Polish Mobilities and the Re-making of Self, Family and Community

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ABSTRACT

The thesis explores the *social* and *spatial* mobilities of young Polish people and the ways in which the self, the family and the community are being re-made through mobility in an enlarged European Union. The research is based on an empirical study with post-accession current and return migrants in Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice. It explores young people's *perceptions* and *experiences* of mobility in three key areas: the personal histories of mobility; the practice of mobility; and the relations of mobility. The thesis argues that social and spatial mobility are differentially and relationally experienced by young Polish people. Furthermore, through a critical engagement with theories of mobility and modernity it is argued that collective social forms (family and community) are being re-configured *through* mobility.

Conceptually, the research is positioned within the inter-disciplinary study of mobilities, which assert the centrality of movement in contemporary social life (Urry and Sheller, 2006). Drawing on empirical evidence, the thesis provides an intimate reading of the personal transformations of mobility for young Polish migrants and offers micro-level analysis of theories of migration, mobility and modernity. As such it responds to calls for empirically grounded studies on mobilities (Cresswell, 2006; McDowell, 2006) and reflexivity (Atkinson, 2010), and contributes to a growing area of research post-accession Polish migration and mobility (Burrell, 2009).

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Introduction

"Some of the world's residents are on the move,

for the rest it is the world itself that refuses to stand still"

(Bauman, 2000a, p.58)

Since the declaration of a common European market in 1958, free movement in Europe has been a guiding principle in the geopolitical development of the region. Over the past 50 years barriers to mobility have steadily eroded so that more goods, services, people and ideas flow across the porous borders of Europe. The accession of Poland to the European Union (EU) in 2004 led to a dramatic increase in migration from Poland to the UK and new trends in migration have been observed in the context of national and regional socio-economic transformations (Burrell, 2009a). The opportunity for a new generation of Central and Eastern Europeans to engage in spatial mobility in Europe is underpinned by a promotional discourse of mobility that is officially communicated by the EU. Mobility is one of the key pillars in the Europe 2020 Strategy and a cross cutting theme in policy relating to education, employment and welfare. In the Action Plan for Skills and Mobility (2002) three priorities were reported: expanding occupational mobility and skills development; improving information and transparency of job opportunities; and facilitating geographical mobility. Such policies connect the provision of opportunity for spatial mobility with outcomes for social mobility, extolling the virtues of mobility (Bonin et al., 2008) and protecting it as an emancipatory 'social right'. However, while many European citizens experience enhanced freedom, opportunity and choice through mobility, others experience poverty, uncertainty and immobility. Furthermore, with mobility comes transition and I will argue that in spite of increased opportunity, young people's mobility is experienced alongside personal transitions that are differentially positioned in a range of socio-spatial contexts.

The objective of this research is to explore the *social* and *spatial* mobilities of young Polish people migrating between Poland and the UK, and the ways in which these

mobilities relate to and affect the self, the family and the community. This thesis offers an analysis of the *perceptions* and *experiences* of individual migrants providing an intervention into wider discourses of mobility through grounded empirical evidence. The empirical chapters are structured to consider three key aspects of mobility: the personal histories of mobility, the practice of mobility and the relations of mobility. In this respect, I pay particular attention to the family and the community in shaping aspirations and opportunities for mobility and how these microstructures are being shaped by mobilities.

The theoretical framework of the thesis draws on three broad areas of debate: transnational migration (Portes, 1997b, Basch, Glick Schiller and Blanc-Szanton, 1992), theories of modernity (Giddens, 1990; Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994; Bauman, 2000a; Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2001) and new mobilities approaches (Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007; Cresswell, 2010a). Firstly, I engage with theories of transnational migration that move beyond the methodological nationalism of classical migration approaches. Drawing on emergent literatures in the field of transnationalism, I explore the *everyday transnationalisms* of Polish migrants and discuss the way in which transnational families and communities operate across multi-dimensional territories, places and scales. Secondly, the thesis bridges detailed micro-narratives of young Polish migrants with the meta-narratives of reflexive modernization and individualization, re-visiting theory through 'actually existing' mobility in the EU. The thesis critically assesses the reflexive modernisation thesis (Beck et al., 2004) engaging with its claims of family breakdown and lost community in the context of large scale social transformations and processes of individualization (Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2001). I argue that in spite of these challenges, family and community perform important functions in the context of mobility. I also explore the role of class in shaping mobility outcomes in modernity, arguing that rather than being a redundant category, class is itself undergoing a process of reflexivity across transnational scales. The thesis stands, therefore, as an intimate reading of social theory demonstrating the ways in which the everyday negotiation of reflexivity and individualization both corroborate and refute different aspects of these meta-narratives. In this sense my study responds to calls for empirical research on mobilities which enable the overarching narratives of social change to become grounded by micro-narratives of individual migrants. Finally, I draw on 'new mobilities' approaches (Sheller and Urry, 2006; Cresswell, 2010a) to explore

the differential 'politics of mobility' for young Polish migrants and the way in which mobility is understood and practiced in diverse socio-spatial contexts.

1.1 Motivation and Justification

The motivation for this study emerged out of a sense of frustration with the way in which the reporting of immigration, both in the British press and in policy discourse, has contributed to an unwarranted discourse about migrants living in the UK. Following a wave of new immigration from East Central Europe (ECE) after 2004 stereotyping of the Polish migrant, in particular, seemed to be legitimised not only by media portraits but also by ambiguous UK government policy on immigration and anti-immigrant rhetoric surrounding the possible solutions to rising unemployment and social disintegration. Public anxiety over the sheer volume of A8[1] migration to the UK after 2004 meant that the level of immigration became a well versed explanation for the general state of the economy and the state of communities. It was my intention to unpack these assumptions and representations of Polish migrants in the UK through empirical research and develop a more holistic sense of what it is to be a migrant in British society. My academic interest in the study was borne out of an interest in transnationalism as a lens of inquiry that emphasises the de-territorialised and unbounded nature of migrant experience. Furthermore, my background in social policy research meant I was drawn to inquire about the ways in which social inequalities are related to mobility and migration. The Polish case, as I saw it then, offered a unique frame to explore these relationships. Moreover, my commitment to qualitative study meant the PhD would offer an intervention to quantitative studies on Polish migration, many of which are largely focused on the impacts of these migrations on the UK economy, treating migrants as economic variables.

The significance of this research is both theoretical and empirical. Theoretically I have tried to bridge a gap in the literature between the two traditionally disparate concepts of *social* and *spatial* mobility. This integrated framing of mobility allows for an explicit recognition of the social hierarchies and inequalities that intersect with mobility. The research is empirically significant because of the relatively unexplored locations and unexplored populations I am researching. There is to date, little research on Polish migration to Scotland, and particularly Edinburgh as the key site of research. The thesis

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[1] A8 migration is the common term used to describe the eight new member states that were acceded to the EU in 2004 – Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia.

shows that Edinburgh is an important destination for Polish migrants with a sizable post-accession community and an established Polish community operating in the city. Furthermore, amongst the literature on Polish migration to the UK, few studies focus on the experiences and reflections of *return* migrants as a sample population. The choice to include return migrants, as well as current migrants, in the study was predicated on an interest in exploring the *mobile journeys* of young people. I wanted to include their reflections on emigration, return and resettlement and the way in which return migrants continue to experience mobility in certain forms, whether imaginary, occupational or ensconced in the everyday.

1.2 Research Questions

To fulfill my research objective I devised a set of essential research questions. These provide a framework to explore the perceptions and experiences of mobility, analysing young people's imaginations of mobility as well as their embodied experiences. The questions that frame this research are:

1) How is mobility understood, practiced and represented by young Polish migrants

2) How do the family and the community shape mobility decisions, values, aspirations and outcomes

3) In what ways are self, family and community *transformed* through mobility

1.2.1 Methodology

The thesis is based on an empirical study of young Polish migrants (current and return) in Edinburgh in Scotland and in Kraków and Katowice in Poland. The research design is wholly qualitative and consists of five integrated methods: biographical-narrative interviewing; photo elicitation; semi-structured interviews; interactive blogging and participant observation. This multi-method approach has enabled a comprehensive and richly textured analysis of the perceptions and experiences of young Polish people. My research sample consists of two key groups.

- Group I - Young Polish people who have experienced emigration to the UK, aged between 18 and 35 (current and return migrants)

- Group II - Agents, gatekeepers and community members who are related to the management and mediation of Polish migration to the UK.

The geographical settings for the research are the cities of Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice. This has enabled discussions of and in place, with the associated immobile structures and fixtures that enable or constrain mobility. It has also helped to contextualise the research, facilitating case studies that are set in locally significant and geographically distinct urban centres. In this sense, my theory is grounded in and applicable to particular geographies. A rationale for the choice of locations is presented in chapter two, and in chapter three I present a detailed breakdown of my research sample and the research methodology.

1.2.2 Summary of Key Arguments

This thesis presents a set of key arguments that I will now summarise. Mobility is understood, practiced and represented by young Polish migrants in different ways. Young people have wide ranging imaginations of mobility and are differentially positioned in various socio-spatial contexts through which mobility occurs. In relation to this I explore the idea of a '*mobile subjectivity*' (Sheller and Urry, 2005, p.5). Subjectivities are constructed by individuals within the transitive spaces of mobility, whilst simultaneously being produced through broader structures, processes and discourses of mobility. In this sense, mobile subjectivities are contingent on a 'politics of mobility' that are defined by particular social relations (Massey, 1993; Adey, 2009; Cresswell, 2010a). These multi-scalar social relations influence the values and decisions of individuals, their aspirations for and experiences of mobility. It is therefore argued that mobile subjectivities are made up of ascribed, inherited and invented values within which the classic binary of structure and agency intersect.

History and place are essential analytical components in the study of contemporary mobilities. As Cresswell (2010a, p.29) points out, 'elements of the past exist in the present just as elements of the future surround us'. This thesis argues that forms of mobility that are represented as new are connected to and have residual elements of older mobilities. Using empirical evidence from the research interviews I present the young people's recollections of post-socialist transformation in Poland during the 1980s and 1990s, showing how the memories of growing up during this period have shaped values for mobility and mobile subjectivities. I argue that aspiration for spatial mobility

was a widely held inter-generational value during this time in spite of the relative immobility and restricted freedoms of the socialist past. Moreover, many of the research participants expressed a belief that spatial and social mobility were connected, with one often seen as a result of the other. In light of this, it is argued that post-socialist mobility was a highly uneven process subject to classed processes which continue to manifest in present experiences of migration to the UK.

Intimately connected to this is the notion of transformation. Just as young Polish people have lived through the socio-economic and political transformations of the post-socialist era, so too have they experienced personal transformations through mobility. Theories of modernity posit that contemporary society is one of ambivalence, uncertainty and flux. While it is recognised that young people are uncertain about their futures and are faced with a range of risks and fears, this is not necessarily a product of 'second modernity' (Beck, 1994). Drawing on the empirical evidence I argue that risk and uncertainty were also features of the so-called solid phenomenon or 'antiquated curiosity' (Bauman, 2011, p.27) that was communism in Poland. This is evidenced by the participants' memories of socialist-era political struggles and socio-economic insecurities. Moreover, in an assessment of the personal transitions of mobility I show how young Poles moving to the UK today resolve and live with the uncertainties associated with a mobile life. I suggest that young people's subjectivities are *reflexively* but also *relationally* constructed and expressed. Young people reflect on 'becoming' a mobile individual and express recourse to representations of Polish migrants in the UK, as well as representations of return migrants in Poland. As a result, identity categories are re-negotiated in reaction to normative discourses taking on different forms that mutate, excite, repel, soften and regress. In sum, there is evidence of reflexivity occurring through mobility linked to broader youth transitions as well as relations with others. As Lyotard (1984, p.15) wrote 'no self is an island' but exists in a 'fabric of relations'.

The micro worlds presented in individual narratives of mobility in this thesis contribute to understanding the values and aspirations of those engaged in mobile livelihoods, their distinct socio-spatial practices and the materiality of everyday mobility. Young migrants are understood here not simply as subjects of dominance and dependency, nor are they constructed solely as agents who have the power to effect social change through reflexive choices. Rather, individuals are embedded in a web of relations that interact with, support and constrain actions emphasising once again the need to analyse mobility

as a relational, contingent and adaptive process. In Simmel's work on social interaction in urban spaces, he speaks of a language of autopoiesis, suggesting that 'things find their meaning in relation to each other, and the mutuality of the relationships in which they are involved constitutes what and how they are' (cited in Urry, 2007, p.25). This is useful groundwork for understanding urban migrant subjectivities and the interactions that lead to different forms of sociability, intimacy and co-presence in urban spaces. A central argument of the thesis, then, relates to the relationality of migrant experience in the urban spaces of Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice. In arguing this I focus on the role of family and community in mobility and demonstrate the ways in which family and community are central in shaping the socio-spatial contexts for, and personal experiences of, mobility. The significance of relationships with family, friends and community in young people's 'reflexive biographies' is testament to the durability of kinship ties and desire for collective solidarity and personal intimacy. Drawing on theories of family and kinship I argue that there is a retrenchment or revival of social forms in the context of transnational mobility. Family persists as a dominant social process for young people and shapes values and moral judgements for mobility. I examine how the construction of the 'Polish family' as a moral issue extends transnationally and is practiced by young adults in migrant spaces. I also discuss the complex negotiations that young people engage in to preserve and enrich not only existing family relations but also a 'sense' of family in the context of a mobile livelihood. Distance from family is perceived as less important to the maintenance of kinship ties, as the literature on transnational families and communities suggests. However, young people value physical closeness, or co-presence, for the preservation and strengthening of intimacy with family at home and in new settings.

Finally, I explore the meaning of community to mobile people arguing that the idea of community is valued by young people and central to their strategies for mobility and integration in the UK. Whether this be communities of utility or need, communities of difference or the subaltern, collective active participation is central to mobile practices. Using empirical evidence gleaned through participation with the Polish migrant community in Edinburgh I show how new forms of migrant community are emerging in diverse ways. These are more than 'communities of interest', but rather a re-configuration of traditional notions of community in new locations as sites of belonging and common understanding.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter two sets out a background context for the thesis and provides a summary of existing research on Polish migration to the UK. The chapter is divided into two parts, the first of which discusses academic literature on the histories, networks, strategies and subjectivities of Polish mobility. Part two considers the geographies of Polish mobility and sets out the rationale for choosing Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice as key locations for study.

Chapter three will discuss the methodological framework for the study. Here the research design will be explained in detail and the issues and challenges of research practice will be discussed. This section will include a detailed section about the research sample and reasons behind the chosen variables for selection.

Chapter four provides the conceptual foundations of the research with a critical appraisal of theories of mobility. This section charts the development of theories of migration and social mobility, interrogating the migration-mobility nexus. The convergence of new mobilities theories with theories of modernity are critically explored to add another layer of analysis to understanding contemporary mobilities alongside social transformations.

Chapter five combines empirical and historical accounts of the everyday life of socialism and post-socialism. Drawing on accounts from narrative interviews the chapter presents young people's recollections of growing up during the 1980s and 1990s in a changing Poland. Here, the personal histories of mobility are revealed as well as a discussion on the inter-generational values that have shaped aspirations and decisions for mobility.

Chapter six is a discussion of the transitive spaces of mobility for young people and is concerned with the post-accession experience of mobility in the EU. Using empirical data the chapter explores how young people understand, practice and represent mobility. It reveals the choices and limitations of mobility, the emotional and practical factors that have shaped mobility decisions, and the personal transformations experienced through mobility.

Chapter seven discusses the intersections of family and mobility. The focus here is on the family as a dominant social process in young people's mobile lives. I examine the

Polish family as a representational and transnational phenomenon and discuss the complex negotiations that young people engage in to sustain and preserve family relations. Furthermore, the concept of transnational families is discussed, bringing in issues of care, intimacy and proximity; and the notion of friendships as substitute families in transnational spaces.

Chapter eight is concerned with the way young Polish migrants understand and express community through mobility. The discursive framing of migrant community is discussed alongside case study examples of the way in which community is being practiced by young Poles in the city of Edinburgh. Within this, community is practiced in place and in virtual space and has multiple and overlapping meanings. It is argued that new forms of community currently operate in the city that are critical of more traditional forms of community organising suggesting that conventional discourses of migrant community as collective subjects are inadequate representations of a diverse population.

Chapter nine reviews the key arguments of the thesis and draws the analysis to a conclusion, outlining the main contributions of this work to the field of Polish migration studies and theories of social change.

Chapter Two

Polish Mobilities in the United Kingdom

This chapter contextualizes the research by providing a summary of background literature on Polish mobilities in the United Kingdom. While I focus on the post-accession wave of migration from Poland to the UK since 2004, I also discuss the mobile histories and networks of pre-accession and socialist era migration periods that have been important in shaping and facilitating current migration patterns. The chapter goes on to discuss the different strategies of mobility and the idea of a 'mobile subjectivity' (Sheller and Urry, 2005, p.5) among Polish migrants in the UK. I also consider the geographies of mobility. Following a brief introduction of the popular destinations for Polish migrants in the UK I provide a context and rationale for the choice of locations used in this research.

2.1 Polish Migration to the UK

Polish migration to the UK is not new (Burrell, 2009a; Iglicka, 2001; Sword et al., 1989). Geographical mobility has been a feature of modern day Poland in line with key political events. From the exiled populations produced through partitioning by Prussia, Austria and Russia and the 'za chlebem' immigrants of the 19th and 20th Century (Davies, 1981) to the forced migrations of the Second World War and the post-War Polish Diaspora (Burrell, 2006a; 2006b). During the communist era patterns of mobility have been characterised as short-term, circular, often clandestine and highly restricted (Iglicka, 2001), and while 1989 saw the opening of borders for some these short-term, circulat patterns continued on a similar scale (Wallace, 2002). The most dramatic episode in Polish migration history has been observed more recently upon accession to the European Union in 2004 (Burrell, 2009a). The migration of Poles outwards dominates the literature, but studies documenting the return migration of Poles have begun to emerge, both from a historical perspective and with a focus on contemporary patterns of return (Grabowska-Lusinska, 2010; Iglicka, 2009; Slany and Ślusarczyk, 2008). This study is concerned with post-accession mobility of Poles to the UK and this section, therefore, explains why 2004 is considered to be a dramatic moment in Polish

migration history (Burrell, 2009a; Drinkwater et al., 2006; Grabowska-Lusinska and Okolski, 2008; Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009).

In 2004, Poland was one of eight countries from 'new Europe' to gain official member status of the EU. The lengthy accession process required each state to conform to the Copenhagen criteria which specified stable democratic institutions, a functioning market economy and adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. Since then member state borders have become more fluid enabling the free movement of workers within the EU, although many older member states set restrictions on mobility fearing an 'influx' of migrants and a drain on national resources. The UK, Ireland and Sweden were the only states in 2004 to allow unrestricted mobility and access to the labour market for A8 nationals resulting in these countries being major 'host' states for migrant workers from ECE[2].

Since 2004 there has been a significant increase in migration flows from A8 countries to the UK, Ireland and Sweden, with some claiming it is 'one of the most important social and economic phenomena shaping the UK today' (Pollard et al., 2008, p.7). It is estimated that around 550,000 A8 and A2[3] nationals have migrated into the UK since 2004[4] (Pollard et al, 2008). This 'new wave' of migration has triggered renewed interest in European migration flows from scholars and policy analysts investigating the impact of A8 migration on national and local economies, public service delivery and community cohesion (Audit Commission, 2007; Salt and Rees, 2006; Stenning et al., 2006). Alongside this, media representations of A8 migrants in the UK have fuelled an anti-migrant discourse predicated on classed notions of the 'migrant worker' as economically motivated and associated with low-wage, low-skilled work[5]. It could be argued that in this respect Polish migrants are regarded as collective subjects around which strategies for policy, practice and public engagement with Polish people tends to be formed. This study explores in more depth the differential experiences of Polish migrants in the UK showing that within migrant communities there are different histories, strategies and outcomes of mobility.

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[2] Since May 2011 all remaining EU member states have opened their labour markets to A8 states due to EU regulations. A8 citizens have now become EU citizens leading to equal entitlements for work and welfare
[3] A2 nationals are those from Bulgaria and Romania
[4] The validity of the estimates is subject to methodological challenges associated with collecting such data and it is acknowledged that these figures could be underestimating the level of A8 migration to the UK.
[5] See Fomina and Frelak (2008) for a discussion on media representation of Polish migrants in the British Press

2.1.1 Mobile Histories and Networks

The use of intermediaries or networks to facilitate migration is well documented, whereby migrants utilise transnational connections to develop migration strategies for upward social mobility (Elrick and Brinkmeier, 2009; Morokvasic, 2004; Basch et al., 1992; Portes, 1997a). Elrick and Brinkmeier (2009) argue that the 'migration histories' and 'migration networks' within a community determine migration patterns. Migration networks are both formal and informal, consisting of links with recruitment agencies, community organisations as well as friend and family ties. If a community has a long history of frequent migratory activity, whether 'hidden' or 'visible', this practice is more likely to continue and these communities are likely to have more active migration networks in place (ibid.). Hence, there are variations in the degree and nature of out-migration from different parts of ECE depending on their distinct histories and community infrastructure (Elrick and Brinkmeier, 2009). Moreover, White (2010, p.578) argues that the migration histories of certain localities has in some places contributed to a culture of migration where young people feel 'socialised into migration' and expect to engage in some form of geographical mobility. This implies that the personal histories of mobility in particular locales or particular families may also have a bearing on the future migratory patterns of younger generations.

It is these historical patterns of migration that have generated a proliferation of informal transnational networks of mobile populations (Iglicka, 2001; Morokvasic, 2004). Some have argued that the intensification of these migratory patterns and networks have developed into a more formal migration industry between Poland and the UK (Garapich, 2008b). The continuation of migratory patterns demonstrate that strategies for mobility have been developing over a significant period of time, across generations and across the shifting, uncertain borders of Europe. Thus, the question remains as to how far the perceived gains of mobility are the effects of EU accession rather than that of pre-accession mobile experiences, or inter-generational experiences. White (2011a) argues that the recent wave of mass migration among Polish families to the UK is a new phenomenon with recent research suggesting large numbers of Polish children arriving in the UK and enrolled in UK Schools (Pollard et al, 2008; Walczak, 2008; Sales et al., 2008).

2.1.2 'New' Mobile Subjectivities

The historical migrations from Poland to the UK have led to the establishment of different kinds of Polish communities in the UK, within which Polish people are positioned differently and subject to a wide range of opportunities and constraints. In an analysis of the characteristics of post-accession Polish migrants in the UK Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009) claim that 72% are aged between 20 and 29 years old while only 16% are aged 35 and above. Furthermore, almost a quarter of these are University graduates in search of their first employment experience, many of whom have a good grasp of English language (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). Their hypothesis suggests that the wave of post-accession migration to the UK is a particularly young and highly skilled demographic whereby spatial mobility is perceived as a 'good start' in relation to social mobility (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009, p.38). Looking at the aspirations for mobility among young people, 58% of 18-19 year old Poles living in Poland stated that if they were offered an opportunity to work abroad they would consider it (CBOS, 2009 as cited in White, 2010). This suggests perhaps that mobility is becoming more widely accepted as a lifestyle choice as they embark upon their careers. Poland's entry to the EU has arguably extended young people's *imagination* of mobility as it is now both a practical possibility and a realistic aspiration. In addition to the removal of barriers to work and residency outside of nation states, mobility is positively encouraged in EU discourse and practice.

Mobility is discursively framed in EU communications as a solution to unlatching the potential of young people in particular, a generation perceived to be at risk due to declining numbers and increased global competition. For example, the 'Youth on the Move' initiative was launched by the European Commission in 2010 to increase mobility among those aged between 15 and 35 in order to improve mobility prospects and minimise the effects of the crisis on young people (COM, 2010, p.477) . Programmes such as 'Socrates', 'Leonardo Di Vinci' and 'Youth for Europe' have been developed to encourage young EU citizens to engage in transnational exchanges for lifelong learning, vocational training and voluntary activities. Moreover, frameworks and toolkits have been created to encourage the harmonisation of processes among EU states and address the relationship between spatial and social mobility for all EU citizens of working age, such as the European Qualifications Framework and EUROPASS, the European Job Mobility Action Plan and the EURES programme.

However, while the co-ordination of educational and work-related frameworks in the EU can simplify the process of accessing jobs across Europe, the level of awareness of these services among young people and how far they encourage spatial and social mobility is unknown. Indeed, much of the qualitative research on the variable experiences of Polish migrants, including that of families, entrepreneurs, low wage workers and women, has shown that despite some common characteristics and the menu of opportunity offered by the EU post-accession migrants are subject to diverse constraints (White, 2010; Helsinka-Hughes et al., 2009; Wills et al, 2009; Burrell, 2008b).

Many of the studies on Polish, or more generally ECE migration are related to the way in which identities are changing in a context of post-socialist transformation. Sztompka (2004) suggests that since the accession of Poland to the EU, there has been an ideological backlash in ECE against the principles of socialism and the 'bloc mentality' has been replaced with pro-West attitudes embracing a neo-liberal ideology of individualism, personal achievement, risk, engagement with the private sphere, a pluralistic and meritocratic society. Rather than an emphatic idealism, Sztompka argues that this imaginary is mediated by a critical recognition of the weaknesses of Western democracy and a confidence that ECE states are equal partners. It is argued that these principles are extended to Polish migrants and demonstrate a generational divide between the established Polonia and newer Polish migrants in the UK, as Michał Garapich remarks,

> *"...This division – between free-market enthusiasts, individualistic, urban and middle-class aspiring Poles and traditional, anti-liberal, more inward-looking and explicitly relying on family and Christian values – is a constant and quite visible feature of Polish society as a whole (Domanski,2002). In a distinctive fashion the massive socio-cultural changes happening within Polish society since 1989 have their peculiar mutation among its London-based section"*
> *(Garapich, 2008a, p.16)*

Garapich, however, argues that this antagonism has been present in emigrant communities since 1989. He claims that it is based on moral and class-based valuations across generations that have now become institutionalised in the social and political fabric of the everyday lives of Polish migrants. He references a sermon given by the head of the Polish Catholic Church of England and Wales in 2007 within which there are references to four types of Polish emigrants – the WW2 generation, the Solidarity generation, the Pope John Paul II generation and economic migrants coming to the UK for 'bread'. It is suggested that these representations of the Polish Diaspora are bound

with moral hierarchy, backed up by Polish state discourse on emigrants which favours the romanticised image of war veterans and soldiers to people moving in reaction to economic downturns in Poland (Garapich, 2008a). These discourses of emigration show the complex classed, gendered and generational distinctions made within Polish migrant communities in the UK. It is therefore, important to re-assert that "young people's experiences of migration, mobility and transition are strongly shaped by social identities such as class and gender" (Hopkins, 2010, p. 225).

2.1.3 Mobile Strategies

In a significant study by Eade et al (2007) exploring the relationship between class and ethnicity among Poles in London, they develop a typology of migration patterns for Polish migrants. The typology presents four discrete types of migrant based on migration strategy and settlement patterns. These are *Storks*, *Hamsters*, *Searchers* and *Stayers*. Storks are conceptualised as temporary, circular migrants clustering usually in low wage occupations (such as seasonal migrants, construction workers, domestic staff) and organised in dense Polish social networks. Their goal is temporary and their perception of social class is linked to that in Poland. Hamsters are also typified as temporary, 'one off' migrants who are driven by economic ambitions to raise finance for a particular goal in Poland. Searchers are characterised as 'young individualistic and ambitious' but flexible to a range of options for migration or, as Eade et al. (2007, p.11) note, they exhibit 'intentional unpredictability'. This category of migrant is perceived to be the most transnational in approach. Finally, stayers are those who intend to settle in the UK and have more knowledge of the barriers to social mobility in the UK and class structures. While this delineation of migrants through an apparently 'logical' categorisation (Eade et al., 2007, p.10) is a useful tool in identifying the different migration strategies, it is also a simplistic, overly rational characterisation of the way in which various migration strategies relate to social mobility. It is also suggestive of particular subjectivities involved in migration as previously discussed. Mobile strategies involve a series of complex relationships that construct, define and reproduce individual subjectivities and it is important to respond to McDowell's (2006) call to address the intersectionality of gender and class, as well as integrating the analytics of race, ethnicity and sexuality, when exploring the ways in which migration strategies evolve both materially and symbolically.

It is clear that strategies for spatial mobility intersect with strategies for social mobility. For example, the migration strategies of some involve a decline in social mobility, de-skilling or 'brain wasting' with many graduates working in low skill, low wage work in order to earn a living (Drinkwater et al., 2006; Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). Furthermore, many are involved in informal work practices often resulting in temporality, lack of rights and insecurity (Anderson, 2000), demonstrating that the reality of lived migrant experience is often different from the EU promise of opportunity in a borderless world. Often this is articulated in terms of a 'lack of options' which compel mobile populations to exist in state of transition and renegotiation (Castles and Miller, 2003), adaptive to economic and social processes of national and EU regulated European migration. However, as Bruff (2007, p.1) argues 'migrants are not variables, but active agents that help to shape political, social and economic outcomes'. There have been well documented examples of the agency of undocumented migrants who have constructed and developed effective, informal networks and irregular channels of migration in Europe (Duvell, 2006). The formations of communities and social movements calling for the rights of migrants have emerged out of such networks and whether or not there are legal frameworks acknowledging their status or denying their rights, migrants 'learn to cope despite the state, not because of it' (Castles, 2004, p.860). Moreover, the increasingly visible expressions of Polish community, through Polish shops and festivals, in towns and cities across the UK (Rabikowska and Burrell, 2009) demonstrate the significance of these newer mobilities to the geographical landscape.

2.2 Geographies of Polish Mobility

Having considered the *who, what, why* and *how* of Polish migration, I will now consider *where* post-accession Polish migrants go. As discussed, the presence of Polish community networks of former migrations has facilitated new flows of migrants to familiar and well trodden destinations. The most commonly cited destination for Polish migrants in the UK is London which draws large numbers of international migrants due to its status as a capital city with economic opportunities and relative ease of access. London has, therefore, been a key site of research for Polish migration scholars, with wide ranging work in sociology, anthropology and human geography (Ryan et al., 2009; Garapich and Eade, 2009; Ryan, 2010; Datta, 2009, 2010). However, increasingly researchers have analysed migration patterns beyond London, focusing on other urban

areas such as Leicester (Burrell, 2003), Liverpool and Greater Manchester (Pemberton, 2009), Glasgow (Clark et al, 2008), Belfast (Kempny, 2010), Leeds (Dwyer et al., 2008) and Newcastle (Stenning and Dawley, 2009). It has been argued that the geographies of mobility for Polish people are changing and in the post-accession era there has been a growth in migration to and from rural areas marking a distinctly different geographical distribution of new Polish migrants in the UK (TUC, 2004). These changes have been attributed to incentive programmes like the Seasonal Agricultural Workers scheme (SAWS), the improvement of transnational employer networks that have linked up rural regions in Poland with those in the UK, as well as improved transport links and low cost flights between certain regions (TUC, 2004; Stenning et al., 2006). More recent empirical work has focused on rural migrations from villages and small towns to rural locations in the UK, such as the South West (White, 2011b) and rural Scotland (Kociolek, 2007; de Lima et al, 2005).

2.2.1 The Research Locations

Polish migration research is a growing academic area and a number of doctoral studies are plugging the gaps in literature by exploring and mapping the geographies of Polish mobility in the UK. In spite of this, there are still unexplored places in the UK and there remains a lack of empirical work on the geographies of return migration. This thesis responds to these gaps by exploring the spatialities of Polish migration in three relatively unexplored locations - Edinburgh in Scotland and Kraków and Katowice in Poland. The research is not, however, a comparative assessment of migration and return migration in these two places, rather it is *transnational* in approach with a focus on the mobile trajectories of individuals across two nations in the EU. The rationale for these particular locations was academic, policy related and practical. The decision to locate the UK-based fieldwork in Edinburgh was motivated by a number of factors. Firstly, there are existing research gaps on Polish migration to Scotland. In a recent report commissioned by the Scottish Government on recent migration into Scotland there are explicit recommendations for further research in the area of migrant experience, aspirations and networks.

> *"Gaining a greater understanding of migrants' perspectives and experiences of living in different areas of the country is important to inform Scottish Government policy aimed at attracting and retaining migrants. Therefore, research is needed on migrants' intentions and aspirations" (Rolfe and Metcalf, 2009).*

The retention of migrants was viewed as particularly important in light of the anticipated change in migration patterns into Scotland after 2011 when nationals from A8 countries are entitled to move freely across all EU member states. The Scottish Government has commissioned research over the past five years to capture the general flow and impact of A8 migration on the Scottish economy and society (Rolfe and Metcalf, 2009). Many of these studies do provide useful data on migrant flows to particular destinations and qualitative research on the experiences of A8 migrants in both urban centres and rural locations (Kociolek, 2007; Blake Stevenson, 2007; de Lima et al, 2005; Sim et al, 2007; Fife Research Coordination Group, 2007). Others focus on community cohesion and integration and public service provision for A8 migrants, such as education and language provision (Beadle and Silverman, 2007) and housing (Coote, 2006; Orchard et al., 2007). While there is an informational function to these studies and some useful data on migrant flows, strategies and the experiences of A8 migrants as a group, their explanations are broad and over-generalised and few attempt to recognize the heterogeneity of migrant communities with only two, for example, focusing specifically on (parts of) the Polish community (Orchard et al., 2007, Kociolek, 2007). Moreover, the surge in commissioning research during the peak of A8 migration to the UK in 2006 and 2007 has slowed down in recent years demonstrating the emphasis on responsive, largely survey-based and impact-driven research over more nuanced, long term investigations into migrant communities. I would argue that the latter is as important as the former and more recent in-depth studies, such as Moksal's (2010) study of the experiences of Polish migrant children in Scotland, are valuable contributions to existing knowledge on the experiences and nature of Polish communities in Scotland.

Secondly, there is both a sizable 'new' and established Polish population in Edinburgh. This population comprises an older generation of Poles who were exiled during and after the Second World War or were part of the 'za chlebem' emigrations of the post-communist era, and a significant post-accession population. Data from 2008 suggests that Poles make up almost a third of the international migrant population in Edinburgh, a number which has been on the rise since 2004 (see figs 1 and 2).

