a forty year old nail clipper! Why would I...? He told me he wouldn't pay me my salary because he lost his old nail clipper, that it cost I don't know how much, that... I don't know...

One day I told him 'I'm leaving. I can't take it with *el señor*, I can't take it.' You know, he abused me psychologically. The treatment... I go to work fearing... fearing what he will say to me, what will happen, and how he will treat me today? There is something every day. So in the end I decided to put a stop to it, and say 'look, you cannot treat me like this'. Right in front of his daughter I told him 'you can't treat me like this, I'm not a slave. If you don't like my work, fire me and I'll go,' I told him. And he said 'well, talk to my children two weeks in advance and then you go,' he said. And I talk to his kids and they get a bit desperate and they tell me 'Blanca, please, this will pass. What did you expect? My father is 87 years old.' But his mind is fine! He walks, he even cooks. I mean, for them! I can't eat anything in the house. [...]

There really are people who treat us very badly. They don't like people from abroad. And look, I've been living here for years. I have citizenship and everything. But there are people who still do not value us. They don't see us as human beings. I don't know... With these people I've come to understand that bad people exist. There are people who... I thought that this type of people didn't exist. I

mean... they have a lot of money, but they are... I don't know... They are the type of people who eat all the best things. They always buy the most expensive things. They say the 'things of quality' and stuff. But to pay! They don't pay! They pay me 800 euros for working from Monday to Saturday morning, eight hours a day. From 10 to 14, and then from 16.30 to 20.30 at night. And that's from Monday through Friday, and then I have to work on Saturday until 14.30. And well, since I now am also working weekends there, then I work the same hours every day of the week. And so... they don't pay me for working on public holidays. You see? And with 800 euros with holidays included. I'm telling you, these people... I don't know what the situation is now [in general]. I don't know if this is what it's like now. I mean, I don't understand, because before employers paid me better. As an *externa* I earned 950 a month. I had holidays and the weekends off. But now I have regressed! Moved backwards!

And all of this, you know, it has affected my morale. I've been feeling low, with no desire to fix myself up, nor get dressed. I mean... It's like that man had traumatized me, I don't know. I felt very bad. And why did I endure in that job, Ingrid? Because my daughter came here from there, and when she came she didn't have a job. She came here with that guy, with her partner, and later... She didn't tell me she was pregnant, not even when she arrived. She came here when she was about four months along, and only when she was about six months she told me that she was pregnant. And I had to endure this job, because I said 'without work, what will I do? What will we live off of? The rent...' Because here you have to pay rent... everything is expensive here, you have to pay... Well, I said 'I have to bear this work.' And I bore it. And I said 'look, until the boy is born I have to bear this work,' because the [father] wasn't working at that point either. Later he got a part-time job in the fish market, a couple of hours every morning, unloading fish. He's there from five to eight. And my daughter... nothing, for now. But she wants to study. [...] And that's why I started enduring this job, but I was going to leave. And now I'm saying 'I'll leave, I'll leave' but it's just that nor my daughter, nor her boyfriend has found work yet. [...]

And it's a job that that completely drags me down, you know? I haven't been going to work happy, I was going with fear, burdened,

‘what will they say to me [today]?’ The thing is they blame me for everything [that goes wrong], you know? A stain that hasn’t gone away... you know? That someone else has made... ‘you don’t know how to clean, you don’t know how to iron, you are useless! Not even cleaning, you can’t even be used for this!’ You know? He treated me really badly, this *señor*. Because... I quarreled with his daughter too, because the daughter, when she saw that her father treated me like that, and I let him, and then she came and treated me the same way. And I told her ‘look, please, I won’t let you treat me this way. I already told you that I will leave. So tell me, fire me, and then that’s it. But don’t come and treat me badly, because I don’t come here to be mistreated, I come here to work. And if the work is poorly done, what you should do is fire me.’ [...]

That’s what happened, dear Ingrid. I ended up in a very bad job. I didn’t know that there still existed people who can still treat a human being like this, you know? I felt so burdened by this that I almost entered a depression. It weighed me down. It’s difficult to get out of all of this. The day that I leave that job I will go to a psychologist, because they treated me very badly, Ingrid. And these things mark you as a person, you know. And in the end I said ‘how am I coming here? For them to treat me like this? I... I got angry with myself, and sometimes with my daughter. I didn’t tell her anything, but I was angry. I mean, angry with her.

And that’s what has happened work-wise, my dear Ingrid. They mistreated me. The treatment I received was horrible. And another thing, look, I’ve had to work holidays, including Christmas, New Year’s. All of that, you know? And they tell me they need a person every day. 365 days a year. But they aren’t willing to pay for it! That’s the thing. And I asked them to give me January 1st off and they didn’t give it to me. I ask for a leave to go to the doctor’s and they don’t give it to me. I was on sick leave because I was... [The doctor] told me ‘you are stressed’ because my spine was hurting, I couldn’t walk, my right foot was hurting so much I couldn’t walk. I went to the emergency room and they told me ‘you will be on sick leave for seven days until the doctor tells you you can go back to work, but you cannot move!’ I mean, total bed rest. And still... Well, I called my employers and told them. I already knew how they are, and I told them... This was a Thursday. ‘Look, I will go to work on

Friday, but during the weekend I have to rest, and then on Monday I will come back to work, despite being on sick leave,’ I told them. ‘You can’t do this, you can’t do this!’ And in the end I had to go to work, I didn’t have sick leave at all (Follow-up interview with Blanca López, July 2019).

