Migrant Breadwinning:
Experiences of Eastern European Women
in Portugal

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Christiane Hellermann, M.A.

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Diese Veröffentlichung lag dem Promotionsausschuss Dr. phil. der Universität Bremen als Dissertation vor.

1. Gutachterin:
   Prof. Dr. Dorle Dracklé, *Universität Bremen*

2. Gutachterin:
   Prof. Dr. Ana Isabel Afonso, *Universidade Nova de Lisboa*

Das Kolloquium fand am 5. November 2012 statt.
"Things in my country are changing very slowly
– too slowly for me"
ALINA

"This is slavery, a paid slavery.
The money should make the difference
but it is slavery to work like that"
GABRIELA

"Here, everybody has problems with the papers"
IÚLIA

"I like Portugal, I like Lisbon,
I like my work, I like my family here [her employers, CH]
– I had good luck, I know"
RODICA

"I came to search for a new partner
– and I found my prince"
DINA

"Perestroika changed everything. Everything changed.
And now I am here in Portugal"
JEKATERINA

"We [the immigrant women, CH] cry a lot"
LUDMILA

"Portugal was an exotic place, I did not know anything…
until I heard the wonderful songs of Amália Rodrigues"
ELENA

"Am I not a real immigrant because I am a student?"
AUGUSTINA

"I wanted to see something different – I came for adventure…
Portugal was a possibility to see life and things differently, in a new way.
I learnt a lot and am still discovering"
FIODORA
Expression of thanks

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Abstract

In my research I examine the situation of women from Eastern Europe who migrate alone to Portugal. Many had to leave behind their families and children. This Thesis explores the women's decisions for leaving their home countries, and looks at the experiences and challenges they face in Portugal. The impact of the women's often undocumented legal status and the precarious work conditions is explained. Central to the Thesis is the migrants' possibilities for agency and the meaning of migration for the women themselves. It is shown that the migrant women generally experience significant downward-mobility in social and professional terms; exploitation, discrimination, ethnicisation, racism, social and political exclusion are everyday experiences. The broader political and historical context of these women's migration is explored under the perspectives of globalisation, service industry and post-colonialism. Social and transnational networks play an important – though ambiguous – role in this type of migration: the borders between needed support and unwanted protectionism or control are often blurry. Hierarchical power structures emerge as a critical issue and often are gendered. In this context, the concept of social capital is examined, showing its negative sides for women migrating alone. Of main relevance appeared the women's ability to regularly send money home to their families. One important finding presented is the defining divide between migrant women who are acting as the main responsible breadwinners for their families and those who do not carry these responsibilities.

Keywords: Portugal, female migration, breadwinning, undocumented migrants, domestic work, globalisation, post-colonialism, social networks, social capital.
Glossary and abbreviations

"FN" refers to the fieldnotes, memory notes and records I kept during my research.

Frequently used Portuguese terms:

• **Os imigrantes de Leste**
  The immigrants from the East, meaning: Eastern European immigrants in Portugal.

• **A empregada doméstica interna**, shortly: *interna*
  The live-in maid; a domestic worker who lives with the employer's family.

• **A empregada doméstica externa**, shortly: *externa*
  Domestic worker who does not live with her employer's family. She may work for one family on a full-time basis, or work for various families on part-time bases.

• **O patrão, a patrõa, os patrões**
  The employer (masc., fem., plural).
  Domestic workers in Portugal usually address their employers using the third person singular or plural; while employers generally address their domestic workers using the second person singular.

• **A senhorita**
  'Miss'. Special way to address the female employer/head of household. The domestic worker uses the third person singular, while the employer addresses the domestic worker using the second person singular in combination with the first name.

Throughout the thesis, I use the Portuguese and English notions interchangeably, e.g. *interna* and *live-in maid*. 
Abbreviations of Portuguese and international Institutions:


1 BASICS

1.1 Introduction

This doctoral Thesis is based on my research on female migration from Central and Eastern Europe\(^1\) to Portugal, which focuses on women migrating *alone*, without families or husbands. Thus the general research interest is on their strategies and experiences as *individuals*. The decision to work with women migrating alone was made before embarking on my fieldwork. I chose to analyse their experiences in order to contribute to a more detailed picture of certain aspects of the phenomenon of the 'new immigration' from Eastern Europe to Portugal and to Southern Europe, such as its gender selectivity (King and Black 1997, King and Zontini 2000). Generally, female migration is under-researched in Portugal and qualitative studies on migration from Central and Eastern Europe\(^2\) are still rare.\(^3\)

The research participants come from the Post-socialist countries of the former Soviet Union, such as the Ukraine, Russia and Moldavia, as well as from Romania. The women I worked with have lived between one and four years in Portugal, and most of them viewed their migration as temporary.

Throughout the main chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 I give the women and their experiences a voice of their own. Through their individual accounts, they paint a common picture of the experiences and challenges of women migrating alone.

All names have been changed to ensure the anonymity of the research participants.\(^4\) For the same reason I do not give specific details about the research participants' hometown or their current work and living place.

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\(^1\) The immigration from Central and Eastern Europe is in Portuguese shortly called *A imigração de Leste*, the 'Immigration from the East'. In this Thesis, I shall use both terms equally when referring to the immigration from Central and Eastern Europe to Portugal.

\(^2\) Cf. Hellermann and Stanek 2006 for a more explicit analysis of the current situation of immigration from Central and Eastern Europe in Portugal and Spain, and for a critical overview on existing and on-going research in that area.

\(^3\) See later in chapter 3.

\(^4\) Please note that in a few instances I have decided to delete even their false names and any references to the women's person or background in order to fully guarantee their and their families' personal privacy and security. Furthermore, when the research participants asked me in some contexts not to reveal their names regarding a particular issue, I have respected their wishes.
1.1.1 Migration

Every migration is an enormous challenge, for the migrating individuals and their families, touching all aspects of the migrants' private and public lives. Migration is unsettling, throwing the migrating person back to the basics of what life is and can be. Being on the move – was and is for many privileged people an adventure longed for, often the fulfilment of a dream. Travel literature and intimate travel logs give a good impression of the adventures, dreams and (mis)fortunes of people who are on the move, in both the past and in the present. Be it Goethe and his Italian journeys (1816/1817, 2006) as Bildungsroman, Jack Kerouac's 'On the Road' (1957), Paul Gauguin's paintings of Tahitian women (e.g. 1891, 1899a, 1899b, 1902), Paul Bowles' experiences in Morocco (e.g. 1963), or, more anthropologically oriented, Bruce Chatwin (1977, 1987), and, in the German-speaking world, Hubert Fichte (1976, 1980a, 1980b, 1985), amongst many others. In most cases, certain Orientalism meets social observations and self-reflexivity. For others, however, migration is not a romantic endeavour nor a big dream of a journey to the discovery of new and others' selves – but a mere necessity for survival. Millions of women, men and children have to leave their home and homelands in search of a place where they are able and allowed to live. A place where they can survive – and nothing else. Refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, fleeing hunger, deprivation, natural or human made catastrophes, discrimination, persecution, crime, torture, war. Others decide to leave their families and their country for the need to make a living, in the hope of a generally better life – for themselves and/or their children. The dream of social and economic upward mobility is often a driving force in the decision to migrate, also for some of the women of this research. Indeed, financial survival is a big issue for many people worldwide and an important push factor, for labelling it in a sociological term. At the same time, the financial aspects of many migrant trajectories can never alone constitute the full meaning and significance of the movements across borders and life routines. Though money is a significant motor in many migrations, my research shows that there is much more to

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5 "Internally displaced people, or IDPs, are often wrongly called refugees. Unlike refugees, IDPs have not crossed an international border to find sanctuary but have remained inside their home countries. Even if they have fled for similar reasons as refugees (armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations), IDPs legally remain under the protection of their own government - even though that government might be the cause of their flight", as defined by the UNHCR. See http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c146.html [accessed 28.02.2012].
consider. Every migration is a highly personal and individual endeavour and experience. Taking a closer look at what at first may seem to be 'all the same', helps us to get a better feeling for the complexity of a person's movement, the individual context of their lives and how it effects the lives of their families and friends. Every migrant, every migrant trajectory, every migrant story is different. Nevertheless, if one truly listens, each migrant's story tells us a great deal about the societies into which they arrive, and in which they struggle to live. They tell us a lot about the people living in these societies – and about ourselves. Every migration is, thus, not only an intense individual and unique experience, but also and always of great social and political significance.

My research looks at women migrating alone. Why are they leaving? What were their hopes when they left, and what are their hopes now, living as migrants in a different society? Many women had to leave behind their families, their partners and children. Most cannot afford to travel home in two, tree, four, or five years time – the journey from Portugal to Eastern Europe is very expensive, and the migrants' earnings are very low. Additionally, many migrants are sem papeles, without papers, undocumented, 'illegal'/illegalised, which makes a visit home almost impossible. Telephone companies, banks and the Western Union, realising huge profits from migrants whose families and friends back home live so far away, capitalise on their saudade\(^6\).

Migrants in Portugal, similar to migrants in most other de facto immigration countries, do find work: many of them work in the informal labour market, without contracts and social protection, on the margins of society. Their work force, their labour and their hands are needed for cooking, rearing children, caring for the elderly and sick, constructing highways and buildings, cleaning streets and private houses. Immigrant labour is needed, the governments, however, does little to support, to help, or to protect them. Actually, the opposite is true: while in fact migrants are needed, public rhetoric endlessly repeats phrases of exclusion, painting images of nation-states overrun by migrants whose objective is to take the maximum profit from the public system. As studies in other countries indicate, migrants, including the undocumented and refugees, contribute on the long run not only positively to the financial system of the state (Goldin and Cameron 2011, \(^6\) Saudade is the Portuguese concept of sad nostalgia, longing and crying for your home, a terra ('the land') and your loved ones, far away. It reflects the Portuguese own intense experience of emigration over many centuries.)
Münz et al. 2007, Straubhaar and Weber 1994) but do so on average even more than the normal native citizen.\(^7\)

My work focuses on women from Eastern Europe who migrate alone to Portugal. I analyse the women's motivations to leave their home countries, and their experiences and problems in the receiving society. Of central interest is always the meaning of migration to the women themselves. I look at their possibilities for agency and research their networks in the social and political context of the receiving society. Additionally, I examine the role of social capital and the further political and historical context of their migration under the perspectives of *globalisation*, *service industry* and *post-colonialism*. The women's ability to regularly send money home to their families and friends turned out to be of central relevance in their lives, and thus, in my research. Consequently, I chose to look at *female migrant breadwinning* as one central topic of the Thesis. However, my research clearly shows that the economic aspects of the women's migration trajectories are only one factor and that there are many other important aspects to look at.

Migration has many facets. It is a constant oscillation between individual experience and the social, legal and political context that surrounds, stimulates and restricts the individual experience. The migrants are confronted with the social structures of the receiving society. As the following material shows, they try to find ways to lead their immigrant lives with dignity, struggling to understand and overcome the limitations set upon them, by 'the structure', the political system, the state, the police, the society, the employers, as well as from the stereotypes and preconceptions they encounter in public and private. Migration is agency within these structures. It is important to recognise existing conditions and structures *without* limiting the migrants to those. Therefore, it is equally important to shed light on the migrants' lives beyond these structures, to look at their deeds, work, struggles, and hopes, and to listen attentively to them as they share their stories.

The women's experiences, as my research examines, show clearly that migration is far more than 'simply' moving from one country to another. It is a challenging, often dangerous journey. It is a long and perhaps endless process. Its end and destination remain unknown, certainly well beyond simplistic labels like 'temporary' or 'permanent' migration.

There are hopes and plans but there is no certainty, ever. In this, migration is extreme: it is a constantly unsettling life experience. My research shows how women migrating alone act in this situation and what they do to better their own (and their families') life situations.

1.1.2 Are women who migrate alone 'single' women?

For the purpose of my research, I define women migrating alone as female migrants, (1) who are neither married nor in a stable relationship, or (2) women who migrate without their families, husbands or partners, and without their children. This type of migration is sometimes termed as independent, autonomous or solo migration.\(^8\) The reason for referring to these migrant women explicitly as 'single' emerges from the daily life experiences of my research participants and, thus, as embedded in the social context of the destination country. During my fieldwork it became evident that women who migrate alone are generally perceived – and subsequently negatively labelled – as 'single', both by the Portuguese society as well as by the women's compatriots and other immigrants. Both view 'single' women in clear opposition to women who migrate as spouses, with their partners and/or families. This perception and construction leads frequently to negative and often discriminatory treatment of the 'single' women. This varies from disrespect to defamation – for example being labelled falsely as a sex worker (usually referred to as 'prostitute'), as will be explained below – and other verbal and even physical aggression.

However, it is important to emphasise that the ascription of 'single' does not necessarily correspond to the women's legal status or self-image, their socio-economic position in life, or in their home society. Nevertheless, women who migrate alone to Portugal are, in daily life, repeatedly confronted with the conception that they are single – and, even more, with all the fantasies and subsequent consequences that implies. That these migrants are regarded as 'single' women is a crucial element in the development of the following analysis and argument.

The Thesis is structured in the following way: Chapter 1, Basics, gives the starting point and elaborates the research context: Section 1.2 outlines the idea and questions behind

the research. The theoretical framework for the Thesis is developed in section 1.3. As the field of migration studies is vast, I had to limit myself to the most important theoretical approaches for my research and this Thesis in order to position and contextualise my research. Section 1.4 describes the research methodology and my empirical approaches. Here, I explain how I set out to conduct fieldwork and some of the challenges I encountered, including ethical considerations. Chapter 2 explores the immigration trends in Portugal, and gives a critical review of current publications on the topic. Chapter 3 to 6 are the core chapters of this Thesis. They present the empirical material and its analysis and interpretation. These chapters explore a wide range of topics that I found to be relevant in the migrant women's lives and narratives. To start with in chapter 3 I look at various aspects of the work situation of migrants in Portugal, focusing on daily life questions as how to find work and other challenging features. Later in this chapter (3.3) I show the relevance of the body in migrant work. Chapter 4 explores the situation and experiences of female migrant workers by applying three current theoretical approaches: the situation of domestic workers in Portugal is placed in the context of international discourses of globalisation (4.1); with Portugal being a former colonial power, I chose to focus on the phenomenon of migration and domestic work from a post-colonial perspective (4.2); finally, I examine critically the extent to which the concept of 'social capital' is relevant in research on individual migration processes (4.3). Based on the empirical material and its analysis, chapter 5 explores the situation of migrant women who are breadwinners for their families and friends in their home countries. As an analytical tool to clearly identify the differences and similarities, I develop a categorisation to better understand the diversity of female migrant experiences and the corresponding effect this has on their daily life.

Social relationships in the receiving society are the leading topic in chapter 6. The role of various social networks and communities is explored in detail. Due to the unique position of empregadas domésticas internas, live-in maids, their daily life and work situations need to be addressed separately within this chapter. The conclusions in chapter 7 summarise the findings developed throughout the Thesis and give explicit answers to the research questions. Further research fields and interests will be pointed out.
1.2 Research aim and questions

I am interested in individual migration experiences within their social context and embeddedness. Therefore, my research looks at the situation and the experiences of women from Eastern Europe9 who migrate alone to Portugal. I call this type of migration 'individual migration project' (cf. 1.3.1.1). Based on the empirical material10 and developed from the women's point of view, the Thesis explores the consequences and the meaning of migration for the women themselves. The theoretical research objective is to develop a more nuanced understanding of the consequences of migration for the individual within and beyond structural constraints. The possibilities of agency are of central interest throughout the Thesis (cf. 1.3.1.2).

The research participants come from the Ukraine, Russia, Moldova and Romania11, and all lived and worked in Portugal for at least one year prior to my research. Many of the migrant women are undocumented, or have been undocumented temporarily for longer or shorter periods of time.

The key research questions are:

→ What are the women's motivations to migrate alone, without their partners and children?

→ What are their experiences in the receiving society, what problems do they encounter?

→ What are their plans and hopes for the future?

For answering these questions, other related aspects of the complex situation of migration have to be taken into consideration. Therefore, I address the following complementary topics and questions:

9 Here and in the following, I use the term 'Eastern Europe' in correspondence to the Portuguese notion Europa de Leste, 'East Europe', and imigrantes de Leste, 'immigrants from the East'. Both notions designate undiscriminatory all migrants from Central and Eastern Europe; they are used commonly in Portuguese daily talk and academic discourses. Specifically in this Thesis, I refer to migrants from the former Soviet Union (in particular from the Ukraine, Russia, and Moldova) and to migrants from Romania as these are the largest national groups of imigrantes de Leste in Portugal; cp. chapter 2.

10 Fieldwork in Portugal was conducted between Spring 2002 and Autumn 2004.

11 At the time of research Romania was not yet EU-member.
• During fieldwork, the significance of migrant breadwinning became apparent and was, thus, chosen as one central topic of the Thesis. At the same time, not all women share the same situation and experiences, even if all are breadwinners. Therefore, it is important to ask:

→ What are the differences and similarities in the women's situations as migrant breadwinners?

To answer this question, various categories of female migrant breadwinning will be developed from the empirical material. Here again, the social context and the subsequent possibilities of agency of the migrant women will be of special analytical interest.

• Thus, for the analysis of the situation and the experiences of migrants, it is necessary to also consider the role of social networks and social capital in the women's migration process. And though the principal research interest focuses upon the individual, migration always takes place in the wider social and collective sphere of the sending and receiving societies, coming in touch with other migrant and autochthonous communities.

→ What roles do social and transnational networks play in the women's migration trajectory and current life situation?

→ Do migrant women use existing social networks, and/or do they create and use their own networks and other forms of mutual help and support?

Furthermore:

→ To what extent are migrant women able to mobilise already existing social capital\(^\text{12}\)?

→ Are they able to accumulate and use 'new' social capital during their migration process?

• Moreover, for any analytical understanding it is imperative to place the women's experiences in the broader historical and political context, also of the receiving society. Otherwise their migration would only be an isolated occurrence, floating freely through European space, its links and socio-political rootedness doomed to invisibility.

\(^{12}\text{Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992.}\)
What insights can be developed from looking at the women's experiences from the perspectives of 'globalisation', 'service industry' and 'post-colonialism'?

For each of these purposes, various aspects of the daily lives of the migrant women in their social embeddedness are of interest and importance. Consequently, the following areas of daily migrant life will be examined qualitatively and actor-centred: the women's situation in regard to money, work, social contacts, networks, and religion; the challenges and problems the women confront in their daily lives, e.g. regarding their legal status, discrimination, experiences with racism and sexism, as well as problems related to health issues. Also of significance are the diverse expectations imposed on them for being women and migrants from Eastern Europe, and the confrontation with stereotypes linked to these role expectations (cp. Hitchcox 1993). For any understanding and contextualisation of the current life situation of migrant women, it is imperative to also consider the woman's individual migration history and her social and cultural background, e.g. family, political and economic situation in her place of origin, education, professional training and employment.

1.3 Theoretical framework

This section lays the theoretical foundation for the Thesis. It reflects on the concepts and the framework used in my research (1.3.a). Given that migration theory is an enormously vast and diverse field crossing various social sciences, I had to be selective. Thus, in the following (1.3.b) I point out solely those approaches, concepts and ideas that are directly linked and most important to the context of my work.

1.3.1 Brief definition of relevant concepts

1.3.1.1 Independent migratory project

This research focuses on women who migrate 'alone', which means without their partners/spouses or other family members, and usually without their children. In my research, I call this type of migration independent or autonomous migration project (cp.
Bedoya 2000, Morokvasic 1993, Zontini 2002). This allows us to clearly distinguish it for instance from the so-called family reunion, which is often considered to be the 'typical' pattern of female migration.\(^\text{13}\) Other scholars call this type of migration also 'solo migration' (Anthias 2000: 5).

Independent, autonomous, solo – these attributes emphasise the characteristic that these migrants do not leave their home country, and arrive in a new society, as part of a larger social unit, e.g. a family. Instead, they have their own individual migratory project (Izquierdo 2000). Furthermore, the notion of independent migratory project reflects the fact that the women participating in my research neither depend economically nor in their legal migrant status on their partners or other family members. Lazaridis points out correctly that independent migrant women "play[ing] protagonist, active roles" (2000: 49). At the same time, it is important to understand that my research does not approach nor construct independent migrant women as being mere individuals or being necessarily 'single', as pointed out above (see 1.1.2). On the contrary, my research participants are in many cases responsible mothers and partners over great geographical distance, they are actively involved family members fulfilling their obligations towards their dependants. These migrant women often also help other relatives and friends, by regular financial support for instance. Thus, when I use the term 'migrating alone', I refer solely to the fact that these women live and work without their immediate family and friendship networks in Portugal; I do not imply that they are necessarily 'single' or without family and friends in their home country, or other parts of the world.

1.3.1.2 Agency

In my work, I understand migration as a continuous process of experiences, subjective evaluation and new orientations. This process can only be understood within the frame of its complex social context in which the subject has (even if only minimal) space to act. There are certain social structures in which the migrant women move and act as autonomous subjects: even if the structures are experienced as rather limiting and patronising, the women eventually find ways to overcome these, as will be shown in the

following chapters. *Agency* and *structure* – their interplay is of great interest to many social scientists, and their friction creates many controversial discussions in social and political theory.\(^\text{14}\) I fully agree with Caroline Brettell that anthropological work can and should look at both (2003: 7), for it is in understanding the relationship of the two that can best reveal both the people and the society they live in. Unlike what the structural approaches suggest, I do not believe that structure is (all-)determinant – and yet, it is important, as structure is closely linked to the social and economical context (as well as cultural, ethnic, religious). I see structure and agency as highly intertwined. Eleonore Kofman and her colleagues explain this nicely and briefly in relation to migration: "economic factors interact with and influence non-economic factors, and together affect the decision to migrate" (2000: 24).

**1.3.1.3 Breadwinning & remittances**

The significance of female migrant breadwinning became apparent during fieldwork. In the context of this Thesis, breadwinning (1) refers to the women's need to make a living for themselves in Portugal, and (2) points to the fact that most migrant women send a – often rather large – part of their Portuguese income home to support the daily living costs of their families (remittances)\(^\text{15}\). Yet, not all migrant women share the same situation and experiences, even if all are breadwinners. For being able to make visible the existing differences and similarities amongst the research participants, it is necessary to distinguish various types of migrant women. These are developed from the empirical material in chapter 5. Such an organisation of the empirical material and subsequent interpretation allows us to see tendencies and patterns in the migration trajectories, while at the same time this enables us to recognise and explain the diversity of experiences of Eastern European women who migrate alone to Portugal. The analysis of the research material suggests the following four categories of female migrant breadwinning: 1. The sole breadwinner, 2. Provider of extra family income, 3. Supporting member of female networks, and 4. Other, 'co-supporting' migrants (cf. chapter 5).


1.3.1.4 'Economic migrants'?

In opposition to the current trend in public discourses and media to see and label most migrants – including refugees and asylum seekers– as 'economic migrants', I think it is extremely reductionist and even dangerous to construct a person's decisions and reasons to migrate as purely economically driven. Consequently, I do not regard the notion of 'economic migrants' as adequate and applicable in my research context for this Thesis. My research shows that the research participants cannot be considered just as 'economic migrants': in my encounters and conversations with many migrants it became very clear that their decision to migrate is more complex than the 'simple' reason of money. Certainly, money plays an important role in their migration trajectories, as will become clear repeatedly throughout the Thesis. Yet to understand and label these migrant women as 'economic migrants' would be purely reductionist. This notion ignores completely the women's complex and multi-layered reasons and motivations to migrate as well as their own perspectives and developments within the migration process and over time. My research indicates clearly that personal development and agency exist beyond the financial dimension of the women's migration trajectories; the economic aspects are only one part of their (his)story of migration. Therefore, I argue that the notion of 'economic migrants' neglects the objectives and ideas individuals have about their own migration process; as a consequence, it denies the dynamics of their own activeness and agency as well as any further personal meaning and development. My research shows the complexity of any migration decision and situation.

1.3.2 Migration theory

Migration is a dynamic situation. Therefore, different theoretical and empirical works within the qualitative social sciences describe and conceptualise migration as a 'project', as a 'circle', as a 'process' (cf. Catarino and Oso 2000, Chambers 1994, Izquierdo 2000, Papastergiadis 2000). Each concept emphasises particular aspects, generating diverse points of view and analyses. In spite of the diversity, these perspectives share the fundamental understanding that migration means changes. These changes have effects on different

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See the section above on structure and agency. Also Kofman et al. 2000.
levels, for example for the 'home society', meaning the place of departure, as well as for the receiving society. The effects of migration might be economic, cultural, social – and private: family and friends are certainly affected. Above all this, migration has undeniable consequences for the migrants themselves: they are the ones who due to necessity or their own desire choose to leave and migrate. They are the ones to cope in a different society. Thus, conceptualising migration as a process enables us to understand the migrant’s situation in the changing context of her/his own life, opening up the possibility to ask for the impacts of migration on her/his personal development and identity.  

However, much migration theory does not focus on the migrants as protagonists and actors, but pays attention only to the larger scale significance of migration movements. These are two different perspectives, and I believe that it is important to consider both. For this reason I chose to have a closer look at some theories of migration, though not all of them are related to anthropological views and perspectives. Yet these theories have the potential to help us to understand the complexity of migration by emphasising for instance its social and global embeddedness. It is then the anthropologists' task to go beyond the grand scale and to ask for the subject's role and experiences.

The great diversity of disciplines which look at migration issues (e.g. Anthropology, Sociology, Geography, Political Science, Economy, Law, Psychology), their various theoretical approaches, aims, methods, foci, units of analysis and interpretational perspectives make it difficult, or rather impossible, to outline migration theory as a whole – for the simple fact that there is no 'one migration theory'. At the same time one can argue that this diversity reflects the many facets of migration as it is lived and practiced by the subjects themselves.

Who is a migrant? In my understanding, the word 'migrant' embraces generally everybody on the move: emigrants – the people who leave; immigrants – the newcomers; settlers – who want to stay in the country of arrival; temporary migrants – who plan to return home sooner or later, or to migrate to another place; return migrants – people who come back to their place of origin or a place where they lived before migrating to another place. Migration can also take place within one country, this is called 'internal migration'.

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The notion of a migrant can also include people who are forced to leave their homes like refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs. Migrants in this category are often undocumented, without papers, and viewed as 'illegal'. Other migrants have a legal status in their country of arrival, being temporary or permanent residents, have a travel, work or study permit, or are tolerated due to humanitarian and/or protective reasons. Migrants can, at least in some parts of the world, become after some years citizens in their arrival country, even if this sometimes means they have to reject their former citizenship. In other places, however, they will never have the opportunity to become a full member of the society as the citizenship rights might be very exclusive – some scholars speak of 'denizens'.

People migrate because of financial reasons and the hope of a better life or for mere survival, for the survival of their families at home; some have to flee persecution, death, torture, censorship, hunger, natural catastrophes. People migrate because of employment opportunities, sometimes into skilled employment, often into jobs beneath their education and qualification level. For example, for some migrants cleaning private houses in Portugal is remunerated much higher than teaching chemistry in their home country. Others migrate for adventure, others to encounter different cultures and people, or to meet their prince or princess. They all have to be understood as 'migrants'. Many leave their place of origin and plan to be back 'soon', but 'soon' can become ten or even twenty years abroad; and there are others who never do return. *O eterno mito do retorno*, "the eternal myth of return", as this is called in Portuguese, reflecting the Portuguese experience of emigration in France, Switzerland, Brazil and many other countries, since many centuries (cp. Monteiro 1994).

Some scholars refer also to the children of migrants as migrants, the so-called second or third generation of migrants; I personally prefer to clearly distinguish between people who migrated themselves – because they wanted or had to –, and those who were taken along with their parents/relatives as children or were born in the new country. A migrant is someone who leaves (emigrates) and who arrives (immigrates) somewhere else, for a shorter or longer period of time. In recent years, much attention is put on the notion of

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18 For Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) see UNHCR 2010.
19 This can affect also the second or third generation of immigrants, though born in the country.
20 Hammar defines denizens as "privileged aliens who were not full citizens" (1990: 14). Denizens are migrants "with rights to permanent residence (and other rights) in country of immigration, but legally [are] foreigners", as Grillo explains (2000: 2). In German, denizen is often termed as "Wohnbürger", without full political rights; see Wobbe 2000.
transnationalism\textsuperscript{21}: the transmigrant emerged as actor of transnational migration through the attempt to overcome bi-polar migration models that see the migrant either as the one who left or arrived, but never being able to capture both as parallel realities. The concept of transnational migration tries to grasp and understand the multiple forms of belonging to and participating in various places in different ways over time and space. However, I believe it is necessary to keep a critical eye towards the inflationist use of the notion. Not all migrants are transnational migrants, nor are their activities and thoughts necessarily oriented transnationally. Migration can also be linked to human smuggling or trafficking. There is family migration, household migration, kin migration, child migration, breadwinner migration, chain migration, forced migration, retirement migration, work migration, economic migration, dependant migration, autonomous migration, family reunion. There is male migration and female migration. And, after all, migration does not only refer to the moving of an individual or a group but touches also agencies, business, borders, nation states, interstate agreements, border regimes, the police, security services, the media, documents and money. All this and much more is migration.

This diversity is reflected in the variety of migration theories across disciplines. There is not one 'migrant' and not one kind of 'migration' – so too there is not one migration theory. I have to be eclectic and brief in order to be able to give an outline of migration theory. As a consequence, I am limiting myself to those theories, which are the most important for my own research and briefly describe their ability to understand gender aspects in migration. Throughout the Thesis I will show relevant links of my work to these theories.

In the following I briefly touch neo-classical and structural approaches; I look closer at the Household Strategy Theory as this theory has direct relevance for my research. Network theory, integrative and transnational approaches will be discussed as well. Though these different theories exist in parallel, I do not see them as monolithically valid buildings that allow us to fully grasp and explain the social reality. These theories influence and affect each other, and interesting links can be made between them for a more complex

\textsuperscript{21} See later in this chapter, 1.3.2.6. Transnational approaches. Cf. Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994.

Thus, I shall briefly outline some of the main approaches in migration theory over the last thirty years. By doing so, I will incorporate recent critiques and research looking at gender aspects within the respective approaches. Whenever possible, I shall draw direct links to my own research.

1.3.2.1 Push/pull models and neo-classical economic theory

Until the 1970s the economically based push/pull model dominated in migration theory (e.g. Lee 1966), also within the social sciences, and is still widely used today. In short, the neo-classical explanation for migration movements is seen through economic factors like the national GDP, unemployment rates, labour demand and supply, wage differentials etc.. The main problem is that these approaches construct migrants as a homogeneous group, following almost automatically economic forces in their migration movement. The individual's decision to migrate is believed to be based on rational decision-making based on wage differentials, weighing up the costs and benefits of the move. This sets the 'neo-classical paradigm'.

Agency is generally neglected, and the analysis of diverse power issues at play (apart from financial and economic aspects) is not an integral part in this way of understanding migration movements. Differences due to gender, ethnicity, race and class are usually overlooked in both models. When these aspects are considered, it is only in very restricted and single-sided ways: women are for instance usually not seen as agents of migration but as mere dependants. Their role is mostly depicted as a restrictive diversion of

22 There are other more specific economic migration theories and models, for instance Relative Deprivation Approach, Risk Aversion, Choice of Capital Intensity. Those try to capture, analyse and explain migrants' movements and behaviour. To an anthropologist's eye, these models look like strange mathematical figures and ciphers, at least at first glance. Authors like Odet Stark (1991) help to get a little insight and understanding of empirical economics and migration research. I am convinced that in larger migration studies the co-operation between economists and anthropologists can shed light on certain migration patterns and dynamics. For economic anthropology, see Narotzky 1997, Rössler 1999, Wilk and Cliggett 2007. Cf. also The Society for Economic Anthropology (SEA), https://seawiki.wikidot.com/ [accessed 28.02.2012].
the male model. This means that neo-classical theories fail to grasp and explain female migration and their realities.\(^{23}\)

Recent research even suggests that the consideration of the GDP and unemployment rates as determining factors fail to explain migration movements. For instance, Nana Oishi’s analysis of female migration flows from Asia shows that the main Asian sending countries of migrant women – the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia – have higher GDP per capita than non-sending countries like Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan (Oishi 2002: 4). Oishi states:

This does not make sense if we assume that poverty is the only cause of emigration. The effect of unemployment is also puzzling. In Sri Lanka, men’s unemployment rate is higher than women’s, but women still comprise 79% of total out-migrants. On the other hand, in Pakistan, women’s unemployment is much higher than men’s, and yet, women account for only 1% of the out-migrants. Economic indicators apparently do not provide sufficient explanations for international migration of Asian women. (Oishi 2002: 4, 5)

These arguments and points of critique suggest that neo-classical models are not able to explain migration movements completely beyond a mere numeric understanding of migration, and even this may not be correct, as Oishi (2002) shows. Nevertheless, they can provide single factors within a variety of different structural conditions that may influence the individual’s decision to migrate. Eastern European countries have a low GDP per capita, which can be interpreted as a push-factor for migration to Western Europe with a higher GDP per capita. Even the Portuguese GDP per capita (PPP)\(^{24}\), which is the lowest of the former EU-15 member states,\(^{25}\) is about three times higher than the Ukrainian and seven times higher than Moldavia\(^{26}\), for instance. Yet it is imperative to understand that this is not

\(^{23}\) Grieco and Boyd 1998 offer an excellent critique on neo-classical theory with a gender sensitive perspective. Also Kofman et al. 2000.


\(^{25}\) Compared to the current EU-27, Portugal has a similar GDP per capita, PPP, as Slovakia. Slovenia’s GDP per capita, PPP, is significantly higher than the Portuguese with 28893 US$, while all other Eastern European countries have much lower GDPs per capita, PPP.

the only – nor the main – reason for my research participants to leave their countries of origin, as will be shown throughout the Thesis on the basis of the research material.

1.3.2.2 Structural and neo-Marxist Perspectives

Partly influenced by Marxist political economy, the structural perspective on migration came up in the mid-1970s. Some of their most ‘famous’ theories are Dependency Theory (e.g. Gunder Frank 1967), World Systems Theory (e.g. Wallerstein 1974) and Dual Labour Market Theory (Piore 1979) amongst others. In brief, these understand migration as flowing almost automatically from the poorer (‘peripheral’) countries to the industrialised (‘core’) nations (cp. Wallerstein 1974). Political and economic conditions – that is, according to these theories, the unequal distribution of power worldwide – are seen as the direct driving force of migration. Similar perspectives were developed by Manuel Castells (1975) and Alejandro Portes (1978). They explore the structural causes of (labour) migration as well as the function of migrant workers for capitalist states, which receive and need migrant workers.27

Despite its critical potential and value, such a view sees individuals merely as marionettes without any capacity for agency, their own will and decision-making – structure is the absolute determining factor, overruling individuality. This does not lower the significance of these theories as macro-explanatory concepts with a strong political standing; however, it asks for a corrective when talking about anything beneath the great picture (the macro-level). I fully agree with Kofman and her colleagues in their critique of neo-Marxist approaches28 when they point out that those construct

"migrant workers as passive agents tossed around in the turbulent seas of international capitalism. There was a tendency to reduce human agency to the interests of the collective – the global working class" (2000: 23).

Similar to the neo-classical approaches, a point of critique on the structural theories is their neglect of the individual, their personal background and situation, leaving no space for

28 One should note that Annie Phizacklea, one of Kofman’s co-authors, was herself actively involved in the building of Marxist influenced theoretical views on migration at that time, cp. Phizacklea and Miles 1980. This is an example of how scientists can have the productive possibility to re-assess and re-write their own arguments and theoretical position over time – if they are open to acknowledge and accept social, political and personal changes.
individual decision-making, while generally down-playing all non-economic factors in migration. The structural point of view understands all migration movements to be politically driven by the world economy and its political and social structures. Such a perspective can shed light on some aspects of migration movement, e.g. direction, but does not give any understanding of the people, their reasons and experiences of migration (also Pedraza 1991: 308). A further point of critique can be that structural approaches tend not to distinguish gender roles and relations (Grieco and Boyd 1998).

However, some of the structural and Marxist theories on migration continue to have a significant impact today. Some of their arguments are picked up and developed further for instance under the perspective of globalisation and global economy. In particular the Marxist influenced thinkers like Alejandro Portes (1995, 1997) and Manuel Castells (1996, 1997, 1998) offer interesting and constructive new perspectives on migration in times of globalisation – and both come from the Marxist background. It is good to see that some theoretical approaches have the potential to be revised and applied to new social and political conditions, to update them within a changing world. Political and economic structures have an impact globally also on migration movements (cp. Castro Varela and Clayton 2003). And yet, for a qualitative understanding one still needs to look at the subject, particularly in the global context of today. Thus I fully support Pedraza when she argues that "[t]he theoretical and empirical challenge now facing immigration research inheres in its capacity to capture both individuals as agents, and social structure as delimiting and enabling" (1991: 308). This is exactly the idea, which I hope to put forward with this Thesis.

These 'classic' theories of migration have clear shortcomings: they over-emphasised the economic dimension and tend to reduce the migrating individuals to mere calculating factors. This prevents us from getting a more complete picture of the complex process of decision-making and its dynamics during the migration process. However, these theoretical approaches give ideas about some exterior factors that may be involved in the migration process, amongst others. We saw further that many scholars working on female migration point to the failure of 'traditional' theories to incorporate gender critically in their analysis of migration movements. If gender aspects are considered, it is mostly under the
perspective of an allegedly female dependency or under the assumption that the female situation fits fully in the male framework. Some authors criticised this ironically as "add women [or: gender], mix and stir" (Grieco and Boyd 1998: 9, 12, Kofman et al. 2000: 22).

1.3.2.3 Household Strategy Theory

Researchers using this approach argue that often the (main) decision to migrate is not taken individually by the migrant but by a group of persons as a collective, which is usually the household unit. They believe that the decision to migrate is taken jointly between the person who will migrate and the people who stay at home (cp. Stark 1991: 25). Unlike in the above discussed approaches, people and individuals are recognised to play a decision-making role in the migration process. Kofman and her colleagues even see this approach theoretically as "[o]ne way out of the impasse between structuralist and neo-classical approaches to migration" (Kofman et al. 2000: 26). In short, Household Strategy sees the goal of migration in the maximisation of expected income for the household/family while at the same time minimizing the risks (Lauby and Stark, 1988, Lawson 1998). This means that some households believe they will have better chances as a collective if one member migrates and, while working abroad, sends remittances or saves money for the family back home. In contrast to the former mentioned models, this approach takes into consideration the real life situation of the migrating individuals and their dependents. Furthermore, this theory's strong side is also that it includes gender aspects and interdependencies into its analysis, rather than seeing the migrant only as a single being that is pushed and pulled by structural forces without any own decisions. However, Household Strategy is a very economic and rational based theory, showing its own problems too, at least to more qualitative oriented or critical eyes; below I will point out some. It constructs the household as a purely rationally calculating unit with clear objectives to which all household members subscribe to and support actively. This is surely an idealised image of the household and families. I think Household Strategy Theory can help to explain some features in some cases of migration but fails to show larger contexts and significances. One can be critical of the theory's underlying assumption that the individual's decision is fully overruled by collective needs and decisions; this opens further questions regarding power hierarchies, dynamics and conflicts at play within households. However, Household Strategy Theory
offers a great potential for exploring the larger social context of migration, its reasons and consequences taking into consideration diverse and interconnected individual, collective, economic and political aspects. This approach is successfully applied by researchers trying to understand and explain migration movements e.g. from a feminist standpoint (cf. Pedraza 1991). It can also be useful in understanding transnational relationships. A shift from the individual to the household can also be found in many anthropological studies (Brettell and Hollifield 2000: 9).

An interesting angle on Household Strategy for instance is offered in the work of Douglas Massey and his colleagues, which I shall exemplify in the following briefly. Their approach on migration and households is more quantitatively and economist oriented; it is more referred to and recognised in demography, human geography and sociology than in anthropology and other qualitative approaches. However, as I firmly believe that migration needs to be approached and studied in an inter- and transdisciplinary way, Massey and his colleagues' approaches and findings offer useful perspectives and ideas for the research on household, family structures and the dynamics of remittances. Their theoretical position is well illustrated in the following excerpt:

The new economics of labor migration (NELM) (Stark, 1991) defines migration as a tool that households use to overcome market failures. By sending a family member to work away from home, a household makes an investment that is recovered when the migrant's remittances arrive. These remittances compensate for absent or poorly functioning local markets for capital, credit, and futures. Remittances may also be used to compensate for the lack of government programs that offer various kinds of insurance. According to NELM, missing, inefficient, or poorly functioning markets are a first necessary condition for the migration of labor. A second necessary condition is the existence of an implicit or explicit contractual arrangement between the family and the migrant […]. Migration is not the result of a decision made by an isolated individual; it is part of a family strategy […]. (Sana and Massey 2005: 510)

Without being able to engage here in a deeper analysis of their approach, I would like to point out two critical aspects. First, Sana and Massey's assumption that the compliance between the migrant and the household remaining behind is based on altruism which they believe to be more powerful among family members than other people (2005: 510). This generalisation is a highly questionable assumption. It neglects not only existing power
relations within families and kin due to gender, age, personality etc, but also precludes other social connections and ties which in some cases, and perhaps even in some societies, can be equal to family ties, or even stronger, as the excellent work by Cecilia Menjívar (2000) shows. It seems that Sana and Massey reproduce here uncritically the – somehow romanticised – US-American/Western image of Central American family life (the survey covers Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Costa Rica). Other scholars on migration are by far more aware of the complex dynamics and power relations within families/households, as for instance the economist Oded Stark:

There are, of course, interesting interactions within the family coalition concerning how to share what has been obtained together through specialization (migration by someone, nonmigration by others) and cooperation (for example, exchange of risks). Here the notions of relative power, bargaining, altruism, and so forth count (Stark 1991: 5)

Another critical aspect of Sana and Massey's approach is similar to the critiques of the former mentioned theories: the emphasise on male migrants, the invisibility of women:

In sum, NELM focuses on a particular kind of labor migrant: the short-term, target-oriented worker who identifies strongly with his or her family of origin and who expects to return rather than settle in the host country. Such a migrant is most likely male, either the son of the household head or the head himself. (Sana and Massey 2005: 511)

This ignores completely a lot of research published that shows for instance the high activity of women as head of household and/or as protagonists of migration; by doing so, the authors simply reproduces uncritically the main-stream perception of migrants, in spite of other research findings and figures, e.g. for Sri Lanka and the Philippines (Oishi 2002).

Thus it is not surprising that Sana and Massey have to conclude that the Dominican households of their study do not fit into their model (unlike the Mexican, for instance). They present the reason for this as very simple and clear: "The instability of matrifocal Dominican families undermines the use of migration for risk diversification and capital accumulation" (Sana and Massey 2005: 525). Here, a consideration of gender dynamics and relations and the larger social and political context in the Dominican republic, as well as a close examination of the real life situation of the migrant women leaving their families
behind, and their performance and problems within the host society beyond statistics and quantitative surveys could have helped to diversify and clear the picture drawn by this study.

In particular feminist researchers call for more gender and power sensitive studies regarding migrants and household strategies, paying critical attention to the "intra-household power dynamics in shaping divisions of labour by assigning domestic work and income-earning responsibilities to various household members [...]. These household divisions of labour are fluid and complex, emerging from material inequalities among household members and from the operation of socially constructed gender ideologies" (Lawson 1998: 40).

Household Strategy Theory can help to understand some dynamics and individual-collective decisions, yet it cannot fully explain migration flows and performances, as shown above. I agree with Nana Oishi who criticises as follows:

Another problem of this approach is that it does not explain why some countries send more migrant women than others. If women emigrate based on their household strategy, it means that households in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan (“non-senders” of migrant women) do not have a strategy, which is difficult to believe. (Oishi 2002: 6)

Being aware of its shortcomings, Household Strategy Theory has a lot to offer as I have explained. It fits well into some recent developments in qualitative migration theory that incorporate ideas of transnationalism, for instance in the concept of transnational motherhood (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997)29. We will have to see if some of my research participants' migration can be understood as being a household strategy in the sense of this approach.

1.3.2.4 Network Theory

Network Theory is not one homogeneous theoretical approach but covers different perspectives, methods and objectives looking at migrant networks across the world. From calculation models developed to measure the density of social networks (REF), to maps showing the spatial distribution and spreadedness of networks (REF), to transnational 'ethnic' communities around the globe to small-scale analysis of narratives, the range is

29 See chapter 5.1.2.1.
Some interesting studies are done, as for instance the very innovative work by Cecilia Menjívar (2000) who theorises the missing links within social networks.

In these approaches, the migration process is understood in its social and cultural embeddedness, linking the migrant to other individuals and groups in both, sending and receiving society. Also on the larger scale, this theory is able to explain some aspects of migration movements and their dynamics in some cases, for instance spatial stratification and settlement patterns, the formation of ethnic niches or the ethnicisation of some professions in the receiving societies – like for instance the high number of Brasilian dentists in Portugal illustrates 30.

Nevertheless, Network Theory cannot fully explain migration movements and processes in more general terms, like the reasons for the direction of migration flows. In the case of Portugal and Eastern Europe 31 there is no evidence regarding the existence of former links that could influence the migration from Eastern Europe to Portugal today. 32 The networks that supported the migration flows from Eastern Europe – particularly from the Ukraine – to Portugal were formed in the mid-1990s. 33 They were based mainly on Portugal’s intense need for cheap and flexible mão-de-obra on construction sites at that time 34. This part of the migration flow to Portugal remained largely undocumented until 2001 (?) when the Autorização de Permanência (AP) was introduced, and is thus not part of the national immigration statistics. Even today, it is remembered by the Ukrainian and Russian migrants that the word spread via these informal networks between Portugal and Eastern Europe. In those years it was still relatively easy (compared to other EU countries) to first work undocumented in Portugal, then after 2001 to legalise their work in Portugal. One has to assume that this information did attract further immigrants, and is thus in correspondence with the Network Theory approach. Nevertheless, the mere existence of social networks does not explain completely migration movements and individual decisions

30 In fact, the ‘Brazilian dentists’ enjoy a very positive reputation amongst the Portuguese, the same as many Brazilian waitresses and waiters in bars and cafés all over Portugal.
31 That is, in this Thesis, the countries of the former USSR and the post-socialist Eastern European countries, as defined earlier in this chapter.
32 The only exception could have happened theoretically during the Portuguese revolution period in 1974/75 when Portugal was shortly considered to be the ‘Europe’s Cuba’ – however, I did not encounter any evidence for any link between the USSR and Portugal at that time, later or before, thus this idea remains a mere mind-game.
33 Also to Spain, see Hellermann and Stanek 2006.
34 For more details see chapter 2, Immigration in Portugal.
– in the case of Portugal it could explain some part of the male migration to Portuguese construction sites but certainly does not allow us to understand female migration from Eastern Europe.

Like me, Nana Oishi expresses some fundamental concerns regarding the (lack of) explanatory potential of Network Theory. Based on her research on Asian migration patterns she writes:

However, social networks cannot explain why and how such networks were developed between one country and another to start with. The web of network does not seem to be evenly spread across countries and regions. The migration system theorists argue that the development of such networks is dependent on historical, geographical, and political ties which existed before large-scale migration started (Kritz et al, 1992). However, there is no convincing evidence indicating the preexistence of such close ties between major migrant-sending and receiving countries in Asia; e.g., the Philippines and Saudi Arabia, or Sri Lanka and Kuwait. Social networks alone cannot explain the patterns of international female (and male) migration either. (Oishi 2002: 7)

Further points of critique are similar as for the Household Theory: I think one should be careful not to reduce and/or construct networks as being purely rational social units with single interest and unanimous decision making, idealised under the (often wrong) assumption that this would "facilitate the equal allocation of resources to all its members" (Grieco and Boyd 1998: 6). It is more realistic to presume and acknowledge the possibility of the existence of hierarchies, power struggles, central and marginal positions, controversial and conflicting goals, and so on, within social networks. This does not mean to neglect the positive and strong effects social networks can have, in particular for migrants. Yet, it is important to approach social networks critically instead of idealising them, and to understand them and their power structures and dynamics in the larger social context, even transnationally. Grieco and Boyd correctly point out that "networks are enmeshed in patriarchal and capitalist social relations" (1998: 6). These contexts have to be recognised and explicitly incorporated into the analysis for not "encourag[ing] research to focus on the 'dominant actors' within those organizations -- who are usually men -- at the

35 Based on the empirical material, I show and elaborate this in various parts of the Thesis, e.g. the part on social capital, social networks etc. Important also is the absence of membership in social networks, see chapter 4.3 and chapter 6.
expense of the ‘subordinate’ ones -- who are usually women” (1998: 7). Gender, gender relations and resulting power hierarchies embedded and reflected in the larger social context are of strong significance as my research suggests.36

As stated before, theories are influencing each other, some of them join to some productive ends. A good example is again the work by Alejandro Portes who links theories of ethnic and transnational entrepreneurship with theories of social networks. He suggests that it is possible to explain current international migration still from an economic perspective, while at the same time understanding migrants as both, independent actors and active protagonist in their migration process, and as members of social networks (1997: 250, 251). Portes comes to a very positive evaluation of the new possibilities for migrants today:

"Economic globalization itself opens up new opportunities appropriated by immigrant entrepreneurs through mobilization of their networks” (Portes 1997: 253)

Though one has to be careful with such a celebratory statement, it certainly opens new perspectives to conceptualise and eventually understand migration and the life situation of migrants. Networks play an important role in migration processes, and theories related to social networks can offer important insights for migration research. How far this is also relevant for the understanding of my research participants' situation in Portugal, will be elaborated in the later chapters.

1.3.2.5 Integrative Approaches

Some contemporary scholars move beyond these clear-cut theories. They argue that a combination of various theoretical perspectives and approaches would allow more realistic and complex insights into migration movements and their reasons and dynamics (cp. Grieco and Boyd 1998). Particularly important in integrative approaches is the co-consideration of the society and the social context as a determining factor in migration and in the individual's decision to migrate, however always seen amongst others factors. The aim is to overcome the shortcomings of earlier migration theory. I agree with these points and believe further in the importance of inter- and transdisciplinary work, particularly when

36 See chapter 6 on social networks.
researching migration: multi-focussed approaches can offer a more complex understanding of this phenomenon.

An interesting example of an integrative approach is the work of Nana Oishi. She uses an integrative approach to explain patterns in international migration (2002). Looking at female migration movements in Asia, Oishi's research integrates three different levels of analysis, combining the macro-, micro-, and meso-level. The macro-level looks at the state which "plays a major role in determining the patterns of international female migration", for instance by controlling the possibilities of exit and entry (2002: 8). Oishi observes that the state and its policies treat women and men differently (Oishi 2002: 8, Lim and Oishi 1996). Her research shows for instance that "[e]migration policies for women tend to be value-driven rather than those for men which are economically driven" (Oishi 2002: 16). The micro-level takes into consideration the individual and her agency, hypothesising that "for a large-scale female migration to take place, women in the particular country have to have more autonomy and decision-making power within the household" (2002: 8). Her research shows that this is true in the major sending-countries in Asia, like the Philippines and Sri Lanka. However, female autonomy is not the only determinant for female migration, as she illustrates with the example of Bangladesh (2002: 16). This shows the impact of the third level to be considered, the meso-level. That perspective looks at the society and the social environment, Oishi introduces notions like 'social stigma' (2002: 16) and 'social legitimacy' (2002: 17). Oishi links her analysis also to discourses of global economy. Here she exemplifies in a very sensitive manner how social norms are gradually transformed, which shows the deep quality of her approach to research:

If society ostracizes women who go abroad and return home, a large-scale female migration is not likely to take place. Women must feel comfortable with leaving their community, and the community also has to provide an environment which does not penalize women who came back from abroad. But for this to happen, I hypothesized that the country would have to be integrated into the global economy and induces women’s internal mobility (e.g. from rural areas to cities) first. When people get used to […] the reality that women leave their community on their own and work in cities, international female migration also becomes more easily acceptable. (Oishi 2002: 8, 9)
I think that most anthropological research is usually not so strictly tied to stern theory as for instance some sociological research, thus the idea of combining and mixing different approaches does not feel so unusual to Anthropologists. However, I believe that it is important to consider various angles and perspectives. Not only in theory but also in practice: I see great potential in joint interdisciplinary work shared by researchers with different academic backgrounds, particularly when working in such complex social fields as migration research. Migration has social, economic, psychological, political, cultural, national, transnational, transgenerational, gender aspects, questions of inclusion/exclusion, of discrimination, racism, xenophoby, priviledge, border regimes, and the passage of time are of importance. Amongst many other aspects. Ideally, this would require an Anthropologist, Sociologist, Political Scientist, Gender Expert, Economist, Lawyer, Psychologist, Philosopher etc. to work together... I know, this is an ideal.\textsuperscript{37}

1.3.2.6 Transnational Approaches

Transnationalism is one of the most challenging and promising 'new' approaches to migration nowadays. Within anthropology and other qualitative oriented social sciences, transnationalism is probably the most used approach on migration nowadays. In fact, in anthropology and sociology it is nearly impossible to write today about migration without any reference to transnationalism. Particularly over the past ten years the research literature regarding all kind of transnational aspects has enormously expanded, which reflects the 'success' of this approach to look at migration issues.

In one of the foundational text of transnationalism, Nina Glick-Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc (1999) describe the analytical way from immigrant to transmigrant as becoming the actor in migration movements. The particular merit of this perspective is that it gives centrality to the acting subject, challenging and overcoming structural and political boundaries (cp. Portes 1997). Thus, transnational approaches locate the migrating subject on the centre stage of their migration process, while seeing this process as embedded and shaped by global developments. This allows one to analyse

\textsuperscript{37} I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work partly together with a sociologist while researching for this Thesis. We had interesting and very productive discussions, presented joint papers at conferences and published together, see Hellermann and Stanek 2006.
migration as an intersection of the micro and macro level, while at the same time the meso-level\textsuperscript{38} is regarded as significant, as for instance in social networks (see above).

Anthropologist Caroline Brettell suggests that transnationalism can partly be seen as a disappointed reaction (cp. Brettell 2000: 104) to the macro-approaches that constructed migrants mainly as passive reactors to the forces of the world economy based on capitalism.\textsuperscript{39} Transnationalism tries to overcome the former dualist models of migration with their clear-cut distinctions of sending and receiving countries, push-pull models, migrant and non-migrant, temporary versus settlement migration etc. I think that this break-up of bipolar concepts is one of the great achievements of transnationalism. Migration is not seen as a one-way ticket\textsuperscript{40} anymore, but as "a social process whereby migrants operate in social fields that transgress geographic, political, and cultural borders" (Brettell 2000: 104). It is this transgression of all kind of borders, limits and former clear-cut concepts that transnational approaches are most interested in. Under this new perspective, it was possible to show that migrants maintain social ties with their countries of origin, and that these ties are of great importance for the people involved but also for the communities and countries on both ends of the migration process. Offering these new ways to conceptualise migration, transnationalism became a challenging approach in the social sciences. Furthermore, transnationalism allows us to grasp and reflect on political issues in a different light. For instance, transnational research was able to show not only to what extent nation-states are 'deterritorialised' and 'des-integrated' (Appadurai 1996, Hannerz 1992, 1996), but also that migrants are involved in the nation building of more than one state (Basch, Glick-Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994, Glick-Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc 1999). A lot of research on various transnational aspects of migration is conducted, some of it leading to very innovative observations, ideas, theories like 'transnational motherhood' (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997). Much research is dedicated to the exploration of transnational spaces (Appadurai 1996, 1998, Hess and Lenz 2001, Mahler and Pessar 2001, Pries 1996), to globalisation aspects (Hannerz 2002), of particular interest is the interplay between the concepts 'local' and 'global' (Gardner 1995, Kearney 1995, Pries 2002, 2010, Römhild

\textsuperscript{38} A great explanation of micro-, meso- and macro-level gives Faist 1997.

\textsuperscript{39} See the discussion of various theoretical approaches above in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{40} This is in reference to one very significant classical book about female migration: "One way ticket: Migration and female labour", edited by Annie Phizacklea (1983).
2011). Migration sits at the core of transnational research and researchers look for instance at aspect like ethnicity (Castles 2000), changes in the sending areas (Gardner 1995), gender issues (Lutz 2002a, Pessar and Mahler 2001).

The variety of foci shows that in current research on migration many connections are discovered between the individual and the global, the households, social networks and transnational activities. The transnational perspective proves to be a very fertile and proactive enrichment for the study of migration worldwide. Another positive effect is that it allows us to see the migrant as an individual or as a collective on the centre stage, giving a lot of space for agency and subjective interpretation beyond structural constraints. How far my research participants can be considered as transnational migrants will be one of the questions of the following analysis.

How does my research fit into these theoretical approaches? Do these help when looking closer at the situation of single migrant women?

Throughout the following chapters I will come back to these questions and check their capacity to explain and understand the concrete experiences of migration of my research participants.

1.4 Empirical research setting

*In this section, I explain the methodological background of my research and the way I carried out fieldwork. The crucial role of memory protocols is pointed out. I describe how the first contacts with possible research participants were established, and reflect on some ethical challenges I faced during fieldwork.*

1.4.1 Methodology

1.4.1.1 Fieldwork and data collection

My study on migrant women is based on empirical qualitative research. Ethnographic methods provide perfect tools for such work: Through observation, interaction and proximity, they allow the identification and analysis of individual experiences, of
developments and changes. Therefore, the 'classic' instruments of ethnographic research\(^{41}\) – participant observation, interviews, field notes – provide also the key methods of my research.

**Participant observation** (Bernard 1995, Geertz 1973) was a valuable tool that allowed me to gain information and to enhance my general understanding on both levels\(^{42}\): the broad topic of migration and related issues, as well as the personal dimension of the migrant experience. As participant observation is a wide-encompassing endeavour and complex activity, it started virtually the moment I left the house and, for instance, walked from Alfama, the old Mourish quarter where I lived at the time, down to Intendente square to take the metro to work.\(^{43}\) The surroundings of this central square in inner Lisbon consist nowadays of many migrant shops and offices, ranging from African hairdressers and financial services to vendors of Indian spices and Chinese fresh and frozen food, amongst many other 'ethnic' businesses.\(^{44}\) Intendente is a busy square and metro station. The rumours run amongst migrants and locals that this is also the place in Lisbon to 'buy' passports, visa stamps and other documents needed.

Sitting in the metro in the early morning, I regularly spotted Eastern European migrants on their way to work, concluding from their cloths, accents or the books or newspaper read. I bought regularly in these 'ethnic' shops and visited the places I knew where migrants meet. Though this approach was at first more *observation* and *approximation* than *participation*, I frequently started conversations with migrants sitting next to me in the metro or with 'ethnic' shopkeepers, for instance. A few times migrant women told me the peaks of their lives, their 'personal live story' within the twenty-thirty minutes of a train ride. Though these migrant women are not the key research participants of my study, their accounts and experiences form part of it and have somehow enhanced my knowledge and influenced my approach towards the topic.


\(^{42}\) For 'meso' level and 'micro' level see Faist 1997.

\(^{43}\) For my own bread winning during the years in Lisbon, I taught German in very different contexts, at various universities in Lisbon, at the Goethe Institut, the German secondary school in Lisbon, and gave private tuition. I also worked as a freelance journalist and for film festivals in Portugal.

\(^{44}\) For 'ethnic business' cf. e.g. Light and Bhachu 1993, Rath 2000; see also chapter 3.2. and 4.3.
For instance, taking the train from Cais do Sodre in central Lisbon to Cascais on the West coast of greater Lisbon, I met once a young woman from Moldova who told how she had to cross through the river Oder in Winter to be able to cross the border between Poland and Germany – she described how scared she was as she does not know how to swim. However, she made it through the cold deep river. For some years now she has lived Lisbon working as an *empregada doméstica*. (FN)

After this short encounter on the train I tried to get in touch with her but we never met again. However, her story – that is, the fragments I know – remains in my memory and sharpened my awareness towards the obstacles some migrants encounter on their way to somewhere else.

Participant observation took me to a variety of places, groups and meetings, I visited documentary film screenings and local activist groups, more established NGOs and religious meetings, I went to folk parties and political demonstrations of all kinds, literature evenings in bookshops and academic seminars, parks, churches and restaurants. For research purposes, I regularly dropped by at a dating agency in Lisbon run by RAISA, a Moldavian woman45, and I went to the beach in order to meet Russian and Romanian domestic workers on their days off, enjoying together the sun and the sea. After I had identified who the main participants of my research would be, I tried to meet these women as often and as informally as possible, alone, with others, near their work places during the week, in cafés, parks on their days off, or after church on the weekends.

Interviews provided a good way to learn more about the migrants, their trajectories and experiences.46 However, the ‘interviews’ I conducted were in most cases *dialogical conversations* with their own dynamics and interactions, and certainly not following a clear-cut "I-ask-and-you-answer"-mode.47 These conversations enabled me to get insights into the migrants' personal and professional backgrounds, their current life situation, as well as in their personal assessment of it. We spoke also about their plans and hopes for the

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45 *‘Agência Matrimonial RAISA’*, more details in chapter 6.1.4.1.
46 For various interview types in qualitative research settings, e.g. narrative, unstructured, free, as well as structured, theme oriented and in-depth interviews, see Berg 1998, Bernard 1998, Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte 1999.
future, be it in Portugal, in their country of origin, or elsewhere. The interviews I conducted were mainly free and narrative and to some extend unstructured, following the impulses and narrative ways the research participants chose. In general, I used the method of free and informal interviews when I met the migrants for the first time(s). This gave me the opportunity to learn about their life and work situation and to get to know them at least a bit. In practice this meant that I tried to keep these interviews as relaxed as possible and avoided creating a situation in which the women would feel like they were being interrogated. Thus, these interviews took the shape of casual conversations, in which the reciprocity and mutual interest became fundamental elements.48 This implied that I had to open myself to a significant extent and to talk overtly about my life too. These personal conversations helped to create certain proximity and trust. Indeed, most of the women were very interested in my life, work and my experiences in Portugal, often they asked direct questions about my private life. I answered as honestly as possible. However, I refrained from verbalising parts of my personal opinion and my 'professional' knowledge regarding certain aspects relevant for my research, as for instance topics relating to Portugal, the socio-political situation and migration in general for not influencing the migrants' answers and their individual appreciation of their own situation more than is unavoidable.49 The way in which the relationship between the researcher and the research participant grows during the empirical encounter over time is one of the strong sides of anthropological work. Mutual expectations – and their, at least partial, fulfilment – play a significant role in this relationship. I felt an obligation towards the research participants to 'give something back', and that was usually to be open myself too.50


49 I am fully aware that the researcher changes necessarily the research context as shown by George Devereux (1967). Consequently, the researcher has influence on the participants who, in the example of this study, perhaps would have never told their migration trajectory as a whole story and in the way they did when I asked them. Like Katy Gardner (2002: 31), I understand narratives as inherently social constructions. Gardner describes the relationship between story telling and identity formation and representation as dynamic and situational: "[N]arratives both reflect history, experiences and meaning, and help shape them" (2002: 27; similar Williksen 2004). I understand these approaches as closely linked to Berger's and Luckmann's concepts on social construction of reality (1966), and to symbolic interactionism (Blumer 1969). For discourse and narrative within anthropology see also Rapport and Overing 2000: 117-125, 283-290.

50 See later in this chapter, 1.4.3 Ethics.
These informal conversations were complemented by more structured and theme-oriented conversations and interviews. Based on our former encounters and the topics and narratives that came up, I identified topics important for my research and then tried to direct the conversation towards these. Whenever possible, I guided gently our conversations towards the particular topic of interest without asking directly or pointing it out. At the same time I tried not to interrupt the research participant’s personal and spontaneous narrative flow. This method allowed for a more open way to address a topic, giving the research participant the possibility to talk about it in her own perspective, in her own words and phrasing. Often, further interesting topics came up, and as a consequence, an initially structured interview soon became a narrative interview. Again, I tried to keep these conversations as informal and relaxed as possible, which gave space to varying degrees of openness and proximity, casual talk and in-depth narration.

These conversations lasted between half an hour to four hours, with an average of about two hours, two hours and a half. For being successful, these conversations needed to be well prepared before (identifying possible topics of main interest). During the meetings I needed to have a very clear head with high level of concentration, the intense effort to listen openly while at the same time keeping in the back of my mind the topics of interest that I might want to explore more.

Some interviews and conversations were recorded.\footnote{See details later this chapter.} However, I noticed quickly that the technique of taking explicit and very detailed memory notes afterwards was a method much more effective (though not only very time consuming but also physically and mentally exhaustive). I found that this was preferable as I found that in recording the conversations the research participants were too cautious to speak freely. They were too aware of sensitive issues, be they legal or private, and some felt also embarrassed because of their command of, or lack of Portuguese\footnote{For the role of Portuguese language for the research participants cf. chapter 3.2.4.}. Repeatedly I observed that, as soon as I turned off the recorder, the women relaxed and were less inhibited to talk overtly and freely about all kind of details, which they did not do when being recorded. For this purpose I decided after a while to generally stop recording our conversations and work intensely with memory notes. This was an excellent decision and adequate for this type of anthropological
research wanting to explore the migrant women's experiences in Portugal. In our mostly 'free' conversations the women spoke very overtly about their lives and themselves, which gave me a lot of valuable information and insight.