Fig. 1: Top 10 nationalities migrating to Edinburgh, 2007/8
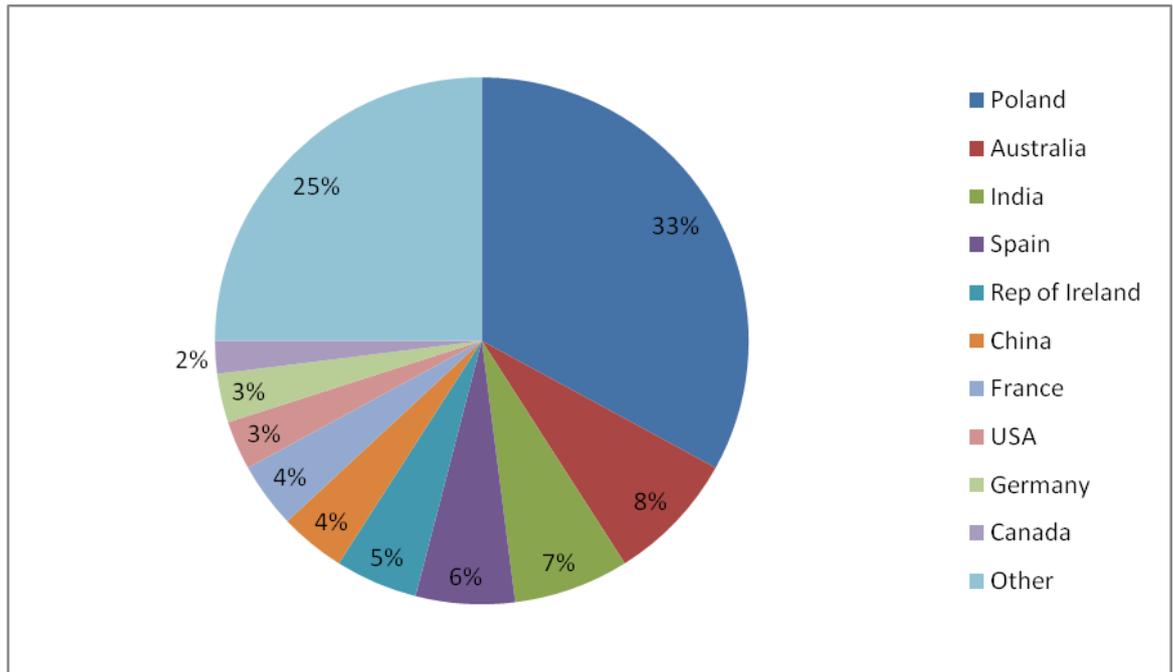
Source: Experian, 2009, data from DWP NINo registrations

Fig. 2: International migration to Edinburgh by area of origin
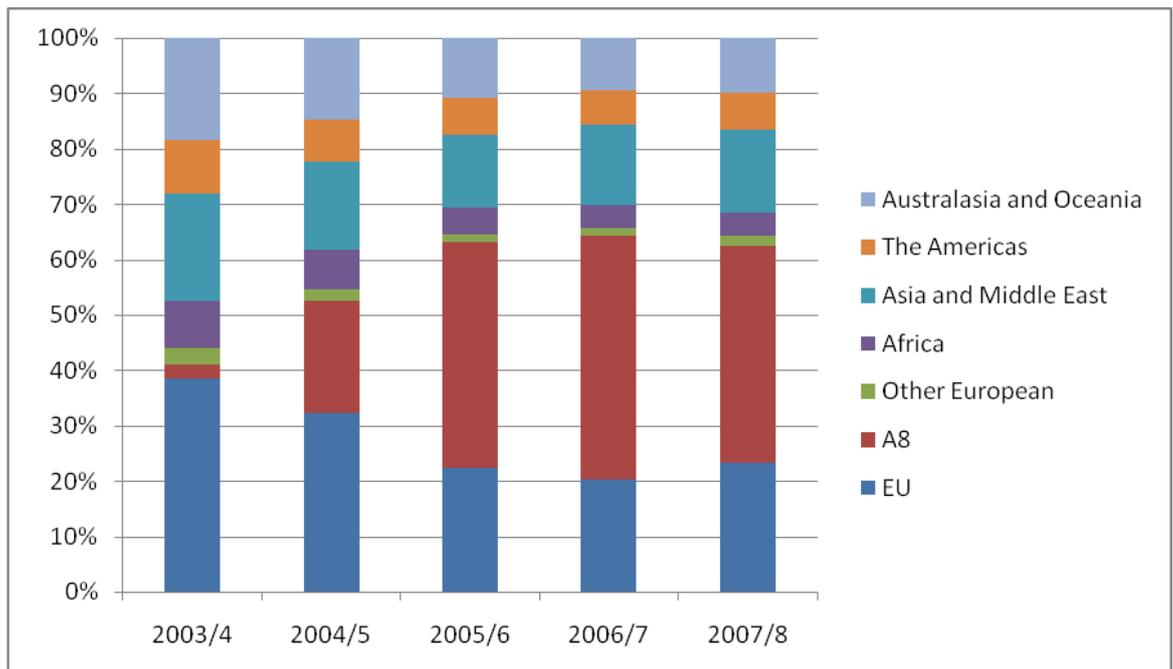
Source: Experian, 2009, data from DWP NINo registrations

The peak of Polish migration to the city occurred in 2006/7 and since then there has been a slight decline, however this does not signal the wholesale return of migrants to Poland. There remains a significant and predominantly young Polish population in the city with almost half of all migrants being age 18-24 and a further 41% falling in the age range of 25-34 (Experian, 2009).

Furthermore, within this population there are a range of functioning social and cultural organisations which have been running in various guises since the 1950s demonstrating an established Polish *community* in the city. The post-war settlement of Polish émigrés led to the development of community organisations, such as the Polish Ex-Combatants' Association (`Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantó' or S.P.K.) and the Polish Catholic Mission in Scotland. Other clubs and societies were set up for the younger generation, such as the Polish Scouts and the Saturday School movement which were viewed as a 'vital way of instilling in children a sense of pride in their roots through Polish history, language and traditions' (Smith and Winslow, 2000, p.95). A national Polish media network has also developed with the emergence of daily newspapers, such as *Dziennik Polski* and *Tydzien Polski*.

Today, there is a visible Polish presence in Edinburgh evidenced by a range of newly established small business ventures and an increase in the number of Polish shops and cafes in certain districts of the city. In terms of the geographies of these communities, the majority of community activities, including consumption practices, occur in the districts of Leith and Gorgie. As Konrad, a Polish deli owner on Gorgie Road remarked – *'there are about 12 or 15 [polish shops] in Edinburgh, 8 or 10 on Leith Walk/Easter road. Gorgie is the second Polish place I would say, Leith is the first, Gorgie is the second'*. On Leith Walk there are a range of Polish owned shops and café's as well as non-Polish owned spaces that offer Polish products and services, such as Polish magazines, beers and food. The following images show some examples of these spaces of consumption along Leith Walk.

Photo 1: Deli Polonia, Edinburgh   **Photo 2: Polak w Skocji, a drop-in
centre for new Polish migrants**
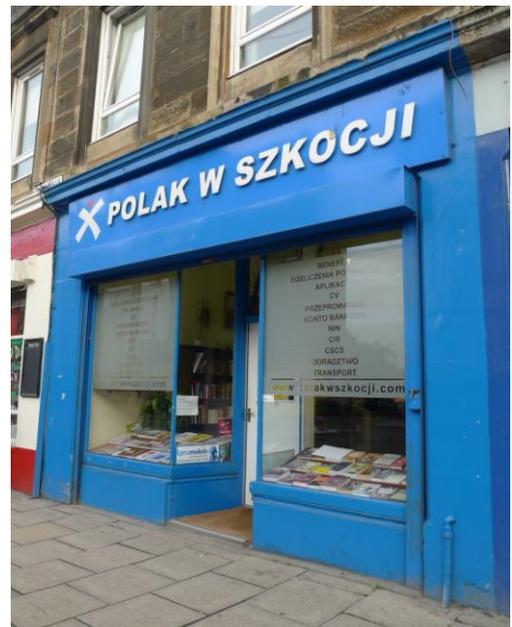
Photo 3 and 4: Polish language products in non-Polish owned shops

There are also a range of newly established community spaces that have emerged in
response to the post-accession wave of migration. These include a Polish community
centre that offers social support to the community and new arrivals (Świetlica); an
association for the promotion of Polish culture (Polish Cultural Festival Assocation);
and a virtual space for the promotion of Polish activities and events in Edinburgh

(Edinburgh.com.pl). I will be focusing on each of these distinct community spaces in chapter eight where there will be a full discussion of Polish community in Edinburgh. The presence of functioning community organisations in Edinburgh, that have themselves been subject to change and continuity over successive migrations, presented an opportunity to access a 'ready made' sample population for my research. I felt these organisations would offer an opportunity to observe and discuss both new and older Polish community practices together. I also had an initial contact within the community who would later act as a gatekeeper and proved to be a very valuable contact in accessing a wide range of young Polish people in the city.

The second destination for fieldwork was Kraków which is located in the south east of Poland in the voivodship of Małopolskie. Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009) estimate that most post-accession Polish migrants in the UK come from the southern region of Poland – this includes the underdeveloped voivodships of Podkarpackie and Lubelskie and the densely populated voivodships of Małopolskie, Śląskie and Dolnośląskie. Małopolskie has experienced significant out-migration since 2004, leading to a rapid decline in unemployment and labour shortages in sectors such as health, financial services and construction (OECD, 2008). The decision to focus on Kraków as the key location of study in Poland was motivated again by academic and practical reasons. There are only a few studies on return migration in the region (Centrum Doradztwa Strategicznego, 2008) and I felt that an in depth study on the reasons for and experiences of return migration would contribute to existing studies and fill gaps in the knowledge base. Furthermore, Kraków is a city of renowned cultural heritage and, like Edinburgh, has high levels of tourism and is perceived as a desirable place to live by national citizens. For this reason I considered it an attractive destination for return migrants and therefore, a location with a potentially large sample for study. Unlike Edinburgh there is no 'ready made' community of return migrants but rather dispersed individuals living in different parts of the city and I discuss some of the methodological challenges associated with recruiting this sample in chapter three. However, I gleaned from anecdotal reports gained during a pilot visit to Małopolskie in 2009 that Kraków is among the most popular locations in the region for young people returning from the UK with particular areas of the city perceived as 'up and coming' and offering a vibrant night life, such as Plac Nowy in the Kazimierz district and the shopping mall, Galeria Krakowska.

Photo 5: Galeria Krakowska, Kraków   Photo 6: Plac Nowy, Kazimierz

The link between Kraków and Edinburgh further consolidated my decision to carry out research in these places. Edinburgh and Krakow have been official 'partner cities' since 1995. While both cities have strong reputations for cultural heritage and high levels of tourism, there are also pockets of deprivation. Wealth and poverty are equally visible in both cities highlighting the inequalities of opportunity for residents. Edinburgh and Kraków are also perceived to be secondary cities – after London and Warsaw respectively – and have not been as widely researched as these capital cities in the literature on Polish migration and return. Finally, there were practical reasons for the choice. I had existing contacts in the city who had been migrants themselves and knew other people who had returned giving me a head start with my sample. Also, the frequent and affordable flights to Kraków from the UK meant it was an accessible and low cost location for research.

At a later stage in my fieldwork I added Katowice as a third destination for two reasons. Firstly, due to snowballing I had access to a larger sample of return migrants there. Secondly, on visiting Katowice I became interested in the stark contrast of the city compared with Kraków. Katowice is a post-industrial city in the voivodship of Śląskie with high levels of unemployment and youth deprivation, while Kraków is a historic site of national culture with high levels of tourism and economic growth. The two places offer different things for young people returning to Poland and I felt this may offer slightly different perspectives on mobile experiences. However, the inclusion of a Katowice sample is not discussed in comparison to the experiences of Krakow returnees but alongside them. The Katowice narratives weave alongside the Krakow and Edinburgh narratives and discuss the experiences of return migrants beyond one city context.

2.3 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has provided an introductory context for the thesis through a discussion of post-accession Polish mobilities in the UK. I have shown that post-accession Polish mobility is predominantly a youthful endeavor and has been markedly different from previous migration trends. While migration histories and pre-existing networks have shaped contemporary migration patterns, there are key differences in the strategies for mobility and the subjectivities of post-accession migrants, as well as a range of differential constraints and opportunities available to them. Furthermore, while there is continuity in the geographies of Polish mobility, new spaces and new communities have emerged, evidenced by increased visibility of Polish sites of consumption on the landscape.

This chapter is by no means a comprehensive history of Polish migration[6] but serves to highlight some of the key themes and concepts that have emerged in recent theorising of Polish migration. I will continue to re-visit and expand upon these themes in subsequent chapters, particularly in chapter four which addresses more broadly the literature on migration, transnationalism and mobilities; and in chapter five which presents historical and empirical accounts of mobility in the context of post-socialist transformations in Poland.

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[6] See Davies (1981) and Burrell (2006a; 2009a) for histories of Polish migration

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter sets out the methodology used in this research and is divided into two parts. Part one sets out the mechanics of the research. This includes a description of the research participants and details of access and recruitment processes and issues. Part two is an explanation of the research approach and methods of data collection and analysis. I set out the epistemological foundations for the research design, provide a justification of the approach and discuss the rationale for each research method used in the project. The research consisted of five integrated methods: biographical-narrative interviewing; photo elicitation; semi-structured interviews; interactive blogging and participant observation. Part three reflects on the everyday processsual issues of the research and how I negotiated and resolved particular dilemmas related to personal reflexivity, representation and positionality.

Part I: The Research Mechanics

3.1 The Research Participants

Overall, 42 people participated in the research and these formed two groups of participants.

Group I

Group I consisted of young Polish people who had experienced emigration to the UK after EU accession in 2004. This group participated in biographical narrative interviews and photo elicitations exercises about the perceptions, aspirations and experience of post-accession migration to the UK. My aim was to interview 30 young people, a number I felt would provide a good range of perspectives and would generate enough material for in depth data analysis but not an overwhelming amount given the timescales of the project. In total I interviewed 32 people (16 current and 16 return) due to extra time in the field once my quota had been reached. I interviewed both current migrants living in Edinburgh and return migrants living in Kraków and Katowice. I decided to include return migrants in the sample to explore their reflections on the past

experiences of migration to the UK in the context of return and resettlement in Poland. Though they are not directly comparable with the perspectives of current migrants I felt it was important to study these two sites for a richer portrait of post-socialist subjectivities and the experience of EU mobility. Table 1 presents a demongraphic breakdown of my sample in group I.

Table 1: Demographic Breakdown of Group I (% and Number)

Category		Percentage	Number
Age	18-24	6%	2
	25-29	50%	16
	30-35	44%	14
Gender	Male	41%	13
	Female	59%	19
Education	High School	12%	4
	Graduate	47%	15
	Post-graduate	41%	13
Marital Status	Single	31%	10
	In relationship	16%	5
	Co-habiting	28%	9
	Married	25%	8
Nationality of partner	Polish	82%	18
	American	5%	1
	British	9%	2
	Spanish	5%	1
Number of dependents	None	81%	26
	1-2	13%	4
	3+	6%	2
Housing Status	Home Owner	25%	8
	Tenant	56%	18
	Lives with parents	19%	6

The age range of the group was 18-35, based on OECD definitions of a young person. Most were highly educated with some form of tertiary education. While some of this group had experienced emigration to the UK prior to 2004 and had returned to the UK

for a second or third time after EU accession, for most their first emigration occurred after 2004 and their experiences in the UK occurred in a 'borderless' Europe. The gender split was fairly even (59% female to 41% male) though a slightly higher number of females participated. Interestingly, the majority of 'gatekeepers' who supported me in accessing the Polish community in all three cities were women suggesting that there are particular gender dynamics within the community. This dynamic was an unexpected outcome of the research process since I had been expecting Polish community forums to be dominated by male leaders, based on my own prior assumptions about the predominance of patriarchal Catholic structures in Polish communities. My position as a young women was beneficial in these exchanges and I found that I could build rapport with female gatekeepers and female participants more easily than with men, perhaps leading to a slightly higher female sample. For more detailed socio-demographic and key migration data for each participant see appendix 1. In these tables I include the current employment and level of education to provide an indication of social mobility amongst my research participants. The tables show that many people's occupational status is on the lower end of the scale despite high levels of education representing a decline in social mobility.

Group II

The second group consisted of official and non-official agents, community members and 'gatekeepers'. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 individuals who I felt would provide scale and context to my research. Table 2 shows the job role and location of each individual I interviewed. Two of the interviewees were based in Warsaw and were included in the study since they offered a national perspective on the issue of return migration and its consequences for the Polish labour market.

Table 2: Group II sample – job role and organisation

Edinburgh	Kraków/Warsaw
- EURES Advisor, Jobcentre Plus - Director of Polish Cultural Festival Association - Director of Świetlica (Polish community centre) - Director of Edinburgh.com.pl (Polish community website) - Community Priest	- EURES Advisor, Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy (Jobcentre) - EURES Co-ordinator/Labour Market Expert, Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Warsaw) - Director of Galaktyka Kobiet (Women's business forum, Kraków) - Co-ordinator of Powroty.pl (government website for re-integration of return migrants) (Warsaw) - Co-ordinator of Streetwork (Organisation for homeless)

3.2 Access and Recruitment

My research sample was derived through a process of snowball sampling from key contacts obtained during the first year of my research. Many of the semi-structured interviews were conducted with 'gatekeepers' who subsequently provided access to a range of Polish community sites, both physical and virtual. This also legitimised my research to the community and I was able to gain trust far quicker through this route than if I had approached the community directly. For example, the Director of Edinburgh.com.pl allowed me to post an advertisement on his website, a community forum for Poles living in Edinburgh. I had tried to utilise internet forums and local community magazines to access the community prior to this with little success. As a result of one post on Edinburgh.com.pl I had a number of emails from Poles in the city wanting to participate in the research highlighting the benefits of a legitimate contact within the (online) community.

Initially I spent a lot of time designing flyers and advertisements with an official project brand. I decided to call the project 'Moving Stories'[7] and every flyer consisted of the brand, the Newcastle University logo and text in Polish and English. I presumed this would make the research appear more professional and consequently encourage greater participation. Figure 1 shows two samples of flyers I distributed during my fieldwork in both Edinburgh and Kraków. I placed them in coffee shops, libraries, bookshops, and universities; I also placed adverts in local magazines (Magazyn Emigrant, Edinburgh and Kraków Post, Kraków).
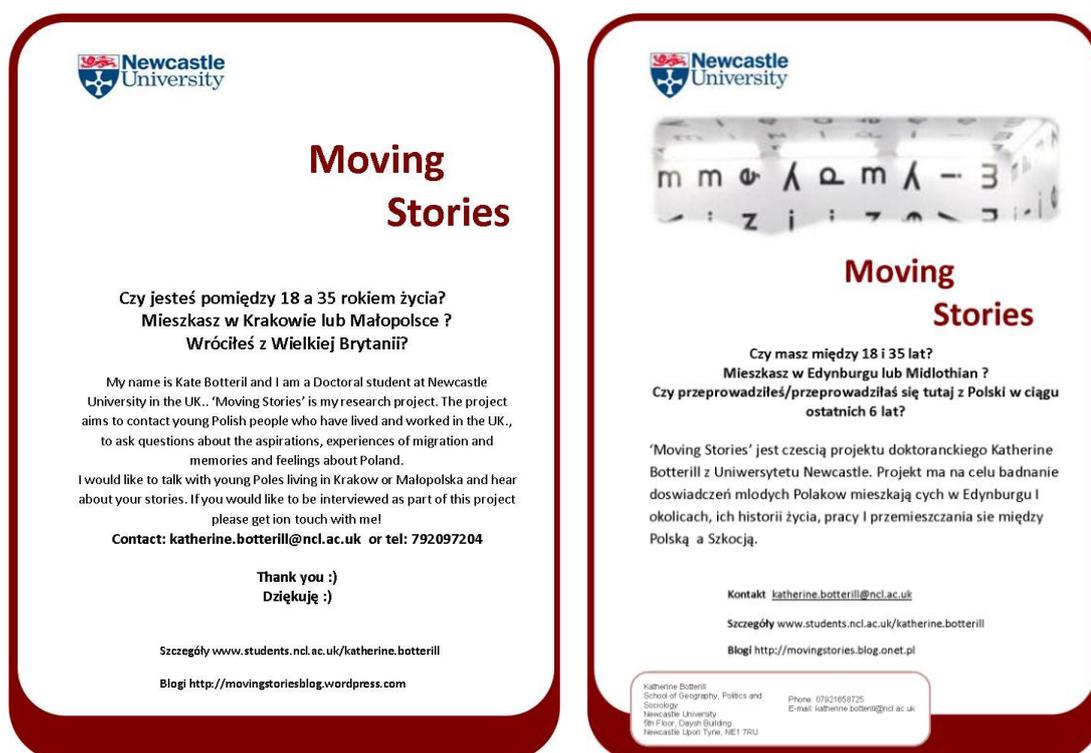
Fig. 3: Two samples of flyer design for recruitment of participants

This method was unsuccessful and I was unable to recruit any participants using this route. I later inferred from a participant that there were problems in the flyer design and branding and it was in fact too professional-looking. He claimed that it looked *'like a marketing tool'* and felt that this would repel young people who may otherwise be interested in the study. Following this advice I used more informal methods of recruitment and relied more heavily on snowball sampling through my existing

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[7] Moving Stories project was intended to have three meanings: a) Moving Stories represent the embodied experiences of mobility – i.e. stories of moving; b) Moving Stories reflect the emotional and ideological aspects of mobility as discussed through biographical narrative i.e. stories that are moving; c) Moving stories is the process of using narrative methods to elicit meanings of mobility i.e. moving stories forward as research method

contacts. Interestingly, adverts posted in an informal manner on 'gumtree', an international online space for classified advertisements, yielded a few responses.

Part II: The Research Design

3.3 The Approach

My research approach draws on key ideas in humanistic geography that question claims to absolute truth. Rooted in anti-foundationalist ontology, I adopt a critical epistemology against the deductive reasoning and generalised quantification of positivist social science. My study is grounded in interpretative social science and I have used only qualitative methods of inquiry. The research does not seek to make abstract generalisations about Polish migration experiences. It is idiographic and seeks to make a series of interpretative claims based on empirical evidence and inductive reasoning. Qualitative research attempts to explore the subjective meanings of research to respondents and participants through a range of methods developed to interrogate and reveal subjectivities. I chose this approach because I was interested in the rationalities that make up young people's decision to move – their expectations, hopes, loyalties and aspirations. A qualitative framework allowed an in-depth interrogation of these factors, exposing their nuances and inter-relatedness in each individual's biography.

3.4 The Method

I used a multi-method approach in the research which consisted of five qualitative research methods. These were:

1) Biographical-narrative interviewing
2) Photo elicitation
3) Semi structured interviews with community members/stakeholders
4) Interactive Blogging
5) Participant Observation/Volunteer Ethnography

This combination of methods reflects a commitment to traditional methods in qualitative inquiry, such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews, but also draws on newer and more innovative methodologies that incorporate visual, interactive and participatory methods. I felt that the more traditional methods would be

augmented by the inclusion of these creative methods and that the multi-method approach would enhance the methodological rigour of the project.

Table 3: Breakdown of Research Methods

Method	Quantity				Timeframe
	Edinburgh	**Kraków**	**Katowice**	**Total**	
Biographical-narrative Interviews	16	12	4	32	Feb-Aug 2010
Photo Elicitation Exercise	14	4	0	16	Feb-Aug 2010
Semi-structured Interviews	5	5	0	10	Feb-Aug 2010
Interactive Blogging	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Feb-Oct 2010
Participant Observation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Aug –Jul 2010/11

The following sections will provide a discussion of the rationale for choosing these methods and the practical issues associated with each method.

3.4.1 Telling Stories: Biographical-narrative interviews

There are three aspects to biographical-narrative interviewing in the study of individuals – the biography, the narrative and the interview. Each of these has different theoretical roots but brought together they offer a critical epistemological stance against positivist social science. A biographical-narrative interview is like a life story. The narrator is responsible for what happens and directs what parts of the story are more meaningful than others through their mention. In this sense it is a methodology that privileges the perspective of the interviewee. However, there are guidelines and frameworks that make it an interview rather than a spontaneous conversation. I decided to use this approach because narrative approaches have historically been adopted by those seeking to explore individual personhood and agency, promoting the untold stories or 'counter-narratives' of 'marginalized voices' (Maynes et al., 2008, p.1). Narrative methods interrogate human agency through raising questions about selfhood 'as it is understood, articulated and practiced by individuals' (Maynes et al, 2008, p.1). The method not only reveals

what people have been through, but also how they construct themselves and confirm their own subject positions *through* the telling of stories about their life (Temple, 2001). In essence, people make sense of the world through narrative because 'social life is itself storied' (Somers and Gibson, 1994, p.38).

In human geography, biographical methods have been adopted to understand the transitions of the lifecourse because they 'relate trajectories…to transitions…and the spaces and times they flow through' (Bailey, 2009, p.408). Telling a story is analogous to recalling or remembering events and feelings and as such provides a link between past and present and the associated transitions of these moments. There are, however, issues of reliability in using memories to recount historical record (Radstone, 2000). Burrell (2011) has discussed this issue in relation to memories of post-socialist transformation and suggests since 1989 discourses about socialism, such as 'ostalgie' sentiments from the GDR and commentary by high profile elites, may have affected how memories are narrated, re-calibrating historical accuracy in light of newer discussions. However, although the use of memories to narrate experience may be a 'risky business', Burrell (2011, p.4) maintains that this does not invalidate the method. The value is the insight these memories offer into what people remember as important to them or, as Burrell (2006b, p.145) puts it, 'their inherent worth is in their transmission of perceived truths rather than received facts'. This simultaneously offers the researcher a record of the personal subjectivities of post-socialism. In this sense, the use of nostalgia as a narrative device tells us something about the imaginary or affective geographies of migration at particular junctures in young people's lives. Boym (1994, p.xiv) claims that 'nostalgia inevitably reappears as a defense mechanism in a time of accelerated rhythms of life and historical upheavals'. It could be suggested, then, that young people express nostalgia (or in some cases 'ostalgie') in the context of post-socialist and mobile transformations. Therefore, in spite of the questions raised over the reliability of nostalgia, myth and emotion in narrative, the method is valuable in its ability to interrogate the subjectivities of individuals in spite of contradictions and ambiguities.

So, a biographical-narrative interview is like a life story and not a life history. Such an approach is not simply a representation of a bygone era but provides a means to examine "how individual narratives are socially and culturally constituted as part of an ongoing explanatory and relational process" (Jackson and Russell, 2010, p.175). Life stories are therefore, not individualised but told within 'broader social narratives'

(Lawler, 2002, p.251) or 'public narratives' (Somers and Gibson, 1994, p.62). I would also add *family narratives* to this catalogue. For example, the use of biographical narrative can reveal intergenerational relations shedding light on the transfer of values across generations and what Vanderbeck (2007) refers to as 'generationing', which 'link social constructions of generations and generational relations to intersections between biographies, historical times, and social times that play over the spaces of lifecourses' (Bailey, 2009, p.410). With this in mind, there is justification for the use of biographical narrative methods to explore the mobilities of young Polish people. On display are their personal histories of mobility, their interpretations of the lived experiences of mobility in the present and aspirations for mobility in the future, all of which are framed within or related to broader social narratives. As discussed, the memories of individuals do not sit neatly in temporal linearity but dart between past and present, between potential and actual, between imagined and physical. So the narrative itself both 'connotes and constitutes movement' as moments and episodes are remembered, interpreted and re-interpreted (Lawler, 2002, p.250). As Frances Pine notes,

> *"More than a world moving forwards, or even a world turned upside down, we seem to have before us a world moving sideways and backwards, simultaneously and often skewed. The ways that people talk about the past and the present, and their ambivalence about both 'modernity' and 'tradition', reflect this confusion" (Pine, 2002, p.98).*

Biographical-narrative approaches require form and it is to this I will now turn – the interview. Kvale (2007) makes the distinction between the professional interaction of an interview which is carefully designed according to a particular purpose and a spontaneous conversation one may have about any topic in any environment. The professional interview requires a degree of preparedness on the part of the interviewer to avoid or prompt lines of questioning whilst simultaneously remaining flexible and adaptable to the conversation and direction of the interviewee. There is also a level of discretion as to how to balance rapport with over-familiarity. As Sennett remarks 'the point is not to talk the way friends do...The craft consists in calibrating social distances without making the subject feel like an insect under a microscope" (as cited in Kvale, 2007, p.9).

The key aims of the interviews were:

- To explore past memories, present experiences and future aspirations of mobility or 'imaginative mobilities'

- To elicit memories and emotions about inter-generational relationships and family value structures, exploring how these affect mobility

- To investigate the experience of migration, work and livelihoods over the life course and how life chances of individuals have affected these

- To reflect with participants on wider meanings of EU mobility and post-socialism

The interviews were unstructured, with key themes to guide conversation but not direct it. In order to fulfil the aims of the interview a rough interview schedule was designed (see appendix 2). I wanted to explore the personal history and memories of each individual through open ended questions about growing up, family, mobility strategies and pathways. I did not want to set in motion a chronological account of a life history based on pre-designed parameters and strict coding frames. For me, it was important for the interview to be an *enabling* space whereby the interviewee/narrator constructed their biography in their own terms. There were, however, limitations on how *enabling* the space could be.

1. Language

All of the interviews were conducted in English but with the option of an interpreter if requested by the interviewee. Interestingly, none of the interviewees requested this as most participants felt they had competent levels of English language skills to complete the interview unaided. A few used the interview as a means to practice their English but were less competent in advanced level English language. With these participants there were issues with understanding of certain questions and I often had to re-phrase or simplify questions, leading to a more structured style of questioning in these interviews.

2. Positionality

Whilst my positionality as researcher undoubtedly played a role in the construction of a narrative (a topic to which a later section of this chapter is dedicated), I used particular approaches to questioning to minimise the imposition of particular frames and terms of reference. I wanted the questions to establish an environment for the telling of particular stories, related to multiple temporal, spatial and social contexts. Technically, the questions I asked were seeking explanations about why individuals move. However, using the biographical-narrative approach the questioning technique was open,

disjointed and informal. Questions related to family histories, friendships and relationships and sought to uncover the deeper thought processes, value judgements and emotional decisions that rationalise mobility, i.e. what makes people make decisions about migration? I was not asking *why* people move, but *how* people come upon the decision to move and what factors and relations construct or shape their rationalities.

To understand these nuances I drew on questioning techniques grounded in psycho-analytical and sociological theory, there was no particular order to the questions and general themes were discussed in different ways. Psychoanalytical methods have been drawn upon in social and cultural geography to take account of the emotional processes involved in research encounters (Walkerdine et al, 2002). A subsequent trend in theories of affect and emotional geographies has consolidated further a commitment to subjectivity (Bondi et al., 2005). Holloway and Jefferson's (2000) free association narrative interview method proved particularly effective in drawing out the 'meaningful episodes' of an individual story because what was revealed was the choice of the interviewee.

> *"Free associations defy narrative conventions and enable the analyst to pick up on incoherencies (for example, contradictions, elisions, avoidances) and accord them due significance" (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000, p.37)*

I was unfamiliar with this style of interviewing since my formal training in qualitative interviewing did not stretch to psychoanalytical techniques. This meant that I could only draw on the ideas of 'free association' and was not taking on the role of 'therapist'. I conducted the interviews in an unstructured and flexible way, using open-ended questions, avoiding 'why' questions and following up answers using interviewee's ordering and phrasing (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000). I reflected on how these techniques worked in the interview setting in my fieldwork diary.

Asking the Right Questions

"This technique of biographical narrative works better with some than others, some need more prompts and reassurance that they are 'saying the right thing', others talk continuously as if I have set in motion a stream of consciousness – a therapy for their anxieties. There is definitely a sense of what is on people's minds at the moment, whether it is the dilemma of staying or 'coming back', changing jobs, moving on, settling down. It is a personal journey and one I have the privilege to hear about, it affects me personally too. I find myself being affected by some of their stories and reflecting on my own story, certain expressions of independence, of family and of friendships, heartache and longing, satisfaction and hope – I hear this in their voices, in the tone and in the looks – it resonates and instills in me a responsibility to be faithful and considerate in my reporting".

This extract reveals the pragmatic and emotional responses I had to some interviews and shows an acknowledgement of my own positionality as questioner. I will turn to how recognition of positionality affected my analysis and reporting of the research in a later section.

3.4.2 Imaging Mobility: Photo elicitation

The second method I used to explore the subjectivities of young Polish people was photo elicitation. This method is drawn from a rich catalogue of visual methodologies and involves 'inserting a photograph into a research interview' (Harper, 2002, as cited in Rose, 2007, p.240). The aim was to conduct a follow-up photo elicitation exercise with all interviewees. However, I conducted only 22 because 10 of the interviewees did not participate[8]. Each participant was asked to bring up to 10 photographs from their personal collection that were in some way related to the discussions held in the previous interview i.e. their migration experience, their mobile histories, family and friendships. I chose this method for a number of reasons. Firstly, I was interested in how people make a visual biography. I asked people to bring a collection of their own photos that had been taken throughout their life because I was interested in their visual record of history. People interpreted this in very different ways but all were involved in a reassembly of memory and were able to reflect on why particular visual representations of their life still held significance for them. People told their own stories – they chose what photograph to take and they chose which photograph to show me. In many cases

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[8] This was mainly due to time constraints on the part of the interviewee

this proved a good way of building on the previous conversation in a more abstract way, uncovering rich descriptions and emotional expressions.

Secondly, I wanted to 'see' how people chose to represent themselves alongside the material realities of migration. A photograph is a unique source that offers 'precise records of material reality' (Collier, 1967, as cited in Rose, 2007, p.238), they are informational as well as affective. As such, they are 'a more transparent representation of the life experiences of participants' (Dodman, 2003, as cited in Rose, 2007, p.238). The third aspect relates to validity of method. The photo elicitation interviews enabled certain pieces of information and themes that emerged during the biographical narrative interview to be re-visited and corroborated, performing a validity check or 'triangulation' of the data (Denzin, 1978). This was also useful in teasing out meanings and significant chapters in people's lives.

One of my interviewees, Ania used a famous quote in the concluding part of our photo elicitation interview to reflect on how we interpret the world around us.

'We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are' (Anais Nin)

Ania's use of Nin's words encapsulates to me the value of using visual methods to learn about how people perceive the world and represent themselves. Talking through visual images reveals certain 'ways of seeing' (Berger, 1972). It can capture various subject positions that inform or construct visions of the world and reveal 'how we see, how we are able, allowed, or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein' (Foster, 1988 as cited in Rose, 2007, p.2). In essence, we all have different visions of the world that relate to our subjectivity, there is not one true vision.

For some, in the modern and postmodern era there are a plurality of 'scopic regimes' in which sight and image, rather than text and speech, have directed or dominated social life in different ways (Debord, 1977; Jay, 1988; Virilio, 1994). Others have reflected on a visual culture that is embedded in practices of everyday life (Mirzoeff, 1998). The photographs analysed in this study are part of this visual culture. But while they are positioned within particular scopic regimes they also demonstrate an agency. By asking questions about photographs from participants' private collections, I am drawing on an already existing image produced by the participant through their own will. They are revealing their 'gaze' through participating in the research and rendering it open for interpretation.

There were a number of practical and ethical issues relating to access, ownership and reproduction of images that had to be considered in the research.

1) Access to Photos

Photography is a mainstream and highly normalised practice for documenting one's life and travel photography revealing the 'tourist gaze' is especially commonplace (Urry, 1990). Images themselves are mobile. People share images with others on websites, such as facebook and flickr, meaning that access to digital format photography is relatively straightforward. One issue is that with mobility comes shedding of possessions in order to travel light, as a result most people in Edinburgh only had a small collection of older family photographs that they had brought with them. However, what they chose to bring was indicative of what memories are meaningful and what visual stimuli they choose to keep with them as a reminder of home, personal development and aesthetic desires.

2) How the image is made

Not all of the photographs analysed in this study were taken by the research participants – some were taken of them by family members and friends. There is, then, a tension between the use of an image somebody else has made to construct your own visual biography. How is somebody else's photograph a real representation of yourself? In this study, what was important was giving the participant the freedom to choose a photograph from their collection that they felt represented their life. In many cases, those taken by others were as emotive as those taken by the interviewee themselves. For example, Marcin chose this photo (7) of him and his grandmother and during the interviewee he described what his parents had told him about the day it was taken but also revealed personal feelings about his relationship with his grandmother and more general discussions about the caring role provided by grandparents while both parents worked. These discussions are analysed alongside this photo in more detail in chapter seven.

Photo 7: Marcin and his grandmother (photo by Marcin)

Marcin remembers that this photo was taken after he has 'escaped' from the house and hid in a 'big, big grapevine' and his grandma was 'very worried'. These memories are not only visual, but also prompt other aesthetic and sensory memories.

3) Permissions and Copyright

Asking permission for the reproduction of images is an essential ethical consideration. Prior to the first interview I obtained written consent from all participants ensuring they were aware of my intentions for the reproduction of photographs in my thesis. I also included a clause which stated that should I wish to publish any material including photography I would seek permission again before doing this.