The Spirit of the Gift and the Laws of the Market

The story of Blanca’s current working situation is severe, but it is included here to duly illustrate the points I make in this thesis, since it relays many of the consequences of migrancy that have already been discussed. As I stated in the introduction chapter, there are at least as many stories about the global market of care as there are working situations. The degrees to which exploitations happen vary according to each situation. My point here is to show that all of these situations, including the most dire ones, are made possible because of the ‘laws of the market’ in place – the legal, and, not least, the sociocultural structures.

These ‘laws’ shape what is conceivable within the market. As shown, they define the type of exchanges made according to the needs and desires of the employers and the society they represent, namely Spain and the Basque Country. They define the exchanges of the global market of care as commodity exchange: they understand that what takes place is the purchase by one actor (the employer) of a particular type of service (care) that takes *the shape* of a social relationship. This relationship varies from illusions of family belonging to outright physical and psychological abuse, depending on the employer’s ‘benevolence’.

The other main actor involved in the global market of care (the employee) has a different take on the exchanges taking place. She sees it as though she is selling her labor (care) in exchange for monetary compensation, but that this exchange takes place in such a way that it goes beyond commodity exchange. Her labor becomes difficult, if not impossible, to perform should she define it as purely a commodity; should she remove her empathy and her subjectivity from the way she does her work. The mimicry of a relationship is often hard to maintain, and so she gives of *herself* when working. The commodity sold is thereby also a gift; it is herself, her subjectivity, her *hau*, that is transferred through the working relationship onto the service user and/or employer. In return she expects, of course, a salary. As Silvia said in Chapter 8, *de esto vivo*

– ‘this is how I make my living’. But, seeing as the worker’s *hau* is inevitably put forth along with her labor, and is often responded to according to what she could expect from a ‘gift relation’, she, understandably, interprets the work relationships as such. As though that part of the relationship should also be reciprocal. As though she should be seen in her human complexity, just like she sees the family she takes part in in theirs. What is often discovered, whether it takes a day or it takes years, is that the gift part of the relationship is, in fact, not reciprocal.

The *hau* of the care worker is undesired. As Strathern (1988) would say – her gift is gendered. And it is also racialized. It is therefore not a gift desired by her *jefa*. It is, ontologically, not a gift at all, because the ‘spirit’ of the gift offered by the worker is one that is outside the repertoire of the gift exchanges that employers undertake with their peers. It is a Catch 22. The care worker cannot exchange gifts with her employer because the gift would include her spirit, her subjectivity, and her employer does not exchange gifts with beings of such spirits.

Additionally, as Blanca’s story above duly relays, the commodity part of the relationship of exchange is often not really reciprocal either. As many participants have noted, the monetary compensation for their work has declined in recent years. Laws and regulations do not protect them from exploitation. Rather, they facilitate the reproduction of a well established secondary economy where migrated people are ascribed the jobs less desired, including care work. As Blanca points out, people are not paid what they deserve, and they are not compensated in other ways either, through, for instance, full membership in Social Security schemes. Notably, then, the exchanges taking place are all at once both gift and commodity exchange, depending on whose perspective we take when scrutinizing them. It is this point, together with the fact that it is often the perspective of the employers and the Spanish state that is taken into consideration, that connects the role of the *hau* – the gender, race, and class of the gift – with the migrancy produced in the global market of care. By excluding workers’ spirit from the exchanges taking place as part of their employment, the laws of the market circumscribe them to life in the global periphery, at the margins of the economy.

Final Remarks: Ways of Becoming and Writing Stories

Maria Mies points out how patriarchy, colonialism – and by extension coloniality – are intrinsically intertwined in a global gendered division of labor.

[P]rogress for some means retrogression for the other side; 'evolution' for some means 'devolution' for others; 'humanization' for some means 'de-humanization' for others; development of productive forces for some means underdevelopment and retrogression for others. The rise of some means the fall of others. Wealth for some means poverty for others. The reason why there cannot be unilinear progress is the fact that [...] the predatory patriarchal mode of production constitutes a non-reciprocal, exploitative relationship. Within such a relationship no general progress for all, no 'trickling down', no development for all is possible (Mies 2014:76).

Sherry B. Ortner asked if female is to male as nature is to culture (1974). In the same vein, I propose that employers are to their employees what the Center is to the Periphery of the colonial economy. In this thesis I have discussed how the ways in which labor is exchanged in the global market of care is dependent on the administration and (ir)regularization of immigration in Spain, through laws on immigration and care work. I have explored how this exchange is done in the intimacy of the relationships between employers and employees and shown how these relationships depend on narratives about familiarity, goodness, charity, and gratitude, which underline the employees' dependency on their employers for residency, economic survival, as well as a sort of existential legitimacy within the Center. I have also shown how anthropological gift theory combined with a feminist and decolonial analysis, can help us understand how exchange takes place in the global market of care through exploitative colonial relations. As the research material renders evident, exchange can in itself be exploitative, perhaps especially when it is part of intimate social relationships such as those that often develop between care workers and their employers and service users.