Field notes, memory notes and my research diary were extremely important tools in the data collection and creation of written research material. After every activity (be it a casual encounter, an organised meeting, an interview, for instance) I immediately wrote my field notes. These were general descriptions of the situation, observations I made, information received, stories I was told. I added also my comments on the events. Further questions arose frequently while writing these notes and reflecting on them. Similarly, instead of recording as explained above, I wrote extensive and very detailed memory notes of the conversations and interviews with research participants and other migrants I met. These memory notes turned out to be a key instrument and method in my research as most conversations were not recorded (see below); usually, this writing process lasted twice as long as the conversation or meeting itself. For example, a conversation with a research participant that lasted two hours would require about four to six hours for the writing down afterwards. I noticed soon that it was advantageous not to speak about the conversation and its topics and details with friends and other people interested before I had written the memory notes. Like this, the first verbalisation of my memory was kept for the research, and this helped to keep my account more committed to details and the initial impressions. In the few cases when I spoke with others before having written down my notes, I noticed later during the writing process that I could not recall all details as clearly as other times and that I missed some of the links between different narratives and topics. Therefore I usually wrote the protocols the same evening or latest the next morning. The writing of these detailed notes was very intense in regards to time and concentration: it took usually two to three times longer to write the protocol/notes than the duration of conversation. Yet the result was satisfying, the research participants and I had spoken a lot, we had covered much ground. In our next meeting, I tried to intensify some aspects and topics the women had spoken about.

In these memory protocols and notes I tried to be as precise and at the same time self-reflective and self-critical as possible. These partly very lengthy notes form the basis of my
research, the analysis of 'data' – which is the women's migration experiences. Further, this method also allowed me to consider the interactive character of any research situation to detect changes in detail, clearing the different phases of the research process (e.g. Kaschuba 1999). Furthermore, this enabled the recognition of patterns in my own perception of the subject, my relationship with the research participants as well as the general decision-making during the research process. Considering the recommended (self-)reflexivity of the researcher about the development of her work and her role in relation to her research participants (Amborn 1993, Crapanzano 1980, Schmied-Kowarzik and Stagl 1993), these instruments have a fundamental consciousness raising character in the research process. I employ these notes to record observations, activities, reports, protocols by memory, questions, further thoughts and ideas; as well impressions, feelings, fears and hopes (cp. Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte 1999, Weiss 1999).

All notes were taken by hand or typed directly into the computer. Many abbreviations were used and constantly new ones invented. I wrote in a mix of Portuguese, German and English, which reflects my daily life and its tongues at that time: Portuguese is the local and research language, German my mother-tongue, English is for me a kind of lingua franca, the internationally oriented language of work.

1.4.1.2 Analysis of the empirical material

The analyses and interpretations of the research material follow the hermeneutic approaches of the Social Sciences. Particularly relevant are the methods developed in the context of Oral History, Hermeneutics and Interpretative Paradigm (cf. Bernard 1998, Dunaway and Baum 1996, Garfinkel 1967, Jung and Müller-Doohm 1995). The interaction with the research participants and the development of our relationships during the research process are also integrated in the analysis.

As a qualitative anthropological research my study follows a multi-layered approach regarding the use of research techniques. The circular process of data collection, analysis and further empirical activities motivated by the first results and conclusions is a characteristic of ethnographic research (Kaschuba 1999), asking for a constant development

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53 I also spent half a year in Bradford, UK, with a pre-doctoral scholarship, later I lived a while in Australia and Malta, where part of this Thesis was written.
54 For a more detailed exploration of these methods see my MA-thesis, see Hellermann and Müh 2000.
of the methods in the field. Known also as 'interactive model' of data collection and analysis, it is widely applied and used in qualitative studies in the Social Sciences as described by Huberman and Miles (1994). Thus, understanding the anthropological research situation as a process and circle enables the researcher to adjust her instruments and analytical concepts according to the necessities of the field and in interaction with the researched persons. Accordingly, I modified and refined some research questions and methods were during my research. My continuous provisional analyses allowed the development and correction of further actual lines of research – this in full correspondence to the research participants' daily life experiences and the ongoing research process (cf. Berg 1998).

1.4.2 Methodology in practice: Fieldwork

1.4.2.1 Language and 'shared foreignness'

The conversations and interviews with the migrant women were conducted in Portuguese. Only one research participant preferred to talk in English: ALINA worked in the Ukraine as a secondary school teacher in Russian and English. She was excited to speak English with me. ALINA explained that she does not have many opportunities to talk English in Portugal, and that she hoped to maintain her fluency in English through speaking with me. Nevertheless, her command of Portuguese is also fluent. As all my research participants had been living in Portugal for at least one year, all spoke Portuguese. Most women had to cope on their own in Portugal from the beginning on and consequently had to learn Portuguese quickly.55

The use of Portuguese as my main research language was a helpful tool: in that both research participant and researcher communicated in a foreign tongue, Portuguese was a neutral medium between us. Together, we could laugh about our mistakes and invented expressions, and we both used hands, facial expressions and words in other languages in our conversations. Portuguese thus turned into a very creative tool, which also placed

55 I will look at this in more detail in chapter 3.
56 This is a significant difference to many male migrants from Eastern Europe in Portugal: Most men find work on construction sites and are, usually, part of a larger and relatively stable group of compatriots. Women on the other hand work mostly individually as domestic workers in private houses, as cleaning or caring personal, in restaurants or as sex workers.
research participants and researcher on the same level, at least linguistically. I experienced this as a very positive side-effect within the research process. The Portuguese language was neither 'their' nor 'my' native tongue, and this helped to ease the communication between us, across different cultures, experiences and roles. Our 'shared foreignness' in Portugal and with the Portuguese language often helped as a can-opener, so important in ethnographic research\textsuperscript{57}. Both were intrinsic conditions of my research, which turned into powerful and positive tools creating proximity and, to some extent, mutual identification.

In fact, various research participants – like Alina, João, Gabriela, Rodica – told me openly that they would have never revealed so much about themselves, with all details, or commented on certain issues to a Portuguese person. I believe too that most research participants would have been much more careful and cautious with a Portuguese researcher. But more, the women did not perceive me as a member of the Portuguese society. They understood themselves and me as outsiders, though they saw me as being very privileged. After knowing some of the research participants over time, some women told me that they respected me because I was also working for my living and not just living of somebody else. This too was a positive side-effect for my research, the research participants could identify with me – at least to some extent – as being a foreigner in Portugal, having to work for my living, and struggling also with Portuguese particularities. I do not think it is appropriate or fair to compare or level my life and work situation in Portugal at all with that of my research participants, who certainly have a very different and precarious standing within the Portuguese society, while I was very privileged; however, some women emphasised this as similar experiences between them and me, and saw this as something positive, connecting us. I believe that this perception of a 'shared foreignness' also helped in the process of mutual trust building between the research participants and myself. As mentioned before, I was also very open about my life, and told the women much about myself personally. I do not think that this type of qualitative research, wanting to look at personal experiences, works without a certain level of reciprocity between research participants and researcher.

\textsuperscript{57} The notion of the can-opener was termed by Collier and Collier 1986 in regards to Visual Anthropology; I think it is a very useful term and worthwhile to be used also in "normal" ethnographic fieldwork.
1.4.2.2 On informality, memory protocols, and sympathy

Informal encounters and meetings played a central role in my empirical study, in combination with extensive memory protocols directly afterwards. The frequent meetings allowed the intensity and deepness of our personal contacts; this had very positive consequences on the quality of the information.

Many migrant women were undocumented and had therefore concerns regarding the use of a tape recorder and camera, in particular when talking about themselves and their lives. In most cases, the informality of our meetings in combination with the extended use of memory protocols (instead of recording) turned out to be the only possibility to talk and engage on a deeper level with the women and get to know about them and their migration trajectory, their families and their fears and hopes. Whenever I taped our conversations, there was an artificial feeling, the women talked differently then before recording. When recording, they hardly spoke – and only started to freely talk when the recorder was turned off. Thus after a while I stopped recording at all. Mutual sympathy and interest between the research participants and myself was a similarly important ingredient for our conversations to be 'successful' for the purpose of this research and Thesis.58

1.4.2.3 Access to the field: First contacts

The 'entry to the field' is of importance in qualitative research and of special interest in Anthropology (Kaschuba 1999: 206, 210, Lindner 1981). It reveals much about the practical application of the methodological design and the 'first contact' between research participants and researcher. When I arrived in Portugal, I tried to get in touch with migrant women in many different ways. I approached NGOs and other groups that work with migrants and/or with women, as well as religious communities (Orthodox, Catholic). I have to say that my endeavours in these areas were, all in all, not very successful even though they consumed a great deal of my time.

The strategy for getting in touch with migrant women from Eastern Europe – a strategy, which I liked the least and felt at most times very uncomfortable with – was in the end the most successful: I am referring here to the strategy of directly addressing and

58 Ethical aspects and concerns that came up during fieldwork will be addressed below, see section 1.4.3 later in this chapter.
talking in public to women who I had not met before, on the streets, in the metro, in a shop. I was reluctant to do this as I find this approach very offensive and aggressive, somehow like 'chatting someone up'. Certainly, this was not the way I wanted to meet the women I was interested in, and I hesitated for a long time. However, after many months trying – quite unsuccesssfully – to get in contact with migrant women through organisations and existing social structures and networks, I started to be quite frustrated and desperate about my endeavour. I had tried approaching so many organisations and people – and yet, I had hardly managed to talk with any migrant woman, just with a hand full of migrant men, mostly from African countries, and with many Portuguese officials and NGO members. I was very grateful for all these contacts and conversations, I had received a lot of interesting information and some insider knowledge. I had also gone to demonstrations and public activities – yet even through these I was unsuccessful in finding research subjects.

At that time, I re-read Nigel Barley's "The Innocent Anthropologist: Notes From a Mud Hut" (1983), which helped in some moments to laugh at myself, to recognise the funny and absurd sides of my – almost desperate – fruitless intents to get in touch with 'my people'.

Finally, I decided that I simply had to start to talk directly to some of the many Eastern European women who I saw almost daily on public transport, on the streets and in shops. I planned to talk to one woman working at the cash of a 'Russian' supermarket in Lisbon; she had smiled a few times in a very friendly way to me. I had observed before that she used to sit at the cash reading a book in Cyrillic letters while waiting for clients, which I really liked. I was very nervous to make contact with her regarding my research, and it took me two visits to the supermarket before I dared to talk to her. It is not that I am terribly shy in general, more that I disregard this strategy, it feels like soliciting. I see this approach in particular as difficult and ambiguous in the context of migrant women in Portugal where the stereotype of the migrant woman as a sex worker is very active and widespread (cp. chapter 6). That's why my reluctance to use this as a method to meet the women for my research. Finally, I talked to the woman working at the checkout at the grocery store – and she was very interested and open. To my great surprise, she almost seemed to be happy that I talked to her and was interested in her! We met a few days later and ALINA and I soon became friends beyond a research relationship.
From then on, I learned to overcome my hesitations for this type of strategy did prove to have the best results. I then used this strategy more often and started to talk more easily to women on the street, in shops, and on the train. Generally, the women's reactions were very friendly, and most were willing to meet me and talk about their life and migratory experiences. On the whole, contrary to what I thought, the women did not feel offended at all. Actually, the opposite was true: most women said they were glad that finally someone was interested and listening to them and their situation, problems and dreams. Usually, I introduced myself like this:

"Olá, sou Christiane. Estou a fazer uma pesquisa sobre mulheres imigrantes cá em Portugal e escrevo uma tese. Não sei se teres interesse, mas talvez podíamos encontrar outro dia para falar um pouco sobre a tua vida e as tuas experiências cá? Podíamos ir a dar um passeio ou ir tomar um café, por exemplo?".

In this way I managed to get in contact with many women. Even addressing some very spontaneously, even if I continued to be uncomfortable with this approach. However, it proved to be a very successful strategy. I still would have preferred to meet the women in a different context, without 'chatting them up', but I learned that theory and the ideal of fieldwork and its methodology are sometimes not the same as being actually in the field. At least my research participants did not seem to mind the way our first contact happened, and this is important too.

Another successful way I found to get in touch with migrant women was through friends and work colleagues. I worked as a part time teacher in the German secondary school in Lisbon and as a lecturer at various universities in Lisbon. After having heard that I was working on a PhD-thesis on migration, some Portuguese and international colleagues told me that they employed migrant women as domestic workers. Once knowing a bit more about my research interests, a few provided me with contacts through their employees – but interestingly, I never was able to talk directly with any of my colleagues' employees. I

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59 'Hello, my name is Christiane. I am conducting a research on migrant women in Portugal. I am writing a Thesis. I don't know if you are interested but perhaps we could meet and talk a bit about your life and your experiences here in Portugal? We could go for a walk, or a coffee, for example?'

60 The employment of empregadas domésticas is very common in Portugal in past and present, see particularly chapter 4.1, 4.2 and chapter 5.
think that my colleagues prevented this deliberately, wanting to keep their private sphere clear from my intrusion: in these cases I was not only a neutral researcher that comes and goes but a work colleague they would encounter regularly. Also, I asked some of these colleagues (who were Portuguese, German, and British) if I could visit them at home for one hour to interview them and their employees. All stated that they thought my research was very interesting and that they would like to help me – and yet, without one exception, all gave polite but complicated excuses why this was not possible or why they would never have time for such an interview. It was clear that they felt very uncomfortable about being asked about their empregadas domésticas and did not want me to gain any insights in relation to their employees.

Once first contacts were established, the famous snowball effect started to work: My research participants put me in touch with other migrant women they knew through work, church or sharing a rented room. In general, the women were interested in meeting me. In deed, many of them had a great need to talk about their situation and experiences. Most women were willing and interested to meet again, often they asked for this before I could. Informal meetings followed, sometimes with other migrant women. With some women I was able to build up personal relationships full of trust that went beyond the mere research and interview situation and made me, at least temporarily, part of their daily life – and they part of mine: I visited them at their work place, we went to activities together, met together other migrant friends etc. Methodologically, this approach follows the "akteurzentrierte Biographieforschung" (actor-centred biographic studies/biographical research\(^\text{61}\)) (Schuhladen and Schroubek 1989, Voges 1987) and Oral History (Howarth 1999)\(^\text{62}\). Here, the migrant women are understood and appreciated as experts of their daily routine and life (Brüggemeier 1987)\(^\text{63}\).


\(^{62}\) I wrote more in detail about these approaches in my MA-thesis (Hellermann and Müh 2000).

\(^{63}\) In other qualitative studies, this approach showed already its usefulness and suitability for the research of migrant life and experiences, e.g. Lauth-Bacas 1994; Morone 1993.
1.4.3 Ethics

1.4.3.1 (Self-)Reflexivity and friendship

Throughout my empirical research, I tried to reflect on the interaction between the participating women and myself as much as possible. I tried to understand what was going on beyond the spoken word, beyond the action, and beyond our embeddedness within the present social, spatial, cultural surrounding in the very moment. My notebooks and computer files filled with entries full of observations, thoughts, and gradually I developed a continuously growing complex system of abbreviations for all kind of observations, moods, feelings and open questions. Apart from my efforts to get hold of and analyse every single encounter with my research participants and many other migrants I met, I tried to be as self-reflexive as possible.

Particularly with one woman from the Ukraine, over the time a warm friendship developed. The more we met, the more I noticed that most what she told me at that stage was directed to me as a friend, and not as researcher. We spoke about private and intimate details, and I realised that this was not to be written down, to be analysed, to be used in my thesis. I started to 'censor' the notes I took after meeting her, I started to omit large parts of what she had told me. It took me some weeks to come to terms with myself and how I thought I should handle this discrepancy between 'research relationship' and 'friendship'. One day I told her about my concerns regarding the information she had given me, and that I thought most of what she had told me as a friend and thus I would not use. She appreciated my open words, and confirmed that she had for some time seen me as a friend and not as a researcher. She said she was glad that I was not using the information she had given me – and admitted that she completely forgot that, originally, we had met through my research; though we did speak about my work, she had forgotten that she was participating too. I felt uncomfortable about this and wondered if I was abusing her friendship and trust. When I saw her next, I told her that I will not take any notes anymore about our meetings. That woman had become a real friend, and I decided that I would not use her as an 'informant' anymore as this would have been against my own ethical principles.

Though this decision – not to use private information and knowledge beyond a certain point of confidentiality – might read now as something obvious and perhaps even
'common sense', I found this to be one of the big challenges for me personally in my research. I had sleepless nights because of this 'ethical dilemma' as I experienced it, and in the course of which I even questioned my entire research project. In the end I was able to make a decision, and noticed later that this step helped me to see my relationship with other research participants clearer. I had learned some more sensitivity regarding the limits of a qualitative research relationship and friendship.

1.4.3.2 Roles and limits

In Anthropology there exists a long history of accounts of how the researcher is perceived by his/her informants. The variety of roles and functions which get attributed during the fieldwork and beyond (cp. Barley 1983, 1986; Kaschuba 1999): from police officer, secret agent or spy, to health professional, healer, money giver or as an innocent child – all these perceptions and many more might develop, in their positive and negative meanings. The challenge for the researcher is not to fall into the trap of confusing the roles – some assigned roles might be charming, others give power. This is one of the reasons why self-reflexivity is such an important instrument within anthropological and other qualitative research: it can enable the researcher to consciously avoid such temptations and to remain true to one's professional orientation. Other researchers work in pairs or teams, or exchange closely and regularly with other researchers to be able to correct such confusion of roles and blurred perceptions and developments of the research process.64

Like this 'classical' experience in Anthropology, I was perceived as working for the police, the SEIF65, the Portuguese government, the tax office. I sometimes encountered mistrust – with good reason, as many migrants had an unclear legal status, much work in Portugal is done informally (cp. chapter 3.2 regarding the informal labour market), and rumours about deportations amongst the former USSR-nationals occurred (though in fact,  

64 I was lucky to be in constructive long-term exchange and collaboration with a Polish sociologist and friend (Mikołay Stanek) in Madrid, two anthropologists from Norway (Cecile Øien) and Finland (Pirjo Virtanen) who did their fieldwork also in Portugal, a German political scientist in Lisbon (Dr. Nina Clara Tiesler). Through our similar positions as non-local researchers in Portugal and Spain we could support each other in our different fields and research contexts. Also my involvement with various Portuguese universities, particularly with the ISCTE Lisboa and Prof. Dr. Antónia Lima, was very helpful, as well as the contact with some human rights-NGO activists in Portugal. I am very grateful for all their support and help during the research process.

65 Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras, the Portuguese Aliens and Frontiers Service.
the Portuguese officials did not seem too concerned, and many sem papéis were later legalised, see chapter 2). Thus the cautiousness of many migrants was very understandable. In most cases, I was able to dissolve their concerns due to our frequent and private encounters, and the mutual trust which developed between the migrant women and myself. In that context, I spoke overtly with the women, I disclosed also much about myself and my life. Thus our research relationship in many cases was to some extent a 'give-and take' relationship, and the women directly asked me to also display parts of my life. I was aware of these developments. I think that many women felt comfortable telling me very intimate details (for instance in chapter 6) because I did so too. And for me, as a professional researcher, this was a good and ethical correct way to treat my research participants, to show my respect and appreciation for them. I believe that less involvement and openness from my part would have limited the women's braveness to speak with me about their lives, to allow me some insights into their present life in Portugal.

Yet, as outlined above, the limits between research and friendship became also clear. I also noted that I could not meet some of the women's expectations and hopes: I could not help to legalise their status, I could not loan money, I could not help to find better work places. What I could do was to refer them to institutions that might be able to help (like NGOs and churches) and to explain which Portuguese offices can help in which way and what was the migrants' rights. Many times I wished I could help more.

Sometimes it was hard to distance myself from my research participants' problems and fears. After every encounter I was writing my notes for hours, after which I needed to detach and disengage my head and heart. This was often difficult – running and long walks helped.

1.4.3.3 ‘Honour’, independency and Who-pays-the-bill

Frequently, the financial aspect in our encounters was to some extent tricky: Generally when we met for a coffee and cake, I paid the bill. I understood this as a fundamental part of the research setting, the women talk about their lives, and I offer the coffee (in my anthropological mind, I imagined this as a kind of symbolical balance, at least to some extent). During the first meetings, this was acceptable for most women – but not all. A few insisted to pay their own coffee, IÚLIA for instance did not allow me once to
pay for her. I was embarrassed and felt guilty (because she had anyway so little money and needed all for her daughter in Romania). Also symbolically, I thought the imbalance was too great, I felt guilty because I could not give her anything. I did not understand for a while why she was behaving like this. While other women – like ALINA and FIODORA – also insisted sometimes to pay for themselves, or even to pay also for my coffee (as it is habit in Portugal to pay for both), I could accept this easier when our relationship became closer and more like a friendship. In their cases, I understood the women's need to create more balance on the financial and symbolical level. Yet in JULIA'S case I struggled for a long time with her insistence to pay for herself. – because I knew her extremely difficult live situation. It took me some weeks to appreciate that this was her way to show and emphasise her independence. In hindsight, after completing the empirical research, I understand her better, and even admire her strength and independence. At a later point during my research, I spoke with ALINA about this (im)balance and the question of 'who-pays-the-bill'. It was she who spoke about this as "honour" (we spoke English), and she even said that she feels proud to be able to invite me too – and that it was from the beginning very important for her, not to be always the invited one but to give something to me too. That conversation with ALINA, sitting in the café in the little park at Campo dos Mártires da Pátria in Lisbon, still amazes me: The entire situation and its significance (independence, friendship, give-and-take, honour) was clear to her – while I was hanging on to my theoretical, supposedly 'ethically correct' ideas regarding 'why I think I have to pay'. The women I got to know through my research showed me the real life beyond research – and insistently showed me that they were much more than simply and only 'research participants'.
2 IMMIGRATION IN PORTUGAL

How to imagine Portugal as an immigration space?

Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece – the 'old' Southern EU-members - experienced in the last fifteen years a shift from being emigration to immigration countries, which some authors refer to as 'new migration' (e.g. Anthias and Lazaridis 2000, Castles 1993). During this transformation from sending countries to receiving countries, only Portugal continued being at the same time sending country of emigrants (Baganha 1997, Hellermann 2004a, 2006, Pires et al. 2010, Rocha-Trindade and Oliveira 1999). This unique situation and its impact on the Portuguese society became even more interesting under the perspective of the (still ongoing) construction and enlargement of the European Union. Consolidated in the Schengen treaty - the reducing of internal border controls in favour of intensified and strengthened external controls -, immigration has turned out to be one of the key issues in EU politics as well as in the public discourse (Boswell 2003, Geddes 2000, Jünemann 1999, Tomei 1997), also in Portugal (Leitão 2001a). In this context, the notion 'Fortress Europe' became a well known slogan, frequently used by politicians, scholars and the mass media, reflecting the increasing attention paid to the external borders, their political significance and control, e.g. by Frontex. The EU-borders must be understood in their

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66. In recent years, more than 20,000 individuals leave the country a year, in 2007 26,800 Portuguese emigrated, in 2010 23,700. Due to the high unemployment rate in Portugal, about 12% generally, amongst academics about 16% (2011), there is a significant emigration wave in the last years, with the tendency of a brain drain towards other EU-countries and towards Portuguese speaking countries. Cf. INE. Exact data will only be available after the Census 2011 will be evaluated. See also various newspaper articles: [http://portuguese-american-journal.com/thousands-emigrated-in-2010-%E2%80%93-portugal/](http://portuguese-american-journal.com/thousands-emigrated-in-2010-%E2%80%93-portugal/), [http://www1.ionline.pt/conteudo/128983-numero-portugueses-emigrar-disparou-41-no-ano-passado](http://www1.ionline.pt/conteudo/128983-numero-portugueses-emigrar-disparou-41-no-ano-passado), Jornal de Notícias, 03.02.2010: http://www.jn.pt/PaginaInicial/Sociedade/Interior.aspx?content_id=1485098 [all accessed 28.02.2012].

67. Cf. Brochmann and Hammar 1999. Newspapers, TV news, articles refer repeatedly to the 'Fortress Europe' and to Frontex, the comments and analyses are very diverse from supportive to critically negative, and it would go far beyond the scope of this introduction to give a proper overview, seeing that also all organisation, NGOs and scholars working on the topic of migration and asylum politics have their own standpoint. Cp. Amnesty International 2007, The Global Detention Project: [http://www.globaldetentionproject.org/home.html](http://www.globaldetentionproject.org/home.html) [accessed 28.02.2012]. See also Sperl 2007, Thielemann/El-Enany 2011. Interesting is also that Google offers 9,000,000 entries for 'Fortress Europe' and 2,030,000 entries for 'Frontex' [accessed 28.02.2012].
2 Immigration in Portugal

Under this perspective Portugal holds a unique and important role in the EU: with its long Atlantic coastline Portugal is geographically the borderland of the EU, serving as port and connection to *ultramar*, Portuguese for 'overseas'. Over the centuries until today Portuguese harbours serve as doors for people and goods to and from Africa, Asia, South and North America. Furthermore, Portugal's colonial past and the strong bonds to its former colonies – Angola, Brasil, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Macão, Moçambique, São Tomé e Príncipe – become very interesting in the context of the developing process of the EU. Therefore I chose Portugal for my research on migration. Though the research participants come from Eastern Europe, the post-colonial context of the Portuguese society has some influence also on their daily life and migration experience as will be shown later in this Thesis.

Portugal today has a total population of 10.636.979 inhabitants, of which 445.262 persons are counted as *população estrangeira*, 'foreign population'. This corresponds to 4.2 per cent of the total population (2010). The data vary slightly to 2004, with Portugal at that time having 10.356.117 inhabitants, of which 449.194 persons being legalised immigrants (permanent and temporary). Yet the percentage of immigrant population

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69 As defined above in chapter 1, footnote 9.

70 Cp. chapter 4 for my analysis of global and post-colonial aspects in Portugal.


73 For the demographic significance of immigration in Portugal see Peixoto *et al.* 2009, Rosa *et al.* 2003.


75 This number includes the foreign residents with *Autorização de Residência* and the holders of *Autorização de Permanência*, 'permit to stay', which was introduced in 2001 and is tied to a work contract. My calculation. Source of data: Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (SEF), March 2006 (last numbers available for 2004). Foreign residents: 265.361 (provisorial data from 2004, processed 05-08-2005). *Autorização de Permanência*: 126.901 (2001), 47.657 (2002), 9097 (2003), 178 (2004).
remains stable in the last decade, with 4.2 to 4.3 per cent of the total population in 2004 and 2010.

However, over and above these figures, official government sources estimate that there are another 50,000 or so undocumented immigrants (in 2004). There is still no reliable data available just indications. NGOs estimate that there are up to two times more immigrants without papers. The organisation "ATUA! Por uma Cidadania Global!" speaks of even 150,000 undocumented immigrants in Portugal. Thus it is safe to say that, in total, there are more than half a million immigrants in Portugal, including the *migrantes sem papeles* – the 'undocumented migrants', 'illegalised', 'with irregular status' –, which corresponds to 5 per cent of the current population.

The significant growth of immigration in Portugal since the mid-1990s becomes clear in the statistics when comparing the current figures to the 113,978 foreign residents in 1991 – then 1.6 per cent of the total population. This means that the immigrant population has quadrupled in only thirteen years. Due to the demand for manual labour in the building and service industry, partly connected to EU structural development funds and partly because of the 1998 EXPO World Exhibition in Lisbon, the immigration rate started to rise at the beginning of the 1990s, increasing further by the mid-1990s and attracting in particular migrants from Eastern Europe from 1995/96 on.
One of the characteristics of immigration in Portugal is the great heterogeneity of the migrants' origins (cp. Rosa et al. 2000). The so-called *traditional immigrants* come from the former Portuguese colonies in Africa – from Angola, Cape Verde Islands, Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé e Príncipe – and from Brazil. In fact, the political, economic, and cultural bonds between Portugal and its former colonies are still strong today. The 'new immigration' from Central and Eastern Europe, *A imigração de Leste*, started at the beginning of the 1990s and continues to this day. Most of these immigrants come from the Ukraine, Russia, Romania and Moldova. In lesser numbers, there are also immigrants arriving from other Central and Eastern European countries, such as Poland and Belarus, and a few from Asian Post-socialist countries like Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan. The term *A imigração de Leste* refers to immigrants arriving from both Central and Eastern European as well as Asian Post-socialist countries, and is used widely in Portuguese daily talk and the media.

Portugal as a new immigration country was – and partly still is – not prepared to receive immigrants. Immigrants remain at the margins of society. Even if immigration from the Ex-colonies has a relatively long history in Portugal, only a few policies or programs for social support and integration have been introduced and available before 2007, when the New Immigration Law was introduced, as will be explained below. This led to a very visible social and spatial exclusion of the African immigrant population (cp. Malheiros 2000, 2002), including nowadays the second or even third generation: slum-areas and clandestine housings can be found easily in Lisbon and Porto, the main Portuguese cities. Even in 2004, after almost a decade of significantly increased immigration flows, only a small number of services and support programs existed for immigrants. Predominantly, these services aimed at immigrants are connected to churches (e.g. Roman Catholic, Ukrainian or Roman Orthodox, Muslim) and some NGOs, which, as well as some local administrations, offer also Portuguese language courses – but only few immigrants attend them. The basic problem was that the information on these few existing programs simply did not reach most of the immigrants: a huge lack of communication is noticeable when talking with different immigrant groups. Also relatively complicated, inflexible and partly 'obscure' bureaucratic structures in Portugal make it difficult for newcomers to obtain the
information needed, as various immigrants told me (and, by doing so, they confirmed my own impressions and experiences). Besides, many immigrant women I met tended to keep a distance from any kind of institution or network, as I will explain more in detail throughout the following chapters.  

Today, in 2011, the governmental efforts are noticeable, also a consequence of the New Immigration Law 2007. The official online pages by ACIDI are well made and offer information and help to new immigrants, including a telephone translation service in sixty languages. The new integration course "Programa Português para Todos" started, co-financed through the European Social Fund (ESF). Also the Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (SEF), the Portuguese Aliens and Frontiers Service, presents itself online as help for immigrants: "SEF - a sua porta para o futuro", "SEF – the door to your future". SEF started to offer a special web page called "Info-imigrante" and a telephone hotline. All these efforts are consequences of the New Immigration Law from 2007, to which SEF refers directly in the headline of its website: "Agora os direitos dos imigrantes têm força de lei", "Today, the immigrants' rights are legally enforceable". Today official Portuguese immigration offices run by the SEF exist in the Ukraine and Russia (SEF 2010: 95). The question is if and in how far this information and potential support programmes do reach the migrants, and how strong the trust in these official Portuguese institutions and their offers is. During my research, most migrants I met tended to be very cautious or even suspicious with official institutions of any kind. The vast majority of migrants preferred to rely on information obtained otherwise, either through people they knew, i.e. social

See chapter 4.3 and chapter 6.


ACIDI, Alto Comissariado de Imigração e Diálogo Intercultural, the Portuguese High Commissioner of Immigration and Intercultural Dialog. The former name was ACIME, Alto Comissariado de Imigração e Minorias Étnicas. See http://www.acidi.gov.pt.

SEF offers also online some information, see http://www.sef.pt [both accessed 28.02.2012].


SEF runs these information offices since longer time already in the 'traditional' sending countries: Angola, Brasil, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Moçambique, San Tomé e Príncipe, cf. SEF 2010.

Cf. chapter 6.
networks, or through 'agents'.\textsuperscript{90} As explained later, even the local NGOs working with migrants were not really trusted by my research participants.\textsuperscript{91}

### 2.1 Numbers and immigration dynamics

Similar to other European countries, Portugal changed from being predominantly an emigration country to being a receiving society. The situation changed in particular in the mid to late 1990s (see Cordeiro 1997, Pires 2002). While in 1992 123,612 migrants\textsuperscript{92} lived in Portugal (1.6\% of the total population\textsuperscript{93}), the number almost quadrupled to 434,548 individuals in 2003\textsuperscript{94} (4.1\% of a total population of circa 10.4 million\textsuperscript{95}).

Not only the direction of the migration flux changed in the last decade but also the main countries of origin (national composition). Previously, the so-called 'traditional' immigrants in Portugal came from the lusophone African Portuguese ex-colonies (Angola, Cabo Verde, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, San Tomé y Príncipe) and from Brazil. In the 1990s the 'new' immigration began from Central and Eastern Europe as well as Asia, which is called usually a imigração de Leste in Portugal, 'the immigration from the East'. The migrants from Central and Eastern Europe\textsuperscript{96} alone represent currently nearly a quarter (24.1\%) of the total legalised immigrant population in Portugal. And yet, the significance of this immigration is regularly not perceived, or ignored. For instance, in 2006 the economically oriented newspaper Diário Económico wrote\textsuperscript{97}: "A proporção de imigrantes em Portugal é pouco significativa", "the proportion of immigrants in Portugal is hardly significant". In fact, the article's data is wrong and claims falsely that immigrants only make up 2.3\% of the population. It does not mention a single word about immigrants from

\textsuperscript{90} See chapter 6.4 for various 'service providers'. 
\textsuperscript{91} Cf. chapter 6 for details and analysis, 
\textsuperscript{92} Source of data: Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (SEF), Portugal.
\textsuperscript{94} Source: SEF. It includes the holders of the Autorização de Residência (AR) in the year 2003 and the concession of the Autorização de Permanência (AP) during the years 2001 (granted to 126.901 persons), 2002 (47.657) and 2003 (9.097).
\textsuperscript{95} Census 2001: 10.356.117 inhabitants. Source: INE 2002, final data.
\textsuperscript{96} This number is for illustration purposes only and calculated by me, source: SEF. I included migrants from the following countries: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Russia, Serbia and the Ukraine.
Eastern Europe but refers only to immigrants from the PALOP countries\textsuperscript{98}, the UK and Spain. That article exemplifies the strong ignorance and eclecticism amongst some of the Portuguese media and public regarding the 'New immigration'. Further, it does not pay attention to the earlier published fact that "Imigrantes já produzem 7% do PIB português", immigrants produce already 7% of the Portuguese GDP.\textsuperscript{99} Interestingly, the article emphasises at the same time that Portugal benefits from the immigrants due to their age structure\textsuperscript{100} and their tendency to be highly qualified.

The immigration from Eastern Europe started to rise in 1995/96 (cf. Portella 2001); most migrants at that time were males and working in the construction area. However, until 2001 the imigrantes de Leste did not leave significant traces in the statistics due to their over-all undocumented status.\textsuperscript{101} In 1997 only 348 Russians were registered officially in Portugal, 311 Bulgarians, 186 Polish, 147 Romanians and 83 Ukrainians, (only mentioning the biggest national groups).\textsuperscript{102} The more realistic dimension of the immigration from Eastern Europe only became visible in 2001 after the introduction of the Autorização de Permanência (AP), the temporary 'permission to stay', which was only granted when having a current work contract. The AP allowed many migrants from Eastern Europe to legalise their stay in Portugal.\textsuperscript{103} As a result, the large scale of the immigration from Eastern Europe became 'suddenly' visible in the statistics: the immigrant population counting 207,587 individuals in 2000 had grown to 350,898 individuals in 2001\textsuperscript{104} – this is

\textsuperscript{98} PALOP: “Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa”, African Countries of Portuguese Official Language. These five PALOP-countries are former Portuguese colonies: Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Moçambique, São Tomé e Príncipe.
\textsuperscript{99} The original article 'Imigrantes já produzem 7% do PIB português' was published online, http://www.acime.gov.pt/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1337 [date of access 05.05.2006]. Today it can be found under http://www.aipa-azores.com/noticias/ver.php?id=245 [accessed 28.02.2012].
\textsuperscript{100} The positive demographic impact of the immigrants in Portugal elaborate Rosa et al. 2003.
\textsuperscript{101} The only statistical "hints" were the relatively high numbers of Eastern Europeans nationals who where expelled from Portugal in the 1990s till 2000 due to their irregular stay and work in Portugal. Cp. Malheiros and Baganha 2001, Portella 2001. See Leitão 2001b for information regarding the rights of "imigrantes em situação irregular", immigrants with an 'irregular [legal] status'.
\textsuperscript{102} SEF.
\textsuperscript{103} The Autorização de Permanência (AP) is tied to a work contract and granted for one year. Depending on the annual renewal, the AP can be renewed four times. Many migrants applied then for resident status. Thanks to the ‘Nova Lei da Imigração’, the New Immigration Law in 2007, many migrants could change their temporary permits (AP and long term visas) to a permanent resident status. This explains the change in the statistical structure. Cf. Appendix, table 1. Cp. also SEF 2010.
an impressive increase of 69%! According to the statistics from 2003, the *imigrantes de Leste* represent a total of 104,785 individuals\(^{105}\), about one quarter (24.1%) of the legalised immigrant population in Portugal. For comparison, the residents of the European Union represent only 16.06% of the immigrant population (69,805 individuals).

**Table 1.**\(^{106}\)
Migrants from Eastern Europe residing in Portugal in 2003 with *Autorização de Residência* (AR) or *Autorização de Permanência* (AP), by nationality

![Pie chart showing migration data](image)

Source of data: *Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras* (SEF); own elaboration.

According to the immigration statistics from 2001, the Ukrainians with 64,821 individuals were the largest national group (14.92%) of the legalised immigrants in Portugal. The next largest groups were the Brazilians with 64,295 persons (14.8%), the Capeverdians counting 62,487 persons (14.38%) and the Angolans 34,080 individuals (7.8%). The fact that the Ukrainian migrants formed the largest national immigrant group between 2001 and 2009, reflects the significant change in the migration scenario in

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\(^{105}\) This calculation and all following are my own elaborations, based on the statistics from the *Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras* (SEF) 2004 (provisional data for 2003, processed 24.5.2004). I include here the numbers of the current carriers of the AR and the concessions of the AP during the years 2001, 2002 and 2003.

\(^{106}\) Formerly published in Spanish in Hellermann and Stanek 2006.
Portugal. The Ukrainians represent by far the biggest national group from Eastern Europe. There are about five times more Ukrainians than Moldavians who represent the second largest national group from Eastern Europe with 12,912 individuals (2.97% of the total immigrant population). Further important groups in numbers are the migrants from Romania with 11,566 persons (2.66%) and from Russia with 7,626 persons (1.75%). There are 3,616 Bulgarians registered, 1,189 persons from Belarus, and 541 individuals from Poland.

Table 2:
Main immigrant groups by nationality, 2009

![Chart showing percentage of main immigrant groups by nationality. Ukraine: 12%, Romania: 7%, Moldavia: 5%, Brasil: 25%, Cabo Verde: 11%, Angola: 6%, Guinea Bissau: 5%, Other countries: 29%.]

Source: SEF 2010: 27

These numbers changed only slightly from 2001 until 2009, with the Brasilians now being the most populous immigrant community (116,220), followed by the Ukrainians (52,293).\textsuperscript{107} – reason for this change is that a large group of earlier undocumented Brasilians were able to finally legalise their stay in Portugal, which increased significantly the official number of Brasilian migrants. The number of Ukrainians meanwhile decreased about 12,000 individuals, and one can only speculate for the reasons: some Ukrainians will

\textsuperscript{107} SEF 2010, data of 2009.
have left Portugal for returning to the Ukraine but probably most went to other EU-
countries where the wages were higher than in Portugal – during my research quite many
spoke about their plans to go eventually elsewhere. It could also be that some might have
gained even Portuguese citizenship but I could not find data for this speculation. And yet,
the Ukrainians still form the second largest immigrant group in Portugal, followed by
migrants from Cape Verde (48.845), Angola (26.557), Moldova (20.773), Romania
(32.457), and in much lesser numbers from Russia, Bulgaria, Belorussia and Poland (SEF

2.1.1 Feminisation of migration in Portugal

The "feminisation of migration" (Boyd 2006, Geddes 2000, Papastergiadis 2000) has
also taken place in Portugal. Yet, the awareness that 48 per cent of the immigrant residents
are women (in 2009) has only slowly reached Portuguese society and public discourses on
immigration. Until recently, some official national statistics on immigration issues ignored
completely the gender of the immigrants (e.g. SEF 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004: Autorização de
Permanência).\footnote{This changed only in the latest immigration statistics by SEF, in 2009. Cp. SEF 2010: 29, 31, 32.} It is also important to note that only a few academic researchers studying
immigration in Portugal thus far have considered gender or focused on women – though in
the recent years there has been a notable increase in the amount of research being carried
aspects such as on female genital mutilation practises amongst African immigrants in
Portugal (Martingo 2009), research on HIV-positive pregnant migrants women (Lopes
2007), about practises of family planning of migrant women from East Timor (Manuel
analyses the image of female migrants in the Portuguese media, Abranches (2007) looks at
Muslim women in Portugal. Taking into consideration that relative late start of academic
interest in the topic of migrant women in Portugal, a parallel can be drawn to the continuing
disregard of women and/or gender aspects in international migration studies, which earlier
Nora Räthzel called "silence" (1992: 29), while Floya Anthias and Gabriella Lazaridis
labelled this phenomenon in the Mediterranean context as "invisibility" (2000: 1). The
tendency in spite of the fact that numbers and statistics worldwide illustrate the feminisation of migration is evident.\textsuperscript{110}

In Portugal, the public image of the stereotypical immigrant continues to be male, and works in the construction area; he is thought to be from Angola, or, more recently, also from the Ukraine. If at all, immigrant women are perceived and imagined mainly as sex workers, be they from Brazil, Africa or Eastern Europe – the mass media reinforces this image year after year.\textsuperscript{111}

\subsection*{2.1.2 Immigrants at work}

Immigrants work in Portugal mostly in the service industry, and, in rural areas, in the agricultural sector. While a lot of migrant men get jobs in the construction industry, women work as cleaners, in the kitchens of restaurants and hotels.\textsuperscript{112} Once their command of Portuguese improves, they can also find jobs as waitresses and at the cash counters of supermarkets. However, the predominant niche for immigrant women in Portugal has become domestic work and the demand for empregadas domésticas in the upper and middle class is very high throughout the country (Hellermann 2005a). Consequently, almost all migrant women I met worked at least for a while as internas, live-in maids. In particular at the beginning of their stay in Portugal these jobs are attractive to women migrating alone as they include a place to stay and usually their meals, allowing them to save on the cost of rent and food. Furthermore, some migrant women also work in the sex industry, some in a situation of forced prostitution, with these women coming mainly from Brazil and non-Portuguese speaking African countries like Senegal and Chad. Other women are victims of trafficking, and these come mainly from Brazil and Eastern Europe (cf. Neves 2003).


\textsuperscript{111} Cf. chapter 3 for more details.

\textsuperscript{112} This is just a short introduction, for details see chapter 3.
2.2 Publications and current state of knowledge

Portugal as a receiving society plays only a marginal role in European and international research on migration. In the Southern European context, more work is focused on Spain and Italy (cp. Anthias and Lazaridis 1999 and 2000; Izquierdo 2000).

In Portugal, the public and, later, academic awareness on immigration issues started to rise only a few years ago as explained above. This has to be seen in strong contrast to the relatively well-researched Portuguese emigration (e.g. Brettell 1982/1995, Malheiros 2011, Monteiro 1994, Peixoto 2004, Pires et al. 2010, Rocha-Trindade and Oliveira 1999)\(^{113}\), including new research on Portuguese return migration (Neto 2010, Queirós and Madureira Pinto 2010). However, some recent work regarding immigration can be found as for instance sociological and anthropological publications focusing on the 'traditional' immigrants from the former colonies (Constant 2009, Cordeiro 2004, Crause 1998, Machado 2002, Saint-Maurice 1997, Sardinha 2005). Other studies offer analyses of the political discourse regarding the construction of an "immigrant problem" in Portugal (Oliveira 2000), racist practices (J.F. Marques 2007, Rosário et al. 2011, Vala et al. 1999), stereotypes (Matias 2010) and the reciprocal images between migrants and the Portuguese (Lages et al. 2006). There has also been new research focusing on the second generation of migrants (e.g. Pires 2009, Seabra et al. 2011), questions of schooling (Marques 2005, Silva and Gonçalves 2011) and health aspects (Fonseca and Silva 2010, Pussetti 2009). Attention is also paid to the economic impact of immigration to Portugal (Oliveira 2004, Ferreira and Rato 2000).

In 2006, my colleague Mikołaj Stanek, a sociologist, and I wrote a joint article, comparing the current state of research on immigration in Spain and Portugal, noting the following:

En el caso de los estudios portugueses se puede observar que, en gran medida, los llamados inmigrantes 'del Este' se consideran como un conjunto homogéneo sin tener en cuenta su diversidad interna. Creemos que esto está relacionado con un hecho que ya enfatizamos anteriormente: los trabajos realizados en Portugal muestran un interés

\(^{113}\) The Portuguese Observatório da Emigração provides excellent information on this topic online, including an updated list of publications, see http://www.observatorioemigracao.secomunidades.pt/np4/11 [accessed 28.02.2012].

Studies looking at gender aspects in migration are still very scarce in Portugal (Brito 2001), and publications covering the new immigration and gender very singular (Catarino and Oso 2000, Hellermann and Stanek 2006, Miranda 2009). Regarding the immigration from Eastern Europe, I did some research on gender aspects of this new migration (Hellermann 2004, 2005) and on the role of social capital (2006), which will also be a focus of this Thesis\textsuperscript{116}.

\textsuperscript{114} "In the case of the Portuguese studies, one can observe that – on the whole – the so-called imigrantes de Leste are considered as being a homogeneous group without paying attention to its internal diversity. We believe that this is linked to a fact which we pointed out earlier [in that article]: the research realised in Portugal shows a main interest in the economic aspects of the Eastern European immigration and from the point of view of the receiving society. Therefore, the internal differences of the immigrant groups are secondary compared to the analyses of the changes and dynamics of the immigration flows in general and their impact on the Portuguese society, like the question of insertion in the labour market, and business activities etc". My own translation from the original Spanish into English.

\textsuperscript{115} For an early quantitative approach see Cordeiro 1997.

\textsuperscript{116} See chapter 4.3.
Though some interesting research exists, one has to note that the 'new immigration' from Eastern Europe to Portugal is still hardly researched (cp. Rosa et al. 2000, Pires 2003). Nevertheless, immigration as an actual issue and research field has become more recognised in Portugal, and nowadays more scholars are interested in the topic. Consequently, in the last years more conferences and workshops on the topic of immigration, including from Eastern Europe, have started to take place in Portugal. The governmental *Observatorio de Imigração*\textsuperscript{117} tries to bring together scholars from various disciplines and publishes online a regularly up-dated overview on ongoing research on immigration in Portugal. More publications can be expected over the next years. The awareness and the interest in new immigration trends is growing – and so is the need to know more about this significant feature of the Portuguese society today, reflecting a part of European life.

### 2.3 A single collective from 'the East'?

From a certain point of view, the women who are the participants of my research are part of a collective: as pointed out above, *A imigração de Leste* has had a growing impact on Portuguese society since the mid-1990s and the immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe formed the largest legalised group of immigrants in 2003\textsuperscript{118} as shown earlier in this chapter. However these Eastern European migrants – referring to the 104,785 individuals – come from more than 25 different countries\textsuperscript{119}. In spite of their diversity, one can observe a strong tendency in the Portuguese media, in public as well as academic discourses, to construct one single collective of 'Eastern European' migrants. As a consequence, the differences which exist amongst the immigrants are generally not recognised. Almost no interest is paid to the variety of national origins, ethnic belongings, self-identifications, amongst the many other factors of difference such as education, profession, class, religion, gender etc. (cf. Hellermann and Stanek 2006). Under such a perspective, the variety and diversity between individuals becomes invisible. The following example explains this:

\textsuperscript{118} SEF 2004, cf. footnote 105 above in this chapter.
\textsuperscript{119} SEF 2010.
For example, **Gabriella** and **Dina** are both migrant women from Eastern Europe, and both work in Portugal as domestic workers. They would probably be regarded as similar cases in conventional Portuguese discourses. However, looking closer reveals that their background, as well as their current situation, is quite different: **Gabriella** is a pottery designer from Romania with a working-class background. She is a practicing Orthodox, married and the mother of three teenage daughters. **Dina**, on the other hand, is a paediatrician from Siberia (Russia) and, as a practicing musician and journalist, she is also an active member of her hometown's intelligentsia. She is an atheist, widowed and mother to a young son. Since migrating, both women, however, work as domestic workers and, at first glance, may appear, to the fleeting eye, as being 'the same'. But even on this level, distinctions can be made: **Gabriella** lives with the family that employs her and works six to six and a half days per week and has hardly any free time. In order to migrate to Portugal, she had to quit her permanent job. This has left her uncertain whether she will find another position back in Romania again. **Dina** on the other hand, lives in a rented room, apart from her employers, and works for a clearly defined number of hours. This allows her to have regular free afternoons and evenings in which she can enjoy some of the cultural possibilities she finds in Lisbon. She knows that she will find a position as paediatrician when she returns to Siberia and she is certain that her job will then finance her and her son's living costs. Similarly, their reasons to migrate are quite different: whereas **Gabriella** had to leave her home-country due to financial hardship, **Dina** said she wanted to see and live in Western Europe for some years, and perhaps find a new partner there.

**Gabriella** and **Dina** demonstrate that the levelling of the diversity of the migrants has to be seen and approached critically. To see these migrant women simply as part of 'the collective from the East' not only neglects their differences but also takes only a perspective from above, the macro-perspective. The problems associated with such a perspective are well known.

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120 This is the perspective taken in many approaches to research migration, their social networks, social capital etc. in empirical and theoretical research, cp. chapter 1 and 4.
to social scientists working qualitatively: it reduces the experiences and problems of individuals, neglects differences, simplifies complex contexts and connections, and fails to show dynamics and changes. (FN)

My Thesis focuses on the position of the individual – embedded in the wider, societal structures – but nevertheless with the aim to understand the individual’s experience of their social context and the possibilities of agency. The diversity of the immigrants de Leste will become evident throughout the following chapter.

2.4 How do (female) migrants enter the country?

It is interesting to pay attention to the diverse ways immigrants enter Portugal, particularly as these show strong gender differences (cp. Boyd 2006) as we will see in the following:

Most immigrants from the Portuguese African Ex-colonies (PALOP) and Brazil enter the country – at least when they arrive the first time – with a tourist or study visa, which are relatively easy to obtain due to bi-national agreements between Portugal and these Portuguese-speaking states. Many immigrants overstay their visa duration in the hope of being able to legalize their situation permanently somehow, sooner or later. A work visa offers for some immigrants a temporary solution: BARBARA for example is a woman who came from Brazil to Portugal as a tourist and then arranged a work contract as empregada doméstica, domestic worker; after that, she left Portugal for one week to obtain the visa and returned. This practice is common amongst many Brazilian and PALOP nationals, and known to the officials. Nevertheless, I emphasised already in this chapter that thousands of immigrants continue to be undocumented, many of them so-called 'overstayers' (of visas), hoping for future regularization possibilities.

The entrance to Portugal is in general more difficult for immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and other African, not Portuguese speaking, countries. It is not unusual to pay a couple of hundreds or thousand US dollars to 'agents' who arrange a Schengen or tourist visa\textsuperscript{121}, or in the case of Central and Eastern European migrants to smuggle them into the EU and through various countries to Portugal. Some of my research

\textsuperscript{121} Cf. chapter 3 and chapter 6 regarding the role of ‘os agentes’.
participants spoke overtly about the risks they had to face during their travel: even if in possession of a valid tourist visa, they may be stopped several times and offered 'protection' – meaning that they are threatened and charged – by different mafia-gangs operating within the EU. The existence and practice of human trafficking has become better known in the last years as well as the fact that many women from Central and Eastern European countries become victims of forced prostitution.

Many of the migrant women I met in Portugal were aware of these risks before their departure, in particular from the countries of the former Soviet Union (Russia, Ukraine, Moldova), and tried to take precautions. To reduce the risk that their passport might be taken away and they might disappear in these interceptions and 'controls' by mafia-gangs, some accepted rough conditions of transport on their way to Portugal: for instance, one of my research participants spent three days in the luggage boot of a bus; another had to cross the river Oder between Poland and Germany without knowing how to swim, and experienced then a similar journey to Portugal hidden in a bus.

Thus it seems that the major risk for female migrants from the former Soviet Union is not so much to cross various borders – particularly considering that many do have official entry permits – but more the interceptions and 'controls' by mafia groups during their journey. As flights are often far too expensive, migrants from Eastern Europe tend to come by bus, in vans or organised cars. The migrant women fear those mafia interferences certainly more than any police controls etc.

For Romanian immigrants – that is before Romania joined the EU – the journey was different: according to my research participants' accounts, most Romanians arrive in shared cars or vans. Usually they were without documentation thus for them it was a challenge to cross the various borders on their way. One woman told me laughingly that she was travelling with another woman and two men in a small car to Portugal, and whenever they saw a border control or police men they tried to look like happy couples on a holiday trip, holding hands, hugging each other, exchanging fancy smiles – though they did not know each other, they just 'booked' the same car-ride to Portugal. She said she had little to lose during that car journey, as Romania was already then in negotiation to join the EU, the

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122 Cf. chapter 6.3 on the service providers and possible links to the 'mafia'. In regards to their journey to Portugal, various migrants spoke about these controls particularly taking place within Spain, by 'Russian' groups of men. This was during the years 2000-2003, according to my research participants accounts.
police would have only sent them back, if caught on the way. Also in this context, some agencies seem to organise journeys to migrants' destinations; but according to my research participants, these were not threatening organisations, just simple 'service providers' – meaning they were not 'mafia' connected but still illegal and for profit.

Sub-Saharan African women arriving by plane to Portugal face a very different and serious problem: they might be sent back if they are suspected to be prostitutes in Portugal – even if their papers are in order, even if they have valid visa etc. Officials from the SEF (Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras, the Portuguese Aliens and Frontiers Service) are overseeing the airports and they do send 'suspicious' women straight back. There is no information about the criteria for this practiced selection process and what is understood as consistent indications or evidence for intended sex work. These practices appear to be purely racist and sexist based official actions and certainly not in accordance with international human rights. No numbers or estimations are available of how many women are sent back this way but stories of African women being sent back without having left the airport of Lisbon run through the discourses of immigrants in Portugal, and was repeatedly referred to by my research participants.

Therefore, I argue that the gendered experience of migration starts already in the migrants' home countries, continues during their journey as well as upon arrival in Portugal. It continues and shapes the immigrants' daily life as will be shown in more detail in the following chapters of this Thesis, all based on the concrete experiences and accounts of my research participants.

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123 The risk of being detained or send back is not only a rsik for women, also men are victims of unfair and unjustified treatment by the SEF, as lawyer and journalist Virgilio Brandão points out correctly in his article (2008).
124 For airports as instrument of immigration control see Miles 1999.
3 WORK AND SOCIETY

In this chapter I explore the conditions of work that migrants in Portugal encounter, and analyse how the research participants deal with different situations and challenges. Throughout the chapter, I refer to some specific cases and their thematic significance more in detail in order to reveal a more complex picture of the situation of the women. This is to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the various layers of circumstances, experiences and decisions, which, in most cases, cannot be reduced to a single reason-consequence step. Instead, exploring the more comprehensive narration of a situation helps to show the dynamic and changing facets that built up over a certain amount of time and with increased exposure to the receiving society in general, or through intensified experiences with Portuguese employers in particular.

As an introduction to the broad field of work and society, I will address first a fundamental topic – Why and how did the research participants come to Portugal? –, and then explain one relevant feature of the Portuguese society that has significant impact on the migrant population: the multiple segmentation of the labour market. This is necessary for a more complex understanding of the social, legal and political context – and its limitations – in which the migrants are creating their (work) life in the receiving society.

3.1 Destination: Portugal

Why do migrants from Eastern Europe come to Portugal? Did my research participants choose to migrate to the small country at the Atlantic Ocean? How did they travel?

From the mid-1990s on, Portugal began to attract migrant workers from Central and Eastern Europe. At that time the country needed primarily the migrant labour force for mão-de-obra, manual labour, in the construction industry, which suddenly boomed due to various financial stimuli and investments, mostly from multi-national funding bodies like the EU. The migrants needed for these jobs were mostly male, and consequently the first larger numbers of migrants from Central and Eastern Europe were predominantly constituted by men. The migration flow from the East to the Atlantic Ocean continued into the new millennium. A few years after its beginning, it increasingly attracted more women.
Many accounts of my research participants indicate that transnational networks played a major role in spreading the word that there were jobs in Portugal, and becoming legalised was relatively easily. This led to a situation where, on the one hand, thousands of migrants from Central and Eastern Europe came to Portugal in search for work and a better quality of life, yet at the same time a significant part of the Portuguese population continued to leave the country towards France, Switzerland, Luxembourg and other 'Northern' European places, as well as towards Canada and Brazil, for improved chances of making a living there. The fact that Portugal is an immigration and emigration country at the same time results in the interesting phenomenon that the Portuguese emigrants occupy often the same jobs abroad that Eastern European immigrants do in Portugal – which is mainly working in the construction and service industry, and lower level work positions.

Generally, my research participants did not aim to go to Portugal as their first choice or by choice at all. Many would have preferred to go to Germany or Italy. But they knew too, before departure, that it is much more difficult in those countries to work without papers. Also very important were the public controls, and specifically, the possibility to get legalised was reduced in these countries, or not possible at all. Whereas in Portugal, so they heard, there would be fewer controls, perhaps more tolerance to the absence of papers and also some possibilities to get legalised sooner rather than later. This, again, indicates the existence and availability of transnational networks and their spreading of information between the 'new' immigration countries in Southern Europe and the Eastern European countries of departure. Some women then made their decision to go to Portugal on the belief that legalisation would be easier. In contrast, for other women, like Jekaterina Portugal as a destination was pure chance: she paid for a Schengen-visa, and got issued one for Portugal without being able to choose. All of these women I worked with emphasised in our conversations, often repeatedly, that Portugal would not have been their choice at all. A couple of women obtained work or study visas which can be renewed and allowed them to stay for a few years. Elena for example came to Portugal with a study visa; while attending a post-graduate degree course at a Portuguese university she has to also make her living and thus works 'illegally'. Some research participants entered the country with a short-term visa.

\[125\] Cp. chapter 2, Immigration in Portugal.
\[126\] Cp. chapter 2, Immigration in Portugal.
like a tourist visa, and then overstayed. These migrants usually arrived by airplane, only a few travelled overland. In some cases, the journey was purchased together with the visa, and in other cases the research participants had bought what I call a pre-arranged 'packet of services' which included also an arranged first place to stay and work.\(^{127}\) Other migrants had to enter Portugal illegally, hidden in buses or trunks of cars for many days on their journey. Those women who travelled to Portugal this way spoke of informal 'controls' throughout their journey from Eastern Europe, but particularly intensified in Southern France close to the Spanish border and throughout Spain and Portugal. One example of these informal 'controls', recounted by one research participant: After having stopped the vehicles, mostly Russian-speaking men with guns checked the travellers and their documents, and proceeded to ask intimate questions. The passengers had to pay for being able to continue their journey. One research participant\(^{128}\), a young attractive blond woman, told me that she was warned before her departure that some women simply disappear while travelling from Eastern Europe to Spain and Portugal, and thus she hid 'voluntarily' in the luggage boot of the bus for three days, from France to their destination place in Portugal. She said she never had felt such fear in her life and seriously regretted her decision to migrate to Portugal. "But this was only the beginning of the problems", she said to me in hindsight. Her situation in Portugal did not become easier, as I explore later in this Thesis.

In the following I shall explore the conditions of migrant work life in Portugal.

3.2 Migrant Work In Portugal

3.2.1 The Portuguese labour market: Triple segmentation

3.2.1.1 The informal labour market

A *economia clandestina*, the 'hidden economy', as the informal labour market is often called in Portuguese, shows a considerable economic significance in Portugal (Baganha *et al.* 1999, Sassen 1995). Experts estimate its impact about 20 to 24% of the Portuguese GDP (Gross Domestic Product, Bruttosozialprodukt) (Frey and Schneider 2000). Yet, Portugal is

\(^{127}\) In chapter 4.3 I look at some aspects of the migrants' journey to Portugal under the perspective of *social capital*, for instance the 'packet of services' that some migrant women had purchased before departure.

\(^{128}\) Though all names are changed throughout the Thesis, I decided here and on a few other occasions that it would be better not to identify the research participant to fully ensure their anonymity and personal security.
not a unique case. The phenomenon of a big shadow economy has to be placed in a larger historical, political and social context: the extensive informality of the labour market can be understood as characteristic of the Southern European countries, including the 'old' EU-15 member states (Baldwin-Edwards and Arango 1999, Mingione and Quassoli 2000, Reyneri 2001). In the context of my research this means that for both, autochthonous and immigrant workers, it is common to work without a contract, not paying taxes and social security etc (cf. SOS Racismo 2002). The difference is that many local inhabitants can choose – at least to a certain extent – to work informally, whereas immigrants have no other alternatives, as it is mostly impossible for them to find employment in the first (legal) labour market. In addition to the absence of _segurança social_, 'social security', unemployment benefits etc, this structural condition is a significant disadvantage for migrants as they need to have a valid work contract for the legalisation of their stay in Portugal. Furthermore, it is not unusual that legalised migrants are pushed back into illegalisation because their employers refuse to give a work contract, and the migrants are thus not able to renew their legal status in Portugal like the _Autorização de Permanência_. At the same time, many employers prefer to employ undocumented migrants as this makes the labour cost significantly cheaper for them.

### 3.2.1.2 Ethnicisation

We can observe a certain 'ethnic' segmentation of the migrant labour market in Portugal. In regards to employment possibilities, it makes a difference if a migrant comes from Africa, Asia or Eastern Europe, and what 'colour' their skin is – the migrant's skills and qualifications are less than secondary as my research shows. It is important to emphasise that in this context the notion 'ethnic' is not used as a self-description and self-identification by the migrants (cp. Eriksen 1993) but it is employed as an ascription from outside, by the Portuguese society and its categorisations of newcomers and _estrangeiros_,

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129 Cf. also 3.2.6 below on undocumented migrants.
130 Cp. Lazaridis 2000: 49 for a similar observation on Greece and Southern Europe in general. See also Reyneri 2003.
'strangers', 'foreigners'. Based on their – in some cases: visible – difference to an imagined and constructed 'ideal Portuguese', the migrants are categorised and subsequently placed into certain work areas. As a result, an ethnicisation of the migrants is placed upon them. At the same time, in the case of migrants from Eastern Europe, this means that they are recognised and labelled as being *de Leste*, from the East, without differentiating their place of origin, their nationality, their ethnic belonging and identification. Thus, in the Portuguese perception, it does not make a difference if the migrants come from Siberia, Kiev, Tiflis or rural Romania, they are simply *imigrantes de Leste*.

The homogenisation and levelling of migrants in combination with an exclusionary ascription of difference means also that, within the Portuguese context, one could, and should, speak of a very common and colloquial 'racialisation' of migrants. Through homogenised and homogenising categories 'races' are constructed that reproduce existing images and stereotypes uncritically; these are for instance *'os pretos'* or *'os negros'*; the blacks, *'os rusos'*; the Russians – referring to all migrants from Eastern Europe, *'os chinos'*; the Chinese – including all people from Asian countries, *'os ciganos'*; 'gypsies' – meaning the Roma people. There is hardly any public sensibility or awareness towards difference and differentiation. Complementary to these categories of *estrangeiros*, 'foreigners' – or in more positive anthropological terminology: Others – exists the equally homogenised, idealised and unquestioned construction of *'os Portugueses'*; the Portuguese, as a people, a

131 The literature on ethnicity is vast and offers a versatile mixture of different approaches and ideas. Thus, I will indicate here only some of the approaches to and perspectives on the issue that I find the most challenging. Excellent broad overviews to the contested concept of ethnicity, its partly controversial understandings, and related discourses like 'race', nation and social identity, given by Eriksen 1993 and Jenkins 1997. For the relationship between ethnicity and gender within political contexts see Andall 2003, Anthias 1992, Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992, Brah 1996, Charles and Hintjens 1998, as well as the 'Gender and Ethnicity' issue of Ethnic and Racial Studies 2000, Vol 23, Number 5. Floya Anthia has widely written about and challenged the notion of ethnicity, e.g. by incorporating ideas from post-colonial authors like Paul Gilroy and Stuart Hall, cf. Anthias 1998, and by linking ethnicity and class, see Anthias 2001. Castles 2000 examines ethnicity and migration in a global context. Questions of ethnicity and identity explore for instance Brah, Hickman and Mac an Ghaill 1999, and Brettell 2003a.

132 Cp. chapter 2.3.

133 For the concept of 'Othering' in anthropology, see James Fabian 1983, Johannes Fabian 1995, Kohl 2000.
race, a nation – as imagined community. This practice can be linked to post-colonial discourses of national identity and history; those will be explored further in the following chapter 4.2.

3.2.1.3 The gendered segmentation

Furthermore, the migrants’ access to both formal and informal labour markets is strongly gendered. *Men* find work mainly in the construction industry. Since the beginning of the 1990s in which strong pull-factors included the Expo ’98 (Lisbon World Exhibition) and the preparations for the Euro 2004 (European Football Championship). In these contexts various large buildings, stadiums, highways etc. were built. Additionally, the highway and railway network continues to be expanded and improved, partly in connection to those mentioned special events, partly with the aid of EU structural funds like the European Regional Development Fund, ERDF.