3.4.3 Semi-structured Interviews

In total I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with a range of people. This method was supplementary to the main interview method. I was interested in the underlying tensions or distinctions between official and community voices and wanted to understand the dynamics of Polish community in different places. I therefore interviewed a range of official and non-official agents, community members and stakeholders as detailed in table 2. The purpose of these interviews was to contextualise the research and investigate the different spatial scales of the migration process beyond

the individual. I was also able to extend my sample through these avenues. For example, following the interview with the Director of Świetlica in Edinburgh I was invited to attend a workshop at the community centre through which I secured three further participants for the in-depth interview component of my study.

3.4.4 Interactive Blogging

During the first year of the research I developed a project blog as an iterative research method. The project blog was designed as an interactive space for discussion among young Poles living in the UK to reveal their 'virtual and imaginative mobilities' (Urry, 2007, p.40). The idea to develop a blog emerged from a commitment to participatory research methods and an interest in handing control of the research process to participants. The blog was designed with the intention of encouraging participants to engage in 'transformative reflexivity' (Kindon et al., 2007, p.1). I wanted users to initiate questions, topics and debate, engaging with a creative practice that was non-representational and performative (Thrift, 2000).

I named the blog 'Moving Stories' in line with my project brand and posted only an informational explanation of the project and the following request[9].

> *"This blog is a place for stories. If you are aged between 18 and 35 and live or lived in the UK, tell your story here.*
>
> *Write or post photos and videos of your experiences – you hopes, your fears and your thoughts about moving, living and working in Europe.*
>
> *Post a comment or email kbotterill@gmail.com to join the blog"*

I had hypothesised that this method would develop into a more sophisticated web tool presenting migrant stories according to migratory paths and journeys, which could be a research output from the project. However, the outcome has been less successful due to low web traffic and poor user engagement with the concept.

The blog evolved over the life of the project. Following two months of no activity on the site I altered my approach and began uploading a series of closed multiple choice questions periodically over the next 6 months, all written in Polish. This yielded results

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[9] See appendix 3 for blog questions, results and screenshots of the homepage

immediately and a few people (5) also posted comments. I used online poll software to create the questions and uploaded one every few weeks to improve coverage. This was, I believe, the major weakness of my approach. The blogging culture requires a frequent and fruitful online presence to ensure people remain engaged and connected to the project. The period of inactivity between posts I feel significantly affected the number of blog followers. Moreover, the blog was intended as an interactive space but as the blogger I did not contribute much of my own personal insights and research developments. I feel this lack of attachment led to the blog being a quasi-survey rather than a forum for creative exploration and discussion. It was not the welcoming and informational space I had at first envisaged but more like a draughty waiting room.

In total, the blog has had 641 views, most of which occurred on the dates I posted a question. I tried to advertise the blog on various sites whenever I posted a new question. The following table details the statistics for the origins of web traffic to the blog over the life of the project. The most common route to the blog is via a key website for the Polish community in Edinburgh on which I had a half page advert and project information section with support from the site owners. I also posted adverts on facebook[10], Emito and Mojawyspa to target Polish community interest.

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[10] I also made a facebook group and invited my participants to join the group so I am confident that many of these views were legitimate

Table 4: Breakdown of Blog Traffic

Website	Number of Views
Edinburgh.pl.com	85
Students.ncl.ac.uk	75
Facebook	54
Emito.net	32
Mojawyspa.co.uk	23
Ncl.ac.uk	3
Alphainventions.com	3
Mail.live.com	3
Poczta.onet.pl	2
Sosbuzz.com	1
Movingstoriesblog.onet.pl	1
Poczta.interia.pl	1
Linkedin.com	1

While the high number of views is a positive outcome of the blog, it is unclear as to the composition of the views. The blog was hosted on wordpress.com which has basic statistical recording of this information but it is not sophisticated enough to provide a rigorous and reliable picture of the exact composition of web traffic. The stats did not account for repeat visits, my own visits, visits from non-Polish people e.g. academics routed to the site from my profile on the Newcastle University website and Linkedin.

In terms of the data gathered from the questions there were similar problems with reliability and analysis. The first 5 questions seemed to yield good results with between 45 and 65 clicks, however, these are cumulative totals calculated in retrospect. The last 5 questions generated between 10 and 20 clicks, which demonstrates a significant decline in the number of users over the 6 month period. This is related to a number of issues. As my research progressed I became less engaged with the blog because I began to realise its pitfalls and wanted to focus on my other methods of data collection. During this time the level of advertising of the blog on external sites decreased and I had

completed the bulk of my fieldwork so was not advertising 'in the field' either. I used free online poll software to design the questions and embed them into a wordpress blog. However, this did not include a free data analysis component, which meant there was no information about repeat clicks or any user location data. Therefore, the validity of the data set is questionable. These issues are potentially resolvable and there are potential strengths to online blogging as a research method. In this case, the method was iterative and at times experimental with a number of unanticipated problems throughout. While it has yielded some data, I am not confident enough to include these statistics in my overall analysis since my other methods proved far more successful in fulfilling my research aims.

3.4.5 Volunteer Ethnography

Between August 2010 and July 2011 I became a volunteer at a Polish community centre in Edinburgh (Świetlica) through which I engaged in informal participant-observation of the local Polish community in a fixed local space. I have used the term 'volunteer ethnography' to describe the participatory process of collecting and analysing data on a particular community through volunteering with that community. The motivation for turning what is otherwise called *volunteering* into an ethnographically-informed exercise came from the realisation that through regular interaction with people at the community centre I could gain trust and get to know more young Poles in Edinburgh, increasing my overall sample size and giving me a more general sense of the diverse expressions of community within the centre. In chapter seven, I detail the inner workings of the centre and discuss in what ways the space acts as a re-formulated and re-configured version of Polish community.

In practice, this method involved note taking at volunteer meetings, informal conversations with volunteers, co-working on events and the everyday running of the community centre, and co-organising projects in support of migrant rights. These techniques infer exploration and immersion rather than description and explanation of subjectivity. They are less aligned to those satirised in Bent Hamer's (2003) ironic portrait of scientific observation in *Kitchen Stories* but instead draw on those used in participatory research methods (Kindon et al., 2007). The use of such techniques in early anthropological and sociological research has been criticised for essentialising cultures within bounded territories using a colonialist frame (Appadurai, 1991). Since

then there has been a shift towards a more critical ethnography based on understanding space and scale as produced through situated, embodied material practices exploring the politics of difference (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997) and the interrelations of space and place (Massey, 1994). A key aim of my research design was to achieve understanding through a concept of shared knowledge or 'interpersonal knowing' between the researcher and the researched (Rodaway, 2006, p.266). This approach recognised the interaction between the researcher and researched in the particular 'lifeworlds' of the community (cf. Rowles, 1976).

This element of my research was not in my initial project design. It evolved as the research progressed and became an additional method for data collection. As I began to develop my sampling frame and making contacts in the field I became involved with Świetlica in Edinburgh. At first I attended a few meetings and promoted my research within the centre in the hope of recruiting volunteers to participate in my study. This method was successful, I completed my interviews with these participants and did not return to the centre for 3 months (during which time I was conducting fieldwork in Krakow). Whilst working away from the centre I reflected on the issue of reciprocity and responsibility in the field. I became uneasy with the thought that I would be perceived as having a detached 'surveillant gaze', extracting knowledge and giving little in return (Walkerdine et al., 2002, p.181). This, I presumed, affected the degree of trust afforded to me and impeded my own understanding of the role of the community centre, how the volunteers interacted and in what ways this contributed to a wider sense of community among Poles in Edinburgh. Upon my return to the UK I visited Swietlica again to re-connect with the research participants and develop further my understanding of the dynamics of Polish community in Edinburgh. Contrary to my assumptions I was not met by unguarded suspicion of my intentions but a 'welcome back' and an invitation to become a volunteer myself. It was clear that my anxiety was rooted in a self-consciousness associated with reflexive practice and the imagined position of authority I inhabited as researcher. I realised that this imaginary was pre-emptive and failed to acknowledge that reflexivity should not be regarded as the property of the researcher. Essentially, I have become reflexive about reflexivity. In a later section I discuss these reflections in more detail.

3.5 Data Analysis

I analysed the data using principles of grounded theory whereby codes and concepts have been drawn out of the data rather than imposing particular theories or hypotheses prior to the exercise of data collection (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). I was particularly interested in this method since it grounds abstract theory by requiring the analysis of lived empirical realities to inform and construct 'new' theory.

Although the main part of the analytical process took place after leaving the field, I was also engaged in data analysis in the field. The transcription of all interviews in the field meant I was able to established key ideas for themes and concepts that would generated a more formal derivation of codes upon return. During the formal analysis phase data was coded using a mix of computer software and freehand methods. I used a thematic approach to analysis, the main coding frame was designed from ideas established in the field following transcription of all interviews. The data was then imported into NUD.IST NVivo software, a data management and analysis programme, which I used to store, manage and open-code the data. The data was then analysed again offline which involved axial coding of key thematic categories, i.e. re-reading coding documents to highlight the inter-relationships between variables and concepts. Words and images were analysed together, and the hesitations, silences, tone of voice and emotional expression were recorded and taken into account.

The rationale for integrating software and freehand methods of data analysis was to guard against the limitations of computer-aided techniques. It has been suggested that a reliance on computer software to analyse data limits the researcher's ability to contextualise the research as a whole, leading to the loss of valuable concepts and themes (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). I feel, however, that through the process of transcription and subsequent freehand axial coding of the data, I have had sufficient interaction with the data to enable a fully contextualised reading of it. The final stage of the data analysis process was in the writing of the research. Whilst writing the thesis, further relationships between concepts were identified and written into the research. Structuring an argument inevitably leads to re-shaping and refinement of theoretical claims and it was through this writing that the critical junctures of my argument were formed.

Part III: Reflections from the Field

3.6 Reflexivity, Representation and Positionality

As social researchers we are continually challenged to strike a balance between positions. We adopt the position of authority as facilitator and expert of certain knowledges, whilst also positioning ourselves as a learner who asks questions and records the knowledges of others. As we continue our study a growing confidence in our ability to summarise and elucidate what we have learnt leads us to a more informed perspective, balanced between the power of new knowledge and the aspiration for further knowledge. However, this is a dangerous space to navigate and throughout this study I have engaged with reflexive practice to find the correct balance between my role as a private receiver and recorder of others knowledges and as an academic striving to make my point. There are ethical considerations in social research that should be implicit in the research process and techniques that guard against unethical practice. I will consider three areas of ethical regard – reflexivity, representation and positionality.

Reflexive practice seeks to discover, reflect upon and make explicit the subjective assumptions which form the value judgements of the researcher. Haraway (1991) argues that all knowledge is 'situated knowledge' critiquing the goal of objective neutrality in scientific inquiry. It follows that qualitative investigation should acknowledge and take account of the social context and site of research. Through techniques such as auto-ethnography, textual or autobiographical reflexivity and auto-critique the researcher or writer engages in self-reflection and in some cases deconstruction of the self in order to reveal or challenge initial assumptions and judgements. There is a danger, however, that over-reflexivity is tantamount to self-absorption and a potentially distracting solipsistic examination of the self. Some have questioned the claim that reflexivity is a critical practice in social research arguing that there is a 'politics of reflexivity' that should be acknowledged and redressed (Adkins, 2002, p.346). Rose (2007) contends that reflexivity should be more about 'self-construction' than 'self-discovery' and should strive to acknowledge difference and uncertainty in the research process. Moreover, the process of reflexivity extends beyond self-examination in the field to recognition of the consequences of the interactions between researcher and the researched and their shifting subject positions.

I have been writing a fieldwork diary throughout the research process and it has proved a useful tool in recalling events, situations and feelings. Re-reading extracts from the diary as I go along have caused me to re-think aspects of my research practice and often resulted in a change of approach. A good example of this is how my positionality in the field evolved over the course of the biographical-narrative interviews. Positionality is an important consideration for any qualitative researcher and it was important for me to reflect on the dynamic between myself and the interviewee. As Rose (2002) claims, 'bodily subjects are positioned in extraordinary complex articulations of identity, including gender...those identities are relational; we are always located in relation to others" (as cited in Bondi et al., 2005, p. 253). Exposing the dynamics of the relational space produced through the process of research is one of the principal aims of reflexive practice. It involves a self-conscious analysis of one's position as researcher and a consideration of the power relations in the production of knowledge. In my fieldwork diary I made explicit my positioning as a young, white, female, middle class and, importantly, English researcher. Being English in Scotland and in Poland was met with different expectations and prompted different responses. I tried to navigate and work with the various assumptions made about my role and identity that were unpredictable and ambiguous. Simultaneously, it was important to be aware of my own assumptions and embedded 'defences and fantasies' which influenced the production of subjectivities (Walkerdine et al., 2002, p.190). While I was aware of these textbook references to positionality and reflexivity, it was only through my own experience that I fully appreciated how diverse and malleable the interview dynamic could be. The following reflection on positionality was written in my fieldwork diary after I had conducted two interviews.

Extract from Fieldwork Diary

"I have been reflecting on my position as a young looking, white female researcher and my interview manner. I tend towards informality and building rapport through common bonds associated with people my age group – music and film for example. I try not to talk too much and be clear about my purpose, stating the duration of the interview but giving control to the interviewee by saying that they can say as much or as little as they want, thus they have control over interview length. In my questions, I use the interview schedule selectively and make judgements on what questions are better placed to continue the interview in its current flow. My aim is to try and facilitate a situation in which the narrator is representing themselves to me as they wish to be seen. However, I am aware that their sense of self is related to my presence and their perceptions of me and what I want them to say. I want them to trust me, and show that I respect their stories and the exchange by offering some of my story too.

I am slightly anxious that in order to facilitate openness I should give some of myself away, however, I am reluctant to give too much personal information incase it affects the interview. For example, in both interviews I have done so far each interviewee has delved into personal issues, relationships and family situations – I have in both cases felt the need to disclose some personal information about myself in response to directed questions from the interviewee. In both cases, my personal life has been shared so I do not come across closed or untrustworthy. I think this is reasoned on a case by case basis – for example, by sharing information about personal relationships my sexuality is made evident – this may cause some issues with interviewees who have certain beliefs about homosexuality based in Christian faith, or it may not and I may be pre judging such an encounter because of my personal experiences".

This extract exposes my own insecurities about my position as researcher and I reflect on a number of concerns relating to how I 'affect' the interview. I am also preoccupied with being 'open' whilst at the same time being reticent to share or reveal my own subjectivity fearing retribution of some sort. As I continued the research it became clear that the concerns about Polish catholic suspicion of homosexuality were largely unfounded and that my own prejudices were interfering. I continued to make decisions about my approach on a 'case by case basis' and although my sexuality was not a frequent topic of conversation, I did not withhold this information in discussions of personal relationships and transitions, for example. This example serves to illustrate the benefits but also the limits of reflexivity. If we over-indulge in our own reflections we can get caught in a reflexive loop that distracts and disguises our eventual aims. However, it also highlights the place of emotions in conducting research, acknowledging the emotional in research is a vital stage in the process of analysis and

understanding how subjectivities are being produced and deconstructed throughout. Rather than deny these attachments and disturbances, I have tried to, as Walkerdine et al. (2002, p.194) suggest, 'find some way to take seriously a subjectivity that always intrudes, no matter what one's best intentions'.

A further yet related issue is how we represent our research 'subjects'. In writing our research we are engaged in representation of some form because, as McDowell (2010, p.169) contends 'the very act of naming something, perhaps even thinking about it always, however temporarily, constitutes an ordering or a representation of a relationship'. Reflexive practice is one technique for safeguarding against the power of the researcher because it exposes researcher bias and attempts to deconstruct the 'fantasies, associations and identifications' at work in the researcher/researched relationship (Walkerdine, 2002, p, 182). These include, for example, binary representations of phenomena, such as East and West or individual and community. Throughout the thesis I have attempted to deconstruct such binaries, recognising their interrelatedness in the narratives of young people and re-thinking their meanings.

Throughout the study I have also been concerned with the interpretation and representation of social class among my participants. Only a few of the participants identified their own social class position and many denied the presence of social class as a relevant category among Polish people due to the legacies of socialism as a facilitating a 'classless' society. This made socio-economic profiling according to social class a difficult endeavour. This is further exacerbated by the variation of class schemas currently used to derive socio-economic status across Europe[11]. Throughout the thesis I talk about the social class position of my participants and I am aware that I am imposing a position on them based on my own interpretation of class definitions and delineations. My understanding of class is drawn from an academic and experiential position - I occupy a privileged English middle class position and have assumptions about social class as an entrenched social problem in Britain. My knowledge of the Polish class system is less familiar and while a review of literature has gone some way to an informed perspective, I have not lived through the transitions of a post-socialist society and can make only educated presumptions about the nature of class in contemporary Poland. This thesis, therefore, does not seek to describe the class system in Poland as it now stands, but analyses young people's narratives on (social) mobility and how this

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[11] Each nation uses their own methodology to derive classification variables, however there are clear similarities among them

relates to class. While some made explicit references to a class position, most were non-committal or ambiguous and I have made inferences using my own judgements about class in the UK Poland and the EU in order to build up a clearer picture of the factors that facilitate or inhibit social mobility among migrants.

3.6.1 Validity and Generalisability

These discussions of representation, reflexivity and positionality have been included to show the process by which I have come to achieve academic rigour in my research. The qualitative approach I have used to conduct the research is concerned with finding meaning and understanding of a particular social phenomenon, it is not a verification of universal laws as might be the aim of the positivist social scientist. It is not therefore a project that intends to be generalisable and explanatory of the population of Polish migrants in the UK but rather an exploratory and contextualised account of specific socio-spatial relations and settings. Equally, the validity of the research is not a claim to absolute truth but a series of valid accounts of individual migrants that have been collected with methodological rigour and accurately reported. Techniques to validate and ensure reliability of the data were embedded in the research design. For example, I personally transcribed each interview within a short timeframe of conducting the interview to ensure continuous reflection of my interview practice and the data being generated. This was usually followed up with a photo elicitation interview which provided a further opportunity for data checking with the participant. It was intended that all interviews were conducted in one language – English – with the option of an interpreter if required. This removed the need for a translator after the interview and facilitated the use of verbatim quotations when reporting. How I then analysed and made sense of these quotes, however, brought about certain ambiguities. All participants communicated with me in their second language but for most this was a language learned at school and many had a familiar grasp of it. At times the playful use of English language and the hybridising of English words with Polish words led to re-configured meanings of common idioms and phrases. This was enriching both to the interview dynamic and the discursive analysis of transcripts later on. I have tried, through explicit reference to these different frames of meaning, to avoid a narrow discursive representation of Polish migrants and to report with discipline and integrity.

3.6.2 Impact and Reciprocity

We constantly ask ourselves about the immediate value of our postgraduate research to the community we work with. The issue of whether our research is valued in this sense ties in with discourse on how research *impacts* upon communities – an increasingly used term to measure the social and economic relevance of our work. Throughout my research so far I have come across a number of dilemmas, the most concerning being that of impact or community engagement. This is a dilemma in which good intentions often fail to materialise due to lack of resources and/or they become negotiated out through many diverse interests. Finding ways to meaningfully involve my research participants in the project so that there is a mutual benefit in the process as well as the outcome has been an unwieldy commitment. Throughout the fieldwork stage I had offered to be involved in co-organising an event about my project with the community. Some of those involved had organised several cultural events in the past and were keen to be involved in such an exercise. However, others were less interested so it became something about a few individuals rather than the community as a whole. My role as volunteer at Świetlica led to discussion about the production of publicity materials for the centre which included some biographical data from my project that would be of wider interest to the community. Although there was some interest from key individuals at the centre, they did not have the time or resources to get too involved and I felt that it may seem like a token gesture rather than real collaborative engagement. The conversations about the possibilities of developing something collaborative in terms of output continued as the research progressed but as I didn't write this into the project from the outset it has been a case of trial and error. Moreover, there has been a conflict of interest since my goals as researcher did not fit neatly into the goals of the community centre or the Polish cultural elite in Edinburgh. It was clear that there were many different versions of community among the Poles living in Edinburgh and rather than attempt a one-size-fits-all solution there were smaller more individualised ways to give back to the people that had helped me. In practice it became a case of returning the favour as and where I could and this lead me to several unrelated and small scale outputs of community engagement rather than a grand statement that made a big impact.

3.7 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have presented and discussed the methodology of this thesis. I have set out and critically discussed the key methods used to collect, analyse and interpret the data. Each method has its merits and limitations in the production of research knowledge and this chapter has considered these in relation to the key aims of social inquiry. This has involved some personal reflections on my work 'in the field' and how I have negotiated and resolved certain ethical and practical dilemmas. Having discussed the methodological groundwork, chapter three presents the theoretical framework for the research and sets up the key argument to contextualise the four thematic, empirical chapters that follow.

Chapter Four

A Critical Reading of Migration and Mobility

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

(Cresswell, 2006, p.2)

4.1 Introduction

As Cresswell (2006) points out the representation and meaning of mobility is ambiguous, it is chaotic and undetermined yet intimately related to time and space. Mobility is a contested concept and subject to a diverse range of interpretations across the social sciences. Old distinctions in geography between *spatial* and *social* mobility have led to a conceptual dualism in the discipline that has forked theories of mobility and migration into two camps. Spatial mobility refers to the horizontal mobility that involves movement across space, while social mobility is the vertical mobility that describes movement up and down in society, relating to classifications of wealth, income, occupation and status. Moreover, the centrality of place in geography has meant that spatial mobility has often been theorised as between territories or bounded entities - getting to somewhere from somewhere. On the other hand, social mobility is conventionally understood as bound to particular geographies rendering the two concepts incongruent. Some theorists have sought to find the linkages between social and spatial mobility at different scales (Savage, 1998; Clark et al., 2011), yet there remains space for further analysis of the present state of theories on mobility. This chapter engages with dialectical thinking to traverse the theoretical dualism of spatial and social mobility. Within this, the classic binaries of the individual and the collective and agency and structure are also considered. Using contemporary theories of social change and new mobilities approaches, the thesis integrates conventionally disparate theory to explore new ways of thinking through mobility and immobility.

Part one introduces the migration-mobility nexus. This section highlights the dualism between theory on spatial and social mobility. Firstly I discuss the way in which migration theory has developed over the past few decades, bringing in theories of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism as key theoretical developments exploring spatial mobility. I then introduce a focus on social mobility – or 'vertical mobility' (Urry, 2007). Here mobility is discussed alongside social differentiation discussing the ways in which class intersects with theories of migration. Part Two charts the emergence of the 'new mobilities paradigm', exploring the divergence from classic migration theory and the convergence with contemporary theories of modernity. Here a detailed discussion of the intersections of modernity and mobility will take place, drawing on the work of key thinkers in contemporary sociology, such as Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck and John Urry. Extending this the work of social and cultural geographers is explored, with particular focus on the politics of mobility and immobility among migrant populations in the European Union (Cresswell, 2010a).

4.2 The Migration-Mobility Nexus

Cresswell (2006, p.43) argues that 'as the world has appeared to be more mobile, so thinking about the world has become nomad thought' where mobility is seen as implicit to our understanding of the world. Classic migration theory sought to understand the relationship between people and place through enquiries into patterns and directions of mobility between and within certain places. Migration had been conceptualized as a purpose-driven break from the normal sedentary lifestyles of people bound to geographically distinct societies. Over the past few decades sociologists, anthropologists, geographers and philosophers have broken with sedentarist traditions to develop theories on mobility that are anti-essentialist, anti-foundationalist and anti-representational (Cresswell, 2006; Said, 1984; Deleuze and Guattari, 1986; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, Gupta and Fergason, 1992). This has contributed to a shift in discourse from understanding space and society as bounded, territorialised categories based on the formation and development of the nation state to a globalised, unbounded and de-territorialised space based on global, supra-national or transnational networks, processes and structures (Castells, 2000; Held et al, 1999; Sassen, 2002). This reflects a discourse of social transformation, whereby mobility is an *effect* of wider processes of social change. However, the transformative power of mobility is also ever present in these narratives whereby mobility is implicated as a causal process of social change. As

Hannam et al. (2006, p.2) argue, "mobilities are centrally involved in reorganizing institutions, generating climate change, moving risks and illnesses across the globe, altering travel, tourism and migration patterns, producing a more distant family life, transforming social and educational life of young people, connecting distant people through 'weak ties' and so on". The following section discusses how theories of migration have developed alongside these processes of social change.

4.2.1 Economic theories of migration

Perhaps the fundamental question that pervades theories of migration is - why do people move? Since Ravenstein's laws of migration were published in the *Geographical Magazine* in 1876, migration theory has worked by the assumption that economics drives migration and this has been a salient model for informing policy, practice and scholarship for two centuries. Neoclassical theorists of migration sought to understand the economic *causes* of migration through an examination of individual decision making for migration. What developed was a set of 'push' and 'pull' factors that drive individuals to move. From this perspective individuals are perceived to make decisions for migration according to rational calculations of costs and benefits based on financial security (Hicks, 1932), labour market demand (Borjas, 1989) and labour market characteristics (Todaro, 1969). The economic *effects* of migration have been viewed as beneficial to both sending and receiving countries resulting in economic equilibrium as migrants respond to labour demand and generate remittances (Borjas, 1989; Brown and Connell, 1993). These approaches have been critiqued for simplifying both the process of migration and the decision-making capabilities of individual migrants. The economistic semantics of neoclassical theory focus on individual labour migrants as 'resources' crossing back and forth in response to labour gaps and the economic requirements of the individual. However, the scale and direction of migration differs from place to place, and rarely constitutes the poorest people moving to the richest places (Castles and Millar, 2003). Moreover, the assumption that migrants have access to 'perfect' information about their potential migratory paths which then lead them to rationally informed choices is seen as unrealistic by critics (Boyle et al., 1998; Castles and Millar, 2003).

For some, using the individual as the unit of analysis to try and understand the causes of migration is a ineffective and misplaced exercise, because it ignores more complex units

of analysis, such as families and householdsas (Portes, 1997b). Such criticism led to a more integrated approach to the study of migration focussing on 'the interplay of socio-economic structure, household strategies and individual decision making' (Massey, 1998, p.15). The New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) approach saw migrant decision-making in the context of the family and the mutual interdependence of household relations (Stark, 1991). Household decisions are perceived to be made jointly and for mutual benefit in order to counter any perceived risks that the household may be experiencing. However, while these theories have provided some rich data on family migration and the role of remittances, they have been critiqued for their methodological individualism and assumptions of optimal rationality in relation to migrant decision making (Abreu, 2010). It is argued that NELM remains rooted in the neoclassical economic tradition as an 'avatar', despite expectations that the models would bridge the divide between the rational action and structural approaches (Abreu, 2010, p.2). Furthermore, feminist critics have argued that NELM approaches do not adequately acknowledge the social relations and gender imbalances *within* the household (Walby, 1989; Halfacree, 1995). Extending this, Boyle et al. (1998) argue that *beyond* the household, power relations among other relatives or friends of the family, such as godparents or 'conocidos' (acquaintances) can influence and be equally constraining to women. Also, the weight of community expectations and the changing nature of religious and cultural values, which serve to perpetuate constructions of gender, can play a part in determining intra household decision-making and ultimately female migratory patterns (Boyle et al, 1998; Chant, 1992). Thus, the household is not a 'unified strategic actor' and migrant decision making within it can be complex and manipulated by many factors (Goss and Lindquist, 1995).

Much of the existing research on gender and mobility is focused around the household and the family as units of analyses. Decisions around migration are often family based but not necessarily decided *by* the family on behalf of the person migrating. Many see women as active agents with their own individual strategies who engage in household decision making (Kofman et al., 2000). Women do not 'simply follow men' and while the feminisation of migration has become conventional wisdom, it is analysed in very different ways and with very different assumptions (Phizlacklea, 2003). From a gender perspective, there is still a need to reconsider the 'neat classification of the development of European migration' as a sequential path from male labour migration to female reunification and recognise that women engage in multiple forms of mobility (Kofman,

2002, p.43). The notion of the household as an agent of change requires further analysis to unpack the relationships and hierarchies that exist within it. What constitutes a 'household', particularly in a time where the 'family' is increasingly heterogeneous, fluid and not necessarily based around traditional gender constructions or representations. In chapter seven I discuss of the impact of family on mobility decisions. I argue that the Polish family is imagined, represented and practiced in many forms and the complex familial relationships extend and have influence beyond the bounded territories of nation states.

4.2.2 Politics and Structure in Migration Theory

A major critique of neoclassical approaches to migration theory has been put forward by scholars of Marxian political economy who sought to explain migration patterns as entanglements of industrial capitalism. Scholars of this perspective sought to highlight the 'hidden' structures underpinning global migration flows, linked unequivocally to the development of industrial capitalism and the social relations of production and consumption (Frank, 1969; Portes, 1978). The scale, form and direction of migration is perceived to be rooted in the 'uneven development of capitalism' across the world, perpetuated by relationships of dominance and dependency between states that direct the movement and mobility of labour (Wallerstein, 1979). Such conditions, it is argued, have deep rooted effects on the economic and social landscape, such as labour market segmentation, 'brain drain' and 'brain waste' that perpetuate regional imbalances and the unequal division of labour on a global scale (Amin, 1974; Piore, 1979; Castles, 2004; Sassen, 1999).

The strengths of a Marxist perspective lie in the insistence on the material effects of unequal structural relations in society. These effects that have been widely evidenced in more recent studies on labour migration, such as Anderson's (2000) work on migrant domestic workers.

> *"Migrant domestic workers are...defined in a very real sense by their social relations, characterised by personal dependency on the employer often reinforced by immigration legislation" (Anderson, 2000, p. 4)*

Anderson takes forward structural approaches to migration by arguing that the individual experiences and micro-worlds of women employed as domestic workers represent a 'commodification' of labour and personhood by buying into and

reproducing power relations of domination and dependency. Multi-scalar analysis of the experiential effects of migration has led to the assertion that migration is a highly differential process dependent on access to resources and social rights (Boyle et al., 1998; Morris, 2002; Luibhead, 2007). Often, this polarisation is represented in terms of the 'gainers and losers' of migration (Smith and Edmonston, 1997) with a discernible chasm of opportunity between them. Highly skilled migrants and entrepreneurs are subject to fewer constraints and more opportunities than those working in lower levels of the labour market, forced migrants and displaced peoples, who occupy most strikingly a position of vulnerability and exploitation. For example, studies of immigrant entrepreneurship document migrants as *agents* who seize opportunities for economic improvement leading to successful 'enclaves' of migrant entrepreneurialism (Bonacich, 1973). While for others the experience is typified by more immediate and uncalculated risk whereby low skilled migrants are *compelled* to dominate the 3D jobs – dirty, dangerous and demanding (Piore, 1979). These migrants have low status, are often informal with limited job security or prospects for mobility making the associated risks of migration greater (Koser, 2007). The conditions for refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people are perceived to be even worse due to the lack of legal status and the associated risks of deportation, particularly relevant in the context of increasing 'securitization' of state borders and the implementation of aggressive measures to control immigration (Cornelius et al., 2004).

Migrants are subject to and engage with a wide range of experiences, typified by variable access to opportunities and fluctuating degrees of risk. For highly skilled migrants, the level of control and autonomy over their migration paths suggests they are more readily able to demonstrate agency in seeking out opportunities for their own gain. However, this thesis shows that many highly-skilled migrants experience declining social mobility in a host destination so that access to the labour market opportunity is uneven and unpredictable. Furthermore, many have observed the 'brain drain' effect of high skilled emigration on the 'sending' country/region, whereby the depletion of 'talent' has serious consequences for development thus challenging the notion that international migration induces development (Glick Schiller and Faist, 2010, p.7). The labour experiences of migrants do not always fit into a neat category of gainers and losers, just as migration does not necessarily lead to economic development. The 'economistic bias' in classic migration theory is a key area of contention for many scholars working in anthropology, social and cultural geography (Faist, 2010, p.4). This

is given due consideration in chapter six where it is argued that the personal transformations of mobility experienced by young people are uncertain and complex and go beyond economic path dependency. Migrants form communities, establish a civil and political presence and express cultural diversity. In chapter six, the importance of economic rationalities *alongside* socio-political and cultural mobilities is discussed.

4.2.3 A Transnational Frame

As migration theory has evolved it has been framed by particular national imaginaries. The quest for order through the strengthening of borders defined the geopolitical landscape of Europe throughout much of the early Twentieth Century. The nation state was, and arguably still is, perceived to be the most sacred and legitimate form of social organization, despite the unstable nationalisms and border politics that emerged out of legacies of imperialism and nation building. Migration scholarship focused predominantly on the benefits and costs of migration to the nation state, particularly in relation to economic development, social cohesion and the effective assimilation of migrants into the public realm. In the early 1990s, however, scholars in the field of anthropology began to challenge the 'methodological nationalism' of classic migration theory and sought to explain the cross-border connections between migrant communities and their home spaces. Basch et al. (1992, p.33) called for an 'unbounding' of social categories like the nation state as the 'key container of social action' and asserted a need to refer instead to the 'transnational' context of migrant's lives and the 'fluid, dynamic and culturally patterned' social relations within which they are embedded. They asserted that migrants engage in cross-border activities and connections between 'here' and 'there', which has contributed to the development of new forms of transnational identification among migrants, or 'transmigrants', outside of traditional nation state borders.

> *"Transmigrants develop and maintain multiple relations - familial, economic, social, organisational, religious, and political that span borders. Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and feel concerns, and develop identities within social networks that connect them to two or more societies simultaneously."*
> *(Basch et al., 1992, p.1-2)*

Since these insights, transnational migration research has become a multi-disciplinary endeavour. Theories of transnationalism address wide ranging concerns and describe multifarious processes, situations and experiences. There is no wholesale consensus on

the definitions or application of transnationalism but rather a collection of trends, talking across disciplines. Transnationalism has been often equated with globalisation and the effects of 'despatialization' or 'time space compression' (Held et al., 1999; Harvey, 1989). Studies concerned with the emergence of international forms of governance began to conceptualise transnationalism as a new epoch of 'post-national' existence, arguing for (and against) universal forms of membership and citizenship and supra-state structures and institutions (Soysal, 1994; Jacobson, 1996). Sassen (1991) charts the emerging 'de facto' transnationalism occurring as state policies are devolved to supranational institutions, like the EU, alongside the privatisation of public sector functions that opens up trade and investment to an international arena. In cultural theory, transnationalism is referenced as an effect of cultural globalisation, such as in Appadurai's (1991) 'ethnoscapes' or Bhaba's (1994) thesis on the 'third space' of 'transnational hybridity'. Here transnational space is 'in-between' here and there, an enabling space which challenges sedentarist and territorial ways of being and permits transnational actors to occupy a third space. This reading has been critiqued by some for being too abstract and 'beyond space and time' (Mitchell, 1997, p. 27). In contrast, Mitchell stresses the importance of economic and social relations in the (re)production of transnational subjects and networks.

The conceptual delineation between subjects and agents has generated diverse yet interconnected research agendas. These interrogate both 'transnationalism from above' and 'transnationalism from below'. The former is typified largely by work on corporate elites, supra-national governance and the global sites of transnational exchange, while the latter is exemplified by the local survival strategies and emancipatory struggles of migrants. Guarnizo (2003, p.690) suggests that 'from below' theorising of the 'transnational living' of migrants navigates 'historically and geographically specific socio-political and spatial hierarchies and contexts'. This framing of transnationalism incorporates both structure and agency in its analysis. While migrants are perceived as active agents involved in political communities and socio-cultural activities, they are also embedded in particular contexts that constrain or facilitate their actions (Smith and Guarnizo, 1998). This framing is also concerned with re-thinking the way in which social forms operate across space, leading to new understandings of family and community as de-territorialised yet connected between 'here' and 'there' in fluid space (Goulbourne et al., 2010; Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002; Portes, 1997a).