These relationships involve performative dynamics that, when scrutinized, reflect important components of social stratification. The performativity of social stratification is at the core of feminist methodolo-

gies and research agendas, and this theory has been particularly helpful in understanding these relationships. The ways we ‘name’ things, directly through speech acts (Butler 2011) and knowledge production (Hill Collins 2000, Haraway 1991, Harding 2015, Mignolo 2005, Mohanty 1988), but also indirectly and subconsciously in our encounters with other people, affect which differences and similarities we perceive, and how we perceive them. This, again, can have severe material, emotional, and physical consequences for people in distinctive positions within different sociocultural contexts (Crenshaw 1991, hooks 2005, Skeggs 1997). In other words, what we are continuously becoming, and how we negotiate those processes of becoming, is all connected with dynamics of naming and categorization. I argue that the social encounters that generate, and that are narrated in, my research material can tell us about elements that structure and produce particular forms of exchange in a global economy of care (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010, Hochschild 2000, Parreñas 2001, Yeates 2004), and about how people negotiate their own becoming on account of these exchanges. The question then remains, whether other ways of becoming can be made possible in the global market of care.

Ways Forward? Writing Other Stories

As Blanca’s story above shows, there is still a long way to go when it comes to creating a global market of care within which people are treated fairly. On a practical level, this would mean redistributing care work within families and spreading the responsibility for it equally among all genders. Only then will there exist a possibility for not replacing women by other (racialized) women in order to get the work done. Secondly, workers who are employed as carers must be fully incorporated into Spanish labor law, and attain all the same rights and obligations as other workers. Conceptually, it would, in a sense, mean delinking the *hau* from the exchanges taking place in the market of care. It would mean protecting care workers and their rights so that they might lead full lives together with their loved ones.

We would need to aspire to a world in which we all took our share of the day-to-day caring, such as cooking and cleaning, and in which institutions were in place which employed qualified, well paid workers to take on the heavier burdens of care, such as that of the elderly or of children. In the case of the global market of care connected to the Span-

ish and Basque care work sector, this would mean to (re)construct that market adopting a feminist and decolonial approach. It would mean, as I have done here, to center its workers as the main characters when telling its stories, and it would mean a global re-valuation of both the ‘feminine’ and of reproductive work. Consequently, it would also mean redefining masculinity to include care and reproductive work, and, as such, socializing our children differently.

To obtain all of this, we must imagine a different economy, and thereby a different world in which we dismantle the consumerist society we live in today. If we ‘need’ less to survive, our time will not have to be spent working, and we can thus use more time caring for each other. Fundamentally this would mean returning to a practice of economy as it is defined through anthropology – as a social, not a monetary, system. We would have to *exchange* differently. As the participants in this research have already demonstrated, this is not only possible, it is already taking place. While we do not necessarily need to incorporate, for instance, exchange with deities as part of the exchanges we perform in our daily lives, taking into account how these practices of exchange are done and what they mean to those who do them, is part of restructuring the global market of care. It is only by considering the experiences and expectations of the migrated working class woman that her ontological Being can actually be made possible within the market: that she can actually be included in reciprocal relations of exchange, whether they are centered on commodities or gifts.

I recall Nicholas De Genova’s inspiring introduction to his book *Working the Boundaries*, where he states that his analysis takes as a starting point ‘the premise that “things” could have been different, and that nothing has to remain as it presently appears’ (2005:1). It is by writing different stories, and by writing them *differently*, that I attempt a humble contribution to a better and more just future for women (and others) everywhere, but especially for Alma, Angy, Ana, Blanca, Consuelo, Elia, Flavia, Gladys, Jhoselyn, Jimena, Katty, María, Maribel, Mery, Silvia, all of their peers, and all of their loved ones, near and far.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Organizations in the Field

Red de Madres y Mujeres Bolivianas [Network of Bolivian Mothers and Women]

An organization predominantly comprised of women from Bolivia seeking to be a meeting place outside of work where one can relax, dance, play sports, and engage in Bolivian ‘culture’ and folklore. In terms of participant observation, this entailed that I learn different folk dances and participate in performances at different events. It officially about 50 registered members, of which around 20 were active during the time I did my fieldwork with them.

Mujeres con Voz (Women with Voice)

A larger organization, more openly engaged in political issues that concern women who have migrated from different corners of the world. It has a central office in Getxo, a town and municipality that belongs to the metropolitan area of Bilbao. The organization offers different forms of assistance, such as legal aid and psychological support to migrated women in general, most of whom are care workers. The organization also arranges social events and sometimes engages in political protests from a feminist standpoint. Those who participate in these activities are usually migrated women from Latin America, but there are also participants from other parts of the world, including Africa, Asia and Europe. Through this organization I met and interviewed care workers from Bolivia, as well as from other from Latin American countries.

ATH-ELE – Asociación de Trabajadoras de Hogar/Etxeko Langileen Elkarte [Association for Domestic Workers in Bizkaia]

An organization that caters to the growing number of workers in the care and domestic work sector in Bizkaia, the largest of three provinces in the Basque Country. Their (voluntary) staff assists workers to resolve legal twists related to their specific type of employment, which holds a particular place within the Basque/Spanish economy. They provide statistical information on the cases they work during the year in their annual reports, which are sources I have used as secondary material throughout my thesis. These numbers are not statistically representative of the care work sector as a whole, but give a picture of what takes place as part of this sector, and help paint a general picture of what is taking place in the care work sector in general, and particularly in Bilbao.