*Women*, on the other hand work mostly in the service industries: immigrant women clean offices and shopping malls, work in restaurants and hotels (service, kitchen, cleaning), and as *empregadas domésticas*, domestic workers, very often as *internas*, live-in maids. As *internas* work in particular women from Eastern Europe, Brazil and Africa. Some migrant women work in the sex industry as strippers, go-go dancers and sex workers. Some women work also in a situation of forced prostitution; according to the Portuguese NGO SOS Racismo (2002) this affects predominantly women from Brazil and non-Portuguese speaking African countries like Senegal and Chad. Some of these women are trafficked. Other women, in particular from Brazil and Eastern Europe, are also victims of

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134 Very interestingly, ‘the Portuguese’ see themselves as a non-racist nation, and put themselves in this context often in contrast to France. This self-idealisation of Portugal as a non-racist nation was part of the luso-tropicalismo ideology (Freyre 1933, 1940) promoted by the Estado Novo regime in the 1950s and 1960s under dictator António de Oliveira Salazar. Cf. Pineiro Iniguez 1999, Vale de Almeida 2000. See also http://blogarmageddon.blogspot.com/2010/06/o-luso-tropicalismo-de-gilberto-freyre.html [accessed 28.02.2012]. Though politically much changed in Portugal since the carnation revolution in 1974, the non-racist idea still is repeated without being challenged by many Portuguese.
trafficking (cf. Neves 2003). There is also evidence of male migrants work in the sex industry, serving in particular the gay market. I was told that some young Brazilian men are also trafficked into Portugal for this purpose, though the vast majority of trafficking victims are females.

There are also some exceptions from the basically gendered character of the Portuguese labour market. Migrant women and men work together in the following three sectors:

1) In the agricultural production. This is mostly to be found in the rural areas of Southern Portugal, Algarve, Alentejo, as well as in the Setubal region in the South of Lisbon;

2) As kitchen workers. Migrants wash the dishes, clean, cut, and cook in restaurants and hotels all over the country;

3) They work in small (family-)enterprises and shops, which are mostly run by migrant families from Asia (China, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh), often using extended family networks (Malheiros 1996). These shops can be found in all bigger and many smaller towns in Portugal.

Predominantly, migrant women and men in Portugal do heavy physical labour, often working overtime in precarious job conditions with irregular days off. The professional background and experience of the migrants is largely not appreciated. As a consequence, my research shows strong experiences of downward mobility and brain waste, as will be analysed in the following. Many migrants report of serious problems with their employers. For example, the employers' refusal to give a work contract reinforces the


136 I am aware that it is problematic to label – and thus, to construct – trafficked persons as being (only) victims and as passive objects. See discourses regarding victimisation, e.g. Kapur 2002, Kelly 2003.

137 For the consequences of migration for women see also Pedraza 1991.
migrants' undocumented status and consequently, their physical, social, legal, and emotional vulnerability. Physical threatening and abuse is common. Another frequent problem for migrants in Portugal are the low wages, as well as the practice to not pay open salaries. As many migrants do not have a work contract and/or a stay and work permit, they have no legal means to address the faults of their employers. NGOs working with migrants in Portugal have large documentations about this type of abuse and betrayal (e.g. SOS Racismo).

Further to this, not only the unpaid salaries are of concern to the migrants but also the poor, albeit expensive, Portuguese standard of living, as the following account illustrates:

The salaries are very low in Portugal, says LUDMILA, and she adds that this is not only for migrant workers but for the Portuguese too. Also the standard of living is very low: "Não é uma maravilha como pensei, como a minha amiga me conte", 'it is not fantastic as I thought, as my friend had told me'. LUDMILA reckons that life in general is very modest in Portugal. (FN 34).

LUDMILA’s observation is absolutely right: In spite of the low salaries, the cost of living (like rent, food, cloths) is expensive in Portugal, particularly in the cities. Within the EU, Portugal ranks on the 28th place regarding the standard of living, before Cyprus and after Slovenia. The low wages in Portugal influence also the life situation of the migrants and their future plans as this Thesis shows.

3.2.2 ‘Ethnic business’

In economy and migration theory, these types of shops and small enterprises are referred to as 'ethnic economy', which sometimes can also form an 'ethnic enclave' (cf.
Pedraza 1991, Waldinger et al. 1990, Waldinger 1993). One example of a successful Eastern European enterprise in Portugal is the so-called 'Russian' supermarket in Lisbon, a shop selling all kinds of Eastern European goods and delicacies, as well as books and videos. One research participant – who is an Orthodox believer from the Ukraine – told me that the owners were not Russians but Georgian Jews. These religious, ethnic and national distinctions and discriminations are important amongst the migrants but are not of any interest for the receiving society, who again perceives all migrants as the same, as explained above.

Another successful business run by an Eastern European migrant is Raisa's Agência Matrimonial in Lisbon.⁴¹ The owner, RAISA, is a woman from Moldova. She found a business niche with her marriage brokering/matchmaking and developed a very successful business, which is widely known and respected in Portugal, and often portrayed in the media.⁴² Though her business is not really 'ethnic', the owner used her freedom of not being Portuguese to start something unconventional without the moral restrictions that would have been an obstacle for most autochthonous people. In this example, the 'foreignness' of the owner enabled her to do something different, which would not have been acceptable for a member of the dominant society. Most of her clients are Portuguese. Thus the Moldavian woman knew how to use her migrant status constructively by opening and occupying a formerly not existing niche in the local labour market and service industry.

Both businesses demonstrate that there are possibilities for migrants to find niches within the Portuguese market. However, their importance for the employment of other migrants is limited due to the relatively small scale of the businesses compared to the large number of Eastern European migrants. Included in a similar restricted marginal place within the Portuguese labour market are the Russian newspapers, commercial translation services and the few Eastern European 'ethnic' restaurants. In Portugal, for the time being, the role of Eastern European ethnic business and ethnic enclave is not as commonplace as it is in other migrant communities. A lively trade oriented business culture is found in the Chinese or Indian-Bangladeshi as well as in some African communities that have a longer

Footnotes:
⁴² See also chapter 6.1.4.1.
immigration history in Portugal, as for example the Angolan and Capeverdian communities.\footnote{For ethnic business in Portugal cf. Malheiros 2008, Oliveira 2004.}

### 3.2.3 Migrant strategies to find work

After having shown the significance of the labour market segmentation in Portugal and the limitations set for migrants in general, I will next examine the ways women migrating alone manage to 'get a foot' into the labour market of the receiving society.

For women who arrive alone in Portugal and don't have extended family or friendship networks in Portugal, is the problem upon arrival that they need to find an immediate safe place to stay, and then to find work. Most women in this situation pay for an arrangement which fulfils both these needs. Later in the Thesis, I will analyse the migrants' arrival and the need to pay someone under the perspective of social capital.\footnote{See chapter 4.3.}

In my research, I was able to identify four strategies the research participants employed to find work. The migrants use these strategies at the beginning of their stay in Portugal. However, the same strategies are used also at a later stage of their migration trajectory: it is not uncommon that the migrants feel a need, or even necessity, to change their work place. This can have various reasons, as I will analyse below. Furthermore, I add also a fifth strategy, the search for additional work by migrants who are already established in Portugal and have a job, often as empregada doméstica interna, live-in maid, as I shall explain in the following:

#### 3.2.3.1 The use of service providers: 'Os agentes' I

Many women tell me that they had to use "agentes", 'agents', upon arrival in Portugal, as for instance FIODORA:

When FIODORA arrived in Lisbon, she did not speak any Portuguese and did not know anybody. Thus, she paid 300 € to a Russian speaking man she had met her first day in Lisbon and he immediately arranged for her a work place as a doméstica interna. When the employer began to harass her after two weeks,
FIODORA called the man and he quickly provided her with another job. (FN 88, 94)

These *agentes* FIODORA mentions are part of the so-called ‘Russian mafia’ in Portugal and operate as informal service providers: for cash, they also organise jobs (in Portuguese: *arranjar trabalho*), accommodation, documents (including visa and passports), medical help. Like FIODORA, some migrant women use their service at their arrival in Portugal for finding work and a place to stay. The migrants who cannot pay immediately are in debt to the agents and these agents make sure that the migrants pay later, often including interests. Other research participants paid *agentes* before leaving their home country in order to obtain a Schengen-visa or for a full 'packet of services', including travel, first stay and work.145

Interestingly, in our conversations all research participants distance themselves from these *agents*, respectively the 'Russian mafia', by using similar arguments: "*Esta gente*", 'these people', would make money and enrich themselves through the helplessness of newly arrived migrants, they would take advantage of their lack of knowledge – an activity and attitude that many of the research participants reject explicitly. Regarding their contacts with *agentes*, the research participants usually tell that they used their services at the beginning of their stay in Portugal when they did not know anything or anybody, but emphasise that now do not use these services any more.146

### 3.2.3.2 The help of social networks

Newly arriving migrants who have relatives or friends in Portugal commonly are helped by these who have been already a while in Portugal. The definition of a relative and a friend is quite flexible in this context, often they are cousins, nieces, second cousins or more distant relatives, 'friends' can include also friends of friends of a work colleague's brother. Sometimes they are indirect acquaintances the migrant never met before. However, migrant social networks play a key role in the access to the labour market in Portugal, and they continue to play this role even after years of being in Portugal. ‘*Conhecidos*’, the

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145 See chapter 4.3 on social capital.
146 I analyse further the research participants' access to social networks and their utilisation of *agentes* using the perspective of social capital in chapter 4.3.
Portuguese word for 'acquaintances' or contacts, as well friends and relatives, all help *arranjar trabalho*, to find a work place (cp. Portes 1995).

After her arrival in Portugal, JEKATERINA's first work place was arranged by *uma amiga* from the Ukraine, a friend of ten years. She helped JEKATERINA to find a job as *doméstica interna*, live-in maid, in an international family. (FN 102)

The migrants actively use calculated social networks to find work. In fact, I found that information passed by word of mouth is the most important medium in their search. At a later stage of their migration trajectory, Portuguese *conhecidos* (acquaintances) and their social networks can have a crucial role for the dissemination of informal information regarding work opportunities for and amongst migrants.

### 3.2.3.3 Migration arranged by relatives or friends

Sometimes, friends or relatives, who have worked already for some time in Portugal, are an important factor in the research participants' decision to migrate. Illustrating the importance that relatives or friends can give in the impulse to migrate and providing direct access into the migration process are the following two examples:

At home in Romania, RODICA received a telephone call by a friend, and former work colleague who at that time had already been living in Portugal for four years. The friend offered RODICA a job in Lisbon, explaining that a sibling of her *patrões*, of the family she was working for, needed urgently somebody to look after the newborn child. RODICA decided quickly to take that chance, she quit her job and started two weeks later in Lisbon. (FN 43)

Also GABRIELA received one day a call from a close Romanian friend who was working in Portugal. The friend enquired about her life and her family, and asked soon if GABRIELA would be interested in working in Portugal too, like her? There would be a job for GABRIELA in the same *pastelaria*, bakery, where
her friend works. Before that, tells GABRIELA, she had never considered, or even imagined, to go abroad for working and earning money. Yet, she made up her mind quite quickly and arrived three weeks later in Portugal – only to find out that the job was not available any more. However, her friend put her up for a while, both women sharing the only bed. The friend helped GABRIELA also *arranjar outro trabalho*, to find another job (see details below), as a *ajudante de cozinha*, kitchen helper in a restaurant. (FN 15, 16, 20)

In many cases, the relatives and friends also offer to *arranjar um trabalho*, find work, in Portugal for the other who was still in the home country, or even promise a certain job. GABRIELA’s case shows the risk of such a promise not to be fulfilled. However, GABRIELA’s friend was loyal and did her best to support her and ease her way into the Portuguese world.

However, I would like to emphasise that not all migrants have relatives or friends in the country of arrival, and even if they have, not all are able or willing to help like GABRIELA’s friend. Consequently, the fact that they do not have access to social networks themselves means for many migrants that they have to pay somebody, *agentes*, for finding a job at the beginning of their migration process but possibly also at a later stage, as pointed out above.

### 3.2.3.4 Individual search strategies

Some women develop successfully other individual search strategies to find work. I was told that the use of personal adverts on pin-boards in supermarkets was very successful usually, for instance, in particular *na linha de Cascais*, Lisbon's Western suburbs along the sea front, and other middle and upper class areas. Most work arranged like this is in the field of caring work (looking after the elderly, the sick or children) and cleaning work (domestic work, cleaning, laundry and ironing, sewing, gardening etc.). The work can be done in one household only or, on an hourly basis, in various families, shops or offices throughout the week. Some women find also work at the counter in supermarkets or smaller shops through their own initiative, for instance by going directly to the shops and talking

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^147 See chapter 6 for more detailed analysis regarding social relationships, and chapter 4 for social capital.
with the owners. Various women emphasised that these ways of finding work allows them certain autonomy and self-determination, freedom and choice, as the following example shows:

DINA tells that she found her new work place as *empregada doméstica externa* in immediate proximity to her flat through an advert she saw in her local supermarket. She appreciates that she does not have to commute anymore to her work place, thus having more time for her cultural interests and activities. (FN 80)

However, one has to note that these ways of finding employment are only available to migrants who have been living in Portugal already for a while and have developed a sense of locality and local understanding. Also crucial is the command of Portuguese is crucial and self-confidence.

### 3.2.3.5 Side jobs

A few women who work as *empregadas domésticas internas* additionally tried to find by their own initiative a few hours on the weekend, to enhance their income. The following to examples show this:

Though working six days a week from early morning till night, RODICA convinced her *patrõa* to have two hours free every Saturday afternoon. In these two hours she cleans and tidies up the flat of two men who live right under her *patrões*. She saves the money to be able to give presents to her family and friends and for cloths for her children. (FN 47, 48, 56)

GABRIELA is also trying to convince her *patrões* to get every Saturday afternoon free, which she then would use to take on another job. She hopes to find a family "*pertinho*" (‘near by’), as she says, who needs somebody once a week, for instance for sewing. She could do that also from home, on the weekend or in the evening, whenever her time would allows. Yet her *patrõa* does not want to
buy a sewing machine. Thus, GABRIELA hopes to find a small extra-work. She strongly believes that the sooner she can save more money, the sooner she’d be able to return home to be with her family and children. (FN 19)

In both cases the women actively pursue the idea to not waste any time and to use every possible minute to earn money for their family at home. The women are very proud of their capacity to work hard, as well as their ability to use their time creatively in order to make some extra money. Some women save this money for presents and small treats for their children, like RODICA, others hope that the extra work will allow them to return home sooner, like GABRIELA. However, it is important to mention here also the downside of this attitude: these migrants hardly have any free moments to rest and relax, for leisure and solid rest, or to go out and meet others. Consequently, many women begin to feel exhausted and disillusioned after working so intensively over a longer period of time. The situation can become particularly grave for women who work as internas and who experience pressure, discrimination and abuse in their work and subsequently place of residence, as will be shown more in detail below.

3.2.4 Language

A good command of Portuguese is crucial for migrants to manage on their own in Portugal. Even if a migrant speaks English, it is hard to get by with it as not all Portuguese are able to speak English. French is somewhat more known in Portugal, at least amongst the elder generation, but few migrants from Eastern Europe speak French. According to my research participants, there is a general reluctance of Portuguese employers to speak with their employees in another tongue, in particular within the area of service work. This leads to a situation where some migrants who were able to find a job through the help of friends or agentes then needed to learn Portuguese as quickly as possible, at least a functional command, in order to be accepted by their patrões, employers. The individual search strategies I have mentioned earlier, including the search for side jobs, are only possible when a migrant is capable of expressing herself well in Portuguese.

My research shows that the ability to communicate well in Portuguese is particular true for women migrating alone as many are isolated through their work as empregada
The following examples give an impression on the ways the women learnt Portuguese. For most of them, Portuguese was not the first foreign language they learnt.

As many other migrants, FIODORA did not speak a word of Portuguese when she arrived first in Lisbon. She learned to speak the language through various jobs, for instance as an interna, in restaurants and as a secretary for a Russian-Portuguese newspaper. When I met her first, she had been in Portugal for three years and spoke Portuguese very well. At that time, she was desempregada, unemployed, and she used the time for attending language courses. She studied Portuguese in the intermedio, advanced level and was very excited about starting now also to learn English for the first time in her life. (FN 88)

Already in the Ukraine before her departure, JEKATERINA had bought a Russian-Portuguese dictionary and Portuguese language course book. However, she says that almost no communication was possible at the beginning as her knowledge was simply too limited. With time passing, and through her work cleaning in hotels, she has picked up her command of Portuguese on the go, and today she is well conversant in it. (FN 102)
So far, also LUDMILA learned Portuguese all by herself, having only a dictionary at hand. She tells that she wants to attend a language course in the next time as she plans to stay in Portugal for three or four more years. However, her Portuguese is already very fluent and confident; I think that her confidence in speaking Portuguese has to do with her open, extrovert personality and her socially very active life. (FN 33)

After being in Portugal for five months and working as *empregada doméstica interna*, DINA attended a language course. She tells that, once speaking some Portuguese, this enabled her to find other work places that suited her better: first in a restaurant as *empregada de copos*, later as *empregada doméstica externa*, working part-time in the afternoons. (FN 80)

IÚLIA thinks of herself that she was never talented for learning languages. However, here in Portugal she had to learn as there was no way to survive without speaking the language. She speaks very well and clear Portuguese. IÚLIA learnt the language through watching television whenever possible, and found subtitled movies particularly beneficial. Further, she reckons that the fact that Portuguese belongs like Romanian to the Romance language group helped her, as many words are similar as well as the structure of the sentences. (FN 12)

ALINA also learnt Portuguese using the television, she preferred to watch Brazilian *telenovelas*, soap operas. Therefore, she knew first how to speak Brazilian, and learnt Portuguese only afterwards, as she adds with a big smile.148 Today, her command of Portuguese is very elaborate and careful. However, when we see each other, she asks me to talk in English: in her home country, the Ukraine, ALINA is a teacher of Russian and English. Since arriving in Portugal, she has almost no opportunity to talk English and is afraid of loosing her competency in that language. When she arrived in Portugal, she

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148 Portuguese and Brazilian differ significantly in the spoken language, e.g. in the pronunciation and melody of both, single words and entire sentences, as well as in the use of verbs, for instance when addressing another person. Differences in talk are detected right away by Portuguese and Brazilians alike.
hoped she could manage with English but soon noticed that people were treating her like a "stupid child" (ALINA's expression) because she did not speak Portuguese. ALINA describes this condescending behaviour as a typical attitude of Portuguese people. (FN 60, 62, 67)

ELENA's connection to Portugal and the Portuguese language is by far the most romantic I heard. She studied in Romania to be a teacher of Portuguese and French. Initially, however, she planned to study Italian – until she heard "as canções da Amália", the songs of the famous and very popular fado-singer Amália Rodrigues. ELENA thought these songs were "maravilhosas", wonderful. For this reason, she decided to study Portuguese and not Italian. Repeatedly she said that the Portuguese language sounded so exotic to her, and Portugal was "um país exótico, não sabia nada", an exotic country she knew nothing about. (FN 6)

3.2.5 Features of daily work life

3.2.5.1 Frequent changes of work place

Already during my fieldwork, the importance of domestic work for migrant women became clear. For many women, it turns out to be one of the few niches available to them, or even the only niche. This observation is supported by the fact that almost all research participants worked for some time as domestic workers, generally as internas. The reasons why many migrant women decide to work – at least temporarily – in this special part of the service industry will be discussed later, for instance in chapter 4. However, the work as domestic worker is often not the first job in Portugal for most women. Usually, the research participants had already various other jobs before their employment as interna, as the following two cases exemplify:


150 Cp. the analysis of the segmentation of the labour market, earlier in this chapter, and see chapter 4.1 for the global dimension of domestic and caring work also in the Portuguese context.
When LUDMILA arrived in Lisbon, she was able to stay the first nights with a friend of hers. LUDMILA tells that, during her first week, she did not have a proper job yet and managed only to get some occasional work like cleaning for a few hours in private houses. Soon she found a small job as a babysitter: a Brazilian woman who worked every night as a stripper needed someone who stayed overnight with her little daughter. LUDMILA did that for one month, though she did not get much money because the other woman did not have much either. At least it was a beginning, says LUDMILA, and she had a place to sleep. Then she found a position in a *casa de repousos*, retirement home, outside Lisbon. The *directora* promised LUDMILA a work contract, which made LUDMILA very happy and content. In spite of repeatedly promising her the contract, it never materialised. LUDMILA stayed three months, sleeping at night on the office floor. She tells that this job was very demanding and physically hard, lifting the elderly people, washing them, etc. Many could not control their bowl movements any more, others had begun to lose their full mental functioning. LUDMILA finds that for her the most difficult was not the physically hard labour but the job "era mais pesado psicologicamente", 'was more difficult to deal with psychologically'. To see "a isolação, a soledade", 'the isolation, the solitude' of the old people deeply affected LUDMILA. She tells that the relatives hardly came to visit, and if they do come, they usually drop in on the weekend for half an hour, with a rushed and cool air about them. Nobody seems to care about these old people, observes LUDMILA. She tells me in length in particular about one woman, an elegant Portuguese lady who enjoyed displaying her wealth overtly. She came every Saturday to see her mother for 30 minutes, bringing expensive perfume and crème and then disappearing again. LUDMILA saw that she was not caring at all for her mother. LUDMILA felt pity for the old lady and sometimes, when she could arrange a little spare time, put the crème on the lady's face telling her things like "para fazer a senhora bonita", 'to make the lady look beautiful'. She tells that the old lady was very happy and moved then, with tears in her eyes. LUDMILA found it very painful to observe repeatedly over the weeks how much the residents are waiting for the weekend
in the hope of visitors, and then they come and disappear immediately again. “Me dava pena, muita pena”, ‘it hurt me, it hurt me a lot’, sighs LUDMILA, putting her hand on her décolleté. By coincidence she heard that somebody was needing a doméstica interna and she expressed immediately her interest. Thus, she found her next employment and was relieved to be able to leave behind the job at the retirement home. (FN 29)

LUDMILA then worked as an interna for 16 months. I described LUDMILA’s path into domestic service at length to indicate the multiple reasons the migrant women have to change their work positions. LUDMILA found her work in the retirement home too emotionally challenging and psychologically difficult, she felt very touched by the residents' fate and suffered with them, as she said to me once.

Frequent job changes are also usual for women who got an employment promised by a friend before their departure. Some of them find out upon arrival in Portugal that the work place they came for is not available anymore. This happened for instance to GABRIELA, as I made reference to earlier:

GABRIELA’s decision to migrate was triggered by a friend who called and offered her employment in Portugal. When GABRIELA arrived she found out that the job in the pastelaria, bakery, was not available any more. Her friend, however, did not let her down and put GABRIELA up for some months, both women sharing the only bed. GABRIELA’s friend did den help to arranjar outro trabalho, to find another job, as ajudante de cozinha, kitchen helper in a restaurant. (FN 15, 16, 20) GABRIELA worked as a kitchen helper for three months but had problems with a cozinha, the female cook and chef, who worked very fast and expected the same from GABRIELA. She tells me that, surely, she always prepared the food at home, for the whole family and friends but that she does not have experience in cooking those large quantities and with the speed needed in a professional kitchen. GABRIELA felt that the cook demanded too much of her and felt very uncomfortable in this job. Thus she
was glad when she found another employment, this time "numa pequena tipografia", 'in a small printing office'. The work environment and colleagues were very friendly. For instance, one of Gabriela's tasks was to put cards into envelopes and then into plastic covers. She tells that through this work her fingertips got burned by the alkaline and became completely insensitive and numb. Still, Gabriela enjoyed working there because of her colleagues. Her work situation changed when her friend's husband left his work place and returned to work in Lisbon. Consequently, Gabriela had to move out and search for a place to stay. She found a room in a shared flat with other migrants; she had to share one single bed in a tiny room with a young woman. At first, the arrangement seemed to work well as the other woman slept during the day, and got up at 11 pm to work throughout the night. After her first relief to have found a sleeping place, Gabriela noticed that it was a problem to have to wait every evening till 11 pm until she was able to go to bed, having to sit quietly for not waking the other in the dark and unaired room. Thus after a few months, the possibility to take on a job as interna seemed very attractive as it offered her also a room for herself. Gabriela started to work for an 'old' Portuguese family "da sociedade alta, muito alta", 'of the high society, very high', who is nowadays relatively impoverished, yet still trying to live the old style, which includes also to have a live-in maid. Gabriela's fingertips remained insensitive for a few weeks after having stopped working in the printing office, then, bit by bit, Gabriela started to feel again something in her fingertips. She assures me that now her fingertips are ok again. (FN 16, 17)

Gabriela's case illustrates how far the job situation can be linked to the general living situation, in particular to housing possibilities, their respective problems, as well as to health issues. Among the reasons frequently given by the migrants for a change of employment that are unfulfilled promises for work, too high demands and pressure on them, and the lack of privacy. A frequent issue is also an unsafe and health threatening work environment, often without any social protection, accident insurance or compensation agreements due to the lack of a contract – I will explore this more in detail later. Other
migrants change their work places because of unpaid salaries, general problems with the employer, the employer's refusal to give a work contract, different kinds of exploitation, sexual harassment, discrimination, abuse etc. These experiences will be described and analysed in the following sections. They can lead to a change of work place – but one has to note that many migrant women are not necessarily in a situation that allows them to take this step and, thus, they have to live and cope with continuing risks and/or discriminative behaviour towards them.

### 3.2.5.2 General work life

The cases I mentioned so far indicate already the fact that most migrant women earn their money with physical work, which is usually very hard and exhausting labour. In particular, but not exclusively, domestic workers find the long, endlessly repetitive work days very tough and wearing. Certain circumstances aggravate the situation of domestic workers, particularly for *internas*: they have only a few short breaks during the day – if at all –, and very restricted possibilities to go out and leave their obligations behind. This means that many are under constant supervision and control. A further demanding factor is the ignorance and the lack of respect by their employers.

These experiences are reflected in the choice of words the research participants use when they describe their work situation. I encountered the following words again and again: *humiliação* ('humiliation'), *chicana* ('harassment'), *falta de respeito* ('disrespect'), *ignorancia* ('ignorance'), *desprezo* ('contempt, disdain'), *escrava* ('slave, serf, bondswomen').

### 3.2.5.3 A positive example

Yet not all experiences are negative as the following positive example shows:

**RODICA**'s case is an exceptionally positive one. She reckons she had "*tão boa sorte*", 'such good luck', with her *patrões* and her work place, "*estou contenta, satisfeita, não podria ser melhor*", 'I am happy, it could not be better'. Basically, she works as nanny, taking care of a young boy. **RODICA** works full-time, as well as being the one who gets up in the night when the little boy wakes up and cries. When she started her job the baby was five months old, and
she tells me proudly and with a soft voice and loving facial expression that the little boy learned walking with her, and now talking. Indeed, she says, she is playing the role of the mother, more than his real mother. RODICA does not have to clean or to cook, however, if she would like to cook, she can and occasionally she does. But it is not required of her. She also adds that she can sit and eat with her patrões and she knows that this is highly unusual in Portugal, where everything concerning the domestic worker's private life – including basic needs – is usually spatially strictly segregated from the employers' sphere, and has to happen out of their sight. RODICA tells that her patrão also invites her frequently to watch TV with them and she can also watch DVDs alone. RODICA says repeatedly that her life and work situation is "como em casa", 'like at home', and indeed, she would feel "como na minha casa", 'like in my own house'. She emphasises her good and familiar relation with her employers, they can talk together, and the atmosphere is full of mutual trust and respect. Twice she told me: "Para que entenda bem: eles são como amigos", 'Do understand: they are like friends'. Whenever RODICA talks about the little boy and the family, she beams and mentions that she is really happy with her job. (FN 44)

On the whole, says RODICA, "gosto de Portugal, gosto de Lisboa, gosto do meu trabalho, gosto da minha família cá – tinha boa sorte, já sei", 'I like Portugal, I like Lisbon, I like my work, I like my family here [her employers] – I had good luck, I know'. After a short moment, she adds that she is grateful to God for that. (FN 51)

RODICA is very aware of the exceptionality of her positive relationship with her employers, as she knows from her friends (other migrant women working as domestic workers in Portugal) and has heard their experiences.

3.2.5.4 Discrimination

Work relationships and the underlying discrimination can be manifold and complex as the following three cases show (LUDMILA, GABRIELA, IÚLIA). The first case I will
analyse closer ss LUDMILA. Her experiences exemplify well the different facets of discrimination, namely:

(A) Exploitation and under-payment;
(B) Mistrust;
(C) Employers' general ignorance at their employees' living conditions;
(D) Ignorance, disdain, disrespect, humiliation.

I shall indicate these layers briefly within the body of the following text:

Before I met LUDMILA, she worked over a year as empregada doméstica interna in the house of a rich family in Lisbon. She tells me that she was responsible for a big house with 4 floors, 5 bathrooms, 12 rooms, and 5 people and a garden. LUDMILA did the cleaning, the laundry, the cooking, and the garden work. During the last months she took care additionally of the parents of her patrōa, both in need of nursing care. She had no free time, not even an hour for a coffee in the afternoon. LUDMILA received 530 € for her work.

⇒ A - Exploitation and under-payment

However, the family used to spend their weekends in the country side – but they did not allow LUDMILA to stay in the house in Lisbon, the patrōa said that there would be too many valuable things for letting her stay alone there.

⇒ B – Mistrust

Consequently – after having spent the first weekend outdoors on the streets in Lisbon –, LUDMILA had to find a sleeping place. This meant to rent a room, even if she could use it only for one night per week. She 'arranged' (arranjar) to share a room with another woman near the square Martim Moniz, a relatively run-down area in central Lisbon which is, during the day, a very busy and colourful multi-cultural place with many Asian and African shops but is said to be a dangerous zone during the night because of street prostitution and drug dealing, in particular between the metro stations Martim Moniz and Intendente. The room cost 350 €, that was 175 € for each of them. For LUDMILA the fact that she could not stay in the house during the weekends meant that her income was significantly reduced to 355 € per month. She explained that she did not
have any other choice as the rental prices in Lisbon are expensive and without *fiador*, a guarantor, it would be almost impossible to find something anyway. Additionally, being *sem papeles*, without papers, makes it even more difficult.

Thus, she had to take what she could get. (FN 29, 30)


\[ \text{C – Employers’ general ignorance at their employees' living conditions} \]

Even if LUDMILA’s relationship with her employers, in particular with her *patrõa*, was on the whole positive and polite – LUDMILA spoke with respect of her *patrõa* who she described as an active and hard working medical doctor – there were other negative situations and aspects, apart from her not being allowed to stay alone in the house. LUDMILA experienced in particular the first work day as very negative and offensive. She tells that the *patrõa* asked her first a lot about her education and university studies, then about her family, "*sobre a minha mãe, o meu pai, etcetera*", 'about my mother, my father, etc". Apparently satisfied with LUDMILA’s account, the *patrõa* commented every detail with "*muito bom, muito bom*", 'very good, very good'. Thus, says LUDMILA, the *patrõa* knew that LUDMILA had a good university education, skills and a wide range of work experiences – afterwards, however, the *patrõa* began to explain to LUDMILA how to iron. LUDMILA says briefly: "*Já sei*", 'I know'. The patrõa ignores LUDMILA’s comment and continues to show her in all details how to iron. LUDMILA repeated: "*Sei como passar o ferro, temos também ferros na Ucrânia, tenho também um ferro na minha casa*", 'I know how to iron, we have also irons in the Ukraine, I have also an iron at home'. The patrõa does not show any reaction. While telling this incident to me, LUDMILA gets upset, she says to me: "*Um ferro é um ferro, não faz diferença se tem este nome o este*", 'an iron is an iron, it does not matter if it has this or that name'. LUDMILA experienced this as very humiliating and disrespectful, however, she could not say much more then repeat again and again "*já sei*" as her command of Portuguese did not allow much more at that time. After that, the *patrõa* showed her the entire kitchen, explained her the fridge and the freezer, LUDMILA tried again to say "*já sei, temos também frigoríficos*", 'I know, we have also fridges', but the *patrõa* continued to ignore LUDMILA comments.
LUDMILA felt humiliated and completely ignored, and like this the patrõa continued explaining the entire household and ignoring LUDMILA's "já sei, temos isto também", 'I know, we have that too'. "Me senti tratado como um bicho", 'I felt I was treated like an imbecile', recalls LUDMILA, she thought in that moment she would not do this work a second day and return home immediately. (FN 31)

D – Ignorance, disdain, disrespect, humiliation

LUDMILA was confronted with multiple discriminations from the day she started as interna. Humiliation, ignorance, mistrust, exploitation and under-payment were repeated experiences also of other research participants. However, by emphasising in her accounts that the relationship between her and her employers was on the whole polite, it becomes also clear that LUDMILA tried to see her patrões as positive as possible for being able to continue with the job and for maintaining her self-respect. LUDMILA forced herself to swallow the disdainful treatment and on-going multiple discriminations and managed to work for the family for 16 months.

GABRIELA works also as empregada doméstica interna. Her experiences with her patrões are similarly negative and marked by their disrespectful and discriminatory attitudes:

As common for Portuguese employers of domestic workers, GABRIELA is not allowed to sit at the same table and eat with the family. However, GABRIELA tells me that once her patrõa did not have a very good day and, when she sat down for lunch, she said to her: "Agora a GABRIELA toma um prato e sente-se comigo para dar-me companhia", 'Get a plate and sit down with me to give me company'. GABRIELA tells me her reaction: "Não queria ser tratado assim, não queria ser como uma boneca, só fazer o que ela quer. Estive com fome mas disse: Obrigada a senhora, mas a GABRIELA já comeu. Mas se a senhora quiser companhia, vou sentar-me com a senhora" – 'I did not want to be treated like that, I did not want to be like a puppet, just doing what she wants. I was hungry
but I said: Thanks, *senhora*, but I have eaten already. But if you want company, I will sit with you*. The *patrôa* responded brusquely something like that, if GABRIELA does not want to eat with her, she would not need her company. After this had happened, the *patrôa* never asked GABRIELA again to sit with her. (FN 18)

At another occasion, recalls GABRIELA, the *patrôa* asked her for a cigarette and added: "*Então também a Lena pode fumar cá comigo*", 'Now you can also smoke here with me', what GABRIELA did. About this she tells me: "*Mas isto era tão frio, o cigarro mais frio da minha vida, com tanta distancia*", 'But it was so cold, the coldest cigarette of my life, with so much distance'. (FN 18)

GABRIELA came to the conclusion that, when she manages to accept her *patrões* and their behaviour and attitudes as they are, her work situation on the whole is ok. She can talk with them about money (though the *patrões* answered they could not pay her more). When GABRIELA lost a lot of weight and her own cloths did not fit anymore, the *patrões* gave her some cloths from the *patrôa* and her mother. GABRIELA appreciated this very much, in particular because they had noticed that GABRIELA likes to dress elegantly, so they gave her also better dresses and tops. She says that this was really nice of them. She is very happy that she has a room for herself, it is small and nice, and has two canapés and a separate bathroom. For GABRIELA it is very important that she can close the door behind her in the evenings to be alone – she needs this privacy and quietness to relax and rest: "*assim é descansativo*", she says. (FN 18)

This last comment makes also clear how little 'relaxing' the general life situation is for many other migrants who must share rooms and beds with others, or sleep on kitchen or office floors.

### 3.2.5.5 Emotional exploitation

It becomes evident that the discriminatory treatment of migrant women is manifold. The different layers and manifestations are intertwined and cannot be easily separated from each other, as in fact they work hand in hand and together they create pressure on the migrant women. In addition to the disdainful behaviour by their *patrões*, which I analysed
above, come the structural limitations, for instance through the segmented labour markets and their gendered and ethnicised-racialised aspects, as outlined earlier in this chapter. The undocumented status of many migrants aggravates this further. Before examining closer the significant impact of the legal status on the research participants and their work and life opportunities in Portugal, I regard it as crucial to illustrate the interconnectedness of these various aspects in one case. Here, my research material shows the issues of employment beneath education and skills and social downward mobility, which need to be understood as explicit expressions of discriminatory attitudes and practices.

IÚLIA’s example shows well the complexity of the pressing features on the life and work situation that many migrant women have to face. IÚLIA’s case is not a rare one:

IÚLIA (31) is physiotherapist and has a seven-year-old son. Her income in Romania was not enough to cover the living costs for herself, her son and her parents after her divorce. Since her migration, her son is living with her parents. When I met her first, she had been living and working in Portugal for a year and a half year, being all the time undocumented. IÚLIA started her current work as empregada doméstica interna for an 82 years old Portuguese lady five month ago. When she started this job, two days off per week were promised – yet never granted. She was employed for cleaning and cooking on the basis of two free days per week but her actual work situation consists of seven labour days, only having the possibility to leave on Sunday morning for attending the mass and meeting other migrant women afterwards – in the afternoon, she has to be back at work. IÚLIA did not have one single day off within five months. She says that the elderly woman is in need of nursing care, "ela precisa-me", 'she needs me', says IÚLIA, 24 hours a day. Consequently, she finds herself and her work under the total control and service of her patrõa, six and a half days of the week. Effectively, IÚLIA’s work consists of an extensive range of physical taks including all household, cleaning and caring duties. She is regarded as a service deliverer by her employer, yet not remunerated in an appropriate way: neither can she have her (initially agreed) days off, nor does she get the equally promised work contract that would allow IÚLIA to legalise her stay in Portugal.
and would enable her to have access to at least some social protection. Consequently, every time I meet IÚLIA "os problemas como os documentos", 'the problems with the papers', as she calls it, dominate a big part of our conversations. Additionally, IÚLIA is not paid for the skilled physiotherapeutic treatments that she gives every day to the patrõa – IÚLIA has ten years of work experience – though these treatments were not planned and agreed on when she initially got the job. IÚLIA feels intensely disrespected and abused. But without papers, she does not see a possibility to change her situation in Portugal.

IÚLIA’s case demonstrates, amongst other issues, to what extent illegality ties migrants to their employers and makes them dependant.

The ignorance of many employers regarding the precarious situation of migrants is a topic that emerges frequently in the conversations with the research participants. At the same time it becomes evident that many migrant women agree to do overtime work without any additional payment; they agree in the hope to get a work contract that way. Or they experience emotional abuse through their de facto full responsibility for a human being who is dependent on them alone, as was shown in the above case. The risk for exploitation is very high, as the experiences of the research participants show. IÚLIA is only one example, other women found themselves in similar pressuring situations. The experiences and narratives are similar. The severity of these conditions and practices becomes clear when we consider that nearly all research participants had worked as domestic workers in Portugal, almost all also for some time as internas. And, with only few exceptions, all are still working within the service industry, some continue also as internas.

The research participants are aware of this situation and these circumstances, as for instance GABRIELA expresses it: "É escravatura, uma escravatura paga, o dinheiro deveria fazer a diferença, mas é escravatura trabalhar assim" – 'This is slavery, a paid slavery. The money should make the difference but it is slavery to work like that'. (FN 18)

3.2.5.6 Employment beneath education and skills: 'Brain waste'

Many women who migrate alone are highly qualified professionals: in my research, the women from Eastern Europe turned out to have in general secondary school degrees as
a minimum, and professional education with long work experience. Many research participants have university degrees. I could observe a similar high level of education and professional experience with many Brazilian and African (usually from non-Portuguese speaking countries) women who migrate alone and who I met during my research in Portugal. It seems that the majority of migrant women from Eastern Europe, in particular from the Ukraine and Russia, as well as many from Brazil hold university degrees, up to professorship.

Looking at the qualifications and professions of these women, a strong downward-mobility and employment significantly beneath the migrants' education and skills become evident. Responsible, often intellectually demanding work is exchanged for repetitive physical service labour, usually requiring obedience and servitude, in a case like IÚLIA's almost 24/7, as shown above. The phenomenon of employment beneath education and skills is often referred to as 'brain waste' (cp. Brandi 2001) in migration studies. This means that many migrant women suffer a significant professional and social downward mobility during their migratory trajectory. This is certain for their position in the receiving society. Both, employment beneath education and skills and social downward mobility in the receiving country, are likely to cause negative effect on their professional identity, self-respect and self-esteem.\footnote{At least for the time being and within the receiving society. The impact on the women's professional and social position in their home country is an open question, worthwhile for further research to look into; the women of my research do generally experience a strong career break – or even cut if they are not able to return to their professions on their return home, if they return. Some transnational research has shown that migrant women can gain \textit{significant} social recognition and up-ward mobility in their home societies through their labour abroad, e.g. by providing their families with a secure income, schooling for the children and the building of houses (e.g. Filipina migrants, see Parreñas 2001). However, I think this is in most cases only a mid- to long-time reward and does not prevent from psychological difficult situations for the migrants in their attempt to find their way into and to establish a life within the receiving society. Piper speaks of this simultaneous downward (in the receiving society) and upward mobility (in the society of origin) as "contradictory class positioning", (2005: 21).}

This is supported by research into the psychological dimensions of migration and exile. From a psychoanalytical perspective Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) emphasize for instance the importance of work beyond the financial aspects of migrant life:

The enormous importance of work as an organizing and stabilizing factor in psychic life cannot be overemphasized. This is in particular true if the subject is skilled in his work and obtains certain satisfaction from it. In an immediate and evident way, work restores the immigrant's self-respect, allowing him to meet expenses and resume the
functions of adulthood following the regressive period just after arrival. At the same time, work makes one feel that one has a place in the new society. And, at a deeper level, work allows one to draw on one's creative capacity, with reparatory benefits to the self and its lost or abandoned objects. (Grinberg and Grinberg 1989: 95-96)

Though the authors write about work in its positive significance for the migrant, it suggests implicitly situations where the migrants are not able to perform their skilled labour, where no satisfaction is possible due to exclusion and discrimination. And what is the migrants' place – not to mention the subsequent (self-)respect – in the new society when they are treated mainly disdainfully for the 'dirty work' (Anderson 2000) they do, and for their ethnic background? Many of the research participants feel that they had to throw away what they 'were' before migration and feel their skills and qualifications neglected or even wasted. My research participants are for instance lawyers, teachers, and economists. They have high qualifications, a wide knowledge and many skills: today, as immigrants, they work as domestic and cleaning workers – not unusually treated by their employers like "a stupid kid without their own will and brain", as one Brazilian migrant woman I met put it aptly.

ALINA, (26) a secondary school teacher in Russian and English from the Ukraine, has worked and lived for two years in Portugal. The first one and a half years she was employed as an interna in the provincial area of Setubal, now she works in a supermarket in Lisbon. ALINA describes her work as stupefying. She feels bored and fears that she will lose her knowledge and skills as her work lacks intellectual stimulation, tells ALINA: "I am afraid to lose my profession". She would like to return to the Ukraine and work again as a teacher, but she has to support her mother, her sister and their two children. This means for ALINA that she will have to stay in Portugal as long as the economic situation in the Ukraine remains not changing significantly: "Things in my country are changing very slow – too slow for me".
3.2.6 ‘Sem papeis’: Being undocumented

"Illegal é simplesmente má, é difícil" – [Being] illegal is simply bad, it is difficult

(IÚLIA, FN 10)

The significance of proper documentation – or the lack of – appeared again and again in the conversations with migrants in general and with my research participants in particular. I have pointed this out already in an earlier section. For this reason I think it is important to start this section with an exceptional and positive case:

JEKATERINA is one of the very few migrants I met who was never confronted with 'ser ilegal', being illegal. She received a tourist visa for Portugal via an agency from the Ukraine and, once being in Portugal, her first employers gave her a work contract and helped to legalise her situation as a worker. (FN 101, 102)

The question of being documented, or not, has impact on the everyday life of migrants. As the following will show, 'being undocumented' influences significantly the work possibilities and general life situation, as well as the migrants' possibility to visit their families and friends at home. But firstly, I would like to explain the situation and language used in Portugal regarding the legal status of migrants.

The word 'illegal' is widely used in Portuguese daily talk in relation to immigrants, by immigrants themselves as well as by the Portuguese population. Governmental institutions like ACIDI, Alto Comissariado para a Imigração e Diálogo Intercultural, the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, employ this notion instead of 'undocumented' or alike, in the same way the mass media (e.g. Público January 21, 2004). Immigrants are constantly confronted with their legal status, not only by the police and other officials but also by the Portuguese population. Here, the use of the word 'illegal'

refs not only to the legal status of the immigrants but also to their position in the labour market: as shown above in this chapter, the underground economy has a very strong impact in Portugal (cf. Baganha 2000, Sousa Ferreira et al. 2000). A significant part of the Portuguese autochthon labour force is working without contract, not paying taxes or social security. The underground economy is estimated with 20-24% of the official GNP. Consequently, the situation of the immigrants is precarious, in particular in their first years in Portugal; for many it is simply impossible to get any 'real', legal job with a contract and contribute to social security. Almost all immigrants I met have or had problems with their papers; almost all experienced at least on a temporary basis 'being illegal'. Papers are an endless struggle and problem: papers are needed e.g. for staying, for residence, for getting work and a work contract, for the recognition of their education and professional qualifications (equivalência), for further studies, for holidays at home, for coming back to Portugal afterwards. In the second half of the year 2003, almost 30,000 undocumented Brazilian nationals living and working in Portugal registered for an extraordinary regularization process due to a new bilateral agreement between Portugal and Brazil. The fact that twice as many undocumented persons as estimated 'appeared', reflects the urgent need for further possibilities of regularization. The migrants understand their undocumented situation as a clearly transitory situation, and many directly explained it as such. All the research participants are trying to get their papers in order to be able to live a more stable life in Portugal, with at least minimal security. And without the eternal fear of being discovered, denounced, threatened, arrested or deported.

The illegalisation of migrants has also another, global dimension. From a very critical point of view puts it Saskia Sassen: "[…] we see that national boundaries have the effect of creating and criminalizing difference. These kinds of differences are central to the formation of a world economic system […]" (Sassen 1998: XXXVI, footnote 9).

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153 Estimation for the mid 1990s, based on currency demand approach (Frey and Schneider 2000).
154 The work of Emilio Reyneri (2001, 2003) supports my findings: "[…] the local labour market segmentation and especially the underground economy, both deep-rooted features in Southern European countries, have a sizeable pull effect on contemporary migratory movements towards those countries. Moreover, the underground economy has important negative effects on migrants' insertion" (2003: 3) – namely exclusion and stigmatisation.
156 See also Izquierdo 2000 for gendered observations regarding undocumented migrants in Spain.
157 Cp. chapter 4.1 for further discussion on migration and the global economy.
IÚLIA's case exemplifies a situation many migrants encounter: the connectedness of papers and work possibilities. First, IÚLIA's professional training as a physiotherapist is officially not recognised in Portugal. Even the two facts that she has more than ten years experience in her profession, and physiotherapists are needed in Portugal, do not help to get the equivalência for her profession, the official recognition/validation. The same happens to other Eastern European migrants whose professions as teachers, doctors, nurses, accountants etc do not get recognised. This situation becomes paradox when, like in the case of Portugal, a country lacks many high-skilled professionals in certain areas but is not willing to acknowledge and accept the skills of migrants who are already in the country, many of them working in low-skilled, manual labour, often undocumented. As a consequence, these migrants are deemed to remain in precarious legal and social situations. The legal paradox of this situation is, again, well illustrated by IÚLIA's case.

After one week in Portugal, IÚLIA found a work place as fisioterapeúta in a private clinic, without a contract. During eight months, her Portuguese employer tried all he could to legalise her position but finally failed against the sternness of the Portuguese officials. Consequently, IÚLIA had to leave this work place because by then it was known that she worked there undocumented. After that she took on various jobs like cleaning, reception in hotels, but all were only short term work without a contract. By the time we met, she had been working for five months as doméstica interna for an old lady who continued refusing to give IÚLIA a contract though she knew that IÚLIA would need a work contract to finally be able to legalise her stay in Portugal. IÚLIA was trying again and again to talk with her employer, but did not have any success in convincing her.

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159 Surely, this is not only the case for Eastern European migrants but affects all other migrants. However, the regulations and exceptions for certain professions can vary depending on the country of origin as some countries have bilateral agreements regarding the acceptance of certain professions. For instance, dentists and other medical doctors from Brazil are allowed to work in Portugal but not dentists or medical doctors from the Ukraine.
This puts Iúlia in a vulnerable position not only in legal terms regarding her stay and work but also in social and psychological terms; I had referred to this in a more detailed analysis of Iúlia’s daily life earlier in this chapter. In our conversations Iúlia uses repeatedly expressions like "problemas com os documentos, problemas com os papéis", problems with the papers, and "muitos problemas, muito difícil", many problems, very difficult.

The sheer helplessness of their situation, in the perception of migrants like Iúlia, puts many in a vulnerable psychological state which makes them open to blackmailing, threatening, verbal and physical abuse. Some women, like Iúlia, become seriously depressed and desperate, not seeing any way out of their situation.

The paradox aspect of their situation and the pressure on the women is also reflected in an interesting narrative by Gabriela:

Gabriela works also as doméstica interna without papers. She tells that one day the police came in the search for another woman, probably the woman who worked for the family before her. The mother of the patrôa was that day at home and spoke with the police. As the woman they searched was not there anymore, the policeman asked to see Gabriela’s papers and passport. The old lady started to talk with the policeman in such a way that he started to become totally confused about what he originally wanted, and finally left without asking again for Gabriela’s papers. Gabriela says that he could have taken her and sent her back to Romania ("mandar-me para casa") because of the lack of documentation. Later, Gabriela tells me that she almost hoped he would ask for her papers and send her home. She asks if I understand what she means? How she was standing there behind the lady, thinking that hopefully she would be caught, taken away and sent home…? I answered that, yes, I would understand, and I say: "Assim teria de voltar para casa, não teria de fazer esta decisão, poderia, deveria voltar...", Then you would have to go home, you would not have to make this decision, you could go home, you would have
to...'. GABRIELA looks deeply into my eyes, nods slowly and starts crying. (FN 16)

The account of this incidence shows strongly how much GABRIELA is trying to keep the balance between her fear and, at the same time, wish to be caught without papers and expelled.

Many women experience it as a huge relieve to receive legal status after all the time spent undocumented and illegalised. The recently acquired legal status opens for many migrants new perspectives on and possibilities for their (work) life in Portugal. Furthermore, the legal security goes hand in hand with a much stronger psychological position, and both together enhance soon the self-esteem of the migrants which is noticeable in a much more optimistic assessment of their migration and their future plans, as the following case demonstrates:

After working without contracts in some jobs during her first months in Portugal, LUDMILA finally received her visto de trabalho through the cooperation of the family she worked for during 16 months. She tells me that she kissed her passport when she received it back and even had a little party the same evening with some friends for celebrating this event. Though her patrões supported actively her attempt to legalise her situation in Portugal, it took various months and many visits to different offices to receive the visa (FN 31, 32).

As regards the time it takes to acquire legal documents, I was told similar stories by other migrants. Usually it is migrants themselves who have to take (unpaid) days off to be able to go first to the offices of IDICT160 – where the work contract needs to get um

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carimbo, stamped – and then to the SEF\footnote{SEF, \textit{Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras}, the Portuguese Aliens and Frontiers Service.} – where the contract is then to be submitted with the application forms and various other documents. As was often the case, after a whole morning of waiting (six hours is not unusual, four hours relatively quick) migrants would often be told that something is missing as no-one from the official offices seemed to know exactly what is needed and when.\footnote{See also chapter 6.2.1.1 on the migrants' perception of Portugal, and on the notion of \textit{civilisação}.}

However, now being documented allowed LUDMILA to change her professional and general life situation in Portugal: she stopped working as a \textit{doméstica interna} and works now as an \textit{externa} for various households. All in all, she works less hours, earns more, and has finally more time for other things in life, including also to meet me and have a coffee – as \textit{internas} this was nearly impossible. Through word of mouth LUDMILA has learned of a possible vacancy as a \textit{porteira}, care-taker, in an apartment block in an upper-middleclass suburb of Lisbon. She hopes the job will become available: this would mean that she would not have to pay for a room anymore and she could also do some other hourly works on the side, like ironing for the people in the house or similar tasks. (FN 30, 32)

LUDMILA's case demonstrates how being given legal status offers a stronger social and legal position which helps the migrants to change, build and pursue their life in Portugal more closely in accordance with their own needs and plans.

Moreover, the question of papers and legalisation is not only relevant for the migrants' stay and life in Portugal but has also consequences on their possibilities to travel home and back again. IÚLIA for instance, who is undocumented, plans to visit her son in the next three to six months. As she is undocumented, she needs, first, to get somehow to Romania without being caught on the way, and second, on her return, find a way how to travel back and enter Portugal again. Another research participant, who asked not to be identify here, told me about her plan to go back to her home country to see her family and friends: together with three other women working undocumented in Portugal, they want to
go by car. Only the driver, who is also the owner of the car, is documented. They would need to go through various EU countries and hope not to be stopped by border authorities en route. The three women decided together to use this way of transportation as it might be the safest for them not to be discovered, in particular as the car would have a Portuguese registration plate. The woman I spoke to reckons that Germany would be the most dangerous part of the route, and if they would get caught they would have to pay a fee (uma multa) or may even be arrested.

3.2.6.1 Choosing illegality?

After having lived illegally undocumented for years, some women wonder if it is still worthwhile to continue to try to get their situation legalised. Bureaucratic procedures are very time consuming in Portugal as I explained earlier. The migrants describe them as an endless, complicated and insurmountable hurdle without clear statements of what exactly is needed for legalising their papers. These incomprehensible structures require them to cue for days, repeatedly, in front of office buildings, often without ever being served. This big hurdle and the plan (the hope) to return home in the near future leads some women to come to the decision to risk being undocumented for a while longer. The main rational behind this decision of the research participants lays in the fact that the Portuguese bureaucracy (and in particular the institutions and offices dealing with migrants) is perceived as an incomprehensible and incoherent burden without clear rules. Therefore, some women may decide not to ‘waste’ their time anymore with the attempt to secure their legal situation as this means a lot of hassle with an unpredictable bureaucracy as well as an unpredictable outcome.

RODICA’s patrões offered also to give her a work contract and help to legalise her stay in Portugal. However, RODICA says to me that she is not sure if she really still wants to be legalised as she is planning to return home within the next six months. Surely, she says, a work contract and a subsequent legalisation would be very beneficial should she get stopped on the way by border authorities or the police since she would not have the money to pay the fine. (FN 52)
However, RODICA’s hesitation emphasises her ambivalence as regards if it is still worthwhile to go through all the hassle a legalisation process means, as I indicated above in LUDMILA’s case.

Also DINA thinks that it is not worthwhile anymore for her to go through the long legalisation process as she will marry soon an EU citizen. This will make it much easier for her to regularise her situation, but her plans are also different, as she and her husband plan to leave Portugal. Until then, she decided to stay undocumented even if she has all the documents needed. (FN 79, 80)

I do not think it would be appropriate to say that these women chose voluntarily to remain illegal. The weighing up of the risks against the efforts it would cost to try "arranjar os documentos", to get the papers, the time they would need to spend to pursue the application (many days, which they somehow would need to get off from work), and the (un)likelihood of success made both women aware that in their particular cases they would save a lot of time, days off and energies by just trying to cope without the documents. This line of thinking was reinforced in the cases of both women, as they both plan to leave Portugal in the near future to return home or to go elsewhere. Yet, RODICA’s and DINA’s decision does not reflect the efforts of other research participants and migrants in general who are trying all they can to finally be able to legalise their situation. As indicated, the obstacles are in most cases either the patrões, the employers, unwilling to give work contracts, or difficulties from the official sites, which give not clear or correct information and delay repeatedly the issuing of visas and other authorisations, as in the case of Portugal.163

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163 At least before the introduction of "A nova Lei da Imigração", The new Immigration Law, which was enforced in 2007 – if the situation has significantly changes is beyond my knowledge.
3.3 Body and work

3.3.1 Physical experiences

During their migration the migrant women experience significant changes not only professionally but also physically. Their new circumstances show in changes to the shape and physical condition of the migrants' bodies. The migration molds the women. Some women speak positively about the consequences of their hard physical work, they are proud to have a more energetic body, stronger arms and more strength in general. Yet the physical changes often produce also pain; many research participants tell for instance about back pain, headache, varicose veins, overstretching, arthritis, eczema. Many research participants mention explicitly that they notice how their shape and appearance changed during migration, they feel that they move and walk differently. Some women have significant changes in their weight, loosing or gaining 20 kilograms or more.

3.3.1.1 Weight

GABRIELA, for instance, told me that she had lost much weight since migrating. She lost 20 kg in 13 months. (FN 24)

One afternoon, RODICA and I sit in a quiet café in central Lisbon. RODICA shows me some photographs of Nuno\textsuperscript{164}, the only son of her patrões. RODICA is taking care of him day and night since he was one month old. In our conversations she often also speaks of him as "o meu filho", 'my son'. I ask if she has also some photographs of her family in Romania. Seemingly happy she takes out many photographs from her wallet and shows me some of her two sons in different ages, a photo of her husband. She shows also some photos of herself and her husband with other relatives at family festivities, weddings, Christmas celebrations in different relatives' homes. In these photos, everybody is smiling, the tables are fully packed with food and bottles. RODICA points out her mother, her mother-in-law, her sisters-in-law, her nieces. Finally, she points at herself in some of the photos. Unlike now, RODICA had long hair that she

\textsuperscript{164} As with the research participants, I changed also his name to ensure anonymity.
wears down. She remarks that she was really much bigger then and tells that she lost 16 kg only in the first eight months of her stay in Portugal. I ask what, in her opinion, is the reason for this significant loss of weight. "A mudança da comida", answers RODICA, 'the change of food'. Besides, here in Portugal she would not eat dinner every evening. And anyway, she adds with a sad smile, at home everything would be so different, they would spend the evenings with their family and friends, and there would be always some food too. And, anyway, if one is at home and comfortable… RODICA sighs. Referring back to something we had talked about earlier, she adds that all this is connected to "a mudança da toda a vida, do trabalho, do ritmo do dia e de tudo", to 'the change of life, of work, of the everyday rhythm and everything'. (FN 44) When I meet RODICA the next time about six weeks later, she looks very well – but even thinner. I do not want to be impolite and thus do not dare to ask about her weight. However, later she mentions that she had lost four more kilograms since we saw last, in total she has lost 20 kg since she left her family and Romania. (FN 54, 55)

Though the migrant women in my research tended to loose weight, I met other migrant women who gained weight. One Brazilian woman for instance put on about 15 kg since arriving in Portugal. She told me that the reason for this significant weight gain was mainly that she was eating too much white bread and too little proper food and fruit. She works 14 hours every day as empregada doméstica externa and is not allowed to eat the main meals she prepares for her employers. Thus, she eats secretly and quickly the employers' leftovers, mostly this ends up being leftover bread, which is not noticed by the patrões. Apart from the fact that she does not have time for food shopping or cooking for herself, she explains that she also tries to save money for her children at home and thus refrains from buying food as much as possible.

### 3.3.1.2 Dangerous work

Sometimes, the physical labour is also dangerous to the migrants' health. This can happen in cases of very hard and demanding physical work, or can be triggered by
unprotected and too frequent use of strong chemicals (for instance for cleaning), a problem encountered by cleaners and domestic workers, as many research participants pointed out. The work and safety conditions are often extremely bad, this can lead to an increase in accidents and serious health problems. In the case of migrant workers the normal safety concerns and regulations seem to be even lower or are neglected at all, as other research on migrant workers in Portugal points out too (cf. Oliveira and Pires 2010).

Gabriela for instance worked a time in a printing office, where she mainly put cards into envelopes and then into plastic covers. Through this work her fingertips got burned by the lye, and as a result of this continual contact her fingertips were rendered completely numb. After a few months Gabriela changed her work place. Her fingertips, however, remained insensitive for a few weeks more. Then Gabriela began slowly to feel again something in her fingertips, eventually the feeling returned completely, she says. (FN 16)

3.3.1.3 No private sphere

Another stressful and burdening factor for many research participants is the lack of a private sphere. Many migrants do not have a room for themselves. The research participants experience this as particularly difficult in an arrangement when they live and sleep also in the work place.

This happened for instance to Ludmila, as told in more detail earlier in this chapter, when she worked in a casa de repousos, retirement home, in the outskirts of Lisbon: she spent the nights sleeping on the floor of the office. (FN 29)

Ludmila’s case demonstrates well what also other research participants experienced: What seemed first to be interesting and advantageous – because the arrangement offered a chance to save a lot of money which otherwise would have gone to paying for accommodation – frequently turns out to be a nightmare and a severe difficulty as the
women could not distance themselves anymore from the work and their employers. There is virtually no door to shut, no "room of one's own" (Woolf 2000).

Similarly distressing is the situation for many empregadas domésticas who work and live as internas, as live-in maids. Though they usually have a room for themselves and a door to close, it might be difficult to maintain distance to the employers and have space to relax. The women can be called to perform duties all times of day or night, as was the case with RODICA, explained earlier. There is no set parameter of work hours. In many cases, the internas feel uneasy and always under observation and scrutiny by the family they live with.

GABRIELA's situation illustrates this when describes the strong need she feels to get out every Sunday, which is usually her day off. She explains that she feels that she has to leave her place of work and the family of the patrões behind, that it is very important for her to see something different, to go to church, to meet other people, to talk with friends (i.e. other migrant women). She says that by getting out and spending the day mostly outside, she is trying to forget her patrões and her work situation. Even when her patrõa offered that she could stay on Sundays, for instance when the weather is cold and rainy, GABRIELA feels even more clearly how important it is for her to get away at least this one day a week, that she needs this to breathe and to relax – and to be able to return to work an Monday morning. (FN 18)

The intensity with which GABRIELA speaks about her Sundays, and what it means to her to be away for one day from her work and living place, makes me think of a woman suffocating or drowning, and her struggle to stay alive. Many empregadas domésticas internas experience similar conditions and the intense need to get out whenever they can. Going out is like an escape and puts the women in contact with their own autonomous life without any employer looking over their shoulder. Consequently, a situation like IÚLIA's 165, in which the domestic worker is supposed to be at the service of their employer night and day, every single day of the week, is likely to have severe negative effects on the migrant

165 See above in this chapter.
women, often causing depression and disillusion about their migration project on the whole, but also about their future possibilities. ÍÚLIA for instance does not see an end to her work and life situation, and she does not feel she would have the possibility to change anything. This causes her severe frustration. For ÍÚLIA, like many of the migrant women the lack of social contact further isolates the women and thus tends to reinforce their feelings of being stuck and not in control.

However, there are some positive exceptions, as for instance RODICA, who works also as interna.

RODICA has an unusually good relationship with her patrões, as I described earlier in this chapter. She repeats in our conversations how she is "contenta, satisfeita", 'really happy' with her work situation and the family she works for and lives with. RODICA even says that she feels "como na minha casa", 'like in my own house'. (FN 44)

Still, her experiences are unique amongst the research participants. And yet, it is important to keep in mind that many migrant empregadas domésticas internas do not remain passively in this position but succeed in changing actively their situation, as in the cases of DINA and LUDMILA.166 Sooner or later, after months or in some cases years, most women manage to move on and stop working as live-in maids, which they perceive as very relieving. They begin to take up work as externas, for example cleaning houses or offices, and rent or share a room outside their work place. I pointed out also that in many cases the legalisation is a turning point that helps the migrants to be able to change their life and work situation to the better as it opens more possibilities in the receiving society on the whole, and allows the migrants to gain more independence from their employers. The legalisation is a crucial point for the research participants and their development in their migration process, allowing them to live an independent and self-responsible life again. And yet, both are important factors that cannot be underestimated as both have positive psychological effects on the women, as many cases in this chapter and the following

166 Cf. the analysis of both cases in chapter 5.
illustrate, helping the migrants to regain a sense of power, self-determination and possibility for agency.

The lack of an adequate and respected private sphere can have also another dimension, namely the sexualisation. This and more aspects of the same issue will be explored in the following section.

3.3.2 Sexualisation

O corpo, the body, and the experience of it and oneself appear repeatedly in my conversations with the migrant women. However, the topic of the body emerges in various contexts and under different perspectives and links them: The research participants talk for instance about physical changes and restrictions as mentioned before. They also speak about the physical and habitual differences they experience in comparison to "A Portuguesa", "A mulher Portuguesa", 'the Portuguese woman'. Some speak with me also about the role of sexuality and sexual desire in their migrant life. In a later part of the Thesis I will look at these narratives and experiences.¹⁶⁷ For now, I would like to continue focusing on the research participants’ experiences of the body in relation to work.

Many migrant women encounter a strong sexualisation of their body at the work place by their employers. Generally, the research participants feel uncomfortable about the sexualisation, they experience and interpret it as an offence, and consequently try to defend themselves against any sexualisation. As will become clear through the following analysis, the research participants' experiences reflect the power dimensions behind the work relations: Many employers assume and take for granted that the migrant women are (also) physically at their service – and this means also sexually, at least in the understanding and the expressive behaviour of the employers. Many research participants describe similar incidences relating to the behaviour of the employers. When the women did not accept their employers' sexual advances, the employers started to denigrate and defame them. Often, this was done by telling other colleagues that the woman was a prostitute, for example. By doing so, the employers disrespect and, thus, depreciate the woman as a migrant and as a female worker.