"The past decade has witnessed the ascendance of an approach to migration that accents the attachments migrants maintain to families, communities, traditions and causes outside the boundaries of the nation-state to which they have moved (Vertovec, 2001, p.574)

Here Vertovec refers to the transnational *attachments* of migrants to pre-existing social forms and the preservation of families, communities and traditions in spite of mobility. Portes (1997a) describes the emergence of, what he terms, 'transnational communities' as 'dense networks across political borders created by immigrants in their quest for economic advancement and social recognition' (as cited in Vertovec, 2001, p.574). In these communities, individuals live 'dual lives', speaking more than one language and operating effectively across two different cultures and homes. Some see transnational communities as 'born out of the experience of social injustices, global inequalities and chronic insecurities" (Kennedy and Roudometof, 2002, p.4). In the context of the geopolitical transformations that occurred in ECE over the past few decades, it is unsurprising then that such communities are perceived to exist between particular locales in Poland and the UK (Garapich, 2008; White, 2010). In chapter eight a discussion of the Polish community in Edinburgh shows the way in which young migrants develop new communities in the city, re-imagining what constitutes a community in the context of mobility.

Theorising transnationalism is an ongoing critical process. Early studies of transnationalism tended to apply generic models of immigrant settlement and reconnection as evidence of transnationalism. While this has been developed to incorporate ideas around mobile livelihoods, transnational families and communities, there is scope to develop understanding further around how cross border practices operate in different settings and to unpack the mutually constitutive role of gender, class, age and place and varying types of transnationalism. This thesis is concerned with how particular forms of transnationalism, or transnational practices, are producing /constructing new social forms – in terms of families, communities and subjectivities. This objective requires an analysis of the everyday transnationalisms and their associated power geometries. Scholars exploring everyday or 'middling transnationalism' (Conradson and Latham, 2005; Friesen et al, 2005; Voigt-Graf, 2005; Struver, 2005) are concerned with the way in which mundane practices alter the perception of mobility as simultaneously fluid and fixed. For example, Clarke (2005) observes the gap year migrations of British working-holiday migrants in Australia as

ordered through mobility, reflecting that their lives are experienced through internet cafes, mobile phones, airports, backpacking hostels and travellers bars, and therefore structured around a 'culture of mobility'. Moreover, recent work on the place of emotions in transnationalism has brought to attention the ways in which the emotional effects of transnationalism can have material effects on migrant lives and the new forms of subjectivity that are brought about by the migration experience (Faier, 2011).

4.2.4 Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is a concept used in social and political theory to describe certain socio-cultural processes or conditions, philosophies, practices and dispositions that have occurred through increasing globalization and and transnationalizaiton. Vertovec and Cohen (2002) suggest six perspectives on cosmopolitanism. Firstly, cosmopolitanism is a socio-cultural condition of the late twentieth century (Appadurai and Breckenridge, 1988), typified by mass consumerism and standardization of culture which contributes to a decline in local cultures and traditions (Smith, 1995). Secondly, cosmopolitanism is a philosophy based on a vision of global rights and justice (Pogge, 1992). The third reading of cosmopolitanism views it as a political project to promote and govern transnational democracy through supra-national institutions (Kaldor, 1999). This also incorporates those who observe the emergence of a global civil society through the proliferation of new social movements on global issues (Delanty, 2001; Smith et al., 1997). Fourthly, cosmopolitanism relates to the pluralistic subjectivities of political citizens who have multiple affiliations and loyalties and negotiate different scales and forms of political organization and interest (Held et al., 1999). Fifthly, cosmopolitanism is an individual disposition or attitude relating to cultural diversity (Hiebert, 2002). This definition suggests that cosmopolitans exercise choice in rejecting the bounded notions of their own culture, they exhibit an attitude of cosmopolitanism and become 'skilled in navigating and negotiating difference' (Binnie et al, 2004:8). Finally, cosmopolitanism is defined as a practice or a matter of 'competence' (Hannerz, 1990, as cited in Vertovec and Cohen, 2002, p.13). This again suggests a cosmopolitan skills set or cultural competencies that enable one to develop 'the cosmopolitan self' (Waldron, 1992).

In this study the final two definitions of cosmopolitanism are most useful to draw upon in relation to the attitudes and practices of cosmopolitanism that have been observed among young Polish migrants. Throughout this thesis the idea of cosmopolitanism as an

attitude or as a practice is drawn upon in discussions of the mobile self and the pursuit of difference (see chapter six) and the notion of cosmopolitan community (see chapter eight). However, these definitions are employed critically and with due consideration of Binnie et al's (2006, p.13) advice that 'understandings of cosmopolitanism must be generated through analyses which are grounded in particular times and different spatial contexts'. Binnie at el. (2006, p.8) conceive cosmopolitanism as a 'classed phenomenon...bound up with notions of knowledge, cultural capital and education'. It is not unsurprising then that much of the literature on cosmopolitanism is around the experiences and spaces marked out by cosmopolitan elites (Isin and Wood, 1999). These are the meritocrats or 'cosmocrats' who are the travelling business class whose cosmopolitanism is defined by their attitude, lifestyle and consumption practices. This elitist version of cosmopolitanism has been seen to be 'marked by a specialized and-paradoxically-rather homogenous transnational culture, a limited interest in engaging with the 'Other', and a rather restricted corridor of physical movement between defined spaces in global cities' (Vertovec and Cohen, 2004, p.7). Moreover, Kothari (2008, p.500) argues that the discourse on cosmopolitanism is based on 'Eurocentric, urban-centred and often elitist assumptions about who has the potential to be cosmopolitan and the characteristics that constitute the cosmopolitan sensibility'. She asserts a need to critically investigate the subjectivities of cosmopolitanism, understanding how identity intersects with power relations. Again, the relational differentiation of migrant experience is highlighted suggesting that cosmopolitanism is socially produced and not a matter of choice (Calhoun, 2002).

Migration as a lifestyle pursuit for the relatively privileged is juxtaposed by the forced mobility, or immobility of others. The mobility of a backpacker, for example, can be viewed as a source of status and power compared with the forced re-settlements resulting from tourism mobilities (Hannam, 2005). However, Binnie et al. (2006) warn against constructing a dualism between cosmopolitanism as mobility or immobility. Drawing on Appiah (1998) they suggest that local attachments to particular spaces and communities can foster a type of 'rooted cosmopolitanism'. Hence, the more fruitful readings of cosmopolitanism come from those analysed in relation to the 'ordinary' cosmopolitanisms in everyday spaces (Lamont and Aksartova, 2002, p.1; Schein, 1999) and studies on cosmopolitan urbanism (Binnie et al., 2006). Of particular relevance is Ayona Datta's (2009) work on the everyday cosmopolitanisms of East European construction workers in London. Datta approaches cosmopolitanism through Bourdeiu's

concept of 'habitus', linking cosmopolitan attitudes and behaviours to social and spatial practices and contexts. She critiques the class-based binary representation cosmopolitanism as elites vs.working classes, suggesting that there are multitudes of situated cosmopolitanisms on display among London's Eastern European builders. In chapter six I provide my own empirical data in support of Datta's argument, showing that in both Edinburgh and Kraków, there are different cosmopolitan imaginations among young Polish people.

4.2.5 Social Mobility

Theories on migration rarely intersect with theories of social mobility. However, just as spatial mobility is shaped by social hierarchies and conditions (Anderson et al., 2000; Wills et al., 2009), social mobility operates in space. People move for work, for better prospects and lifestyles and these relationships are central to understanding the experiences of migrants. Social mobility is not only about work, but also underpins thinking on the inequalities that influence the life chances of individuals. Social mobility is defined as the movement (upwards or downwards) of individuals or groups in the class or social structure of society (Nunn et al., 2008). There are different approaches to the measurement of this type of mobility which produce different understandings of mobility. These are presented in the matrix below.

Table 5: Social Mobility Matrix (Nunn et al., 2008)

Intra-generational	Inter-generational
The movement of individuals between different social classes compared with that of their parents	The achieved social position of an adult during their own lifetime
Absolute	**Relative**
Changes in the structure of society so that the distribution of the population between different social classes, changes	The movement of an individual between different social classes regardless of changes in the distribution of the population between them

As a concept social mobility is derived from class analysis and it is, therefore, important to present a brief account of the trajectories of class theorising is required to contextualise a re-engagement with the social in framing mobility. Class analysis had been a dominant analytical tool in sociological inquiry for over a Century and has been used by social theorists to order the social world and provide a framework for

understanding societal divisions. Informed largely by Marxist and Weberian theories, scholars have explored the entangled relationship between class and the development of industrial capitalism (Wright, 1985; Edgell and Duke, 1991; Poulantzas, 1979). In their seminal study Erikson and Goldthorpe (1993) critiqued graduational and hierarchical class schemas through a *relational* approach to understanding societal divisions. They viewed class identification as derived from social mobility and immobility, depending on a person's 'life chances, their life-styles and patterns of association, and their socio-political class orientations and modes of action' (Goldthorpe, 1983, p.467). By focusing on *relative* social mobility Erikson and Goldthorpe (1993) have developed a strong critique of liberal theorists who contend that industrial capitalism creates the right conditions for upward social mobility, eroding class differences through the 'logic of industrialism' and widening opportunity structures (Kerr et al., 1973; Blau and Duncan, 1967). Instead, they argued that despite an increase in 'absolute' rates of social mobility across Europe, 'relative' mobility is declining demonstrating the persistence of class division in European society (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1993).

The class schemas developed by Erikson and Goldthorpe (1993) are theoretically grounded analyses of class and a reaction against the prescriptive and subjective stratification systems that had been used to delineate and order social class prior to them. They aim to understand class as relational and to describe the underlying conflict and divisions *between* classes in capitalist societies (Crompton, 1998). While these approaches demonstrate a move forward from the convention of quantifying class in terms of subjective inscription in moral terms, they have been criticised on a number of levels. One particular criticism is that such approaches fail to take into account other attitudinal and behavioural factors that may influence social class processes outside of employment and occupational classifications (Crompton, 1998). Moreover, these studies have been critiqued for their isolation from broader social theory and their focus on narrow economic delineators over 'issues of history, culture, subjectivity and identity' (Atkinson, 2010, p.4). While they may be useful descriptors for employment and occupational status, such approaches do not offer a conclusive explanation of social change and/or shifts in class structures (Crompton, 1998).

A further criticism is around the way in which the categories of classification have been arrived at, and how effective they are in explaining class relations in a 'globalised'

world. The 'methodological nationalism'[12] of many of the studies on social mobility is in contention here, as they report comparatively on the social mobility of different nation states without acknowledging their shifting demography (Breen, 2004; Blanden et al., 2005). Challenging this nationalist framing of social mobility, there is space for considering the *transnational* dimension, particularly in the context of an international division of labour. For migrants, social mobility is predicated on movement around international/regional labour markets. For example, Filipino migrants have been described as a 'highly segmented new international proletariat, portrayed as the globalized workforce of the world capitalist economy' (Gibson et al., 2006, p.370). Furthermore, criticising the 'state-centric, objectivistic and one dimensional' analysis of class, Eade et al. (2007, p.43) suggest re-focusing class analysis on the transnational European social mobility field where 'migration becomes a potentially gratifying continuity in time and an individual trajectory rather than a traumatic disruption of space and uprooting of ties'. These critiques generate questions around how to classify and measure the relative mobility of people who do not lead a sedentary life, asking how do we conceptualise the relative social mobility of the mobile? In chapter six I re-visit this question using empirical evidence from the individual mobility biographies of young Polish people.

Much of the literature on migration is concerned with the integration and incorporation of immigrants into particular national contexts. As a result studies on the social mobility of immigrants have been confined to national frames, with a particular focus on intergenerational mobility and the 'prospects' of second generation immigrants (Borjas, 2006; Platt, 2005; Andersson, 2005). For Massey et al. (1998, p.47) social mobility is an acquired concept for migrants.

> *'...although migrants may begin as target earners seeking to make one trip and earn money for a narrow purpose, after migrating they acquire a concept of social mobility and a taste for consumer goods and styles of life that are difficult to attain through local labour. Once someone has migrated, therefore, he or she is very likely to migrate again'.*

Massey et al. recognise the processual nature of migration and mobility and suggest that migrants experience a shift in perspective when they move, developing aspirational attributes that perpetuate repeat migration. There is limited discussion of a prior notion of social mobility, however, suggesting an absence of social mobility in the sending

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[12] Cf. Glick Schiller et al. (1992) on methodological nationalism of migration theory

labour market. This presumes that opportunities for social mobility only emerge upon migration to a new, more buoyant labour market that is accompanied by a consumerist culture and lifestyle. Social mobility in this context is bound to 'taste' and the acquisition of what others have referred to as social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 2000). According to Bourdieu, individuals possess different forms of capital (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) that are valued and given meaning through the *habitus*[13]. In the context of migration, the habitus is conceptualized as transnational or cosmopolitan (Kelly and Lusis, 2006; Datta, 2009). Kelly and Lusis (2006) argue that the habitus becomes transnationalised as capital is transferred from one space to another. However, these transfers are differentiated leading to an 'exchange rate' of capitals from one habitus to another. It is therefore important to recognise not only the value of capital but how valuations are made, by whom and in whose interests (Kelly and Lusis, 2006; Datta, 2009).

The practices that transnational migrants engage in and experience in particular socio-spatial contexts are the focus of these studies, capturing in greater depth the intersections and negotiations present in these mobilities. The following section delves further into a socio-spatial framing of mobilities in a discussion of contemporary theories of mobility in the 21st century. Here theories of mobility are moved forward through an holistic approach to mobility incorporating the social and the spatial.

4.3 Mobilities in the Twenty First Century

4.3.1   A New Mobilities Paradigm

Theories of mobility and migration have evolved over the past decade and some have championed the emergence of a 'post-disciplinary' 'mobility turn' in the social sciences (Sheller and Urry, 2006, Urry, 2007). The study of mobilities rather than migration emerged as an attempt to integrate diverse strands of scholastic activity on different forms of movement. One of the key differences in the study of mobility is that it navigates a much broader theoretical and disciplinary ground than the study of migration connecting work in the humanities, social sciences and sciences (Cresswell, 2010b). John Urry (2007) has been at the centre of claims of a paradigmatic shift in discourse in his conception of the 'new mobilities paradigm', which he argues is

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[13] Pierre Bourdieu developed a theory of 'habitus' within which 'individuals act in the context of a structured framework of evaluations and expectations which lead to the conscious or intuitive prioritising of certain dispositions and practices' (Kelly and Lusis, 2006, p.833).

transformative of social science presenting a new direction for sociological theory and method. Urry calls for a 'movement driven social science' that 'enables the 'social world' to be theorized as a wide array of economic, social and political practices, infrastructures and ideologies that all involve, entail or curtail various kinds of movement of people, or ideas, or information or objects' (Urry, 2007, p.18). As Adey (2009, p.4) remarks, 'it appears as if the social *is* mobility' (my emphasis). The new mobilities paradigm functions as both a substantive claim that mobility exists in different forms, and as a lens of social inquiry or *way of seeing* that is framed by mobility. Essentially, it is championed as a new way of questioning and theorising society that sees every form of mobility as embedded in the social world.

Mobility itself (as opposed to migration or social mobility), however, is not a new subject of study in the social sciences and, as Cresswell (2010) notes, has long been integrated into studies on urban sociology (Park and Burgess, 1925); spatial interaction theory (Abler et al., 1971); theories of 'plastic space' (Forer, 1978) and feminist theories of everyday mobility patterns (Hanson and Pratt, 1995). The difference in Urry's framing of mobility is in the holistic approach to mobilities and the focus on 'the actual fact of movement' (Cresswell, 2010, p.18). Wide ranging theoretical resources are drawn upon to stimulate new ways of thinking about mobility from Georg Simmel's urban sociology, theories of nomadism and fluidity (Deleuze and Guatarri, 1986; Bauman, 2000a), to complexity theory in physics. Simmel provides the conceptual grounding of Urry's mobility paradigm through his discussions of human movement and interaction in the city. Simmel describes the human 'will to connection' exemplified by the construction of roads and bridges to connect people and places, 'impressing...[a] path on the surface of the earth' (cited in Urry, 2007, p.20). In this sense place is important for mobilities, and mobilities occur in place. Rather than view mobility as unfettered to places (Adams, 1999), new mobilities research introduces the idea of 'moorings' or 'dwellings' (Hannam et al., 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2000). Furthermore, Simmel accentuates the importance of 'flux' in mobility, rather than a pure and unfettered flow. He talks of the 'vitalist flux' of modern life that is characterised by 'tension, struggle and conflict' which is comparable to Urry's dialectic of mobilities and immobilities as complex intersections of social life (cited in Urry, 2007, p.25).

> *"Almost all mobilities presuppose large-scale immobile infrastructures that*
> *make possible the socialities of everyday life... Intersecting with these*
> *infrastructures are the social solidarities of class, gender, ethnicity, nation and*

age orchestrating diverse mobilities, including both enforced fixity as well as coerced movement"(Urry, 2007, p.19).

Largely influenced by Harvey's notion of 'spatial fixity', mobilities are viewed as entwined with immobilites. For them, de-territorialisation and mobility are connected to fixed platforms. As well as the physical, place-bound structures, such as roads and airports[14], immobile structures enable virtual or 'cybermobilities' (Adey and Bevan, 2006) facilitating the informational, digitised and communicative mobility through mobile technologies. Furthermore, Urry refers to the 'social solidarities of class, gender, ethnicity, nation and age' as durable and deep-rooted social structures that interact with and inhibit fluid movement. These solid structures are viewed by some as the 'frictions' of mobility that involve the strengthening of boundaries and borders that perpetuate immobility (Cresswell, 2010; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Rumford, 2006). However, drawing from the earlier discussion of international migrants as a transnational class, it could be argued that these so-called 'solid' structures are themselves moveable.

A key feature of the new mobilities paradigm is its preoccupation with systems and networks, drawing on Castells' (2004) 'network society' as a 'space of flows'. Urry (2007) sees mobilities as non-linear, non-deterministic and dynamic. As a result much of his theory examines 'movement-spaces' which are the 'utterly mundane frameworks that move 'subjects' and 'objects' about' (Thrift, 2004, as cited in Urry, 2007, p.45). New mobilities approaches view the production of social life as an assemblage of interdependent and interconnected mobilities that operate within particular mobility systems. Here, Urry lists the five interdependent mobilities that make up social life.

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[14] See Kesselring and Völg, 2006 for study of as 'places of inbetween-ness', such as airports, waiting rooms, hotels, stations and parks, that enable mobility to occur.

Urry's (2007) Five Interdependent Mobilities

- The *corporeal* travel of people for work, leisure, family life, pleasure, migration and escape, organized in terms of contrasting time-space modalities (from daily commuting to once-in-a lifetime exile)

- The physical movement of *objects* to producers, consumers and retailers; as well as the sending and receiving of presents and souvenirs

- The *imaginative* travel effected through the images of places and peoples appearing on and moving across multiple print and visual media

- *Virtual* travel often in real time thus transcending geographical and social distance

- The *communicative* travel through person-to-person messages via messages, texts, letters, telegraph, telephone, fax and mobile

Social mobility is glaringly absent from this list, so how do new mobilities approaches reconcile this? Urry maintains that 'the richer the society, the greater the range of mobility systems that will be present, and the more complex the intersections between such systems' (p.51), and points to the production of social inequalities through differential access to mobility systems. Adey (2011, p.433) suggests that in this sense 'the 'social' has been *put into* mobility' by connecting the issue of socio-spatial inequality with mobility. Urry's concept of 'network capital' distinguishes between *actual movement* and the *potential for movement*, drawing on Kaufmann's (2002) concept of 'motility capital'. In order to overcome spatial constraints that inhibit mobility people require network capital, and the ability to acquire network capital is 'determined by access, skills and appropriation' (Urry, 2007). This is the point at which spatial and social mobility intersect in the new mobilities paradigm.

In their outline of a new mobilities paradigm Sheller and Urry (2005, p.5) refer to a 'mobile subjectivity'. However, the concept is somewhat underdeveloped and it is unclear as to what kinds of subjectivity could be deemed mobile. Overall, there is limited engagement with subjectivity, but rather a focus on discourse and practice that create mobility and immobility. This is surprising given the influence of Georg Simmel's work on the city and co-presence on the new mobilities thesis. There is little

critique of Simmel's dualistic thinking of urban/rural subjectivity, for example. Simmel (1950, p. 409) frequently compares the personal subjectivity of 'metropolitan man' with the relations of village life which 'rests more upon deeply felt and emotional relationships' where life 'flows more slowly, more habitually and more evenly'. The metropolitan man is discussed as having a particular psyche which is qualitatively different from small town thinking – even feeling restricted in a small town environment. Simmel also talks of 'individualization' of the personality – seeking 'qualitative differentiation' to set one apart from another in the frustrated muddle of the city. He compares the brief, fleeting interaction of people in the metropolis with the 'social intercourse' of the small town. Simmel views the city as made up of systems of relationships that are constantly challenging, restless and fragmentary, in which individuals are liberated from historical bonds and experience 'full freedom of movement'. For Urry, this portrait of *relational* city living is useful ground upon which to discuss the socio-spatial interactions of mobile people. It does, however, assume certain subjectivities that coincide with or are driven by certain forms of mobility, such as the claim that with increased mobility comes increased human agency (Urry, 2007, p.55).

Feminist critiques of mobilities research have interrogated the way mobility studies are formed from gendered and classed (male and middle class) subjectivities arguing that they fail to interrogate the complex intersections of gender and class in the debate on mobility (Adkins, 2004; McDowell, 2006). Skeggs (2004, p.49) asserts that 'mobility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship', therefore it is important to recognise the particular conditions and discourses within which mobility and immobility are represented, constructed and lived out. However, while many critique the paradigm for being ungrounded in economic and political contexts, Adey (2011, p.437) justifies Urry's attempts at this, claiming that 'Urry's increasing focus upon the weighty relationships between mobilities and resources seems certain to ground mobility even deeper within the political and economic contexts from which they emerge and transform'. Taking this forward, I would argue that there is scope to interrogate the subjectivities of individuals that are engaged in these contexts and develop a clearer framework as to what constitutes a 'mobile subjectivity' in the modern world, beyond a cosmopolitan attitude. To contextualise this question further the following section discusses how theories of mobility intersect with theories of

modernity and social change highlighting particular claims pronouncing the decline of collective social forms in an increasingly individualized and mobile world.

4.3.2 Mobility and Modernity

> *"Mobility is central to what it is to be modern. A modern citizen is, among other things, a mobile citizen. At the same time it is equally clear that mobility has been the object of fear and suspicion, a human practice that threatens to undo many of the achievements of modern rationality and ordering" (Cresswell, 2006, p.20).*

Much of the discourse on mobility proclaims the centrality of mobility to all things modern, equating increased mobility with modernity. Urry sees modernity as mobile – 'modern society is a society on the move' (Urry and Lash, 1994 as cited in Adey, 2011, p.436). But in what sense is modern society a mobile society? The paradigmatic shift claimed by Urry suggests that mobility has become a sociological metaphor with emphasis on 'movement, mobility and contingent ordering, rather than upon stasis, structure and social order' (Urry, 2007, p.9). Cresswell (2006) traces the historical discourses of mobility suggesting a shift in the way mobility is understood and practiced. He claims that the late modern era saw the emergence of new forms of global mobility and, as Cresswell notes, 'mobility seems self-evidently central to Western modernity' (p.15). The vast increase in travel through more affordable transportation in an era of automobility and aeromobility, the rise of information technologies and increase in speed of communications are all processes that have 'revolutionize(d) the objective qualities of space and time' (Harvey, 1990, p.240). Some have argued that technological advancements in transportation and communications have caused the 'death of distance' (Cairncross, 2001) or 'time-space compression' as conditions of a postmodern era (Harvey, 1990). Theories of social change in the late modern era stress the transformative. The pace and scope of social change is perceived as unique (Giddens, 1990); where human life is fluid and no longer fixed (Bauman, 1991); and we are witnessing the emergence of a 'new kind of society' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). The personal transformations that accompany the wider processes of change are also seen to produce new ways of being in the world and creating new senses of self. The following sections present some of the key ideas put forward by three social theorists who have been central to discussions on modernity and postmodernity – Anthony Giddens, Zygmunt Bauman and Ulrich Beck.

Arguably the most prolific theorist of modernity is Anthony Giddens whose statements on the nature and consequences of modernity have been both highly influential and highly contested. Giddens has been described as 'the last modernist' (Mestrovic, 1998) in setting out his theory of 'late modernity'. Giddens frames society as post-traditional, multi-dimensional, reflexive and characterised by a series of 'discontinuities' (Giddens, 1990, p. 4). The pace and scope of social change that has occurred in modern society, Giddens argues, is unlike any pre-modern experience and in this sense late modernity is unique. Giddens (1994, p.95) refers to the 'evacuation of local contexts' and dismantling of tradition in late modernity. The assertion of a 'detraditionalization' of society comes with its caveats – firstly, Giddens sees tradition as still existing in discursive articulation in reaction to pluralism; secondly, local customs continue to be practiced as routinised 'habits' or 'relics'. In this sense, tradition and modernity are not mutually exclusive but rather tradition in modernity is viewed as different from pre-modern notions of tradition that hold certain forms of knowledge as sacred and pure.

In a post-traditional society, traditional social forms are no longer deemed relevant. Consumption and leisure supersede old social markers, like class, and a post-materialist politics typify political consciousness. Giddens (1994, p.75) sees the emergence of 'lifestyles' in which individuals have 'no choice but to choose' their future actions from a menu of options (if somewhat constrained). These choices are continuously re-evaluated as a 'reflexive project of the self', and it is these choices that determine differentiated life-chances, rather than the old descriptors of class. In this analysis Giddens (1990, p.53) is not refuting the existence of social inequalities but rather that social relations are being lifted out of their 'situatedness' in specific locales. He replaces traditional identification categories likes class with the idea that individuals engage with different 'lifestyle sectors' which can be drawn upon at different times. In these spaces social bonds are 'made' rather than 'inherited' generating new forms of independence (1994, p.107).

Giddens sees self-identity in late modernity as inherently mobile because reflexivity involves transformation on an everyday, negotiated level. He argues that reflexivity is 'a defining characteristic of all human action' in late modernity, it is at once reactive and enabling (1990, p.36). His ontological premise for this argument is the duality of structure and agency. Giddens' theory of structuration explains the relationship between

structure and agency as mutually constitutive rather than diametrically opposed. With recourse to structural Marxist perspectives and historical materialism, Giddens (1984) critiques theories that discuss structures as constraining and posits that structures are also enabling. He argues that since human beings are complicit in the reproduction of structures, social life and social change are ultimately contingent on the interplay of both structure and agency.

Giddens is critiqued by human geographers for an 'inadequately developed sense of space' (Thrift, 1990; Holloway, 2011) and for ambiguity in empirical application (Gregson, 1989). Cultural class analysts have critiqued Giddens' claims about reflexivity as an essential component of human action, suggesting instead that reflexivity is the property of the privileged. Skeggs (2004) argues that the tropes of individualism, choice and responsibility are induced states, legitimised by elites in order to reproduce inequality. More generally, his meta-narrative is most fervently and defensively critiqued by rational action empiricists such as John Goldthorpe for being 'data free' and lacking in cross-national variation. As a response to these criticisms, I have chosen to engage, albeit critically, with Giddens' theories of reflexivity in this thesis to explore the subjectivities of mobile people. Throughout the empirical chapters that follow I assess the usefulness of Giddens' ideas to explain the experiences of young Polish migrants and the extent to which they are engaged in 'disembedded' and 'de-traditionalized' practices.

Uncertainty in Liquid Modernity

Zygmunt Bauman conceptualises modernity as a solid phenomenon constructed by an over-rationalised and unfettered quest for order. In the contemporary period, processes of globalisation, individualization and consumerism, he argues, have changed the nature of modernity by liquifying social forms and practices. Liquid modernity, he argues, is characterised as a fluid condition, no longer territorialized around solid forms, such as the 'imagined communities' of nation states; its people living in transient and uncertain spaces under conditions that are aestheticised and morally indifferent. Bauman insists that liquid modernity is a phase in which poverty is on the rise and family and community are disintegrating through 'by decree' free market individualism and globalised power. In liquid modernity we are all strangers engaged in fleeting and insecure negotiations and communications. Here, 'proximity no longer requires

physical closeness; but physical closeness no longer determines proximity' (Bauman, 2003 as cited in Clarke and Doel, 2011, p.51).

However, while some seek order in such chaos, others seek chaos in order and attempt to disrupt and subvert 'power-assisted order' (Bauman, 1991, p.9). If we take an empirical example of young migrants in the EU, we could surmise based on Bauman's premise that through their subjective questioning of 'the order of things' a perceptual flux is occurring between order(s) and dis-order(s). It is restless, fragmented and ultimately ambivalent (Bauman, 1991). Thus, liquid modernity is responsible for a permanent state of ambivalence and contingency. On mobility, Bauman (1998) refers to an 'acceleration of modern life' that has changed the relationship between space and time, arguing that power has become 'exterritorial', identities refuse to be fixed and traditional, sedentary practices are fast being overtaken by nomadic lifestyles[15]. For Bauman, this fluid existence is personified by the 'tourist and the vagabond', for whom mobility is differentially positioned. The tourist's raison d'etre is to be mobile and unsettled, rarely putting down roots. The tourist perceives life as a series of episodic choices and, while uncertain, is underscored by the imagination of home and the comfort that one can always return. In contrast, the vagabond is compelled to be mobile, unwittingly 'pushed' around the globe, displaced and unwelcome – "if the tourists move because they find the world irresistibly attractive, the vagabonds move because they find the world unbearably inhospitable" (Bauman, 1998, p.92).

Bauman's symbolic interpretations of mobility in contemporary (postmodern) life can be employed to some degree in discussions on the differential experiences of young migrants, whilst at the same time avoiding his more linear representation of heroes and victims. An exploration into migrant subjectivity requires a removal of dualistic representations where individuals are typecast as 'citizen subjects' or autonomous agents (Ong, 1999). The continuum of mobility opportunity, or 'freedom of choice' for mobility, is strikingly diverse, from the 'kinetic elite' of transnational business and the cosmopolitan 'lifestyle migrants' to trafficking, global homelessness and domestic servitude. Relating to this, Faist (2010, p.24) argues that 'the mobility of persons is best viewed as ranging on a continuum from totally voluntary exit...to totally forced exit, where the migrants are faced with death if they remain in their present place of residence'. White extends this model to Polish families migrating to the UK, in order to

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[15] See Deleuze and Guattari (1986) for a discussion of nomadology

'dispel myths...about the unfettered mobility of Polish migrants' and suggest that working-class families in Polish small towns have '*limited* agency' compared with young, childless graduates from Warsaw, for example (White, 2011b, p.6). In later revisions of his thesis, Bauman addresses the social stratification and differentiation of global populations as a process of differential mobility that polarises freedom of movement– 'some inhabit the globe; others are chained to place' (Bauman, cited in Clarke and Doal, 2011, p.52). Here immobility is recognised as the janus face of mobility denoting that mobility for some is at the expense of immobility for others. Bauman (2011) refers to victims of globalisation as 'collateral casualties' citing particular examples of young unemployed people as among those suffering the worst effects of 'profit driven, uncoordinated and uncontrolled globalization' (Bauman, 2011, p.4). Critical readers of Bauman's thesis lambast the limited empirical purchase of his ideas, viewing it as 'sociology as art' rather than 'sociology as science' (Davis, 2008). This thesis presents empirical examples that engage with many of Bauman's ideas of the self, the family and the community in modernity, validating some of his claims about uncertainty in modern life and the differential access to mobility.

Individualization in Second Modernity

The final theorist of modernity whose ideas are drawn upon in this thesis is Ulrich Beck. Beck theorised the rise of 'second modernity' as a period of modernization through which 'a new kind of capitalism, a new kind of economy, a new kind of global order, a new kind of society and a new kind of personal life are coming into being' (cited in Holloway, 2011, p.56). Beck's (1992) seminal work on the 'Risk Society' encapsulates convincingly the emergence of new forms of incalculable and unintended risk in society, as ecological, political and social. Society, Beck (1994) claims, is undergoing a process of 'reflexive modernization' in which institutions, corporations and individuals are required to continuously adapt to unanticipated risks. Risk, to Beck, is a clear determinant of social mobility and affluence among individuals and he is unsympathetic of those who have re-engaged with class as an analytical device for understanding social change, labelling it a 'zombie category' in social science. He pays particular attention to the workplace as a microcosm of social change in 'second modernity' and argues that processes of labour casualisation, gender empowerment, temporary working patterns and the associated processes of global chains of work have led to new forms of work-life, typified by declining collective solidarity, increased

flexibility of the employee and employer and processes of 'individualization' (Beck, 1999).

Individualization is viewed simultaneously as a structural process and a reflexive project where individuals are no longer ascribed along traditional class, family or community lines, nor are they willing to subscribe themselves to these aggregate categories. He purports that these collective sources of meaning are 'suffering from exhaustion, break up or disenchantment' (Beck, 1994, p.7). Instead individuals carve out their own life-worlds to create new ways of confronting the effects of a 'risk society'.

> *'Individualization [is] …the dis-embedding and…the re-embedding of industrial society ways of life by new ones, in which the individuals must produce, stage and cobble together their biographies themselves" (Beck, 1994, p.13).*

Beck acknowledges the possibility that these life-projects may be characterised as retreat to old traditions and traditional forms in the context of unmitigated risk and fear, but he presents alternative constructions of community as centred on common interests rather than traditional sources of collective meaning. The traditional notion of family is no longer a valid category in Beck's second modernity but is replaced by a multitude of family forms and 'elective family relationships' that extend beyond immediate kin, evidenced by trends in marriage and divorce, particularly 'intercultural' marriage.

> *"The family is becoming more of an elective relationship, an association of individual persons, who each bring to it their own interests, experiences and plans and who are each subject to different controls, risks and constraints' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001, p. 97).*

Beck focuses here on the situation and prospects for Germany and it is not clear how far this is intended to be generalised but nowhere does Beck address kinship in faith communities, or the presence of growing numbers of same-sex families. However, he does recognise the individual desire for intimacy as a counterweight to the disintegration of the family unit, suggesting that rather than disappearing, the family is 'losing the monopoly it had for so long' and undergone a re-shaping or re-constitution into a 'post-familial family' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001, p.98)

Mobility is central to Beck's thesis as he views the 'readiness to be mobile' as a key requirement of the individual in second modernity. In second modernity, the expectation and demand for labour market mobility contributes to the breakdown of place-based

kinship networks where the requirement to develop new non-static social forms is paramount. For Beck, the individual is 'condemned to individualization' (1994, p.14) and dis-incentivised towards community. He predicts the 'litany of lost community remains two-faced and morally ambivalent as long as the mechanics of individualization remain intact' (Beck, 1994, p.16). In his later works Beck (1998) engages more closely with work on transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, extending his thesis to discussion of 'reflexive cosmopolitanism' as post-national practices of spatially distant yet inter-connected communities. Optimism pervades these narratives of cosmopolitanism as he describes the evolution of new communities of sub-political interest cultivated by the co-ordinated efforts of individualized agents.

> *"The ethic of individual self-fulfilment and achievement…[might provide] the basis for a new cosmopolitanism, by placing globality at the heart of political imagination, action and organization" (Beck, as cited in Holloway, 2011, p.59)*

Writing alongside Beck and Giddens, Scott Lash (1994) refers to the 'reflexive community' which, whilst acknowledging processes of individualization, calls for a re-evaluation of community within this context. Lash views community as rooted in 'shared meanings and background practices' (p.149). He draws on Bourdieu's concept of '*habitus*' regarding community as an everyday practice rather than a shared interest or shared property. As such the community is continually re-inventing itself and evolving in a manner very different to that of traditional communities.