Brujas y Diversas/Sorgin eta Anitzak [Diverse Witches]

A collective of women from different organizations and walks of life that live in Bilbao or nearby areas, with whom I attended a few meetings during my fieldwork. They first came together in 2013, and in 2014 they organized a conference where they discussed the different ways in which the current crises – considered to be not only economic and financial, but multiple: emotional, familial, value based, and so on – are impacting their lives. The manifesto I have cited as a source in Chapter 11 was written based on the conversations conducted during this conference, and was published during one of my fieldwork periods in Bilbao.

APPENDIX 2: Research Participants

This overview presents some biographic information about the research participants that are explicitly present in this thesis. It is loosely organized according to relations between them, and in order of appearance in the text. Since my fieldwork periods stretched across several years, I state the approximate ages of the participants unless otherwise specified.

Gladys Villca , late 30s, unmarried, no children	From Sucre, but lived in Santa Cruz before migrating. Initially hung out socially through the association, but later on also on an individual basis, especially by going running together. University degree in pharmacy from Bolivia, worked as a pharmacist there, re-training herself to be a lab-technician in Bilbao while working full time as a care worker.
Angy Cuellar , mid 30s, married to Dilmer , mid 30s, daughter Liseth in elementary school age	From a village outside of Cochabamba, but lived in Santa Cruz before migrating to Spain together. We socialized in <i>Red de Madres</i> , and I interviewed her and Dilmer together. Stayed with them for part of my fieldwork in Bilbao. Dilmer as a welder in a small factory in Bilbao.
Elia Vargas , mid 30s, divorced (at least in spirit) from Walter, two daughters in their late teens	We met through her sister Jhoselyn. Hung out often at the flat she shared with Jhoselyn and her son, her own daughters, Walter, and others. From Vallegrande, and migrated directly from there to escape her husband.
Doña Verónica , mid 60s, Elia, Jhoselyn, Maribel, Sandra, Wilma, and Daniel's mother. Not married, but has had three partners with whom she had her children, now all adults with children of their own	From Vallegrande, but lives in El Torno outside of Santa Cruz. Lives on her own, while all her children and grandchildren live in Bilbao. Owns land on which she grows potatoes and other vegetables that she sells at the market. Has other family from Vallegrande who lives in the El Torno area. I stayed with her for about a month and a half during my fieldwork in Bolivia.
Jhoselyn , late 20s, single, one son in elementary school age	Elia's youngest sister. I met her in the very beginning of my research through the Bolivian consul in Bilbao, and we became close throughout the years. Worked as a live-in care worker in Santa Cruz before migrating, while also studying law at the university. Did not finish her degree because she got pregnant and then migrated. Has worked as a care worker in Bilbao since she

	arrived, but is pursuing a new career in business administration and has recently gotten a temporary job as a secretary.
Maribel , mid 30s, married, two pre-school aged sons	Elia's older sister. Now working in Sandra's bar/café, but used to do care work. I would often hang out at the bar and chat with her in the mornings.
Sandra , early 40s, married, two teenage children	The second oldest sister of Elia, and the one who owns the lease to the bar. Her two teenage children, whom I had more contact with than her, sometimes work a couple of hours there after school.
Annie , mid 40s, married, one daughter in her late teens.	Elia's oldest sister, whom I have only spoken to on the phone while I was living with Doña Verónica in Bolivia, in trying to help arrange her travels.
Daniel , mid 20s, girlfriend and baby daughter	Elia's youngest sibling and only brother. I did not meet him more than once, but he is referred to in the text. The fifth, and eldest, sister of these siblings is not mentioned by name as I did not end up meeting her.
Walter , late 30s, (ex)husband of Elia	Only met him a couple of times. Works part-time for Bilbao municipality as a gardener during the spring and summer. Plays in a band playing <i>Vallegrandino</i> music together with Elia's brothers-in-law.
Francisco , late 30s, Elia's cousin, married to Rosa, two daughters; one teenager and one pre-school age	Lives close to El Torno, but originally from Vallegrande. I met him often, together with his wife and daughters. Elia's closest friend/family in Bolivia. Plays <i>Vallegrandino</i> music in a band and drives both <i>mototaxi</i> and taxi to make a living.
Rosa , mid 30s, married to Francisco, two daughters	Also originally from Vallegrande. Keeps the house, but also drives the family taxi sometimes on the weekend when Francisco is hired to play in different places with his band.
Tía Inma , in her 50s, Doña Verónica's sister, two adult daughters	Was living in El Torno while I was there, but has spent many years in Chile doing care work there.
Alma , late 20s, two children	Tía Inma's daughter. Lives in El Torno, and visits Doña Verónica several times a week to help her out and keep her company.
Pati , late 20s, married, baby girl	Doña Verónica's neighbor. Married to Elia's second cousin. He and his brother lost their mother when they were children and are both barely making ends meet due to alcoholism.