¹⁶⁷ This will be examined in chapter 6, particularly sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.
Female domestic workers are extremely vulnerable for sexual harassment and abuse (cp. Anderson 2000), as they work isolated in private households AND thus have only few and very limited possibilities of contact with others. This is in particular true for internas as the following case exemplifies:

FIODORA (32) ran her own business in Siberia (Russia) before deciding to migrate to Portugal because she wanted to see and experience something new and different – "por aventura", as she says, 'for adventure'. In Portugal, she started working as an interna for a divorced, alcoholic man and his son. At the beginning both were very friendly and helped her to learn some Portuguese as she did not speak a word. However, FIODORA tells that, after two weeks working and living with them, her employer asked her if she would like to marry him ("ele propus-me o matrimonio"). She answered with a clear 'No!', emphasising that she did not come to Portugal to get married. However, from that day on her employer began to put her under pressure, insistently telling her she would not have any other chance if she wanted to stay and work in the country. He emphasised this by showing FIODORA calculations of how much she would have to spend for rent, food – not failing to add that she would get all this from him 'for free'. Thus, he insisted, she should marry him. Soon the employer started being more and more demanding and obtrusive, making direct sexual advances towards FIODORA. FIODORA says that she started to feel threatened and fearful, carefully locking her room in the night but was still not able to sleep. She decided to leave this work place and was able to find another job within a few days with the help of an agencia.168 (FN 94)

FIODORA's story is a case of sexualisation and abuse of migrant women at their work place: the employer assumes the total availability of the woman and her body. The marriage proposal is not meant as help or as a stepping stone for the migrant but rather as pure satisfaction of the employers needs, demands and desires: He needs a woman for cleaning

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168 See chapter 6.
and cooking – and everything else, including sexual services. Her needs, on the other hand, are fully ignored.

Sexuality plays also in work relations outside of private households. Employers often see their female migrant employees as also sexually available to them, or use sexual references as means of putting pressure on the women. One woman, who I do not identify in this context to ensure fully her anonymity and thus call her 'LARA' in the following, was offended by her employers' sexual advances at various times in different situations:

Based on her professional experiences and skills 'LARA' was hired for an administration job in a big chain supermarket. When she started this job she was asked to work the first month in the shop so as to get to know all areas. 'LARA' thought this to be a reasonable arrangement and agreed. Soon she found herself sitting most of time at the cash register. After the month had passed, her boss told 'LARA' that they, including her, would go for dinner with a lawyer the same evening to clarify the situation, and that she would start to work officially in the administration after that. The dinner took place in a nice restaurant with good quality food and wine. The lawyer, however, did not show up. Soon the employer made his intentions clear, if 'LARA' did not agree to have sexual intercourse with him that same evening, she would not be given the administrative job she had been promised. 'LARA' answered right away: Okay, then I will stay at the cash register. 'LARA' told me that this did not cause any further problems with the employer at that moment, and that he seemed to accept her decision. She was relieved with this solution as she had gotten the impression by then that it might be better for her not to have to work too closely with her employers and thus be able to remain slightly removed from their business, and all the stress and responsibility connected to it. In hindsight 'LARA' is content about her decision because, the day after the dinner, the boss started to tell everybody in the shop that she did have sex with him. 'LARA' found this very disturbing, degrading and felt hurt. (FN 65)
By declining the employer's blackmail of sex against a higher work position 'LARA' actively rejected the blunt sexual offence which put her under pressure by trying to abuse her subordinate work position. At the same time, she knew that her non-compliance also meant an end to the prospect of a better salary and a more challenging job position that would be more adequate to her professional training. However, the woman was able to make her decision quickly and, by doing so, reaffirmed her integrity and self-respect. She feels confirmed that her decision was right after learning of her employer's revenge – her sexual defamation amongst her work colleagues. And yet, the research participant's experiences with sexualisation and offences at the work place continue as time passes:

At a later stage of her employment, somebody gossiped that 'LARA' would have had sexual intercourse with the other boss with whom she had a good work relationship. 'LARA' was shocked, and told all her colleagues that this was mere defamation and not true at all. She wonders who started this gossip but somehow doubts that it was the respective boss himself. 'LARA' never found out but was relieved when the gossip finally stopped after a while. (FN 65)

'LARA's' reputation amongst her colleagues gets worse, with the other boss as the invented sex partner painting her more and more as 'willing for sex and easy'. Though most of her colleagues remain friendly, saying they would not believe the gossip, 'LARA' feels uneasy, vulnerable and threatened. However, she does not have the opportunity to change her employment as her legal status is tied to the work contract, and thus, to her employer. This is a difficult situation for her and many others, the legal dependency on the employer can pose a very risky situation for many migrant employees.

After some time 'LARA' was indirectly offered a leading position in another shop of the same chain in a different town. She was considering this opportunity but was still not sure if she should accept it, should she really get it offered officially due to her past experiences with her employers and sexual defamation. 'LARA' wondered if it was not better and safer for her to stay clear
from too much direct contact with the bosses, even if this means a lower job position and less income. (FN 66)

And yet, 'LARA' is – understandably – attracted by the thought of working in a different, more challenging position, considering also that this particular migrant woman has a university degree and years of qualified work experience.

When I met the same woman a few weeks later, I asked if there were any news about the offer. 'LARA' tells me that she was not offered officially the new position yet. Instead, her employers had suggested again that she could start working in the office. However, 'LARA' had decided by then to decline this offer again, based on her bad experiences and subsequent mistrust in her employers. This decision was in particular strengthened by another incident of sexual defamation that had happened to her recently, again openly started by her employer. The entire shop was gossiping about her, and 'LARA' got really upset and angry. When she tried to confront the employer, he just left with a big smile, not saying anything. However, he continued telling other employees that 'LARA' had had sexual intercourse with him. I asked her if she would know any reasons or have an explanation for the employer's behaviour. With a desperate expression in her face she said that she really does not know and does not understand. (FN 72)

By this time 'LARA' speaks about her deep wish to change her work place but the difficulty in doing so without risking the legality of her stay in Portugal.

The direct sexual offences and repeated defamations express a complex of underlying power relations based on hierarchical thinking, sexism, machismo and is linked also to the perception of migrant women in public, in this case of Eastern European women in Portugal.
3.3.3 The Stigmatisation of the Female Migrant Body

Beyond the sexualisation at the workplace, a strong sexualisation of migrant women is also taking place in the Portuguese public sphere: Sexual desires and fantasies are projected onto the body of migrant women. The female migrant body serves as mere projection surface (German: 'Projektionsfläche') for all kind of fantasies and racist (gender) stereotypes. This is very present in the conversations with the research participants and other migrants, and shows how daily these experiences are: both, Portuguese and migrant men assume – and many articulate this explicitly – that migrant women are, due to the fact that they are alone in Portugal, either sex workers ("prostitutes"), or, in any case willing for sexual encounters, if not searching. As a consequence of this attitude many migrant women mention repeated verbal and physical obtrusiveness and sexual harassment, against which they have to defend themselves frequently.

The first time I become aware of the stares of male by-passers on some of the research participants is on a walk with ALINA through the Baixa, a commercial and tourist oriented area in central Lisbon, up to Campo dos Mártires da Pátria and down to the old "Moorish" area around Mártim Moniz and back to the Baixa, the square Rossio. It is a late summer afternoon. ALINA is wearing an elegant white blouse and dark tight trousers with small red sandals, she looks very pretty and young. Her eyes are covered with dark sunglasses and a gold necklace shows through her blouse. She is very carefully and well dressed. My clothing style, however, is the opposite, I am dressed in black as usually, a T-shirt, old trousers and comfortable shoes. In Portugal, I find myself chronically underdressed compared to most Portuguese. A Spanish-Portuguese friend told me that my somehow slack clothing style would identify me immediately as being German. At the time, I thought this really interesting as I used to dress in Lisbon by far better and more carefully than I ever used to do. However, that day I noticed the difference in our clothing style mainly because of the expressions and comments of men on the street we encountered. Everybody stared at ALINA and many spoke to her, asking her out for a drink or making straight sexual offences. ALINA ignored these. Later she said to me that she
really enjoyed this afternoon and our walk together, and that it is nice to enjoy the city and feel safe because one is not alone. (FN 72, 72)

Though ALINA hints at it only indirectly and does not want to speak about it, other research participants tell overtly about sexual advances and offences that happen to them on the streets as well as at their work places. It is important to notice that the offences come from both, Portuguese and migrant men, from the research participants' compatriots and other migrants independent of their origins. LUDMILA for instance speaks about her experiences with other migrant men:

LUDMILA is renting a room near Mártim Moniz, a main square and metro-station in central Lisbon. The area is rather run-down and attracts nowadays many migrants as the rent is relatively cheap. There are many African and Asian shops and the entire area is a busy multi-cultural place. In the nights the area between Mártim Moniz and Intendente serves for street prostitution and drug dealing. However, LUDMILA says she likes the multi-cultural, open and vibrant atmosphere but since living there she has become really annoyed by the men around. She tells me that she is constantly harassed by men making unwanted sexual advances: they would talk to her and even touch her. While walking through the streets she is hearing all the time the same word addressed to her: "puta", 'whore'. LUDMILA finds most upsetting that the majority of the men she sees or who call her "puta" are black. She says that, until recently, she never bothered about the colour of the skin, that she never was a racist but now she has begun to dislike black men more and more. They talk to her and try to touch her all the time, and she finds that really disrespectful and disgusting. However, for the time being she cannot avoid these men and their offences as she is still living there, but she says she hopes to be able to move somewhere else soon as she can't stand this situation anymore. While we speak about that, LUDMILA gets quite upset, and asks: "E que é a razão? Que é? Eles são também imigrantes, mas qual é a diferença? Eles falam Português – e nós, não!", 'And
what is the reason? What is it? They are also immigrants but what is the difference? They speak Portuguese – and we not!'. (FN 32)

In LUDMILA's view the sexual offences are an expression of hierarchy amongst migrants, suggesting that the Portuguese-speaking African migrants from Portugal's former colonies would feel to some extent superior to other, non-Portuguese-speaking migrants like Eastern Europeans, and that this finds its expression for instance in the way these migrant men approach women, in particular Eastern European women. LUDMILA's question indicates certainly that she feels threatened by these offences, and in some way inferior. She locates this feeling of vulnerability in the differences in the migrants' command of Portuguese.

LUDMILA's view has to be seen in a broader socio-political and analytical context: I believe that the sexual offences have to be seen also in the context of female-male relations in public. The stereotyped perception and construction of the migrant female body as open and willing for sexual intercourse with 'whom ever' is crucial. This gets reinforced in the cases where the men know that a migrant woman is alone in Portugal, as this equals in their understanding the woman to being a prostitute. This is a very narrow minded concept of women and their life situation, ignoring her subjectivity, motivations, feelings and history fully. The female migrant body becomes stigmatised (Goffman 1975). For the research participants this means that they are confronted again and again with male fantasies and ascriptions onto them based on the mere fact that they are, first, women, second, Eastern Europeans, and then, third, 'single', that is alone in Portugal.

3.4 Conclusion: Work and society

As a starting point to this chapter I outlined the segmentation of the labour market in Portugal. Throughout the chapter, the analysis of the experiences of the research participants revealed how far these structural and social conditions limit the employment possibilities for migrant women from Eastern Europe, in spite of the women's professional backgrounds and skills. It became clear that these women are more likely to find work informally, which in most cases makes the legalisation of their status in Portugal nearly impossible. This is in particular the case during the first years of migration to Portugal
when most migrants have not (yet) enough resources (knowledge, language, time, support, friends) to better their work situation, and with this, their entire living situation in Portugal. Furthermore, the research shows that, due to ethnic and gendered constraints, these migrant women find predominantly work within the service industry, cleaning and cooking, or as domestic workers. The brain waste becomes apparent – migrant women with university degrees and qualified professional training, teacher, managers, physiotherapists, artisans with many skills and years of professional experience do menial work in Portugal. And yet, as I shall explore deeper in a later chapter (chapter 5, Breadwinning), after a few years of being in Portugal some women find ways to significantly better their situation, even if they remain mostly within the same ethnically and gendered niche of the labour market, that being the service industry. Besides, this chapter explained that the sexualisation and stigmatisation of migrant women at the work place and in public are common experiences. This stigmatisation of migrant women frequently leads to physical harassment and sexual abuse. The research shows that ethnic and gender stereotypes are extensively employed (prejudices, prejudgments, stigma).

On the whole, this chapter focused on the experiences of migrant women regarding the conditions of work they encounter in the receiving society of Portugal. A variety of cases and situations were analysed. They indicate that the problems these women encounter are not coincidental but strongly affected by structural conditions like discrimination and social and legal exclusion. Still, it is evident also that not all experiences are negative, there are some women who are satisfied with the jobs they have found, and they feel they are achieving the aim of their initial migration endeavour to Portugal. But even in these cases the centrality of the legal status became clear, in particular its impact on the possibilities of agency for the migrant women regarding their work choices and rights, with consequences also on the way they can (or cannot) lead their life in the receiving society. And yet, inclusion and exclusion do not simply depend only on the legal status but also on the discriminative behaviour of the employers and the society as a whole. Nevertheless, the research showed that a legal status enables the migrants to confront discrimination and abuse more overtly and actively, be it by having legal means to go about it or be it by 'only' quitting the job. Having 'os documentos', the papers, gives the migrants the freedom to act.
In the following chapter, I will place the work related experiences of the research participants in the international context of, first, the global economy and, second, (post-) colonialism. Both analyses will be based on the fact that virtually all the research participants worked as *empregadas domésticas*, which reflects the centrality of domestic service for migrant women in Portugal – and in many other countries as I will show in the following. In the second part of the next chapter the focus lays on domestic workers, this time I shall look at the research participants' experiences within the specific historical and political context of Portugal by using some ideas and approaches from Post-colonial studies.
GLOBALISATION, POST-COLONIALISM AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: Three theoretical perspectives on migration in Portugal

After having analysed in the previous chapter certain crucial aspects of the complex work and related general life situations of Eastern European women migrating alone to Portugal, it is imperative to now place the experiences of the research participants into wider theoretical and socio-political contexts. In view of the fact that nearly all of the research participants worked for at least some time as domestic workers, this chapter first addresses the phenomenon of empregadas domésticas in Portugal by examining the research participants’ situation as part of the international economy of domestic work (4.1). Part two, likewise as exemplified by the situation of empregadas domésticas, employs post-colonial ideas in its analysis of the Portuguese context (4.2). This reveals a very productive theoretical approximation of my research, allowing new insights into the situation of migrant women in Portugal and their daily experiences. Finally, in the last part of this chapter (4.3) I incorporate a broader theoretical perspective by examining the role and significance of social capital in the women’s migration trajectories.

4.1 Globalisation matters: Domestic work and the global economy

In the contemporary world, migration and domestic work are intrinsically linked. Together they constitute a truly global feature; thus, in this chapter I will examine the migration of women from Eastern Europe to Portugal, certainly one new part of this trend. As revealed in the previous chapter, nearly all of the research participants worked, for at least some period, as empregadas domésticas. My research shows that domestic work is a major field of employment for many migrant women in Portugal, irrespective of their vocational background. For a majority of migrant women the care and domestic service industry offers the only employment possibility – though many research participants hope
to leave this work situation rather sooner then later. They believe that a change of employment would be an improvement for their entire situation in Portugal. Usually, the women's first step is to switch their employment from *empregada doméstica interna* (live-in maid) to *empregada doméstica externa*, i.e., a 'housekeeper' or 'cleaning lady' not living in her employer's household. The principal aim for most women is to be able to work more independently, as for instance a cleaning lady. The research participants hope to later find greater employment opportunities, preferably in their field of profession and work experience. With the goal of opening up and creating better employment options in the future, many women try to save a small part of their earnings as *empregada doméstica* (though most support also their families at home); their objective is to invest money and time for further education and professional training at a later stage of their migration.

Domestic work as part of the global economy is an important topic in current feminist and other social critical discourses (e.g. Banks 1999, Bose 2003, Lutz 2007, Patil and Seenarine n.d.). Later in this chapter (4.1.4), I will give a short review of some relevant approaches, and reflect upon the feminist perspective on reproductive work and the reinforcement of gender roles versus changes in society. This shall be linked particularly to the Portuguese context. The overall objective is to scrutinise to what extent the experiences of the research participants can be understood as being part of a global phenomenon (see 4.1.5).

As I will show, the subject of domestic work links three major current social phenomena and their discourses, namely globalisation, migration and transnationalism. Domestic work combines these three fields as practical lived realities, and highlights their social and political significance. In particular, from an anthropological perspective, this means that the topic allows one to look at individual experiences and performances, while at the same time viewing them as an active part of the larger social field, thereby revealing structural conditions of national and global economic significance today. The fact that many women migrating alone were found to be employed as domestic workers shows that

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169 See e.g. LUDMILA's case, chapter 3.2.6.
171 Cf. chapter 5, *Breadwinning*.
172 In particular the so-called 'feminisation of migration', cp.chapter 1.3.

The analysis of domestic work offers interesting insights into some crucial intersections of politically relevant discourses and current social practices, as the manifold research on this topic shows (Chang 2000, Fauve-Chamoux 2004, Henshall Momsen (ed.) 1999, Lutz 2002a, 2002b, 2007, Parreñas 2001 etc.). As domestic work proved to be an important employment area for the research participants, it became also a significant part of my research with Eastern European women in Portugal, and subsequently in this Thesis. Thus, the issues raised in the following reflect current trends worldwide, yet are continuously linked to the specific context of Portuguese society and history.

I have structured the discussion in the following way: first (4.1.a), I will analyse the reasons for the growing demand for domestic workers in Portugal. To that end, it is important to look at the empirical material, the life and work situation and the experiences of migrant women in Portugal (4.1.b): What does it mean for the research participants to work as empregadas domésticas? Next, I will examine certain features of the global phenomenon of migrant domestic work, and point out the situation in the European Union, and more particularly, in Southern Europe (4.1.c). The following section (4.1.d) gives an overview of the research on domestic work worldwide, illustrating its broader context through a selection of research examples. Finally (4.1.e), I will show the extent to which the specific situation in Portugal corresponds to these frameworks and the practices of domestic work as part of the global economy.

4.1.1 The demand for empregadas domésticas in Portugal

Nowadays the demand for migrant domestic workers is great in Portugal. I observed this trend during the four years I lived and worked in Lisbon and found it confirmed during
fieldwork. Empregadas domésticas are in particular searched for in the urban areas, larger towns and cities, but also in countryside hotels and larger households. Though numbers and statistics on this demand do not exist, other indicators (as follows) can be taken into account that support this observation. I see five prevalent reasons for this development in the area of migrant domestic work in Portugal:

1. The first and statistically best established reason for the demand for domestic workers lays in the high participation of women in the Portuguese labour force. 61,1 % of the Portuguese women work, while the average of the EU-27 countries lies at 58,2 %. Significantly more women in Portugal are employed as compared to other Southern European countries: Spain 52,3 %, Italy 46,1 %, Greece 48,1 %, Malta 39,2 % (cf. Ferreira 1998, Flaquer 2000). As in all dual-wage-earner families, the female professional activity opens a gap in the daily task of reproductive and caring work (see Baizán 2006). Here, the employment of domestic workers, and increasingly of migrant domestic workers – read: migrant women –, comes into play.

2. In spite of the high female participation in the labour force, the traditional gender role allocation in the private sphere continues to be the predominant and rather unchallenged arrangement in Portugal (Perista 2002, Torres 2004, 2006): The fact that women go to work does not mean that men start to do more reproductive work at home (Caetano 2007, Sambado 2007, Wall et al. 2004-2006). Consequently, the classical double burden and role for women is perpetuated. This explains one of the structural reasons for the increased demand for domestic (usually female) workers: Other women are employed

173 Unfortunately, there are no official data available on this topic. Neither the Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE), the Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (SEF) nor the Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (IEFP), the Portuguese Employment and Vocational Training Institute, publish statistics on the labour market activity of migrants. The only data I could find counted the immigrant unemployment rate, provided by the IEFP, see http://www.iefp.pt/estatisticas/MercadoEmprego/EstatisticasMensais/Documents/2011/Estat%C3%ADstica-Mensal-Dezembro11.pdf [accessed 28.02.2012]. Cf. Peixoto 2008.

174 Cp. also chapter 2, Immigration in Portugal, regarding the non-existence or the insufficiency of statistics.


176 The only Southern European exception is Cyprus with a female employment rate of 63,0 %. Data from Eurostat 2011 as in footnote above.
to take care of many (or all) of the household duties. Peterson (2007), amongst other authors, describes this correctly as "global care chain". It implies that the domestic worker is primarily seen as substituting the female at home who, in turn, is now employed elsewhere (cp. Young 2001). Thus, the housework remains in most cases the female task – and it continues to be the male privilege not to be involved in the household labour (cp. Anderson 1999: 119). Instead, most of the domestic chores work – such as cooking, cleaning, looking after the children and elderly – is delegated to *empregadas domésticas* who are perceived and constructed as being fundamentally 'different': supposedly from a different class, from a different part of the world, and with a different ethnic, racial or religious background. A further discriminatory assumption most research participants repeatedly encounter is the Portuguese employers' idea that the migrant women who do the "dirty work" (Anderson 2000) have limited or fully lack education. Thus my research confirms what Bridget Anderson (2000) noted. Already in chapter 3 I indicated how unfounded this idea is in the context of Eastern European female migration to Portugal, for many of these women have fully qualified professional training, university degrees and many years of work experiences in their fields of expertise (see 2.2.d).

3. At the same time, other contributing factors play a significant role in the demand for domestic and caring service. Some reasons can be found in the social structures and performances of the nation-state: Generally speaking, the welfare state is weak or hardly existent in Southern Europe as many authors point out, cf. Baizán 2006, Ferrera 1996, 2005; also Flaquer 2000, Katrougalos and Lazaridis 2002. Research conducted in Spain, Italy, Greece and Cyprus (cp. Kofman *et al.* 2000: 118 ff., Lazaridis 2000: 50) suggests a connection between a weak welfare state and an increased demand for domestic workers today. This allows one to draw a parallel assumption for Portugal: while it is traditionally the women's task to take care of children, elderly or sick people, today domestic workers are employed for these tasks – migrant women. Further, this aspect is closely linked to the following as we shall see:

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177 Cf. also below in this chapter, 4.1.3.
4. Another general feature of the Western world, which is more emphasised in the Southern European context due to the historically stronger role of the family, is the disruption of traditional family and kinship networks. Individualisation and the dissolution of the extended family, with the resultant preference for nuclear families, have proven to be significant tendencies also in Portugal (Wall et al. 2001, Wall 2006). Consequently, and thus expanding the argument put forward in point 3, given the weak welfare state, caring tasks that traditionally were performed by the extended family – for example, grandmothers, aunts and sisters looking after the children and the sick, and helping each other with more difficult household tasks – today must be performed either by a member of the nuclear family, usually the mother, or, if she is employed herself, the task must be 'outsourced', to use a neo-liberal expression, e.g. through private child care, nannies, and domestic workers (cf. Baizán 2006: 184).

5. Furthermore, the employment of domestic workers has become – to some extent – a status symbol in Portugal in the last decade, a *must* for certain social strata. Again, a similar trend can be found in other Southern European countries (cp. Anderson 1999: 120; Hess and Lenz 2001: 154ff., Pe-Pua 2004: 11). During my work as a teacher in a private international secondary school in Lisbon, to which many 'better' Portuguese families with high aspirations send their children, I learned how normal it is for the Portuguese children from higher middle or upper class backgrounds to talk about their 'menina' or 'empregada', domestic workers who are their nannies and cleaners. Similarly, most international and Portuguese teachers also employ domestic workers, be it full-time for all household tasks, or part-time for the cleaning of the house and the laundry. Some pupils were very surprised when I mentioned that I did not 'have' a *empregada doméstica*.

It is important to emphasise that the demand for migrant domestic workers in Portugal is not an isolated or nationally confined phenomenon. As indicated above, the situation in Portugal shows particular strong parallels to other Southern European countries.

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179 Similar in other parts of the world, e.g. from Canada (Hodge 2006: 62) to the Middle East and Gulf region: "With the increasing wealth in some parts of the region and increasing influx of migrant workers, employing a foreign domestic worker is a way of raising women's social status in middle class families. Not only does it helps with domestic burdens, but 'having a (foreign) house cleaner is seen as essential and a status symbol of middle class identity' and adds prestige (Anti-Slavery International 2006: 19)."
Obviously, all of these countries, along with the rest of Europe, take (at least to some extent) active part in the global economy thus sharing and perpetuating inter- and transnational developments and trends (cf. Giddens 2007: 6, Hay et al. 1999). Before looking closer at the phenomenon of the global service industry today in the following sections (4.1.c), 4.1.d)), or into Portugal's role in particular (4.1.e)), as an anthropologist it is important for me to first analyse the experiences of migrant women working as empregadas domésticas in Portugal and examine the situation from their point of view.

4.1.2 The situation of migrant domestic workers in Portugal

The following examples of migrant domestic workers in Portugal, their life and work situation, reflect the diversity of domestic workers on the whole, and of Eastern European women in Portugal in particular. As pointed out earlier\(^\text{180}\), there is the tendency in Portugal to see and construct migrants from Eastern and Central Europe as one single collective.\(^\text{181}\) Such a point of view is highly problematic, as it does not allow for the recognition of any variety and diversity between different subgroups on the one hand, and individuals on the other hand. Indeed, such a perspective is blind to any differences possibly constituted by race, ethnicity, class, gender, religious beliefs and practices, profession, family status, migration history, personal identifications etc. The following comparison of two research participants will point out the diversity of the life and work situation of migrant domestic workers. This demonstrates how important it is for qualitative and actor-centred research to look at the differences behind any surface of apparent similarities.

Gabriela and Dina are both migrant women from Eastern Europe, and both work in Portugal as domestic workers. They would probably be regarded as similar cases in conventional Portuguese perception and discourses. However, a closer look reveals that their backgrounds, as well as their current situations, are quite different: Gabriela is a pottery designer from Romania with a working-class background. She is a practicing orthodox believer, married and mother of three teenage daughters. Dina, on the other hand, is a paediatrician from Siberia.

\(^{180}\) See chapter 2.3.

\(^{181}\) As well as in other countries, cf. Hellermann and Stanek 2006.
and, as a musician and journalist, is an active member of her hometown's intelligentsia. She is an atheist, widowed and mother of one pre-school son. Since migrating, however, both women work as domestic workers and, at first glance, may appear as being the same. But even on this level, distinctions can – and should – be made: GABRIELA lives with the family that employs her; she works six to six-and-a-half-days per week and has hardly any free time. In order to migrate to Portugal, she had to quit her permanent job. This has left her uncertain about her professional prospects upon her return to Romania, whenever that might be.\(^{182}\) DINA, on the other hand, lives in a rented room apart from her employers, and works for a clearly defined number of hours. This allows her to have regular free afternoons and evenings in which she can enjoy some of the cultural possibilities she finds in Lisbon. She knows that she will find a position as a paediatrician when she returns home and she is certain that her job will then finance her and her son's living costs. Similarly, the research participants' reasons to migrate are quite different.\(^{183}\) whereas GABRIELA had to leave her home-country due to financial hardship, DINA said she wanted to see and live in Western Europe for some years, and perhaps find a new partner there. Also their work duties and conditions are quite different: GABRIELA takes care of two young children, she cleans, cooks, does the laundry and, thus, does all daily chores in the family's household, day and night. Conversely, DINA is in charge of the cleaning and cooking but returns to her own space and life after her work hours.

GABRIELA's and DINA's cases demonstrate that any sweeping generalisations made without specific regard for of the diversity of the migrants, including their backgrounds, motivations, or their current life and work situations, have to be approached critically. To see these migrant women simply and only as part of 'the collective from the East' not only neglects their differences but also takes a perspective from above, the macro-perspective. The problems associated with such a perspective are well known to social scientists

\(^{182}\) See chapter 5.2.2.2.

\(^{183}\) More details in chapter 5, *Breadwinning*. 
working qualitatively: it reduces the experiences and problems of individuals, neglects differences, simplifies complex contexts and connections, and fails to show dynamics and changes (cf. Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

As an example, I shall look in detail at GABRIELA’s work conditions in Portugal and what those mean to her. This will exemplify the situation of many migrant women; other cases are discussed throughout the Thesis in chapter 3, 5, 6.

GABRIELA works as empregada doméstica interna for an ‘old’ Portuguese family. She looks after the two children, aged one and four years. When she started this position, the baby was one month old. GABRIELA says that she quickly became very attached to him: "Já pensei, tal vez é o filho que nunca tive", 'I thought already that he is perhaps the son I never had'. While being in Romania for a month to spend Christmas with her family, she reckons that she will miss him a lot, "vou ter saudades dele", she says. (FN 16, 17, 18)

GABRIELA’s relation with the son of her employers illustrates well the emotional entanglement of care work. Her feelings for the boy throw a shadow over her visit home, though she simultaneously longs to be at home with her own children and husband. This illustrates the paradoxical situation facing GABRIELA and many other domestic workers caring for children.

Besides looking after the children, GABRIELA keeps the house tidy and prepares all meals for the family. GABRIELA says that she has to clean their shoes too – at home, this is one of the household jobs her husband does. GABRIELA emphasises that she has never before cleaned shoes. When she had to this the first time as interna, she felt quite humiliated, says GABRIELA: "Senti-me como um pano de pó sujo", I felt like a dirty dust cloth. (FN 17, 18)

The cleaning of the patroes’ shoes can be understood as one moment in which GABRIELA realised some of the practical implications of her migration. In particular, the
disruption of her work and life routines and expectations, along with the different demands placed on her by others, became evident to her – symbolised in her having to do a task she had never done before, like cleaning shoes, which task even had been the responsibility of others.

However, says GABRIELA, luckily the family employs another domestic worker who takes care of the laundry of the patrões, while she washes only the children's cloths. Another empregada comes once a week for the bigger cleaning, mopping the floor, cleaning the bathrooms etc. GABRIELA repeats how glad she is about that and explains that, initially, she was supposed to also do the cleaning of the entire house ("a limpeza mais grande" – 'the major cleaning'). Yet after a few weeks GABRIELA told the patrôa that it would be impossible with one hand to clean the toilet, and simultaneously to look after the children the whole day. The patrôa agreed that this was not a good solution, and soon after the other domestic worker was employed. GABRIELA emphasises how relieved she was. (FN 17, 18)

GABRIELA showed resistance against circumstances she found unbearable and against a too demanding workload. With determination, she made the limits of her willingness and obedience clear to her employer who in turn took her serious and changed the work situation. GABRIELA is glad that she expressed her objections and in the end could come to an agreement with the patrôa on these issues.

Yet, she is cleaning every day, adds GABRIELA. Her work day start usually at 9 am and ends around 9.30 or 10 pm. Unfortunately, this will change soon when the daughter starts school. It will be GABRIELA's chore to wake, dress her, and prepare her breakfast. Thus, GABRIELA's work day will already start at 7.30 am, that is 1.5 hours earlier than before – without receiving any more money for her work. GABRIELA says that she approached her patrões regarding this issue. "A senhorita só disse que não podem pagar mais, que não tem mais dinheiro", recounts Gabriela, 'the mistress just said that they cannot pay more, that they do
not have more money'. GABRIELA adds sarcastically that this is understandable: where should the money come from if the patrõa herself is not working? (FN 17, 18)

This final comment sheds a different light on the whole employment situation – the class factor is noticeably at play. While GABRIELA is doing all the house work, the patrõa is not employed or working elsewhere. Though GABRIELA's work day will extend even further for some hours every day, the patrõa does not even consider getting up herself to wake and dress her daughter for school. This, in the patrõa's perception, is clearly the maid's job, even if they cannot afford to pay for it. Yet the patrõa knows that GABRIELA depends on the job and she calculates further that her empregada doméstica will therefore do this additional task as well. It is important to understand the relative power relationship behind this situation: The patrõa abuses GABRIELA as she pressures her to more work without additional remuneration; she knows that GABRIELA does not have the choice to reject the additional work. The research participants experience a variety of similar pressures on them, and the employers know very well how to manipulate and abuse their migrant employees for their own advantage. This abuse, ignorance and disrespect on a daily basis many women find very challenging to handle, as the empirical material throughout my Thesis demonstrates. Particularly difficult is the situation when the research participants live in the same household with their abusive employers, as is the case with all empregadas domésticas internas.

4.1.3 Migrant domestic work as global phenomenon

As already indicated, domestic work (in particular when done by migrants) and globalisation share some significant characteristics: the emphasis placed on a greater flexibilisation of work, decreased social welfare, little public childcare etc. (cp. Young 2001). These features can be understood as part of the neo-liberal world and its developments in economy and politics, particularly after 1989. Therefore, I fully agree with Saskia Sassen who states that: "Immigration is, in my reading, one of the constitutive processes of globalization today, even though not recognized or represented as such in mainstream accounts about global economy" (1998: XXI).
Migrants are needed as domestic workers worldwide.\textsuperscript{184} The forms and means of their migration vary significantly, from governments encouraging and regulating the emigration flows like the Philippines, to private recruitment agencies who organise legal documents, journey, work place, accommodation and sometimes the return home. In other cases, individuals either may i) enter a country legally, as for example students or tourists, and then 'over-stay' their allotted visit time, thus becoming illegalised, or ii) enter clandestinely and work without papers.\textsuperscript{185} The global need for migrant domestic workers has some differences and many similarities.\textsuperscript{186} Some of the predominant features one encounters worldwide are the reinforcement of power hierarchies, inequality, racialisation, ethnicisation and discrimination. For instance, the Human Rights Watch World Report 2007 points out that "[d]espite regional variations in domestic work, migration patterns, and recruitment systems, striking similarities exist among the abuses confronted by domestic workers around the world" (2007: 2).\textsuperscript{187} Obviously, this also includes gender aspects: even if some domestic workers are very occasionally male (e.g. Lindio-McGovern 2003: 525), the vast majority of migrant domestic workers worldwide are female.

Therefore, it is correct to say that the situation in Portugal regarding the demand for migrant domestic workers is not only part of a European, but also of a worldwide, growing phenomenon (cp. Kofmann et al. 2000: 118, Rerrich 2007). Tendencies similar to the situation in Portugal can be found in Middle and Northern Europe. There, the increased demand for au-pairs and care workers (cf. Hess and Lenz 2001) plays a significant role since the social welfare states with their former caring possibilities are increasingly undermined and eliminated (Anderson 1999, Young 2001).

\textsuperscript{184} According to the maps and trends outlined in Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003: 276-280, women migrate in order to work as domestic workers for instance from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Philippines, India, Thailand to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait; from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand to Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong; from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Dominican Republic, Peru, Guatemala, Colombia, Brazil, Morocco, Ethiopia, Somalia, Nigeria, and Eastern Europa to Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and other EU countries; from Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean as well as various Asian countries to the USA and Canada. See also the interactive map on domestic workers provided by Human Rights Watch 2006a.

\textsuperscript{185} See chapter 2.4 and 4.3.2 for the journey and the entrance to Portugal.

\textsuperscript{186} The book Gender, Migration and Domestic Service, edited by Janet Henshall Momsen (1999), offers a good overview on the worldwide phenomenon of migrant domestic work showing its commonalities and differences. The book gives also a concise outline of the international history of domestic workers (as servants, nannies, slaves etc.)

\textsuperscript{187} Cf. also Human Rights Watch 2006b.
In the context of immigration in Southern Europe, many authors indicate that the majority of female migrants are limited to finding work only as domestic workers (cp. Andall 2000: 146, Lazaridis 2000: 49). As a general observation, this is also true for Portugal as shown above. Even if some migrant women do find jobs in other areas, like in restaurants or as sex workers, these work places are still part of the service industry as the main employment sector for female migrants in Portugal. Generally speaking this implies that, nowadays, migrant women all over Europe encounter similar difficulties, or even restrictions when seeking jobs in other sectors of the labour market. This constitutes a fundamental shift in employment opportunities for migrant women in general, having also a severe impact on their legal status and possibilities. In respect to those European countries with a longer immigration history, Eleonore Kofman, Annie Phizacklea, Parvati Raghuram and Rosemarie Sales (2000) point out rightly that these changes have also to be seen in relation to the increased tightening of the migration regimes during the last decades:

In the late 1970s in Europe there still existed a demand for labour throughout most sectors of the economy. Migrant women could, for instance, be found in most feminized sectors of manufacturing as well as most service industries. But more recent migrant women find that, in Europe, apart from sex work or domestic work, the avenues for employment are almost closed for them. There is now a widespread recognition that the restrictive immigration policies practised by virtually all states that receive migration labour do not stop migration, they simply increase the number of migrants who are clandestine. (Kofman et al. 2000: 115)

In particular, the second part of this quote refers directly to the situation of many migrant women in Portugal and their legal/illegalised status as I explained in chapter 3.2.6. Besides, it points directly at the Portuguese political context and the country's handling of immigration nowadays, including the production of illegalised migrants. In spite of many globalisation discourses pointing out the decreasing role of the nation-state (see discussions e.g. in Beck 2000, Morris 1997, Tønnesson 2004), the state is still a crucial and powerful actor, especially with regard to migration. As indicated in the quote above, it is the state that sets the rules, defines the citizen as well as the non-citizen, decides who is allowed to cross the border legally and remain in the country, and who not. This means that the nation-

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See chapter 3.

See chapter 3.2.6, *Sem papéis*: Being undocumented.
state continues to maintain control – in spite of the widespread idea that the state plays a weaker role due to globalisation (cf. Sassen 2007). Shu-Ju Ada Cheng for instance observes that:

[…] domestic service, while increasingly associated with a gendered transnational labor system globally, is constantly reconstituted as a new labor regime locally. The state mediates the globalization of domestic service, and national policies continue to shape the welfare of foreign domestics as governed subjects. The state remains integral to the gendered analysis of carework. (Cheng 2003: 166)

Another author points out critically that the employment of individualist discourses can obscure underlying power structures and state interests:

Yet governments and organizations benefiting from global restructuring use the individualist view as an ideological tool to legitimize labor export. Migration has become a structural imperative for some and national governments play a key role in facilitating such movement, in part by presenting it as an individual opportunity for upward social mobility. Such ideological justification makes invisible the role of the structural adjustment policies in creating the preconditions for labor outflow. (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 518)

Saskia Sassen remarks also that "[t]he state is the strategic institution for the legislative changes and innovations necessary for economic globalization as we know it today" (Sassen 1998: 6). Within the EU this is particularly true regarding the control of migration flows through policy making and implementation, along with plans to increasingly unify and homogenise ("harmonise") currently existing national border and immigration regimes (UNHCR 2003). At the same time, the state's role has changed in

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this context through transnational and global processes. Saskia Sassen identifies two aspects of this transformation:

One is the relocation of various components of state authority to supranational organizations such as the institutions of the European Union (EU), the newly formed World Trade Organization (WTO), or international human rights codes. A second is the emergence of a new, privatised transnational legal regime for cross-border business transactions which now also includes certain components of cross-border labor mobility, notably service workers. (Sassen 1998: 5)

The last point refers to the privatisation of some parts of migration control and mobility. This raises serious concerns about human rights (see also Sassen 1998: 25). Also within this context belong the increased activities of human smuggling and trafficking, also for the purpose of domestic work (Human Rights Watch 2007: 2). All these trends in migration movements and control should be understood as being part and parcel of globalisation.

Some features of globalisation have a strong impact on migration, its circumstances and conditions. In the following, I will outline briefly some important aspects and connect them to the sphere of (migrant) domestic work: 1) inequality, 2) flexibilisation, 3) privatisation, and 4) discrimination based on race and class differences.

1) Inequality

Various authors point out that the new global economy creates "new forms of inequality" (cf. Appiah, Foreword Sassen 1998: XIII, XIV), often also poverty.\(^\text{191}\) These can be seen as one major driving force and push-factor in migration movements worldwide (Castles and Miller 2003, Cheng and Yang 1998), including from Eastern Europe. Inequality can be based on economic and connected socio-political differences, but also on gender, profession, race and ethnicity, religious or political identification, to name but a few potential discriminating factors. However, inequality is not restricted solely to the countries of origin; it is also a feature frequently experienced by migrants in the receiving

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\(^{191}\) In this context I understand also Monica Boyd's argument linking the "feminisation of migration" to "feminisation of poorness" and to Sassen's "feminisation of survival", though she does not speak directly about globalisation or global economy (cf. Boyd 2006: 3-4).
society, as becomes evident throughout the Thesis.192 In relation to migrant domestic work, one can observe the emergence of a new inequality between women. This inequality is based on the existing power relationship between a patrõa and a empregada, the 'mistress' and 'the maid', as pointed out by Brigitte Young: "The increasing equality among middle-class men and women of the same class and ethnic background is accompanied by a new kind of inequality among women of different ethnic and class backgrounds" (2001: 324). I have identified this in chapter 3.2. Most research participants experience this inequality as my analysis shows throughout the Thesis.

2) Flexibilisation

Globalisation and neo-liberal ideology push forward the flexibilisation of production worldwide (cp. Manders and Brenner 1999, Soederberg et al. 2005). This has severe consequences for local, national and international labour markets: relocations of production sites lead to mass dismissals, the increased emergence of sweat shops, the undermining and total destruction of national subsistence economies, and greater dependencies on international and multinational co-operations. These deregulating conditions have strong effects on the working population, requiring workers to be constantly more flexible: casual and part-time work is becoming more widespread in the industrial world (Boulin et al. 2006, ILO 1997, Sennett 1998), workers’ unions loose their impact, the social welfare state is more and more undermined, social assistance programs are cutback, and the worldwide gap between rich and poor widens (WIDER 2007, World Bank 2006). These developments and trends take also place within most 'first world' countries, and precarious work conditions in the Western world are no longer an exception (Bourdieu 1998, Candeias 2005) – as illustrated in the popular notions of 'working poor' and 'white trash'193 (Ehrenreich 2002, Shipler 2004, Wray and Newitz 1997). Additionally, Bergeron's analysis shows that these aspects of globalisation have a particularly negative effect for women (2001).

3) Privatisation

192 For instance, see chapter 3.2.5.
193 Though these notions originate in the US-American context, they are increasingly used to also describe the circumstances in the EU and other Western countries.
Neo-liberal privatisation discourses and practices encourage better educated, middle-class women to participate in the labour force (cp. Simon-Kumar 2011). At the same time, these discourses and practices support and encourage the ongoing decline of the welfare state in the Western world as well as the cutback of state subsidised care (in the countries where it existed before). In Portugal this leads to an urban family model that needs two breadwinners to meet the high living costs194 and provide a good education for the children. At the same time, public child care is limited (“creche”, "infantário público", see Luz 2007). Thus, many families are thrown back onto their own resources, mainly in the form of grandmothers, aunts or sisters, as this is a traditional female task and practise in Portugal. If a family does not have this option because the extended family does not exist anymore due to individualisation (see above), then domestic workers are hired to fill this gap – and in Portugal today these are usually migrant women. Drawing on her research with Filipina women in Italy, Ligaya Lindio-McGovern links the private employment of domestic workers back to the state. Her analysis, which describes very well the dynamic of the situation in Italy, can be extended to include Portugal, and other countries worldwide with a significant demand for migrant domestic workers and other cheap labour force:

The privatization involved here is the privatization of social reproduction – which basically involves the care of the young, the elderly and the daily maintenance of the formal labor force – by minimizing subsidy from the state. By assigning domestic work mainly to migrant women, who can be hired cheaply and on temporary terms, the state is able to pass on social reproduction mainly to the families in the host country and in the sending country. In this process, the […] [migrant, CH] women are placed in a more disadvantageous position since employers in the host country try to make domestic labor as cheap as possible in as many ways they can, at times to the extent of violating the worker’s human rights. (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 528)

I fully agree with Lindio-McGovern’s argument: The high demand for migrant domestic workers in Portugal is principally based upon the need for private care. And, as my empirical research consistently demonstrates, the employee is often at risk of abuse at the hands of her present employer.

194 The income in Portugal is relatively low while the prices are high, in particular in the cities and urban areas. See chapter 3.2.1 and Eurostat 2007a, 2007b, United Nations 2006.
4) Discrimination based on race and class differences

One result of the above elaborated factors, is the delegation of many household tasks, which are traditionally performed by female family members, onto an employed (migrant) domestic worker. This delegation leads to new and different power relationships between women. Class and ethnicity/race come into play. Brigitte Young identifies these dynamics as the "rise of a privileged professional class of women and the growth of an ethnically-defined female underclass", in which "[b]oth sides are mutually dependent on the other" (2001: 324). Young goes so far as to opine that with regard to the 'mistress' and the 'maid': "one cannot do without the other" (2001: 321) – the power relationships between the women and the work tie them together.

In spite of the long and critical debate on gender and reproductive work since the 1970s, domestic work continues to be perceived predominantly as a female issue and is thus "misleadingly conceptualised as a relationship between women – female employers and female employees", as Andall points out (2000: 146). Various authors express a similar critique:

In most households, the migrant worker is seen as substituting for the labour of the wife, with the wife's income paying for the cost of employing this surrogate housewife […]. In this way, domestic patriarchy is maintained […] yet, at the same time, society is imposing a backlash on working mothers. (Henshall Momsen 1999: 3)

Rather than couples questioning patriarchal household and work structures (such as the 'man-made' day) and re-organizing domestic labour and child-care on a shared basis, the preferred option has increasingly become one of buying in replacement labour for those chores. (Kofman et al. 2000: 118)

These authors indicate a general shift from the exploitation of women by men to the exploitation of women by women, which now divides the women by differences in class (which includes in this context the legal status) and ethnicity, as other works on reproductive and migrant domestic work emphasise (cp. Andall 2000). From a feminist and social critical point of view this development has to be seen as re-active: rather than challenging and changing social structures, it perpetuates and reinforces existing roles, divisions and power relations in relation to gender, ethnicity and class.
In reference to current globalisation discourses and trends, it becomes evident that the often mentioned 'feminisation of migration' (Castles and Miller 2003) also implies the fact that many migrant women end up undocumented and without any rights and protection, often working as domestic or sex workers, being highly dependent on others. Many of these migrant women face an intense economic, social, political, legal and psychological vulnerability. This is also true for migrant women from Eastern Europe in Portugal, as some of the presented cases demonstrate throughout the analysis in this Thesis.

These various points evidence that the part of global migration I decided to look at share aspects and characteristics with other migration phenomena in the age of globalisation.

4.1.4 Research on domestic work as a global issue

Though domestic work constitutes a relatively marginal topic in academic research, authors from various disciplines show interest in the topic due to its social complexity as a mirror of current societies and global transformations. As will be outlined in the following, existing research covers a wide range of perspectives on different settings of migrant domestic work all over the world. Amongst the authors are anthropologists, sociologists, geographers, psychologists, historians, economists and political scientists; they look at gender and health issues, at financial, political, social, cultural, transnational, religious, psychological and community based aspects, among others. Larger studies were conducted for instance by Bridget Anderson (2000) on migrant domestic workers in various European countries (Greece, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, UK); Grace Chang (2000) analysed the situation of Central American and Asian women workers in the US; and Rhacel Salazar Parreñas (2001) undertook a comparative study on domestic workers from the Philippines in the US and Italy.

Additionally, we find a wide range of articles looking at migrant domestic work in different parts of the world, focusing for instance on domestic workers from the Philippines in the US (Tyner 1999), from Central America and Mexico in Los Angeles (Hondagneu-

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195 This should not be read to imply a reduction of the women to being mere victims (cf. Agustín 2003, Kapur 2002). However, it is crucial and politically imperative to acknowledge the structural obstacles and confinements many migrants encounter for being able to challenge and overcome them by the agency of the subjects. Cf. chapter 3.2.1.3.
Sotelo and Avila (1997), Puerto Rican 'transmigrants' in the US and in Puerto Rico (Aranda 2003), Sri Lankan domestic workers in the Middle East (Ismail 1999), Filipina and autochthonous domestic workers in Taiwan (Lan 2003a, 2003b), domestic workers from Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Indonesia and the Philippines in Singapore (Yeoh and Huang 1998), and domestic workers of various national and cultural backgrounds in different European countries (see Andall 2000; Anderson 1999, 2001).

In order to provide insight into the growing body of literature looking at the phenomenon of domestic work and its global dimensions, I have chosen three articles. My intention is to point out the broadness and diversity of the approaches, and yet underscore the commonalities of the topic, its empirical bases and theoretical challenges. The first article focuses on Central American ('Latina') women in Israel and analyses religious activities and discourses of transnational motherhood as central strategies of the migrants (Raijam et al. 2003); the second looks at the situation and the experiences of Filipina women in Italy under the perspective of globalisation and the role of nation-states (Lindio-McGovern 2003); the third examines the situation of au-pair and domestic workers in Germany and Cyprus (Hess and Lenz 2001).

Rebeca Raijam, Silvina Schammah-Gesser and Adriana Kemp (2003) analyse the situation of undocumented Latina women in Israel. The authors describe these migrants accurately as being a "part of a larger flow of 'global reproductive workers' who are imported as cheap labor to occupy gender-specific jobs in Western capitalist societies, in the newly industrialized countries of Asia, and in the oil-rich nations of the Middle East" (Raijam et al. 2003: 728). Explicitly positioning their work against the common "mobility of the capital and labor approach", which the authors see predominating in globalisation discourses, they focus their attention on the (gendered) impact of globalisation on the migrating women, their families and children. The article aims to show what the authors call 'dilemmas' that migrant women encounter. They emphasise that migration is not a mere strategy for economic mobility; instead there are "inherent cost and strain associated with it" (Raijam et al. 2003: 728).
More specifically, we refer to the prices that migrant women have to pay in terms of occupational downward mobility, the 'cost' of being illegal in the host society, the disruption of family life, and the contradictory expectations stemming from the need to redefine their roles as mothers and as breadwinners. (Raijam et al. 2003: 728)

It becomes clear that these 'dilemmas' are intertwined. Furthermore, the article is politically challenging in a different aspect: so far, very little research has looked into undocumented non-Jewish migrants in Israel (Raijam et al. 2003: 728, 729). According to the authors, this is significant in so far as non-Jewish migrants are not entitled to a permanent resident status in Israel, let alone citizenship (2003: 729). Thus, these migrants are restricted to remain in a precarious marginal social and political position. The authors show that the migrant women employ two main strategies for dealing with the challenges and 'dilemmas' they encounter. The first is religious participation:

We argue that Latina migrants' participation in religious activities opens an alternative path for social mobility and a public space, perhaps the only one available to undocumented migrant women, where they can acquire visibility within their community. Churches offer Latina migrants a space for the production of a 'sense of belonging' within the experiential context of uprootedness and marginality. (Raijam et al. 2003: 746)

As a second strategy, the authors identify discourses of transnational motherhood. These offer the migrant women…

[...] a redefinition of mothering that stresses the economic responsibility for their children as equally important to – or even more important than – their daily presence at home becomes a central strategy that legitimizes separation from their children. Their rhetoric of transnational motherhood creates a new discourse that subverts traditional conceptions of mothering. (Raijam et al. 2003: 746)

Though speaking of 'dilemmas', the authors of this article succeed in elaborating the migrant women's possibilities for agency; it is thus, an interesting, even exceptional study about domestic work and the global aspects of female migration.

196 For my analysis of female migrant breadwinning cf. chapter 5.
197 See also chapter 6 for the social role of religious communities for the research participants in Portugal.
198 More on transnational motherhood in the context of my research in chapter 5.1.2.1.
Ligaya Lindio-McGovern (2003) analyses the consequences of globalisation in the migration experiences of Filipina domestic workers in Rome. The worldwide migration of Filipina workers (to Asia, Australia, the Americas, Europe and the Middle East, for instance) receives a great deal of academic attention, as the relatively large body of published literature shows (Lusis n.d., Parreñas 2001, Pe-Pua 2004, Perez and Patacsil 1998). In my understanding, two reasons may explain this interest: First, with more than 2000 migrants leaving daily, the Philippines are the largest sending country in Asia (Dizon, 2001: 5, 9, quoted in Lindio-McGovern 2003: 514). Second, this labour migration is directly linked to the specific policy of the Philippine state to actively promote and encourage the emigration of their workforce – one could even speak of migrants as a national 'export' (Rodriguez 2005). The interest of the Philippine state in sending a significant portion of its population abroad has been pointed out regularly: the country's overseas workers ensure a large flow of remittances, forming a significant percentage of the Philippines' GDP. The majority of these migrant workers are women, and more than 70% of all migrants from the Philippines work as domestic workers (cp. Lindio-McGovern 2003: 514).

Lindio-McGovern argues that the Philippines' export of domestic workers is a direct consequence of globalisation and the debt crisis, which are structural factors favouring emigration (2003: 513, 517). Focussed upon the intersection of globalisation and labour migration, Lindio-McGovern's article examines the role of the state by looking at both the Philippines' export and Italy's import labour policies. The author shows that the feminisation of the Philippine labour migration is intrinsically linked to the "hegemonic process of capital accumulation" (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 523-525). One consequence is the reinforcement of "women's subordinate status in the global political economy" (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 527). Privatisation is, again, cited as a central factor in globalisation and in the globalisation of migrant domestic work, in particular; for, not only does the state play not only an important role, but it also profits from the commodification of the migrants who

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199 Lindio Mc-Govern points out that she also met a few male Filipino domestic workers in Rome. However, she emphasises that they only did these jobs because it was the only work available for them, and not because of changed attitudes about gendered role allocation. Thus, she speaks of an 'unchallenged traditional household division of labour' (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 525).
are seen as constituting a "docile and disposable labor force" (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 530).

Thus, the globalization of domestic service work, privatization of reproductive labor and violation of labor/human rights interlock to create an army of cheap domestic workers in the host country. Intersecting with pre-existing gender and national inequalities, this interlock reinforces the hegemony of capital accumulation under globalization. Since it is Filipino women who are largely relegated in domestic work, they are the ones who suffer more the detrimental impact of this hegemonic interlock while the Italian household and the Italian economy benefit more from it. (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 529)

With respect to migration movements and control, the analysis of this particular migration flux refutes the idea of the diminishing role of nation-states in the globalisation process. Furthermore, it is emphasised that the receiving states also profit from immigration "by splitting the labor market through state policies, such as immigration policies that segregate them [the migrants, CH] to this 'subordinate work'" (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 530). The author concludes with a general critique of the inequalities produced on different levels and by different actors through the globalisation of domestic service:

The export of domestic service workers links reproductive labor to capital accumulation in ways that receiving and sending states, private employment agencies, human traffickers and employers profit from it. In the final analysis, labor export in the context of globalization is besieged with contradictions that reinforce the inequality between the poorer sending country and the wealthier receiving nation, between migrant and local workers in the host society, and exacerbates inequalities based on nationality, race, class and gender, as exemplified by the globalization of domestic service work. (Lindio-McGovern 2003: 530)

It is precisely this type of inequality which the research participants face in Portugal – whether the way they are (mis)treated by their employers, or in the daunting bureaucratic structures, unclear requirements and time-intensive processes they face, hindering their dream of transition to legalisation.200

200 Cp. chapter 3.2.6.
In the German speaking world Sabine Hess and Ramona Lenz (2001) edited a volume exploring the intersections between globalisation and gender. Amongst diverse perspectives on the issue, one chapter looks at domestic workers and their female employers, authored by Hess and Lenz. Based on their studies in Germany and Cyprus, Hess and Lenz point out that the invisibility of domestic work offers work opportunities for undocumented migrant women while at the same time exposing them to exploitative work conditions (Hess and Lenz 2001: 142). Migrant labour in the service industry is described as "ants' service for the globalised capital" ("Ameisendienste für das globalisierte Kapital", Hess and Lenz 2001: 142). In Germany, au-pairs constitute a significant percentage of the domestic work sector, and often encounter similar "conflict potential" (Hess and Lenz 2001: 145 ff.), duties, restrictions and problems like other domestic workers. In Cyprus women have to deal with the double burden of work-related and household demands. Unlike in the former times, the women cannot rely on the help of relatives, due to an intensified female participation in the labour force on the one hand, and changes in traditional family structures, on the other (Hess and Lenz 2001: 151, 152). Besides, the employment of domestic workers is also an important status symbol in Cyprus (Hess and Lenz 2001: 154ff.).\footnote{This is linked to racist ascriptions of migrant workers: "black" women (read Asian women, mostly from the Philippines and Sri Lanka) work as domestic workers; Eastern European women are presumed to work in the sex industry (Hess and Lenz 2001: 154, 155). However, this also reflects the predominant ethnic segmentation of the labour market in Cyprus – which is, again comparable to the situation in Portugal I found in my research.\footnote{The authors conclude that various forms of inequality intersect on the basis of gender, class and ethnic differences. These inequalities are also experienced, and at the same time practised and reinforced, by autochthonous professional women who employ migrant domestic workers.\footnote{"Heute sind es die kapitalistischen Globalisierungsprozesse, die alte-neue Ungleichheiten auf der einen sowie neue globale Möglichkeitsräume der Existenz(sicherung) auf der anderen Seite vergrößern und damit eine neue...\footnote{Compare below in this chapter (4.2) for domestic worker as status symbol in Portugal.\footnote{See chapter 3.2.1.\footnote{In fact, a classical feminist dilemma. See also above (e.g. 4.1.1) for same power relations I found in Portugal.}}}}}
vergeschlechtete Arbeitsteilung bis in die Haushalte hinein hervorbringen. Dabei trägt das europäische Migrationsregime wesentlich zur staatlichen Regulation dieser vergeschlechteten internationalen Arbeitsteilung bei, indem es bestimmte MigrantInnen und Migrationsformen zwar illegalisiert, aber strukturell einkalkuliert". (Hess and Lenz 2001: 158).

If, on the one hand, today's capitalist processes of globalisation expand the ever present inequalities, on the other hand, globalisation expands the new global opportunities for earning one's living – albeit, with a resulting new, gendered division of labour within individual households. In this regard, the European regime of migration plays a significant role in each state's regulation of the gendered international division of labour; for, though it declares certain migrants and forms of migration illegal, it structurally factors in their existence'. (My translation, CH)

This is a very important point. Similar to Lindio-McGovern (2003) and others, the authors argue that the state 'produces' undocumented migrants. Hess and Lenz conclude that globalisation reinforces existing power hierarchies leading to a simultaneous 'feminisation of migrant labour and ethnicisation of reproductive work' (Hess and Lenz 2001: 159).

4.1.5 Conclusion: Portugal as part of the global economy of domestic work

As pointed out in chapter 2 (Immigration in Portugal), little research on female migration is published in Portugal. Consequently, I was not surprised when I did not find any literature on (migrant) domestic work in Portugal. There are a few newspaper articles illustrating the life of empregada domésticas in Portugal (e.g. Cavalcanti 2006a, 2006b), though these lack any critical description or analysis. According to such an article, the life of a migrant domestic worker is full of advantages, as the following section suggests:

"A principal vantagem de ser doméstica é que você ganha mais do que em outros empregos, ainda mais porque economiza em aluguel, transporte e alimentação", tells a domestic worker from Brazil to a BBC reporter, 'The main advantage of being a

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204 Cf. chapter 3.2.6.
domestic worker is that you earn more than in other jobs and even more because you do not spend money for rent, transport and food'. The women being interviewed is 34 years old, and has been working in Portugal for four years while her adult son is in Brazil. During these years, she has saved enough money to realise her dream: opening a café in Lisbon. "Lá [em Brasil] uma empregada não consegue sobreviver, enquanto em Portugal, ela não só sobrevive como consegue mandar dinheiro para casa e ainda economizar", 'There [in Brazil] an employee cannot survive; while in Portugal she not only survives but is also able to send money home and still save', writes the BBC reporter, who concludes that – in spite of discriminatory and abusive behaviour by the employers mentioned in the article – "[i]sso acaba sendo até uma experiência mais libertadora para essas mulheres", 'this is a liberating experience for these women'. (My text and translation, quotes from Cavalcanti 2006c)

My research with migrant women from Eastern Europe shows throughout that working as domestic worker is neither so simple nor so advantageous as the referenced newspaper articles naively suggests. To the contrary, the present analysis of migrants' experiences reveals a far different situation, one which is influenced by a variety of power structures. Factors including: global dynamics, national and supranational interests and politics, post-colonial attitudes, issues related to gender, class and ethnicisation each affect the migrant women's life and work situation in Portugal.

In contrast to other European countries, for instance Italy (cf. Andall 2000), the Netherlands, Germany and the UK205, migrant domestic workers in Portugal did not have any political organisation, as for example a union or other interest group, during the time of my empirical research. Thus there was no social institution correcting false images, no platform for action to raise awareness amongst the Portuguese population of the domestic worker' plight, let alone to advocate for their fundamental rights of domestic workers, be the workers authochtonous or migrant. Until recently no public structures existed. Today, I

found one NGO\textsuperscript{206} working on the issue of \textit{empregadas domésticas} in Portugal, and I hope successful action and political changes will result.

And yet, looking at the experiences of migrant women working as domestic workers, a parallel can still be drawn to the situation in other countries. As outlined above in this chapter, existing international literature on domestic work indicates various significant global features, which I have identified also for Portugal as explained above in this section. These are: \textit{privatisation}; \textit{individualisation}, which in the Portuguese context refers particularly to decreased family support from historic levels, and the appearance of more nuclear families; the \textit{feminisation} of the labour force, in particular in the middle and upper class; a general \textit{diminution} in social welfare, childcare, elderly care etc. – such as it had ever existed\textsuperscript{207} – and the subsequent, necessary expansion in the \textit{privatisation of care}; the prevalence of \textit{neo-liberalist discourses and politics} in Portugal. Further factors are the structural \textit{invisibility} of many migrants, as for instance through the exclusion from legal rights which undocumented migrants face, as well as restricted citizenship rights; a general \textit{reinforcement of power hierarchies}, e.g. between women, between the rich and the poor; a strong \textit{emphasis on differences} in relation to class, gender, ethnicity, race, religion etc., and subsequent \textit{discrimination} based on these assumed and ascribed differences leading to \textit{racialisation} and \textit{ethnicisation}.\textsuperscript{208} Finally, a further relevant feature related to the earlier referenced global \textit{feminisation of migration} is that women increasingly appear as autonomous protagonists of migration, often with dependent families and children at home. Such was the case of many of the research participants presented in this Thesis.\textsuperscript{209}

All these features can be found in Portugal today, as my research shows. They confirm the country's active role in the global economy, and in the globalisation of domestic work. At the same time, and in spite of these shared global features, migrant domestic work in Portugal has also a unique face due to the country's colonial history and social traditions related to class consciousness and a particular construction of 'Otherness'. Thus the next section of this chapter – \textit{The post-colonial perspective} – examines certain of


\textsuperscript{208} See also stereotypes and stigmatisation of migrants in Portugal as I explained in chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{209} Cp. discourses of 'transnational motherhood' and, more focussed on my research, chapter 5,\textit{ Breadwinning}. 
Portugal’s historically based specificities and their continuing impact today – again, as experienced by migrant women.

4.2 Post-colonial issues

This part scrutinises the existence and the revival of old and (supposedly) overcome colonial and feudal patterns in the thinking and behaviour of the urban middle and upper class in modern day Portugal. It does so by looking at the situation of migrant domestic workers. As analysed in chapter 3 and above in this chapter (4.1), the employment of domestic workers is very common and popular in Portugal. The range for needed services is wide, from cleaning ladies, who visit different households once or twice per week, to empregadas domésticas internas who live with their employers, being at their service six and a half days per week, day and night. Some households further employ various domestic workers to take care of children and old persons, to do the laundry, house cleaning, cooking and so on.

The following analysis combines three different, yet interconnected perspectives. The first is based on the immediate daily life experiences of migrant domestic workers in Portugal. The second reviews the historic context of Portuguese colonialism, which even today influences the Portuguese society. This allows one to understand Portugal as a postcolonial space, as explained in the following. Consequently, the third field employs concepts and notions of post-colonial studies as tools for understanding and analysis. The main aim of this part is to better understand neo-colonial ideology and (modes of) behaviour in Portugal within a post-colonial context. The central question here is: What are the characteristics of neo-colonialism that can be found in the behaviour of Portuguese employers towards their employees, migrant domestic workers?

In spite of similar tendencies to employ migrant women as domestic workers in other European countries it is enlightening to consider the phenomenon of domestic work in Portugal as being rooted and reflected in the country’s colonial past. In the following it will become evident the extent to which post-colonialism may lead to neo-colonialism by

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210 See above in 4.1.
reproducing colonial patterns of behaviour and ways of thinking. The concepts and tools developed by *Postcolonial Studies* enable us to grasp and analyse lived realities and their underlying power relations. To be sure, these are intertwined with the factors I have analysed above in the context of global power relations and dependencies, i.e. political, economic and social tendencies as side-effects of globalisation (cf. Lutz 2001, 2002b; Parreñas 2001).

This part is structured in the following way: First, I identify and scrutinise two myths concerning the colonial past that are still present in the Portuguese society (4.2.1). This includes a short outline of the Portuguese colonial theory ('Lusotropicalism') and the country's path to de-colonialisation. Looking at *Language and Power Relations* (4.2.2), *Feudal Class Structure and Domestic Work* (4.2.3), I will explain how the daily practises of power relations between employers and the migrant domestic workers continuously reinforce the historic memory of the Empire in Portugal. The subsequent analysis (4.2.4) reveals three features of neo-colonialism: 1. *Binary thinking*, 2. *Stereotypes and racism*, 3. *Refusal of fundamental rights*.