There has been some fervent critique of Beck's theory of 'reflexive modernization' and its associated constraints and opportunities. Some have questioned how far the 'risks' he discusses are universally experienced. While Beck does acknowledge some degree of social differentiation of risk, he fails to attend to a cultural relativity of risk and his work has been critiqued for being produced from a distinctly Western European, middle class intellectual gaze (Holloway, 2011; Wynne, 1996). In more recent writings Beck has more readily engaged with the inequalities and injustices of the social world, admittedly though to lambast further the relevance of class - "the categories of class are simply not differentiated enough to capture such interlocked relationships of border-spanning, multi-perspectival inequality" (Beck and Willms, 2004, p.105). There is some merit in Beck's critique of the efficacy of existing class models as realistic representations of social inequality as the complex relationships and practices of transnational migrants are not easily transposed along class lines. However, as people travel, so does class and while there are a wide variation of factors that inhibit or extend opportunities for social

mobility among migrants, class is not a redundant category in this assessment. Contemporary examples of the way in which class is embedded in social processes and discourses have been put forward in defence of class analysis, alongside claims that individualization and reflexivity are 'exaggerated' and 'ungrounded' hypotheses (Atkinson, 2010. p.187; also see Smith, 2000; Savage, 2003; Russo and Linkon, 2005; Stenning, 2008b). In this thesis a re-reading of class relations within Polish migrant groups in the UK shows that through their mobility, class travels and is re-imagined and re-instated in new transnational contexts.

4.4 Re-framing Mobility

Having discussed the emergence of the new mobilities paradigm and the way in which this intersects with theories of modernity, I will now look at how mobility is framed in social and cultural geography. The cultural geographer Tim Cresswell (2010, p.265) conceptualises mobility as navigating the 'contested world of meaning and power', marking out different 'aspects' of mobility that are related to particular power relations. He argues that 'mobility involves a fragile entanglement of physical movement, representations, and practices...with broadly traceable histories and geographies' (2010, p.18). These three 'entanglements' of mobility – movement, representation and practice – provide an holistic framework for the study of particular mobilities and enable a much broader understanding of the 'politics of mobility' that are implicit to them. Politics plays a part in the physical movement of people, as discussed in classic migration studies and transport studies; there is also a politics of representation and the construction of discourses or 'narratives' about mobility; and finally politics is embedded in mobile practices and the embodied experiences of mobile people. This thesis draws on Cresswell's framework in order to provide structure to a complex study on contemporary mobilities in the EU. Concurrently, it does not conform to assumptions about the fluid nature of society and allows the differentiated meanings of mobility to be explored in particular socio-spatial contexts. Cresswell (2010, p.17) emphasises the importance of place and time in the production and reproduction of mobilities and theorises 'constellations of mobility', which are 'historically and geographically specific formations of movements, narratives about mobility and mobile practices'.

When talking of a 'politics of mobility' Cresswell is talking about the social relations of mobility that involve the 'production and distribution of power'. How social relations intersect with mobility has also been the focus of many studies on migrant transnationalism, diaspora and citizenship (Basch et al., 1994; Ong, 1999) and those devoted to migrant subjectivities (Blunt, 2005; McDowell, 2005). Massey (1993) maintains that mobility is always 'located and materialised' and subject to uneven 'power geometries'. State and inter-state power is integral to the politics of mobility as it regulates a moral tone for contemporary understandings of good and bad mobility. Deleuze and Guatarri (1986) assert that 'the State never ceases to decompose, recompose and transform movement, or to regulate speed' (as cited in Urry 2000, p.196). While the flow of capital and goods is encouraged, the free movement of people is subject to regulation through monitoring and surveillance. Moreover, across Europe mobile populations are viewed by States with varying degrees of acceptance. From a 'kinetic' elite who exercise 'transnational corporate choice' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2004) to engage in unsustainable mobility, which is seemingly encouraged through rewards for air miles, to the moral coding of homeless mobility (Cloke et al; 2003), Roma populations and refugees. The positioning of mobile 'subjects' in this way occurs at local, national, and transnational level to regulate mobile practices and reproduce hierarchies of mobility. As Hirst and Thompson (1999, p.257) assert, 'people are less mobile than money, goods or ideas, and in a sense they remain "nationalized", dependent upon passports, visas, residence and labour qualifications'.

As discussed, representations of mobility in the EU purport certain moral valuations of mobility which impact upon the status and rights of mobile people. This discourse frames Europe as no longer bound to traditional, sedentarist, territorialised practices but rather as fluid, flexible, classless, cosmopolitan and mobile where traditional social ties and collective social arrangements have been eroded and the 'individual' is an agent with the capacity to choose and interpret reflexively their own social position (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991). The most damaging consequence of this framing is its failure to recognise that pre-existing socio-economic, political and cultural structures and practices play a key role in shaping the life chances of individuals. In this thesis I show that young Polish people's mobility is defined by particular social relations and their productive and reproductive capacities. Varying degrees of choice, necessity and compulsion lead to different kinds of mobile livelihoods (or not) among young Polish

people and the intersections of class, gender, ethnicity, religion and nationality are all complicit in these experiences.

Finally, in exploring the experiences of mobile people it is important to discuss mobility as an embodied practice (Cresswell, 2010; Cresswell and Merriman, 2011; de Certeau, 1984). Following criticism against the supremacy of the 'gaze' in new mobilities research there have been calls to consider other 'embodiments' of mobility (Spinney, 2006). Alongside more general work on the geographies of materiality, affect and emotional geographies (Burrell, 2008a; Bondi et al, 2005), embodied mobile practices, such as walking, driving, dancing and flying, have been the focus of academic inquiry (Lorimer, 2011; Laurier, 2011; Dewsbury, 2011; DeLyser, 2011). As Cresswell (2006, p.4) notes 'mobile people are never simply people – they are dancers and pedestrians, drivers and athletes, refugees and citizens, tourists and businesspeople, men and women'. Just as mobile subjectivities are represented and attributed particular subject positions through discursive media, they are also resisted and reinforced through embodied practice.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has set the conceptual groundwork for the research. I have reviewed literature on conventionally disparate concepts and theories in order to build an integrated approach to the study of contemporary mobilities. I have considered the migration-mobility nexus by exploring the development of migration theory and its corollaries of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, alongside studies of social mobility. This has enabled mobility to be framed as socio-spatial, whereby social differentiation plays a role in opportunities for spatial mobility. Secondly, I have explored the emergence of the new mobilities paradigm and its convergence with theories of modernity. Drawing on three key thinkers of social change – Anthony Giddens, Zygmunt Bauman and Ulrich Beck – I have critically engaged with theories of reflexive modernization, liquid modernity and individualization. The final section shows how mobility is re-framed by geographers. These studies relate less to the socio-technical aspects of mobilities and more on the practical, representational and emotional, offering new frames within which to make sense of mobility. This thesis draws on these ideas to interrogate mobile subjectivities by looking at how mobility is understood, represented and practiced in different socio-spatial contexts. In this sense I

seek to understand what is beneath the rational choices, making explicit underlying political, social and cultural relations.

Chapter Five

Transformation: Post-socialist Mobility and Immobility

5.1 Introduction

> *"In the new 'liquid' phase of modernity, communism was bound to find itself an antiquated curiosity, a relic of bygone times, with nothing to offer to the generations born and groomed inside the new era and no sensible riposte to their profoundly altered ambitions, expectations and concerns" (Bauman, 2011, p.27).*

In line with his theories on liquid modernity, Bauman (2011, p.27) views communism as 'a bona fide 'solid modern' phenomenon' and charts its decline as synonymous with the emergence of a 'liquid phase' of modernity. Here, in the 'new era' of post-communism, or post-socialism[16], he says younger generations have 'altered ambitions, expectations and concerns'. Bauman's claim represents much of what has been critically analysed in chapter four, namely the assertion that social transformations of the Twentieth Century have generated profound changes in the scale and pace of mobilities. The aim of this chapter is to respond to broad claims about social transformations through a contextualised study of the historical mobilities of young people who grew up during post-socialist transitions in Poland during the 1980s and 1990s. It begins by establishing the socio-economic and political context of post-socialist transformation in Poland and its associated effects on young people through a focus on neighbourhood, work and community. Within this it is argued that socialist practices around work and community have influenced the values and perceptions of young people in spite of socio-economic transitions, particularly relating to the durability of kinship networks in the community and the persistence of class in social formations. The chapter then explores spatial and social mobility and immobility in Poland during transformation and shows mobility occurred throughout the period in spite of restricted freedoms and socio-economic hardships. Here, the significance of older (im)mobilities in the development of newer (im)mobilities is asserted, with empirical examples of how inter-generational experiences of mobility are complicit in the growth of aspirations for mobility among

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[16] Throughout this thesis the term 'post-socialism' is used as opposed to 'post-communism' for continuity purposes. Post-socialism is more commonly used in human geography while post-communism tends to be the *lingua franca* of political science. See Stenning and Horschelmann (2008) for a discussion of conceptual frames of post-socialism in geography.

young people. Furthermore, the chapter illustrates to some degree the differential experiences of mobility for Polish families during the 1980s and 1990s, challenging assumptions of universal immobility enforced through state socialism but reinforcing the notion that mobility was, and is, experienced differentially and subject to status and connections. The chapter goes onto explore the transformations of EU accession in 2004 and the impact of EU 'free movement' policies on the mobility of young people in the 21st century.

Post-socialist Transformation in Europe

Over the past two decades Europe has witnessed vast and rapid changes to its economic, social and political structures. The revolutions of 1989 led to the pervasive decline of socialist institutions and to the fall of the Iron Curtain, which demonstrated symbolically the end of socialism. For many, the dismantling of the Soviet system signalled a 'return to Europe' and a new dawn in political and economic freedom, characterised by a free market system, democracy and political cooperation with the West[17]. For many others, the uncertainty and disorder experienced during the transition from socialism to a post-socialist capitalist system has generated insecurity, dislocation and poverty. 1989 is often conceptualised as a transformative episode in European history where the changing geopolitical conditions of Europe are represented as a linear progression from post-socialist states as 'backward' and repressive to progressive and free, and 'catching up' with Western European neo-liberal democracy[18]. However, this assumption is critiqued for its failure to recognise that the rapid installation of neo-liberal reform in the region was prescriptive, overly teleological and did not adequately take account of the pre-existing social structures, and thus in many ways widened and deepened social inequalities (Murrel, 1993; Burrell, 2009; Hardy, 2009). Within the post-socialist region, ECE states have experienced different forms of economic, political and social change that point to the diverse geographies of transition (Pickles and Smith, 1998).

In Poland the process of transformation began much earlier than 1989 and its effects continued throughout the 1990s. It is therefore difficult to delineate the precise moments when transformation began and ended. This chapter is concerned with post-socialist

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[17] Using the terms 'East' and 'West' is a reference to Cold War geopolitical division that has informed binary thinking around the relationship between these distinct geopolitical settings. For a critique on this terminology see Stenning and Horschelmann, 2008

[18] See Burrell, 2009 and Fortier, 2006 for discussion on this discourse

transformation as it occurred throughout the 1980s and 1990s, from the rumblings of the Solidarity movement (Solidarność) in 1980, Martial Law and the development of market socialism in the 1980s, the installation of neoliberal reform in 1989 and its continuing effects. This timeframe coincides with the early memories of the young people interviewed enabling a blend of historical record with reflective memory to illustrate the political, public and personal transformations that occurred during this period.

Biographical narratives reveal early memories of post-socialist transformation alongside perceptions and recollections of parental experiences and inter-generational values that have been re-configured over time. Few people remembered the specific events of 1989 but had vivid memories of changes that took place, reflecting on the lived experiences of dislocation and uncertainty that became widespread during this time. Nostalgia, myth and emotion are inherent in these memories and narratives shifted from the positive recollections of socialist material culture and practices from childhood to teenage memories of the 1990s and the effects of transformation as more problematic. Temporal shifts were common and differentiation between experiences before and after 1989 was unclear. Everyday places, people and things dominated the narratives rather than a chronology of events in relation to geopolitical shifts. As a result the following section presents the everyday of neighbourhood work and community during this period.

5.2 Neighbourhood, Work and Community

The social and economic landscape of post-socialist transformation in Poland has been described as a landscape in crisis defined by uncertainty, ambiguity, insecurity and fragmentation (Stenning et al., 2010; Hardy, 2009). For decades mass economic growth through industrialization and urbanization had been prioritised at the expense of living standards and vast inequalities existed between the ruling classes (*nomenklatura*), the expanding working classes and rural 'peasants'. Following a period of economic stagnation, high price rises and rising socio-economic inequalities in the 1970s the Solidarity movement emerged in 1980 as working-class, political opposition to the state. To combat this opposition and ameliorate a debt-ridden economy Martial Law was instated in 1981 and a policy of market socialism introduced as a mediated response to emerging cracks in the centrally planned economic system. As market socialism developed the partial privatization of assets, property and business contributed to the

emergence of a quasi-management or entrepreneurial class, formed mostly of the *nomenklatura*. This contributed to a further polarization of wealth and opportunity and exacerbated the poor living conditions of the non-elite members of society. The material consequences of these transformations for ordinary people were stark, with managerial inefficiencies leading to a reduction in workers morale, inefficient production and shortages of even the most basic goods (Hardy, 2009). The rapid installation of neoliberal reform in 1989 deepened these effects with structural and sectoral changes generating high levels of unemployment, widening wage differentials and in-work poverty (Kovacs, 2000; Smith et al., 2008).

Numerous ethnographic studies on everyday life after 1989 document the effects of transformation on women and men in various local and regional settings (Bridger and Pine, 1998; Burawoy and Verdery, 1999; Hann, 2002). The relationship between neighbourhood, work and community in this context has been discussed most notably by Stenning (2010) whose empirical work in Nowa Huta explores the 'changing geography of the work-community nexus' in the context of post-socialism in Poland (Stenning, 2010, p.209). This work documents the ways in which new forms of work and community are emerging in 'new economic spaces', though she maintains the important role of 'pre-existing connections' in attempting to 're-shape capitalism' through everyday resistance (Stenning, 2010, p.209). This section develops this work through a discussion of young people's memories of the everyday life of transformation.

5.2.1 The 'Concrete Blockivisko'

Recalling the memories of early childhood experiences caused many of the research participants to reflect on the local neighbourhoods they grew up in, with vivid portrayals of space and place in these locales. Some recalled the *'concrete desert'* of overpopulated housing estates, most remembering their block of flats as '*typical*' and *'small'*. Others remembered the *'crowded'* home spaces - *'a two room apartment'*, sharing a *'tiny bedroom'* with siblings, and parents sleeping in the living room.

Photo 8: Residential Housing in Podgórze, Kraków (photo by KB)

Many recalled going away to stay with grandparents in rural areas or *'escaping'* to the forests on the peripheries of towns as a diversion from the *'communistic style blockivisko'*. Rural areas were often depicted as sites for holidaying, both those structured around work and organized through kinship networks. For some, these *'open spaces'* were viewed as valuable sites of exploration and freedom and a direct contrast to the densely populated housing estates which served as their home, developed during the drive towards urbanisation and industrialisation of early socialism (Pounds, 1960). These post-war high and low rise blocks were the predominant, though not exclusive, housing style in ECE during socialism and most of the research participants who grew up in urban areas recalled living in such blocks (see photos 8 and 9 for example of residential housing in Kraków). Access to state-owned housing was typically subject to state or municipally led allocation and long waiting lists, often related to employment status (Stenning et al, 2010). Informally, housing exchanges, sub-letting and the quasi-marketisation of housing became more widespread in the later years of socialism (Bodnár and Böröcz, 1998). Elzbieta recalls how her parents negotiated the complicated housing allocation system in Bytom, a mining city in Western Poland.

> *"You has sizes of flats for particular families so if you only had one child you could only get two rooms…it was a complicated system…my mum was pregnant*

with me but they only had one child so they said 'you can't have this flat'…so they started trying to find some rules so they could have this flat and my mum worked in education so she was allowed a bigger flat because of that…they finally found a way…then my grandmother swapped flats with somebody across the road so she could help my parents because they both worked. That's what it was – swapping flats, not like selling" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).

The notion of flat swapping highlights the centrality of informal barter exchange networks in the neighbourhood and supports claims that kinship and social networks were operating in a highly organized fashion outside of state structures (Buchowski, 1996).

Characterisations of the tower block as a dull and oppressive environment were counterbalanced with more ambivalent and nuanced discussions of the social life of neighbourhoods. Relationships with neighbours, a '*sense of community'* and reflections on the *'types'* of people living on the block were recalled to illustrate the social relations of the locality. This was sometimes discussed in relation to the internal differentiation between housing blocks according to occupation or status, implying some of the hidden hierarchies within the neighbourhood.

Photo 9: Plan and entrance to residential housing area in Nowa Huta, Kraków (photo by KB)

Tomek reflects on the occupational classifications between the blocks, though he does not accept that this constituted social class or material division within his neighbourhood.

> *"...there was a crazy idea that this block of flats is Police block, this one is soldiers and this one is University people...you are pretty anonymous, you don't know people in your building or the one next to you... I must say at some point I realized that most of my friends were from highly educated parents but...in Poland because of communism everything was flattened and so a person working on site and a person like my father, for example, they had the same money so there was nothing like 'this guy is a tutor in the University, he is smart, he has a great car, and this guy is working class and has no car', - No-one had car! There was no visual association with social class or social group - it was just people who you feel better with"* (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).

Tomek's perception of social class is predicated on an understanding of socialism as classless due to equality of income and he refers to the lack of 'visual association' as an indicator of its absence, contextualized through childhood. In a different interpretation, Łukasz refutes the notion of class division in the neighbourhood despite recognition of unequal distribution of wealth and material goods.

> *"...there were people much wealthier living in the same block of flats – they had a better car and unlike the UK a car was an indication of your wealth, and they possibly had better audio equipment or TV, they were still living in the same block of flats, is it middle class? I don't know, they worked in an office, they were not factory workers...I can't see any particular sort of class division"* (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).

It is interesting that both Tomek and Łukasz use imagery of the car to illustrate their perception of status. As Hanasz (1999) points out, automobility during socialism represented a statement of rebellion against public transportation infrastructure and so, against the state. Cars were viewed as 'engines of liberty' (Hanasz, 1999) signalling an aspiration for individual mobility and material status. This contrasts Urry's (2007, p.120) notion of the car as an 'iron cage' in modernity. He argues that the car is 'wholly coercive' as it compels people to live their lives in 'spatially stretched and time compressed ways'. The relationship between materiality and mobility is considered later in this section where it is argued that the fetishisation of particular goods from the 'West' represented a form of 'imaginative mobility' (Urry, 2000, p.49; Burrell, 2011).

Łukasz views the car as an indication of wealth, but does not equate this with any particular class position. His distinction generates questions about how far the memories of wealth and status (or lack of it) are dictated by the subjective understanding of young

people's own position and status at the time. These interpretations of the class relations in the socialist neighbourhood could be described as 'ambivalent, defensive and hesitant' whereby class is dismissed as irrelevant (Savage, 2000, p.36). For some, this was justified by the contention that poverty was universal and a denial that one group was disadvantaged over another.

> *"It wasn't good that everyone was poor but at least we were equal and actually no-one felt the poverty that much at the time -I didn't realise we were poor' (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

For others, there were clearer distinctions. Dorota claims that *'we were never rich…we never had any money really'* but refers to other people in the neighbourhood as *'poor'* and less able to cope when the *'system changed and some people didn't have to go to work – you didn't have to go to work, you didn't have money but you were on benefits and you sit at home drunk with friends'* (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh). Here poverty is understood in the context of dependency, echoing claims about the emergence of an 'underclass' and 'cultures of poverty' after the collapse of state socialism (Domański, 2002; Karwacki and Antonowicz, 2003) rather than a class-based interpretation of poverty[19].

There was some variability of housing stock in Poland with pre-war tenements and single-family homes also making up the physical landscape of socialism (Stenning et al., 2010). Though most of the research participants lived in blocks, some lived on rural farms and others admitted to a more affluent life in a single-family home and the associated benefits of wealth and status. In contrast to the depictions of rural spaces as sites of freedom those living in the countryside described rural spaces as a site of work (farming) signalling a lack of time and struggle. Marcin grew up and still lives in Wola Botorska, a village around 20km from Kraków. For him, the most vivid memories of a rural childhood are associated with 'very hard work' rather than exploration or freedom.

> *"A lot of people in the village have to work in some companies and also had small farms so I remember all the time, and the same friends, work with parents on the farm. It was not very fun. Very hard work" (Marcin, age 34, Kraków).*

The differential and relational perception of outside space among those living in urban and rural areas is redolent of claims that poverty and immobility were common features of with village life during socialism (Creed, 2002; Zbierski-Salameh, 1999).

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[19] See Stenning (2005b) for a critique on cultural interpretations of poverty in the post-socialist world

During the transformation to capitalism, the housing system underwent radical change. Privatization, deregulation and marketisation of social housing led to 'markedly uneven social and geographical consequences' (Stenning et al., 2010, p.112). Weronika recalls a privileged upbringing which involved opportunity for mobility through private education and frequent travel.

> *"I was raised in a big house with my Grandma and my sister, It's quite a big house….I went to private college so we didn't have problems with money. We had a good life. We would travel a lot" (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).*

Weronika has continued to travel and has spent time living as an adult in the USA, UK and Ireland. She says she has an almost inherited disposition for mobility through her parents' desire for travel but bemoans the lack of a 'wow factor' in seeing new places since she has already seen so many places. Conversely, others have described being 'trapped' in the locality with little opportunities to travel outside of their home town independently from structured work-based holidaying and/or Church organized groups that were emerging in the late 1980s. These examples serve to illustrate to some degree the differential experience for mobility among families during the 1980s and 1990s, challenging assumptions of universal immobility enforced through state socialism (through passport policies etc) but reinforcing the idea that throughout the transformation period mobility was experienced differentially and subject to status and connections. This is given further consideration in section 5.3.

5.2.2 Working Class Community

In a discussion of working-class communities in post-socialist Poland Stenning (2005b) argues that throughout ECE the working class was constructed both materially and discursively during state socialism. The combination of top-down propaganda by state bureaucrats depicting working-class heroes and urban restructuring to create new towns and cities around new forms of work, contributed to a 're-making' of society around the principles of socialism and the representation of working class as a vanguard (Stenning, 2005b, Słomczynski and Shabad, 1997). The workplace became 'the main axis of organisation of social life' during state socialism around which education, leisure, health and housing revolved (Ciechocińska, 1993 as cited in Stenning et al., 2010, p.81). Neoliberal reform after 1989 led to profound changes to the nature of work and community life in Poland with de-industrialisation, labour market segmentation, the development of new, flexible forms of work and the emergence of in-work poverty

(Smith et al., 2008). Kideckel (2002) argues that these changes, along with ineffective representation, increasing dependency on the informal economy and inadequate state policies for protection, remediation and training of workers have contributed to a deeper inequality of resources for workers. He goes further to assert that the perception of the 'worker' has declined under post-socialism from one of courage and heroism to one of denigration and 'subalternization'.

Ewa grew up in Szczecin in North West Poland near the German border, she remembers little about the events of 1989 but recognizes the material effects of transformation on her family,

> "I remember it really affected my family after that, I mean…financially… because my dad had some troubles with job and with work and I remember the family being much poorer than it was before" (Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).

Dorota reflects on both the material and emotional impacts of transformation on her family, growing up in a small town south of Kraków.

> "when the system changed suddenly you had to pay for everything yourself because it was subsidized before, my mum was a nurse as well so all the healthcare was so easy for us…my mum was a nurse and my father was working in the [factory] …when the system changed because he got onto the Board he started to be stressed and my mum had to organize other jobs…they were not at home, all the neighbours had to do the same, we stopped meeting that often" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).

Dorota's memories of life at 'home' during this transitive juncture connote a disruption of stable family and community life when her parents were increasingly absent from the home in order to earn a livelihood. In major cities, such as Katowice and Łodz, the effects of transformation led to rising unemployment and wage polarization, particularly in the context of industrial decline and closures. Maciej reflects on the changes in Katowice during this time,

> "In Katowice it was always an industrial city and the miners were people who had money but in the 1990s when communism was gone, the only chance, you had to do something…nobody is going to give you money for nothing, you had to do something so you had to go to work, finish some college or education or open your own business" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice).

Here, individual agency to '*do something*' is perceived as the solution to overcome the challenges of the transformation from socialism to capitalism. Maciej moved back to Katowice in 2008 after completing a MBA in Dublin. He now runs a small marketing company and contends that there have always been 'opportunities' in Katowice for

those with the initiative to recognise them. The Katowice conurbation was severely affected by the decline of industry and has struggled in terms of economic development in the context of economic crisis in the 1990s and 2000s. Agata remembers the insecurity of this time and the 'opportunity' for retirement rather than unemployment.

> *"My mother, she worked in the Steelworks until she retired and they fired quite a lot of people at Huta Katowice and they offered some people of a certain age that they could go for early retirement so my mother used this opportunity. She was not happy not to work but was scared that if she stayed she would be fired"* (Agata, age 32, Kraków).

Elzbieta recalls the redundancies at a Bytom[20] coal mine in a slightly different manner

> *"Bytom used to have 9 coal mines and now there's only one left so they were closing them all down and there was a moment where they had to fire someone in my mum's department – they fired her but I think it was because they knew my dad had a bit of money and they would be able to cope whereas there were people there where both husband and wife worked there and if they were fired they would be left with nothing"* (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).

Elzbieta portrays the redundancies at the mine as inevitable and seems to take solace in the fact that her family were not the worst affected, implying a sense of trust in the workplace where the idea of collective bargaining and mutual support remained strong tenets of the working-class community in Bytom after the fall of socialism.

From the narratives it was clear that memories of growing up in local neighbourhoods were peppered with a mixture of ambivalent critique and devoted warmth. Emilia describes Bytom as a *'post-industrial rotten town'*, *'really dilapidated'* and *'one of the ugliest towns in the world'*; while Sabina evokes a sense of immobility present in her neighbourhood.

> *"I lived in a block of flats, it's not very typical to travel somewhere in my area – completely different….when I was a kid I played with kids outside in the yard…but not many people travelled, all the time just in the area they are living and I was travelling quite a lot"* (Sabina, age 25, Katowice).

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[20] Bytom is one of 16 cities located in the post-industrial conurbation of Katowice in Upper Silesia which is the largest metropolitan area in Poland and one of the largest in CEE. Bytom is in a disadvantaged position, economically and socially. Krzysztofik and Runge (2010) suggest that outmigration, an ageing population and economic decline have led to urban shrinkage in the city. Depopulation through rural outmigration and emigration occurred in response to rising unemployment (particularly long-term unemployment) and pockets of deprivation the city. Economic development and transition from traditional industry to service sector expansion was hampered by exclusion from special investment zones. Despite some peripheral investment and development of small businesses in Bytom, the rising unemployment and low salaries sustained high levels of deprivation among the people.

She marks the static version of community life as contrary to her own experience revealing perhaps class based antagonisms within the residential neighbourhood. Both Elzbieta and Emilia, who were friends growing up in Bytom recall the size of the residential area but with different interpretations on how the scale of the place affected the sense of community. Elzbieta warmly refers to the neighbourhood as *'sypialnia Bytomnia'* (the bedroom of Bytom) while Emilia reflects that there were *'too many people who live there'*. However, the negative portrayals of Bytom as a place are counterbalanced by a sentimentality of youth. Despite her earlier indignation, Emilia reflects that *'I will always go back to Bytom as a place of my youth so I feel sentimental about it'*. Similarly, Elzbieta remarks *'I know it wasn't the nicest place to grow up but I think you can have fun and be happy in any place if you have your family and friends'*.

Here place is discussed in terms of the social relations of the community. Similarly, Maria recalls growing up in Nowa Huta, a socialist-planned neighbourhood in Kraków organised around the local Steelwork factory.

> *"I always thought the time before [the transition] was better, my parents, we had lots of guests all the time in the house... the whole block of flats were open door and you could go and get juice from aunty from 5th floor and you knew all the kids. It was tough but everyone was sort of happier, I think especially that most people relied on the steel factory and it gave you some sort of reassurance. I think it's a specific history of this district"* (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).

Maria expresses nostalgia for the social aspects of the community in Nowa Huta before the transition and the sense of certainty and 'reassurance' for people living in the neighbourhood of Nowa Huta. She suggests that the lack of continuity of work in the immediate aftermath of transformation led to a resilience and adaptability to uncertainty among many families and a continuation of community as a means of support through the uncertain processes of neoliberalization. In an analysis of civil society in 'communist Poland' Buchowski (1996, p.83) argues that both the proliferation of 'official' associations and 'unofficial' civic groups composed of extended kin groups contributed to social cohesion during the communist period. Youth organisations, such as the Union of Socialist Polish Youth (ZSMP), Union of Polish Students (ZSP), the Polish Scouts and the Country Youth Association, were state licensed groups and forums of collective organisation. Furthermore, despite state efforts to subvert family and local loyalties in favour of subordination to the State, kinship and friendship networks remained a central part of everyday social and economic life (Buchowski, 1996).

5.2.3 Social and Kinship Networks

In the context of widespread shortages, economic uncertainty and political instability the reliance on family and friends to facilitate networks of care and employment became a widespread feature of Polish community life during socialism (Stenning et al., 2010). Extended kin and friendship networks were 'microstructures' operating in an 'alternative public sphere' that, some argue, 'buffer[ed] against the economic crisis in Poland confronted during the 1980s' (Tarkowska and Tarkowski, 1991 as cited in Buchowski, 1996, p.85). Multi-generational households were common with grandparents often living in the family home or in close proximity. From the narratives this emerged as particularly important for those in single-parent families. Jozef grew up in Poznań and lived in a predominantly female household with his great grandmother, grandfather, mother and sister. Jozef chose this photo (10) to represent important memories from his childhood. He reflected on the close relationship he had with his great grandmother as his primary carer when his mother went to work. He described her as an 'iron lady' and a central figure in the family set up.

Photo 10: Jozef's Great Grandmother (photo by Jozef)

> *"My great Grandma she was from Lviv, she was living with us in the place and she make a huge impact on my life...Because father left, my mother needed to go to work and so she left me with her" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

Family and kinship networks have remained strong in post-socialist Poland. They are both encouraged and required due to policies of welfare privatisation along with the conservative and traditional values of Polish Catholicism (Stenning et al., 2010). However, in the context of EU mobility the family is undergoing a complex process of re-configuration with greater youth mobility having implications for networks of care in the future. These issues will be covered in more detail in Chapter seven.

Wider friendship and community networks were also important sources of emotional, practical and strategic support (Wedel, 1986). Dorota recalls her mother's 'strategic' friendships with another woman in the local neighbourhood as a means of protection.

> *"She is an important figure in our family for various reasons. She represents a little how Polish society works still – she wasn't really a friend of my mother's but she was a poor woman who came from a really terrible family, a pathological family. Her husband is a drunk and his three sons as well and they're all criminals…she never had money so she ate at our place. So we were basically protected in the neighbourhood because the mum of the criminals was a friend of our mum" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Dorota's representation of her mother's friend as a microcosm of Polish society suggests a reading of community and the extended networks of friendship as a 'mutual economy of favours', which is particularly salient among women (Stenning et al., 2010, p.188). Some have argued that these social networks are now being eroded by new life-worlds in a market economy, echoing theories of modernity outlined in chapter four. Creed (2002) suggests that rapid transformation to a market economy has contributed to more individualised work practices where economic survival strategies are 'inward' facing; a de-politicisation of culture; and a sense of dislocation and a retreat from community. This is further repudiated by increasing levels of EU mobility through which traditional forms of community are no longer practiced in the same way in the context of a mobile livelihood. However, nostalgia for community was a key feature of the narratives which has contributed, in some cases, to the construction of new forms of community by young Polish people who maintain the value of community structures challenging processes of individualization in society. Chapter eight contains a full discussion of the new forms of community being practiced and performed by young Polish people.

As Svetlana Boym (1994, p.285) wrote 'most of us experience history as nostalgia', and anyone asked to recall memories of childhood and growing up will involve a nostalgic recollection of past events, people and places. Todorova and Gille (2010) suggest that post-communist nostalgia is a longing for the security, stability and prosperity of state socialism, or the feeling of loss for a particular form of sociability that is deemed to have gone or been forgotten. Some of the narratives contained nostalgic reflections on a 'simpler', safer and more sociable community life during socialism compared with the materialist and consumerist preoccupations of modern life. Memories of good neighbours, friends and extended family networks in the home or neighbourhood were often tinged with a romantic glow of affection for childhood. Dorota grew up in a village 150km south of Kraków and recalls the community in affectionate terms.

> *"The communism was great for children, really. Basically your parents were always there, they were never stressed, there were lots of people, all our neighbours. Our flat was like the social hub so there were people coming, lots of children all over, everybody had lots of children and we were living in this block of flats where the doors of our houses were never closed…I don't know the simple things, like queuing for something- for coffee or for toilet paper and all the children from the neighbourhood were queuing there and money wasn't a problem, there was nothing to spend money on…you never wanted money because you couldn't buy anything…everything was gotten by chance…but it was a really happy time" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Dorota values the 'simple things' and the social life she remembers as a child, focusing on the sense of open community in the neighbourhood and her perception of the benefits of chance over choice. A lack of options, materially and financially, is viewed as a blessing rather than a curse whereby consumerist aspirations were irrelevant. Nostalgic reflections on the lack of options available during communist times somehow making life 'simpler' were backed up with the denigration of the over-stimulating yet addictive public culture of consumption that was observed, by some, in contemporary Polish society. Here the imagery represented through nostalgia is related to 'a vision of the present, a vision of decline' (May, 1996, p.200). Some lamented the wider injustices of contemporary society through nostalgic reflections on life during socialism.

> *"We were trapped to be the same and people didn't like it, but everybody had the same flat which is good because at the end of the day you had a flat, you had your own family – ok one orange per family per year but you still had the orange and just now you have families who have five oranges and the other ones*

who will never get one – and apparently now it's better?" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).

Financial stability was perceived to be a key benefit of socialism, Konrad recalls that *'people were earning much more'*, while Ryszard and Agata claim that people did not have *'money problems'* because there was *'nothing to buy'*. Typically, it is argued that post-communist nostalgia is subject to generation with middle aged Poles being most likely to express it, since they are viewed to be the chief beneficiaries of the socialist era (Wieliczko and Zuk, 2003). However, Todorova and Gille (2010) suggest that a growing curiosity among the younger generation has extended this phenomenon across the generations, as exemplified by Dorota's memory of her childhood. For some, this nostalgia exhibits an ironic and almost ambivalent form often relating to the material life of socialism, again drawing on Dorota's example of queuing for coffee, and the objects that trigger memories of a certain time and place. This will be re-visited in a section 5.3.2 on materiality and consumption.

The nostalgia for a 'simpler' time was not shared by everyone and romantic portrayals of socialism were contradicted with a sense of relief that things have moved on. Reflecting on growing up during the transition in Poland, Magda comments upon how times have changed.

> *"I did spend a chunk of years in a changing Poland which was moving from Communist, backwards country to a democracy with a lot of economic opportunities…but there was still a lot of differences – like two worlds – people living in the memory of old habits or the country providing everything – your house, your car, like a nanny state and people, young people tried to achieve something, change something and find their way in the new economics…it's applicable for the older generation…some people were reminiscent of how it was back in the day and things were easier, much easier, much more predictable. You know, you were born and your parents had a flat and you get it in 20 years if you're lucky…" (Magda, age 33, Edinburgh).*

Magda is not nostalgic for state socialism and views young people as having a different viewpoint from older people – *'like two worlds'*. Pine (2002) suggests that social memory is 'selective and contextual' and that a generational impasse is relative to present circumstances and the vantage point from which one remembers. For young people the memory of lived experience is that of childhood and a coming of age combined with the possibilities of the present and future. For some, negative memories of the dislocation, poverty and immobility of state socialism in Poland involved typecasting an older generation of Poles as untrusting, antagonistic and unwilling to

'move on'. Łukasz refers to specific examples to illustrate his assumption of mistrust between Poles.