Aracely Pérez , mid 20s, single, baby boy	Jhoselyn's friend whom I interviewed, but did not end up meeting again. She moved to Bilbao on her own, and had a child there with her boyfriend who left her soon after. Hoping to return to Bolivia soon with her child, but meanwhile barely making ends meet as a care worker.
Ana Soto , late 40s/early 50s, single, two daughters in their early 20s	One of the first people I interviewed. Obtained citizenship through marrying her employer, who was already deceased when I met her. I stayed with her in La Paz during my fieldwork there. Originally from Los Yungas, but had moved back to La Paz with her daughters. At the time of publishing this thesis she has once again moved back to Bilbao together with her youngest daughter, while her eldest daughter has stayed on in Los Yungas.
Katty Aquino , mid 30s, single, adolescent daughter Clarisa	Politically active. From Cochabamba. Was living with her younger sister in a small town adjacent to Bilbao, and both were working in the care sector. Her sister has now moved back to Cochabamba to finish her university degree. Katty studied to be a teacher before migrating, but did not have the means to finish her degree. Her daughter lives with her parents and younger brother. I visited Katty and her family in Cochabamba during my fieldwork in Bilbao.
Mery Gonzalez , early 30s, single, son who was three years old in 2016	Katty's cousin - their mothers are sisters. Lived many years together with Katty and her sister in Spain, but had just moved back to Bolivia when I met her. Lives in a small town on the outskirts of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Single mother through a relationship with a man who turned out to be already married who is not taking responsibility for his son.
Consuelo Vence , late 40s, single, three (now grown) children by two different men	From Santa Cruz de la Sierra. We hung out frequently; having drinks, going to the gym, organizing events, etc. When in Bolivia, I visited her sister, her sister's children, and Consuelo's (now deceased) mother who had Parkinson. Consuelo's (grown) children live in Bilbao, her youngest son still with her. Her daughter (the eldest) is married and has two children of her own. Consuelo has worked many years taking care of an autistic girl.
Blanca López , late 40s/early 50s, single, young adult daughter,	From La Paz. We met through a Basque friend of mine whose mother's house she cleans once a week. She migrated to Spain when Virginia was ten years old. Sent remittances home for the

Virginia	care of her daughter and mother (who was gravely ill and later passed away). Has been planning to go back 'home' for many years, but things always get in the way.
Virginia López , late teens/early 20s, after we met she met her boyfriend with whom she has a baby boy	From La Paz/El Alto. After her mother left she grew up with her two uncles and grandmother. Waited many years for reuniting with Blanca in Bilbao, and when the permit came through moved there, but then back to La Paz again after a year. Is now back in Bilbao with her boyfriend and baby.
María Cabrerías , late 40s, recently widowed, one son and one daughter in their late teens	Red de Madres. From Los Yungas, but lived in La Paz before she migrated to Spain. She left her two young children in care of her mother in law and escaped her violent, alcoholic husband in order to earn money abroad for her children to survive and get an education. Married an elderly Spanish man she had befriended in order to get citizenship. Their marriage prospered and lasted until he passed away in 2019.
Marcos and Raquel , María's children, now in their late teens	I visited them in La Paz, where they are living together, by themselves, as they have done since they were quite young. At the time they were both in high school and doing well. Marcos has now graduated and is pursuing a university degree in natural sciences. He recently visited his mother in Bilbao for the first time. Raquel is working to finish high school and is an active dancer of Bolivian folklore during her free time.
Jimena , late 40s, single, no children	From Oruro. We met towards the end of my fieldwork in 2015, as she just joined Red de Madres at that point, and I interviewed her. She came to Bilbao after having lived many years in Buenos Aires, where she also worked in care. She works almost around the clock, and had just returned to working as an <i>interna</i> when I interviewed her. She does this to pay off debt, but also to be able to travel.
Flavia , mid 30s, lives with boyfriend Gustavo, no children, Ana Soto's niece	From Los Yungas. We socialized a lot during my fieldwork; visited each other, went running together, danced, and so on. However, despite actively pursuing a friendship with me, she was often reserved when it came to sharing her stories, and she did not want to participate in an interview.
Gustavo , late 30s, Flavia's long term partner	From Oruro. Usually participated in all Red de Madres activities, also as a dancer.
Silvia , late 30s, single, a	From La Paz. Left Red de Madres during my fieldwork time

son and a daughter she had managed to reunite with in Bilbao, now in their early 20s	due to unclear internal conflicts between some members. She came to Bilbao on her own, but eventually managed to bring her children there after she obtained papers. They are both still living with her.
Tanya , early 20s, Ana's niece	Just shortly mentioned in this text. Daughter of Ana's (ex) sister-in-law, who is the current president of Red de Madres and whom I also interviewed and spent a lot of time with. Tanya migrated to Spain with mother, father, and three younger siblings. Her parents divorced because of her father's psychological violence and infidelities; he has now moved back to Bolivia and has a new family there. Tanya's mother has been working for years in the same family in one of Bilbao's wealthy central neighborhoods, caring for their three children. Tanya's family's story shares many traits with the other ones presented in this thesis, but was (as many others) not explicitly told here due to space restrictions.