### 4.2.1 Portugal as post-colonial space & myth

I understand Portugal as post-colonial space. With this approach, I follow Stuart Hall who points out the influence of colonialism on the colonising society – and the marks left by colonialism on the colonising society: "[...] colonisation was never simply external to the society of the imperial metropolis. It was always inscribed deeply within them" (Hall 1996: 246).

There are two myths in relation to the colonial past that are present in the Portuguese society today. To understanding them some knowledge of the Portuguese colonial history is crucial, in particular the ideological history. Therefore, I shall give a brief and eclectic overview of the Portuguese colonial history. The first myth refers to the 'great' imperial past, a past full of glory, marked by the discoveries. The second myth refers to the predominant idea and Portuguese self-image as being an essentially non-racist nation. This self-image has a distinct historical background, as will be explained briefly in the following.
For centuries, Portugal was one of the main colonial powers in Africa and Asia. The country held on to its colonies at a time when all other European colonial rulers, such as France and Great Britain gradually had granted independence to their colonies after the World War II. As a result, Portugal remained a colonial power until 1974.

The Portuguese de-colonisation process is a blood stained battlefield leaving behind dramatic wounds in the African colonies as well as in the pátria, the 'fatherland', the Portuguese homeland. For thirteen years, from 1961 to 1974, Portugal fought its colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. During all these years dictator Antônio de Oliveira Salazar (in power 1932-1968) and his successor Marcello Caetano (in power 1968-1974) held firmly onto the nation's colonies. Thus, the Portuguese de-colonisation could only start after the success of the Carnation Revolution on April 25, 1974, which set an end to the Portuguese fascist regime and opened the country to democracy. However, until today the colonial past has never been closely re-evaluated, nor have the history and legacy of the Estado Novo, the 'New State', Salazar's fascist regime, which lasted more than forty years (1933-1974).

In my opinion it is important to understand Portugal's colonial and fascist past of the 20th century as being each other's part and parcel and, thus, as inseparably linked.

The Portuguese colonial rule was and is often described as having been special and different – different in comparison to the colonial practices of Spain, France and Great Britain. In this context, different refers to the allegedly 'humanistic' (Vale de Almeida 2002: 181) – that means: more human and humane – attitudes and practices of the Portuguese colonial rulers. Until today the conviction – or: the myth – predominates that the Portuguese hardly killed any indigenous population, nor did they even discriminate against them. Brazil serves in this context usually as the prominent and successful example of the

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211 Even if these were referred to as 'províncias ultramarinas' (oversea's provinces) from the 1950s on (cp. Sobral 2006).

212 "Portugal is still haunted by the ghosts of that past", observes Power in regards to the colonial wars and how they are portrayed and perceived until today (2001: 489). In relation to the Portuguese national memory and identity, Sobral points out that the end of both, the Portuguese colonial empire and the Estado Novo, did not question or threaten the continuity in the national identity: "Depois [1974], as colónias acabaram. Este facto fez-se sentir de modo muito variável, mas não representou qualquer colapso que pusesse em causa a continuidade nacional" (2006: 23, italics in the original) – 'After [1974, the Carnation revolution and the end of dictatorship], there were no colonies anymore. This fact was noticeable in different ways but never caused any collapse that would have questioned the national continuity', English translation by me, CH.
supposedly 'soft' Portuguese colonialisation.\textsuperscript{213} The legendary heart of this 'by definition' different colonialism and its ideology forms the so-called \textit{Lusotropicalism}, which is based on the thoughts of the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre (1933, 1953). Lusotropicalism can be understood as Portugal's 'Sonderweg'. However, the concept of Lusotropicalism is discussed (cp. Pereira n.d., Piñeiro Iñiguez 1999, Wöhlcke 2000), there is no uniform agreement in Portugal regarding its political, ideological and/or practical significance, nor, indeed with respect to its implementation, either during the 1960s confronted with the prolonged colonialisation of the African overseas provinces, nor even today (cf. Castelo 1998). Nevertheless with undeniable political consequences, Salazar and his regime used Lusotropicalism as a convenient justification for the extended, stubborn and brutal holding on to the African colonies (cp. Vale de Almeida 2002: 192).

Lusotropicalism repeatedly emphasises the uniqueness and specificity of the Portuguese colonial regime.\textsuperscript{214} For example, one of its tenets ascribes to the Portuguese people a distinctive fundamental adaptability and essential 'plasticity' ("plasticidade") in climatic, cultural and biological terms (Freyre 1953). This is linked to one of the main points of the ideology: theoretically, the underlying objective is not so much the extinction or subjugation of Others – but the mixing of races, miscegenation (in Portuguese: \textit{mestiçagem}). The Portuguese colonialism conceptualises itself as a peaceful and harmonic mix of different cultures, based on nationalistic essentialism, strongly romanticised: Multiculturalism \textit{à portuguesa} – at least according to the former state propaganda. It quickly becomes evident that this ideology is itself based on racist ideas.

Another dimension of the propagated and idealised mix of races has to be questioned: 'Who mixes with whom?'. Looking at the past, its practices and evidence, the answer is clear: The Portuguese \textit{colonizador} (coloniser) is, by definition, male, and he mixes with the indigenous, colonised woman. 'Mixing', 'miscegenation', means in this context that she has to adapt and to subordinate to him, the coloniser. We have to understand colonial practises also as gender practises. Consequently, the problematic of the power relations between

\textsuperscript{213} Of particular interest in regards to the Portuguese colonial practise is the work of the anthropologist Miguel Vale de Almeida, who addresses explicitly the construction of Portugal's self-representation as non-racist nation (2000, 2002). For current racism in Portugal, see Vala \textit{et al.} 1999.

\textsuperscript{214} In Gilberto Freyre's words: "[...] essa obra de amorosa assimilação do exótico que nenhum outro europeu realizou até hoje, igual ou sequer semelhante, nos trópicos" (1953: 24) – 'this accomplishment of affectionate assimilation of the exotic, which no other European achieved in the Tropics until today, in a same or similar way', English translation by me, CH.
coloniser und colonised (or: the colonised Other) (Bhabha 1994, Memmi 2003 (1965)) is doubled in the relation between the colonising man and the colonised woman.

The Portuguese colonial practise was not only based upon patriarchal and gender specific structures of power, but also reinforced them. Various authors point out the gender dimension as a characteristic of colonial practises.²¹⁵ However, the uniqueness of Portuguese colonialism lays in its explicit gender hegemony in connection with the propaganda of sexual interracial activity. Today, this historic ideology and practise is reflected in the continued construction of images of woman-ness and femininity based on ethnic, cultural and class-specific differences. As we shall see in the following analysis, the daily practices of power relations between os patrões, the employers, and the migrant domestic workers constantly reinforce the historic memory of the Empire in Portugal.

4.2.2 Language & power relations

The use of language in general, of linguistic structures, as well as single phrases and words can be revealing in the analysis of power relations, social position and representations. Therefore I would like to point out some aspects of language used in the context of migrant domestic workers in Portugal. Many words describe the work of a domestic worker: servant, house worker, cleaner, nanny, cook, helping hand, gardener, carer, entertainer. Critical discourses like post-colonialist and feminist approaches help one to comprehend that these notions tend to hide the power structures behind the work arrangements.²¹⁶ For that reason, many scholars and activists today prefer to use the more neutral, yet at the same time more politicised notion of domestic worker.²¹⁷ This term emphasises that the delivery of any kind of home work and care is not based on sympathy, good-heartedness, or even an assumed 'feminine' orientation and 'nature', but rather on solid, heavy work. Furthermore, on the linguistic level it acknowledges the individual as a wage labourer, thus explicitly calling for fair remuneration and protection. These discourses

²¹⁶ One can observe the same in German: Haushaltshilfe, Hausschwestern, Hausangestellte, Kindermädchen, Putzfrau, Pflegerin, Nähfrau, Köchin, Dienerin, Dienstmädchen, Bedienstete, Zugehfrau, Tante – perhaps even Fee (‘fairy’) or Putzperle (‘cleaning jewel’) etc.
²¹⁷ In German: Hausarbeiterin.
constitute domestic work as a political and politicised practice\textsuperscript{218}, and expand simultaneously the struggles since the 1960s and 1970s for the social, economic and political acknowledgement of reproductive work as \textit{work} (cf. Malos 1980, McElroy 2001).

In those cases in which the domestic worker is not living with her employers, in Portuguese she is usually called \textit{empregada doméstica externa}, as briefly pointed out before. If the domestic worker lives with the employers, she is called \textit{empregada doméstica interna}, usually abbreviated as \textit{interna}. The notion \textit{interna} corresponds to the English 'live-in-maid'. Some employers also speak to and about their \textit{empregada} as 'a menina', the girl, the maid.

Another important notion commonly used in Portugal refers to the employers of domestic workers: \textit{os patrões}. This notion is very often used in Portuguese daily talk, also by the domestic workers. In the context of my research, \textit{os patrões} designates the employers of domestic workers, the 'master' and the 'mistress'. \textit{Os patrões} is definitely not a neutral notion as it reflects a clear power relationship. A brief etymological rooting of the word also indicates its current and, in this context, relevant use: \textit{os patrões}, from the Latin word \textit{pater}, the father. It is connected to the Spanish and Portuguese \textit{patrimonio}, the tradition and inheritance from the forefathers, \textit{patrimonio} also as national heritage and 'under national protection'. Obvious is the notion's linguistic and etymological relatedness

\textsuperscript{218} Which as such is racialised and class-based, as Davis (1981) shows.

\textsuperscript{219} Ferreira (1998) points out that this tendency has its roots in the country's social and political history: "[...] in the Portuguese case, it is necessary to bear in mind that until some twenty years ago society was regulated by the legal stipulation that domestic work was a woman's obligation. The traditionalism of the socio-cultural imagery of many sectors is clearly expressed in a number of surveys of what is considered to be desirable feminine behaviour, according to which the majority of those responding would not be prepared to forgive a woman infidelity, a woman who speaks or dresses badly, or one who smokes or drinks alcohol (Expresso, November 26\textsuperscript{th}, 1994). In the above-mentioned survey with regard to the sexual division of work, more than two thirds of the people interviewed still stated that in their view some tasks were more suited to men than to women (70% men and 61% women)” (1998: no page). The author writes further that "[i]t cannot be assumed [...] that effective logistical support is sufficient to satisfy the needs of the family. Other factors have to be taken into consideration, factors linked to social and ideological representations which define masculine and feminine roles, according to a norm which attributes responsibility to the former and assistance through domestic work to the latter. Within this framework, inequalities can hardly be expected to be overcome at the level of micro-policy and interaction between men and women, as society is structured around the principle of inequality in the very way in which institutions function and in the organization of social and political life” (Ferreira 1998: no page).
to concepts like *patriarchy* and *paternalistic*. The direct English translation of the Portuguese word *o patrão* is also the *master*, the *boss*, or the *superior*.

In our conversations, the domestic workers speak of their employers in general as 'patrões'. When they talk to them in daily life, they call their employers *o senhor* respectively *a senhora*, often also in the diminutive form *a senhorita* – that means 'master' and 'mistress' ('Herr'/Herrin' in German), or 'miss' ('Fräulein' in German) respectively. The research participants all use the Portuguese formal and respectful manner in addressing their employers by using the 3rd Person singular. The employers, on the other hand, usually call the domestic workers by their first name and in the informal manner, using the 2nd Person singular. This clearly indicates the extent to which power relationships and positions are reproduced and reinforced on a verbal level in the context of migrant work in Portugal.

The research participants who work as *empregadas domésticas* frequently mention the lack of respect from their employers. In the women's narratives regarding their work circumstances and the contact with their employers certain key phrases emerge repeatedly, as for example "*humiliação*" – 'humiliation', "*chicana*" – 'harassment', "*falta de respeito*" – 'no respect', "*ignorancia*" – 'ignorance', "*desprezo*" – 'contempt', and "*escrava*" – 'slave, serf, bondswoman'.

Certainly, unequal power relations are not only manifested in daily language use. To an even greater extend, they are lived out in various way. GABRIELA’s case exemplifies these hierarchical dynamics and problems, as shown above in this chapter (4.1.2):

GABRIELA works six days a week, from 9 am till 10 pm. Now that one of the children attends school, GABRIELA is expected to start her workday 1,5 hours earlier in order to get the girl ready – without receiving remuneration for her extra work. The argument put forward by the employers is that they cannot

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220 The Portuguese language distinguishes hierarchies and social position very sharply through different linguistic expressions, e.g. the ways of addressing others, which are considered to be appropriate or inappropriate depending on the situation and the social and age-related position of the addressee and the addressee. This is very different for instance to the English language which, in comparison, appears to be in many situations less hierarchical and more 'easy-going', at least linguistically. Power positions and dynamics might be similar to the Portuguese context but are not so emphasised on the linguistic level. For a migrant this complex Portuguese system of addressing other persons is very difficult to comprehend and use correctly. I often felt that I used the wrong form in addressing others, erring most often on the side of informality.
afford to pay more; GABRIELA, however, feels exploited, and she points out that this is even intensified by the fact that the patrōa does not work and usually spends a large part of the day leisurely at home. (FN 17,18)

4.2.3 Feudal class structure and domestic work

The particular power relations between patrões and empregadas are also historically rooted in Portugal. For lengthy time the country was a feudal society, marked by large landowners, a few 'old' families, with the majority of the population being landless labourers. A strong sense of class-consciousness remained throughout Salazar's regime, showing effect in the economy and politics. Today, a certain class structure and division continues to exist and makes its impact beneath the country's democratic surface.

In this context, it is not a surprise to find that domestic workers have a long tradition in Portugal. Until the early- to mid-20th century, it was common for young women from poor rural and provincial areas to work as servants, cooks and nannies in the homes of the landowners and the (urban) upper class. Mostly, these women remained employed with one family for life. Their status was more that of a serf or slave than of an employee. Similar work conditions can be found today, as pointed out in chapter 3, many women working as internas are at the service of their employers from early morning till late at night; 14-16 hours per day are common, six days a week normal. One of the research participants, IÚLIA, who takes care of an elderly woman, has her weekly free time on Sundays from 10am to 4pm; the remainder of the week she must be at her employer’s service, day and night. All this for a monthly salary of 400€, without a work contract, which means she has to remain undocumented in Portugal.221 Another domestic worker, GABRIELA, describes her situation as followed: “É escravatura, uma escravatura paga, o dinheiro deveria fazer a diferença, mas é escravatura trabalhar assim”, 'This is slavery, a paid slavery. The money should make the difference, but it is slavery to work like that’. (FN 18)

The feudal life-style was also practised in the colonies. The Portuguese colonisers usually had various local indigenous slaves or servants. Many Portuguese living in the

221 Cp. chapter 3.2.5.
colonies returned to Portugal after the revolution 1974/75 – estimations vary from 500,000 to one million so-called retornados, 'returnees' (i.e. repatriates) (cf. Carrington and Lima 1996: 334). The move to the Portuguese homeland must have been a major change in lifestyle, in particular as many retornados had lived for generations in the 'províncias do ultramar', the Portuguese overseas provinces, as the colonies were called. This reference to the historical context should not suggest that the retornados, as the embodiment of the former colonial power, are the same and only people who employ domestic workers nowadays. Yet, the retornados have surely contributed in their own way to weaving and perpetuating the 'grand narration' of colonial Portugal and its glorious past, the continuous myth. This great narrative continues in Portugal – in spite of all the theoretical post-modern discourses on fragmentation (Smart, B. 1993: 21). Feudal and colonial structures continue to exist in the Portuguese collective memory, in particular, though not exclusively, in the Portuguese middle and upper class. These structures are re-discovered, re-inforced and re-invented through various regional, national, European and global developments which transformed Portugal from an emigration to an immigration country in the last decade of the 20th century.222

Whereas in former times Portuguese women from impoverished rural areas were employed as domestic workers as noted before, today migrant women – mainly from Brazil and Eastern Europe (in particular from the Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, and Rumania) – work in this area. The work situation of one research participant, as described in the following, demonstrates the interconnectedness of a strong class society and its elitist lifestyle on the one hand, with the historic remembrance and celebration of the past, on the other. It exemplifies outdated values, while perpetuating the wish and fantasy to re-connect and reconcile with the (lost) past – or, more correctly stated: today's fantasised image of the past. Also interesting is how this case illustrates obvious references to the dramatic and reactive fantasies of Brazilian telenovelas, soap operas, which are very popular in Portugal.223

223 This raises further questions regarding the post-colonial relations between the (former) centre and the (former) periphery, and how past colonisers' life-styles turn into dreams and projections through appropriation by the former colonised – to be then consumed by the former colonisers.
The research participant\(^\text{224}\) works for a family from the upper class in Lisbon, living in a house with seventeen rooms. She does virtually everything: all the reproductive house work; she takes care of the children; makes the dishes, does the laundry, cleans the house, irons, and cooks. She must further serve the meals to her employers, wearing a white apron and bonnet, like servants used to in the Portuguese past, and as shown today in the popular Brazilian *telenovelas* (soap operas). The meals always consist of successive courses, all prepared and served by the research participant, everyday. Afterwards, *os patrões* have coffee, and if the coffee has not the right temperature, *a senhora* gives the research participant a hard time, shouts at her and tells her off. According to the research participant this happens frequently. The *senhora* uses a little bell during the meals to indicate when the next course is to be served. The research participant reckons that all this is the labour of a slave, and this is exactly how she feels her employers treat her. She has a university degree in journalism and worked many years as a managing director. She tells me that she has to repeatedly remind herself to forget her past and to think only of the future – otherwise she would not be able to endure the present, she says. And she would not be able to put up with the daily humiliations. (FN)

Generally, the employers ignore the fact that most of the migrant women from Eastern Europe working as domestic workers went to university and have many years of qualified experience in their professions, e.g. as engineers, doctors, economists or teachers.\(^\text{225}\) That means as well that in many cases the migrant domestic workers are by far better educated than their Portuguese employers. The same employers who treat their employees like uneducated, ignorant and stupid servants and subordinates, coming from uncivilised and allegedly 'under-developed' countries. The research participants encounter this attitude again and again, sometimes more overtly, sometimes more subtly. But however it presents, it is a daily experience and the migrant women talk about the constant belittling, degradation and disrespect which they face. Thus, colonial attitudes and ways of behaviour

\(^{224}\) The research participant asked me to remain fully anonymous in this particular narrative.

\(^{225}\) See for instance chapter 3.2.5.
are reproduced daily. In relation to the migrants from Eastern Europe, this takes the form of a highly politicised and ideologically marked arrogance; many Portuguese express to the research participants the belief that capitalism, and the free market economy, are the 'winners' and the more highly evolved system. This implies the condescending and patronising idea that Eastern European countries, embodied in the migrants, have to catch up to the West's development.

4.2.4 Employing migrant domestic workers: Three features of neo-colonialism

What are the characteristics of neo-colonialism that can be found in the behaviour of Portuguese employers towards their employees, migrant domestic workers? To answer this question, which shall comprise the central theme of this part, I must now look more closely at three major aspects I have already identified as fundamental to my research.

4.2.4.1 Binary thinking

The former analysis indicates a strong reproduction of ideological dichotomies and binarisms, on which the ideas – and imaginations – of the Portuguese employers in relation to migrants, and to domestic workers in particular, are based. These are expressed in their behaviour towards the research participants, but also on the linguistic level. My research shows, on the one hand, that there is an uncritical construction and representation of an alleged 'We', for instance of Portugal as a developed 'first world' country full of progress and very advanced civilisation. In diametrical opposition and delimitation to one's self – as the national self – is placed the construction of the 'Others', the poor, the allegedly underdeveloped and uneducated. Migrants in Portugal, including those from Eastern Europe, are seen as part of the 'Others'. This position serves the employers as legitimisation for a disrespectful and often abusive treatment of the migrant domestic workers. From a critical, feminist, post-colonial perspective, this practice of differentiation can be understood as Othering, which serves to protect and reinforce existing power relations and positions.

226 Cf. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin 1998. For very similar discourses in Anthropology on 'self' and 'other' and the construction of otherness see e.g. James Fabian 1983, Johannes Fabian 1995, Kohl 2000.
Postcolonial studies show that binary thinking is a characteristic of imperialist ideologies and practises (cp. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin 1998: 23-27). Consequently one can argue that colonial patterns of behaviour are reproduced in a political-ideological context in relation to migrant domestic workers in Portugal. According to the research participants' narratives, many employers are convinced that it is pure mercy – thanks to the Portuguese magnanimity and benevolence – and merely good luck for the migrants to be allowed into Portugal and the 'West', to be allowed to work there. (Interestingly, this idea of magnanimous Self completely ignores the fact that most Portuguese employers are unwilling to give their migrant employees a work contract; and thus preventing them attaining legal status for their stay in Portugal)\(^{227}\). Many employers are convinced that without their own and their country's generosity, the women and their families would be starving to death in their home countries, at least in the employers' imagination and fantasy. This is a strong paternalistic attitude which contains and reflects the employers' fundamental ignorance. On the whole the research participants are very aware of this attitude and frequently point to it in our conversations. They feel hurt and disrespected in their personal and human dignity by this. Moreover, this ignorance is based on exaggerated fantasies and does not correspond to the economic and political situation of most Eastern European countries. Neither does it correspond to the individual histories of the women, their professional qualifications and social standing at home, nor their personal motivation to migrate.\(^{228}\) Furthermore, it does not correspond to the research participants' basic daily competence: It is not unusual for the employers to explain to the domestic worker, who, for instance, is an economist or researcher in natural science and the mother of grown up children, what a fridge is or how to iron, fully ignoring her objections that she was familiar with all these appliances and understood well how to operate them.\(^ {229}\)

A complex and highly political interconnection becomes apparent: The legacy of the colonial empire mixes with hegemonic paternalistic and capitalist globalisation claims. And these themes are experienced, embodied, expressed and lived out between people, between autochthton and migrant, between the *patrões* and the *empregadas domésticas*.

\(^{227}\) Cf. chapter 3.2.6, *Sem papéis*: Being undocumented.
\(^{228}\) Cf. chapter 3 and more details in chapter 5.
\(^{229}\) E.g. see LUDMILA's experience as described in chapter 3.2.5.
4.2.4.2 Stereotypes & racism

Closely connected to the binary thinking is the daily use of racist stereotypes and practices. Most Portuguese people would not be aware of them. Racist discrimination frequently starts as positive discrimination: Migrants from Eastern Europe in Portugal are regarded as being diligent, clean, reliable, and, above all, hard working (see Lages et al. 2006). These features are generally very much appreciated by Portuguese employers. At the same time, this opens the door to discriminatory hierarchies and excluding judgements of migrants. For the assumption and ascription of competences is based only on ethnic background, hence reducing and limiting the migrants to certain stereotypical types and images.

The experiences of the research participants demonstrate very well how easily these 'positive' stereotypes can turn into their opposites.230 This, for instance, is reflected in the behaviour of the patrões towards the migrant empregadas domésticas as various research participants told me: The image of the hard working and reliable woman 'from the East' collapses as soon as an employer cannot find something at home (for example a watch, a document or a newspaper) – even though they have themselves misplaced it. It is immediately assumed that the domestic worker must have stolen the object – she is not only the scapegoat but also the presumed evildoer. When the patrões find the missing object later, they ignore what happened and rarely, if ever, bother to apologise to their empregada.

In the wider social context stereotypes regarding migrants from Eastern Europe show a similar strong binarism: the image of the poor, but good migrant, is very present, as pointed out above. Simultaneously present is the image and fantasy of the so-called 'Russian mafia' which is exploiting others and allegedly murdering fellow 'Russians' (implicitly meaning: other Eastern Europeans).231 Both images and ascriptions co-exist but are generally utilised separately. However, in cases of doubt and conflict they are easily bound together; thus a single migrant person is deemed to embody both.232

These stereotypical positive as well as negative images of migrants can be found not only in the context of migrant domestic work but are also present in daily conversations and

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231 See chapter 6.3.
232 The use of stereotype and 'scapegoating' go frequently together and are two sides of the same coin; cf. Giddens 1993: 256-7.
in the Portuguese media. For the last few years, news and reportages on migrants regularly appear in the print media and on TV. Particular attention is given to clandestine migration\textsuperscript{233} and criminal networks related to migration and trafficking. Images of knife fighting or gun shooting Eastern Europeans are frequent and are uncritically reproduced, not only in the yellow press.\textsuperscript{234}

4.2.4.3 Refusal of fundamental rights

The denial of basic legal rights can also be seen as a characteristic of neo-colonialism and its related exploitive attitudes and practises. As pointed out above, most Portuguese employers refuse to give work contracts to their domestic workers. As a consequence, many migrants have to remain undocumented at the margins of the society, and are thus in a legally and politically, but often also psychologically vulnerable position.\textsuperscript{235} To legalise their work and living situation in Portugal, migrants need a valid work contract. Furthermore, most domestic workers are not provided any basic health, accident, or social security insurance (\textit{segurança social}), nor are they given designated work times and days, let alone holidays or sick leave. Most women also mention that their private sphere is not respected. In some cases the employers expect the total physical and emotional availability of the domestic workers including sexual services.\textsuperscript{236} Sexual harassment and abuse are frequent.\textsuperscript{237} All this indicates that the 'Other', in our case the female migrant domestic worker, is not conceived and respected as an equal human being. In this sense, one of the research participants said: "Muitos portugueses tratam os imigrantes como animais", 'Many Portuguese treat immigrants like animals' (GABRIELA, FN 25).

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{234} Cf. chapter 3.2.5 and 3.2.6.
\item \textsuperscript{235} Cp. for instance FIODORA, chapter 3.3.2.
\item \textsuperscript{236} Here, I would like to point out again the gendered character of colonial practises mentioned earlier. See above in this part, footnote 215.
\end{itemize}
4.2.5 Conclusion: Post-colonial issues

In conclusion, I would like to consider again two prevailing myths mentioned at the beginning of this section – the 'great imperial past' on the one hand and the 'essential' non-racism of the Portuguese nation, both today and in the glorious past. I showed how profoundly these myths still influence thinking and behaviour in Portugal and enable neo-imperialist and neo-feudal tendencies. Today these tendencies and expressed attitudes are also addressed against traditional non-colonial subjects, including women from Eastern European countries working as empregadas domésticas. Similar tendencies can be found in other European societies; but in Portugal the tendencies are under-girded by the specific (post-)colonial context and the continuing role of the Portuguese colonial ideology and its embeddedness in the collective memory. This in turn, is further supported by the still active remnants of a strongly discriminatory and exclusive class society.

The historic memory of the Empire effects on the construction of the 'Other' with regard to its basis of ethnic, cultural and gender differences (see Ware 1996), which are daily renewed and reinforced by the performative practices in the relations between migrant domestic workers and their Portuguese employers. The questioning, analysis and undermining of this construction, which is linked directly to the former Portuguese colonial ideology, thus becomes an important and necessary political and practical challenge. It therefore adds another significant dimension to my analysis of the experiences of Eastern European women in Portugal.

4.3 The role of social capital

In this section of this chapter, I shall look at the social relationships of women migrating alone from a different theoretical angle. The concept of social capital opens an interesting perspective. My analysis, however, makes clear that the concept's applicability has some limitations, in particular in research aiming to look at agency beyond structural constraints. Nevertheless, I believe that social capital can offer some excellent insights into migration dynamics and the power relations these produce. Thus, the aim of this section is to explore how far the concept of social capital can lead to a deeper theoretical understanding of the experiences of women migrating alone.
Social capital is an interesting yet ambiguous concept, as one finds in the diverse discussions and approaches within the social sciences (e.g. Baron et al. 2000, Bourdieu 1986, Deth et al. 1999, Lin 2001, Norris and Inglehart 2003, Portes 1998b, Sapiro 2003, Smart, A. 1993). It is ambiguous not only in its theoretical capacity to shed light on social structures and dynamics, but also when trying to grasp and understand it in the praxis of the empirical world. I shall explore this ambiguity in the following; the central question: *Does the concept of social capital make sense when researching individual migration experiences? Or, more precisely: Can it, as a practical matter, enable to researcher to grasp individual, non-collective migration experiences?* In my attempt, I concur Alejandro Portes, who acknowledges that: "[...] the greatest theoretical promise of social capital lies at the individual level" (Portes 1998b: 21).

Section 4.3.1 discusses shortly and eclectically the concept of social capital and some of its definitions. This makes clear my own approach to, and understanding of, social capital. Drawing on the empirical material (4.3.2), I then look at the role of economic and social capital in the arrangement of the journey to and arrival in the destination society, both crucial steps within every migration trajectory. In 4.3.3 I pay particular analytical attention to the negative sides of social capital. Finally, in section 4.3.4 I present my conclusion.

### 4.3.1 Diverse definitions of social capital in the social sciences

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) has established the interdependencies and 'conversions' of the various forms of capital. Bourdieu also points out that economic and cultural investments are often needed for being able to accumulate and activate social capital. Nevertheless, in the area of migration studies, one finds that social scientists refer more frequently and extensively to the work of other authors on social capital like James Coleman (1994), Robert D. Putnam (2000) and the World Bank (2006), especially when considering questions of migrants' social participation in the destination society. This orientation often focuses predominantly on migrants' economic activity and performance in the labour
markets (e.g. 'ethnic business')\textsuperscript{238} (cp. Light and Bhachu 1993, Rath 2000, Sanders 2002, Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward 1990, Werbner 2001).\textsuperscript{239}

Unlike Bourdieu, James Coleman understands social capital more as a "by-product" of other activities (1994: 312) and therefore as largely unintentional (Schuller, Baron and Field 2000: 7). Coleman posits a connection between social capital and human capital. This interrelatedness is significant in interpreting my research participants' migration trajectories.

In spite of the differences, there are certain common features in the theoretical conception of social capital to which most all scholars subscribe: networks, reciprocity, trust, mutual goals, respectively shared values (cp. Schuller, Baron and Field 2000: 1, 14). Alejandro Portes sees the academic consensus in the definition of social capital principally in "the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (1998b: 6). However, this point of view runs the risk of undermining any possible conceptual and epistemological differences between social capital and social networks. Nan Lin, on the other hand, suggests that the general consensus of scholars could be stated as: "investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace" (Lin 2001: 19; italics in the original). Here again we find the predominant academic interest in economic performance. However, Nan Lin's perspective on social capital points to one of the most relevant dimensions of the concept that I found also in my own research. He states that: "In this approach, capital is seen as a social asset by virtue of actors' connections and access to resources in the network or group of which they are members" (Lin 2001: 19).

Based on my research, I contend that social capital is less a question of civic participation – as for instance Robert D. Putnam (2000) suggests – but rather a question of access to basic information, people, and resources. The important issues for the migrants in my study are: 1) how to find a safe place to stay, even when you only have a limited or non-existent command of Portuguese; 2) how to find work – and help when being exploited or harassed; 3) from whom to gain emotional support and, hopefully, friendship. We can see that, in this context, social capital refers to minimal possibilities that are activated and

\textsuperscript{238} See also Nederveen Pieterse (2003) who gives an interesting, critical examination of the notion of 'ethnic economy' in relation to migration and social capital.

\textsuperscript{239} For ethnic business etc. see also chapter 3.2.2.
used in a quite conscious way by the migrants. My research suggests a different conceptualisation of social capital. The migrant women on whose experiences and strategies my research is based know very well what they 'possess' socially – and also what they lack and would like to acquire.

Consequently, my working definition of social capital differs slightly from its conceptualisation and use in the foregoing academic arguments. My research on women migrating alone suggests that, in the context of migration, social capital is not identical nor is it nearly identical to social networks as some social theorists argue (cp. Portes 1998b). Rather, social capital is primarily needed to gain access to social networks.\(^{240}\) In my understanding, social capital can be defined as that which a person can offer in order to gain access to networks, and consequently, to resources, help and knowledge. From this perspective, and in keeping with Bourdieu's point of view (1986), I find that social capital is linked closely to economic capital.

The economic and social capital invested in the preparation of the migration trajectory determines the consistency of the migrants' first weeks and months – indeed, at times the entire first year – in the destination society, as well as shaping their relationships with other migrants. Successfully invested economic and social capital produces its own dynamics in that destination society, not only in maintaining, but also enabling, the creation of further social capital.

**4.3.2 Empirical evidence: The journey to Portugal and beyond**

For the women in my study, the emigration from Eastern Europe is often arranged via so-called 'travel agencies', which are half official and half private.\(^{241}\) Many migrants from Eastern Europe have to pay large sums of money to migrate. Many Ukrainians and Russians I met paid between 1000 and 1500 US dollars.\(^{242}\) It is well known in migration studies that economic capital is needed to migrate – it is rarely the poorest segment of the

\(^{240}\) See Menjívar 2000: 148 ff. for similar observations on Salvadoran immigrant networks in the US.

\(^{241}\) Some newspaper articles hint also at the important role of travel agencies, e.g. Faria 2004, Felner 2003. Cf. chapter 3.2.3.1 and chapter 6.3 on the role of service providers and possible connections to the so-called 'mafia'.

\(^{242}\) Cp. Faria 2004 with reference to the MA thesis *Tendências Recentes da Imigração em Portugal - O caso dos Imigrantes da Europa de Leste na Área Metropolitana do Porto* (Costa 2003). According to this quantitative study, conducted in Porto during 2002, the research participants paid between 116 € and 2780 € euros for the arrangement of their journey to Portugal, indicating an average payment of 741 €.
population who leave (cp. Castles and Miller 2003: 23). My research confirms that for many of the migrants from Eastern Europe, families and friends collected money to enable them to leave. This is frequently seen as an investment in this person, which reinforces existing – or creates further – responsibilities and obligations. As a consequence, remittances are an important aspect of the migrants' life and most women send money regularly to their families and friends (cp. Hellermann 2005b). Thus, social capital, understood both in its 'classic' form – that is contacts, networks, and trust – and as access to financial resources, is needed for migration. Amongst my research participants, only a few women could afford the costs for migrating entirely by themselves; DINA and JEKATERINA are examples. However, one must keep in mind that, from the very beginning the situation is quite different for those women who came to Portugal through the initiative and persuasion of friends (see analysed in chapter 3.2.3.3 and 6.1.1.1).

At the beginning of the migratory process, the economic and social capital invested determines the character of the arrival and initial experiences of the migrants in the country of destination. In the case of Eastern European migrants in Portugal, it all comes down to the content and quality of what I will call here the 'packet of services', which they purchased before their departure. In some cases the migrants have paid not only for the basics, such as documents, visa, and the travel, but also for the arrangement of accommodations and a job upon arrival. The migrants see this as an initial stepping-stone. Most often the pre-arranged job for women is as a domestic worker. A few start out as kitchen hand and washer-up, or in cleaning. Generally speaking, the women know beforehand about the type of work they will be expected to perform. In the best cases, their first contacts within Portugal's migrant society (for which one has paid or obtained through the help of family or friends) enable the migrants access to further contacts and better work opportunities.

By contrast, some migrants only invest in a 'basic packet' of services: documents and travel. While others try to arrange everything for themselves. In most of these cases, upon arrival the migrants will be immediately confronted with the need to invest money as the following example shows:

243 See chapter 5.
244 Cf. chapter 3.2.3.3 and chapter 6.3.
Having arrived in Lisbon after a long journey from Siberia, and not speaking any Portuguese, on her first night FJODORA found herself with nowhere to sleep. She explains that, at that instant, it was easiest to accept one of the offers of help from a Russian-speaking man she met on the street – for money. After a few days she decided that it would be most expeditious to also pay for the procurement of a job. She knew how to locate the man and asked for his help. After having started working as a domestic worker, she paid back his commission in instalments over the next months. Afterwards, FJODORA kept in contact with her 'agent', who later helped her to find another job when her first employer threatened and harassed her sexually.²⁴⁵ (FN 88, 94)

I was repeatedly told by the research participants, as well as by other migrants I met, that 'services' arranging accommodation and jobs are everywhere and easily available in Portugal; many of them wait for the newcomers at their places of arrival (e.g. the main international bus stations in the bigger towns, at airports etc.). Migrants using these services must pay for the help they receive, either immediately, or later, depending on the bargain struck. The point is that, upon arrival, migrants often have to pay to gain access to resources and knowledge, which in turn generates social capital that enables further access to networks and resources. In these cases economic capital is first needed to create social capital so that the individual is later able to use her or his human capital.

The down side of social capital in migration trajectories is the creation of dependencies, and, on a different level, certain commodification of social relationships amongst migrants, particularly between newcomers and longer established migrants, who act as providers of 'services', sources of information and access to jobs, accommodation, documents, medical help and social resources. More established migrants make money, and – according to JEKATERINA (FN 102) – "even a fortune", simply by exploiting the helplessness and lack of knowledge of the newly arrived migrants.²⁴⁶ As a consequence of

²⁴⁵ For more details see chapter 3.2.3.1, The use of service providers: 'Os agentes'.  
²⁴⁶ Cf. also next section.
these 'services', power relations, hierarchies and dependencies emerge in the destination society. It is important to notice that these hierarchies tend to contribute to further gender divisions; the service providers in Portugal were in all cases male.

In contrast, some migrants can rely on extended family or friendship networks even after arrival, as examined earlier in the Thesis:

**Gabriela**'s journey to Portugal, as well as her first work place, were arranged by a female friend who migrated some years before her. When upon arrival the job was no longer available, her friend put her up during the first month, sharing the only bed, as well as helping her find another job. **Gabriela** thinks that this was very helpful as she got a great deal of insider-knowledge right from her friend from the beginning.\(^{247}\) (FN 15, 16, 20)

Her friend's help and familiarity with life and work in Portugal made **Gabriela**'s first orientation into the destination society much easier, for she was able to build on the knowledge base and social capital from other migrants, based on friendship ties originating from before her migration. Still in all, **Gabriela**'s case is quite exceptional. The majority of women migrating alone do not have friends or relatives in the destination country, and many are unable or unwilling to pay for 'services' and help.

During their first years in Portugal, many migrant women hardly have time and/or resources to create new contacts or extend existing ones, as examined in various parts of this Thesis. This sets them apart from other migrants and reinforces their structural vulnerability and dependencies on others (Hellermann 2004a). This observation is particularly, but not exclusively, valid in the case of live-in domestic workers (see also Chang 2000, Parreñas 2001). As shown in chapter 3, most of these women have only a few hours of free-time per week. Many *internas* I met only have Sunday morning for themselves. The rest of the time they are at the service – and under the control – of their employers. Thus, for these *internas*, the weekly Sunday meetings, for instance in the

\(^{247}\) See also chapter 3.2.3.3.
surroundings of the Romanian Orthodox church in Lisbon, become their only real means of maintaining contact with other migrants. The rest of the week such women live in isolation.

On the basis of Pierre Bourdieu's work on social capital (Bourdieu 1986, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), one could argue therefore that these migrant women only have very limited opportunities to undertake the "work of sociability" (Bourdieu 1986: 251) needed to transform economic and/or cultural capital into social capital in the destination society. Furthermore, as Bourdieu (1986) posits, the impact and reproduction of existing power relations become evident in the experiences of these migrant women, often causing frustration and a general feeling of exclusion and loneliness. They lack emotional support.

4.3.3 The negative sides of social capital

In the last several years certain scholars have begun to emphasise the negative potential and inherent ambiguity of social capital, suggesting a kind of slower consideration or a corrective to the generally over positive and somewhat 'celebratory' use of social capital (Portes 1998b, Sapiro 2003). I sympathise with Alejandro Portes' critical perspective on the ways social capital has been approached in sociological research in the last decade:

Social ties can bring about greater control over wayward behaviour and provide privileged access to resources; they can also restrict individual freedoms and bar outsiders from gaining access to the same resources through particularistic preferences. (Portes 1998b: 21)

By looking closely at the situation of Eastern European women migrating alone to Portugal, we get a good impression of the ambiguity of social capital as experienced on an individual level. The previous section addressed its positive features: social capital enables access to social networks, to work, a sleeping place, to obtaining help for acute problems, as well as providing emotional support. These are basic human needs, and my research participants are actively working to build up new social capital. However, their endeavours go frequently beyond the basic needs: most of these women come from socially intense and stable backgrounds with closely knit family or friendship ties (e.g. ALINA, FIODORA, RODICA) and positions of strong professional activity and recognition (e.g. ALINA, DINA,
GABRIELA). As migrants in Portugal, they are very aware of what they now lack. Therefore, as shown above in this chapter, they try actively to establish new contacts, find friends and create new ties – at least as far as their working conditions and very restricted time allow. And as I have demonstrated throughout this Thesis, that those are, in particular for domestic workers, extremely limited.

ALINA's case illustrates the complexity of the challenges that many women migrating alone face:

ALINA supports the livelihood of her mother, her sister and her sister's two children from her work in Portugal. In her hometown in the Ukraine she is part of a very active and strong family and friendship network. As a migrant in Portugal, ALINA frequently mentions that she misses the exchange and the emotional closeness with others, and that she feels very lonely. She finds it very difficult to find female friends in Lisbon. She is aware that many people – including other (migrant) women - look at her and treat her condescendingly and with suspicion because she is alone, a 'single' woman. One of her colleagues, a woman she once regarded as a friend, told others that ALINA was a prostitute. Since this happened, ALINA has kept her distance from other migrants and social networks. (FN 60, 67)

Women from Eastern Europe who migrate alone to Portugal are confronted constantly and on different levels with suspicion and mistrust. One of the greatest affronts and reasons for exclusion that 'single' women encounter is that of being labelled a 'prostitute'. Their ethnic origin plays a crucial role when autochthon people, as well as other immigrants in Portugal, project their sexual desires and fantasies onto these women. As a consequence, the women are perceived and labelled as 'easy' and open women, willing to and searching for sexual contacts. From a critical point of view, I argue that in this context ethnicity should not be understood and conceptualised as a practice of

248 See chapter 3.
249 I showed this in chapter 3.3.2.
(self-)identification by the women but rather as an ascribed feature.\textsuperscript{250} Thus, the fact that they are so easily and frequently labelled as prostitutes \textit{because} they come from Eastern Europe suggests that ethnic, or regional, origin can lead to a specific negative stigmatisation in their migration trajectories (cf. Goffman 1963/1975). At the same time, Eastern European women are not the only ones in Portugal who daily experience the problematic of ascribed ethnic characteristics for 'single' migrant women: the sexual stigmatisation of Brazilian and sub-Saharan African migrant women is also wide-spread and common.

Many Eastern European migrant women have also had bad experiences with networks, both with the social networks of their compatriots, and with other migrants. Such discriminatory actions also take place in groups connected to churches, which play an important role in the support of immigrants in Portugal. Certain of my research participants said repeatedly that they feel excluded and treated condescendingly because of their position as 'single' migrant women and, again, what many migrant and autochthon men and women think that would status implies. These women see themselves confronted with a paternalistic tendency of protection and control, which leads to problematic power-relations between the women and their 'protector' with the resulting risk of dependency and pressure.\textsuperscript{251} As a consequence, most research participants consciously begin to keep their distance from the existing migrant networks and communities, paying the price by facing an increased sense of loneliness and a decrease in, and even loss altogether of social capital. As was shown in ALINA's case, such women are thrown back on their own resources. We saw that other women too spoke of similar problems and patterns in female friendships during their migration trajectory. They found themselves confronted with situations, such as having to live with gossip when supposed female friends revealed their intimate details to others. In the worst scenarios the woman could be 'declared' a prostitute. Research participants such as ALINA come to regard these as unexpected negative experiences, leaving them with a certain cautious scepticism of other (migrant) women.

Women migrating alone are constantly confronted with suspicion and mistrust and consequently establish and maintain a certain distance from social networks in the receiving

\textsuperscript{250} In accordance with the analysis in chapter 3.2.1.2, Ethnicisation.
\textsuperscript{251} Cp. above in this chapter.
society. This threatens and diminishes their existing social capital as well as future possibilities of generating new social capital. It becomes clear that the migration trajectory implies for many of these allegedly single women a double disruption of social relationships: not only when emigrating, but also after the bad experiences in the receiving society and within the migrant communities and networks. This double disruption amounts to a double negative effect on their social capital. The women find themselves in difficult and vulnerable positions, which limit their access to the positive aspects of social capital. From an analytical point of view, the migration trajectories and experiences of my research participants suggest that social capital – including the possibility to generate and enhance it – is not only gendered but also ethnicised.

### 4.3.4 A critical conclusion: Social capital

Social capital is said to create and enable access to networks, and thus, to resources, knowledge, and connections. My research into women migrating alone, however, shows that social capital is, more often than not, linked to economic capital, particularly at the early stages of migration. For many migrants, economic capital is first needed to create social capital; only then are they to use their human capital.

In many cases, the migration process is closely linked to the support of family and friends who invest economic and social capital in the preparation for their departure as well as facilitation upon their arrival at their destination, by arranging documents, money, first accommodation, and sometimes a job. Family and friends actively help to create contacts and thus further access to knowledge and support.

The precarious position of women migrating alone suggests that their access to social capital in already existing networks is both limited and ambiguous. Regarding their first access to the resources of social networks at the beginning of the trajectory, the women participate and invest in the same way as other migrants. The conflicts come up after having lived for a while in Portugal, when they are confronted by others' attempts to exert control over their behaviour and way of living. But that is not all, for women migrating

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252 And indeed, here one could make a link to so-called 'mafia structures': A person pays with economic capital to get access to further, also social, resources. Cf. chapter 6.3, The use of service providers: 'Os agentes'.
alone encounter suspicion and mistrust due to their allegedly 'single' status. Consequently, these women tend to keep distance from social networks and by doing so often reduce their social capital as well as their potential to employ their human capital. In addition, for many migrant women, their ethnic origin becomes a hindrance rather than a help, both within Portuguese society as well as within their compatriots' and other social networks. Most women migrating alone thus intensively experience the negative sides and the loss of social capital during their migration trajectory. Being very aware of their situation and difficult position, they feel a strong need to create alternative social capital; but, they have only limited time and resources for doing so.

Returning to the central question of this section – whether the concept of social capital makes sense in research on individual, non-collective migration experiences and if it allows one to grasp these experiences –, I come to the conclusion that the usability of the concept of social capital appears to be limited.

The subjects of my research suggest a rather negative and desperate image of the situation of women migrating alone. My fieldwork shows that they are in a vulnerable and marginal position. My research, however, also shows that this is not the only face of the women's migration experiences. The concept of social capital does not seem to grasp or reveal the complexity of the individual's situation, her unique agency, motivations, and aspirations. It places too strong an emphasis on the structural position, meaning, at least in the context of my research, its constraints on the individual. The agent's life and experiences remain invisible.

Rather than analysing and understanding the micro-level, the concept of social capital seems to be more useful in meso-level research contexts\(^{253}\), for instance on the dynamics within established communities. Here, the concept of social capital can offer challenging perspectives, showing the positive strengths of communities which though not economically rich, are nevertheless able to create and successfully use other resources. Social capital is a useful, although controversial, approach and 'tool-to-think-with' for researching social relationships and their commodification. However, in research on individuals – at least individuals who are in marginal social positions – the concept of

\(^{253}\) For the distinction of micro-, meso-, macro-levels, see Faist 1997.
social capital does not provide significant insights beyond the structural constraints such individuals confront.

4.4 Conclusion: Globalisation, post-colonialism and social capital

The embeddedness of the research participants' experiences in wider political contexts was developed in the first two parts of this chapter by looking at the relevance of the international division of labour based on gender, ethnic, race and class differences. As discussed, this also takes place in the Portuguese context of the new immigration. However, my research shows that these differences are constructed, and consequently ascribed to the migrants by the dominant society and its members. As we saw in many cases of the research participants, the migrants are perceived by the receiving society as being all the same, and this usually means impoverished, poorly educated, ignorant, backwards persons from uncivilised countries without technology or electricity.254 The fact that many migrants are far better educated than their employers, and much better than the average Portuguese citizen255, is fully ignored by many employers, who choose to view the migrants only as that for which they need them: obedient and efficient servants who do not ask questions.

And though one finds similar practices all over the world, in regard to Portugal's migrant domestic workers, the specific Portuguese historical context encourages and perpetuates a certain type of master-servant thinking and subsequent behaviour. The colonial legacy has an impact on the collective consciousness of the society. And, because very little work has been done to publicly and critically re-evaluate the heritage of colonialism and dictatorship in Portugal, the myths of the Empire continue with all of its discriminative constructions of the Other, still exist. This includes the Other Woman – who in Portugal nowadays is a migrant coming from historically unconnected/unrelated places in Eastern Europe. I further showed that class structures are very present and reinforced in the employers' attitude towards their migrant domestic workers.

254 Cp. chapter 3.
The third part examined the role of social capital in the women's migration trajectories. My analysis showed that this concept aids in gaining an understanding of certain aspects of the complex social relations between migrants on the one hand, and their family members and friends on the other, both in their country of origin and the receiving society, whether before or during the migration process. Yet, the ambiguity of social capital for women migrating alone became apparent, for as we have seen it can lead to a rather negative assessment of a woman's capacity to enhance and use her social capital. I thus conclude that the concept of social capital in individual migration contexts allows one to grasp only certain limited aspects of the migrants' life situation. Often, those provide a too negative and restricted image of women migrating alone and their possibilities of agency. Such negative outcomes have been disproved through other analytical parts in this Thesis.

The next chapter focuses on the individual experiences of the research participants: I shall analyse the role that breadwinning plays in the life of the migrant women. This allows one to see the extent to which their economic responsibility to their families at home impacts the migrants' life and work situation in Portugal.
5 BREADWINNING

5.1 Introduction

During fieldwork I became aware of the central role that breadwinning plays in the research participants' lives. Particularly interesting is the situation of those women needing not only to make a living for themselves but also for others in their home countries. Different levels of economic responsibilities for their families in their home countries have considerable impact on the women's work and life situation in Portugal, as this chapter will show. Thus, I decided to take a closer look at the role of breadwinning of women migrating alone. This perspective allows us also to analyse the different reasons and motivations to migrate. It further enables us to notice how far different arrangements create various dependencies and obligations for the women, and to what extent those influence the migrants' possibilities for agency in the receiving society. It even has consequences on the women's ways to relate with their employers and on their work life performance. To be able to show these interdependencies and consequences in a clear way, I will develop for analytical reasons a categorisation of female migrant breadwinning in the following. Thus this chapter offers a dynamic mix of the migrants' narratives, accounts, self-assessments of their current situation in Portugal and hopes for the future, and the analysis of this rich empirical material, including the structural conditions. This will clarify the significant variations amongst the women, their different reasons, motivations and plans. Noteworthy is that this diversity exists in spite of the fact that all research participants work in the service industry, many as domestic workers. Though from the superficial outside view these women seem to be in similar situations, the closer look and analysis reveals in fact very different life situations in the women's home countries and in Portugal, presenting different challenges and possibilities for agency for the research participants and their entire way of life in Portugal and beyond.
5.1.1 Definition: Female migrant breadwinning

For the development of the following argument it becomes crucial to ask and understand: Who is a breadwinner? In the context of this Thesis, the term breadwinner is used to describe persons who earn own living, they are autonomous wage earners. This is the case for all the research participants I worked with.

By definition, breadwinners are persons "whose earnings are the primary source of support for their dependents." Other terms regularly used to describe 'breadwinner' in social sciences and economics include the following: A common notion is the 'wage-earner'. Still, a wage-earner is not necessarily a (main) breadwinner but simply a person who is employed and receives money as a financial reward for her/his labour. One has to be careful not to equate automatically wage-earning with breadwinning: for instance, a part-time worker is also a wage-earner even if (mostly) her/his income cannot pay most of a family's living costs. And yet it is common practice to simply "translate wage earner as the breadwinner for the family", as Brigitte Young points out correctly (2003: 4) – in particular when the wage-earner is male. From a gender-sensitive perspective, this has to be seen critically, and thus Young notes further: "the assumption that women are not breadwinners has long meant that the work they do outside the home is low-waged work even in a context where women are increasingly taking on responsibility as a 'breadwinner'" (Young 2003: 5).

This indicates how far the uncritical use of notions in this social-economic context not only reflects social and gendered imbalances but, furthermore, perpetuates them. Frequently employed to describe breadwinners are also expressions using verbs, like 'to earn an income' and 'to make a living'. From a socio-linguistic perspective, these are not necessarily so easily associated with only one specific gender nor under-lying power...

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256 Cf. also chapter 4.1.4.
258 In another article, Brigitte Young (2005) examines theoretically the "decline of the family wage model" in the Western world. She understands this decline as a result of globalisation since the 1970s, having "eroded the material conditions for the male breadwinner and his dependent wife and family" (Young 2005: 4). Various factors come into play in this context, like the feminisation of the labour process and the integration of women into the labour market. The author points out that welfare states usually do not see women anymore as dependent on male breadwinners. According to the author, all these factors helped to bring about changes in gender roles and in the "social value structure" (Young 2005: 4), even if, as Young remarks, conservative and neoliberal discourses continue to advocate a male breadwinner centred family as the responsible unit for social reproduction (Young 2005: 6).
relations, because both expressions require an active single subject to determine who is receiving money for work. Another notion in the context of breadwinning is the 'head of household'. 'Head of household' is used sometimes in economic and transnational oriented research: I observed that, particularly in transnational texts, the 'head of household' meant the responsible wage-earner for the family and/or household. In my Thesis I refer to something similar when I use the term 'female migrant breadwinning'. Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila speak for instance of "female-headed households" (1997: 1) or "women-headed households" (1997: 15) (similar Albelda et al. 2004).

After having looked at the more commonly used notions in academic contexts, their meanings and implications, I decided to use 'breadwinning'. I chose this notion also as it states so pointedly what it refers to: the making (that is: earning) of the 'daily bread' as a symbol for the essential living costs – and the effort this takes. Thus, the notion is also symbolically charged, beyond the material realities it points directly to. It expresses the complexity of the situation, including the responsibility many research participants have for others. Therefore, I refer throughout this Thesis with the notion 'breadwinners' not only to all wage-earning women but in many cases to those migrant women, who remit regularly part of the money they earn in Portugal to ensure the daily living costs, entirely or partly, of their families at home. As the following analysis will show, families do appear in this context not only in their small nuclear form (children, husbands), but can include also the women's parents, as well as sisters, brothers and their children. In some cases the research participants financially support also their friends.

The following analysis will show how far the notion of the 'breadwinner' needs to be expanded and simultaneously refined. It will become evident how diverse the research participants are and also will show that there exist similarities. And yet, the women reveal individual difference in their life situations, decisions, and what they regard as important for themselves and their families. Consequently, I argue that it is necessary to develop a wider theoretical and more flexible, yet more profound understanding of 'migrant breadwinning'.
5.1.1.1 Women & breadwinning

As pointed out in the context of the notion of 'wage-earner', discourses on income earning are highly biased and gendered, and reflect various underlying power-relations and ideologies. This is supported by the fact that, generally speaking, to date female wage-earners tend not to be perceived as responsible breadwinners. Rather, they are constructed as additional income-earners who supplement the male income which is understood as the 'main' income. Thus, female wage earning continues to being constructed as merely complementary to the male income. A practical consequence of this attitude and perception is the encouragement of the female part of the population to take on part-time jobs or to enjoy the 'luxury' of staying at home (cp. German 1996). Historically, this got reinforced and explicitly advocated in times of excess work force, as happened in many Western countries after World War II (see Donath 2002, May 2001), or after 1989 in East Germany (Hahn n.d.). This tendency appears up until the present in the labour market statistics of the EU-countries: the female employment rate is generally significantly lower than the male\(^{259}\), while women are predominantly employed in highly casualised and part-time work (see Eurostat 2007c: 138, figure 5.6.). While the idea to stay at home or work part-time might be desirable for some, this stereotypical expectation can become a challenge, even an obstacle for other women who seek alternative scenarios for their (work) lives. One of the problems lays in the hegemonic assumption that, first, the female income is 'only' and 'necessarily' complementary, and second, that the majority of women prefer to stay at home or work part time rather than take on waged full-time work. These dynamics have been analysed and criticised worldwide by various feminist scholars and activists since the 1970s (Gottschall 1995, Janssens 1998, Peterson and Lewis 2001). Furthermore, such attitudes and practices discriminate also in both directions: they do not leave female workers much choice about what kind of life they want to live, neither does it easily allow male workers to decide to stay at home while their female partners earn the living for the family. Though the EU, for instance, promotes gender equality, little has been done to actively implement fairer and more flexible work and care conditions in most countries (cp. Commission of the European

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\(^{259}\) The employment rate in the EU-25 was 2005: women 56,3 %, men 71,3 % (Eurostat 2007c: 135, table 5.2). Similarly, the unemployment figures show that in most EU-countries more women are unemployed than men, cf. Eurostat 2007c: 141, figure 5.12. The unemployment rate in the EU-25: women 9,8 %, men 7,9 % (Eurostat 2007c: 143, table 5.6).
Communities 2005). Thus, until today the male income remains to be seen generally as the main family income in almost all Western countries (cf. Conway-Turner and Cherrin 1998).

A condescending and patronising perception of many female wage-earners is perpetuated in dominant economic theory (cf. Peterson and Lewis 2001), and repeated also in a large part of migration theory (cp. Moch 2005, Pedraza 1991). This confirms the continuous discrimination of women as significant economic members by disregarding their active role within the family and within the society.

Additionally, this perspective leads to a double discrimination of migrant women as it is complemented regularly by the assumption that female migrants are mainly the dependents of their male spouse or other family members as put forward by most migration theories in past and present.260 As a consequence, female migrant breadwinners as autonomous migrants and autonomous wage-earners are largely absent in economic and migration theory till today. I look at some of these few works later in this chapter (5.1.2). Thus, my research exemplifies to what extend female breadwinning, and in particular female migrant breadwinning, does not appear in theoretical frameworks, and how far its existence is regularly not considered, undervalued or simply overlooked.

Within the relatively large body of migration literature only a small share of work does look at the situation of migrant women earning the income for their families at home, as for instance the discourses on transnational motherhood.261 And yet, female migrant breadwinning appears to be only a side topic in these studies, not their main focus. Again, the theoretical and practical importance of female migrant breadwinning is not explicitly tackled. Consequently, one objective of the Thesis, and in particular of this chapter, is to show the significance of the work of migrant women, to make their labour and their breadwinning visible in both, practical and theoretical terms.

### 5.1.1.2 Breadwinning as current activity

Breadwinning does not necessarily imply that this is the main reason for women’s migration – though in some cases it was and is the principal motivation, amongst other factors. It is rather important to understand the concept of breadwinning – as I develop it in

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260 See chapter 1.3.2.
261 See the following section. Also cp. chapter 1.3.2 und chapter 4.1.
this Thesis in order to analyse the current function and activity those women fulfil with and during their migration – without reducing these migrant women to being breadwinners, as the body of the empirical material and my subsequent analysis will show later in this chapter.

5.1.2 Literature on female migrant breadwinning

A few academic works look at or refer to female migrant breadwinning, as indicated above. In the following section I will briefly outline some publications to give an impression of the scope female breadwinning is addressed in migration studies so far. Examining the literature on international female labour migration, I found only a handful of texts looking explicitly at the situation of female migrant breadwinners. Most of these works use the notion of breadwinning only in passing and apply it to a very limited group of migrant women. However, it is important to see in which contexts the idea of breadwinning is used. Thus, I shall give brief résumés of these works in the following. This overview shall help to position and clarify the argument and aim of this chapter in its larger empirical and theoretical embeddedness. The presented articles demonstrate also the global dimension and importance of the issue of female migrant breadwinning.262

I found only two publications regarding migrant women that use the notion of breadwinner/breadwinning already in the title:

The emphasis of Michele Gamburd’s essay (2002) 'Breadwinner No More' lays on the changes in male and female gender roles in Sri Lanka brought upon by female migration. Though Gamburd speaks de facto of women as breadwinners, she only uses the notion explicitly to describe the former male role as breadwinner that is now being challenged by female migration to the Middle East and the subsequent women's income earning. She observes a range of complex changes and dynamics:

The migration of these migrant women has expanded common notions of motherhood in Sri Lanka to include long absences from home. At the same time, female migration has reconfigured male gender roles in an often uncomfortable fashion. Many men feel

262 Namely women from Sri Lanka, the Philippines and South America working in the Middle East, Italy, the USA and Israel – plus my own research on Eastern European women in Portugal.
a loss of self-respect and dignity when their wives become breadwinners. Such men only reluctantly take over the 'women's work' of child care and cooking, they arrange to have female relatives assume these duties instead, in accordance with strongly felt local gender roles. (Gamburd 2002: 190, 191)

Furthermore, the author points out that the new breadwinning role of women threatens the male social position, and questions their sexual image and identity: "Common local stereotypes devalue these husbands' [whose wives work abroad, CH] competence as breadwinners and lovers" (Gamburd 2002: 191). Gamburd interprets these as signs of a "slow, difficult, and often painful negotiation of changing gender roles and family structures" (Gamburd 2002: 192).

The second article is entitled 'Women Breadwinners in the Margins: Filipina Domestic Workers in Rome, Italy' by Margaret Magat (2004). Though it carries the notion of 'women breadwinners' in the title, the author does not define to whom she refers to explicitly. It appears, thus, that 'breadwinning' is used as a generic term for all Filipina domestic workers who send money to their families at home. In her article, Magat gives a general picture of Filipina life in Rome by describing e.g. domestic work as an ethnicised niche, its underlying power structures, and the role of consumerism and materialism amongst the migrants. In the conclusion the author returns explicitly to the breadwinning, stating correctly that migrant women "should be recognized for their role as the main breadwinners of their family", while at the same time "[t]heir needs must be addressed" (Magat 2004: 364). However, the author does not look closer at the complex situation that breadwinning means to migrant women and their daily life; or, more theoretically, to their (social) position within the home and the receiving society.

Other articles that touch the topic of female migrant breadwinning are the following:

Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila's (1997) article 'I'm here, but I'm there. The meanings of Latina transnational motherhood' is a crucial text and core reference for discourses on 'transnational motherhood'. It serves until today as both, inspiration and as a benchmark for many scholars working with female migrants from transnational, often feminist oriented perspectives. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila address
the construction of ideological and idealised discourses concerning motherhood and the "cult of domesticity", which are seen as opposite to the male breadwinners earning the "family wage" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 2). At the same time, the authors point out the racialised, gendered and class background of these discourses and images. In this central text on transnational motherhood, the authors analyse the situation of mothers who go abroad for work. They observe that these migrant women have to "cope with stigma, guilt, and criticism from others" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 4). The authors see breadwinning as being part of the migrants' understanding of motherhood:

For these women, the meanings of motherhood do not appear to be in a liminal stage. That is, they do not appear to be making a linear progression from a way of motherhood that involves daily, face-to-face caregiving toward one that is defined primarily through breadwinning. Rather than replacing caregiving with breadwinning definitions of motherhood, they appear to be expanding their definitions of motherhood to encompass breadwinning that may require long-term physical separations. For these women, a core belief is that they can best fulfill traditional caregiving responsibilities through income earning in the United States while their children remain "back home." (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 10)

Caregiving is understood as a "defining feature of their mothering experiences" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 10), and it is the strength of this approach to recognise the women's work abroad as a positively adding practical experience and value to their caregiving skills. At the same time, the authors notice the critical stance of the migrant women towards their work abroad and the separation from their families and children that this work implies: one of their research participants expresses clearly her realisation that motherhood is not only breadwinning, she says: "You can't give love through money" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 11), while another woman emphasises that "being a mother involves both breadwinning and providing direction and guidance. 'It's not just feeding them, or buying clothes for them. It's also educating them, preparing them to make good choices so they'll have a better future'" (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 11).

263 In my understanding, this indicates the limits and possibly arising conflicts from their work abroad for the women. I discuss this aspect later in this chapter, based on my research.
Transnational mothers seek to mesh caregiving and guidance with breadwinning. While breadwinning may require their long-term and long-distance separations from their children, they attempt to sustain family connections by showing emotional ties through letters, phone calls, and money sent home. If at all financially and logistically possible, they try to travel home to visit their children. They maintain their mothering responsibilities not only by earning money for their children’s livelihood but also by communicating and advising across national borders, and across the boundaries that separate their children’s place of residence from their own places of employment and residence. (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 12)

Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997) look in their article at breadwinning migrant women. Yet, as their emphasis lays on 'transnational motherhood' and the redefinition of what motherhood and caregiving means, they do not focus analytically on the breadwinning and its consequences for the migrant women.