> *"In communist times I feel the nation was…people we're quite sort of…there was a secret police that would for instance pay your neighbour to grass you up to the police if you're doing something anti-Poland and that pattern of behaviour stayed in Poland and in Poles, so I don't know if this particular generation has to die out for things to move on?" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

This example illustrates the extent to which political tensions and anxieties were embedded within the social fabric of daily life, reflecting a desire to change the system.

5.3 Transforming Mobility

As set out in the introduction to this chapter, a key aim of this thesis is to recognise the importance of analysing memories of the past to identify how young people imagine and perceive continuity and change/transition. In the context of mobility this requires taking seriously 'old' mobilities in order to understand newer ones. Polish mobility did not suddenly occur upon Poland's accession to the EU in 2004 despite media portrayals of the unprecedented 'influx' of Poles to the UK since then. Spatial and social mobility before 2004 – whether on family holidays, individual travel experiences, seasonal work or transnational business – have shaped subsequent mobilities and influenced the perceptions and aspirations of young people in different ways.

Post-socialist mobility continues to exist in a set of distinct socio-economic and political conditions and, despite a 'European rebranding' of former Eastern bloc countries, 'equality of mobility was certainly not achieved' (Burrell, 2009, p.5). While the experience of mobility for Poles changed through the removal of repressive structures and policies after 1989, freedom of movement was highly variegated through differential access to information and resources for spatial and social mobility during a period of economic and social restructuring. Much post-socialist mobility was a continuation of socialist era practices and many of those interviewed recalled memories of migration prior to 2004, whether as individuals or families. Some people's parents and grandparents had been emigrants themselves; others had other family members living abroad. Others had limited access to mobility prior to 2004 and for them their emigration to the UK was the first emigration experience in their immediate family history. These personal histories of mobility, in one way or another, instilled a sense of value and confidence in mobility as a (new) viable route for work and a life.

> *"The Iron Curtain imposed a huge cage of immobility… Such bureaucratic restrictions did not succeed in wedging human nature into a Communist form. Independence of movement continued to be a deep value to most people living under Communist rule"* (Hanasz, 1999, p.1).

As Hanasz suggests, during the period of State socialism in Poland there were a number of significant barriers to mobility. Political and economic conditions, such as State control of passports, visa regimes and the restriction of civil liberties, made spatial mobility outside of Poland very difficult (Jaźwińska et al, 2007). International mobility was often limited to those in power or political emigrants rebelling against the system. Some of the narratives contained stories of extended family members fleeing Poland illicitly to other parts of the world, such as Ewa's aunt who left Poland on a state subsidised trip to Italy and subsequently 'escaped' to Canada. As well as material restrictions by the state, emigration from Poland was 'constructed as a moral issue' within elite circles and for some Poles, particularly activists of Solidarność, to leave Poland was viewed as betrayal by the political elites involved with the trade union and democratic opposition movement (Erdmans, 1992).

Patterns of everyday mobility and travel within Poland were also subject to state provision through the subsidised public transport systems, low level car ownership and subsidised holidays linked to workplaces. However, despite these limitations many people had positive memories of travel experiences during socialism, from taking summer trips to the mountains on a PKS bus to the state-subsidised holidays with families and children from the local neighbourhood (co-ordinated through each workplace). In fact, it was the decline of these provisions in the early 1990s that was perceived as contributing to less mobility in the context of neo-liberal reform and the end of collectivised provision for travel. Konrad describes the changes his family experienced in Radom, central Poland. In this photo (11) Konrad and his father are on holiday together at a Lake in Poland. He chose this photo to represent a positive memory of travel from his childhood, but reflected with regret that this was the last holiday he and his father went on together.

Photo 11: Konrad and his father on their last holiday together (photo by Konrad)

> *"I was always going on holiday somewhere with my parents in Poland, then after – nowhere. The companies owned houses over lakes, somewhere deep in the woods and it was easy to go there. I was going with other kids to camps for two or three weeks and later on, nothing. The companies sold the places, it became very expensive so basically it was stopped to send kids to camps. And then I started going by myself" (Konrad, age 29, Edinburgh).*

Konrad recalls the waning of opportunities for travel through the state, suggesting that for his family the promise of greater freedom of choice for mobility through private agencies was de-stabilised by the polarisation of opportunity and material effects of neoliberalization (Stenning, 2005a). For Konrad, the absence of opportunities for family holidays required him to travel alone and has generated an aspiration for independent travel and ultimately emigration from Poland in 2005, though not without serious risks to his personal safety and a lingering sense of nostalgia for the dynamics of family holidays.

The systematic regulation of mobility under socialism extended to more permanent internal migration within Poland from rural areas to newly developed conurbations, such as those in Katowice and Kraków, based on Soviet style town planning. For example, Nowa Huta, a small town outside of Kraków, was created to house workers of the new Lenin Steelworks after the Second World War. From the 1950s onwards young people were encouraged, through state propaganda, to migrate from countryside to town

to work at the steelworks, sold on a life of 'stability, opportunity and security' in an otherwise insecure and uncertain post-War environment (Stenning, 2005a, p. 117). Maria's family moved three times before she was aged 6 from a small village where her mother grew up to Skawina, a small town where *'we were all cramped because my uncle's family also lived there and my granny and it was a two bedroom flat'*; and then to a nearby village until finally settling in Nowa Huta. She describes moving into the area in the mid 1980s and the impact upon mobility.

> *"We had a block of flats and everyone in these flats moved in the same week, so it was chaos but you met your neighbours in the same week and they all worked all over the place but mostly in Nowa Huta, mostly in the steel factory. There was such a mix, there was a doctor, an accountant, my dad was a surveyor – mix mix mix of people but they all moved in the same time, they all had kids, there was no-one old and no-one young, they were just the same age of kids [but].. My mum was really missing the village, and at this point women didn't really work if they had kids, but my mum had the opportunity to emigrate to the States on a tourist visa for two years but she couldn't come back...my dad was working all the time so my granny was taking care of us and...for two years I think my mum became a kind of stranger really."* (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).

Maria's early experiences of mobility within Poland, along with her mother's emigration, have shaped her ideas for mobility and community as an adult and she is carefully reflective of both the benefits and costs of international mobility. Her mother's emigration experience was perceived as less free than Maria's since she was unable to return for two years and as a result Maria appreciates the opportunity of having a 'free passport' to travel. However, while she enjoys the benefits of her own emigration to Edinburgh and the 'choices' for mobility she is also wary of the dislocation of perpetual mobility – *'it de-roots you... I have to say, every time I moved I am losing something'*. This reflects a paradox of mobility – while the promise of geographical mobility is a newly acquired freedom in many ways, the 'obligation to choose' is often overwhelming (Rose, 1998 as cited in Walkerdine, 2003, p.240). Making sense of the choices for mobility in the context of seeking a better and happier life is the key challenge for Maria and for her there is some merit in staying in one place – there is a sense of gaining more through staying put and working through the everyday struggles.

Many reflected on the barriers to mobility during state socialism and felt that their parents had shaped their aspirations in reaction to those barriers – exploration, travel and education were commonly held inter-generational values. Joanna moved to Edinburgh in 2006 but has had many previous experiences of migration having lived in London, San Francisco and Finland. Joanna's mother lived in the USA during the 1970s

before getting married and settling in Łodz to bring up her children. Her mother's emigration left a positive *'impression'* of mobility on Joanna, and a less positive impression of being 'stuck at home'.

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

Joanna's perception of mobility is associated with her mother's pre-marriage experiences of mobility to the US and conversely immobility is bound to the experience of her parents being tied to home and a fixed place. Her aspiration to be 'more free' than her parents has led to a life of continual movement from place to place in order to experience the world and *'work more internationally'*. Dorota also cites her mother's migration experience from a rural village to a nearby town as equally influential to her current perception of mobility.

> *"My mum did make a big step as the only one in her family to leave the village and she went to town and became a nurse and not a housewife, it was a big thing for her so she did her step but she wanted more for her children... [my parents] were a little bit better than the place where they left"* *(Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Here the value is in the aspiration to move, despite the distance. Dorota respects her mother's attempt to 'better' herself by leaving the village, in spite of familial expectation and tradition. Dorota's own experiences of international mobility, in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, have been further 'steps' in the family's mobility trajectory.

As well as intergenerational experiences of mobility there was state-sponsored youth mobility which gave young people an opportunity for travel independent of family. State-licensed youth organisations were important in Poland throughout socialism, but after 1980 and the emergence of 'Solidarność', independent movements for civil action became more common. The Independent Union of Students (NZS) or Student Solidarity were set up to give young people a vehicle for political expression (Anusz, 1991), as well as environmental and pacifist movements which developed into strong 'youth subcultures' (Fatyga, 2001). During this time the Catholic Church was embedded in local community life as an antidote to state control and represented a 'major organization of civic society' sponsoring youth groups and investing in social infrastructure (Buchowski, 1996, p.87). From the narratives it is evident that many

people were members of Catholic associations and for some this offered the opportunity to travel both within Poland and to other European destinations, such as Italy, through formal Church camps throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Dorota describes how she exploited these opportunities to travel in spite of an ambiguity about the functioning of these associations.

> *"I always thought I would go to an English speaking country and I couldn't find an opportunity for exchange ...it was actually Church related – it was a Catholic group and I was a Catholic, I didn't really like Catholic associations but that was the way to go abroad" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Most people had experienced some sort of travel, both within Poland and abroad, through youth exchanges. For some this was linked strongly to school and 'cultural exchanges' became increasingly common in some schools, particularly to neighbouring countries like Germany. Tomek remembers meeting students from other European countries on a cultural exchange trip from his home town of Zielona Gora, West Poland in the 1990s.

> *"There was some kind of cultural students exchange between [Germany] and Zielona Gora and we went there for ecology camps...So that was quite important part of my life in Zielona Gora, every year trips to Germany to do that and because in that village there were people not only from Poland and Germany, but also Czech people, Danish ... it was already extremely international bunch of teenagers and we had good fun there" (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Tomek perceives the opportunity to interact with an international group of young people as a positive and different experience to that of his parents. This is discussed in relation to his later travel experiences - hitchhiking around France and his more recent emigration to Scotland through which he describes a 'need for movement' and a desire to meet 'different' people. In chapter six I discuss in greater detail the way in which these early experiences of mobility have affected the way young people understand and practice mobility today.

5.3.2 Imagining Mobility through Materiality

Throughout State socialism balancing production and consumption had been a perennial problem and the move to market socialism in the 1980s only led to further disorganisation of the consumer market (Hardy, 2009). As a result, shortages were commonplace and bribery, long queues, waiting lists and barter networks became everyday practices (Hardy, 2009; Myant, 1993). Many people remembered, often with

derision, the act of queuing as a national pastime, as Dorota notes, *'we hate queues, there's such a resentment for queues" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh)*. Queuing for essential items, such as bread, became such a common practice in the 1980s that it continues to be a common reference point of communism[21]. The scarcity that became a common feature of all socialist states in ECE was made more apparent by the awareness of and limited access to western goods. Poland has been portrayed as one of the more western facing states of the Soviet satellite due to its emigration histories and strong base in Christianity (Davies, 1981) so it is perhaps unsurprising that western goods permeated the borders (Burrell, 2011). For some the infiltration of western goods was an exciting childhood memory and they recalled the particular objects that clearly marked this development, such as colour TV's, computers and Disney toys rather than *'black and white TV and plastic cars'*. Burrell (2011) refers to this excitement as an 'enchantment for western things' whereby the memories of specific objects were coveted in contrast to those available in Poland, which were often perceived as lacking colour. As Jacek claims *'western stuff was awesome, so everybody went for the western stuff'*. Burrell (2011) suggests that western goods evoked 'imaginings of another place and the yearnings for another time yet to come, a potentially enchanting, and in the context of the socialist regime, politically subversive combination' (p.145). The idea that this 'enchantment' could transport young people to an imaginary western place is aspirational and, as Burrell notes, could be regarded as a form of 'imaginative mobility' (Urry, 2000, p.49), where the idea of the west precludes geographical mobility to the West[22].

Informal markets and 'Pewex' shops were the most organised sources of acquiring western goods (Kerr, 1977), though many acquired goods through their own emigration or that of their parents. Maria remembers getting sent parcels of clothes and toys from the US while her mother was working there as an emigrant.

> *"We got parcels from the States and got lots of clothes which were kind of 'wow' and toys and everything but my granny, she was from the war generation and she was afraid everything will be wasted so she was not giving us any of the new clothes, it was all put away for special occasions, for the better times. So we were still dressing in this awful bloody communist things having all this great things put away and we were getting a toy every week, so we were like 'come*

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[21] In 2011 the Institute for National Remembrance (IPN) released a board game called 'Kolejka' (The Queue). The game has been marketed as an educational tool to teach young people about the 'everyday life of the 1980s' during state socialism. It has been dubbed 'the communist monopoly' as it is intended to highlight the inequalities and scarcity present during the state socialist era.
[22] See Bonnett (2004) for a discussion of the 'idea of the West'

on'. All these things were put away for special occasions which never came because we grew out of the clothes and they were given to someone who had a special occasion every day" *(Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Here, the distinction between the '*new clothes'* and *'communist things'* is clear. Moreover, her grandmother's decision to *'put away for special occasions'* is illustrative of the changing values towards material possessions between generations. It could be argued that the value of these once sought after Western products has declined and become a source of ironic parody for some young Polish people. Compared to the widespread availability of things in Poland today, Western products from the 1980s are now being regarded as kitsch. Here, an image of nostalgic products from the 1980s and 1990s are displayed beneath the bar in a popular nightclub in central Kraków.
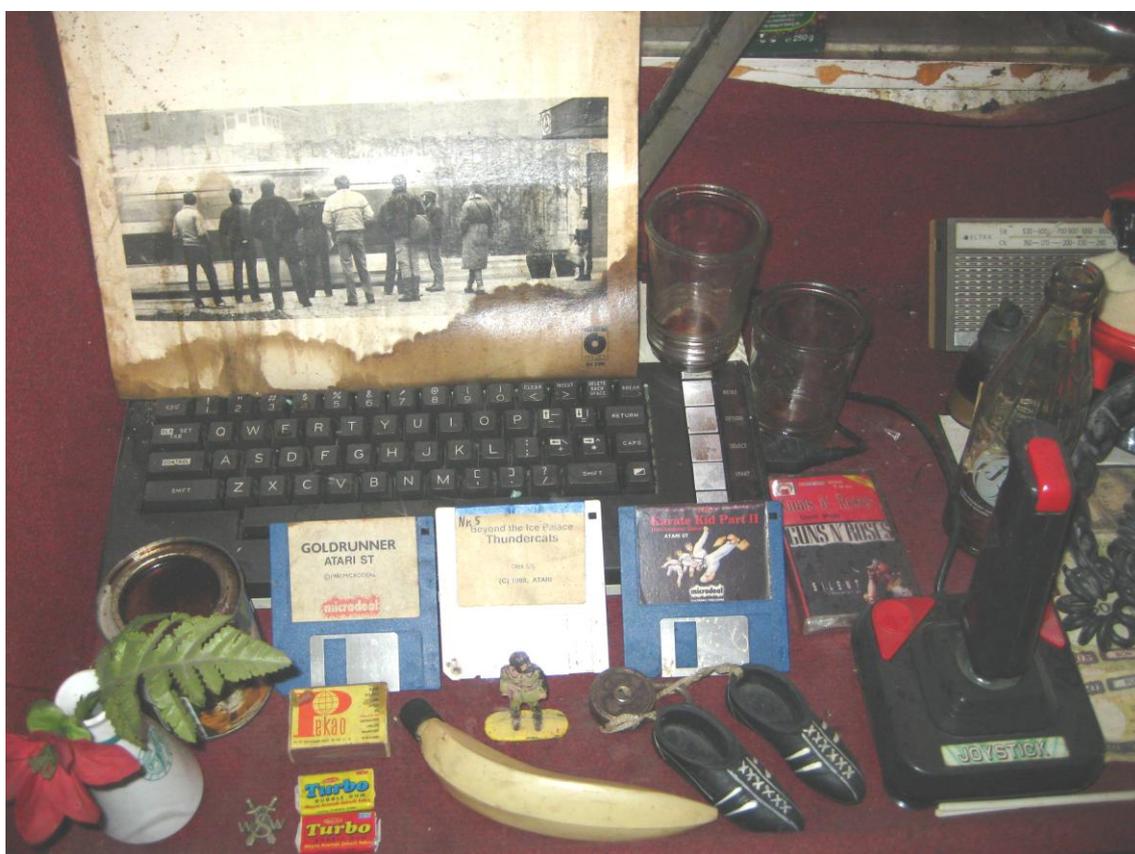
Photo 12: Gallery of items at 'Kitsch' bar, Kraków (photo by KB)

While there are clear shifts in the value of things to different generations the resilience of inter-generational values on waste, greed and consumption is striking. Many people reflected on the *'over-stimulation'* of capitalist society compared with the *'low-stress'* childhood without *'too many choices'*. Some were grateful of their parents' sacrifices to give them a *'better life'* with education being viewed as a key investment.

Burrell (2011) argues that access to western goods was unequal with many vendors exacerbating tensions within neighbourhoods by 'creating envy' and 'marking out the haves and have-nots' (Burrell, 2011, p.151; Kerr, 1977). Similar to earlier reference to the fetishization of the car as a signifier of individual mobility, the accumulation of western goods as a status symbol points to the influence of material culture on perceptions of social mobility and immobility. In the narratives 'envy' was seemingly present among children in the neighbourhood, as Tomek explains;

> *"...it was something about having real Nike shoes as opposed to fake Nike shoes – the real Nike shoes were from European prices and the fake Nike shoes were from Polish prices and in that time the difference was huge – probably five times more expensive, so there was something about money...those parents were richer but... Probably it did have something to do with financial background as well I now realise because my parents would never buy me...cool shoes and probably that's the reason why I had to rebel, because I had to rebel against them, because I wanted to be cool but then I realised that I don't like those guys because they don't like me because I am not cool because I don't have shoes and that's so cheap and actually –Shoes! Who is going to judge me for shoes"*
> *(Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

For Tomek the early desire to consume western goods through peer pressure is balanced by a later reflection on the unreasonable distinction made between having 'real' versus 'fake' Nike shoes. His failure to acquire such goods led to a rebellion against his parents, whilst at the same time a rebuttal of the consumerist aspirations of his peers and both were expressed throughout his teenage years through an allegiance to a 'punk' lifestyle. His rejection of the 'cool label' emerges in a nostalgia for the simple life of childhood involving playing in forests, ecology trips and reading books, some of which he feels are now lost or compromised through transformation to capitalism in Poland. The post-communist nostalgia present here narratives reflects a yearning for lost values rather than a request to return to the socialist past and is reconciled through a proclamation of and engagement with new 'opportunities' for mobility and freedom associated with contemporary European society. The way in which these opportunities are framed and performed in the context of EU mobility will be explored in the chapter six.

5.3.3 A New Era in European Mobility

Poland's accession to the EU in 2004 undeniably changed mobility for many young people improving access to spatial mobility for many who had previously not imagined

leaving Poland. Elzbieta moved to the UK in 2008 and lived in Manchester for one year with her English boyfriend, she reflects on the limits to emigration before 2004.

> *"I didn't think it was possible, I didn't even dream about it, why would you if you know it's never going to happen. And in terms of money as well, my parents weren't really wealthy so I knew I wouldn't be able to afford it even if I found a job for the Summer in Poland…not to mention all the visas" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).*

Overwhelmingly the young people interviewed were optimistic about Poland's accession to the EU, both in terms of the opportunity for spatial and social mobility – through fewer limitations for working and living abroad, and through the improvements in living standards and economic prosperity of Poland. Most people were in agreement that the ability to engage in spatial mobility with greater 'ease' lead to a number of significant and unique benefits.

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

Emilia contends that the EU affords more opportunities to individuals to be mobile, and her perception is that exploiting this mobility through foreign travel is a wholly positive experience. Some of the young people felt that if Poland had not joined the EU their experiences of mobility would have been largely compromised. Dorota reflects on the benefits of EU mobility for her and her friends.

> *"...my life was completely changed by the EU. I was offered a [Erasmus] scholarship by EU to go to Germany...when I started working here I was paid by EU money...so if there wasn't an EU uh..." (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Dorota's experience reflects the benefits of spatial mobility in maximising opportunity for economic and social benefit. However, the degree of social mobility experienced by many people living and working across EU borders is often impeded by lack of rights and restricted access to resources and information (Stenning, 2005a). For many the realities of deskilling and under-employment, of insecure and temporary housing, language challenges and the wider ramifications of distance from family led to a less positive reading of mobility. These issues will be discussed in more detail in chapter six in which an analysis of mobility as an embodied practice highlights further the differential experiences of young migrants.

Education and Aspiration

Education was regarded as a high priority during state socialism as a means of promoting collective social mobility among the people, and as such led to rising demand for education as 'key for attaining future material status' (Simon, 1980 as cited in Vulliamy and Webb, 1996, p.112). State control of the curriculum, centralised textbook production and strict guidelines for teaching practice contributed to a formulaic education system based largely on the requirements of a centrally planned economy (Janowski, 1992). As Magda recalls, there was '*no room for exploring or creativity…you're asked to sit in the class straight and learn everything by heart*'. In the late 1980s and 1990s the changing political ideology, economic structures and economic crisis of the transition led to curriculum revisions and systemic restructuring that had important implications for young people's social mobility in Poland. The curriculum was streamlined giving more autonomy and flexibility to individual schools and teachers; religious instruction was officially sanctioned in schools; vocational education was restructured for the new market economy with an emphasis on more general skills rather than specific technical and manual skills for the centrally planned system. This contributed to high unemployment rates among graduates from vocational schools in the early 1990s (Janowski, 1992). Some of the narratives contained reflections of their own experiences of graduation from vocational schools and entry into the uncertain job markets of Radom and Poznań.

Despite the material inequalities experienced by many people both at school and upon graduation, education in itself was perceived by many as a path to social mobility and aspiration for education was a commonly held inter-generational value. Elzbieta reveals the sacrifice made by her parents to give her a good education,

> *"My parents…if it was related to education they would eat less – they always saw it as important even though they are not well educated. They didn't go to University or anything but at that point they realized how important it's going to be because when they were younger it wasn't very important. You finished school and you went to work because even if you went to University you would earn the same money and everything so what's the point of trying. There was no motivation" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).*

Similarly, Dorota reflects that '*education was the door for better life*', a value instilled by parents who '*never had this opportunity to go somewhere... if you wanted just to*

have a normal life and family it was good to…tame your aspirations' (Dorota, age 31, Edinburgh). Here, education is synonymous with mobility and theaspiration for a better life.

Maciej perceives his experiences at high school – playing in a band and doing things with friends – as a 'barrier' to social mobility.

> *"I am an intelligent person, so I knew I couldn't finish up like the other people drinking beer on the bench, so I focused on myself and finished high school and then I went to college…I always had this barrier…I was doing bad things but I knew at the worst moment I had to sort myself out – to study and do all the good things that people do to have a normal life" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice).*

Maciej associates a normal life with the 'good things' of study and opportunity, in contrast to the immobility experienced by other people his age living in the neighbourhood who '*drink beer on the bench*'. He portrays the friendships at school as distractions from his own personal achievements and suggests that through focusing attention on himself he will be better able to pursue a 'normal life'. Maciej recognises the disparity between these two positions as a matter of aspiration to develop the skills and harness the tools to become upwardly mobile.

Language was viewed by many as the most important tool that gave access to mobility and all of the participants had engaged in English language tuition at school. There was a dramatic shift in the teaching of foreign languages in schools during the transition period. The compulsory teaching of Russian ceased and English language tuition was introduced at primary school level and became part of the national curriculum. As Ryszard recalls,

> *"…when I went to primary school in 1987 it was before the change and we learned Russian and then suddenly the next year all the Russian ladies had to start learning and teaching English just like that. The level of education was not that good" (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).*

In a comparative analysis of education during communism and post-communism, Vulliamy and Webb (1996) argue that in the 1990s the demand for English tuition outstripped supply placing English teachers in a strong bargaining position with schools. For many the lucrative salaries offered for private tuition led to a shortage of English language tutors in state schools and meant that some primary schools, in particular, were unable to provide any English language tuition. Dawid recalls first-hand experience of this shortage describing *'four different teachers in one year'* at his school. The emergence of private schooling for language contributed to a polarisation in the

education system and gave rise to differential access to English language tuition and a wide variation in skills levels among pupils (Vulliamy and Webb, 1996). Konrad reflects on his experience of learning English throughout his schooling highlighting the practical barriers of differential access to English language at High School. I asked him whether he spoke English when he arrived in the UK, and he replied,

> *"I thought I did, I had it in Primary School, two hours a week for five years and in High School, again two hours a week for five years but it was just worse than in Primary School because there was no English in all schools when I was young and some people learnt German and some people learnt Russian so when I went to High School we had a group of people who never started to learn English – we had one class of about 35 people and half of them never learnt English. So in High School I was doing nothing with English" (Konrad, age 29, Edinburgh).*

Along with many others, Konrad considered his limited English skills as a key barrier upon arrival in the UK and attributes some of this to his experiences at High School. In chapter six this issue is covered in greater detail.

The rapid installation of structural adjustment policies and the consequent withdrawal of funds from state education have reproduced social class inequalities of wealth and income. This has worsened due to an increased demand for private education among those better off, drawn to the appeal of smaller class sizes and focused attention on English teaching and additional pursuits. As Vulliamy and Webb (1996) suggest 'such inequalities are further exacerbated by the growth of private and social schools in Poland which can be viewed as both a product of, and a contributor to, a new capitalist class based society' (p.122). These class differences were revealed in some of the narrative discussions on schooling. Sabina grew up in Bytom and reflects that her experience of high school was very different to that of primary school.

> *"At primary school all are together – we go to the closest primary school – and then people are changing, they have bigger aspirations…it's kind of like they have more money as well, they are better educated so they can afford more travels as well and going out and going to the cinema or whatever. So I started getting different friends than in primary school" (Sabina, age 25, Katowice).*

Again, Sabina regards wealth and aspiration as somehow connected and her changing friendships are associated with her own opportunities for affording a better education. Elzbieta also grew up in Bytom and recalls her experience of going to a High School that was 'a bit posher'.

> *"We were never people who had loads of money and could buy loads of things but I think there was a moment when I was in High School. I went to a really good High School. I think it was one with an entrance exam and this was the most difficult to get to...I got there and most of my friends were from really good backgrounds like their families had houses and they had money and they went to private English classes and all that – they weren't arrogant about it so I never felt worse than them but at the same time I realised that, you know" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).*

These examples clearly demonstrate that the distinctions between public and private schooling were recognised as markedly different among young people.

Work and Opportunity

The opportunity for social mobility in post-socialist Poland was also contingent on work. As a result of neoliberal reform and the dismantling of traditional industrial forms there has been a polarisation of opportunity for social mobility contingent on occupational status and access to resources. While many are critical of the binary representation of 'winners' and losers', particularly in the context of capitalist transformations (Gibson et al., 2006, Hardy, 2009), this discourse pervades the narratives on post-socialist transformation. The 'winners' were viewed by some as those with entrepreneurial acumen or business luck able to exploit opportunities in the new market, the opportunists or swindlers, and those with existing networks (particularly networks abroad). The 'losers' were seen as those dislocated through transition – the unemployed, those working in particular manufacturing industries, and some reflected on what they saw as a dependency culture emerging in their local areas, depicting the neighbourhood as a place of crime and alcohol abuse. However, for some this was viewed less as an outright consequence of transition but a worsening of an existing situation.

Poland was particularly regarded as a country that, unlike other ECE countries, had not felt the full force of the regime and thus entrepreneurial and small businesses continue to exist throughout the communist period. Ryszard remembers business activity during this time and believes it is testament to the entrepreneurial acumen of Polish people,

> *"I think the level of entrepreneurship is quite high and it was always high even during communist times…the regime wasn't maybe so strong…we still had farmers, they had land. There was no collectivization. There were small businesses – guys having little shops with groceries, it wasn't all state owned" (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).*

Entrepreneurial acumen was viewed as a key skill for success during the transformation period. Hardy (2009) refers to a 'new orbit of opportunity' after 1989 as western investment could be strategically exploited by a new ruling class, or what Wedel (2001) calls 'energised elites'. Maciej recalls the 'opportunities' for small businesses in the wake of market reform in Katowice.

> *"There was opportunity in early 1990s…there was a complete gap, you could do anything you want and you were earning money for it, there was nothing here, no private owned companies so people would open a small shop and you were the only shop on the street and everybody would buy in your shop. I know people from this generation, they are in their 40s now and they had loads of money because there was a big gap" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice).*

Maciej contrasts this image with those who did not take the 'opportunity' to 'do something' but rather 'dropped into problems' leading to unemployment and dependency. He constructs a binary between those who acted to achieve something as rewarded with success and those who failed to actively participate in the market as stuck in a 'poor cycle' of dependency, based on the neoliberal ethic of individual agency over collective solidarity. Stenning (2005b) argues that the growth of poverty in post-socialist Poland has been accompanied by a denigration of the working class through representations of an 'underclass', of criminalization, wastefulness and cultural reading of poverty rather than a class-based analysis. This has become a common discourse among young people, presenting a version of reality that inscribes a moral value upon people and rests on an assumption of mobility as individual choice.

For others, the binary of winners and losers was understood in terms of 'luck', as Jacek remarks – *'it's just purely impossible to have success with your own business unless you're really lucky'*. This is illustrated with a discussion on the decline of the wool industry and rising unemployment in Bielsko Biała, where Jacek grew up.

> *"…the guys who couldn't find employment after that tried to start their own businesses and so on, but by that time you already had people who were established with their business and making money and going to the Mass while all these Poles were trying to quickly climb the ladder, but they never did because…the law and class system in Poland meant that those who had lots of money are ok and the guys who are trying to can never make it now – it's not enough to cheat anymore"(Jacek, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Jacek's interpretation is different to that of Maciej in the recognition of differential access to the social *'ladder'* as based on entrenched class inequalities in Poland. The imagery is made clear with a final sardonic reference to those who *'cheat'*, suggesting that despite acknowledging the structural inequalities there remains an assumption of

foul play at the heart of those who did not 'climb the ladder', reminding us of Kideckel's idea of worker imagery earlier in the chapter.

The idea that a culture of 'cheating' the system is a symptom of everyday socialism is discussed by Morawska (1999, p.359) who refers to the 'homosovieticus syndrome'. 'Homosovieticus' refers to a residual attitude of the socialist era, combining *kombinacje* (informal arrangements not always according to the rules) and the methods of Soviet-style 'debrouillard entrepreneurship'. She suggests that the incorporation of ECE states into a capitalist, neoliberal framework has actually served to reproduce the 'homosovieticus' syndrome, in particular the 'beat the system/bend the rules orientation on informal/crony/patronage and connections'. Recalling the development of illicit barter networks during socialism Ryszard explains his father's experience of working as a butcher in a local factory in Bielsko Biała.

> *"The best job he had at this time was that he was in charge of storing the meat in a big factory and in communist times meat was difficult to get…whoever was employed wherever stole what they could and those who didn't steal were losers somehow…it was extremely good for exchange for other goods so in my home we never had…it was a very modest household but we never had financial problems" (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).*

Echoing this Agata provides an explanatory justification for these practices.

> *"I think there was this double ethic – you could steal from the state without remorse. The system was kind of sick and it was the way people were dealing with it, having nothing in shops and not being able to organize anything. I think people even in the party had this feeling at the end" (Agata, age 32, Kraków).*

As discussed, kinship ties and informal networks, through barter relations or the secondary economy have continued to flourish since the collapse of communism (Burawoy and Verdery, 1999). Maciej portrays his neighbourhood in Katowice as a place of dislocation and social disenfranchisement following the closure of coalmines in the area. He remarks on the continuation of socialist era practices of barter exchange and the development of cross-border crime patterns and talks of the opportunism he remembers from his neighbourhood in Katowice.

> *"In communism Polish people were trying to make deals. I remember when I was 6 and the guys were selling currency, to have foreign currency was illegal and if you want to go abroad and you want to buy something, the guys were selling stuff…now it's drugs, cigarettes and still loads of stealing but not as much as in the 1990s. In the 1990s it was very popular to be a car thief in Germany…I remember when I went for holidays to Germany…I was ten, it was two or three years after communism ended and there were big boards saying 'Polish please don't steal'…but its changed now" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice).*

These examples illustrate the way in which and the discourse of winners and losers is loaded with stories of success and failure, opportunity, risk and luck, social mobility and immobility. Implicit in these are various distinctions of social class but few refer explicitly to class struggle or give examples of working class mobilization as central to transformation.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has contextualised post-socialist transformation using the words and visual memories of young people. These have been analysed alongside historical and sociological accounts of post-socialist transformation illustrating that personal memories of transformation both diverge from and coalesce with historical accounts in complex ways. In the narratives transformation is understood as people, places and things and I would argue that an analysis of these personal accounts helps to understand the way in which mobility and community is understood by young people. Such accounts are important foundations for a wider discussion on Polish youth mobility because they reveal the personal histories of young people's mobility – charting from where aspirations for mobility emerge and the personal dynamic of family and community in shaping these aspirations. This chapter has discussed the importance of older mobilities in relation to the newer mobilities experienced by young people moving in the EU. While EU accession presented a marked shift in the mobility opportunities and experiences of young people it is evident that for many people mobility featured a different junctures in the life prior to 2004 and throughout childhood. Moreover, even in the context of immobility, social and geographical mobility is a widely held inter-generational value.There is muchoptimism in many of the narratives about the opportunities for 'free movement' in the European Union, such as that of Emilia and Dorota who felt their experience of mobility had been greatly improved since 2004. However, this optimism was juxtaposed by ambivalence in some cases to the overwhelming choices of a neoliberal society and nostalgia for a 'simpler', sedentary or, what was perceived to be, a more equitable life under socialism.These examples of post-communist nostalgia for community and social life denote that inter-generational values for social interaction and the notion of a 'mutual economy of favours' retain importance for young people in the context of mobility. However, in many cases nostalgia was counterbalanced with contemporary understandings and experiences of mobility and the contradictory de-valuing of parental ethics and values on community as traditional,

restrictive and unremarkable. In this sense, the personal histories of mobility, family and community are both drawn upon and rejected in peoples narratives of mobility

A further issue raised in this chapter is related to the differential and uneven nature of post-socialist transformations and how inequalities of opportunity have shaped contemporary patterns of youth mobility. I have suggested that class is an important indicator of this unevenness. Many of those interviewed spoke of class in an 'ambivalent, defensive and hesitant' way (Savage, 2000, p.36), dismissing class as an irrelevant category in relation to post-socialist transformation. For others, the delineation along class lines was discussed less as a product of capitalism but rather a cultural inevitability. In the following chapters I will discuss how these delineations are reinforced in the context of EU mobility and the ways in which class difference is expressed as cultural difference through the emergence of new forms of family and community in migrant settings.

Chapter Six

The Transitive Spaces of EU Mobility

6.1 Introduction

This chapter extends the discussions in chapter five through a focus on the post-accession experiences of young adults and the 'newer' mobilities that have occurred between Poland and the UK since 2004. Here, young people's perceptions and experiences of post-accession mobilities are explored showing that mobility is imagined and experienced differentially. Drawing on ideas and evidence from chapter five, this chapter begins by discussing how young people 'become mobile' - what drives young people to engage in EU mobility exploring what factors, practical and emotional, have shaped values and aspirations for mobility. This discussion explores how mobility is represented by young people in the context of broader transitions of the lifecourse, whereby 'becoming mobile' is synonymous with 'becoming an individual'. Following this, I discuss the impacts of youth mobility and the personal transformations experienced through mobility. These include emotional, practical and embodied transformations and involve complex negotiations of place, self and other. It is argued that the opportunity to be mobile in the EU is of symbolic importance to young people but the material inequalities of de-skilling, 'brain waste' and precarious work are just some of the uncertain transitions of both emigration and return. These transitive spaces of mobility are uneven and relational, embedded within wider socio-spatial contexts that affect subjective meanings of family and community in different ways[23].