APPENDIX 3: The LAPAD - Promoción de la autonomía personal y atención a las personas en situación de dependencia

Public measures taken to assist families in providing care to their dependent members are by and large the mentioned economic benefits given out through the law of 39/2006, of 14 December, for *Promotion of the Personal Autonomy and Attention towards persons in a Dependency Situation* (BOE-A-2006-21990, or LAPAD. According to Nogueira and Zalakain, Basque legislation states that these benefits cover the following three situations (2015:80):

1. *Prestación Económica Vinculada al Servicio* / Economic Benefit Connected to [Personal] Service (PEVS) – A private service or a temporary residence at a private care taking facility when a dependent person cannot access the needed services due to a lack of open places in institutions;
2. *Prestación Económica para Cuidados en el Entorno Familiar y Apoyo a los Cuidadores No Profesionales* / Economic Benefit for Care in a Family Setting and Support to Non-professional Carers (PECEF) – A payment to a non-professional individual belonging to the dependent person's family that acts as the primary care giver, either alone or with the support and/or supervision of others;
3. *Prestación Económica de Atención Personal* / Economic Benefit for Personal Assistance (PEAP) – Payment to assist the dependent person in realizing the following activities, including training for her/him to be able to realize them: taking care of oneself (*cuidado personal*), especially getting in and out of bed, personal hygiene, personal mobility in and outside the home, eating, and other basic functions of daily life. In addition, these benefits can also be used for 'instrumental activities' that tie the person to their surroundings, such as communication, and ability to access their family and community.

In Bizkaia, the province where Bilbao is located, the PEVS (1) is designated only to pay for people to stay/live in a residential institution, not to pay for day care centers (*centros de día*) for elderly people. In the provinces of Araba and Gipuzkoa the PEVS (1) can also be used to pay

for the latter. In Bizkaia the PECEF (2) can only be used on its own and not combined with other benefits or services – so that if the family decides that one person will stay at home with the dependent person, then other possible solutions cannot be used. In Araba and Gipuzkoa the PECEF (2) can be combined with other services. This means that the package offered to a particular person can be better tailored to each individual case in the latter places. The last benefit scheme – the PEAP (3), which is basically an economic benefit intended for paying for a personal assistant – is hardly used in any other regions in Spain. This is because of the general interpretation of the legal text regarding this benefit, which states that it should be used to pay for the dependent persons to be allowed to continue their work or education, as well as their personal care. However, in the Basque Country this benefit has been opened up and the focus lies on the personal care, rather than the element of education or work. The PEAP (3) is therefore supplied to any dependent person in need of a personal assistant for them to realize their daily personal care, and can as such be used to pay for the hiring of a care worker.

APPENDIX 4: Original Texts in Spanish

A. Chapter 6: Text from Mujeres con Voz's blog, November 25, 2015:

Aquí en Getxo SÍ hay violencia.

Que el empleo doméstico sea feminizado y por lo tanto peor pagado ES VIOLENCIA.

Si tu trabajo es de 12 horas continuas y te pagan 6, 7 u 8...ES VIOLENCIA.

Si te piden más que aquello para lo que te contrataron ES VIOLENCIA.

Si no te dejan ir a recibir atención médica ES VIOLENCIA.

Dejarte morir en casa de tu empleadora y que se desentiendan de ti ES VIOLENCIA.

Que te paguen 2.50€ la hora ES VIOLENCIA.

No darte las vacaciones pagadas que te corresponden por ley ES VIOLENCIA.

Hacerte pagar TODA tu seguridad social para regularizar tus papeles ES VIOLENCIA.

Que las instituciones hagan oídos sordos ante la realidad en el empleo doméstico ES VIOLENCIA.

Que parte de tu trabajo doméstico sea hacer favores sexuales ES VIOLENCIA.

Que te digan que en tu pueblo esto NO pasa ES VIOLENCIA.

Soy tu empleada, NO tu esclava. Tengo derecho a vivir dignamente.

La precariedad ES VIOLENCIA.

B. Chapter 7: Real Decreto 1424/1985, de 1 de agosto, por el que se regula la relación laboral de carácter especial del Servicio del Hogar Familiar (BOE-A-1985-17108) (translated part in italics):

Mediante la presente norma se da cumplimiento a tal mandato, teniendo en cuenta la necesidad de conciliar la equiparación de las condiciones de trabajo de los trabajadores domésticos al resto de los trabajadores y la consideración de las peculiaridades que se derivan de una actividad prestada en el ámbito del hogar familiar; es precisamente el ámbito de la prestación de servicios, es decir el hogar familiar, el factor determinante de las especialidades que con respecto a la legislación laboral común se

preven es esta norma, ya que ello *determina la necesidad de que esta relación se base en la mutua confianza de las partes, equilibrando el respeto a los derechos laborales básicos de los trabajadores con la necesaria flexibilidad que debe concederse a que el empleador y el trabajador determinen las condiciones de prestación de servicios por mutuo acuerdo, no cabiendo tampoco olvidar que en el ámbito familiar en el que se desarrolla el trabajo se proyectan derechos constitucionales, relativos a la intimidad personal y familiar.*

C. Chapter 7: Real Decreto 1620/2011, de 14 de noviembre, por el que se regula la relación laboral de carácter especial del servicio del hogar familiar (BOE-A-2011-17975) (translated parts in italics):

Las condiciones particulares en que se realiza la actividad de las personas que trabajan en el servicio doméstico, que justifican una regulación específica y diferenciada son bien conocidas. De modo principal, *el ámbito donde se presta la actividad, el hogar familiar, tan vinculado a la intimidad personal y familiar y por completo ajeno y extraño al común denominador de las relaciones laborales, que se desenvuelven en entornos de actividad productiva presididos por los principios de la economía de mercado; y, en segundo lugar y corolario de lo anterior, el vínculo personal basado en una especial relación de confianza que preside, desde su nacimiento, la relación laboral entre el titular del hogar familiar y los trabajadores del hogar, que no tiene que estar forzosamente presente en los restantes tipos de relaciones de trabajo.*