The article 'International Migration, Domestic Work, and Care Work: Undocumented Latina Migrants in Israel' by Rebeca Raijam, Silvina Schammah-Gesser and Adriana Kemp (2003) is also placed within the larger context of feminisation of migration and the globalisation of domestic work and child care. Closely following Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997), Raijam et al. identify the necessity for migrant mothers to replace the idea of "family in one place" – that is, the glorification of privatised mothering – to a new rhetoric of transnational motherhood and the breadwinning role of the migrant women (Raijam et al. 2003: 731). The authors understand migration as a significant challenge to breadwinning mothers and thus point out critically…

"[…] the dilemmas inherent in the process of female labor migration, namely migration as a strategy for economic mobility on one hand and the inherent cost and strain associated with it on the other. More specifically, we refer to the prices that migrant women have to pay in terms of occupational downward mobility, the 'cost' of being illegal in the host society, the disruption of family life, and the contradictory expectations stemming from the need to redefine their roles as mothers and as breadwinners." (Raijam et al. 2003: 728)
Pei-Chia Lan (2003a) looks at Filipina women who become breadwinners through migration in her article 'Maid or Madam? Filipina Migrant Workers and the Continuity of Domestic Labor'. She emphasises the benefits for the women as "such a feminized migration pattern helps Filipina homemakers expand the scope of their lives and become the primary breadwinners in their families" (Lan 2003a: 192). The article refers also to the socio-historical patriarchal context of the Philippines, which according to Lan (2003a: 191) encourages women to seek work as domestic workers abroad. This is portrayed as a challenge to male self-understanding which leads frequently to private and social conflicts: "[…] some of their husbands drink or gamble to excess when they are no longer in charge of the daily duty of breadwinning" (Lan 2003a: 193). Lan concludes that some men have problems in accepting the changes in gender roles and feel the "ideal masculine role of breadwinner" is undermined (Lan 2003a: 194).

Looking at the situation of the migrant women themselves, Lan observes – similar to Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997) – that the women gain economic independence and a higher social standing within the Philippine society, while at the same time they "pay the emotional cost of leaving their husbands and children and are stigmatised for their deviation from the ideal of domesticity and motherhood" (Lan 2003a: 194). Thus, concludes Lan, Filipina women as transnational breadwinners "remain burdened by their gendered duties as mothers and wives back home" (Lan 2003a: 202). Additionally, the author refers to other women, who start their migration before marriage and children: she notes that those gain a significant boost in their self-esteem and self-confidence through their breadwinning abroad. Some of these women come to the conclusion that it is better for them not to marry, in order to maintain their independence and self-reliance (Lan 2003a: 200); they see the status of a married women as the unpaid version of a domestic worker abroad and prefer their economic independence (Lan 2003a: 200).

5.1.2.1 Transnational motherhood?

We see that some research, in particular under the perspective of 'transnational motherhood', suggests that migrant women gain more say and respect – and thus power – in their families and home societies through their work abroad and through the economic dependency of their families on them (e.g. Parreñas 2001). This might be true in certain
cultural and social contexts. However, I did not find any evidence for this in my research, and the research participants never mentioned any aspects that would make such in interpretation possible. I see two possible reasons for this different observation: First, my research was based in the receiving society with the main aim to examine the work and living situation of women migrating alone. A transnationally conducted comparative study of the situation and interaction with the families of the research participants in their home countries might have revealed other aspects of their migration. Secondly, it could also be that in the Eastern European post-socialist countries like the Ukraine, Russia and Romania, women tend to have already a significant say within the family. Additionally, all research participants were employed before migration, they were significant wage-earners in their home society, some shared the breadwinning for the family with their partners and husbands. Other research participants are single mothers and were already then sole breadwinners at home, carrying the full responsibility for their children and other family members, e.g. parents or siblings. This corresponds to the image of strong and independent yet warm and caring women that was promoted in particular in the Soviet Union (see Bridger et al. 1996, Einhorn 1993, Mace 1961). My research in general and the following analysis as in this Thesis show the strong position many women have within their families, and it shows also how serious these women take this responsibility. Yet, I did not find any evidence suggesting an increase in these women's social role and say in their home countries, as some transnational literature suggests. Wage-earning and decision-making within the family are not new experiences for the research participants, these are not gains from their migration but existed before. This suggests that some aspects of transnational motherhood discourses are highly dependent on the socio-cultural context in the society of origin. What other researchers suggest for women for instance from the Philippines (Lan 2003a, Parreñas 2001) and from Southern America (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997, Raijam et al. 2003) as above briefly explained, is not necessarily true for women from Eastern Europe, respectively the former USSR, who come from societies which used to encourage women over many decades to be active in both roles, as mothers and workers. All research participants were employed before migration, including those who are mothers. Consequently, this turns out to be a crucial differentiating factor to the transnational studies mentioned and shows that the ideas connected to discourses of
transnational motherhood are highly context-dependent and not fully applicable to all social and cultural backgrounds.

And yet, in spite of this limitation, transnational motherhood as theoretical concept offers valuable insights, in particular through the shift of perspective from constructing migrant women as passive victims towards seeing them as active and responsible members of their family and society. These women achieve a lot through their work abroad and across the geographical distance. My research confirms this while making visible at the same time the implications different breadwinning arrangements have for the migrant women and their lives in Portugal, as will be developed in the following.

5.2 Five categories of female migrant breadwinning

5.2.1 Preliminary remark: Typologies in current Anthropology

From a contemporary, critical, post-structuralist anthropological and feminist oriented point of view, any kind of classification, typologisation and categorisation – in particular strict and inflexible ones – run the risk of reductionism, without being capable of corresponding to the complexity and diversity of social life and daily experiences (e.g. Auinger 2004, Rapport and Overing 2000). Nevertheless, in migration studies, as Caroline B. Brettell points out, some anthropologists do use typologisations in order to "capture different migration strategies", yet recognise their processual character (2000: 101/102). Similarly, in my research, I consider it as helpful to outline tendencies for analytical reasons and a clearer comprehension of the context and dynamics of migration experiences. In this chapter, a categorisation of female migrant breadwinning will allow the development of comprehensive insights in the diverse motivations of migrant women in their (and their families’) decision to migrate, as well as of their personal objectives and plans. Thus, the following categories are employed primarily for operational reasons to enable a better understanding of migration trajectories, to 'handle' better the complex nature of migration experiences – without reducing and suppressing the women's diversity to a rigid, restrictive and excluding typology. These categories make visible the differences and the diversity beyond (apparent and assumed) similarities.
Thus, the categories developed in the following are eye-opening tools-to-think-with. They are used as a starting point to conceptualise migration projects and experiences while recognising some structural facts and conditions – yet without limiting the migrants and their point of view to those. Thanks to the focal point of the autonomous breadwinning migrant each research participant's narrative and situation unfolds in a clear way through the categories. In this way the diverse migration experiences of the research participants are not squeezed into rigid boxes, which ignore differences and result in creating a false 'sameness'. The multiple narratives around these categories help to develop a deeper understanding of the uniqueness and diversity of all migration.

5.2.2 The women

All research participants are autonomous breadwinners. While all are earning their living themselves, there are significant variations amongst the migrant women as the body of material shows through the analysis. Based on my research, I develop in the following five categories of migrant women who are breadwinners. Four of these categories are breadwinners and economic supporters of their families in their home countries, however in different ways. I added a fifth category to enrich the differentiation analytically as this allows a more illustrative understanding and comparison of the research participants' real life' situation. Thus the fifth category encompasses those women who migrate alone to Portugal but who are not economically responsible for others family members or friends – yet they are still breadwinners for themselves. By contrasting these women with those of the prior category, we gain a clearer understanding of the migrant women's situation as well as the effects of the structural conditions on their daily lives. It reveals the restrictions and the possibilities for agency of the first four categories in order to make a good life (and living) beyond the structural limitations. For this purpose I decided to include the fifth category for its explanatory and analytical value for the entire situation of migrant women. Therefore, the conjunction of these five categories allows a deeper analysis of the differences in the life situations of migrant women in Portugal. The implications of each situation become particularly evident in comparison with the other cases and life situations within each category and across those. The analysis shows clearly that the women's contribution to the family income is significant throughout, even if they are not the only
earning family members like the research participants in category I. The categories developed are the following five:

**Category I: Sole breadwinning women**

**Category II: Primary breadwinners**

**Category III: The supporting member of female networks**

**Category IV: Other, 'co-supporting' migrants**

**Category V: Independent migrant women**

For each category I will give first a short definition of the type of migrant women's breadwinning I found, and then take a closer analytical look at each woman and her migration trajectory. I examine some of the cases at greater length than others in order to allow the complexity of the women's situation to become clear. Without claiming to be representative, these categories reveal tendencies and patterns through a variety of migration trajectories. Furthermore, the categories reflect the diversity of the experiences of Eastern European women migrating alone to Portugal, while, at the same time, they enable us to identify commonalities, similarities and differences.

As a matter of fact, the categories themselves show the limitations of any attempt to press life into structured frameworks: Though one aspect of a situation and experience might be similar in two cases – as e.g. the social-economic condition of breadwinning as developed throughout the categories –, other facets of life prove to be different. Similarity exists only on the surface, for the fleeting eye. The categories help to deconstruct any superficial levelling of experiences and positions and are thus a powerful analytical tool for this qualitative analysis. As pointed out in chapter 1.3.1.4, I reject levelling attempts as exemplified in the notion of 'economic migrants' and the like. The categorisation of the life situation of migrant women into different breadwinning types shows how limiting such an endeavour is as it becomes obvious that the differences beyond the breadwinning are enormous, even within the same category.

And yet, the shared experience of a certain economic responsibility can link diverse experiences, and helps to create an epistemological understanding of the complexity of the migrant situation. It becomes clear that breadwinning in its different appearances
encompasses many more dimensions and factors than the mere economic fact of earning money for the family at home. Consequently, the analysis incorporates details and aspects that are relevant to a fuller image of migrant women breadwinners, as for instance the women's reasons to migrate. Thus, the breadwinning categories are developed from a broad understanding of the research participants' life situation before migration and now in Portugal. This means that the cases are examined within their larger social context. This shows the complexity and embeddedness of any economic situation and decision making in other social and emotional responsibilities and activities beyond mere economic 'reasoning'. Also, changes in the economic, social and emotional circumstances play a significant role in the life of migrant women and influence each other. In the introductory section of each category I describe shortly the economic-rational setting for then looking at the single cases. These, in turn, open a different perspective on the 'purely' economically determined category and reveal diversity through the singularity and individuality of each case.

### 5.2.2.1 Category I: Sole breadwinning women

The first type of female migrant breadwinning refers to women who can be understood as breadwinners in the strict sense of the term: the women’s income is the main – and usually only – financial source for the daily living costs of their children and other family members in their home countries. They *depend* on the money sent home by the migrant women (remittances)\(^{264}\) in the literal meaning of the word: for their daily bread, for their daily living. It turned out that all my research participants, who form this first type of breadwinning, are mothers. Additionally, they are single parents – for various reasons: divorced, widowed, father left, 'no father'. This makes them the only and fully responsible breadwinners for their children. With their work in Portugal, these women support also parents and siblings, in particular the family members who take care of their children while they are abroad, but not exclusively. Nevertheless, the women's motivations and experiences of migration are very different as the following two cases will illustrate – in spite of the fact that both women share the same socio-economic obligation to earn the living for their children and other family members. On the surface, one might think that these two research participants share a similar background and life situation: ÚLIA and

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\(^{264}\) Cf. chapter 1.3.1.3 'Breadwinning & remittances'.

DINA are both single mothers from Eastern Europe, both migrated temporarily to Portugal, and both work as domestic workers. Yet, the closer analysis will reveal the very different life situation of these two women; subsequently, significant differences in their possibilities of agency will become visible.

**IUÍLIA: Survival**

"*Que posso fazer?*: 'What can I do?'

IUÍLIA is 31 years old, and has a 7-year-old son. She explains that her situation in Romania was "hopeless": she is physiotherapist and had her own practice. Nevertheless, her income was not enough to cover the basic living costs for herself and her son after her divorce. For one year she was financially helped by an aunt but as the economic situation continued to deteriorate in Romania, IUÍLIA saw no other possibility but to make her living by going abroad. She heard that physiotherapists were needed in Portugal. (FN 9, 10, 12)

IUÍLIA is one of many Eastern European women I met who left their families and countries because of direct financial needs and a precarious work situation. Their migration must be seen in the context of the political, economical and social transformations in the post-socialist countries after 1989 (cp. Bridger et al. 1996, Einhorn 1996, Morawska 1999). IUÍLIA and many other women from the former socialist countries decided to migrate temporarily, in the hope that the situation in their home countries will meanwhile improve.

The information that physiotherapists are needed is correct: similarly to most other Western countries, Portugal lacks medical and healthcare professionals, for instance nurses, physiotherapists, doctors, dentists. However, for many migrants it is impossible to work in their professions: their degrees are often not recognised, which is true for the majority of

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migrants who received their education in Eastern Europe. To be able to use their skills and receive the ‘equivalência’, as the official professional recognition (equivalence of diplomas) is called in Portugal, the migrants have to undertake again many years of professional training and/or university studies including exams. Due to the lack of time and financial resources, most migrants can not afford to pursue this option for the time being, and instead take on menial jobs they can find. However, most migrants hope that the legislative situation will change sooner or later, for instance through bi-lateral agreements similar to the ones that exist between Portugal and Brazil in regard to the recognition of some professions (like dentists). In the professional context, IÚLIA’s case exemplifies another obstruction many migrants face in their search of work in their area of qualification.\textsuperscript{266}

Though physiotherapists are highly sought after in Portugal, IÚLIA – once in Portugal – learned that the main obstacle to work in her profession was her undocumented status. After having to leave a work place – without a contract – in a private clinic as fisioterapeúta after eight months, IÚLIA took on various restaurant and cleaning jobs. Then she found a more promising and stable job as live-in-maid. Now, she works six and a half days per week; her current Portuguese employer is not interested in giving a work contract, which would allow IÚLIA not only to legalise her situation but would also enable her to get work in her profession. (FN 11, 12)

Clearly, this is a classic vicious circle that many migrants encounter in Portugal as well as all over the world: without a work contract, no visa or other type of regularization – and without papers no work contract. For many, this precarious legal and social situation has also a negative impact on their psychological condition and balance, as the following shows:

IÚLIA feels very frustrated and desperate about her situation in Portugal, as became clear in our conversations. For now, IÚLIA sees neither any possibility of returning to Romania in the near future, nor any way to work in her

\textsuperscript{266} I examine this case closer in chapter 3.2.6 ‘Sem papéis: Being undocumented’. 
profession, which she feels would be at least more fulfilling and satisfactory. "Que posso fazer?", 'What can I do?', she says again and again, shaking her head a little as in disbelief. IÚLIA's question is addressed to herself, she does not expect an answer from me. (FN 10, 11, 12)

IÚLIA suffers from the paradoxical situation that her skills as physiotherapists are needed in Portugal but that she cannot find a legal way of being accepted and allowed into the society, including her field of expertise. Furthermore, she is under strong pressure to earn money regularly:

IÚLIA has to regularly send money home to support her son and her parents who take care of him while she is abroad. Besides, IÚLIA hopes also to be able to save some money for the time when she will return to Romania. Ideally, says IÚLIA, these future savings would provide her and her son with some resources for the future and for building up their lives in Romania again. She dreams of opening her own business but does not know yet what this could be. IÚLIA explains that the economic situation in Romania continues to be very low and nothing seems to be improving. Under these circumstances, she thinks that she will not be able to make ends meet as a physiotherapist – her past experiences proving this. Thus, she says, she would need something else in order to make a living back home. IÚLIA wonders what this could be. Until she finds a way to secure her income more reliably than as a physiotherapist, says IÚLIA with tears in her eyes, she won't be able to return home. (FN 12)

The obligation to regularly send money home to her son and her parents, makes it currently impossible for IÚLIA to save a significant amount of money per month – the wages are generally very low in Portugal and migrant domestic workers usually receive even less than autochthonous workers. Surely, Portugal is part of the European Union and not as poor as it was some decades ago – yet, compared to other EU-countries, wages are very low and life-style is modest. This is reflected also in the economic possibilities.

migrants have. IÚLIA feels caught and for the time being does not know how to better her situation in Portugal. Thus, another idea is taking shape and I got the impression that IÚLIA was about to change her migration project:

After having been in Portugal for one and a half years, IÚLIA is now planning a visit home to see her son, whom she misses very much as she keeps repeating. After spending some time with him, she wonders if it would be better to go to Italy instead of returning to Portugal. IÚLIA mentions that a cousin of hers is working in Italy. For her, this would mean, explains IÚLIA, that at least she would not be as much on her own as she is now in Portugal. She explains that she already was thinking about the possibility to go to Italy before her migration to Portugal. In the end, she decided against it because she had heard that legalisation would be possible in Portugal, unlike in Italy. Thus, IÚLIA chose Portugal. (FN 10, 12)

This narrative points out the importance of transnational networks, and the information disseminated by them: they play a significant role in decision making in regards to migration and often maintain to have influences on the course of migration trajectories.\(^\text{268}\)

IÚLIA resumes that, as she is in Portugal "sem papeles", 'without papers', and does not see a way to legalise her situation, she could also go to Italy without risking too much. In the end, she adds, nobody in Portugal is interested in giving work contracts – and this makes her situation very, very difficult and "sem perspectiva", 'without perspective'. (FN 10, 12)

For IÚLIA, the idea to go to Italy instead of returning to Portugal gives her some hope that her situation will finally change for the better – and be it 'only' because she would have some of her family close by. Indeed, IÚLIA is really desperate and she thinks that it cannot be worse than at the moment. She feels stuck in Portugal with her work and financial

\(^{268}\) Cp. chapter 6.
situation, being separated from her son without seeing a possibility to return home nor to save a significant amount of money within the next years. Any change in her situation feels to her like a promise of improvement.

I do not know for sure if IÚLIA finally decided to leave Portugal and go to Italy. But considering our conversations, her frustration, unhappiness and depression, I think she left Portugal and tried her luck in Italy. The only indication I have that might support my assumption is the fact that a few months after our last encounter her Portuguese mobile phone number did not work anymore. IÚLIA’s consideration of this step reflects her inner strength and willingness to radically change a situation that turned out to be a dead-end-street for her. Faced by desperation and hopelessness she was willing to move on to something new – though her deepest wish was to return to Romania and be with her son. Thrown into a structural situation without many possibilities for agency, she considered a radical change, that being leaving the situation in Portugal and to try something new in Italy. Her choice is very limited by the fact that she has to provide a living for her son and her parents.

**DINA: Searching a partner**

"A minha migração é como um conto das fadas": 'My migration is like a fairy tale'

Similar to IÚLIA, DINA is also the autonomous and sole responsible breadwinner for her 12-year-old son and her parents who look after her son while DINA is working abroad. Nevertheless, her situation and perspective is very different from IÚLIA’s.

DINA is a paediatrician, journalist and musician from Siberia, Russia. Her husband died five years ago. DINA did not migrate because of economic hardship, as she keeps emphasising in our conversations: As a doctor in Russia she did not earn much, tells DINA, but it was enough for her and her son. Thus, she points out that she did not leave her hometown and her son for financial reasons but with the dream of finding a new partner – "para encontrar um homem", as she put it frankly. Ideally, says DINA with smiling eyes, this man should be a man who would share her wide cultural interests and furthermore,
and – this is equally important to her – a man who would not drink. "Isto foi a minha razão para ir a Portugal", ‘this was my reason to come to Portugal’, DINA tells me. And yet she regularly sends money home to her 12-year-old son and her family who need it to cover their living costs. (FN 80, 81, 82, 83)

Though DINA is the sole responsible breadwinner, her motivation to migrate was not economically determined. Rather, her migration project is a romantic endeavour in search of love and an intellectually challenging partnership. DINA points out also what I heard from many other women from Eastern Europe, and in particular from Russia and the Ukraine: the widespread frequency of male alcoholism (cp. Grogan 2006, Titova 2003, Wasserman et al. 1994, Wellcome Trust 2006). DINA was disappointed to find out that unmarried men in her hometown seem all to be either culturally ignorant or alcoholics. Thus her idea to try her luck abroad for a while.

DINA is 39 years old. She has lived for 18 months in Portugal and works currently as a domestic worker, but is not living with her employers. After having worked as interna for five months, she felt that a work arrangement like this is too restrictive on her own life. DINA is an energetic, bright and very active woman with many cultural interests. She repeats that she did not come to Portugal to spend all her time working but also to enjoy her time here – and that she wants to see something from this part of the world. Thus, DINA spends every free hour walking through Lisbon, and she likes to talk about her regular visits to museums and concerts. She also travelled from Lisbon to Southern Spain and was impressed by the beauty and the Moorish atmosphere of Sevilla and Granada. (FN 80, 81, 82)

DINA knows that she will be able to find work again in her profession as a paediatrician upon her return to Russia and that she will be able to make a living there. These certainties allow DINA not to worry about saving money or about her and her son’s future. Thus, she can spend the little money she has left, after sending the majority of her income home to her son and her parents, and after paying the rent in Lisbon. DINA can
afford to go to concerts and to travel, a 'luxury' most other breadwinning migrant women cannot afford. This shows how different apparently similar situations – in this case women who migrate alone and who are the main responsible breadwinners for their families – can be.

DINA's story and migration project has a beautiful continuity:

After one year in Portugal, DINA finds "o meu príncipe", 'my prince', as she calls him: a Polish artist she met in Lisbon. Of course they would try to spend a lot of time together, adds DINA with a big smile – now that they found each other. DINA and her "príncipe" are going to marry soon. They will fly in the next months to Russia to see her family and get married there. After that, they plan to move – together with DINA's son – to Poland to her fiancé's hometown and to live there together with his son. DINA was amazed when she learnt that his son is exactly the same age as her own son: "não podia crê-lo", 'I could not believe it', exclaims DINA happily laughing. DINA explains later that also her professional situation will be good as she won’t have problems to work as a doctor in a hospital in Poland: the country recognises medical degrees from Russia and needs paediatricians with experience. Additionally, says DINA, she will become a citizen of the European Union by her marriage with her Polish "príncipe". This will allow her to travel more easily in Europe and elsewhere. Her migration project was successful and DINA is very conscious about that: "A minha migração é como um conto das fadas", 'My migration is like a fairy tale', says DINA happily. (FN 79, 80, 81, 82)

Indeed, DINA's migration project is a really successful one. Yet, it is important to recognise also that DINA continues to be the responsible breadwinner for her son and her parents. Thus, her case belongs to the first type of breadwinning.

In my fieldwork, IÚLIA's and DINA's cases were some of the most touching. I felt upset by IÚLIA's depression and her general feeling of seeing her situation at the time as being hopeless, while meeting DINA spread the positively sparkling sensation of the
wonders and surprising marvels of life. Their cases mark somehow the two most extreme situations I encountered. Every time after meeting ÍLIA I questioned the usefulness as well as the ethics of my work and generally suffered from the political, social and economic injustices that exist in the world. It took me usually a few days until I felt capable again to meet other people and be open to other migrants and their situation again. DINA, on the other hand, made me want to be culturally more active again, go and visit museum and concerts more frequently and have intellectually challenging conversations – as well as simply enjoy life. Her enthusiasm opened repeatedly again my perception and appreciation of Lisbon’s beauty and the world in general. It was only after a while and first attempts to look at the material from a perspective that centres on breadwinning, that I noticed that, beyond all apparent differences, both women share a significant factor in their lives: the love and responsibility for their children and their families. Though their general life situation and their migration trajectory are very different – and so is their personal background and history –, both women do earn the living for themselves and their families back home, both are single mothers (for the time being and during the last years), and both work as domestic workers while their professional skills cannot be used in Portugal. And both are sole breadwinners. Apparently a similar situation – and yet so different.

5.2.2.2 Category II: Primary breadwinners

The second type of female migrant breadwinning consists also of women whose earnings are needed by their families (again: nuclear and extended family: children, parents, sisters and brothers, and their families). Yet there are two main differences to category I: First, the women’s own children are older in age or even adults; second, the families do not depend only on the women’s income for ensuring the daily survival. Often, the money the women earn in Portugal is needed for extra expenses and for somehow securing a ‘better future’, as was expressed by many research participants. One characteristic of the women I met, who fall into this type of breadwinning, is the fact that either they have husbands, respectively fathers for their children, who are able to earn a share of the needed daily living costs, or (and) their children have already grown up. In both situations the money earned by the women working abroad tends to be seen not only as important for the daily life of the family but also as a financial investment particularly for the education (mostly
university education) of the children, as well as for the future in general. These women have many plans for their own future and return home, for example starting to work again in their learned profession or opening their own business. They send regularly remittances and try to save as much money as possible while living in Portugal. This can lead in some cases to a relatively stern financial self-restriction as the following will show: for example, one research participant explained that every euro she does not spend in Portugal, equals a day earlier for her to return home.269

Though these women portray at first glance their migration to Portugal mainly as a means for providing a University education for their children, "um futuro", 'a future', the closer analytical look will shows that in fact these women earn reliably the daily living for their families in their home countries as will be explained through the following cases. In contrast to type I they are not the sole breadwinners, as either the children themselves are employed too (as in JEKATERINA’s case) or their husbands (as in RODICA’s and GABRIELA’s case). Yet the income is not enough to secure the daily life of the family. Thus all women of this category II are breadwinners also for their families at home, plus hoping to be able to secure "um futuro" for the children, as many put it; or securing through their work in Portugal the needed medicine for the chronically ill husband as GABRIELA does. The women carry the responsibility for the family, also economically, which becomes clear through looking closer at the individual cases:

JEKATERINA, RODICA and GABRIELA have children in (early) teenage or young adult years. Their income is needed daily and is expected to support the (future) education of the children. Thus these women's migration to Portugal is to be understood as their personal investment in the family's future in their home country.

JEKATERINA: Leaving a marriage

"A Perestroika mudou tudo. Toda a nossa vida mudou":
'Perestroika changed everything. Our entire life changed'
JEKATERINA is an economist from the Ukraine. She is 38, divorced, her two children are in their early 20s. JEKATERINA has been living for two and a half years in Portugal, where she works in hotels and restaurants. She sends part of her income home for financing the university studies of her daughter, who decided to become an economist like her mother, explains JEKATERINA proudly. And hopefully, adds JEKATERINA with a smile, she will soon also finance the studies of her son, who joined her a few months ago in Portugal. During the last year JEKATERINA took classes in computing in Lisbon and hopes to soon find a qualified workplace where she can use her skills as an economist. (FN 98, 99, 103, 106)

Though her income is modest, around 500 € per month, and the rent high, JEKATERINA manages to save some money after giving a significant part to her children:

With her savings, tells JEKATERINA, she would like to buy a flat for her daughter in their hometown in the Ukraine – for ensuring "a good future" for her daughter, as JEKATERINA puts it. Furthermore, JEKATERINA tries also to save money for herself with the aim to open a shop when she returns home, "uma loja de bonecas", 'a doll shop' – a business she ran already successfully, from the mid-1990s until she left. She plans to return to the Ukraine in a few years. JEKATERINA mentions also that it would be nice to have her own car… But anyway, says JEKATERINA, money was not the decisive reason in her decision to migrate. (FN 100, 101)

From the beginning, JEKATERINA makes explicitly clear that she did not migrate because of financial reasons. This appears to satisfy JEKATERINA's own need to distinguish herself from other migrants in Portugal for whom economic hardship is a major motivation to migrate, as for instance in IÚLIA's case. But even more so, I see JEKATERINA's need to distinguish herself as an active reaction to the levelling perception and stereotypical construction of migrants – and Eastern European migrants in particular – as 'economic migrants' ("imigrantes económicos", "imigrantes laborais") in Portugal. In a manner
characterised by disrespect and negativity, the migrants are constantly confronted with these stereotypes by individuals and the media. This image is also quickly linked to criminality (cp. Lages 2006, Marques 2007, Palma 2007).

JEKATERINA's motivation to migrate is related to changes in her personal life during the 1990s, as the following will show. And yet, JEKATERINA does not hide that the lack of money was a persistent problem since Perestroika, as both she and her husband found themselves repeatedly without any income for up to three or four months because their salaries could not be paid.

The times were tough – and got even more difficult when her husband lost his job, tells JEKATERINA. Though he used to find casual temporary work, there were repeated phases of unemployment. Beside her work as an economist, JEKATERINA opened her own small business selling children's toys and dolls. This enabled her to secure at least a basic income for the family. She describes their life as "okay" before Perestroika, they were not rich and did not have plenty, she says, but they had all they needed, and, on the whole, it worked well. "A Perestroika mudou tudo. Toda a nossa vida mudou", Perestroika changed everything. Our entire life changed', says JEKATERINA, referring to both, the professional and the private sides of their live. "Tudo mudou. E agora estou cá em Portugal", 'Everything changed. And now I am here in Portugal'. (FN 100, 101)

Structural social, political and economic conditions have influence also on individuals and their life situations. Perestroika changed not only JEKATERINA's and her husband's life and work conditions but also had a significant impact on their personal life. Over the years, more and more problems in their relationship became apparent:

JEKATERINA repeats that the money was not her reason to migrate. Instead, she wanted to leave her husband and get out of the marriage, says JEKATERINA.

270 Cp. chapter 1.3.1.4 and chapter 4.2.4.
Later, she tells more details about their relationship: she and her husband had a lot of problems for a long time. According to Jekaterina, this was partly because of his unemployment, and partly because of his drinking (alcoholism). She says that she had threatened often to leave him. He never believed that she would really do so – until the day Jekaterina went to a travel agency and paid for obtaining a Schengen-visa. (FN 100, 101)

This means that, rather than for economic reasons, Jekaterina decided to migrate as a way to leave her husband. Financial aspects and aspirations did exist too but were less than secondary for her decision to migrate, as Jekaterina emphasises.

During her first months in Portugal, her husband rang her a few times pleading her to come back. Yet, says Jekaterina, whenever she calls her daughter she is told that his life continues as aimlessly as before. In hindsight she thinks that an Ukrainian saying fits very well to describe her husband: One does not recognise the value of what one has; only when one does not have it anymore, then one knows the value. (FN 101)

This made her realise that the situation and the dynamics between she and her husband would not change and that, consequently, their separation was to be permanent. Jekaterina requested divorce through the Ukrainian embassy in Portugal, and was divorced by the time I met her.

Jekaterina reckons that she put up with too much for too many years, and explains that she was fed up of her husband and their life for a long time. Though she wanted to leave him earlier, Jekaterina had decided to leave him only after both children finished secondary school. In hindsight she says that it was good to wait – good for the children. Nevertheless, adds Jekaterina, she remains dissatisfied with all those years and does not want to live anything like that again. (FN 100, 101)
Child in Portugal

After Jekaterina had been living in Portugal for a little over two years, her 21-year-old son came to stay with her. Jekaterina is very happy to have him around. She mentions him often and we talk more closely about him and his situation in Portugal.

Jekaterina hopes that he will decide to go to university in Portugal but says that he is at the moment more interested in earning money, for instance for buying a computer and other things he dreams of. When Jekaterina and I meet for the last time, Jekaterina says that her son is working in a restaurant in Monte Estoril, a rich Western suburb of Lisbon right at the seafront. She mentions that he is currently without papers. But Jekaterina points out that, should he begin to study in Portugal, he would qualify for a student visa, and this would allow him also to travel to the Ukraine and within the EU. However, says Jekaterina, she does not want to put pressure on him. (FN 99)

Jekaterina does not seem to be too concerned about her son's legal status, his professional situation or possible future education.

With a cheeky smile she remarks after a while that she is convinced anyway that soon he will be bored and annoyed by this type of work, and then be more than happy to go back to study again. Jekaterina explains that he had lost the interest in studying while still being in the Ukraine. It had seemed to him that – even with a university degree – there would be no work, no opportunities, and no money to earn in the Ukraine, so why bother studying? Nevertheless, Jekaterina believes that the situation in her home country is not hopeless and that it will change for the better in the coming years. She thinks that it is important to believe and invest in the future. (FN 99)

This is exactly what she is doing: with her work in Portugal, Jekaterina finances the education of her children, and she saves money for her own future when she plans to return in a few years time to the Ukraine. Furthermore, she tries to improve also her professional
career while in Portugal by investing time and money in further qualifications e.g. by learning how to work with computers. JEKATERINA is actively constructing her own life and she works hard to ensure a "better future", as she says, for her children and herself. She sees her migration to Portugal as temporary and actively develops plans for her return to the Ukraine in some years. JEKATERINA is happy that she left her unhappy marriage and generally thinks positively about life in general as regards herself and particularly her children.

Through the analysis of the empirical material it becomes clear that there is significantly less pressure on JEKATERINA as her children are not small anymore, they are old enough to make their own living at least partly. She is divorced, thus there is no husband needing her support. Both facts give generally more freedom and possibilities for agency and self-determination for migrant women. Yet, at the same time JEKATERINA is working very hard to earn her daily bread, to support her family and invest in their future. JEKATERINA has high hopes and many plans. She can develop and pursue perspectives for her own life in Portugal as well as upon an eventual return later to the Ukraine.

The following two examples are (again) more limited due to the structural conditions and the women's obligations towards their families, as will be shown next:

**RODICA: The role of gifts**

"Quem está a limpar as janelas?", 'Who might be cleaning the windows?'

RODICA's family situation as well as her reasons to migrate alone are quite different from JEKATERINA's. As a consequence, RODICA's situation in Portugal, her perceptions and activities differ too as the following will explain:

RODICA is 39 years old, she is a sales manager from Romania. She has worked for nearly a year as a live-in-maid in Lisbon. RODICA gave up her workplace in order to migrate. She explains that, though she had a permanent position in
Romania, her income was very modest. Furthermore, the business did not go very well and nobody knew if the company would keep going for much longer – the perspective was missing, as she puts it. RODICA’s husband is a truck driver but could not find stable employment during the last years. Thus the family depends on RODICA’s reliable income. Her income turned out to be not enough to cover securely the living costs of the family and with two teenage sons providing the financial resources needed for the sons’ current school and future university education was too much. The family saw their future as very limited and rather negative under the circumstances given, explains RODICA. For some months, RODICA’s husband took on work in Spain but soon lost the job and had to return home. Thus, when a friend called RODICA and offered her a job in Portugal, the family decided that she would work abroad for a few years not only to guarantee the daily bread for the family but also to improve the family income for the long run, the future possibilities for the family, and particularly for the two sons. (FN 43, 54)

RODICA’s migration is based on a family decision: under the mentioned circumstances, the family had the impression that a stable, reliable and profitable job would be more likely abroad. RODICA emphasised repeatedly that she does not want to work in Portugal for a long time, that she does not want to be apart from her sons for too long. However, she knows that she will be only able to return home when either she or her husband can find permanent work in Romania that can provide the family with a secure income. RODICA does not want to let the years go by working abroad, she makes it very clear that she hopes to be able to live in Romania with her family again, preferably sooner than later:

When RODICA and I met for the last time at the end of November 2004, we spoke a lot about her plans to visit her family and to spend Christmas and New Year 2004/2005 at home. She mentions the possibility that she might not come

272 This fits to the Household Strategy Theory, as discussed in chapter 1.3.2.3.
back to Portugal but stay in Romania. However, she says, the whole family will make this decision together over Christmas. (FN 54)

After RODICA had left for work in Portugal, the employment situation of her husband changed: he found a casual job as truck and mini bus driver, transporting people and goods between Italy, Germany and Romania. The problem is though, that her husband's employment is only casual and not very stable.

Every time we meet, RODICA feels the need to point out to me again and again that the family needs a reliable income from at least one of them in order to make basic ends meet. RODICA says repeatedly how much she hopes that her husband can somehow "arranjar", 'arrange' a more secure position by Christmas. (FN 43, 54, 55)

During our conversation, RODICA returns to this topic again and again. She is seemingly excited but also nervous about her journey home and what will happen in the future. She wishes that her husband can find a permanent work – and she makes it clear that only then would she be able to stay in Romania and not have to return to Portugal. At the same time, RODICA is very aware of how difficult the situation currently is in Romania.

RODICA misses her sons, her family and her home very much. She feels that there is a strong paradox in her family's situation is. The following narrative reveals the tension this is causing for her:

RODICA speaks explicitly about the difficulties of her situation: She is working abroad in order to finance all of her family's needs in daily life and additionally the future university studies of her sons. At the same time and in practical terms, this means that she cannot be with them to help them with their school work and, above all, she cannot be there to 'educate' them, as she puts it. RODICA is worried about this situation as she feels that her sons need "a woman around them", 'a woman in their lives'. (FN 46, 54, 55)
RODICA experiences her migration as a dilemma. Later, she gives a concrete example for the paradox situation she finds herself in:

RODICA explains that her older son has to pass his final junior high school exams (year 10) next summer to be admitted to the technical senior high school (years 11 and 12). She thinks that this year is particularly important and he needs somebody to look after him at home, to support him in his studies, and to help him to prepare for the final exams. At the same time, she knows that her sons’ (future) studies cost money too. RODICA experiences this as a strong contradiction placed upon her: Either she can stay at home and support her sons – but then the family would lack financial resources. Or she could return to Portugal and earn money – but then she would not be able to help her sons in other important ways, since over the distance, she says, one cannot support in the same way. RODICA says repeatedly how difficult this situation is for her. (FN 54, 55)

RODICA is very aware of the positive sides of her work abroad – she is financing her family, enabling a good living for today and provides “a future” for her sons –, as well as of the negative sides – she cannot be with her sons nor help them in daily life and in their studies. On the one hand she is proud of what she is doing and succeeding in, and finds this also rewarding. On the other hand she suffers from being so distant from her family, the geographical as well as emotional distance. In RODICA’s case it is appropriate to say that she feels torn between both sides. This gets intensified the closer in time her visit home comes – which could be her return home. All her hopes focus now on her husband and his ability and luck in finding permanent employment. In our conversations, RODICA expresses clearly her preferences: She does not want to go back to Portugal but be with her family and sons. And yet, in spite of her emotional inclination, she might have to decide to continue to work abroad in order to secure the future education of her sons. She feels

273 Cp. discourses on ‘transnational motherhood’, in particular Raijam et al. 2003. See chapter 1.3.2, and above in this chapter 5.1.1.1 and 5.1.2.
274 See for instance next chapter 6.2.3 ‘Contact home’.
responsible for providing the maximum she can give for her children, and she knows that this is linked to certain financial possibilities.

RODICA speaks a lot about Romania, her home, about her extended family and friends. Frequently, she also expresses her concerns about the way in which her husband and her sons manage daily life without her:

RODICA is very worried about her sons and her husband – after all they are three men alone at home, she says with a sad grin. RODICA thinks that the situation of her friend GABRIELA, for instance, is quite different as she has daughters at home – in RODICA’s opinion this means that one does not have to worry so much. RODICA explains that recently she began to wonder how the house would look, when she arrives home. She thinks in particular about the windows, being certain that nobody ever cleaned them during her one-year absence: Who else than herself would bother to clean them, she asks rhetorically with a sad smile. RODICA says that since this thought crossed her mind, she cannot stop thinking about the windows. Even if her sons have been always helping with household chores and cleaning, RODICA believes that it would be very different to have daughters. Her sister-in-law, who is like a friend to her, regularly lends a hand to her husband and sons with the household tasks, but as she has also her own family she cannot do too much, explains RODICA. (FN 55)

The windows and RODICA’s concern who is cleaning them, if at all, become a strong image for her being separated from her family and home. Though the cleaning of windows is not essential in the management of daily life, it becomes a symbol for all the work and care RODICA does to provide her family with a good and comfortable life, even if a great part of her efforts, like the cleaning, go largely unnoticed by anybody else. Furthermore, cleaning windows is in RODICA’s understanding either the work of the housewife, or of a domestic worker. As such her current work position in Portugal is in conflict with her role as mother and wife as they are incompatible and mutually exclusive through the

275 See next case.
geographical distance. In RODICA’s self-perception is her inability to "clean the windows" – that means, to look daily and directly after her family, not compensated by her great job to provide the family income and enable her sons to go to University later. RODICA feels neither appreciated nor rewarded by this, she does not identify with the celebratory ascriptions of 'transnational motherhood' at the moment. It is possible that she might come to a different and more positive re-assessment and re-appreciation of her hard work in Portugal at a later stage, but for the moment, she mainly suffers. And the theoretical idea of transnational motherhood does not fit for her case and present situation.

The role of gifts

In chapter 3.2.3.5, I mentioned briefly that RODICA took on an additional job on Saturday afternoons. This job allows her to earn additional money that she can put aside. However, this reveals also some of the pressures and expectations on women working abroad that need to be met, and that the women feel they have to meet:

RODICA is happy with her side job: every Saturdays she cleans for two hours the flat beneath her patrões’. She uses this extra money for buying presents and little surprise gifts for the family and friends – after all, everybody would expect her to bring something from Portugal, laughs RODICA. Proudly she says that she will take a large suitcase full of presents to Romania. For her husband she got a mobile phone; she wants to buy him also a pair of jeans that she saw the other day – but that’s then enough for him, she says laughing with a wink. For her sons she will get some fashionable cloths they would like to have, like track suits, jeans, and sneakers. They would like things they can show to their friends and in school, explains RODICA. All these presents cost her quite a lot of money, she says, and for her sons she has to buy the double of everything. Additionally, she will give small presents to each of her family members and all her friends, tells RODICA. (FN 56)

276 I explain their points briefly above in this chapter.
While we talk about the presents, RODICA beams with happiness. She likes to give presents and is very content that she was able to arrange the side job that allowed her to spend money on her family and also for presents for friends without having to touch the money she earns for her family. The gifts show that her migration was successful, and demonstrate that she works hard and, yet, is generous. RODICA is not only able to support the fundamental needs of her immediate family but also to give luxury items to the ones who are important to her. She feels pleased and rewarded, and is proud of herself and what she achieved in Portugal.277

RODICA mentions also two occasions in the past when her efforts – symbolised as presents sent to Romania – where not appreciated the way she hoped:

She had sent to her sons a parcel with various trendy t-shirts from expensive brands, which cost her a lot of money. When the parcel arrived, she received only a very short sms to thank her. RODICA was very disappointed and angry about this brief appreciation. She tells that she became very sad at the same time. The same happened some time later when she sent money to her sons and their reaction was similarly brief and superficial. (FN 56, 57)

RODICA was disappointed and hurt, her expectations of reward were not fulfilled. These incidences reveal certain discrepancy between the ways her sons reacted and her need to feel her work and efforts abroad acknowledged and appreciated. To me it seems her sons take the presents and their standard of life for granted, and are not able to see their mother's hard work and sacrifices. Probably they cannot see this, and I do not want to accuse them of this. However, for RODICA this scenario is painful and she would hope to be back home with her family tomorrow.

RODICA's migration can be understood as a family decision and as a strategy to secure the daily bread and the children's future. This fits very well into the models of household

[277] The social and symbolic role and significance of gifts and gift exchange has long been a central interest in anthropological research. See Lévi-Strauss 1957, Mauss 1954.
strategy theory, as discussed in chapter 1.3.2.3. However, the existing models do not shed light on the emotional sides of these migration projects, on the concerns and worries of the migrant women for their families at home, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the personal loss and suffering of the migrating person. RODICA's case illustrated some aspects of these emotional sides, as expressed for instance in the question who will clean the windows.

The next case, GABRIELA, shows the professional loss some migrant women have to come to terms with, along the emotional difficulties.

**GABRIELA: The professional loss**

"A minha profissão era a minha vida": 'My profession was my life'

GABRIELA is a pottery designer from Romania. By the time we meet, she is 44 years old, married and mother to three daughters (22, 20, and 15 years old). Her husband is chronically ill ("ele está doente"). When I met GABRIELA first, she had been living in Portugal for 13 months. (FN 15, 19)

Gabriela does not hesitate to explain that her migration to Portugal is based primarily on financial reasons.

"O meu único objectivo é ganhar dinheiro. Dinheiro para as minhas filhas, para que possam ir a faculdade, para que tenham um futuro. Tudo para elas. Por isto estou cá. [...] Nunca pensei [na emigração], nunca imaginei-a. [...] Mudei toda a minha vida, toda", says GABRIELA: 'My aim is to earn money. Money for my daughters, so that they can go to university and have a future. All is for them. [...] That's why I am here. I never thought [about emigration], I never imagined it. [...] I changed my entire life, completely'. (FN 15, 19, 20)

GABRIELA works in Portugal to ensure that her daughters have possibilities and "perspectivas", 'perspectives' for the future, as GABRIELA puts it. (FN 20)
Initially, Gabriela planned to work for two years in Portugal. However, after the first year she now believes that she will have to stay at least four years, or even longer, to be able to earn the money she and her family need 'to have a future', as she says. Gabriela explains that 'a future' in Romania does not only depend on a good education:

Proudly she explains that her oldest daughter recently finished her university degree, and her second daughter has started to study physical education. However, adds Gabriela, the family not only needs money for their daughters' university studies but also for helping them to get a job later on – "dinheiro para a bolsa", 'bribe money' is needed, explains Gabriela. I ask her if this was normal in Romania today, and Gabriela answers: "Normal? Não. Mas frequente, sim", 'Normal? No. But frequent, yes'. (FN 15)

Gabriela says that she never thought that she would have to emigrate one day to assure the future of her children – it was not until the economic pressure in her country got very dire and by the end of the nineties started to affect her family's life. Thus, the economic circumstances in her home country made Gabriela and her husband decide that she should work abroad for some years. Though the family did not experience extreme financial hardship and/or unemployment, Gabriela's and her husband's combined incomes covered only the very basic daily living costs of the family. The money was not sufficient enough to buy the regular medicine her husband requires, nor would it cover the costs of sending their three daughters to university. Gabriela and her husband considered also the possibility for him to go abroad for work, but they realised soon that he was too ill for such an endeavour, that it would be too risky for his health.

After Gabriela was offered work in Portugal, she and her husband discussed this possibility. Together they decided that it would be beneficial for the family if Gabriela would go and work some years abroad. (FN 15, 20)

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278 Cp. chapter 3.2.3.3.
Like in RODICA's case, GABRIELA's migration is based on a family decision – due to the lack of financial possibilities in Romania and with the aim to secure additional expenses for the family. Thus, GABRIELA's migration can be understood as being – to a significant extent – an investment in her daughters' future, as well as the necessity of paying for her husband's medicine. Her migration reflects also the affluent aspirations of some families with a working class background. GABRIELA and her husband both undertook their higher education and professional specialisations as evening classes after the birth of their three daughters. GABRIELA is very proud about their achievements, which involved a lot of hard work and sacrifices from the whole family over many years. (FN 19, 20)

Every time GABRIELA speaks about her life before migration, she cries. She says she was happy then, and her family and her work were "a minha vida", 'my life'. She loves her profession and felt fulfilled by her work: she designs and creates ceramic pottery, and always thought it was wonderful to create unique pieces and not mass production. While working, she had time to think, and in between different work stages there was always time to talk with her colleagues, as the porcelain needs time, explains GABRIELA. (FN 15, 20)

Though she knows that she will have to spend some more years in Portugal, GABRIELA regularly dreams of returning home and to be able to work as a pottery designer again:

Although the company is also affected by Romania's economic problems and subsequent rationalisations, GABRIELA hopes to take over her husband's job upon her return in a few years [he is also a potter]. Then, he could retire, which would be good because of his health condition, says GABRIELA, and she could work again in her beloved profession – finally. In tears, GABRIELA explains that "o meu trabalho era a minha vida. E gostei, tanto, amei o meu trabalho", 'my work was my life. I liked my work so much, I loved it'. Later, she repeats that she never thought she would have to leave her work and her family behind in order to migrate. (FN 20)
GABRIELA is very aware of the professional loss she experienced. As pointed out earlier in this Thesis, de-skilling and brain waste are common features for many migrants, as exemplified by the research participants. Employment beneath education and expertise is a frequent side-effect of migration and many migrants struggle with the devaluation and disrespect they encounter through their work in mostly menial positions. Many migrants find it difficult to come to terms with this situation, practically and emotionally. Apart from missing her family and home, GABRIELA experiences a strong loss of quality of life caused also by her work situation. For her, personal fulfilment and satisfaction is strongly tied to her profession and she suffers intensely from having had to leave her work. GABRIELA identifies strongly with her profession as a pottery designer. Because GABRIELA is aware of the significant role of profession in her life and the subsequent deficit of this important element through her migration, she has considered alternative work possibilities in Portugal:

GABRIELA explains that, since being in Portugal, she has thought many times how wonderful it would be to find work here in one of the ceramic manufacturers. But she knows that this is a silly idea, says GABRIELA, as she would earn a maximum of 700 € gross, and still would have to pay for a room, the food and everything else. This would mean that, in the end, she would be sending home less money than now. The same would happen if she quit her job as empregada doméstica interna to work in a restaurant the like. GABRIELA repeats that she is not here in Portugal to do the work she likes. On the contrary, she is in Portugal only to earn money – the faster, the better, sighs GABRIELA with tears in her eyes. (FN 19, 20)

Though she would love to work as a pottery designer again, GABRIELA’s reasons for not doing it are clear to her. Her justification for staying in Portugal is that she earns more money than at home. Her migration is a double sacrifice, a personal one as well as a professional one, and GABRIELA is conscious about that.

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279 See particularly chapter 3.2.5.6.
280 Portugal has a significant number of high quality ceramic manufacturers; some of them are also located in or around Lisbon.
Whenever I see GABRIELA, she says that her only reason for coming to Portugal was work, and this means she wants to work as much as possible in order to earn as much money as possible. She clearly experiences her entire situation as very frustrating. GABRIELA says that she thinks incessantly that, if she would find a way to work more, she could earn more and then would be able to return home earlier. GABRIELA cries a lot, alone, but also when with other migrant women she sees on Sundays, and also when we meet. She says that she misses her family and daughters very much. (FN 19, 20, 21)

Although having the discourses of transnational motherhood in mind and appreciating their challenging perspectives and ideas, I find it difficult to detect in a case like GABRIELA's the positive and winning sides for her personally, apart from gaining the resources to enable the daughters to go to university and ensuring her husband gets the medicine he needs. This is certainly a strong achievement for her and her family that should not be underrated, an achievement GABRIELA is proud of. However, personally and for the time being she is suffering intensely due to her migration to Portugal.

**Child in Portugal**

It is interesting to note how migration decisions and patterns are repeated amongst friends and colleagues— and also within families. One of Gabriela's daughters later followed her to Portugal:

After finishing her university studies, GABRIELA's eldest daughter decided to work also in Portugal for some time with the aim to earn some extra money. GABRIELA arranged a job for her in the extended family of GABRIELA's patrōa. The daughter arrived six months ago and works now, like her mother, as empregada domestica interna. GABRIELA sees her daughter only on Sundays but they have daily contact via telephone and sms. (FN 15, 18)

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281 As I have shown throughout this Thesis, cp. for instance chapter 3.2.3.3.
GABRIELA is very happy to have her daughter nearby and to have helped her to be able to earn some money she can later use to build up her future in Romania. And yet, the daughter cannot assuage for GABRIELA's feelings of loss and distance to her life and family back home. But they can share the experiences and help to persist with their main objective: to earn as much money as quickly as possible so that they can return home as soon as possible. And yet, GABRIELA knows very well how fragile these objectives are: She had to postpone her return already. GABRIELA planned to work for two years in Portugal but realised already after one year that she will have to stay for at least four years.

JEKATERINA, RODICA and GABRIELA share the responsibility to earn a significant part of their families' daily living costs. Further, they try to earn as much money as possible to be able to pay for the education of their children and, more generally, for their children's 'future', as they express it. At the same time, all three cases show the diversity of migrants in similar situations: JEKATERINA came to Portugal because of her own will and decision-making. Her temporary migration seemed to her to be a good way to leave her long-time unhappy marriage, while at the same time opening new financial possibilities for her children and herself, also it offered a positive change in professional terms. On the other hand, RODICA and GABRIELA left their home countries based on family decisions. With some years of work in Portugal, they can ensure a good daily life for their children and husbands, as well as enable a better education ("um futuro") for their children. While being proud about their achievements and strength, one should note that both women intensely suffer from being separated from their children for such a long time. In fact, these women feel torn between their roles as mothers and absent breadwinners. Though JEKATERINA is also breadwinning and trying to save as much money as possible, she feels more independent and can exercise greater self-determination and agency as a migrant in Portugal: for instance, she does not work as empregada doméstica interna but in hotels and restaurants, and she lives in a shared flat. Also, JEKATERINA invests some of the money she earns for her own personal development, like further professional training on the one hand and a variety of social activities on the other hand. The difference is that she is

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282 See discourses of transnational motherhood earlier in this chapter, 5.1.2.1.
283 See chapter 6, particularly 6.1.1 'Friendship' and 6.2.2 'Relationships with men'.
supporting adult children, who already work and earn some money too, and not a husband. In contrast, RODICA and GABRIELA feel that they have to save every cent possible to ensure the daily living costs and the future of the entire family. They only very rarely treat themselves to a cup of coffee and a bolo, a sweet pastry, in one of Lisbon's many pastelarias. Both enjoyed it immensely when I invited them to cafés where we used to sit for hours chatting relaxedly. However, this shows once more the stern self-restriction some migrant women place onto themselves in order to save as much as possible. As GABRIELA pointedly expressed it: Every euro she does not spend in Portugal means to be able to return home one day earlier.

5.2.2.3 Category III: Supporting member of female networks

Some migrant women do not have their own children, yet regularly send remittances to other family members, like parents, siblings and their families. Here, the money helps to stabilise the families' life to some extent. At the same time, these arrangements can imply a major and restricting burden for the migrant women. This is exemplified in a strong way in the case of one Ukrainian woman I met. It shows to what extend the women fulfil strong responsibilities that are rewarding emotionally, yet burdening and restricting the migrant women's own life and possibilities:

ALINA: This is normal

"I want to send part of my money home, otherwise I don't have to be here".

ALINA is a 25-years-old secondary school teacher from the Ukraine. ALINA had been living in Portugal for one and a half years when I first met her. Her work in Portugal allows her to contribute significantly to the daily living costs of her mother, her sister and her sister's two children. ALINA considers her support as "normal", she says. Nevertheless, after knowing her for a while, she confides that she feels this responsibility sometimes as a tiring burden, which restricts her own life and, above all, stops her from returning home and working again in her profession. But as long as the situation in the Ukraine continues to be so
bad, says ALINA sadly, she won’t be able to return home. (FN 60, 65, 66, 67, 70)

In the case of ALINA and in some of the narratives of other migrant women I met, emerges a strong 'tradition' of fatherless respectively husbandless women – there are mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and female friends who play a role but no men. These narratives reveal strong bonds, solidarity and responsibility amongst these women that to intensive mutual support, which can also, amongst other features, imply long term financial help, like in ALINA's case. This is a clear indication of strong female networks.

ALINA’s obligation to send money to her sister and her mother has significant consequences on her entire life situation in Portugal. Similarly to GABRIELA, as mentioned above, ALINA is trying not to spend any money, so as to be able to send more money home. This impacts also on ALINA’s choices regarding her housing situation in Lisbon:

Since our first meeting, ALINA and I talk a lot about her search for a better, and yet affordable, accommodation. She emphasises repeatedly how difficult and time consuming the searching is. Since she stopped working as a live-in maid, ALINA lives in an apartment with other migrants, she shares a tiny room without window with another woman. ALINA says that she wakes up with a headache every morning because the air is sticky and hot in there. Her flatmates on the whole are ok, she says. And yet, ALINA feels that it would be better to get out of this flat and find something different. She says that she had seen other rooms (usually shared rooms), which she found via various Portuguese and Russian-speaking newspapers (e.g. Correio da Manha and Slobo), or through word-of-mouth from other migrants. So far nothing she saw was appealing, and she describes the rooms offered as mostly worse than the one she already has, or more expensive than the one she co-rents. ALINA dreams of a room or a little

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284 Rental housing is generally very expensive in Lisbon and stands in no relation to the average income levels. The situation is even worse for migrants who usually have to pay higher bonds and rents. The prices nearly double for undocumented migrants. Most migrants share apartments and rooms, some sleep in turns in the same bed (cp. chapter 3.2.3.3, GABRIELA). Due to the lack of housing, some families in Lisbon rent out rooms to students and migrants; many of these rooms are converted storage spaces, are tiny and do not have windows. A shared space like this sill costs about 250-300€ per month per person.
apartment for herself but says she will have to stay in shared flats and shared rooms with other migrants as this is much cheaper. She adds slowly: "I want to send part of my money home, otherwise I don't have to be here". (FN 70, 73)

Though ALINA does not have children of her own, she feels a strong responsibility towards her family in her home country. She has very strong bonds with her mother (who was a single mom during ALINA’s childhood), her sister (who is a single mom too) and with her sister’s two children. This leads to her remitting regularly to her mother and her sister the largest part of her income. Though ALINA understands her attitude and commitment as something 'normal', she is not happy about her personal situation and feels trapped in Portugal. Similar to some concerns expressed earlier and based on the empirical material of my research, and specially in this particular case I cannot share and support the perspectives that some authors suggest in the context of transnational motherhood (e.g. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997). In ALINA’s situation, and for the time being, she feels little reward or satisfaction from the respect and recognition she might receive for her labour in Portugal from her mother and sister and others in her home community. Thus, the responsibility she carries in needing to make a reliable income and to regularly send home a significant part of her wages, translates into a heavy burden that restricts her possibilities and decisions in the receiving society. This understanding does not mean to construct or reduce ALINA into being a mere victim, but it enables us to recognise her unhappiness and suffering as a migrant who is not able to work in the profession she likes, because her degrees are not recognised in Portugal, but who nevertheless cannot return home because her income in the Ukraine would be too little to support her family. This does not leave much room for self-determination and autonomous agency, for her own needs and plans. For the time being, ALINA feels little consolation or respect from home while feeling trapped and unhappy many thousands of kilometres away without having the possibility to travel home more than every few years. For the conditions to be right to allow her to go back to the Ukraine to visit she needs a legal status which would allow her to return to Portugal after visiting home, also the possibility to save enough money for the journey.

285 See earlier in this chapter, 5.1.2.1.
286 Cp. chapter 3.2.6.
and other essential conditions like being able to take holidays without losing the job etc. ALINA's case demonstrates that obligations towards family exists not only for mothers towards their spouses and children, but that similar responsibility can exist and determine migration decisions if someone carries the responsibility for siblings and their own parents. These obligations show a very similar effect on the migrants' possibilities for agency.

5.2.2.4 Category IV: Other, 'co-supporting' migrants

At this point, the notion of the breadwinner dissolves and blends into a different group of migrant women. Those whose work cannot be considered being the breadwinners for their families in the strict sense of the definition as stated above (5.1.a), which understands breadwinners as persons "whose earnings are the primary source of support for their dependents" (WordNet 3.0, 2006). Even if these research participants remit a part of their income, they came to Portugal with different motivations and plans. As we will see in the following, a fundamental difference in comparison to the other breadwinning migrant women mentioned before is the fact that these 'co-supporting' women do not have children or other family members depending on them. Nevertheless, these women also send money home to various members of their families in order to support their livelihood, for helping them in difficult and more restricted times or with extra-costs – yet, their families do not depend on them for their daily living expenses. A positive consequence of not being the primary breadwinners for others is that these childless migrant women do not feel such a strong pressure upon them. They see more and easier possibilities to live their own lives in Portugal: many of them are very active socially, participate in groups, and invest in further education etc., as the following case will show:

**LUDMILA: Life quality**

"Nunca tinha a boca fechada ": 'I never kept my mouth shut'

LUDMILA is a manager from the Ukraine (in Portuguese she describes herself as "economista"). She is 44 years old, divorced and has no children. LUDMILA has been working for 20 months in Portugal and regularly sends money home to support the living of her mother, her brother and his two children. Before
migrating, says LUDMILA, she had a secure income, a good work position that she liked and which allowed her to travel regularly abroad. Yet because she felt the economic pressures also tightening around her, by the mid-1990s, tells LUDMILA, she considered migrating. While neither she nor her family were starving, LUDMILA perceived the situation as very restrictive and felt she could not maintain a good quality of life. (FN 26, 27)

In this context, LUDMILA talks also about the role of Perestroika and the subsequent changes in the daily life in the USSR and, later, in the Ukraine:

LUDMILA believes that the biggest changes were economically. She explains that before Perestroika, people did not have much, but they had enough to live on. Then all the new products came, tells LUDMILA, everything looked nice and bright. And the people bought it, realising only later that they had spent the money for one month in only one week. Thus, suddenly everybody needed more money, reckons LUDMILA, including herself. (FN 27)

This means that LUDMILA’s migration to Portugal can be understood as being partly driven by economic considerations, though this does not mean that she had to face severe difficulties or even poverty. LUDMILA felt she could not live her life anymore with the quality and freedom she wanted and, thus, started to consider migration. As more explicitly analysed later in chapter 6, LUDMILA made a first attempt to work in Germany but found her undocumented situation there too big a risk and returned to the Ukraine. The pressure to leave the country again cannot have been very strong, as her friend, who was working already in Lisbon, needed quite a while to finally convince LUDMILA to migrate to Portugal.287

Later, LUDMILA continues to reflect more generally on the topic of Perestroika and the changes it brought upon her life:

287 See chapter 6.1.1.1.
She tells that "o fim do socialismo", 'the end of socialism', did not mean more freedom for her. She says that she never felt oppressed in the USSR: "Nunca tinha a boca fechada, nunca", 'I never kept my mouth shut, never'. LUDMILA emphasises her words with a gesture drawing a bandage on her mouth while shaking her head.288 "Neste relação, não mudo nada para mi", 'in this relation, nothing changed for me', affirms LUDMILA. (FN 34)

From the perspective of breadwinning, LUDMILA's case seems to be, at least at first glance, similar to ALINA's: both give financial support to family members in their home countries but do not have children of their own. Yet the differences beyond the surface become apparent after knowing both of them for a while and looking closely at their migration circumstances and trajectories. From an analytical point of view, the crucial distinguishing factor is that LUDMILA does not feel the same obligation towards her family as ALINA does. Consequently – even if both women seem to behave similarly by sending remittances to close family members – LUDMILA feels much more in control of her life in Portugal. This is reflected for example in LUDMILA's plans to change her work situation from interna to a more independent and self-reliant work as a porteira (concierge) in an apartment house, as examined in chapter 3.2.6. Altering her work conditions will allow her not only to be able to work more autonomously but also to have her own apartment – and thus, more privacy. Her ability to take these steps is based on two factors in her current life situation: First, her legal situation enables her to change her work place, even if this means quitting her job.289 Second, she does not have children, which allows her – at least in the short run – to opt for a somewhat less financially secure situation to make her living. Knowing that she does not need to save as much money as possible, allows her to take the risk to live a few months with a tighter budget, hoping that soon she would be able to build up new possibilities that better her entire life and work situation in Portugal and would correspond more to the life style LUDMILA is aiming for. (FN 32) Important to note is that

288 This corresponds in English to the colloquial term 'gagged'.
289 LUDMILA has a work visa and not an Autorização de Permanência which is tied to an existing work contract and loses its validity when the contract is dissolved or cancelled. Cf. chapter 2 and 3.2.6. This allows her to change work place without risking her legal status in Portugal – an apparently 'small' detail, yet showing much impact on a migrant's life in terms of possibilities of agency.
LUDMILA does not perceive her regular remitting of money to her family in the Ukraine as a burden that restricts her own life or her future possibilities.

The comparison of LUDMILA's and ALINA's cases demonstrates that the extent to which the research participants are inclined to commit themselves and to take on responsibility for others, has significant influence on their migrant life and on their possibilities for agency. Consequently, this justifies the separation of ALINA's and LUDMILA's case into two categories. These indicate the varying forms of responsibility the research participants feel, respectively carry, as well as reflect the different levels of dependency the families at home have on the migrant women. This allows us to recognise ALINA as a breadwinner, while LUDMILA can be understood as being a co-supporting family member.

Furthermore, my research indicates that the migration situation turns out to be on the whole easier for women who are not primary breadwinners for their families at home, as they are not torn so much between two countries and two lives, respectively also two separate roles, as LUDMILA's example shows. These women can pursue their lives in Portugal with more confidence and find greater possibilities for agency in the receiving society; this is due to fewer restrictive conditions being placed upon them and their having limited responsibility for others. And yet, these women do not have the possibility to risk an economically unsafe position for a long time, as they are counted on to support others regularly, though they experience significantly more freedom and space for their own needs. This tendency becomes even more emphasised by the next category:

5.2.2.5 Category V: Independent migrant women

The following cases demonstrate significant differences in the migration process between migrant women who earn the livelihood for their families in their home countries, and those women who do not have this responsibility and who 'only' need to make a living for themselves. Though this category does not fit into the typology in the strict sense of the definition, I consider it as very important to include this fifth category because only through the difference in the women's situation and life plans we can understand the migrant women's breadwinning more fully.
FJODORA: Migration as adventure
"Ver a vida duma forma nova": 'To see life in a new way'.