6.2 Becoming Mobile

Throughout the narrative interviews migration to the UK was portrayed as a search for a better life, for something more or something different to that on offer in Poland. For many this was the tangible benefit of a living wage or a particular economic goal. For

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[23] The term 'transitive' is borrowed from linguistic theory and I am using it here as a hermeneutic device to interpret migrant experience for two reasons. Firstly, in grammatical terms a transitive verb requires both a subject and a direct object –in this sense the term is relational and fits well with the idea that the mobile experiences of young people have material consequences. Secondly, it is not quite transitional – I have intentionally moved beyond the term 'transition' in order to show that there are multiple transitions – political, social, cultural, emotional – that intersect in transitive space.

others, economics was contextual rather than a dominant precursor for mobility, or to put it another way, money was a requisite foundation for the pursuit of goals of self-definition or self-realisation. For the most part, EU mobility was inscribed with positive valuations and understood overwhelmingly as 'opportunity'. Stenning (2005a, p.114) suggests that in the post-socialist era mobility, opportunity and choice have been discursively constructed as positive for the development of capitalism, despite the reality of 'unequal access and constrained choice'. It could be argued that this discourse has contributed to a perception of the EU as a mobile space. This is reflected both in youth policy developments and in the language of many young Polish people I interviewed. This section explores what drives young people to engage in EU mobility and explores how the language of choice and opportunity are employed in representations of mobility.

6.2.1 Rationalising a Move Abroad

> *"When the borders opened there were three buses a day taking people to UK and Ireland. Now there is not. People were going to earn money. You could get over five times the wages in UK and Ireland so people were going to work, earn money and save so that they could live more prosperously in Poland when they came back. It was mostly students to begin with going over during the Summer months to earn money and have more during the academic year. I went over for three months and worked in a factory and as a waitress in Pizza Hut and earned enough to live in Poland for the rest of the year. It was all about money"* (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).

Weronika tells a familiar story of the dramatic increase in emigration of young people from Poland after 2004, one that is readily restated in popular British discourse along with imagery of the migrant worker. Economic incentives are undeniably a significant factor in driving decisions for migration and this was evident from the majority of narratives. The 'pull' of higher earnings in the UK along with the 'push' of high unemployment and a 'lack of prospects' in Poland were viewed as key drivers of migration. In this context moving to the UK was represented as a constrined choice, as Ryszard claims '*I had no other option than this*'. Ryszard moved to London in 2004 and recalls the labour market limitations in Poland at the time

> *"I finished University and I realised that I don't do whatever I was studying for five years and there is very little chance I could do it here in Poland because at this stage unemployment was high, close to 20%, and especially for Land Surveyors – there is a lot of them and you could get very, very little money so I*

thought I've got to do something so I went there and found proper work that was actually earning money" (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).

The lack of opportunity for social mobility in the Polish labour market was a commonly cited reason for emigration. Narratives of disillusionment portrayed Poland as a place in which people experience limited opportunities, repressive and bureaucratic social structures and difficult, work-oriented everyday lives. These factors are seen as directing a move away from home whereby the opportunities for upward social mobility lay outside of national borders. This reflects Eade et al.'s (2007, p.35) assertion that "most migrants emphasise the opportunities for social mobility which lie ahead and these opportunities are contrasted with a seemingly protectionist, non-meritocratic and anti-business Polish labour market". In many of the narratives people talked of life as a 'struggle' in Poland, compared to an 'easier' life in the UK. Some felt that the hierarchies of work in Poland meant that personal contacts were still an important factor in being successful and thus unfair work practices were common. Ania moved to Edinburgh from Warsaw in 2007.

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

For Ania, the decision to move to Edinburgh was a desire to make a break and seek a way out of feeling 'stuck' – *'I got stuck in my job, I got stuck in my relationship, I got stuck in my life so I thought why not go'*. Here spatial mobility is viewed as an opportunity to overcome barriers to social mobility, to become '*independent economically'* and '*come to the new world'* where earning money, finding work and making a change were desirable possibilities for Ania.

Representations of a highly competitive work environment, lack of work/life balance and limited options for sociability were also expressed by return migrants . Dawid returned to Poland after working in the UK for 6 months. He believes his migration experience in UK offered an alternative vision of what his life could be like *'somewhere else'.*

"People here [in Poland] are quite…you know the expression 'ratrace', I think it's kind of a big competition... I don't really want to stay here...I want to start

life somewhere else, in a country where it is more economically stable" (Dawid, aged 29, Kraków).

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

> *"There's nothing going on at all. At 6pm the city is dying and no-one is on the streets. I would say right now all the young people moved out from that city... no jobs... it's a hole on the map. There is opportunities of work in the supermarkets, all the big companies closed and moved out somewhere else" (Konrad, age 29, Edinburgh).*

Similarly, Wanda grew up in Białystok in Eastern Poland and reflects on the limited work opportunities and the 'impossibility' of earning a living wage.

> *"The situation in Poland was very difficult to find a good job. Of course, there is lots of work but the income from that work is horrible, really, really, really low. There is not enough for our life, not thinking about big life but sometimes it's not enough for bills and food" (Wanda, age 35, Edinburgh).*

These examples show that economic incentives perceived in the UK were central to decisions for migration with varying degrees of choice and compulsion leading to mobility, particularly relative to the *'lack of options'* perceived in particular parts of Poland.

For the majority of young people emigration was first and foremost a temporary goal rather than a move towards permanent settlement elsewhere, with many people experiencing different episodes of migration back and forth. This type of temporary 'shuttle' migration is not a post-accession phenomenon and has been documented as a common form of post-wall mobility (Iglicka, 2001). Szymon worked for two successive Summers as a farm labourer in Suffolk between 2002 and 2003 during his University years, primarily to *'earn money for my studies'* since his parents did not have the financial resources to support him. Similarly, Marcin spent two Summers working as a

gardener and carer in Dover, London and Bedford between 2006 and 2007. Marcin sees the two episodes as markedly different – initially he emigrated with his family (wife and young son) and recalls this experience as positive and maintains that '*first reason was travel but work was very useful to get some money*'. He returned for the second time alone and reflects that this time his motivation was '*only for money*' and was not as positive because he missed his family. Marcin's experience highlights the variability and unintended consequences of migration strategies – while the opportunities for work in the UK are clear economic incentives, family serves as a counterweight to the desire for a more permanent migration. For others too, family and home were strong incentives to ensure temporary migration and a planned return. After spending a Summer in the UK, Weronika moved to Dublin to earn money while her boyfriend, Paweł was studying for an MBA at Dublin University. Her intention was to find work in the hospitality industry and gain valuable experience for a potential career path.While some of her work experiences were positive, she maintains that '*the whole culture depressed me*' and re-iterates her temporary, financial goals.

> "I said 'ok I'm doing this for money, I'll stay a few more months and we'll come back'" (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).

Weronika and Paweł stayed in Dublin for three years in total, after a number of attempts at '*coming back*' got put off. Weronika returned alone in 2009 and is currently waiting for Paweł to join her in Kraków, determined to make a life for them both in Poland. This example demonstrates the uncertainty of temporary mobility that was a common feature of the narratives. For some, unfulfilled economic aspirations often caused a longer stay than planned where 2 months turned into 3 years, or a working summer holiday after University became 5 years. For current migrants in Edinburgh duration of stay in the UK is an ongoing question and the pull of return is something many young people grapple with. This was evident in the context of the interviews, whereby the interview itself was regarded as a space for reflective thought in which the decisions about return were being discussed and deliberated as the interview progressed, demonstrating that rationalising migration is an ongoing and uncertain process.

6.2.2. Becoming an Individual

Young people often talked of the personal motivations for mobility in the context of broader youth transitions, such as '*growing up*' or '*blooming*'. Many of the narratives

were replete with references to self-discovery and changing the self in the context of mobility. The formation of particular goals for mobility can be seen as linked to the transition to adulthood, which incorporates the desire for independence, self-definition and financial autonomy. Here, Arnett's (2000) theory of 'emerging adulthood' can be drawn upon as a useful conceptual frame. He describes this period as 'a time of life when many different directions remain possible, when little about the future has been decided for certain, when the scope of independent exploration of life's possibilities is greater for most people than it will be at any other period of the life course' (Arnett, 2000 as cited in Hopkins, 2010, p. 232). Typically, Arnett (2000)[24] claims that emerging adulthood occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 years old, however, many young Poles talked of these types of transitions occurring into their 30s suggesting that the process of 'becoming' is a highly subjective endevour. For Ania, who moved to Edinburgh aged 31, geographical mobility was driven by a desire for self-fulfilment.

> *"I wanted to do something that I really wanted. It's stupid but I thought I'm not able to do that in Poland. Maybe it's a personal thing, maybe it's not Poland to blame because maybe my strength has been growing, it was a process and finally I bloomed here…maybe it's just a personal growing up thing. Yeah I wanted to be able to do things here, to take photos, to mix in a nice city, a well organised city, then you don't have to struggle everyday" (Ania, age 34, Edinburgh).*

For many young people their emigration experience was similar to gap year travel and some had engaged in the '*ritual*' of summer jobs as students, which served as a space for thought as Maciej and Helena explain: *'to clean my head'* or *'figure out what I wanted to do '*[25]. In the context of student travel the decision for mobility was viewed in terms of a 'why not' scenario denoting a lack of anything else to do. This often resulted in temporary periods of migration to the UK, almost as a post-graduate 'rite of passage' (Eade et al., 2007) for backpacking workers with a dual motivation of rapid monetary gain and other socio-culturalfactors, such as developing English language skills or having a *'cultural experience'*.

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[24] Arnett's research centres on the experiences of young Americans, as is much of the Western, industrial society-centric literature on youth transitions

[25] See Heath (2007) and Simpson (2005) for a discussion of youth travel as a cultural practice

Photo 13 Backpacking in Scotland (photo by Jola)

Jola selected this image to represent her desire for *'exploration'* in new places. In this photo (13) Jola and her friends are lost and trying to find a route back home, but she is smiling reflecting that getting lost is part of the journey. Since moving to Edinburgh in 2005, Jola has backpacked across Scotland a number of times, with friends and alone, to visit places and 'see things'. Often, particular places were reflected upon as sites of meaning based on prior knowledge or experience that reflected 'wider cultural imaginings' (cf. Benson and O Reilly, 2009, p.6-7). For example, Edinburgh was commonly described as a centre of culture with a vibrant arts and theatre scene, which were key motivating factors for choosing Edinburgh as a place to live with some moving specifically to participate in the Edinburgh Festival, for example. Moreover, among those living in Edinburgh the wider geographical imagining of Scotland was regarded as important, particularly in the context of an historic relationship between Poland and Scotland, expressed through its established Polish population and the continuing efforts of the younger generation to find common meanings of community (see chapter eight).

Mobility was viewed by many as an opportunity to seek new horizons away from what is perceived as the normal life in Poland. Galasińska and Kozłowska (2009) argue that

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

> *"I was looking to change something. I wasn't quite ready to do the other part of Polish traditional typical life which is finish Uni, find yourself a boy, get a house and all the marriage stuff…in Poland to be honest, it would have been my only alternative" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Here, mobility is viewed as an alternative to a traditional life in Poland – rather than settling down and getting married, mobility is perceived as something individual and emancipatory. Moving to the UK is represented as a break from normal life, a search for difference and a celebration of uncertainty, echoing cosmopolitan theories of migration. Helena moved to the UK in 2006 from Łodz in order to move away from the family home and 'lose [her] inhibitions'

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

The independence gained through her experience of mobility is a significant step forward for Helena – she does not imagine returning to Poland as it is, for her, associated with dependence on family structures and a life dominated by work. For Helena, becoming mobile is synonymous with becoming an 'individual'. Moreover, she is attempting to subvert the immigrant stereotype of migration as driven purely by economics. Although there are clear economic gains of migration, there are a wide range of other factors implicit in the decision to become mobile that both support and subvert the economic rationale, with economics as contextual to intersecting motivations. Hence, the desire to achieve personal financial autonomy was understood

as a vehicle for personal change since it was often connected to the desire for independence from the 'family' and the 'home'. Emigration to the UK was perceived as an opportunity to raise money quickly in order to 'move out' whether into (or out of) a marital home or as a single person retreating from the parental home. Olga describes her reason for migrating to Scotland in 2005 as a temporary project to save money for her wedding, which has subsequently evolved into a permanent settlement in Edinburgh.

> *"We came here just to really save money. It was a five month project to come in and save money for wedding…it wasn't like students who come here just for Summer, it wasn't. We had a clear plan and as all plans they developed…five years on we're still here, it's not like we're still saving for our wedding…We've managed what we wanted, to pay for our wedding and then we just wanted more…I have seen the opportunities here and I can compare them with the ones in Poland and if I would go to Poland I would never have what I have here, ok it's only a one bedroom flat but it's my flat, it's in my name and I can make as many holes in my walls" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).*

Olga describes her migration experience as an evolving process, from temporary and planned economic goals to a more permanent settlement in Scotland. She associated owning her own flat and the financial autonomy gained through working in Scotland as a key benefit and feels her and her husband have achieved their goals.

Photo 14: Olga and her mother on holiday in Poland (photo by Olga)

Olga grew up in a single parent family with her mother who was a Communist politician during the transition years. In this photo (14) Olga is on holiday in Poland with her mother in the late 1980s before the end of communism. Olga reflected that because of her mother's position in the Party she was afforded numerous holidays during this time. For Olga, the memories are like 'movie memories' and she doesn't reflect on feeling privileged during this time, but rather is critical of her mothers 'life full of parties and different types of holidays'. Throughouther narrative she refers to various attempts at cultivating independence from her mother from working as a teenager to paying for her own wedding despite the relative wealth accrued through her mother's position in the Party. For Olga, the economic goal of saving money through her migration is bound to the desire to be independent from her mother.

This section has discussed representations of mobility as a search for new horizons related to the goal of 'becoming an individual'. On the surface this has all the hallmarks of a 'reflexive project of the self' (Beck et al.1994) since the choices for mobility are autonomous acts for particular mobile 'lifestyles', often in reaction to the strictures of 'normal' family life and Polish tradition. However, the idea that this type of youth migration is somehow a 'rite of passage' into adult life (Eade et al., 2007) suggests that these individual actions are embedded within a collective practice linked to particular times, spaces and flows. Here we could draw on Benson and O'Reilly's (2009, p.1) concept of 'lifestyle migration' to understand these distinct forms of mobility among young Poles since it is the pursuit of the 'relatively privileged'. However, my framing is slightly different in that it is not a desire for settlement among Western Europeans living abroad but rather, temporary choices for mobility among young Central/Eastern Europeans, a demographic who are more likely to be positioned and stereotyped as low-waged, underpriviliged migrant workers.

6.3 'Fitter, Happier, More Productive': Impacts of Youth Mobility

The impacts of youth mobility were discussed as both personal and professional. This section will present the different perceptions of current and return migrants on how their experiences of mobility have had a transformative effect on their lives. The interview served as a forum for self-evaluation and reflexivity in which individuals revealed how their experiences of mobility had met their expectations.

6.3.1 Personal Transformations

Many people felt that their experience of mobility to the UK had shaped them in very positive ways. For some, mobility was viewed as tantamount to personal well-being, whereby the act of emigration contributed to an increasing self-confidence, self-reliance and personal success. Łukasz describes the key personal benefits of migration in terms of his growing sense of success.

> *"I'm very happy with what I've become here and I think my migration was necessary for that, because I suppose in Poland I would have just stayed mediocre guy settling for mediocre stuff not really wanting to do much with his life...I wanted to have more and raise my standard of living, to do that I felt I had to become a better person, if you know what I mean...more drive, motivated, educated, smarter, wiser I suppose. So yeah, I think this whole move was absolutely necessary and it shaped me" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Łukasz is overwhelmingly positive about the transformative effects of migration and feels the experience has 'shaped' him considerably. He uses a number of decisive adjectives to explain his personal development in line with what he perceives are the necessary skills for a successful, and suggestively neoliberal, self. He goes on to describe what might have become of him had he stayed in Poland,

> *"I think myself very successful as well starting from a small town in Poland where I could have easily just knocked up a girl and become an early dad with receding hairline and a bigger belly than I have now...getting a degree and moving to London and being actually able to fit in there, to communicate with other nations and finding myself in a completely different reality...I'm very happy with the person I've become" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

The imagery of poor health and early fatherhood are suggestive of a view of small town Poland that is mired in provincialism and immobility, one that Łukasz represents as his alternative life path if emigration had not been an option. His success, he feels, is dependent on his act of mobility that has shaped the person he has become.

Ewa has lived in Edinburgh since 2008 and has worked in a local bookshop, a cafe and now works as a part-time carer whilst studying film-making at University in Edinburgh. While her intentions for mobility were initially temporary to '*enjoy*' the Edinburgh Festival, she now feels settled in Edinburgh, having '*moved on*' from Poland, and wants to stay.

> *"Poland for me is like the place where I was small, living with my parents for most of the time and now I've moved here I can just feel independent and do what I really want. I have more energy and more guts to pursue what I really want, it's dangerous though... I really would like my parents to come here and see how I love it and to bring my friends and be like 'look this is the place, this is who I am now, this place changed me, I have changed, I really like being here and I just want you to see that'. Because it is so difficult to convey that experience just by talking to them, they just don't want to come and visit me"* (Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).

Ewa describes her migration experience as transformative but is reticent because her familyare in Poland and are not involved in her life in Edinburgh. Here again the uneasy transitions to adulthood in the independent spaces of individual mobility are mediated by the distance away from family and friends and the threat of never returning to Poland. For now, this is a dilemma that Ewa is happy to postpone.

For Olga, who has been carving spaces of independence from her mother for a number of years, this dilemma is not relevant to her current lifestyle. She feels that living in the UK provides her with both a sense of emotional well-being and the financial autonomy to buy the things she wants.

> *"I keep saying to my friends, I always had that problem between 'be or have'. Like 'be' is developing yourself inside and 'have' is to have something like a house or a car and I'm looking for the way to get these two together...I think Great Britain gives me chance to 'have' and 'be' at the same time and in Poland you have to choose it – you either work hard and 'have' your flat in like 30 years maybe or 'being' which means staying with your parents until your 40 and then getting the house when they die – I think that's how we benefit from being here and not in Poland"* (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).

Olga's interesting distinction between 'having' and 'being' is in essence a false dichotomy, since she is arguing the need to 'have' in order to 'be'. The material wealth accrued since her emigration from Poland has been important in shaping Olga's perception of 'being' in the UK. Since moving to Scotland Olga's income has grown incrementally from '*eating bread for 19p*' to having a larger disposable income and greater consumer choice. Returning again to the example of the car as a representation of status, Olga reflects on the comparative advantage of car ownership in the UK compared with Poland.

> *"...when we came here we bought an Astra for £350 and then moved onto Ford Mondeo for £450, then he [Paweł] bought on in December and then in June he bought an Audi 3 for like £7000 – that's a big jump, you would never have that in Poland"* (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).

The financial autonomy secured through mobility was perceived to have a significant material impact on many people's lives, leading to higher levels of consumption in both the UK and Poland. Teresa reflects on the effects of her seasonal work in Southampton after she graduated from High School.

> *"I was young and I had money – I could buy a dress, a lot of gifts for my family and I didn't have to ask anybody for help. I was like 'wow, I can earn real money'-at the time the pound was high, it was really good currency exchange so I earned for two months really a lot of money for an 18 year old girl"* (Teresa, age 26, Katowice).

Being able to earn money independently has far exceeded Teresa's expectations considering her age, gender and dependency on family. For Zosia, the economic benefits of migration have continued to have positive material effects on her personal life upon her return to Poland, however, the initial excitement of spending money has given way to a desire to save for the future.

> *"I came back and I am rich actually and this feeling is absolutely amazing. The first time you always spend your money on everything you want because you never had money before so you start spending money on...something for face, cosmetics and X box games, PC games for my husband, it's absolutely crazy. And then you start thinking, I should leave this money and start thinking about my future and we're doing this at the moment"* (Zosia, age 22, Kraków).

Although Zosia is currently living in Kraków, with her parents, she plans to return to Ireland where her new husband remains, living with her cousin and earning money for the couple's future goals. She moved back to Poland temporarily for the Summer during a period of unemployment supported by her family, her imminent return is motivated by her marital commitment to her husband – *'we are together...he is my family...I'm starting a life – maybe this way is not the best way but I don't have a choice because I really need money and I want to come back one day to my country and maybe build a house or buy a flat an... the normal life'*. Here the aspiration for independence and the desire to start a life together with her partner coincides with a period of dependency, linked to family, friends and other networks (Jeffrey and McDowell, 2004). This example suggests that the 'institutional fabric of social life' (Kenworthy Teather, 1999)

is important in shaping aspirations and opportunities for mobility. Moreover, Zosia's desire to '*come back one day*' for '*the normal life*' restates the temporariness and uncertainty of her current transnational circumstances and, contrary to earlier examples, the quest for normalcy is a positive aspiration rather than a catalyst for emigration from Poland. This distinction will be discussed in chapter seven since it relates to key familial relationships and expectations concerning marriage, faith and tradition.

Cosmopolitanism

The social and cultural capital gained through migration is seen as a significant driving force for many migrants (Clarke, 2005; Boyle et al, 1998). Learning a new language, experiencing new cultures and lifestyles are perceived as opportunities to many migrants, and for some a sense of cultural enlightenment is the key objective. From the narratives it is evident that an impact of EU mobility is the extension of social and cultural capital networks across borders. Drawing on Morokvasic's (2004) study of Polish women engaging in 'circular mobility' during post-socialism, it could be argued that many of Polish young people are 'settled in mobility', where migration is a lifestyle choice and an important way to remain linked to their 'home' whilst making trips abroad (albeit more long term) to sustain a livelihood and improve social and economic status, between 'here' and 'there' (Morokvasic, 2004). Joanna moved to Edinburgh in 2006 and claims her desire to '*live...and work more internationally*' has propelled her to live in a range of places - San Francisco, Finland, London and finally setting in Edinburgh. She runs a hair salon and feels she has gained significant cultural capital through mobility since her trade enables her to move freely from place to place meeting new people. However, Joanna does not fit the stereotypical 'cosmopolite' image. She lives on a modest salary on a collective farm, has recently bought and refurbished her own boat (named 'Lady Vagabonde'), moored in a nearby Loch, and has aspirations to put down roots – '*I think it's time to do things a bit more solid*'. Joanna chose this photo (15) to signify her sense of achievement in fulfilling her aspiration to build a boat. To her, this image represents the realization of a potential idea that became successful with the help of friends and a DIY spirit. She reflects on how her life may seem to others when all the 'experiences' are counted up.

Photo 15: Lady Vagabonde (photo by Joanna)

> *"So far I have really almost done everything I possibly can (laughing)... I have become attached to little dreams here and there so I have decided to design my dreams now so they come a bit more (laughing) kind of rational and doable ...but when hard time came last year, that just...I had to go back home and had to face reality of family as it was... by telling them all these stories it just made me feel like a mad person, nobody would understand it"* (Joanna, age 31, Edinburgh).

Here theories of cosmopolitanism are problematic.While exhibiting characteristics of a highly mobile, opportunistic and aspirational individual, Joanna's experiences of mobility intersect with family expectations and circumstances. The 'hard time' she refers to here was the death of her mother, a deep loss that has shaped her desire for feeling *'more solid'*. She named her boat 'Lady Vagabonde' to represent her mobile spirit but the purchase and mooring of 'Lady Vagabonde' represents, to her, a decisive act to settle in one place with options for temporary sojourns.

As discussed in chapter four, cosmopolitanism is conceived as both an attitude and a practice. Hannerz (1990) defines cosmopolitanism as 'an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other', suggesting that cosmopolites exercise choice in rejecting the

bounded notions of their own culture and exhibit an attitude of cosmopolitanism, becoming 'skilled in navigating and negotiating difference' (as cited in Binnie et al, 2006). Some of the narratives contained positive statements about the effects of living in a country that is perceived to be more 'tolerant' of difference than Poland. Many felt that living among BME and/or migrant communities and working with other migrants had heightened their own sense of '*tolerance*' for ethnic diversity and an acceptance '*that people are different' (Jozef, age 32, Edinburgh).* Julia moved to Edinburgh in 2007 for a study year as part of a Business and Accounting degree at Jagiellonian University, Kraków. She describes how, through mobility, she has gained a broader understanding of her own 'tolerance' of difference.

> *"I didn't realise there would be so many people from so many countries. In Poland if you see someone who is different you keep looking at this person and it is so normal in Scotland that there are other people with tattoos on their faces and all over their skin, nobody has a problem with that and it was different because in Poland we still have a problem with tolerance and I wasn't sure if I was fully tolerant because I didn't have contact with people from different countries and now I know that I am because I worked with them and I didn't have any problems with their nationalities, I think you have to check yourself"* (Julia, age 25, Kraków).

Similarly, Magda described Poland as '*very homogenic*' and claims that '*we struggle to be tolerant and appreciate people from different backgrounds*'. The degree to which the discourse of 'tolerance' has penetrated the identities of young Polish people is an interesting finding[26]. While these narratives are reflexive in relation to their own personal encounters with people who are ethnically or culturally different to them, they are expressed using politicised language. Rather than view themselvesas migrants and the subject of 'tolerance', young people are classifying other migrants, or in some cases Black or Asian British people, as the subjects of tolerance. This suggests that, for many, their values on ethnic diversity are formed from the comfortable position of ethnic privilege being a White migrant. Other narratives were less positive about their experiences of ethnic diversity, as Łukasz portrays through an explanation of his first emigration to London.

> *"I suppose it was a bit of a culture shock, London as a cosmopolitan city, all those nations mingling together like a melting pot and for me that didn't work. For instance, Edinburgh...again cosmopolitan city, lots of different nations but*

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[26] See Mendus (1989) for an account of the concept of toleration in liberal theory – toleration as false acceptance veiling true assumption of inferiority and 'otherness'.

you've got this sort of huge bracket of Scots that keep it together while over there it was just struggling massive different ethnic backgrounds and interests and religious beliefs" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).

For Łukasz, cosmopolitanism is not equated with ethnic diversity and he is openly critical of multiculturalism as operated in London. He views national identity (based on shared ethnicity, faith and interests) as an important foundation for the cosmopolitan city. This demonstrates that cosmopolitanism is a label used to mean different things to different people and can be underpinned by a racialised interpretation of what cosmopolitan culture is, or should be.

Migrant worker or Working Class migrant?

Gibson et al. (2006) suggest that migrants are engaged in class *transformations* and assert the need for an analysis of 'class becoming' – as performative and processual rather than static and structurally fixed. Migrants are perceived as having multiple class positions simultaneously whereby 'servitude' is experienced in a host country whilst engaging in upward social mobility at home through remittances. The classed subjectivities of young Polish migrants have been explored throughout this study. The previous chapter contained a discussion of the perceptions of class in the socialist neighbourhood, at school and in terms of access to mobility among Polish youth throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Drawing from discussions on current migrant experiences, it could be argued that class relations in migrant spaces are also ambiguous and shifting. However, it would be remiss to accept without caution the idea that migrants transcend class or that somehow in an age of mobility class is a 'zombie category' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2000). Class remains an important signifier in the context of a mobile livelihood; in all its forms class travels.

As discussed, in many of the narratives there was a reluctance to acknowledge class as a relevant category in contemporary social relations in Poland, this extended to Poles living in the UK. Interestingly, class was perceived to be an entrenched social problem in the UK among the British public and for some, it was this perception that prompted them to re-consider their own class position. Maria suggests that, to her, class is '*learned rather than embedded*'. Similarly, Ewa reflects on how she became aware of her own 'privilege' after meeting 'middle class' people in Scotland.

"...it's just so funny because I met all the nice people, being middle class,

playing instruments, having really nice upbringing and stuff like that. Yeah, and that was the moment for me to recognise that actually I had privilege, I went to a really nice School and had a nice background as well. I think that was when the recognition came to me" (Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).

The notion that socialist Poland facilitated a 'classless' society was drawn upon in many of the interviews. For the majority of those interviewed, who for the most part could be described as middle class, class was not a term readily employed in the distinctions made about other Poles. At face value, this supports Giddens' (1990) assertion that class is of declining importance as an analytical category among individuals. However, there were other classifications made that relate indirectly to class positioning of the self and others. Stanisław reflected on feeling different from his housemates, who were Irish and Lithuanian, when he lived in Northern Ireland, comparing his own social and occupational status with theirs.

> *"I feel very strange because I walk in the house and I am wearing a suit and everybody in the house were like collecting plastic or worked in stone mines so I felt strange in this house" (Stanisław, age 29, Kraków).*

Indirectly relative class positions between Polish migrants were implied through discussions about work and Polish culture in the UK. Some people referred to the Polish 'mentality' to characterise the behaviour of 'other' Polish migrants who they felt were representing Poland in a negative way. Łukasz expresses the varied social stratification between Polish migrants working in the same jobs.

> *"There's also a lot of Poles who came here for financial reasons that were painters, joiners and what not and they don't care – they either had no education or they just don't want to know – maybe they just feel so insecure and unconfident and not confident at all to just go out make and effort and try to learn the language...if I meet people who work as waiters or waitresses or kitchen porters, that's just their job rather than their mentality – so even though during the day they wash dishes, during the evening they write, or they paint, they draw, they do something" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Łukasz differentiates between those who are proactive in learning language and pursuing interests beyond their everyday work activities, and those who lack the confidence, security or will to 'try'. This bifurcation of class suggests an image of the working class as reactive, while the middle class is viewed as proactive, echoing Kideckel's (2002) work on polarisation of class in post-socialist ECE. Łukasz also differentiates between work as a 'job' and as a 'mentality'. This imagination of a Polish

mentality can be traced to Polish literary heritage and the representation of 'homo Sovieticus'. 'Homo Sovieticus' or 'New Soviet Man' was originally coined by members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to typify an idealized version of communist man. It later became a derogatory reference used to construct various typologies of behavioural and psychological attributes condemning certain sections of the working population as 'passive and anti-individualist; defensive, conservative and state-benefit-dependent'; as opposed to those who fit into a more 'enterprising, pro-social and independent type' (Koralewicz and Ziolkowski,1990; Szalkowski and Jankowicz, 1999). Making further delineations across the Polish migrant cohort, Łukasz goes on to reject the 'migrant worker' category and questions its application generally.

> *"I never thought of myself as a migrant worker, a lot of them actually are migrant workers because they allow themselves to be classified like that whereas they don't necessarily have to do. Again I guess it depends on the definition of worker – if you say manual worker I imagine someone working on a factory line, yeah. But then again, I have two degrees and I work in education – am I an intelligent class?" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Writing about post-socialist civil society in the 1990s Buchowski (1996) remarks that the tension between two distinct 'mentalities' has implications for the development of civil society since there is a tendency among some towards 'learned helplessness' based on a residual attachment to state welfare provision and the paternalistic role of the state (Koralewicz and Ziółowski, 1990, p.157). It could be argued that the use of these typologies in organisational practice has led to a discourse that has permeated beyond the workplace and remains an easy reference point for Poles at home and abroad, whereby state dependency is constructed as a choice. Olga reflects on those who '*abuse the system*' in Scotland,

> *"...some people choose to have lives what they want and I try not to judge them, I judge Polish who are staying on benefits, I hate them. I had so many situations when they would come to my house wanting help to fill in applications. Because I could speak English they came to me in an informal way. They hear about me from my friends or something. I just hate it, it's really giving a bad picture of us Poles" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).*

These examples demonstrate the ways in which some young Poles delineate themselves from other Polish migrants along class lines, extending Michał Garapich's (2008a) work on intergenerational class antagonism among Polish diaspora in London since these divisions are prevalent both within and between Polish migrant cohorts.

In some of the narratives class was often expressed as culture. Ewa talks about her experience as a volunteer at a local Polish community centre.

> *"...it's divided between two groups of volunteers – and the first group is like me and two other volunteers and we do this creative, art, kind of more intellectual kind of class and the other part is just playing. And the girls that do the play bit I don't really get on that well with them...well, I think the girls that work with me have a similar kind of attitude... I'm a bit of a culture migrant and I just want to be here and experience what's here while I think loads of people kind of cling to what they had back at home"(Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).*

Ewa portrays the differences between the volunteers as cultural. It could be suggested that here class difference is shrouded in the distinction made between the 'economic migrant' and the 'culture migrant'. She differentiates between her own values of creativity, intellectualism and pursuit of culture and those who '*cling to what they had back home'*. The association between class and culture was made more explicitly by Tomek in a discussion of punk culture in Poland as emerging from the middle classes and thus being '*much stronger intellectually'* based on anti-racism, ecology and postmodern identifications rather than a worker ideology**.** In this photo (16) Tomek is at a punk festival in Balków, Poland with friends when he was 19 years old. This was one of the only photos Tomek had brought to Edinburgh from Poland and represented to him a time when he was experiencing 'difficult' and 'extreme' music, people and cultures. For example, he said that two of the four friends in this group were bisexual and suggested that this reflects the environment he chose to engage with. He discussed these experiences as alternative to 'average' life in his hometown, and felt that these events had inspired his curiosity for 'weirdness' or difference.

Photo 16: Tomek as a teenager with friends at punk festival in Poland (photo by Tomek)

Tomek's narrative is interwoven with many examples of 'alternative expression' and particular events, people or places that he feels are 'creative and inspiring'. When he emigrated to London after University for a temporary working holiday he lived in a squat in Old Street which he portrays again as something 'different' and inspirational. He continues to be involved in active community networks in Edinburgh seeking ways to bridge the gap between Scottish and Polish people through art and culture. However, Tomek reveals that these values have changed as he has grown up explaining that his move to London to live in a squat was an adventurous *'holiday experience'* while his emigration to Edinburgh is more *'serious'*. Here he references his youthful idealism in the context of a relatively privileged upbringing,

> *"I had this punk background all the way throughout my life but I never had to live on the squat level in Poland, I was quite comfortable so it was more like experience something interesting. I know some squatters would probably say 'bloody posh kid would like to taste the real life', maybe it was a bit like that..."* (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).

These examples have illustrated that class is reflexively experienced by young Polish people in different relational contexts. As Savage (2005) notes, class labels are employed to mark relational differences rather than membership of a collective grouping. It could be argued that the very act of distinction between these class positions leads to the reproduction of class divisions within migrant groups. However, some felt that through interaction with other Polish people from *'different backgrounds'*, most commonly at work or in particular Polish community settings, class relations were being challenged and, in some cases, transcended. Jozef talks about a work colleague who trained him in his first kitchen porter job in London.

> *"...he said to me 'I remember your first time and you came to me and said Mister', He was from the background of working class and never got used to me call him Mister – he was more laughing than was proud of this"* (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).

Jozef clearly identifies the class position of his colleague but does not make explicit his own; his comment is referencing the unlikely event that a working class person would be called 'Mister'. For others, the shared purpose of temporary migration to the UK or Ireland and shared experiences of low wage work in spite of educational attainment or class background was perceived as blurring class lines. This reflects Eade et al's (2007) claim that through mobility Polish migrants are constructing a transnational class identity, which is de-localised and dynamically interpreted with reference to several stratification systems. Weronika talks about the shared solidarities among Polish work colleagues,

> *"I had loads of friends and I never judged people. If you're doing housekeeping you can be my best friend – I don't care, even if I'm the manager. We're all there for the same reason, we all had our own reasons for going, I don't mind..."* (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).