Conservando, con todo, esta relación laboral especial singularidades propias que explican un tratamiento diferente respecto de la relación laboral común, es claro que los más de veinticinco años transcurridos desde la promulgación de la norma reglamentaria que contiene el régimen jurídico del servicio doméstico, aconsejan una revisión en profundidad de esta normativa, para renovar y modernizar diversas instituciones jurídicas que las transformaciones sociales habidas en estos últimos tiempos y la evolución natural de las costumbres han dejado caducas. La modificación del régimen jurídico de la relación laboral especial del servicio doméstico se aborda desde una perspectiva que pretende conjugar el mantenimiento de las diferencias, allí donde estas encuentran una justificación objetiva y razonable, con la reducción o elimi-

nación de aquellas, cuando se comprenda que su razón de ser ya no encuentra por más tiempo motivo, de manera *que se logre una progresiva equiparación del bagaje jurídico de esta relación laboral especial con la común. En este contexto cobra especial relevancia el hecho de la fuerte feminización del empleo doméstico*. Los datos disponibles muestran una distribución que incluye mayoritariamente a mujeres en porcentajes próximos al 94%, y el 6% restante, a hombres.

Es preciso destacar, al mismo tiempo, como aspecto íntimamente ligado a la relación laboral especial al servicio del hogar familiar, la existencia desde antiguo de un ámbito propio de protección social para los empleados de hogar constituido por el Régimen Especial de Empleados del Hogar de la Seguridad Social. De ahí que la revisión que se haga del régimen jurídico de la relación laboral especial va de la mano y ha de ser coetánea con la que se haga del Régimen Especial de la Seguridad Social de Empleados de Hogar.

A partir del Pacto de Toledo, celebrado en abril de 1995, los diferentes Acuerdos sociales producidos en materia de Seguridad Social, recomiendan la simplificación e integración de regímenes, pudiendo mencionar el Acuerdo de medidas en materia de Seguridad Social, de 13 de julio de 2006, cuyo apartado V prevé la elaboración de un estudio de la regulación de la relación laboral de carácter especial, a fin de proponer en su caso, su adecuación a la realidad actual, así como el establecimiento de medidas paulatinas de convergencia del Régimen Especial de Empleados de Hogar con el Régimen General de la Seguridad Social.

El mencionado estudio de la regulación de la relación laboral de carácter especial, junto a las propuestas para su adecuación a la realidad actual, a que se refiere el Acuerdo de 13 de julio de 2006, se encuentra en la base del presente real decreto.

Finalmente, debe hacerse mención al Acuerdo Social y Económico para el crecimiento, el empleo y la garantía de las pensiones, suscrito el 2 de febrero del 2011 por CEOE, CEPYME, CCOO y UGT con el Gobierno, en el que se aludía a la revisión de la situación del Régimen Especial de Empleados de Hogar a los efectos de su integración en el Régimen General de la Seguridad Social, lo que debía hacerse en el proceso de tramitación parlamentaria de la reforma de la Seguridad Social.

La Ley 27/2011, de 1 de agosto, sobre actualización, adecuación y modernización del sistema de Seguridad Social, procede en su dis-

posición adicional trigésima novena a integrar el Régimen Especial de la Seguridad Social de los Empleados de Hogar en el Régimen General de la Seguridad Social, habilitando al Gobierno a modificar, en consonancia con esta integración, la regulación de la relación laboral de carácter especial del servicio del hogar familiar. Con este fin se dicta este real decreto.

Desde esta perspectiva, esta norma reglamentaria, *partiendo de la conveniencia y la necesidad de mantener la relación laboral de carácter especial, se dirige a la consecución de la dignificación de las condiciones de trabajo de las personas que realizan la prestación de servicios en el hogar familiar*, mediante las siguientes vías:

De una parte, a través del establecimiento de mayores y mejores derechos de los trabajadores, aplicando, en lo que resulte factible, la regulación general contemplada en el Estatuto de los Trabajadores y normativa complementaria.

Por otra, introduciendo una mayor estabilidad en el empleo, a través de la supresión del contrato temporal anual no causal y la sujeción a las reglas del Estatuto de los Trabajadores en materia de contratación temporal.

En tercer lugar, a través de la introducción de mecanismos de reforzamiento de la transparencia, que se despliega en asuntos como el de prohibición de la discriminación para el acceso al empleo y en las obligaciones del empleador en materia de información al empleado de hogar respecto a las condiciones de trabajo.

La entidad de las modificaciones incluidas en la nueva regulación junto a elementales razones de técnica normativa y seguridad jurídica aconsejan la promulgación de una nueva norma en sustitución de la vigente hasta la fecha.

La norma se estructura en cuatro capítulos que contienen en total trece artículos, tres disposiciones adicionales, dos disposiciones transitorias, una disposición derogatoria y tres disposiciones finales.

[...]

CAPÍTULO I

Disposiciones generales

Artículo 1. Objeto y ámbito de aplicación.