FJODORA, 32, has lived in Portugal for three years. She decided to give up her secure work place as merchandiser in a large import company and to leave Siberia, Russia, "por aventura", 'for adventure', as she explains it. FJODORA did not choose Portugal as a destination country. When she went to "uma agência de viagem", to 'a travel agency'\(^{290}\) to enquire about work possibilities in Western Europe, she learned that legalisation was virtually impossible in Germany, and very difficult in Italy – but that there were many "vacâncias", job 'vacancies' for work in Portugal. Thus, she bought a ticket to Portugal. During the start of her time in Portugal, FJODORA worked as a live-in-maid but left after some weeks due to problems of sexual harassment by her employer.\(^{291}\) Since then, she has had different service jobs in restaurants and hotels until she found an administrative position in a Russian magazine in Portugal, which allows her to travel once in a while and have contact with many people from all over the country. FJODORA is very content about her work and feels challenged. (FN 88, 90, 94, 96)

During the last years, FJODORA had the advantage that nobody else was depending on her income. This gave her the personal freedom to act in ways that felt best to her at the time, without having to account to somebody else. Consequently, she was able to leave work places when she encountered serious problems or when she was not content with the work. Thus, she had the flexibility of time, and was able to find employment that she really liked and that suits her, both her skills and her career ambitions. This work allows her also to have spare time and an active private life:

FJODORA is a very dynamic woman and enjoys living in Portugal ("Gosto de Portugal", 'I like Portugal'): she practices many different sports, goes regularly

\(^{290}\) See chapter 3.2.3.1 and chapter 6.3 for the role of travel agencies and other service providers, 'os agentes'.
\(^{291}\) I look at this situation in detail in chapter 3.3.2.
to the gym and dancing. Recently, FIODORA also started to attend an advanced Portuguese class and a beginner's English language course. She explains that she sees in particular the latter one as an investment for her future. For more than one year, FIODORA has had a Portuguese fiancé and she explains happily that they plan to marry soon. She likes his family and says with smiling eyes that his parents are delighted by her. In the near future, FIODORA plans to travel with her fiancé to Siberia, to show him her country and also to introduce him to her family. FIODORA says that she likes changes in life and that she is curious about what the future will bring. (FN 88, 89, 92, 96)

With a great deal of liveliness and optimism, FIODORA reflects on her situation and what the migration means to her:

Referring to the three years she spent already in Portugal, FIODORA says that she learned and experienced a lot, and also started to think differently. Portugal was for her "uma possibilidade de ver coisas e a vida duma forma nova", 'a possibility to see things and life in a new way'. She reckons that this was a very interesting and positive experience for her – and she adds with a happy smile that, also, there is still so much more to discover and to learn. (FN 96)

FIODORA's case is a good example of a personally successful outcome of the migration process and its dynamics. In my encounters with migrant women I could see the tendency that, after being a few years in Portugal, some women manage to open and develop new perspectives for themselves and their future. Even if many of them do not have the possibility of changing their job or their general life situation at the moment (due to financial and legal precariousness), they do begin to invest in the future and make significant changes to their social life: many of these women attend further professional training or start to study (again), learn other languages or open their own small businesses. Others begin to teach language courses in NGOs or at universities, work as volunteers in NGOs or religious groups, do physical exercise and join other group activities. All in all, they start to be actively involved and have their 'own' life in Portugal.
Two other research participants do not remit money and are without responsibility for other people. This does not mean that they might not encounter restrictions placed upon them by the receiving society, by immigration laws or by racist attitudes, or that they do not encounter abuse and discrimination in their work place. Nevertheless, similarly to what was illustrated in Fjodora's case, these migrant women are able to make decisions for themselves, and to more easily leave difficult situations behind, as the risk this involves only affects themselves – and not others. As the differences become clear in their narrations, I decided to portray these two women in brief and uninterruptedly:

**AUGUSTINA: Many plans**

"Vamos ver": 'Let's see'.

AUGUSTINA, 27, is from Romania, she is a certified translator of French and Portuguese as well as English. AUGUSTINA has been living in Portugal for two years. She is very active in a migrant church community in Portugal, where she helps other migrants not only with translations but also with visa and other bureaucratic applications. AUGUSTINA perceives herself as a privileged migrant because she would not be "imigrante economico", 'economic immigrant', she says. AUGUSTINA describes her migration to Portugal as a possibility to get away from Romania, from home, and to see something different. Her migration is "uma aventura", 'an adventure' for her. At the same time, she knows that she can always return home, that her family will help her if needed. Her family owns a house in Bucharest and AUGUSTINA indicates that she would probably live there if she decides one day to return to Romania. However, for the time being she has other plans and ideas, and says that she takes every year as it comes. She sees her time in Portugal as an excellent possibility to continue learning and to qualify further. Presently she hopes to be accepted for an internship with the EU in Luxembourg for which she has applied. AUGUSTINA says that she wants to travel, and live her own life. And at the moment, she adds, her life is taking place in Portugal. She smiles, 'we will see what next year will bring', "vamos ver". (FN 35, 36, 37, 38, 39)
Elena is 28 years old. She has been living in Portugal for four years, three of which she spent in Porto. Before coming to Portugal she trained in Romania to be a secondary school language teacher for Portuguese and French. During her studies she spent one year in Portugal with a scholarship. After her graduation in Romania, she returned to Portugal where she worked the next three years in different jobs, e.g. as a secretary, also in hotels and restaurants. She would have loved to work as a teacher but could not find work. Occasionally she was able to teach Portuguese as a foreign language to Romanian migrants but the income was not enough to make a living. However, Elena’s situation changed significantly in the year before we met: she applied for a Portuguese scholarship for a master’s programme (mestrado) in Portuguese Literature, and received the grant. This scholarship has allowed her to work for the past year but only part-time, as receptionist in a hotel in Lisbon. The rest of the time she can dedicate to her degree, she explains. The scholarship allows her also to rent a small flat and she enjoys the space and quietness at home. Elena says that she could imagine staying in Portugal after finishing her master’s degree. But this would depend entirely upon the possibility to find a qualified work place, she adds, and being able to use her skills. She would prefer to work as a teacher, as she loves the profession and feels challenged by it in very complex ways: the need to be open to others and to new ways of thinking, having to read a lot, and to be spontaneous. She says that she would not like to stay in Portugal if, in the long run, she would have to continue working in restaurants and hotels. For, in this type of work she would not be employing her education and studies, explains Elena; in that case she would prefer to return to Romania. Though the salaries are very low, Elena reckons that she could find a job in her profession in Romania and somehow manage to make a living, though modest. Probably she would have to teach in schools as positions in universities are very rare, but anyway, she says, at least she would be able to use her skills. Elena
adds that she is convinced that one can always find a way to get through in one's home country, that something will come up. (FN 5, 6, 7)

Both, AUGUSTINA and ELENA, are convinced that they will find their way, this being a qualified job in their professions, either in Portugal or in their home country. As they do not have the responsibility to look after others, they can focus on their own life and future career development. Furthermore, both feel that they can return to Romania if things do not work out in Portugal (or anywhere else) and still be able to live and work there. As both research participants did not leave their home country due to economic or social pressures (as for instance having to secure economically the living and educations of one's dependents) but choose freely to go to Portugal, their attitude was from the beginning different to other research participants who experience their migration as something they did not want or seek out but nonetheless chose because it promised a better future for their families (like IÚLIA, RODICA, GABRIELA, ALINA, with the explicit exception of DINA and LUDMILA). Furthermore, due to their university studies and professions, AUGUSTINA and ELENA came to Portugal, already knowing a good deal of the language and culture before migration.

And yet, the analysis shows that the crucial difference between the women of this category and the other research participants is the absence of any responsibility for others, this became particularly clear through FJODORA’s case. This absence allows these three women to move freely and make decisions according to their own needs. As a consequence, it has had a positive effect on their possibilities for agency in the receiving society, and beyond.

5.3 Conclusion: Breadwinning

The migration of many Eastern European women, who are breadwinners for their families, has to be seen in the context of diverse family income strategies and personal plans, as well as within the socio-political and economic transformations in Central and Eastern Europe in the last twenty years. My research participants refer regularly to the changes after Perestroika, after socialism, changes in their professional as well as private
lives, in particular in their relationship with their husbands, or respective partners. From their point of view, the repeated phases of unemployment in their home countries – or the threat of –, unpaid salaries during long months, as well as the loss of habitual daily life structures and security have affected also their life as couples and their future perspectives.

On the analytical level, the consideration of structural and socio-economic conditions does not necessarily reduce the women to passive victims, as I have shown by emphasising the diverse significance of their migration trajectories in the cases of the research participants themselves, their achievements and further plans. The consideration of the social, economic, political circumstances is important in any analysis of agency as they provide the framework and set the conditions – as a starting point. Nevertheless, those can be transcended and overcome, at least partly, by the acting subjects, as my Thesis shows.292

As a summary, it can be said that, after some years of migration – usually 2-3 years (in the case of my research participants) –, the difference is striking between women, who have to support financially their families at home (IÚLIA, RODICA, GABRIELA, ALINA), and those who do not have this responsibility (FIODORA, AUGUSTINA, ELENA), or to a lesser extend (LUDMILA). The first ones tend to continue like before, often feeling frustration and resignation, whereas the latter women manage to open new possibilities to change their life and future, gaining new perspectives on themselves and the significance of their migration.

I indicated that some breadwinning migrant women (categories I, II, III) try to live in Portugal using the least amount of money possible, trying to avoid any expenditures in order to be able to send more money home (like IÚLIA, RODICA, GABRIELA, ALINA). My research clearly indicates how far these women tend to restrict their own needs, often to an absolute minimum. They deny themselves the smallest pleasures like meeting somebody for a coffee (which costs in Portugal 0,50 €) and, thus, reduce their social contacts even further. I shall look at this closer in the next chapter. As a result, many migrant women feel very lonely and ‘useless’, as for instance IÚLIA said. The research shows that many women, who have to significantly support their families at home (category I and II), can feel deeply frustrated about their work and life situation in Portugal and about the physical distance to their children in their home countries (e.g. IÚLIA and GABRIELA). Additionally, most of the research participants understand – respectively admit to themselves – only after some years

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292 Cf. also chapter 1.3.1.2.
that their migration will be a long-term arrangement: They have to stay much longer than they thought initially to cover their (and their family's) needs and reach their aims. For many of them, a return home within a few years becomes more and more unrealistic and improbable. Therefore, migration and its consequences can mean a threat to the personality, the self-esteem, also the professional and social identity of many migrant women, in particular when they are the primary financial breadwinners for their families (categories I and II, but also III). They have difficulties in finding a satisfactory balance between their different roles, their duties and their own individual needs, as my research shows. Frustration and resignation are common reactions and problems as the women often do not see any concrete personal perspective, respectively cannot plan any future, neither in Portugal nor at home.

And yet, despite their self-restrictions and the suffering caused by the separation from their families, children, homes and professions, it is crucial to recognise and emphasise what these research participants gain through their work abroad, which is necessarily linked to their absence from home and from their families: The research participants do earn the money needed for sustaining the daily life of their families, they do open doors for the future, they do ensure that their children can receive a good education and university degrees, they do also provide the financial resources for future purchases of assets.

After having examined the importance of breadwinning and its consequences throughout the research participants' different migration trajectories, the next chapter will analyse social aspects of migration. It looks at the women's social life and relationships in Portugal – which will show that the research participants do also 'have a life' beyond work in Portugal. Here, it will become clear that these social relationships can never be fully separated from the work sphere and the structural conditions surrounding the migrants' life. This confirms the complexity of migration as a holistic experience in which all aspects and levels are linked and intertwined.
6 SOCIAL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION

In this chapter I examine different social fields that are of significance in migrant life. The empirical material is used intensely to develop and analyse the women's situation from their own point of view by looking at their own expressions and understandings. Thus the research participants and their experiences have to great extent their own voice and space in this chapter. Based on these, I analyse various social relationships within the receiving society. Friendships, religious communities and other social networks are of central analytical interest in the first part of the chapter (6.1). The position of women migrating alone and their possibilities for participation are examined throughout. The second part of the chapter addresses further social aspects that arose as relevant for the women, i.e. their self-perception as being different from the Portuguese, affectionate and sexual relationships, and the ways in which the women maintain contact with their families and friends at home (6.2). I conclude the chapter with a short remark on the women's attitude towards the so-called 'mafia' (6.4).

6.1 Social relationships

6.1.1 Friendship

Amizade, friendship, stood as being the research participants' most important form of social contact in Portugal. This section will examine how far the research participants differ in their ways to find friends, as well as in their comfort level in forming contacts and friendship with others. The following cases show various facets of friendship that are each part of the women's daily life.

Through her work in various restaurants and hotels since her arrival in Portugal, Jekaterina found friends amongst her colleagues. She says that she likes very much having all these international colleagues, for example from Bulgaria, the former USSR, from Africa, as well as from Portugal. (FN 103)
Indeed, Jekaterina is one of the few research participants who was able to establish friendship with both migrant and Portuguese women. She has Eastern European women as friends with whom she enjoys to share their cultural proximity, which she feels sets her sometimes apart from the Portuguese. For instance, Jekaterina and other Ukrainian and Russian female friends like to go sometimes to some warm and welcoming cafés in Lisbon in which they can feel 'civilised', as she puts it (FN 104). She speaks also very positively about her Portuguese friendships:

Jekaterina tells me for instance that she was recently invited to have dinner at her Portuguese colleague's home. She was very happy about this invitation. She went together with her son; they bought a bottle of Vinho Verde, a lightly sparkling young wine, considered to be 'typical Portuguese'. Jekaterina's friend had prepared her favourite dish, bacalhau, and they spent a nice evening together. Later, Jekaterina tells me that it was actually this Portuguese woman who actively searched at work the company of her female migrant colleagues, e.g. during lunch break. One day she said to Jekaterina that she feels more comfortable with them than with the other Portuguese workers. Jekaterina further explains this with the fact that most of the Portuguese employees are men with hardly any education and thus their conversations would be "muito básico", 'very simple', in Jekaterina's experience. (FN 104)

Quite a few of the research participants referred to the lack of education and 'civilisation' of the Portuguese. I will look closer at this topic below in this chapter. Jekaterina's account also shows that sharing the same gender and a similar educational level can help to create bonds and establish contact or even friendship bonds with migrants of other origins as well as the autochthonous women.

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293 The notion of "civilização", 'civilisation', as it is used by some of my research participants, is explored later in this chapter.
294 For the details of Jekaterina's case see chapter 5.2.2.2.
295 See 6.2.1.1.
Another research participant, AUGUSTINA, has a very different social experience and life-style than the other women I met:

AUGUSTINA lives in a shared flat with eight other people, some are migrants, some are Portuguese, all of them work. When she comes home in the evenings, they sit together and speak about their days; AUGUSTINA says that she enjoys this kind of atmosphere and the manifold exchanges between them. It is important for her to have many people around her. Her life in Romania was similar, tells AUGUSTINA, she has a wide circle of friends and many acquaintances. She is used to going out a lot, and doing regularly excursions and hiking trips with her friends. With a smile AUGUSTINA adds that she likes to live like that. And yet, she adds with a smile, she would also like to have a few months time, only for herself and for reading. (FN 38)

AUGUSTINA is able to continue her social life in a very similar way to the one she was used to in Romania. This is helped by the fact that she is single and does not have any family or other dependants in her home country for whom she is responsible. She has a qualified job that allows her to make use of her skills and knowledge. Additionally, her residence as well as work situation is legalised. As a translator, she works in an international environment and enjoys the chance to meet new people every day. AUGUSTINA has such an intensely rich social life that sometimes she wishes she had more time on her own, alone. She is a very open person, her eyes sparkle with joy. We try a few times to go out one evening for a beer but never manage. Instead I usually meet her for a quick coffee, an hour ‘in between’ – she comes from somewhere and is on the way to somewhere else, is between work and friends and visitors. She seems happy, and very busy with her life in Portugal.

The social life in Portugal of most of my other research participants is much more limited. This is often linked to the (time) restrictions that their employment as *empregadas domésticas internas* places on them. However, this does not mean that these women do not enjoy time with their friends – yet they have significantly less time available for themselves.
and their private life. I shall narrate at length the following case of RODICA as it illustrates well the emotional importance of friendship for women migrating alone, leaving their family and friends in their home countries.

RODICA, who works as a live-in maid, usually spends the weekend with her friends who live in a North-Western suburb of Lisbon. Almost every Saturday afternoon RODICA takes the suburban train to see her friends. She spends the night at her friends' place. The couple, also from Romania, has a spare room, and RODICA says that she feels almost at home there. On Sundays, RODICA returns to the centre of Lisbon to go to church. After the mass, she sits with other migrant women on one of the benches on a small square next to the church, later they go for walks and sometimes for a coffee. The women had become friends. (FN 49, 50)

Saturday and Sunday are indeed socially very busy days for many research participants, as RODICA's case exemplifies. The weekend is for many women the only time they can meet me, so our meetings are sometimes squeezed in between other activities and social events. RODICA and I talk about her weekends:

When I meet RODICA one Saturday after lunchtime, one of her friend calls twice while RODICA and I sit in a café and talk. I hear RODICA mentioning me and my Thesis on the phone. She had told me that she would go later to see her friends in the suburb, and I get the impression that her friends are already waiting for her, and thus calling. I ask RODICA if they have any plans for the night? They would not have big plans, says RODICA, at their age they would not go out to party anymore – at least not so much anymore, adds RODICA AND laughs. Usually they would stay at home, talk, and watch together TV – some telenovelas, soap operas, adds RODICA, they all enjoy these telenovelas, 'nothing special' she comments. However, they are together, and that would be the most important, a bit like a family. (FN 50)
Later that afternoon, after having talked for many hours, RODICA and I walk along Rossio, a central square in Lisbon, and RODICA unexpectedly meets a woman she knows.

After introducing us briefly, RODICA explains that she would like to talk with her for a while. We say good-bye for today. The next day, Sunday afternoon, I meet RODICA by coincidence. RODICA tells me that she arrived yesterday very late at her friends' place as she kept on talking for hours with the woman we met at Rossio. After that, she and her friends spent the night talking, they spoke about their week and all other things – talking is always important, says RODICA. I answer that I think so too, the talking would be important, as well as the "compartir", the sharing. RODICA smiles very nicely at me, her eyes are shining: "Sim, exactamente!" 'Yes, exactly!' (FN 53)

As much as possible, the women try to compensate the lack of socialising with very socially. For these women, sleep and rest is not as important as the social exchange and lived moments with friends, other acquaintances and compatriots. If we consider that most research participants come from very social and closely knit backgrounds, including the active involvement of family and friends in their daily lives, their effort to build and enjoy friendships on the weekends becomes even more understandable, seeing also the positive effect for the women themselves. It certainly helps to keep their spirits up: many gatherings and activities on the weekends are very lively and cheery, including the church related meetings.

6.1.1.1 Migrating friendship

Also on many other occasions RODICA emphasises how important it is to have somebody here in Lisbon with whom she can talk, somebody she knows; she and the woman friend she is visiting every weekend know each other and have been friends for a long time, in Romania they were also work colleagues. (FN 50)
RODICA’s case indicates something I could observe a few times in my research: Some of the social networks that existed before migration continue to be important for the research participants. As examined in chapter 3, some research participants were persuaded by friends to come to Portugal after a job had been procured for them, like GABRIELA and RODICA. Those friends were in all cases female friends. I showed also in chapter 3 that some women receive help from friends when they arrive in Portugal, for instance by arranging a work place for the newcomer, like JEKATERINA’s friend did (FN 102), or by letting them stay with them during the first weeks or months after arrival, as in the case of GABRIELA (FN 16). Mostly, their friendship continues once both are in the receiving society, though in some cases conflicts may arise, as happened to LUDMILA:

Before migrating to Portugal, LUDMILA worked a while in a restaurant in Leipzig, Germany. She tells that she liked the work and the fact that everything was very well organised, including work time and days off, and the boss was honest. LUDMILA wanted to stay but found it impossible to legalise her stay in Germany. Knowing about frequent police checks, she decided not to take this risk and thus returned to the Ukraine after one month. (FN 27)

Shortly after this first post-soviet migration experience, a friend who had been working in Lisbon called LUDMILA:

The friend told LUDMILA how fantastic everything in Portugal would be, that she could earn a lot and that everything would be beautiful and "uma maravilha", 'wonderful'. She called LUDMILA again and again, trying to talk her into coming to Portugal too. For a long time, LUDMILA refused to come to Lisbon and repeatedly told her friend that she was not be interested. However, explains LUDMILA, the situation in the Ukraine did not get better, and

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296 Cf. chapter 3.2.3.3.
297 LUDMILA is originally from Russia and migrated to the Ukraine in the 80s. She introduced herself as Ukrainian and explained later: "Para nós, não faz grande diferença, é normal", ‘For us, it doesn’t make a big difference, it is normal’. (FN 26)
eventually she started to think about her situation and future. Finally, LUDMILA decided to follow her friend and migrate to Portugal. (FN 27)

However, the Portuguese reality turned out to be quite different from what LUDMILA’s friend had described and from what LUDMILA consequently expected:

When she arrived by train to Lisbon at the station of Stª Apolonia where all international trains arrive, her first impression was that everything seemed to be very different from what her friend had described to her. LUDMILA was in particular disappointed by the dirtiness she saw all around. Soon she understood that everything else was different to her friend’s description also, the income was very low, the work hard and not respected. The first year she did not like it at all, and says that she was very unhappy. However, explains LUDMILA, she has gotten used to many things and has also gotten to know other areas in Lisbon and other towns in Portugal, and now she is able to appreciate Portugal's beauty, like the architecture for instance. But it took her quite a while. LUDMILA adds that she does not imagine herself staying forever – however, she continues, who knows what will happen, one never knows what the future might bring. When she arrived in Portugal she planned to stay only one year, thinking that she would be able to “arranjar muito dinheiro”, 'to make a lot of money', and then return to the Ukraine. Well, she says, now she has already been living in Portugal for one year and nine months… LUDMILA reckons that she might stay for another three or four years, at least, as she has not been able yet to make much money, not enough to be able to build something up in the Ukraine. (FN 28)

LUDMILA made the best of her situation and managed to adapt her plans. But what is her relationship with the friend that convinced her to come to Portugal?

LUDMILA explains that she was angry for quite a while with the friend who had persuaded her into coming to Lisbon, for describing life and work in Portugal
as much better, nicer and easier than things really were. She was particularly upset at the beginning. However, adds LUDMILA, in the end they are still best friends: "Sabes, numa amizade há coisas mais importantes, se pode esquecer de muitas coisas", 'you know, in a friendship, there are more important things, one can forget a lot'. They meet often and talk on the telephone frequently, and send text messages. According to LUDMILA the most important feature in their friendship is that they do not have any secrets – and that it is not necessary to remind the other not to tell intimate things to others. Both aspects are mutually obvious to both women. (FN 28)

This narrative shows that LUDMILA still strongly believes that her friend tricked and betrayed her by telling lies about the working and living situation in Portugal. But she recognises also that it is very important to have a good friend close by, and that she needs the support of a close friend when one is otherwise alone in a foreign country. However, says LUDMILA, it took her a while to come to terms with her friend's betrayal. After some time she came to the conclusion that it is important to have a generous attitude towards friends and the mistakes they make. LUDMILA decided to 'forget' what happened, as she puts it. Only when her friend mentions the wish to return home rather soon, LUDMILA reacts overtly disapprovingly, stating the unfairness in her friend's behaviour:

Recently, LUDMILA's friend expressed her wish to return home very soon, that for her it is soon time to go back. LUDMILA answered that she would not be able to go back now, that she lured LUDMILA to Portugal, she would have to stay too! While telling me this incident, LUDMILA laughs and accompanies her account with a lot of gestures, her eyes are sparkling with light heartedness. (FN 28)

Though LUDMILA disapproves strongly to her friend's idea to return soon, by the time we speak about this incident she has learned that her friend will stay longer in Portugal, not leaving LUDMILA alone, as she had feared. By the time we speak about this, LUDMILA is not threatened anymore by her friend's possible departure. Thus, she can speak about that
incident with a laugh, showing humour about the emotionally intertwined situation she and her friend. However, through her gestures and the way she speaks one can feel the emotional turmoil this caused her not long ago.

6.1.1.2 Having to weigh up: Work versus friendship

Sometimes, it is difficult for the women to find the balance between their own needs and rights (specially their workers' rights) and the demands of their patrões. RODICA speaks about one such example of this type of situation, which bears for her certain potential for conflict: the decision between a good atmosphere at work, and friendship, as the following shows:

One of RODICA's best friends in Portugal wants to celebrate her birthday the following Saturday, together with another friend. They plan to make "uma festa", a party, in the house of some Romanian friends near Santarém (about 80 km from central Lisbon), RODICA excitedly explains. She informed her patrões, who unfortunately are invited for dinner the same evening. RODICA tells that sometimes on Saturdays she stays at home to look after the child while her patrões go out, even if this means not being able to see her friends as she does usually. She always looks after the child in the evenings when her patrões ask her to. RODICA says that a few times she even came home earlier on Sundays when the patrões had appointments in the afternoon, though officially Sunday is RODICA's day off. However, says RODICA, this time she definitely wanted to go to that party, after all it is the birthday of her best friend in Portugal. RODICA spoke with her employers with whom she usually has a very good relationship.299 "A senhorita", her female employer, was very understanding of RODICA's wish, tells RODICA, but the patrão was "chateado", angry with her. Even knowing that he won't be angry for a long time, RODICA feels uneasy about this situation as they work and live together so closely – having a tense atmosphere under these circumstances would be very stressful.

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298 These extra hours for babysitting on the weekend are not paid.
299 See chapter 3.2.5.3.
for her, says RODICA. This time, however, she does not want to cancel her own plans and stay at home so her *patrões* can go out. This party would be something special and she wants to participate. (FN 57)

Under the given structural conditions that dissolve the boundaries between work and private sphere, different needs collide. Power structures can easily influence negatively the research participants' decisions, making them stand back with their own needs and plans, as the example shows. However, in this particular case, RODICA succeeds in placing a limit on her employers' assumption of her constant availability. Though their work relationship is, on the whole, positive, the *patrão* has problems to accept RODICA's own plans when they collide with the *patrões' own arrangements*. However, RODICA insists on her day off and emphasises the many other times she stayed at home so her *patrões* could leave. In this case, RODICA risks the good atmosphere at her work and living place for fulfilling her own needs and wishes: to spend that day with her friends and to celebrate her best friend's birthday. RODICA made a decision that is, in that moment and under the circumstances, more important for her – her friendship. However, RODICA was only able to do so as she feels on the whole secure (safe?) and appreciated by her *patrões*, with whom the relationship is extraordinarily good, as was explained in chapter 3, and which – unfortunately – is not 'typical' as I have shown earlier and throughout this Thesis.

6.1.1.3 Friends are difficult to find

While some women, like the examples mentioned earlier of JEKATERINA and AUGUSTINA showed, find it easy to meet people and make new friends, other research participants describe friendship as something not so easy to come by, very serious for them, and usually difficult to find.

Friendship is something essential and serious for FIODORA. She explains to me that *amizade*, friendship, is give and take. Firstly, it would mean to give and always to try to give, to be with the other when s/he needs support, for example through calling, giving advice, saying your opinion, helping with contacts if possible. It is crucial to be interested in the other, to listen and to know what is
going on inside the other. FJODORA adds that she believes that the most important is to be to be able to trust the other, to know that she can open herself, and to know that the friend is interested, does not tell others and takes her seriously. Friends like this are difficult to find, reckons FJODORA. Though she has a relatively active social life in Portugal, and talks about some Russian and other Eastern European women she meets, FJODORA makes clear that these are only "conhecidos", 'acquaintances', and she does not speak of them as friends. On another occasion, she tells me about an operation she had to have the year before, and mentions that the only person who really helped and came to look regularly after her was her boyfriend at the time, now her fiancé. (FN 93, 94)

FJODORA gives me the impression that she has always been careful about whom to trust and whom to call a friend. While we talk, it becomes clear that particularly important to her is her sister:

At home [in Siberia], tells FJODORA, her sister, who is two years younger than her, is her best friend, and has always been. Sure, they would have arguments and quarrels, as is usual amongst siblings, but still, they are very close. (FN 93)

FJODORA reflects a lot about friendship and its meaning. One day she tells me the following about her understanding of it:

Talking about amizade, FJODORA uses an interesting image: "dois copos cheios de agua", 'two glasses full of water'. One glass would be very calm and still and without movement, no fresh water is coming in, no water is leaving. As a consequence the water stagnates after a while (FJODORA uses the word "estraga-se", which literally means 'perishes'). The second glass, on the other hand, would always receive fresh water and give some away, it would be always in movement, always different and yet, the same glass of water. This would be her "imagem de amizade", image of friendship and life on the whole.
Fiódora says that she thinks frequently in images as there would be so much that cannot be expressed in words; images could say much more, and she likes that. (FN 94)

Fiódora’s example makes clear how it is an individual preference and attitude how easy friendships are built, and how soon one is willing to call the other a friend, rather than an acquaintance, for instance.

I wonder if a woman like Fiódora, who is socially active, who knows many other migrants, who practices regularly sports with others, and who has a fiancé, does not feel the immediate need to see others as friends as she has a multitude of different social events and contacts every week. Whereas others, with significantly less social contact and opportunities, cannot be so picky and are thus more open to friendship as soon as someone feels more or less suitable, or is simply someone sharing the same situation. And yet, friendship is always an issue of trust, some women are willing to trust other women more freely than others.

6.1.1.4 No friends, envy and gossip

Some of the research participants have so little time and space available for themselves that they find it virtually impossible to make friends with others. This is for instance the case with Iúlia, who works seven days a week as interna, having only the Sunday mornings off to go to church, as explored in more detail in chapter 3. Though she meets other migrants after the mass and usually talks with them for a while, one or two hours seem too short to create a more profound friendship with others. Apart from these limits set from outside, Iúlia herself reflects on the situation and gives other explanations that go beyond the surface:

Iúlia explains that she does not have any friends in Portugal. She says this is partly because of her bad experiences in her marriage, which continues to have negative influences also on her relationships with other people and the way she relates with others, up until today. She finds it difficult to trust another person. But it is more important, says Iúlia, that it is in general very difficult for
migrants to find friends because everybody has enormous problems. Thus, everybody would think first in her/himself. This is very understandable, IÚLIA reckons, but would not really help. And, even more, nobody has time. She repeats often that all migrants have big problems, and that things are very difficult for everybody. She links explicitly this difficulty to the illegality many migrants face, including herself.\textsuperscript{300} (FN 10)

Listening to IÚLIA, a more complex image of the migrant situation emerges: the individual history with its past negative emotional experiences and disappointments, as restrictive in IÚLIA’s case, mixes with the conditions of daily life within the receiving society. Here, not only the structural limitations set from outside like time and space impact on the migrants but also their basic need to first look after themselves, to make a living, to survive. Sometimes, this leaves neither space, energy, nor emotional capacities for others.

Though using a different argument, another research participant points out something similar in the behaviour of many migrants:

ALINA mentions that there is a lot of "envy" amongst the Ukrainian migrants in Portugal. I ask if she thinks this is the case because of the competition regarding job opportunities. No, says ALINA, she does not think that this is the reason. In her understanding the reason lies in the fact that everybody resents the others for having more money or better opportunities then themselves. (FN 60)

On another occasion, we talk about this topic again, and ALINA explains her perception further:

ALINA sees one of the reasons for the attitude of envy and rivalry between Eastern European immigrants in the fact that their life situation in Portugal is often dominated by humiliation on the one hand, and certain "greed for material things", on the other hand. She dislikes these attitudes and feels

\textsuperscript{300} See chapter 3.2.6.
alienated from her own compatriots, as she says, not understanding "my own people". (FN 60, 67)

We see that, similar to FJODORA, ALINA describes herself as generally being very careful about trusting other people and making friends. Her friends in the Ukraine are still the most important to her and she keeps close contact via email and phone calls. At the same time, ALINA is aware that this continued closeness over the geographical distance might also be hindering from immersing more in her immediate daily life, which is by de facto taking place Portugal, at least for the time being:

For ALINA family and friends are very important. She has three good female friends in the Ukraine, whom she calls home regularly, usually three to four times a week. ALINA thinks, however, that she is not fully adjusting or integrating in Portugal because her relationships at home are still so close for her. Later she adds that her female friends are very important for her, and that she has the feeling she left half of herself with them, in Portugal she describes feeling that she is only one half of herself. ALINA thinks also that it is important to have male friends. ALINA reflects about herself that she is very choosy regarding people and friends, friendship is something serious for her and something binding. It takes a while for her to let people into her life. The first impression is crucial. Later she adds that she had a good feeling with me from the beginning, I felt honoured. (FN 60, 67)

Being reflective not only of herself but also about her environment, ALINA moves the topic from an individual and personal perspective to a broader social and cultural frameworks:

In the context of friendship ALINA mentions also the pioneers in the USSR. Even if she was still very young when the USSR broke up, she remembers very well the solidarity, the mutual support, the sensitivity people felt towards

\(^{301}\) Cp. later this chapter, 6.2.3.
weaker members of society. Alina says that she misses all this very much. (FN 67)

After having talked for a while about the USSR and its ideology, we continue to talk about Alina's life in Portugal at present:

I ask if she found some friends in Portugal. Alina answers that no, not at all. She finds this very difficult due to the mostly uncomfortable atmosphere amongst the Ukrainians in Portugal. She says that once she thought that she had found a friend and confided something intimate about herself to that woman. Her confidence created a problem as that woman told it to another woman who told it to somebody else - who turned out to be a work colleague of Alina's room-mate. In the end, Alina's most intimate details made the rounds. The gossip amongst the migrants is a real problem, reckons Alina, it is impossible to know whom to trust and whom not to trust. Since this experience, Alina keeps a distance in all friendship possibilities and avoids closeness amongst other migrants. (FN 67)

Alina's case reflects also other research participants' experiences: Various women explained that other migrants, work colleagues etc., with whom they had more personal contact or even friendship, disappointed them because they gossiped, told intimacies or even lies about them to others. In some cases, similar to the anonymous case I analysed in chapter 3 ('Lara'), in which the defamation started insinuating that she was a prostitute. All these are frequent experiences. Consequently, after those incidences, some research participants began to keep a conscious distance from other migrant (women). Nevertheless, I have shown that many women are able to find friends in Portugal. These are in most cases other migrant women with whom they can share their daily life in Portugal, and enjoy their spare time.

Some many migrant women had negative experiences with more informal, female networks and 'friendships': similar to the more established social networks (see below), the

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302 See chapter 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.
level of suspicion and mistrust is quite high also in these contexts, as I analysed in detail in chapter 4.3. Similar experiences and life situations ease the way for friendship and mutual trust. Some women also find friends amongst the Portuguese and migrants of other origins, often near friendships form around the work place or religious communities as we learned through the past analysis.

6.1.2 The role of religious communities

6.1.2.1 The church as social meeting point

For some women, friendship and going to the church are intrinsically linked as the following two examples show:

GABRIELA tells me that seeing her friends and attending mass on Sundays, are ways for her to get the feeling of 'getting out', away from her work and living place, and thus, to create distance from her patrões and her everyday work life in Portugal. She emphasises frequently how important the Sundays are to her. (FN 18)

As GABRIELA works as a live-in maid, she does not have much time off, only the Sunday. She made friends within the church community, and thus meets them usually every Sunday at church. Afterwards they spend the day together, talking in a park or at the beach, or simply walking together through Lisbon, now and then enjoying a cup of coffee in a café as a special treat.

ELENA decided to move cities within Portugal because of the church, leaving behind friends and a life she got used to:

ELENA lived the first three years in Porto, by the time we meet she had already been living already one year in Lisbon. She says that she likes Porto better, finds the city smaller and more clearly arranged, and thus, life in general would be easier to organise. ELENA reckons also that the people in Porto are more
There, she found it easier to make friendships, which was nice, she says, as she describes herself as not being very good at making friends and keeping in touch. Thus, ELENA makes clear that she would have preferred to live in Porto – but in the end the fact that there was no Romanian-orthodox church made her decide to move to Lisbon. Romanian-Orthodox communities can be found in Portugal only in Lisbon and Faro. Thus, the church was the main reason for ELENA to move to Lisbon.

She made a good Portuguese friend in Porto but says that they do not see each other very often since she has moved to Lisbon. She has another good friend in Aveiro whom she sees a bit more. In Lisbon, her friends are mainly other Romanians, tells ELENA, some of them she met through the church. (FN 5)

The importance of her faith and the proximity to a vivid church community of her orientation made ELENA decide against other important factors in her life. Though she speaks of her Lisbon friends as “amigos”, ‘friends’, and not as "conhecidos”, ‘acquaintances’, I got the impression in our conversations that none of these friends is as close and important to her as her friends in Porto and Aveiro. Thus ELENA made a significant sacrifice in her private life when she moved to Lisbon, though she decided it was more important to have the religious support in the place where she lives. Amongst the research participants, ELENA was the only one who made such a decision. However, from a different perspective, one can say that she had the possibility – and even the freedom – to make such a decision. This indicates again the wide possibilities for agency that ELENA has due to the fact that she has no dependants for whom she has to provide the livelihood, as analysed in chapter 5. At the same time, I would reject any reduction of her case and similar cases to being ‘privileged migrants’ because such a label would only consider one of the many facets of migration. Such a label does not acknowledge the complexity of the migrant live and the individual and collective experiences, as I hope to have shown throughout the Thesis.


304 By the time of my research.
In the following I will look closer at the role of faith and religious communities in the lives of the research participants. While the experiences are as different as the personal beliefs, however, some patterns become clear.

A variety of immigrant religious communities exist in Portugal. These include for instance Russian-Orthodox, Ukrainian-Orthodox, Romanian-Orthodox communities, as well as Protestant, Muslim and Hindu communities. The Catholic church is also active for migrants, as for instance the 'Obra Católica Portuguesa de Migrações', and various Catholic communities all over the country offer services following the "rito oriental", the rite of the Eastern Catholic church, or belong to the Greek-Catholic church.

In spite of the relatively widespread existence of various religious migrant communities, my research shows that most Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox women, who migrate on their own, do not keep strong contact to the Orthodox churches. And yet, some research participants use the Sunday mass for more social purposes though also the religious support can be significant for those women who see themselves as believers. Generally, the women perceive the atmosphere in the communities as relatively closed, relationships seem to be more formal and socially divided. Also in this context many women feel observed suspiciously by some of their compatriots and fellow believers because they are women alone in Portugal. Additionally, some women mentioned again the tendency for being protected respectively controlled by other migrants (mostly by men), which confirm the analysis done in the context of social capital. Thus we can conclude that Russian and Ukrainian women tend to avoid religious as well as secular communities and networks. At the same time, they also continue missing friends and feeling alone.

Yet, some immigrant women also talk positively about the contacts that they get through participating in existing social networks and communities. The religious groups offer for some women a welcomed possibility for meeting regularly and obtaining help if needed. This was found to be especially true in the case of Romanian women working as domestic workers and live-in maids. They referred often positively to the social bonds

307 Cf. chapter 4.3.
around the Romanian-Orthodox church, which serves not only a social meeting-point on Sundays but offers also support in other regards, e.g. in legal questions. Many Moldavian migrants belong also to this community due to the linguistic and cultural proximity.

6.1.2.2 Faith and migrant believers

Religion and religious practices play an important role for some migrants. However, the churches, both Orthodox and Catholic, and their ways of performing the mass, on the one hand, and, their interaction with the (migrant) population, on the other hand, is partly contested by the research participants. The following experiences reflect the diversity, and yet, underline the importance of a religious belonging for some migrant women. First I would like to look at the positive experiences with religious communities:

Rodica goes almost every Sunday to church, and she says that she used to do that also at home, in Romania and thus it was a continuity and nothing new in her life. Attending the mass would give her "força, força para a semana", 'strength, strength for the week', as she puts it. Often, she would ask God to keep an eye on her sons and family and to take care of them. Rodica gets tears in her eyes, and starts to cry a bit. After a short silence, she repeats that the church gives her a lot of "força", strength and courage, and this buoyed her. Rodica cries again. I lay my hand on her shoulder, saying that I understand her very well. (FN 49)

Rodica points out the importance of her faith for her daily life, it fills an emotional and spiritual need, in particular now that she is apart from her sons and family. It is difficult for her to talk about this topic and she becomes very emotional. Iúlia on the other hand talks more about the pragmatic significance of the church community and the priest as a reliable support for the migrants, filling a functional need:

Iúlia experiences the role of the church as very positive and helpful for migrants, including for herself. She says that the padre, the priest, of the

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Romanian-Orthodox church helps the migrants a lot. In her opinion, he does all he can, for example offering to stay in the church overnight for people who are without a sleeping place. He also helps to arrange work as he meets and talks to so many people. However, says IÚLIA, most help would be more verbal then material help as there are few funds and resources. Still, IÚLIA thinks that the most important aspect is that one can talk with the padre. Whenever people have problems, they can turn to him for advice. (FN 13)

A few research participants are also actively involved in the church activities, including helping other migrants. The women do this out of faith and the wish to help others who are in difficult situations:

One research participants, who I don't want to identify in this particular context to preserve her anonymity completely, works voluntarily for a religious community in Lisbon, where she regularly gives information to other migrants regarding work, visas, and other official applications; she helps also with translations when needed. She brought me also in contact with other women who she knows through her active participation in the church community. (FN)

For some women, the church becomes important for various reasons and motives, which are interconnected. Their religious belief goes hand in hand with their needs to be part of a social community and to meet friends at least once a week:

Though GABRIELA goes regularly to church, we rarely spoke about the role the church and her belief plays in her migration trajectory. I think the reason for this was that we talked about so many other issues, and GABRIELA enjoyed talking with somebody who is more an outsider, that she preferred to talk about other topics which feel very urgent to her: how much she misses her daughters and her husband, her workplace at home, and how much she hopes to be able to return soon. Only once, GABRIELA spoke directly about her personal belief: "Deus ajuda, já ajudou muito – e não sou eu que ajuda a outros, senão Deus é
...a ajudar, Ele da a possibilidade de ajudar", 'God helps, He helped already a lot – and it is not me who helps but it is God who helps because He is the one who gives the possibility to help'. This sentence reflects the central role God and religious belief plays in her life. At the same time, GABRIELA says that the church is for her also a way to get away from her work, to get out, to see others, she has some friends amongst the women there. And since her daughter came to work in Portugal too, the church is also the place where she can meet her regularly. (FN 18, 24)

For the research participants originating from Romania and Moldova, regularly going to mass was a routine already before migration. They all have a positive attitude not only to religion and faith but also to the church as an institution. By looking in the following at other research participant's experiences with different churches in Portugal, it becomes clear that it might not be a coincidence that these three women, RODICA, IÚLIA and GABRIELA, are active members of the same Romanian-Orthodox community in Lisbon. Other migrants, however, feel a greater distance to the migrant churches. This is in particular true for Ukrainian and Russian women in Lisbon, as the next three examples show, which could be tagged in short as:

### 6.1.2.3 Disappointments, difficulties, distance

LUDMILA for instance got the impression that the Ukrainian-Orthodox church in Lisbon is "um pouco estranho, um mistura de Ortodoxo e Católico", 'a bit strange, a mix of Orthodox and Catholic'. The reason for this is, in her understanding, that many Ukrainian Orthodox priests received their training in Brazil, thus, they would also speak "com um sotaque brasileiro", 'with a Brazilian accent'. The "culto" would be mixed, the ceremony orthodox (Greek), the content catholic. "Uma mistura exquisita", 'a strange mix', thinks LUDMILA, and finds it somehow confusing. She explains that she spoke with other Ukrainians about this, and apparently most were confused too and not very happy with the way the mass is performed. (FN 36, 37)

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309 See chapter 5.2.2.2.
It is not unusual that migrants have also problems with the way the Orthodox masses are performed in Portugal. Like LUDMILA, many Eastern European migrants speak similarly about the services.

ALINA had the same experience. She went once to the Ukrainian church but found that the "culto" was Greek-Orthodox, and, thus, was very different to what she was used to. She says that she got confused by it and felt that she did not like it. Consequently, ALINA did not go again to church in Lisbon. Still, religion seems to play a role in her life as becomes clear when she speaks more about her background. ALINA tells me that, though churches were forbidden in the USSR, her grandmother took her sometimes to church, saying to ALINA 'but don't tell anybody'. ALINA says that she became an orthodox and relatively firm believer. This changed very suddenly a while ago, and she does not know why, and repeats that it just changed. ALINA says it started before she migrated, and got only emphasised when she attended the mass in Portugal. (FN 70, 76)

Still, religion continues to be important to her and in our conversations we speak various times about it. Also, ALINA is one of the research participants who explains more details to me about the Orthodox church in general, and the relatively new founded Ukrainian-Orthodox church in particular.

Other research participants do not feel any link to the established religious communities and churches. One woman in particular expresses strongly her own opinion, while at the same time criticising harshly the churches:

FIODORA is convinced that "cada pessoa tem algum fé", 'every person believes in something' – and if it was to believe that something bad will happen when a black cat crosses the street, adds FIODORA. She says that she grew up without religion, as it was then common in the USSR. Yet today, FIODORA believes in God – but she distances herself from the churches. Talking about the Orthodox churches in Portugal, she says that her impression of these is not very good. In
particular the Ukrainian-Orthodox church seems to her to be very strict, with a strong hierarchical organisation. FIODORA reckons probably that this is exactly what many people want, and that's why so many Orthodox churches have opened now in Portugal. FIODORA remains very critical of these, and adds that she does not think that the churches really help the migrants, they do not help them to find a place to stay or with work related problems. In her opinion also many migrant organisations, which developed partly in the surroundings of the churches, and which are supposed to help migrants, do require money, and thus, she believes, those, too, are only for making money, not for helping others. (FN 95)

The last three cases exemplified migrant women who keep their distance from the established religious communities, partly because of different rituals, partly because of non-belief and mistrust in the church. FIODORA pointed out also the strong hierarchy within some communities. This is actually an argument I heard from many Eastern European migrants why they would not seek social contact with compatriots nor help in the organisation around the churches, which are often also open to non-members of the religious communities. According to these migrants, in particular the Ukrainian and Russian religious communities and churches in Lisbon are rather intolerant and strict. Many women I met told they went once or twice to mass or social gatherings/activities organised by the churches but then never again. The usual reason given was that they did not feel accepted but judged because they are women migrating alone. It is interesting to see that also migrant women from different cultural backgrounds have similar experiences, as the following example shows:

ISABEL from Brazil is an active member in a weekly women's group of a Protestant community in Lisbon. Through this group, she has a lot of contact with other migrant women from Brazil and Portuguese-speaking African countries. As it turned out, ISABEL is the only woman in that church community who has children but migrated alone, who is not living with her family, husband and children in Portugal. She had to leave her children in Brazil while working
as empregada domestica in Portugal. Though she shares a lot of important features with the other women from that community, like the language and religious belief, ISABEL experiences certain mistrust and suspicion from the other women of this group. On a more concrete level, ISABEL says that she feels lonely amongst them as her life and problems are quite different from theirs. Unfortunately, she says, the other women are not interested in her problems, and make her feel judged for having to leave her children in Brazil. Rejected and disrespected. ISABEL keeps on participating in this group because of her religious belief, seeing it as a challenge to her own tolerance. Nevertheless, ISABEL says that she is very lonely and misses somebody to talk to who would not judge her so negatively.

Though this woman is from Brazil and not from Eastern European, her narrative brings to the point the difficulties that many women migrating alone, face: being judged for having migrated alone and consequently being treated differently, not being accepted. This goes hand in hand with the sexual stereotypes I explained in chapter 4.2 (on Post-colonialism). Thus, women migrating alone run the risk of easily being labelled and de-classified as bad mothers and/or prostitutes. The women encounter this attitude implicitly and explicitly, by the autochthonous population as well as by other migrants and compatriots, by men and women alike. Experiences like these make the migrant women keep more distance from other communities and individuals, as I shall explore later in the this chapter (6.1.4).

6.1.2.4 Contact with other denominations

In spite of many negative experiences, it has to be said that the Orthodox churches in particular do attract many migrants in Portugal. As analysed above, the women from Romania speak very positively about the Romanian-Orthodox church in Lisbon; they attendant regularly the Sunday mass and mention also the social significance of the community in their social lives in Portugal. Some migrants also decide to move to be closer to their religious communities, as exemplified above in ELENA’s case.
It is not unusual for believing migrants to try other denominations if their own religious community is not available at their living place. Due to the prevalence of Roman Catholicism in Portugal, many of my research participants came in contact with the way the Catholic mass is performed.

While living in Porto, ELENA tried to get used to the Catholic mass but found them too short in time: "acabo de chegar e já terminou", ELENA says, 'I just arrived and then it's already over'. In comparison, the Orthodox mass lasts many hours, e.g. begins at 9 am; the liturgy goes till 12 am or 1 pm. (FN 7)

ELENA could not get used to the way the Catholic mass is celebrated. Thus, after having spent three years in Porto, she finally decided to move to Lisbon to be able to join the Romanian-Orthodox community. The practice of her faith is very important to her. RODICA on the other hand approached the Catholic service out of curiosity:

In difference to ELENA, RODICA had a positive Catholic experience. She tells me that she went once with friends to Fátima, one of the most popular and important Catholic popular pilgrimage sites in Europe, about 200 kilometres north of Lisbon. RODICA had not heard of Fátima before, however, she liked the place and also the mass she attended there. Now, that her command of Portuguese is very good, she was able to understand the Catholic mass well, and thought the mass was beautiful. Later, she wrote her sons about her excursion, the place and the wonder of Fátima. I ask RODICA if this was the first time she attended a Catholic mass – she answers that yes, the first time, she never had any reason to go to a Catholic mass, neither in Romania, nor here in Portugal. RODICA explains further that there are also many Catholic churches in Romania, her best friend for instance is Catholic but this does not have any importance where she comes from. (FN 48, 49)

6.1.2.5 A further observation: the church and work opportunities

Waiting in front of the Romanian-Orthodox church in Lisbon, I could make also an interesting observation regarding the different role the church plays for migrants. While I was standing for a while opposite of the main entrance of the church, waiting for a woman I had met the week before and who asked me to come that Sunday to see her after church, two migrant women approached me, thinking I needed somebody to work for me, as they explained. (FN 42) Apparently, it is not unusual for people who need somebody as empregada doméstica, or other kind of manual worker, to go to the churches that migrants attend and address people on the street offering casual or permanent jobs. This is another example of the importance and the spreading of informal knowledge and networks for migrants in finding work. Further it indicates that there is certain informal knowledge within the autochthonous Portuguese community in Lisbon in regarding the ways to find and meet potential domestic workers for Portuguese middle and upper class households – a very interesting point for further research about the dynamics between migrants and the host society, and the information exchange.

6.1.3 The special situation of Empregadas domésticas internas in social terms

In the context of social relationships it is important to emphasise again the particular situation of live-in maids. This can be exemplified, for instance, in IÚLIA's case, which I developed in detail in chapter 3. Live-in maids work usually full days. In addition to the Monday to Friday work week they are often required to work on Saturdays as well, if not, as in IÚLIA's case, part of Sunday too, making their normal work week 6 ½ days. These migrant women have only very limited possibilities to meet other people, to get support, to build networks. Due to the isolating circumstances, they are very alone. This reinforces the extremely vulnerable position they are already in because of the privacy of their work and living place.\footnote{311} Since their day off (or half day off) is usually on Sundays, the church becomes frequently a central social element in these women's lives in Portugal. The Sunday mass and, more importantly, the informal meetings afterwards offer many migrant women

\footnote{311}Cp. chapter 4.1.
working as *internas* the only regular possibility to establish some forms of social relationships, as shown above. Another research participant describes her experiences working as *empregada doméstica interna* the following way:

JEKATERINA says that she felt "*como numa prisão*", 'like in a prison', while she worked as *interna* during the first months after her arrival in Portugal. She worked for a non-Portuguese family who runs a large guesthouse in a town in Northern Portugal. Though JEKATERINA describes the family as friendly and cooperative, the female employer for instance cleaned every day together with her, JEKATERINA was more than happy when she left after three months. She went to Lisbon and found different jobs in hotels and restaurants. (FN 106)

JEKATERINA prefers this type of work though she says it is physically very hard too. Even if she does not verbalise it explicitly, it becomes clear that it is important for her to have work colleagues and not to be alone. JEKATERINA speaks a lot about her colleagues and, as mentioned above, made friends with some of them. Furthermore, she chose only to work in hotels and restaurant that give a work contract. She and other research participants who chose to stop working as *internas* appreciate also that it is much easier to leave and change workplace if it is a hotel or restaurant, or even as an *empregada domestica externa*, should problems with the employers occur, or for other reasons that have a negative impact on the women. Though the change of workplace can be, on the short run, a risk in terms of the women's financial situation – and thus inhibits in particular the breadwinning migrants from approaching this step –, it allows many women to better their work and life situation when finding a different work and/or employment environment.312 I showed in chapter 3 the psychological dimensions of the situation of live-in maids, their dependency on the benevolence of their employers and the extreme vulnerability to emotional and physical abuse within the enclosed space of a private household. To cease working as an *interna* allows in most cases migrant women to have more control over their private life, including their days off. This enhances the women's possibilities for social interaction enormously, as various examples throughout the Thesis illustrated.

312 See chapter 3 and 5.
6.1.3.1 Mobile phones as key social objects

During fieldwork I made an interesting additional observation in relation to domestic workers and social relationships: the mobile phone, which virtually all migrants in Portugal possess, and definitely all the research participants, turns out to be the key-instrument for social contact and support amongst domestic workers, particularly important for live-in maids. I quickly noticed that every migrant woman I met had a mobile phone with a Portuguese number. However, the first indication of the central social role of mobile phones for *internas* arose when I was introduced to RODICA and GABRIELA one Sunday after church:

Both women said they would be willing to meet me, however, they emphasise that they would not have much time as both work as *internas*. After I had given them my card with my contact details, GABRIELA took her mobile phone out of her backpack to give me her number too. She explains that she can never remember the number by memory. For about five minutes she tries to find her own number, while I talk with RODICA. Finally GABRIELA looks up, sighs desperately and says that she was very sorry but she cannot find her own number. RODICA smiles broadly and tells me GABRIELA’s mobile phone number by memory. I am surprised and impressed by her memory, and we all three laugh about the situation. (FN 42)

It took me a while to realise not only that RODICA and GABRIELA are close friends, but also to understand the intensity of contact that migrant women are able to establish and maintain with friends through the use of mobile phones. In particular domestic workers with their very limited possibilities to get out of their work and living place to meet others, appreciate the regular social contact that mobile phones offer. During their workdays, the women are able to communicate with each other by text messages (in Portuguese *'mensagens'*) without anybody noticing it, sometimes calling each other in the late evening. Apart from being a central element of social relationships for many migrant women within the receiving society, the mobile phone connects them also easily with their families and
friends in their home country. While international calls by mobile phone are too expensive, the exchange of text messages is relatively cheap and the research participants used them frequently. Thus, mobile phones offer in this context the possibility – or even: freedom – to communicate with whom the migrant women want, whenever. They do not have to use their employers' telephone and do not have to ask for their permission. This gives the women certain freedom: it allows talking without being under the control of the employers. Consequently, I argue that the mobile phone becomes for domestic workers an object of great social importance, enabling at least minimal construction and maintenance of social contacts and friendships. Thus, the mobile phone becomes a special object of privacy and personal freedom. It allows the women to withdraw themselves from their current situation, reinsuring their own individual life and identity – which is not the one of the uncultured immigrant and often humiliated domestic worker as which most of them feel treated by their employers, as analysed in earlier chapters.

### 6.1.4 Migrant networks and communities

The majority of immigrant organisations in Portugal address and represent migrants from African Portuguese-speaking countries and from Brazil. The reasons for this phenomenon can be attributed to a significant part of the country's colonial history and associated so-called 'traditional' immigration trends over the last 50 years. A few local and national NGOs focus their work on all kinds of issues relevant for migrants, and call actively for the general exposure and prevention of racism and xenophobia, e.g. like Solidariedade Imigrante, Olho Vivo and SOS Racismo.

There are a few organisations that are especially aimed at (and partly run by) 'imigrantes de Leste', immigrants from Eastern Europe. Some of these for instance are the

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313 Cf. below, 6.2.3 'Contact home'.
314 Cf. chapter 3 and 4.
315 I use here on purpose the word 'immigrant' and not 'migrant' to clearly distinguish these organisations from many 'emigrant' associations that exist in Portugal. The country has a long history of leaving and returning populations (see Brettell 2003b) until today. Other organisations formed around the so-called retornados, 'returnees', from the former Portuguese overseas provinces ('do Ultramar') in Africa who came to Portugal after the Carnation Revolution in 1974 and the subsequent following process of de-colonialisation.
317 Cp. chapter 2, Immigration in Portugal.
following (in alphabetical order): Associação dos Imigrantes Eslavos 'Soyuz', Associação dos Ucranianos de Portugal, Associação Respublica, Associação Sodrujestvo, Associação Ucraniana 'Sobor', Centro Cultural Moldavo, and others. These organisations offer a range of social activities, many in the evenings and on the weekends. Some groups help with translations and give advice regarding the documentation needed for instance for work and residence permits. A few organisations give explicit legal advice and assistance. Others offer Portuguese classes as well as Russian classes. Further activities by the Eastern European migrant organisations include the production of radio and television programs in Russian and Ukrainian. In cooperation with the public Portuguese TV-station RTP2, Respublika for instance developed a daily TV-programme in Russian, "Po-Russki". A woman from the Ukraine I met used to deliver a weekly Russian-speaking radio program on classical music. A handful of weekly or monthly newspapers and magazines in Eastern European languages (Ukrainian, Romanian) are published in Portugal, though most of them are in Russian. While some have a relatively short life with just a few issues, others have been well established for years, like the Russian-speaking weekly newspaper Slovo (since 2001, edition of 15.000). Most of the printed media start with the help of migrant associations or migrant religious groups, but become independent economic enterprises when successful.

Single organisations can apply for funding for their activities from ACIME, the Alto-Comissariado para a Imigração e Minórias Étnicas, the Portuguese High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities. In 2005, for instance, the Associação dos Ucranianos de Portugal and Respublika received funding by ACIME, 14.000 € and 23.677 € respectively.

In some Portuguese towns you can find also weekend classes or schools for migrant children, which are usually set up and run by migrant organisation or religious communities. Here, the children learn to read and write in their mother tongue, respectively in the tongue of their parents. Classes exist for instance in Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian 318 E.g. Associação Respublica, cp. http://www.cm-sintra.pt/revistaartigo.aspx?ID=23 and http://www.acidi.gov.pt/noticias/visualizar-noticia/4cdbf82eb20ba/institucional_book.pdf [both accessed 28.02.2012].
319 ACIME 2005b.
320 Madeira 2004 gives a brief overview on the Eastern European print media in Portugal. I would like to add that the Russian newspaper Pravda has a Portuguese online edition aiming for readership in both Portugal and Brazil. See: http://port.pravda.ru/ [accessed 28.02.2012].
321 From a total funding sum of 363.294 € available to ACIME in the year 2005 (see ACIME 2005a: 9).
and Chinese. Some of these schools teach the curriculum of the country of origin and are acknowledged by the Portuguese and the country of origin’s ministry of education, as for instance the *Escola Ucraniana de Lisboa*, Ukrainian school of Lisbon (cf. Wong 2007).

Though a variety of Eastern European migrant associations and activities exists, I have to emphasise that their number (as well as the number of their members and activists) is very small compared to the well established and quite sizeable African and Brazilian associations, like *Casa do Brasil*, *Associação Caboverdeana*, or *Associação de Defesa dos Angolanos*.

Public recognition of Eastern European associations is similarly quite limited. Most Portuguese are not even aware of these existing structures; the public perception and interest is low. This is a bit surprising because, for instance, Russian newspapers are clearly visible in most newspaper stalls right on the main streets.

A striking discovery made during my fieldwork was the absence of involvement of Eastern European migrant women in the more established migrant networks and communities, apart from religious organisations. I noticed this first when I tried to get in touch with Eastern European women through migrant associations and other NGOs. I met many migrants but nearly all were male, and the few females were not from Eastern Europe. When I later had contact with Eastern European women the distance these women keep from migrant communities was striking (apart from church related communities, as explained earlier). Fjodora was the only exception – she works presently for a bi-lingual Russian-Portuguese cultural magazine, and was previously active in an Eastern European association that closed down before I started my fieldwork. None of the other research participants was involved with the various migrant groups that exist in Portugal. They all kept their distance, trying instead to find social contacts and friends independently, for instance through church, work, or by mere coincidence in the public sphere. In our conversations, some research participants stress explicitly their choice to distance themselves from migrant organisations:

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322 I describe and reflect critically on my approach in the methodological part, see chapter 1.4.
At the end of our first meeting, DINA says that she recently saw my message on the notice board of Respublika.\textsuperscript{323} She wondered if the Christiane of the posting would be the same she was to meet in a couple of days. Laughing, she says that she had to compare the telephone numbers, to be certain, and was amazed at the coincidence. However, DINA adds quickly, usually she would not go to this organisation nor to any other. That day, she only accompanied a friend who had problems with her documentation and needed advice. (FN 83)

DINA’s attitude to migrant organisations turned out to be typical of many Eastern European women who migrate alone. Nearly all research participants emphasise their decision to distance themselves from these associations and say they would not like to be involved. My research shows that social networks and migrant communities have two sides for women migrating alone as I have analysed earlier in this Thesis\textsuperscript{324}: on the one hand, they can offer support and help in situations of despair and solitude – however, on the other hand the same networks and communities can be a weight, or even a pressuring, judgemental, also controlling instrument. Eastern European women who migrate alone perceive and experience the latter as the dominant side. Consequently, most keep themselves out of organised migrant communities and more formal or institutionalised networks and associations, as my research shows. In particular women from the former Soviet Union, from Russia and the Ukraine, are very sceptical about any contact with their compatriots since they encounter (or are afraid of encountering) an intensive level of judgement and control within these communities. The control over women who are alone in Portugal is mostly, but not exclusively, exercised by men, and follows the idea that a woman needs a male protector, as some research participants pointed out explicitly in our conversations. This idea can lead to the emergence of patterns of protectionism respectively paternalism. The research participants do not want to identify with these ideas and behavioural structures. Thus, the women reject them – and any other attempts at control over their lives, thus they actively keep distance from these communities of compatriots. In the experiences of my research participants, attempts of protectionism can be also

\textsuperscript{323} Associação Respublika is one of the migrant organisation I approached in search for research participants, cp. chapter 1.4.1 'Methodology' and 1.4.2 'Methods in Practice: Fieldwork'.

\textsuperscript{324} See e.g. chapter 4.3 on social capital.
connected to mafia structures and/or pimping. Furthermore, women migrating alone are regularly seen and labelled as prostitutes.\[^{325}\] This idea is based on the mere fact that the women are alone in Portugal and thus, perceived as being 'single' (read: 'available'). Generally speaking, the women often encounter suspicion, disrespect and even defamation by their compatriots, as well as by other migrants and the autochthonous population. I pointed out in chapter 3 and 4 to what extent many Eastern European migrant women encounter a general atmosphere of mistrust. For all these reasons, most women from Eastern Europe migrating alone purposely keep distance from social communities and more formal or institutionalised networks.

### 6.1.4.1 Agência Matrimonial RAISA

Yet there is one exception of an informal social community that many migrant women from Eastern Europe appreciate, one migrant network many refer to frequently. Only relatively late in my research, after having worked very much with the research participants, I understood this. The women did not speak about this very interesting social site directly but mentioned it only in passing, without giving it a name. Thus it took me a while to understand that some of the research participants were referring to the same organisation, or rather meeting point: Agência Matrimonial RAISA, a dating agency in Lisbon run by RAISA, a woman from Moldova. Only in hindsight I realised that some of the research participants did know each other through this place, yet they never spoke directly about each other. This is one of the beautiful examples how difficult it is sometimes for the anthropologist to see all structures and existing links thanks to the complexity of the research participants' lives. Once I was aware about that link, many unresolved questions became answered suddenly. For me, the discovery of the importance of Agência RAISA as informal network for migrant women was a truly enlightening moment. Later I wondered how I could not have seen this before, but there was no way that it was clearly 'visible', it needed time and much knowledge about people and places to appear before my eyes. The funny point about this – what was a true discovery for me – was that I knew RAISA since quite some time, that I had visited her in her agency various times to talk with her, to obtain

\[^{325}\] Cp. chapter 3, 4 and 5.
information about Eastern European migrants, events, political changes etc. I had dropped in occasionally to have a cup of coffee and an informal chat with her (cf. chapter 1.4.1.1), and had interviewed RAISA. In fact, I used Agência RAISA in a very similar way as my research participants did, yet without noticing it, as I simply could not see the link between the agency and other women I knew.

After we had met quite a few times, it was LUDMILA who finally and directly pointed out the importance of another type of migrant meeting point and network, which is very different from official migrant organisations and associations. LUDMILA is an extrovert and active woman, and she likes to meet other people.

LUDMILA tells that she has made quite many friends in Portugal. They are also migrant women, some from Russia and the Ukraine, other from Romania with whom she speaks Portuguese. Agência RAISA would be a kind of meeting point for many of them, explains LUDMILA, as it would be difficult to meet regularly because they all work very much and have different work schedules; thus Agência RAISA is the place to turn to for meeting and getting all kind of information. LUDMILA says that she frequently drops in to say hello, to chat with RAISA, to share the news she heard from home or in relation to Portugal. LUDMILA reckons that such a place is very important to meet people and talk, and also to go to if one needs help. (FN 28, 29)

Thus the social centrality of Agência matrimonial RAISA, a 'marriage bureau' or 'dating agency', for some migrant women became clear only during the research. Most of the research participants, who drop in frequently, say they come less for meeting a new partner but more to meet with compatriots, to exchange news, to have a chat with women in similar situations, and to make friends. RAISA, who is a very energetic, friendly and open-hearted woman from Moldova, is certainly the central figure of this social network. The research participants go to the agency to talk with RAISA who all of them appreciate very

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326 I went to the agency for research purposes. The agency is located in central Lisbon, very convenient for easily dropping by.
327 RAISA keeps all interested persons on paper files one can look through. As she knows all the people herself and spoke to all of them, she also matches the persons herself, quite successfully.
much for her supportive and encouraging attitude as well as the practical help she can offer. Some of the research participants also attend the social outings Agénica RAISA offers, like dinner and dance events. The women appreciate all these social aspects very much.