1. Este real decreto tiene por objeto regular la relación laboral de carácter especial del servicio del hogar familiar de acuerdo con el artículo

2.1.b) de la Ley del Estatuto de los Trabajadores, Texto Refundido aprobado por Real Decreto Legislativo 1/1995, de 24 de marzo.

2. Se considera relación laboral especial del servicio del hogar familiar la que conciertan el titular del mismo, como empleador, y el empleado que, dependientemente y por cuenta de aquél, presta servicios retribuidos en el ámbito del hogar familiar.

3. A los efectos de esta relación laboral especial, se considerará empleador al titular del hogar familiar, ya lo sea efectivamente o como simple titular del domicilio o lugar de residencia en el que se presten los servicios domésticos. Cuando esta prestación de servicios se realice para dos o más personas que, sin constituir una familia ni una persona jurídica, convivan en la misma vivienda, asumirá la condición de titular del hogar familiar la persona que ostente la titularidad de la vivienda que habite o aquella que asuma la representación de tales personas, que podrá recaer de forma sucesiva en cada una de ellas.

4. *El objeto de esta relación laboral especial son los servicios o actividades prestados para el hogar familiar, pudiendo revestir cualquiera de las modalidades de las tareas domésticas, así como la dirección o cuidado del hogar en su conjunto o de algunas de sus partes, el cuidado o atención de los miembros de la familia o de las personas que forman parte del ámbito doméstico o familiar, y otros trabajos que se desarrollen formando parte del conjunto de tareas domésticas, tales como los de guardería, jardinería, conducción de vehículos y otros análogos.*

D. Chapter 11: Juntas y diversas: Compartiendo propuestas. Mujeres migradas en Euskal Herria (Brujas y Diversas 2015:16)

[C]onsideramos que, desde hace varias décadas, en Euskal Herria una buena parte de la migración internacional se caracteriza por ser laboral y feminizada. Una de las razones que explica esta cuestión es que ciertas necesidades locales potencian y combinan la división sexual e internacional del trabajo. También en el territorio vasco, a modo de opresiones múltiples, el género, la sexualidad, la clase social, la raza, la procedencia geográfica, la situación administrativa... entre otros elementos, se entremezclan e inciden en las formas de vida, trabajo, relación, interacción y reconocimiento desde y para las mujeres migradas. El ser mujeres—migradas—trabajadoras representa una especie de punto (común)

de partida, de una identidad personal y colectiva, que conforma una parte importante de nuestra subjetividad como mujeres—migradas aquí y ahora.

APPENDIX 5: Bolivian Foods/Dishes

Food is a central part of social gatherings among people from Bolivia, both ‘at home’ and in Spain. At kermeses food is sold and served in order to raise money for a stated cause. Dishes are served in big portions, and whatever people do not finish they take home with them, as food should never go to waste. Below are short descriptions of foods mentioned in this thesis:

As mentioned in Chapter 2, in Vallegrande typical dishes are *chicharrón*, marinated and fried pieces of pork, with its skin, served with mote, potato, and banana, and *asado colorado*, marinated pork with a particular redish color. In Vallegrande, as well as other areas, like Cochabamba, it is common to drink the fermented maize beverage *chicha*.

Other dishes I became familiar with during fieldwork are: *picante*, or *sajta, de pollo*, a chicken stew with tomato, onions, and peas, served with potatoes. *Charque* is ‘pulled’ boiled beef that is fried right before serving, so that it curls up in crispy ‘straws’, and is served with *mote*, cheese, and hard-boiled eggs. *Fricasé* is stew made of pork, served with potatoes or chuño.

To accompany the different dishes, it is customary with: *arróz con queso* – rice with a particular kind of homemade salty cheese; *chuño* – freeze-dried potatoes, usually dark purplish in color, that need to be watered out, left over night, in order to be boiled and used like regular potatoes; and *mote* – boiled grains of white corn. *Humintas* – a sort of cornbread made of *choclo* (yellow corn), and with cheese inside, is a popular snack. All food is usually served with *llajua*, hot sauce that can be made in different ways, for instance of hot peppers, onion, and tomatoes.

Spain has in recent years become an important destination for care work related migration, particularly for women from Latin America. In order to fill the care gap generated by Spanish women's participation in the remunerated labor market and insufficient public welfare services, paid care work is becoming more prominent. This thesis is based on ethnographic fieldwork among Bolivian care workers in Bilbao in the Basque Country of Spain and their kin in different localities in Bolivia, as well as on analysis of Spanish legal texts. It is a story about what goes on in the encounter between people and global structures of inequality, particularly in the encounter between women who have migrated from Bolivia in order to fill a gap in the Spanish quest for a functioning welfare state, and the structural components that (re)produce their migrancy. Concepts from economic anthropology are used to analyze the research material as part of a global market of care, rather than of so-called care chains. This means discussing dynamics of gift and commodity exchange within this market, and how the 'spirit of the gift' figures in the relationships the market entails. By focusing on practices of exchange, and the expectations and experiences tied to these, rather than on preconceived social ties, a better understanding is gained not only of complex webs of social relationships, but also of what the 'laws of the market' are, and of how these are connected to different structures of power and social differentiation, such as 'race', gender, and class. The story presented here shows how these forms of social differentiation produce particular forms of exchange in a globalized economy of care, and how people negotiate their own becoming on account of these exchanges.