JEKATERINA and FIODORA, for instance, belong also to the group of migrant women from Eastern Europe who go regularly to the Agénica RAISA. All of them confirm LUDMILA's opinion that such an open meeting place is very important for them, and that they are happy to know RAISA.

Indeed, RAISA and her agência matrimonial even became prominent in the Portuguese media in the last years.\textsuperscript{328} According to RAISA this is because of the successfulness of her business and its uniqueness in Portugal. She is regularly interviewed for newspapers and television, and other publications on immigrants portray her too (e.g. Santos 2004). I got the impression that RAISA's agência, together with the so-called 'Russian' supermarket, are by far the best known migrant businesses in Lisbon run by Eastern Europeans. This is not only because RAISA found a business niche in the Portuguese society but also thanks to her bright and charismatic personality.

### 6.2 Further social aspects

In this section I want to look at some further social aspects that play a role in the daily life of the research participants. The following topics came up repeatedly in our conversations reflecting their importance for the women.

#### 6.2.1 Perceptions of difference

I think that the experience of 'sameness' and 'difference' are important features of the migrant experience (cp. Nagel 2002). The research participants observe difference on various levels. Two prominent ones were the following: the first is related to the physical appearance of Portuguese women in comparison to how the research participants perceive themselves, or how they see women in their home society more generally. The second looks at the women's reading of some aspects of daily life and cultural performance in Portugal.

\textsuperscript{328} Cp. DN Online 2006 (Diário de Notícias), Pereira 2004 (Correio da Manhã). International media wrote also about Agénica RAISA: e.g. Folha de São Paulo 2006 (Brazil); Perez 2003 (El Mundo, Spain).
LUDMILA for instance sees herself as different from the Portuguese women, herself and her "compatriotas", 'compatriote women'. The women in the Ukraine and Russia are different, she believes. In Portugal, LUDMILA has the impression that most women by the age of forty years become composed, very calm, settled in, not expecting anything new to happen in their lives anymore. They are like old women, reckons LUDMILA. It is very different from Ukrainian and Russian women: LUDMILA indicates with a mischievous smile that she and her migrant friends here in Portugal would sometimes have a 'really good time', as she puts it, for instance when they go dancing or organise a little party. And I should see them – or at least those women of them who can financially afford it – at the social gatherings, dinners and nights-out organised by RAISA, exclaims LUDMILA amused. She makes dancing gestures and indicates with shining eyes that they usually have a lot of fun on these occasions. (FN 33)

Another research participant, RODICA, perceived Portuguese women very differently from LUDMILA:

RODICA says that she noticed big differences between Romania and Portugal from the very beginning. She thinks that the women in Portugal look so much younger, "sem idade", 'without age', as she expresses it: Women of fifty years look more like being in their early forties. In Romania it would be exactly the opposite. RODICA says that she wonders about that. One explanation she found, which is more a 'speculation', as she emphasises, is that most women in Romania have to work much harder and more than most Portuguese women. In Romania, the women would have their jobs, and then do all the household duties, the kitchen, and, additionally, take also care of the garden. "Trabalham muito, muito", reckons RODICA, 'they work really a lot'. In Portugal many women have their professions too but a lot of these working women employ empregadas domésticas. While this seems to be very common in Portugal, says RODICA, it is not the case in Romania. Furthermore, some Portuguese households employ "varias empregadas", 'various domestic workers', for the
cooking, the cleaning, the children etc. In Romania, only very few families of the highest upper class can afford that. (FN 45, 46)

Though I do not have evidence to prove RODICA’s impression, of how common or uncommon domestic workers are in Romania, I agree with her that the employment of empregadas domésticas is extremely frequent and available to many families of the urban middle and upper class in Portugal. While the demand for domestic workers has increased significantly in other European countries, such as Germany (cp. Rerrich 2007), my impression, based upon my observations, is that Portuguese urban families draw on domestic workers much more overtly and as a matter of necessity. Certainly, within the Portuguese context, class consciousness and the ostentatious display of wealth are in play as well.329 Other researchers make similar observations in other Southern European countries (cf. Andall 2000, Anthias 2001, Hess and Lenz 2001, Lutz 2007).

The difference in two women’s perceptions of Portuguese women can be explained in the women’s different personalities and character on the one hand, and, on the other hand, in the different life and work situation they have found themselves in. As developed in chapter 5 in detail, RODICA’s husband and her children are in Romania and depend on her income in Portugal, while LUDMILA is a co-supporting migrant. This gives the women slightly different positions in the receiving society. Thus, also the differences the women perceive between themselves and others, in this case Portuguese women, reflects strongly the image they have of themselves at the time being. LUDMILA is in the middle of changing her life in Portugal quite significantly to a more independent and probably improved lifestyle and living standard, while RODICA will have to continue working as interna until she returns home to her family.

329 Cp. chapter 4.2, I locate this attitude and practice in the context of Portugal’s post-colonial legacy.
6.2.1.1 ‘Civilisação’: Civilisation, being civilised, being cultured

Apart from the perceived differences to the Portuguese women and in the household distribution respectively the employment of domestic workers, many research participants pointed out the lack of basic education of many Portuguese:

JEKATERINA’s works in a hotel where her colleagues are both, migrants and Portuguese. While she speaks positively about her Portuguese female colleagues, she describes the Portuguese men as "horríveis", 'terrible', they do not have any manners, education or culture. "São tão primitivos e básicos", 'they are so simple-minded and basic', says JEKATERINA, that she finds it impossible to talk with them, or to have to listen to them. She adds that she encounters this lack of education all over in Portugal, people would have "pouca educação, nenhuma civilização", 'little education, no civilisation'. She does not like this side of Portugal, and says that it actually disturbs her, in particular as it is – according to her – present all over, in the behaviour of the people, in the streets, in the ways most cafés are set up and used. However, the café that she suggested for us to meet that day, would be an exception, explains JEKATERINA. Here, she could feel 'civilised', as she puts it, and says that this is the reason why she regularly chooses to meet her female friends here. (FN 103, 104)

Different research participants used the notion of "civilisação", 'civilisation, or the state of being civilised/cultured' – or, as in this case, its absence – to describe the lack of education and manners. One research participant expressed this very poignantly and definitely one day:

"Não há civilização cá em Portugal", 'Portugal is not civilised', reckons JEKATERINA. She thinks that, certainly with some exceptions, the Portuguese people in general "são muito simples, básicos, têm pouca educação e formação,

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330 The Portuguese term 'civilisação' was used repeatedly by various research participants. For those, the term includes refinement, education, culture, and attractive appearance. The women used this expression judgementally, clearly implying the absence of these virtues, when discussing 'The Portuguese'.
muito pouca escola, só alguns anos”, ‘they are very simple-minded, have little education and culture, and just a few years schooling’. And the most important to them would be "comida, football, televisão", 'food, football and television', in particular for the men. (FN 105)

JEKATERINA points here at a factor that became noticeable and known in Portugal since the new millennium: the fact that many migrants, in particular the ones from Eastern Europe, are by far better educated than the average Portuguese. Her observation is shared by many Portuguese and was confirmed by a quantitative study conducted during 2001/2002 (Baganha et al. 2003, 2005).

ALINA has a similar perception of the Portuguese. While not using the notion of ‘civilisação’ as such, she emphasises the lack of values and respect:

Various times ALINA points out to me that she was brought up in the Ukraine with values like "trust", "loyalty", "dignity" and "respect", and the works of the writers Dostoevsky and Chekhov, amongst others. She makes me understand that she cannot find these values and ethics in Portugal. In particular in her various work places she felt and feels treated badly and condescendingly, without dignity or respect. "That's how they treat people here. But always with a smile on their face". ALINA finds this attitude humiliating and degrading. ALINA is disappointed with the Portuguese population and often feels offended. "Every person is a human being, young and old people, and they all have their own dignity and right to live their life, everybody – even when they have only one arm or leg". (FN 63)

331 "Os imigrantes de Leste têm uma educação muitíssimo superior se comparados com a população nacional ou os imigrantes de outras origens", explained Maria Ioannis Baganha when the study was first presented 2003, ‘the imigrantes from the East have a much higher education compared to the national population or to immigrants from other origins’ (Baganha et al. 2003). The study shows that 69% of the imigrantes de Leste in Portugal completed secondary school or a corresponding technical or profession training. 31% have tertiary education (“formação académica superior”), 10% of these completed the BA-level, 21% higher degrees like MA and doctoral degrees. For more statistical details in relation to the education and professional training of Eastern European immigrants see Baganha et al. 2005: 38.
The research participants' experiences with the Portuguese bureaucracy, which I described earlier in the context of the legalisation procedures, can also be linked to the lack of respect and 'civilisação'.

Jekaterina for instance thinks that the bureaucracy in Portugal is significantly worse, slower and less transparent than in the Ukraine. She says that she did not imagine this before coming. Sadly though the situation is truly bad in Portugal, and in fact even worse than in the Ukraine, she reckons. (FN 105)

Apart from the 'civilisação' and the bureaucracy are also other aspects of difference the research participants see and mention:

Gabriela says that she finds Portugal "muito sujo", 'very dirty'. She noticed this during her first week. Gabriela describes an example: In Portugal, it is common to empty the bucket full of dirty water after cleaning and wiping the bathroom and the toilet in the kitchen sink, in which also the dishes are cleaned and the vegetable washed. She observed this in the restaurant she worked at in the beginning, and regularly sees the other domestic worker, who comes to clean the house once a week, doing it. In Romania, this would be inconceivable, says Gabriela, people there would usually have a different mop and bucket for the kitchen and for the bathroom. In Portugal they use the same for everywhere in the house. Also, observes Gabriela, in Lisbon there are many fleas and cockroaches, and for Gabriela both are signs of "miséria", 'misery'. A friend who works as a domestic worker in a very rich family told her that the house is full of big cockroaches – Gabriela finds this extremely disgusting and she cannot imagine finding this in Romania. She also thinks that many people are "muito sujo", 'very dirty' and untidy. Many men pick their noses in public and eat it then, in the street, exclaims Gabriela full of disgust and adds that this would be an extremely repulsive behaviour – but very common in Portugal. Men who are blowing their noses with their fingers and spitting would be

332 See chapter 3.2.6.1 'Choosing Illegality?'.

unimaginable in the capital of Romania, she says, perhaps elderly people in the countryside might do that, "numa aldeia, no campo de vez em quando – mas numa cidade...", 'in a village, in the country sometimes – but in a city...'. GABRIELA is disgusted and concludes: "Portugal é muito sujo!", 'Portugal is very dirty'. (FN 25)

6.2.2  Relationships with men

Social life is certainly not limited to the life the migrants have in relation to churches, social networks and friendships but it includes also, for some women, affectionate and/or sexual relationships with men.³³³

LUDMILA says that she has had a Portuguese boy friend for six months. They met through the Agência Raisa. Looking through the files of men searching a partner, LUDMILA liked his motto: always forward, without fear of obstacles and difficulties. They arranged to meet, and LUDMILA describes him as an active man with widespread interests. Though he was looking originally for a much younger woman, LUDMILA insisted on meeting him. At first he was quite sceptical but LUDMILA convinced him to go dancing (which she loves). She told him he should first get to know her and then judge, saying that she is a very active woman even if she is ten years older than he was looking for. LUDMILA shared with him her impression that in Portugal many women are almost like old women when they become forty, and that this is very different from where she comes from. (FN 33)

³³³ All research participants indicated their heterosexual orientation, and none mentioned a relationship with a woman other than friendship. This does not mean that homosexual encounters and relationships do not happen among migrant women. However, mainly due to the small sample of the research, I cannot generalise and thus only conclude that the research participants did not speak about homosexual relationships. It could be discussed if this is congruent with a certain tabooisation of homosexuality in the former USSR and other Eastern European socialist states. Cp. Buetikofer 1998, Healey 2003, Schluter 2002, Stroehlein 1999 on homosexuality and its tabooisation in the USSR, and Lovatt 1999 for Romania. See also: http://www.gay.ru/english/history/index.htm [accessed 28.02.2012].
LUDMILA was able to convince him and they went out together. They kept in touch, and after a while started having a relationship. LUDMILA speaks more about him and their relationship. Later that afternoon, we talk about their commitment to each other.

However, "without knowing what the future will bring", says LUDMILA, but if things continue to go well with her partner, she could imagine staying much, much longer in Portugal. Even if she had planned it differently. They do like each other, though it is not "paixão muito grande", 'big passion', says LUDMILA and adds with a smile that she is too old for that – then we both have to laugh about the way she put it. However, explains LUDMILA, big love is not always necessary for a good relationship. She will see how things will continue between them – one can never know what will happen, she concludes. (FN 33)

Though LUDMILA has some slight doubts about her partner as well as the subsequent prospect of her staying longer or even permanently in Portugal, she remains open to the possibility, and is willing to give their relationship a chance, and who knows what the future might bring. She knows that it is difficult, even impossible to plan everything ahead and is willing to see what happens.

JEKATERINA is similarly uncertain about the idea of finding a boyfriend in Portugal:

JEKATERINA is not sure if she really wants to find a new partner. She waves a piece of paper with the telephone numbers of three men she just got from Agência Raisa. She laughs and explains to me: "Isto aqui é só uma brincadeira", 'this is just a game, this is just for fun'. Later that afternoon, she says that she had a Portuguese "conhecido", an 'acquaintance'. They have known each other for one year but recently stopped seeing each other. JEKATERINA says that she had lost interest relatively soon as he was "muito passivo", 'very passive', and preferred to stay at home instead of going out. She found him too sluggish, always wanting to watch television, in particular all kind of "telenovelas", 'soap-operas'. When she wanted to see the news he insisted on seeing first the end of the "telenovela", which bothered her a lot.
The only other thing after television he was interested in was "comida", food, tells Jekaterina. She got bored with him and describes herself as being much more active and wanting to go out and see new things and people. This relationship did not lead anywhere for her. (FN 98, 105, 106)

Jekaterina's personal history of her difficult and finally failed marriage certainly influences her willingness, and to some extend wariness, regarding entering a new affectionate relationship. She is afraid of being trapped again in an unhappy arrangement, which might be a burden and put restrictions on her, her life and interests. Her wish to return to the Ukraine and the connected plans she has are also stronger than Ludmila's, for instance. Jekaterina has an idea of what she wants to do professionally once she returns (she is planning to open a doll shop, see chapter 5), and her daughter is also in the Ukraine, which might make it more important for Jekaterina to return. At the same time, her son is currently with her in Portugal, and Jekaterina's future return to the Ukraine might also depend a lot on what he will be deciding to do in the next years. Meanwhile, Jekaterina enjoys her life in Portugal. And even if she takes the dates with men from the agency's files as "brincadeira", as entertainment, as fun, there is the chance that she will meet a man who is the right one and for whom she might decide to stay.

Ludmila and Jekaterina both do not have partners in their home countries. Jekaterina's children are adults. The situation of their stay in Portugal is significantly different for women who have partners and young or teenage children at home, as I showed in different aspects throughout the Thesis. These women's plans to return are much more definite, though in some cases they have to delay their return for many years due to financial reasons, as it happened to Gabriela, for instance. However, affectionate or sexual relationships are also an issue for those research participants who have families in their home countries. The women who are separate from their partners for a long time feel sometimes lonely. Thus, the topic of relationships with other men came up a few times in our conversations:

334 See chapter 5.2.2.2 for a more detailed account of Jekaterina's marriage and divorce.
335 Cf. chapter 5.2.2.2.
Speaking about immigrant women in general terms, RODICA thinks that, for those women who are interested in meeting men, it is relatively easy to find contact. She adds that the fact that many men address migrant women constantly in public, can help to get to know men. While some women, in her perception, want to meet men, RODICA says that "para nos", 'for us' – meaning those migrant women who have husbands and family at home – this is not of any interest and concern. (FN 51)

RODICA makes it clear that she is not interested in meeting anybody for an affectionate and/or sexual relationship but acknowledges that the thought had crossed her mind. She also points out that she talks about this issue with other migrant women. Like RODICA, many research participants do not feel the wish to meet other men, be it because they want to be faithful to their partners at home, or because the demands of their everyday life and work in Portugal is so wearing and restrictive that they have neither time nor desire. It became clear that affectionate and sexual relationships are not an issue for many research participants for the time being, particularly if they are breadwinners for their families at home.

6.2.2.1 Sexual relationships

Sex is a topic that only few women brought up and talked openly about, while many of the research participants spoke overtly about the possibility of affectionate relationships with men in Portugal. But even in these conversations sex was an underlying subject. My research shows that sooner or later sex becomes an issue in the migration process for many migrant women, as they are alone in Portugal and feel sometimes lonely. One research participant spoke particularly frankly about her attitude towards women migrating alone, men and sexual relationships. The intensity with which we spoke about this topic, and her repeated coming back to the topic indicated how much she is concerned and thinking about

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336 I analysed this in detail in chapter 3.
it. This research participant has her family and children in her home country and she is a breadwinner. In the following, I shall call her ANNA.\textsuperscript{337}

Already during our first meeting ANNA started to talk about what it means to migrate alone as a woman, "ser estrangeira", to be a foreigner, and the need to have somebody to hug or to share the bed. She tells me that she got to know a man, a migrant from Georgia. They met a few times, talked and everything was quite nice. Soon he asked her if she would like to go to a hotel with him, as she is alone, and he too. ANNA said that no, she did not feel like "fazer sex, ir a cama com ele", 'having sex and going to bed with him' – to do that she would need more affection and passion between them. And, above all, she is married and not searching for another man or even a partner in Portugal, she is here to earn money not for starting a new life, with a new man. Then ANNA says to me: 'Even if we cannot know whom we will meet and where, and what life will bring anyway'. 'Children are forever', adds ANNA, "não se pode troca-los...Um homem, pois, sim, este sim se pode mudar...", 'you cannot swap them [the children] – but a man, well, yes, this can change...'. However, ANNA gave the man a clear 'no' and explained to me that she did not have a problem in addressing the issue and clearing these matters in a very straight way. She says she can understand him very well and hopes that he found another woman 'with whom he can enjoy the Sundays', as she expresses it. To me she further explains that she knows that he is also working hard and thinks that it is fully understandable if one wants to enjoy the Sundays like that, to see somebody, have a nice lunch, something to drink, then going together to a hotel – and afterwards, both go their own ways and lives until the next week, why not? ANNA repeats how much she can understand this but makes it clear that this is not what she is looking for, and those are not her needs and desires. A little later she adds that the equation of 'we are two people, both alone – thus, let's join together and have sex' does not work for her. (FN)

\textsuperscript{337} To fully ensure her privacy and anonymity, I decided not to use in this context the name I use for her in other parts of this Thesis. Instead, I will use the pseudonym ANNA throughout this part.
ANNA acknowledges the desire for somebody else, yet makes clear that it is – for the time being – not her interest to put this desire into practice. At the same time, she remarks that one can never know what might happen and whom one will meet. ANNA is very aware that her migration might be a risk for her marriage and her family life, not only because she is apart from them, but also due to the loneliness and the unfulfilled desires one has to deal with.

This research participant brings up the topic of sex various times, which reflects the importance the issue has for her currently. ANNA speaks about her interests:

For ANNA, "o sexo é de animal", 'sex is something animal'. Yet for her personally, she explains, it would be much more important that somebody is interested in her thoughts, her ideas, in her entire person and not only in her body. At the same time, she says, she can accept and understand that others might have different preferences, but she would need something deeper than just physical attraction and sex. (FN)

We continue talking about her situation in Portugal and what the future might bring, when ANNA comes back to the topic of sex:

She laughs while she says that, who knows, perhaps one day in the future, after having been alone in Portugal for such a long time, perhaps she might also once feel the desire to "fazer sexo com um homem bonito, ir a cama, sentir outro corpo, estar perto dum homem", 'have sex with an attractive man, go to bed with him, feel another body, be close with a man'. ANNA says further that this would have to be only for her pleasure, that she only would want the other 'as body' and not because the other would want her as body. However, she says intensely laughing, this would be a very unrealistic thing to happen as she would not have the money to pay for such an encounter. And still, adds ANNA, if she felt the desire for physical proximity, for an attractive man, why not...". (FN)
Shortly after, she must have realised what she just revealed to me, and felt she needed to correct this image by reassuring her 'normal' self:

After a while she repeats that in general she would not be interested in meeting a man "só para o sexo", 'just for sex', she would neither like that nor be able to do that. Rather, ANNA says that she is much more interested in the exchange of ideas and thoughts with others. (FN)

ANNA talks about an unpleasant encounter with a Portuguese man whom she got to know by coincidence:

Right after they met ANNA told the man that she would not be interested in having sex. He replied that this was not what he wanted either, particularly because he has a wife at home. He was seeking for someone to talk to, to go for walks, to go the beach, as he would not have anybody to share this with. He was not interested in sex. ANNA agreed to meet him the following Sunday. They went for a walk but after a while he started to touch her legs, her back, her sides and made attempts to kiss her. ANNA asked him what he was doing, reminding him that she had told him last week that she is not interested in having sex. The man reacted as if he was surprised, saying it would be so nice to be physically close, and she is so attractive. Getting angry, ANNA repeated that she made it clear from the beginning that she does not want sex. ANNA left him. She experienced this encounter and the behaviour of the man as offensive, ignorant and disrespectful. The impertinence continued as the man started to hassle ANNA by calling her frequently on her mobile phone. She quickly stopped picking it up: "não atendi nunca, para que...", 'I never picked it up, what for…'. (FN)

ANNA explains that she sometimes gets the impression that men think differently, "trabalho, comida, sex", 'work, food, sex'. I ask her what she believes migrant men in Portugal think about migrant women. ANNA answers
that she got the impression that most migrant men have very basic needs and subsequent basic thoughts: "estou sozinho, ela também – então não há problema, fazemos sexo", 'I am alone, she is alone too – then there is no problem, let's have sex'. She adds that she is convinced that some women think like this, and that this is absolutely ok in her opinion – for other people, but she would not be like that. However, ANNA says once more that she can understand that many migrants suffer from the loneliness and that it might help some people to have another body next to them. She says that she too knows the need to be hugged and squeezed gently, the wish to "ter alguém no meu peito", 'have someone close to me'. While she is saying this, ANNA starts to cry. (FN)

ANNA feels very lonely and misses being close with someone she cares for, and who cares for her. ANNA explains also that she and other migrant women talk about these feelings, about their desires and fantasies. This obviously is an important topic for them, all of them being alone in Portugal, "separados das suas famílias e dos seus esposos, é difícil", 'apart from their families and partners, it is difficult', confides ANNA. (FN)

Later we speak also about her husband in her home country and if he might have other relationships while ANNA is in Portugal:

She does not know what he is doing at home. After all, says ANNA, "ele é um homem também, e fica a ser um homem, claro", 'he is also a man and continues to be a man, of course'. I ask if she would be jealous? No. Would she worry? ANNA laughs and says that, no, "não me preocupo disto", 'I am not worried about that'. She adds that, as she said before, he is a man, and in the end she can never be certain. However, ANNA concludes, one can never be certain anyway. (FN)
6.2.3 Contact home

Another important aspect of the social life of migrants is, of course, the contact they have with their families and friends back home. None of the research participants had the means to travel home frequently as the air fares are expensive from Portugal and the women's income low. For most research participants this means that they are not able to see their families, and children if they have, for at least two, three or more years. Furthermore, as shown earlier, the largely undocumented situation of their stay and work is another hindrance when thinking about a visit at home. Thus, letters, telephone calls, in urgent situations text messages sent or received with mobile phones, and in some cases e-mails and chats become crucially important media for the maintenance of regular contact with their families and friends in their home countries. The research participants use all of these forms of communication frequently, as I will show in the following.

Portuguese telephone companies, internet cafés as well as banks and other financial agencies like the Western Union in the last years realised immigrants from all over the world as an important group of potential clients in Portugal, and consequently began to direct special advertisements to Brazilian, Asian, African and East European immigrants. In fact, the amount of remittances sent by immigrants is high, more then 333 million € were transferred from Portugal in the year 2001. The research participants I spoke to are some of the clients of these institutions and companies, and they contribute to the amount of money remitted; nearly all of the research participants send regularly money to their families and friends, as analysed in detail in chapter 5.

The following cases give an impression of the variety of ways the migrant women use different media to keep in touch with their families and friends.

JEKATERINA spends about 50 € every month on phone calls home; she says that this is a lot of money for her. Just some days before we met, tells JEKATERINA, she was talking on the telephone with her twenty year old daughter Sônia. Sônia did not want to stop talking with her, saying again and again that she

338 Cf. chapter 3.2.6 'Sem papéis: Being undocumented'.
339 This sum excludes international transfers made by EU nationals, cf. D'Almeida 2003:27.
340 Name changed.
misses her so much and asking repeatedly when she was going to come home, and if she would come when she has the next holidays? Jekaterina says that she needs these frequent calls home, she says she has "saudades", 'she feels nostalgic', 'homesick', and misses her children. She needs to know regularly how they are, and also her family and friends. (FN 100).

Dina keeps contact home mainly via e-mail, this allows her to have regular contact with her son, her family and friends. Almost everybody she knows in Siberia nowadays has a computer at home, explains Dina. (FN 80)

Gabriela regularly writes letters home. In particular at the beginning of her stay in Portugal she wrote often and very long ones, about three times a week. In her letters, she writes about her life in Portugal in such detail, that her husband said once on the telephone that he almost feels that he was with her. Gabriela seems to be very happy about that, about the closeness she has with her husband. They also talk frequently on the telephone; Gabriela also often speaks with her daughters on the telephone. (FN 21)

Rodica calls her family every 3 to 4 days. During the first months, she wrote many letters but this has stopped now. However, she and her sons have daily contact via sms, and Rodica says that this helps too. One Saturday she tells me that she will go the next day, Sunday, to the Portugal Telecom shop at Rossio, an internet shop at one of Lisbon's central squares, popular amongst migrants and locals alike, to chat via internet with her sons. She has never done this before and says that she does not have very much experience with computers and the internet, thus uma amiga, a female friend, offered to come with her to help with the internet and the chat. While she was still in Romania, not many people had internet at home, and in the company she worked at there was only internet access in the office of the boss. But things are changing. Rodica arranged the chat with her sons in a very organised and meticulous way: before going online she planned to call her sons on the telephone to make sure...
everything will work, and then they will talk via the internet from 4 to 6pm. RODICA mentions that every time she passes a certain telephone box near the house, where she works and lives, she wants to call her sons, feeling *saudade*. Recently a new pre-paid telephone card was issued that allows her to talk forty minutes with her sons, for only 5 €, as RODICA explains happily. (FN 46, 53, 57).

The next time we meet, I ask RODICA how the chat with her sons went. Unfortunately, it did not work out, though everything seemed to be well planned: first there were problems with the connection in Portugal, then with the line in Romania, so they made another appointment a week or so later. But then there was an important and big feast in her home town and her sons wanted to go and party there instead of chatting for hours, says RODICA, instead they spoke on the telephone. RODICA seemed to be disappointed in particular as she starts to tell me right after that that she sometimes gets angry with her sons and their attitude. For instance, once she had sent them a parcel with t-shirts, all of good and trendy brands, which cost her a lot of money and work – and all she received was a very short sms to thank her. This made her angry and sad at the same time. (FN 57)

RODICA’s example shows that the mediated contact with her family is necessary and very important to her, but not always positive. In addition, the immediacy of the communication can make the geographical distance more conscious and thus more painful, in particular if things are not the best at home:

RODICA tells me that her younger son had to have an appendix operation recently. Even knowing that her husband and her sister-in-law, who is a nurse, are taking good care of her son, RODICA says that she was very worried. When she was first told on the telephone that he would need to be operated, RODICA was so shocked that she could not say a word for some minutes. She found that in the following days and weeks it was extremely hard and challenging not to be able to be at home with her son. (FN 58)
The research participants feel that the contact home is very important but also challenging, in particular emotionally – the contact is sometimes painful. The distance can, after all, not go unnoticed. At the same time the relatively close contact via the telephone, text messages and internet provide a more intense exchange about daily life in both places, in Portugal and at home. It becomes clear that for these research participants 'home' is the country of origin, where their families and friends are, and most women see Portugal as something temporary. The mediated communication helps to bridge the distance and link both sides of their lives.

6.3 The use of service providers: 'Os agentes' II

There is one alternative resource of social relationships the women can draw on. Its existence appeared a few times throughout the Thesis, and more explicitly under the perspective of social capital in chapter 4.3. I am referring to the "agentes", 'agents', the service providers who offer – though for money – support and concrete help with jobs, a place to stay and documents needed. Their activities are often linked to the so-called 'mafia'\(^{341}\), which in the Portuguese public is mostly contemptuously labelled as 'the Russian mafia'. This term reflects the uncritical negative repetition of those that I refer to in this Thesis as 'service structures'\(^{342}\) in the public discourse in Portugal, including the perception of a certain imagined threat for the receiving society. Additionally, this negative term of the "Russian mafia" completely ignores the existence of a manifold of informal structures at play within the autochthonous Portuguese society\(^{343}\), by simply demonising similar structures catering predominantly for "Others". Closer research about any potential similarity of these structures would be very interesting, but cannot be part of this Thesis. If these structures can be labelled as 'mafia' or not, is only secondary for the interest of my research.

\(^{341}\) For the connection between "agentes" and the 'mafia' see Faria (2004): "[...][a]s redes de auxílio à imigração ilegal, que operam em larga escala e que são muitas vezes incentivadas e encobertas por agências de viagens". As reference for the role of travel agencies cp. Felner (2003): "A estatística e o parecer dos técnicos oficiais demonstram ainda que, na maior parte das vezes, os documentos são tratados por agências de viagens, com ligações a organizações mafiosas, que tratam de organizar todo o percurso até ao país de origem [...]".

\(^{342}\) Cf. my elaboration on this issue in chapter 3.2.3.1 and chapter 4.3.

\(^{343}\) Cf. chapter 3.2.
research. As the research participants and other migrants describe the availability of those structures, we can assume that these exist. Further, the existence of these structures shows also that the migrants from Eastern Europe do not come to an unknown "nether land" but into a society where certain informal structures and connections exist within their reach. The question whether these structures were 'imported' from other countries, or if they formed wholly independently in Portugal, cannot be answered within the context of my research. More important here is to note that the research participants did arrive in a country with existing support structures, even if these were partly not official. Certain is, from my empirical research, that some of the research participants had access to these structures and services, and that some did rely on them for some time for help and support with accommodation, work, and in case of problems with the employers, as I analysed earlier in this Thesis. Therefore, I assume that these structures exist and are available to some migrants.

In general, the women emphasise that they keep distance from these "agentes". At the same time it became clear in our conversations that some of the research participants drew on their help. As many women migrating alone have limited resources and time, as shown throughout the Thesis, in certain situations they utilise actively and consciously the services these "agentes" offer. The women do turn to alternative structures when the socially and legally (more) accepted structures are not available to them. It thus becomes necessary to de-demonise the existence of activities that are not fully legal and acknowledge their usefulness for migrants under certain circumstances. This becomes important in a place like Portugal where public services and legislation regarding immigrants are not only still developing but also where the state seems, at times, to be overwhelmed by the challenge to handle and respond to the newness of a migration influx in such a quantitatively large dimension.

The research participants know how to get access, and decide to use these alternative structures of support, when all other services, networks and connections fail or are not available to them, for whatever reasons. This means that, after all, the 'mafia' turns out to be a kind of safety net for many women migrating alone (and for other migrants too). In some

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344 See chapter 3, 4, 5.
situations the 'mafia' might offer more protection and alternatives than any other person or community within the receiving society. FIODORA's case is a good illustration of the reliability and fast efficiency of this type of "agente": She could arrange her initial accommodation as well as her first employment through such a service provider; when serious problems with her employer occurred, the "agente" quickly organised for her a new and safer workplace.345

Thus, I argue that it is important to go beyond certain existing public morals and to acknowledge the beneficial arrangement migrants can find, under certain circumstances, using alternative services like "agentes". This does not mean to neglect possibly arising power relations and dependency structures or to idealise the grey, semi-legal or illegal sphere in which these "agentes" usually operate. Yet the analysis of these services (and subsequent conclusions and judgements) should not be restricted to those morally and legally problematic sides, in particular in research looking at migrants' possibilities for agency.

Another aspect of these transnationally operating services needs to be mentioned: certain "agentes", travel agencies, service providers etc. are able not only to offer support in the receiving society but may act also as messengers, mediators and couriers between home and host society, between migrants and their families and friends at home. It has been stated elsewhere346 – in particular in the context of trafficking and forced prostitution – that these transnational networks have also the means to blackmail either the migrants or their families and friends in the home society by exerting severe methods of pressure and fear. While being aware of these sides of 'mafia'-related activities, I would like to point out the fact that in some situations these networks are for some migrants a positive and well-functioning way for staying in touch with their home country.

And yet, the research participants mention more often than not that they keep distance from "agentes". The women are fully aware of their type of activities and power structures, and despise them. They dislike that these "agentes" make money with the problems and needs of others:

345 Cf. chapter 3.2.3.1 for details.
JEKATERINA believes that the "mafia" is very active in Lisbon. She has the impression that all "agentes" are males. Later she points out that these men do not work but have visas: "Tem muuuuito dinheiro, aproveitam doutra gente. Eles arranjam trabalho para 300 €", 'they have sooooo much money and take advantage of other people. They find you a job for 300 €', explains JEKATERINA. Nearly everybody [amid the Eastern European migrant community] knows one of them, says JEKATERINA, in particular through male acquaintances. Thus, it is easy to get in contact with them, because they operate so overtly and it is so widespread. (FN 102)

As JEKATERINA indicates, the migrant women know where the "agentes" can be located. My research has shown that some migrants will seek out their assistance, but only when other options are not available.

### 6.4 Conclusion: Social aspects of migration

This chapter examined various types of social relationships. We saw that many women migrating alone are able to find new friends in the receiving society and are actively involved in church communities. Some women came to Portugal because of a friend, and they usually stay friends though sometimes problems occur. Other women, however, find it difficult to make friends and do not feel comfortable with the religious groups. In some cases, their status as supposedly 'single' women makes it difficult for them to be accepted in some migrant networks, be they religiously oriented or secular, as is the case with many NGOs and other migrant associations. Due to negative experiences with defamation and attempts of protectionism some women keep a distance from existing formal networks and communities.

Similar to the analysis of the former chapters, the perspective on social relationships confirms the precarious and isolating tendency of the situation of life-in maids (empregadas domésticas internas). And yet, over time most research participants were able to create their own networks and enjoy the contact and exchange with each other. My research shows also the women's creative use of mobile phones and the centrality that this instrument has in the building and maintaining of social relationships with both, other migrant
women in Portugal, and their families at home. Though many women have only limited resources and time for having an active social life, they manage to use the time they have efficiently. In case of problems and difficulties, the women support each other.

Many women are sceptical of the few support services available, be it the services provided by churches, or NGOs. In urgent situations, however, they might draw on these, or else pay a service provider. This links to the analysis of social capital in chapter 4.3, which revealed to what degree many women depend on economic capital for being able to have access to networks of help and support as forms of social capital, and for then being able to use their human capital, e.g. in the form of jobs. However, this chapter on social relationships has shown that the women in general know what they want and need, and find ways to be able to access and use the resources and services available to them.

Though many women are relatively isolated during the week due to their work and accommodation situation, they do manage to keep contact with other migrant women and try to help each other in the best ways they can. Thus, friendship becomes a crucial element in their migrant life, and many women share their hopes and fears with others. Though most of them continue to have strong friendships in their home societies, for some women the friends in Portugal become very important and even a temporary substitute for their families far away. The women's closeness helps to cope with the difficulties many face in Portugal. This allows them not to feel so alone anymore. They gain strength from their mutual support and enjoy the hours spent together.
7 CONCLUSIONS

My research focuses on the situation and the experiences of women from Eastern Europe who migrate alone to Portugal. Throughout the Thesis, I analysed many details and facets of the migrant women's experiences in relation to their daily lives and work situation in Portugal. The women's breadwinning status is of a major importance as it turned out to have a great effect on all other aspects of their daily lives. Many research participants have children in their home country who depend on their mothers' regular income. My research showed that this condition can significantly limit the women's possibilities for agency in the receiving society. This stands in strong contrast to those women who do not bear economic responsibility for others, as the elaboration of categories of breadwinning illustrated. The women's social life in Portugal formed an important part in the Thesis. I examined their friendships and relationships, and looked at the role social communities and networks play in their lives. This included the migrants' contact home. I enquired as to the challenges the research participants encountered in the receiving society in social and practical terms, and found the legal and bureaucratic structures to be a recurring issue. The analysis also showed that gendered and ethnicised stereotypes regarding migrant women are intensely at play in Portugal and significantly influence the research participants' experiences. Therefore it was important to locate these in global and post-colonial contexts. Of interest throughout the Thesis were the emotional aspects of migration and the women's future plans. A comprehensive review of the empirical material, the women's narratives and my observations allowed me develop a deeper insight and understanding into the complexity of daily life for women migrating alone to Portugal from Eastern Europe.

In the following I summarise the core findings of my research and indicate areas of interest for further research:

The empirical material of my research shows that it is important to deconstruct the predominant perception of migrants as homogenous group of disposable work force. The analysis reveals the migrants' diversity. Consequently, it is imperative to understand migrants as individuals and to recognise their diverse motivations, subjective realities, unique professional and social backgrounds, and to inquire further as to their future plans, as my research did. One can then notice that these far exceed the receiving society's
judgmental perception of 'os imigrantes de Leste' ("the migrants from the East") and/or the migrants' actual functions in the receiving society, mainly as an unskilled manual workforce (chapter 3). Through the different cases I showed the extent to which apparent similarities are mere levelling down constructions, ignoring the differences, diversity and individual personal background of each migrant woman. Superficial judgements and perceptions are easily constructed and re-inforced by the receiving society on the one hand and within (autochthonous and migrant) social networks and communities on the other hand, as my research shows. The power of collective stereotypes regarding migrant women, including the prevalence of negative labels, are strongly exemplified by the experiences of supposedly 'single' migrant women from Eastern European countries in Portugal (chapter 4, 5, 6).

The analysis showed that postcolonial aspects are important within the Portuguese society today as they influence the experiences of the research participants (chapter 4). National stereotypes and myths are at play in modern Portugal, based on a class and race related ideology of sovereignty and difference. Hegemonic patterns of old colonial thinking are transferred today onto historically non-colonial subjects, such as Eastern European migrant women, as we have seen in the previous chapters. These power relations interact with features of globalisation, as I have shown within the context of migrant domestic workers.

Though the research participants' motivations to migrate are diverse, it turns out in most cases that the women need to provide a reliable income for their families (chapter 5). The mother's income is the only or main family income. The reasons can be manifold, either the women are single parents, or the father's income is minimal, e.g. through illness or unemployment. In those cases, the single or joint income in their home country was insufficient to cover the family's living costs and pay for the education of their children. When there was a spouse, the family jointly decided that the mothers should work abroad for a period. Often the women expressed their hope to provide a better future for their children than would have been possible if they had remained working in their home society. It was interesting to discover that some of the women without children of their own support other family members by regularly sending money home, e.g. to their sisters who have children. In addition to currently supporting their children and other family members
through their migration to Portugal, some women plan – particularly when their children are older or adults – to open their own businesses or work again in their profession when they return home. Thus the migration of many Eastern European women, who are the breadwinners for their families back home, can be understood in the context of diverse family income strategies and personal plans. The women’s migration is only one step towards a future in which they hope to provide for their children and themselves.

Theoretically, the decision of many research participants to migrate can be considered from the perspective of Household Strategy Theory (chapter 1), e.g. the cases of GABRIELA, RODICA, and to some extent, IÚLIA. Even if Household Strategy Theory can help to understand certain migration dynamics as rationales, my research illustrates well the shortcomings of singular approaches: the different narratives, aspects and analyses throughout the chapters reveal the complexity of any migration decision and performance in the receiving society. Apart from the household as ‘rational thinking unit’, we saw that personal motivations also determine these women's migration, as for example the wish to live for a period in Western Europe or to find a new partner, like DINA (chapter 5).

The socio-political transformations in Central and Eastern Europe since the break-up of the USSR also have to be taken into consideration; for these prove impact the women and their families, and must therefore be understood in determining the research participants' decision to migrate (chapter 5). In my Thesis, I have presented the larger context in which these decisions are made. I understand them as mixed developments, not as isolated unidirectional reason-consequence action. Therefore I argue that migration experiences cannot be grasped fully with one singular theoretical approach. As the empirical material clearly shows: The particular historical context also has an effect. In their narratives, the women regularly mentioned the changes after Perestroika, the changes in their professional as well as private lives. Many women also experienced changes in their relationships with their husbands, respectively partners. From the women's point of view, the repeated phases of unemployment – or the threat of –, unpaid salaries during long months, as well as the loss of habitual daily life structures and security have affected their lives as family members and couples. By the time the women decided to migrate, many had lost their future perspectives because in their home countries their profession could no longer assure them means to provide for the living for their families.
At the same time we saw that some women, whose financial situation was not at risk in their home society, decided nevertheless to migrate for "adventure", as they put it – they desired to live some years abroad, in Western Europe, and to experience a different life and culture; cases such as DINA and FIODORA are exemplary (chapter 5).

The analysis showed that the different starting conditions in the receiving society (as exemplified through the elaboration of categories in chapter 5) continued to have a significant impact throughout the women's migration trajectory. The women's obligation to make a living for their children and other dependants at home is of particular importance in this context. We saw the extent to which this responsibility for others in all cases limits the women's opportunities for agency in the receiving society. This was so even after years of migration, and despite the women's best efforts to make the most out of their limited situation in Portugal. Moreover, the emotional pain of not being at home with their children and the burden to having to provide a living for them, can not be ignored in spite of the women's pride in their achievement. My analysis showed that this pride does not compensate for the physical distance and absence from their families. Particularly unfortunate is when the children do not appreciate their mother's achievements, because such appreciation might lend the women some comfort.

Based on my research, I have come to the conclusion that though the concept of transnational motherhood is theoretically interesting and does constructively challenge fixed ideas about migration trajectories and dynamics, it does not provide adequate understandings sufficiently correspondent to my research participants' situations as the women have perceived and lived it. Those women see their migration as a temporary step, which most of them hope to leave behind as soon as possible (chapter 5).

Most women tend to place a stern self-restriction upon themselves in order to save as much money as possible. With every euro not spent in Portugal, they hope to be able to return home one day earlier, as the empirical material showed. Though this is particularly true for women of the breadwinning category I and II, it is important to recognise that the women's contribution to the family income is always significant, even when they are not the only earning family members (chapter 5).

To sum up: The possibilities for agency are significantly greater for those women who do not have to regularly provide the daily living for their children or other family
members in their home country. As my analysis clearly shows, after a period of years in Portugal, these women are generally able to significantly improve their situation to a more self-determined professional and social life with a greater range of options and possibilities (chapter 5, 6).

Surprising to find was that all women migrating alone learned Portuguese very quickly (chapter 1, 3, 5). Within one year in the receiving society, the research participants had a good functional command of the language. This fact reflects favourably on the women's high level of education and professional training, being accustomed to learning quickly and to the transfer of knowledge. It also proves the fundamental importance of language for women migrating alone. This is supported by the fact that most migrant women tend to work in isolation, e.g. in private households, as my research shows (chapter 3). This must be considered in strong contrast to the migration trajectory of many male migrants as I have shown in chapter 3, and thus confirms the gendered character of migration experiences.

On the whole, the research participants turned out to be highly skilled women of professional training, qualification and experience, some even holding university degrees. The empirical material clearly showed that the women's skills are neither officially recognised nor appreciated in Portugal: to wit, all women worked as empregadas domésticas. And though limited alternative employment opportunities exist in other areas of the service industry, all are menial jobs when compared to the women's professional background (chapter 3). The sole exception amongst the research participants is the physiotherapist from Romania, IÚLIA. Her case shows the harsh downside and absurdity of official non-recognition of professions with parallel, informal exploitation of the migrants' skills. Due to the fact that her professional diploma is not recognised in Portugal, IÚLIA has to work as a live-in maid – while additionally she must give her employer professional therapy without ever receiving remuneration for her qualified work, which intensifies the exploitation of her work abilities.

All research participants are confronted with the issues of employment beneath their educational and skill levels (chapter 3). My research showed to what extent highly skilled migrant women experience a significant social downward-mobility, which, additionally to the harsh life and work conditions, sometimes makes it very difficult to
maintain or construct a positive self-esteem and self-identity. In fact many women feel that their social capacity – and, thus, their social identity – is degrading if not totally wasting away (chapter 3, 4, 5). The reasons for this are that the research participants intensely experience the loss of their usual professional activity and related social position and recognition. This is coupled with the loss of daily life structures and the quite limited contact with their family and friends back home. Further aggravating their diminished self-image is the fact that many migrant women work and live isolated from others, and their lives are extremely financially restricted in Portugal as they try to send home as much money as possible.

During their migration the women experience strong changes not only in professional and social identity related terms but also in physical terms. My research material indicates how the new circumstances of the migrants' lives show impact upon the shape and appearance of the migrants' bodies. It turned out that migration shapes many women in the strict sense of the word (chapter 3). The women observe that their bodies are strengthening due to the intense physical labour. And though for many research participants this is a largely positive experience, it is countered by the negative costs of hard physical labour. The women overtly speak of strained or sore muscles, backache, sore feet and skin reaction to detergents. Some of the women gain or loose significant weight – changes up to 20 kilograms occur, requiring the women to completely change their wardrobe. Of interest are also certain other physical and mental experiences which are related to the heavy work the women must perform daily. These include various physical aches, pains and physical exhaustion; made worse by feelings of frustration, experiences of powerlessness, intellectual boredom and a general fear of becoming stultified, as some research participants shared.

Many migrant women also encounter a sexualisation at their work place, and in the public sphere, as I have shown in chapter 3. This can lead to physical harassment and sexual abuse. Some employers presume the total availability of the women and their bodies as we have seen. Ethnic and gender stereotypes (prejudices, prejudgments, stigma) are extensively employed in private and public towards female migrant domestic workers, and Eastern European women in general. The analysis shows that the direct sexual offences and defamations, which the research participants experience, disclose the complex web of
underlying power relations based on hierarchical thinking, sexism, machismo and to the stereotypical perceptions of migrant women in public in Portugal (chapter 4).

Based on the empirical material it is safe to say that the research participants are confronted with multiple *discriminations* by their employers. Humiliation, ignorance, mistrust, exploitation and under-payment are repeated experiences. The different layers and manifestations are intertwined and cannot be easily separated from each other, as in fact they act jointly in exerting pressure on the migrant women (chapter 3, 4). In addition to the disdainful behaviour of their *patrões*, the structural limitations, such as the segmented labour markets with their gendered and ethnicised-racialised aspects, all come into play, as shown in chapter 3. The undocumented status of many migrants further aggravates the high pressure situation in which they live. Some women succeed in developing strategies to cope psychologically with these stressful situations in order to maintain their self-respect; the case of Ludmila’s, discussed in chapter 3, is illustrative. In cases of abuse those women who got their present workplace through the non-official *agentes* can refer to their *agentes*, who then may help them to find a new workplace, as the evidence of one case has shown. The informal *agentes* system thus offers some protection for the women beyond official structures (see below). The empirical material provides manifold evidence of the *disadvantaged status* of many migrants in terms of pay, work safety, fundamental workers’ and human rights. Moreover, I have clearly demonstrated the particular risks faced by female migrants, most of whom work segregatedly in private households, thereby exacerbating the vulnerability of their position, hidden as they are from others.

For these reasons it is a crucial moment for many women when they can *stop working as interna*, as a live-in maid, for this finally enables them to gain control over their private lives, including their days off. Though the workload is still great, this enhances the women’s possibilities for social interaction enormously, as various examples throughout the Thesis have illustrated. Still in all, many migrant women did not have the opportunity to change their employment, often owing to the fact that their legal status is tied to the work contract, i.e., to their employers. For a long time in Portugal, this was the case for many migrants because the *Autorização de Permanência*, legally tied the work permit to the actual employer (chapter 2, 3, 4, 5). This legal dependency upon the employer creates a risk situation for migrants. Therefore I have concluded that foundational to the many problems
the women encounter are structural conditions such as prevailing societal discrimination and social exclusion as well as formal legal obstacles.

The analysis clearly shows that the tie between the work contract and one's legal status is particularly dangerous for migrants. The research material shows the extent to which this conjunction reinforces power relationships facilitating dependency, exploitation and various levels of abuse (chapter 3, 4). Critical is also the undocumented status of many migrants. In most cases it is the employer who refuses to grant a work contract, which is a legal necessity before one attains legalisation of work and residence. Iúlia's case shows that illegality ties migrants to their employers, making them dependent. The ignorance of many employers regarding the precarious situation of migrants is a topic that emerges frequently in the conversations with the research participants. The risk for exploitation is very high as has been explored in this Thesis. It becomes clear that only through the attainment of a valid legal status, independent of a work contract or an employer, will the migrants have a choice and opportunity to leave unhealthy, risky and abusive employment situations. Thus for all migrants, legal status is of key importance for their possibilities of agency, even after years in the receiving society, as my research shows throughout. Practically speaking, any effort to gain protection for the workers and their rights must clearly advocate a more open and non-restrictive system of legalisation for migrant workers.

Once the women finally receive their legalised status – after untold time spent undocumented and illegalised –, they experience their new situation as very relieving and liberating. The research shows that acquiring legal status opens for many migrants new perspectives and possibilities for their work and entire life situation in Portugal (chapter 3, 5). Furthermore, a secure legal status goes hand in hand with a far stronger psychological position; together, these enhance the self-esteem of the migrants which is immediately detectable in their more optimistic assessments of their migration and their outlooks upon their future, as e.g. Ludmila's case showed (chapter 5).

In many cases of independent migration projects, the migration process is closely linked to the support of family and friends. This pivotal network often invests economic and social capital, whether in the preparation for their departure, or in facilitating the migrant's arrival in the destination society by pre-arranging documents, money, first
accommodation, and/or employment. Family and friends actively help to create contacts and thus further access to knowledge and support (chapter 4, 6). This confirms that social and transnational networks also play an important role in this type of migration. However, the support of these particular networks ends upon the migrants’ arrival in the receiving society.

The research shows that women who migrate alone often have very limited resources or time to become actively involved in social life in Portugal. Many experience intense solitude. It is very difficult for them to gain social contacts, particularly due to their employment situations as empregada doméstica. Still, after some time in Portugal the research participants know well how to efficiently use the little time they have (chapter 6). They actively search and find other female friends in similar situations, as the research showed. In case of problems and difficulties, the women support each other. Some research participants came to Portugal through friends. Generally, though challenged, these friendships remain intact, even if problems occur as the migration process changes the women. Most of the women had and still have strong friendship and family networks in their home societies; these persons are sorely missed. Often, the few friends met in Portugal become quite important to them, and even serving as a temporary substitute for their families far away. The women's close friendships help them to cope with the difficulties they face in Portugal. This allows them to feel less lonely and isolated. They gain strength from the mutual support and enjoy the hours spent together. This means that – in spite of their very limited time and available resources – most research participants are able to create their own small networks and enjoy contact and exchange with others. My research also shows the women's creative use of mobile phones to sustain their contacts. The migrant women use their mobile phones as instrument to break up their periods of isolation and to undermine the threatening atmosphere of their living and work environment. Particularly for domestic workers, the mobile phone is an object of great social importance, at minimum enabling the construction and maintenance of social contacts and friendships, providing a modicum of privacy and personal freedom outside of the control of their employers.

At the same time, my research reveals the ambiguous role social networks play for migrant women: The borders are often blurry between needed support and help on the one
hand, and unwanted control and protectionism on the other hand. This indicates that the gendered nature of many (migrant) social networks is highly significant – and critical – in this context. An important conclusion is that, for most migrant women from Eastern Europe in Portugal migrating alone, **formal social networks** are not very important. In fact, it turned out that, generally, these women purposely keep their distance from existing migrant networks in Portugal. My analysis revealed that the role of more formal established social networks is ambiguous for migrant women. I found various reasons for this, including the risk of being defamed and negatively judged by other community members because of the women's perceived 'single' status. The research participants also noted attempts by fellow male migrants to exert unwanted "protection", that is supervision and control, over their lives. The women had similar experiences with church congregations and related organisations. A common reason cited was that they did not feel accepted, but were instead negatively judged as a woman migrating alone. It was interesting to see that migrant women from other cultural backgrounds tell of similar experiences; i.e., they face similar difficulties and stereotypes, and accordingly were judged and treated differently. The women do not feel they are accepted, and even the belonging to the same congregation does not seem to overcome this problem. To make matters worse, this direct social stigmatisation and exclusion of 'single' migrant women combines with sexual stereotypes, as I explained in chapter 4 in relation to post-colonialism attitudes. Thus, women migrating alone run the risk of simply being labelled and de-classified as 'bad' mothers and/or prostitutes. The women encounter this attitude implicitly and explicitly, from the autochthonous population, but also – interestingly! – from other migrants and compatriots, men and women alike as my research reveals. Bad experiences like these lead many of the migrant women to consciously keep their distance from existing social communities and individuals actively a part thereof.

In contrast, it also became evident that certain of the women attend mass regularly. Usually they were already active believers before migrating. The social meetings of the church community and following mass are very important for them. For some women, though they may attend mass most Sundays, it is the meetings with others that are most important for them, as they explain (chapter 6). For some, the church related communities proved to be the only means of staying connected with other migrants. I found this
particularly true for domestic workers who live-in with their employers. Thus the social function of the church communities cannot be underestimated; their environment and activities help to bring the migrants together, particularly migrant women, as many work in isolation from others six or seven days a week, with little other opportunity for a social life. Once the women are in closer contact with others and have established friendships, they try to support and help each other as best as possible, even if at present their resources are very restricted.

As an additional insight I discovered that some informal knowledge about immigrant structures and meeting points exists amongst the Portuguese population: It is not unusual for 'Lisboetas', people from Lisbon, who wish to engage someone as empregada doméstica or some other kind of manual worker, to go during Sunday mass to the churches that migrants attend. Here, they address the migrants directly on the streets, offering casual or permanent jobs. This is another example of the spreading of informal knowledge and the creation of informal networks supportive of the migrants finding work. It further indicates that there is a certain informal knowledge flux amongst the autochthonous Portuguese community in Lisbon in regard to the ways how one finds and meets potential migrant domestic workers, sought by Portuguese middle and upper class households. I think this could be a very interesting focus of further research respecting the dynamics between migrants and the host society, and the information flux amongst them.

Further to exploring the migrant women's relations to social networks, I considered the aspect of social capital. My research showed that the existent 'classical' concepts of social capital are of no use in understanding this group of research participants – 'single' migrant women – as they are not members of social networks that (can) have and exert power and influence (chapter 6). The research participants have to pay to get help – that is, apart from emotional garnered from friends. As I have demonstrated through the analysis of various cases in this Thesis, this means that these migrant women first need economical capital to then be able to acquire access to social capital, in order that they might finally make use of their human capital. This is a significant result of my research, offering a new perspective in the theoretical understanding of social capital and access to a social network's resources. I have looked at the role of (absent) social capital in this Thesis; I have shown that the economic and social capital invested determines the character and quality of
the migrants' arrival and first experiences in Portugal; and this varies depending upon the particular 'packet of services' the migrants purchased before their departure.

It became evident that for many of these allegedly single women the migration trajectory implies a double disruption of social relationships: not only when emigrating, but also with respect to the bad experiences they endure in the receiving society and within the migrant communities and networks. As the analysis has shown, this double disruption amounts to a double negative effect on their social capital. The women find themselves in difficult and vulnerable positions, which limits their access to the positive aspects of social capital, including participating in social networks and communities. From an analytical point of view, the migration trajectories and experiences of my research participants suggest that social capital, as well as the possibility to generate and enhance it, is not only gendered but also ethnicised.

But that is not all, for as we have seen, women migrating alone encounter suspicion and mistrust due to their allegedly 'single' status. Consequently, these women tend to keep distance from social networks and, in so doing, further reduce their social capital and potential to employ their human capital. In addition, for many migrant women, their ethnic origin proves to be a hindrance rather than a help, both within Portuguese society and among with their compatriots' and other social networks.

An interesting role is played by the 'service providers', the networks of non-official agentes. My research shows that the migrant women call upon these agentes in situations when they need practical support. They must clearly pay for the service and help received, so, as far as possible the women keep their distance from agentes (chapter 6). It turns out that the women generally reject the agentes' practises because they disapprove of those earning money by exploiting the needs of others. Still the women know to make use of these available structures when they truly need help. Furthermore I conclude that many migrant women prefer to pay an agente for help, as there are then no further obligations placed upon them; this, in contrast to cases where the women rely on help from more established migrant communities, which can lead to attempts by others to supervise or control their lives, as some of the women experienced. The empirical material shows the relationship with these agentes remains a merely economic matter, which the women have learned to appreciate as being less complicated for them than the often paternalistic and
judgemental structures within the existing migrant networks and social organisations. The women want to be independent, and not to feel judged or supervised.

This can lead to certain kinds of commodification in their social relationships: The women must purchase services which in other contexts they would have gotten through the help of friends or family. It became clear that gender is a crucially important factor in any social network; my research clearly showed that this is often ambivalent for the migrant women. As a consequence of these 'services', power relations, hierarchies and dependencies emerge in the destination society. It is important to notice that these hierarchies tend to contribute to further gender divisions. The service providers in Portugal were in all cases male. On a political level, this indicates the need for independent support structures for women, structures that advocate and practice an unbiased and non-judgemental stance towards migrant women in Portugal, and which provide support that does not subject the migrant women to direct or indirect dependency and power structures.

Based on my research and insights gained from my analysis, I believe the follow matters merit future study: A follow up study would be interesting, seeing where my research participants are today: What do they do? Are they still in Portugal, did they go elsewhere, were they able to return home to their families? What was the situation when the women returned home? How do they perceive the differences in their home country in light of their experiences in Portugal? What was their social, professional and private situation upon their return? How do the research participants assess the changes related to the break-up of the USSR after more than twenty years? These and many related questions would be interesting and revealing to explore.

It would be challenging to extend my type of qualitative study beyond Eastern Europeans onto migrant women arriving in Portugal from other parts of the world, and to compare and contrast their life situations and migrant experiences. Such a research could include, on the one hand women from Portugal’s former colonies, and, on the other hand, migrant women arriving from countries such as the Maghreb, from Sub-Saharan Africa, from Southern America and/or Asia. The differences and similarities could be worked out and analysed. Would we find similar categories regarding breadwinning as were revealed in my research and documented in this Thesis? Or, will the different preconditions and
different realities of these migrants require further differentiation? Further differentiating questions could be of interest: How do the experiences of Muslim migrant women in Portugal compare to Christian or Hindu migrants?

On a similar qualitative level as my research, comparative work would also be useful, to gain a broader understanding of migration experiences across different cultural and national backgrounds, and in various countries. A great deal of work is focussed upon single countries; I believe it would be highly interesting to bring specialists of these diverse receiving societies together, to pool their knowledge and insights. Further research could also look at how far migration experiences reinforce religious activities and faith, by considering the situation of migrants from Eastern Europe.

The general situation of migration in Portugal would be highly interesting to further analyse. How did the situation in Portugal for migrants change after the introduction of the new immigration law of 2007? Important research could focus on Portugal as a receiving society and examine changes to the country brought upon by its now many years of immigration, taking into consideration the country's future need for increased immigration in light of demographic developments.

The relationship and interplay between the receiving society and migrants as individuals on the one hand, but also as members of social networks and communities on the other, would be important to explore on social, political and individual levels. So too, research looking at transnational networks and connections between Portugal and the migrants' home society would be enlightening, particularly if the research could be performed in both countries. Also Portugal's own emigration history could be taken into consideration by linking it to the new immigration: I think it would be revealing to explore for instance the networks and informal links between the migrants to and from Portugal and to and from the Portuguese traditional emigration countries such as France, Luxembourg and Brazil. Though the types of migration will be very diverse, such as menial and high skilled labour migration, retirement migration etc., one could ask for the role of transnational networks acting in both ways, facilitating the exchange between to 'older' Portuguese emigration and the newer immigration movements.

By applying the post-colonial perspective to other countries, a further idea for comparative research would be to consider the situation and experiences of migrants in
other former colonial powers such as the UK and France. What is the situation there, are my findings in Portugal comparable to experiences of migrants in these countries? In which ways is the colonial legacy expressed and lived out in these countries, and what are their practical impacts upon the lives of migrants?

Personally, I hope soon to be able to return to Portugal to search out and meet up again with my research participants. I would like to know how they are today, if and how their situation has changed, and what their plans and dreams today are. In truth, I hope that most will not be found in Portugal, having finally realised their long-held dream of returning to their home countries, resuming their daily lives, former or new careers, and their active roles as mothers living daily with their children.
### Appendix

**Table 1: Statistical data: Migrant population in Portugal 1980-2009 in graphics**


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IMF, International Monetary Fund
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Phizacklea Annie

Phizacklea, Annie (ed.)

Phizacklea, Annie and Robert Miles

Pineiro Iníquez, Carlos
Piore, Michael J.  

Piper, Nicola  

Pires, Sónia  

Pires, Rui Pena  

Pires, Rui Pena (ed.), Fernando Luís Machado, João Peixoto and Maria João Vaz  

Portella, Cristina  

Portes, Alejandro  

Portes, Alejandro (ed.)  

Power, Marcus  
Pozo, Susan  

Pries, Ludger  

Pussetti, Chiara (ed.)  

Putnam, Robert D.  

Queirós, João and José Madureira Pinto (eds.)  

Rabinow, Paul  

Raijam, Rebeca, Silvina Schammah-Gesser and Adriana Kemp  

Ramalho, Sónia and Susana Trovão  

Rapport, Nigel and Joanna Overing  

Raposo, Paulo and Paula C. Togni  

Rath, Jan (ed.)  
Räthzel, Nora

Rerrich, Maria S.

Reyneri, Emilio

Rocha-Trindade, Maria Beatriz and Manuel Armando Oliveira

Rodriguez, Robyn M.

Römhild, Regina

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Rössler, Martin

RTP, Rádio e Televisão de Portugal

Saint-Maurice, Ana de

Sambado, Christina

Sana, Mariano and Douglas Massey

Sanders, Jimy M.

Santos, Boaventura de Sousa

Santos, Clara Almeida

Santos, Pedro Filipe

Sapiro, Virginia
Sardinha, João Manuel Silva

Sassen, Saskia

Schensul, Stephen L., Jean J. Schensul, and Margaret D. LeCompte

Schluter, Daniel P.

Schmied-Kowarzik, Wolfgang and Justin Stagl (ed.)

Schubert, Klaus and Martina Klein

Schuhladden, Hans and Georg R. Schroubek (eds.)

Schuller, Tom, Stephen Baron and John Field

Schütze, Fritz
Seabra, Teresa, Sandra Mateus, Elisabete Rodrigues and Magda Nico

SEF, Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras

Sennett, Richard

Shipler, David K.

Shore, Chris

Shore, Chris and Annabel Black

Silva, Maria Vieira da and Carolina Gonçalves

Simon-Kumar, Rachel

Smart, Alan

Smart, Barry

Sobral, José Manuel
Soederberg, Susanne, Georg Menz and Philip G. Cerny (eds.)  

SOS Racismo  

Sousa, José Edmundo Furtado de  

Sperl, Markus  

Stark, Oded  

Stoler, Ann Laura  

Straubhaar, Thomas and René Weber  

Stroehlein, Andrew  

Sunder Rajan, Rajeswari  

Tapia, Stéphane de  

Thielemann, Eiko and Nadine El-Enany  

Titova, Irina  

Tomei, Verónica

Tønnesson, Stein

Torres, Anália Cardoso

Touzenis, Kristina

Trovão, Susana and Sónia Ramalho

Tyner, James A.

UN, United Nations

UNHCR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Vala, Jorge et al.
Vale de Almeida, Miguel  

Vilaça, Helena  

Voges, Wolfgang (ed.)  

Waldinger, Roger  

Waldinger, Roger, Howard Aldrich and Robin Ward  

Wall, Karin, Sofia Aboim, Vanessa Cunha and Pedro Vasconcelos  

Wall, Karin, Sofia Aboim, Vanessa Cunha, Sónia Vladimira Correia and Susana Atalaia  

Wall, Karin (research coordinator)  

Wallerstein, Immanuel  

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Young, Brigitte

Yuval-Davis, Nira

Zontini, Elisabetta
Eidesstattliche Erklärung


Ich habe keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel genutzt. Alle den benutzten Quellen wörtlich oder sinngemäß entnommenen Stellen habe ich als solche gekennzeichnet.

Ich versichere ausserdem, dass die vorliegende Dissertation bislang keiner anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt wurde und noch nicht veröffentlicht wurde.

Ich bin mir bewusst, dass eine falsche Erklärung rechtliche Folgen haben wird.

Taunusstein, 16. März 2012

Christiane Hellermann