Weronika implies that the Polish migrants she has met are there for *'the same reason'*, which she perceives to be the desire to earn more money, and despite the occupational hierarchies that exist among Polish migrants in the workplace, the common bonds

outweigh these divisions. At first sight the idea that Polish solidarity in migrant spaces transcends class is a consoling thought, however, Weronika is arguing from a privileged position and it is implicit that she would occupy the managerial post in this hypothetical scenario. In this sense, class appears to be embedded in the language and value judgements of young people just as it is inscribed upon them through the propensity or compulsion to occupy low wage and traditionally 'working class' jobs[27].

6.3.2 The Social Mobility of Migrant Work

Low wage work is a common initial experience of migration among young people. Many have observed the growing bifurcation of the labour market with highly skilled migrants being 'invisible' to the native population compared to those clustered in the lower levels of the labour market, who are more recognisable as an 'immigrant' workforce and often experience severe poverty and discrimination (Castles and Millar, 2003). As a result, migrants are said to dominate the '3D' jobs – dirty, dangerous and demanding, they have low status and little job security making the associated risks of migration greater (Koser, 2007). In the context of Polish youth migration to the UK the situation is more complex with graduates often working below their qualifications and experiencing a significant decline in social mobility, leading to what some refer to as 'brain waste' (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009). Weronika recalls her first job working as a waitress in the UK and being *'depressed'* due to a lack of friends and lack of prospects, since that time she began other jobs in hotels more akin to her professional interests in hospitality and events but remarks on the lack of occupational mobility among her Polish friends at the time.

> *"I don't mind doing anything, office, cleaning, everything but you always have to know whether this is the thing you want to do or is it temporary. For them, they finished Masters degrees and they were doing kitchen jobs and I thought why are you still doing this? I understand at the beginning when you don't understand the language, the culture, you take the first job but now it's two years later and you're still doing this" (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).*

For others, previous experiences of migration and low wage work in other countries had generated an avoidance strategy of particular occupations in the UK, such as factory work and cleaning.

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[27] In chapter 3 I set out my own class position and am aware that I am imposing an analytical frame that relates to class as I see it. This reflects a British class sensibility and I do not claim to fully engage with the Polish sensibility of class but rather present some examples of how class could be read into the interactions of Polish migrants working in the UK.

"I was coming here because prior to me moving to England during my studies I went for this work and travel thing to the United States for four months. I don't mean saying that with disrespect but I didn't like cleaning jobs, waitressing, that kind of stuff so when I was moving here I decided that I don't want to do that so I was looking for jobs in stores, like in the cinema and then I started working in an office" *(Helena, age 28, Edinburgh).*

In a different interpretation, Dorota claims *'I wasn't doing a dirty job'* in regard to her first job in Edinburgh working in a takeaway restaurant (see photo 17) – *'you kind of became part of the community and kind of the girl who sells you supper every night'*.

Photo 17: Dorota working in takeaway restaurant (photo by Dorota)

Dorota and Helena have different subjective interpretations of what constitutes a *'dirty job'*. The underemployment experienced by many young Poles fostered various

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reactions, for some it was a mere stepping stone or opportunity to earn quick cash for a cultural experience, while for others it was an essential livelihood strategy. Many were disappointed upon arrival with significant periods of unemployment as well as low wage, insecure work, such as Kasia who felt *'very depressed'* when she was unemployed for four months in Edinburgh despite being *'overqualified for most of the jobs'*.

Those employed in low wage occupations reflected on a number of barriers to social mobility but the most significant being the absence of opportunities to learn and practice the English language. Lack of opportunities to learn English, whether through employer-subsidised training or local College courses, is a key concern for new Polish migrants particularly among those who did not receive high quality language education at school (as outlined in chapter five) (Viulemy and Webb, 1998). Wanda arrived, with her family, in Edinburgh in 2005 with no English language skills. She found work as a Tailor since she had 15 years experience in this occupation and it required no English language skills. She enrolled on a College course to learn English but was unable to continue study after she fell pregnant and found it too difficult to manage her multiple commitments.

> *"I started English lessons at College but I am not finished there because it happened during pregnancy and I felt so tired because of work, College and homework, too much to fit in" (Wanda, age 35, Edinburgh).*

Working with a predominantly migrant workforce was viewed as an additional barrier to learning English. Teresa recalls the difficulties in learning English whilst working in a Boots factory in Southampton.

> *"Even if I was able to speak English and communicate without problems, it was really difficult. I mean, my language was nothing when I had to start in factory where you don't even hear your voice and you work with people who generally didn't speak English at all, or just a little bit" (Teresa, age 25, Katowice).*

Jola also stressed that working on the factory floor has led to the deterioration of her English language skills because the workforce is mainly Polish. She reflects on the people she works with as coming from a *'whole spectrum of [Polish] society'* remarking on the different aspirations for integration and mobility among the workforce, delineating those who *'just work'* and are more reluctant to learn English compared with those who study and *'want more'*

Some of those interviewed had been able to move out of low wage work and found employment in a variety of white collar workplaces where the degree of job satisfaction and relative work/life balance was perceived as positive. Both Dorota and Maria reflected that a significant difference between UK and Poland is the work/life balance with more opportunities in the UK for hobbies and a life outside of work. As Dorota notes, '*in Poland...I always had to work extra hours or do things to kind of get the basic*'. Moreover, in these occupations workplace culture was viewed as more inclusive and open compared to hierarchical employer/employee relations in Poland and few people complained of discrimination at work based on the ground of nationality. As Helena, who works for Norwich Union claims, '*I never felt that I'm disadvantaged because I'm Polish or a foreigner'.* Unsurprisingly, for those who had returned to Poland it was the white collar jobs that were considered more beneficial to social mobility upon return and were recognised as providing valuable opportunities for personal and professional self-development while low wage work was often viewed as a liability for some looking to return to professions. Sabina worked for 6 months in a recruitment agency in Mansfield secured through an online British-Polish recruitment site. She returned to Poland in 2007 and now works for a Dutch recruitment consultancy in Katowice and regards her work experience in the UK as valuable and critical to her success in securing employment in Poland.

> *"I'm quite sure that I wouldn't get the job I had here if I had not lived in England. It was quite surprising for me because when they hired me I just jumped to the position I had, I didn't get any training...In England they gave me very good training...And I think I got to know myself after this half a year in England – I knew what I like, what I don't like, I knew that I don't like very close supervision...I found out that in England, it was a really good experience to get to know myself" (Sabina, age 25, Katowice).*

Sabina sees a double value of her work experience in Poland, both as a source of professional and personal development leading to social mobility upon return in Poland. However, although Sabina has some positive memories from her stay in the UK she reflects also on the everyday challenges, she feels, for Polish people trying to find work in the UK. She gained an insight into employer expectations and treatment of workers and describes the policies among employers aimed at recruiting low skilled Polish workers in the UK and Ireland

"It was low skilled work, labour in the factories, on building sites, maintenance...we had lots of Lithuanians, Latvians, Polish...sometimes we had a description on the job 'Eastern European worker' and sometimes 'Polish'. They prefer Polish guys because they do a better job. The employers said that...one thing is they like us, they like what we do, they consider us to do good job but when you look closer you notice that we a good for them just for basic jobs, look how many Polish people are in higher level positions...In England I had contact with people who didn't finish their studies, not all but most. But in Ireland, most of them had Master's degree, a good level of English but they're still working in restaurants- they didn't get a proper job, I don't mean that the restaurant is not good but their aspiration was much higher" (Sabina, age 25, Katowice).

Sabina's impression of the opportunities for social mobility in the UK reflect another paradox of EU mobility, while she herself feels she gained valuable experience working in the UK, for others working at the lower end of the labour market the conditions were far more problematic and lacking in opportunity for social mobility. Jan provides an illustrative example of the fate of some Polish people who moved for work since 2004 and were unable to find work,

"There was a few things I didn't notice before 2004, like in Poland it's common to sit in the park and drink alcohol – I didn't see it before 2004 but after some Polish came and so many guys are drinking vodka on the bench. Many things like that happened after 2004 when everyone could just come, so many people just came because they thought they would find a job easier than in Poland and they came and they didn't know what to do with themselves. Many people just stayed at Victoria station and maybe it's because it's the media because newspapers and TV say many people go to UK and it's such a nice place and you can get a job. Many people just packed up and went there without money, they didn't know anyone. I did quite a stupid thing as well cos I didn't know English. I think it's...my first job I found was on the 'Crying wall' – I found a job there" (Jan, age 34, Kraków).
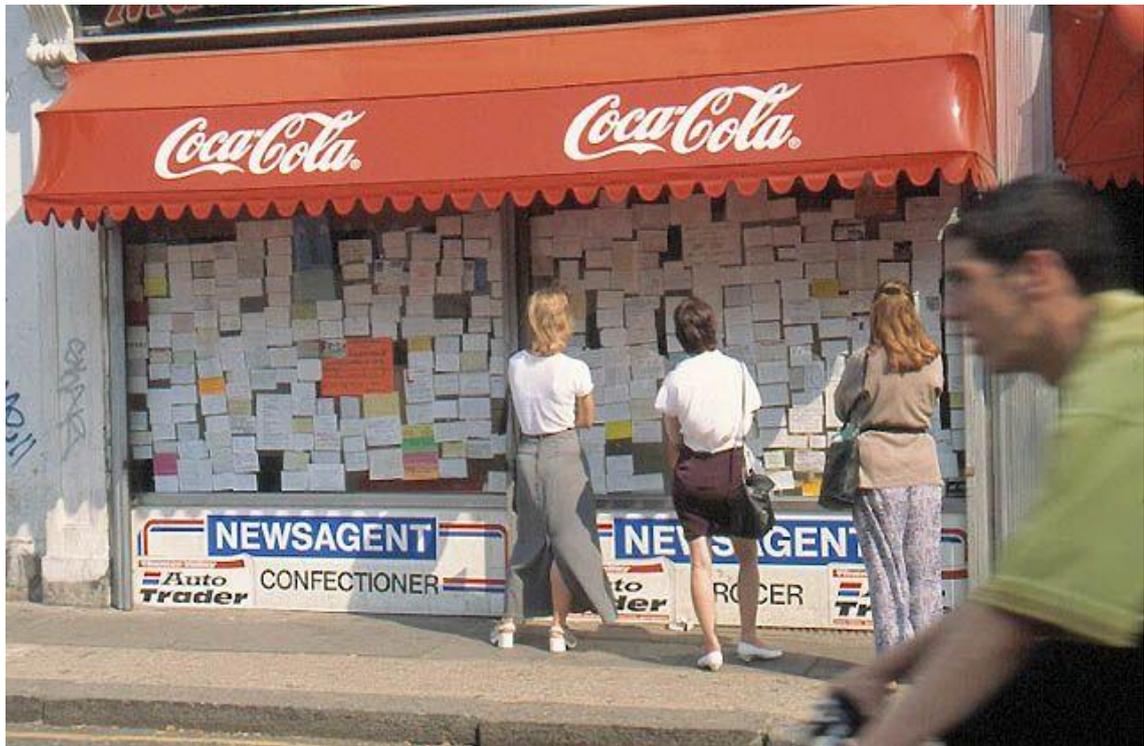
Photo 18: 'Sciana Placzu' in London (Photo by Globetrotter.pl)

The 'crying wall' or 'wailing wall' (Sciana Placzu) [28] referred to by Jan is a newsagents in Hammersmith, London which has a reputation for posting hundreds of informal labour market vacancies in the shop window. Sardonic reference to the site of pilgrimage in Jerusalem, the shop was dubbed 'the wailing wall'by Poles living in London for whom this place was the first calling point for work, its reputation is well known in Poland too[29].

Self-Employment

Like Jan, some of those who had experienced low wage work in the UK returned to Poland to embark upon goals for self-employment. Crease (1970) typified this type of return migration as 'a return of innovation' where 'migrants take new idea, values and ambitions back to their home countries' (King, 2000, p.13). Ryszard comments on the experience of himself and his friends who have entrepreneurial aspirations in Poland upon return

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[28] See Jeffries (2005)

[29] The more widespread access and use of online technology has led to fewer paper ads being posted here but Sciana Placzu has nevertheless been a significant recruitment practice for informal migrant work since the early 2000s

> *"Most of the people who came back are trying self-employment and this money maybe helps them and having the experience of working there maybe they don't want to have a boss anymore" (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).*

Jan returned to Kraków in 2008 with his wife, Gosia, after living in London for seven years. Jan started a small surveying business in London which he has subsequently expanded since his return to Poland with a new office in Kraków. While he maintains transnational business networks between Poland and London, his focus is on the new business venture in Poland, in partnership with Polish friends he met in London and who have also moved back to Kraków. For Jan and his business partners the move to London was an essential stepping stone in the development of their business, it was the site of cultivating an idea and consolidating the organisation. Incidentally, their new business is part-financed by an EU scheme and represents a harbinger for the transnational business opportunities afforded by EU mobility. The transnational entrepreneurialism expressed here represents a type of 'transnational urbanism' in which the 'translocal' networks between London and Kraków are located in specific social contexts and develop through specific socio-spatial practices (Smith, 2001, Conradson and Latham, 2005). However, this should not be overstated since Jan remarked that the business in London is quiet and he is considering giving up his UK phone and focussing on his newly developed SME in Kraków. His transnational activity is minimal and he has little desire to develop links further since he would rather be '*working on things here [in Poland]*'. This demonstrates the adjustments made upon return and the declining importance of transnational networks in the context of return.

For some, the desire for self-employment had been instilled in reaction to negative work experiences abroad. Maciej lives in Katowice and runs his own promotions and marketing company after returning with an MBA degree. Throughout his narrative he extols the virtues of Katowice and justifies his belief in his decision to return and fulfil his aspirations for self-employment in contrast to his work experiences in the UK and Ireland.

> *"When I came back to Poland I decided that I'm going to open my own business and I'm going to do some job like I'm doing now...I decided I was going to do something for my own and I wasn't going to be sitting from 8 til 5 everyday and waiting for a weekend. It wasn't the job for me...when I was working in the office in Dublin I thought 'Jesus what am I doing here sitting in an office in a stupid suit, waking up at 6am, getting up, having breakfast, going to work, coming back, doing the same thing everyday – No'. I knew there would be a*

moment where I would explode so I came back here to start something for myself" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice).

Maciej's aspiration to '*start something for myself*' rather than subscribe to a life of '*8 til 5*' is a reaction against a particular work-based identity he associates with being an employee, contingent on a perception of a monotonous workplace culture with low level job satisfaction. Drawing on Du Gay's (1996) text on identity and consumption at work, it could be argued that Maciej's narrative exhibits traces of an 'enterprising self' driven by an impulse for 'self-actualisation' and 'self-regulation' and becoming, in essence an 'entrepreneur of himself'.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the changing nature of work in the context of neoliberal restructuring in Poland has led to a pervasive 'ethos of enterprise' (Du Gay, 1996) that underpins and supports many people's aspirations for self-employment. In Kraków, the development of a 30 year old unfinished skyscraper (original construction began under communism) to become Kraków's 'new Manhattan' is representative of the drive in commercial property development in Poland[30]. Alongside this, incentive schemes for young people to engage in self-employment are burgeoning, particularly aimed at those returning from abroad. Dominika lived abroad for 8 years working in various European cities for a high profile international corporation, she has recently returned to Kraków and set up Galaktyka Kobiet (Women's Galaxy), an organisation to encourage women in business. Dominika remarks that despite the high levels of female graduates in Poland, women are under-represented in the workplace due to their entrenched position in a paternalistic business culture. She claims women do not 'help themselves' and many of the skills learnt from abroad are 'forgotten' upon return.

> *"Women are a big issue now. We are starting to take over managerial positions, and yet we have no tools to deal with the situation. We definitely know how to take care of the way we look, because the market is saturated with beauty salons…but we still do not have so many centres for women where we can learn from other women how to be successful in this new economic situation in which women are taking over" (Taken from Interview in Kraków Post, July 4th 2010).*

Here, again, the language of enterprise and individual responsibility is suggestive of the current neoliberal and gendered tone of work in Poland. From the narratives, some women talked of the 'glass ceiling' as an inhibitor to social mobility in Poland, while others reflected on the gender discrimination experienced as a Polish woman in the UK

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[30] See Barnett (2010) on the development of Rondo Mogilskie into Krakow's 'new Manhattan'.

"I have found lots of people being very patronising to me just because I'm foreign, just because I have an accent. For women, it's like 'you are cute, you have a cute accent', it's not helping you to be professional" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).

This section has highlighted some of the uneven opportunities for social mobility among those working in low wage work, office-based or professional work and self-employment both in the UK and upon return. As would be expected those with a high level of competency in English language are more likely to experience some sort of social mobility compared with those without, however, the lack of access to English language training and limited opportunity to practice in a predominantly migrant workforce imposes limits upon the degree of career progression from low wage work.

6.4 Potential Futures of Mobility

Mobility has been presented throughout this chapter as an opportunity and as a challenge. Many people see it as both, suggesting that the transitive spaces of mobility can be viewed as encouraging progress and extending choice, whilst simultaneously dislocating from the known, the expected and the secure. The changing economic climate in the UK has caused many to re-consider the goal of migration and many have returned home, while others who remain are questioning whether to stay. Considering return was an unsettling process for migrants living in Edinburgh, reflecting a tension between contradictory or competing imaginations of return. On the one hand, people expressed 'tęksnota' (homesickness), while on the other imagined return as a 'backwards step' leading to downward social mobility, both economically and culturally. Dorota feels a move back to Poland would be a step backwards and feels there is limited transferability between her work experience in the UK and the Polish labour market. She expressed that a sense of pride prevents her from returning to Poland and starting a career path from 'zero':

"I don't want to go back and start from zero. I can go to any other country and start from zero but I'm not going to my own country to start from zero" (Dorota, aged 30, Edinburgh).

Many felt uncertain about returning because of their memories of a deteriorating economic climate, restrictive work practices and an insecure political system. Some lacked the social networks in Poland to develop knowledge of potential opportunities

and some were cynical about state efforts to encourage return. Some people had heard stories of people returning to Poland and struggling to re-settle into Polish society. The processes of adjustment upon return is yet another transition young people experience through mobility. While an initial feeling of optimism or 'urlop pomigracyjny' is a common emotion during the first stages of return migration, this often turns into anxiety and stress as the practical issues of finding work or starting up a business or family come to bear (Centrum Doradztwa Strategicznego, 2010). This is particularly difficult if the return was unplanned or individuals are ill-prepared for the re-integration into the Polish labour market, and wider society (ibid.) reflecting perhaps the market for organisations like Galaktyka Kobiet. Dorota again reflects on this predicament,

> *"...people say when they come back they really struggle with simple things...you got used to countries, maybe not that it works much better but it works in a different way and in a more logical way. That's the experience of your adult life. The student life is closed – most people left at this stage I think, so you learn the rules in a different context and you come back and want to apply them there and it doesn't work. And you get frustrated. It takes so much longer and you kind of think, 'if I had stayed there and learnt how it works there I probably could navigate quicker as well'...it's kind of scary... sometimes this mobility is a bit pointless...why the need to travel, you know – it doesn't work for everybody I guess" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Dorota connects the migration process as entwined with the negotiations of emerging adulthood and discusses the challenges of return migration in relation to youth transitions made abroad. Here the 'rules' of different places are significant in influencing decisions about staying and returning suggesting again that the 'institutional fabric of social life' plays a key role in decisions for mobility (Kenworthy Teather, 1999). This was further exemplified through stories of attitudes to emigrants in Poland. Both Dorota and her husband Pedro commented that their peers in both Poland and Spain make disdainful comments about their emigration, viewing them as *'traitors'* for leaving when *'the country needs you'*, leaving Dorota with a sense of guilt and responsibility to *'give something back to Poland'*. Or as Maria remarks, *'you are starting again from the beginning...so Poland is not always embracing you'*. She expresses her fear of returning as a failure and not the *'big success'* expected as a result of emigration.

> *"...it's my biggest fear that you come there and I actually will live in some rented little apartment not being able to even finance your rent if you are*

unlucky with job. In your job you will have a boss who is from the old times who is going to treat you like nothing...” (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).

The perception of return as success or failure echoes Cerase's (1974) argument on the 'return of failure' and has been noted as a sustained perception among Polish migrants by other scholars (White, 2011a). However, not everyone felt that a move back to Poland would signal downward mobility. Some felt that economic prospects in Poland are on the rise and suggested that although in real terms the wages are lower than in the UK the opportunities for personal and professional development do exist and are getting better, especially in the context of economic downturn in the UK. Emilia moved back to her home town, Bytom, in 2009 after living in Edinburgh for one year while finishing her studies. She now lives with her parents and works in Katowice as an accountant. She sees this stage in her life as a transition from studying to work, viewing more *'sensible'* opportunities for graduates in her home town of Katowice than in the more competitive city of Kraków or abroad. Similarly, Elzbieta moved to Kraków in 2008 with her English boyfriend, Mark after both working as ESOL teachers in Manchester. Elzbieta now works as a translator and Mark works as a private English teacher,

> *"I was working as a teacher and the money wasn't very good because if I worked in Poland I could earn similar money...the main reason for [Mark] to come back was he...decided he can do the same thing in Poland and get the same money and better standard of living" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).*

However, Elzbieta compares her own favourable situation to that of others for whom finding work upon return is more problematic,

> *"...if you had a job in England where you worked in a supermarket and you came back and want to work in your profession it's not going to look good. This friend of mine...he went to England to earn money for a flat, he's a physiotherapist but he's been working in England in a supermarket for four years so I'm really worried that he's going to come back here and not be able to find a decent job...he's kind of going backwards...I think if you're not doing what you want to do...you shouldn't do it for very long...if you keep doing it then going back to Poland and finding a good job in your profession just gets smaller every year" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).*

Similarly, Teresa remarks upon the reactions of her Polish employers to her range of temporary employment in the UK, '*when they told me I got the job he said 'and now you're not a temporary worker, just a normal one''(Teresa, age 25, Katowice).* The ability to get an equivalent wage in Poland in certain professions is a key economic

incentive for return. However, as Elzbieta notes there are challenges associated with slotting back into the job market after a period of under-employment demonstrating that a return is not always a move forward.

6.4.1 Tęsknota

Many people expressed 'tęsknota' or 'homesickness' for Poland, whether connected to family or friends or a more abstract sense of home. Weronika moved back to Kraków in 2009 to 'try' to make a life in Poland.

> *"I always wanted to come back – I missed my life, my family here and I still have lots of friends here...I've worked in Ireland, in the States, in Spain but I've never worked in Poland so how can I say there is nothing to do in Poland when I never tried. So that's why I came back – to try" (Weronika, aged 25, Kraków).*

Weronika reflected that she always planned to come back and her optimism upon return signals a sense of relief and happiness at being close to family and friends. For Weronika the move back to Poland was a perceived success, expressed most emphatically through her desire for closer proximity to family and friends. For others too, proximity to family was a key driver for return for various reasons. Elzbieta, for example, claims that her move back was motivated by a combination of economic calculations and the desire to be close to her sister who had just given birth to her first child. She says '*I'm really close to my family and my niece was born that year and I was kind of feeling that I was missing out'*. For others, proximity to older relatives was an important factor in their return. Ryszard returned to Kraków in 2006 with a plan to settle in Poland with his partner Agata and be close to his father who has health problems. This suggests that in spite of the increasing speed and availability of communication devices that facilitate transnational relationships close proximity to family is regarded as significant to young people engaged in EU mobility. Chapter seven will discuss these issues in greater detail.

Tomek moved to London in 2001 for a short-term working holiday and is now living in Edinburgh and working as an architect. He describes a *'need for movement'* and discovery of new places and people. Tomek sees the physical move away from Poland as offering tangible benefits in terms of its experiential effects – meeting new people, working in a 'different' place, seeing a new environment. However, this aspiration for

geographical mobility is mediated by the absence of significant gains in occupational mobility in Edinburgh and the lack of a defined home.

> *"the difference in my profession is tiny so I think the next step is coming...I feel like I should go back to Wrocław and buy a flat and try to finally sit somewhere...it's quite difficult when you're moving all the time to get to the level...I want to get one place, something which defines as home, because at the moment I don't have anything like that...I need to get my own home to start my movement again" (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Tomek's '*need for movement*' relates to both geographical and social mobility whereby property ownership and occupational status are indicators of upward mobility and '*home*' is not regarded as static. For Tomek, a return home is not the end of mobility for him but a requisite underpinning of further mobility contradicting those who feel return is a *'backwards step'*. Conceptualising 'home' is a complex and highly subjective exercise. Burrell (2003, p.333) refers to an 'emotional transnationalism' suggestingng that imaginings of 'home' can be replicated 'from afar, through the detailed memories, folk tales and intricate performances of traditions'. Łukasz refers to his habit of '*idealising places*' and his aspiration for return is bound to images or '*tęsknota*' for the Polish Summer where '*the grass is greener*' but he contends that this image is darkened with memories of economic disadvantage and bureaucratic institutions.

The imagined geographies of home are often reinforced through diasporic media networks, which portray representations of 'home' as a political tool to extend 'geographies of concern and generosity' in response to certain political situations (Carter, 2007, p.1111). This has been most notably present in the efforts of public figures rallying for the return of Polish young people to key cities in Poland through a range of media representations of the changing face of Poland, underpinning a professionalised and highly economic rationale for return using cost/benefit calculations with a moral imperative for return[31]. It is as yet unclear as to whether these have been successful in encouraging young people back to Poland. For many, the aspiration for onward mobility is unfixed and open to possibility. Kasia moved to the UK in 2007 after various periods of mobility, such as to the Netherlands on a working holiday during University. Her narrative unfolds as a series of chapters in her life and personal reflections on the different movements and achievements made, from various work experiences, changing friendships and relationships and her own embodied changes. In

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[31] National and local government initiatives have been involved in encouraging the return of young Poles to Poland through a range of media, such as the Institute for Public Affairs website, 'Wyjazdy i Powroty'

these photos (19 and 20) Kasia shows how her desire for change often manifests in a change of hairstyle. The first photo was taken whilst studying at University in Wrocław and Kasia recalls it was a time in her life when she was a 'good student', 'responsible' and 'not partying much'. In the next photo Kasia has a shaved head that was motivated, she says, by splitting up with her boyfriend and 'partying more'.
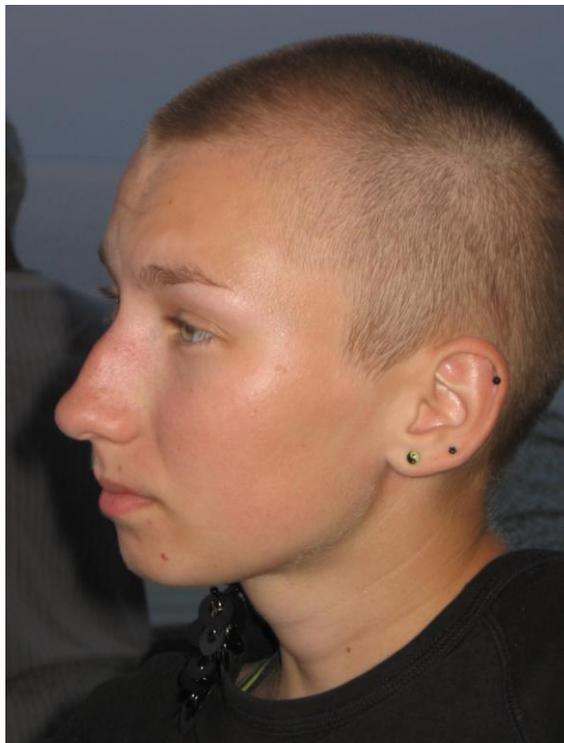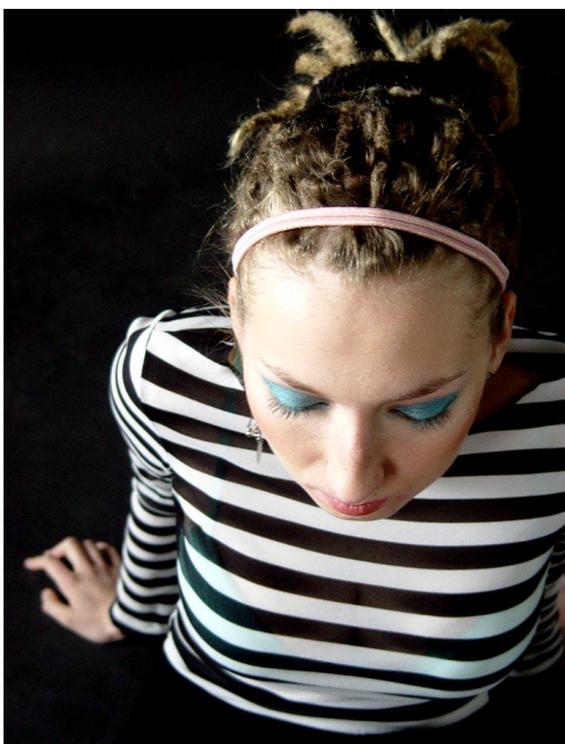
Photo 19: Kasia with dreadlocks   **Photo 20: Kasia with shaved head**
(photos by Kasia)

> *"I think the hairstyles changing go hand in hand with my personality changes and some big events in my life usually including relationships. I think I was a different person. This me and this me, not two completely different people but still different so it's like some marks. When I'm thinking about my life I think about closed chapters so the dreads photo was one chapter and being bald was another chapter. I'm kind of still looking for the next chapter" (Kasia, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Kasia says she has aspirations for further migration, however she remains nostalgic for her home city of Wrocław and clings to the idea of eventual return – *'travel or not travel but being old and spending old age in Poland for sure'*. Plenty has been written about returning to the 'homeland' in older age, and the enduring connection throughout life with the home country, it is clear that for some young people Poland as 'home' is equally important in spite of the 'mobile biographies' and whether they actually return or not.

6.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has shown that post-accession mobility is understood, represented and practiced in different ways by young Polish people. EU mobility represents a beacon for those who see limited opportunities in Poland and for many moving forward is a move abroad. Mobility is perceived as the enterprise of youth and an alternative to a traditional, sedentary existence, but also as a search for a fairer chance. In these narratives, current migrants perceive the Polish workplace as a site of struggle and competition with a patriarchal and backward facing work cultures, while many of those who have returned view with optimism the increasing opportunities for entrepreneurialism and upward mobility in the Polish labour market.

The chapter has also explored the personal transformations that occur with mobility. Young migrants negotiate and reflexively engage with multiple reference points between 'here' and 'there' - e.g. language, culture, class - leading to what could be termed a 'mobile subjectivity'. Furthermore, the aspirational discourse of EU mobility in many ways penetrates youth subjectivities, concealing classed or gendered subjectivities that shape access to mobility. I have argued that these transititive spaces and discourses shape young people's sense of self in different ways.

When referring to the potential futures of mobility migrants express hesitancy to embrace a mobile lifestyle with the desire for familial and community support networks serving as a counterweight to independent spatial mobility. Furthermore, the uncertainties expressed by current migrants relating to mobility in the form of return migration suggest a desire to stay put. Perpetual mobility is less appealing then, if de-rooting form one place leads to a backwards step in another. For many, the risks outweigh the opportunities.

Chapter Seven

The Polish Family: A Remedy to Individualization?

7.1 Introduction

The family is a significant force that underpins the moral geographies of mobility for young adults, particularly in the context of youth transitions. In a recent survey it was reported that the majority of Europeans think moving countries is good for European integration, but only one third think it is good for families (European Commission, 2010). The idea that family is antithetic to spatial mobility implies that a mobile livelihood is still perceived by most Europeans to be a non-stable, anti-local phenomenon. It goes against the idea of fluid and hyper-mobile lives, opting instead for the family as a source of security and comfort. This reflects Beck's (1992) hypothesis that processes of individualization, including the requirement for individual mobility, are rendering the family obsolete.

> *'...the market model of modernity implies a society without families and children. Everyone must be free for the demands of the market order to guarantee his/her economic existence...the ultimate market society is a childless society' (Beck, 1992, cited in Charles et al, 2008, p.4).*

This chapter engages with these debates providing empirical evidence of the ways in which family and mobility intersect in the Polish context. It is argued that the family persists as an importantsocial process for young Polish people and impacts in different ways on values and judgements for mobility.

The chapter begins by discussing the historic dimension of the Polish family and explores how family has been constructed historically and politically in Poland. Here, I examine how the construction of the 'Polish family' as a moral issue extends transnationally and is practiced by young adults in migrant spaces. This is followed by a discussion of the transnational family practices that young migrants are engaged in between the UK and Poland. Here, I explore the complex negotiations that young people engage in to preserve and enrich not only existing family relations but also a 'sense' of family in the context of mobility. Concluding this chapter I explore how mobility involves the formation of new relationships and family set ups. Within this the

importance of friendship networks in supporting mobility is discussed, including the ways in which friendships act as a substitute for family in the absence of close family relations.

7.2 The Polish Family

In Poland, the family is positioned at the top of a hierarchy of values (Dobrowolska, 1975; Bednarski, 1987; Buchowski, 1996; Tyszka, 1982) and perceived by many as 'a sanctuary in a hostile sea of social relations' (Buchowski, 1996, p.84). The family is strongly rooted to Polish national identity, inextricably connected to Catholicism as the predominant faith. Poland as a nation is romanticized as both 'fatherland' and as 'mother', aligned to the iconography of the 'Our Lady of Częstachowa', a holy relic and national symbol crowned as 'Queen and Protector of Poland' (Ostrowska, 2005). It has been suggested that this imagery is projected in various ways onto the 'Polish mother' or 'Matka Polka', who is celebrated as 'the heroic mother of sons, a sign situated between myth and stereotype, central to the country's national identity and it's homosocial dimension' (Graff, 2009, p136). Graff (2009) argues that the gendered nationalism represented in the imagery of Matka Polka is central to the idea of Polish family where women are positioned in certain ways, in spite of policies for gender equality during state socialism. Furthermore, some have observed an ideological shift in contemporary public discourse towards a re-imagining of the myth of Matka Polka (Hardy, 2009)

Gender politics is central to a discussion on Polish family life since the place of women in the household, women's rights in employment and reproductive rights have shaped the nature and role of the family in Poland both during state socialism and after. While it is generally agreed that there were high rates of female participation in the socialist workforce, women were excluded from some blue collar jobs and usually occupied the lower levels of the labour market (Hardy, 2009; Hübner et al, 2003). Moreover, while the communist ideals of female emancipation from the household and from the patriarchal family were espoused by the Party, the reality was based on a far more traditional notion of the family. Women were burdened with domestic responsibilities in addition to their public employment and there were few spaces for raising gender consciousness among women in reaction to exploitation and gender inequality (Siemieńska, 2010; Hardy 2009). Since 1990 women 'have borne the brunt of

transformation' with higher levels of unemployment among women, gender based labour market segmentation and stratification, and neoliberal welfare reform leading to the polarisation of childcare provision and increasing the 'double burden' for working mothers (Hardy, 2009, p.164).

Working mothers appeared in the memories of young migrants in Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice, relating to family life during transformation. In relation to their household roles mothers were described as 'working', or as 'industrious', 'strong' or 'sacrificing'. Maria reflects on her mother's 'sacrifice' for the family through emigrating for work during the communist era and her subsequent return to work during times of economic insecurity after its collapse.

> *"my mum came back from the States, she brought lots of money...she was so missing us and so tired of being on her own that she completely sacrificed herself for us and rebuilt the whole house, painted, bought new kitchen so the whole house changed. But they never invested the money because my dad was holding it...he wanted good because he took the money and put it in a bank account with a higher percentage...he thought if nothing change he could quit his job and mum wouldn't have to work because we can live on the percentage...he never foreseen that communism would collapse...and suddenly the money was worth nothing and we had no security...my mum was like 'ok I'm going to work now'"* (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).

Maria portrays her mother as performing both the domestic and breadwinner role in this context and while she appreciates her father's attempts to be financially savvy she extols her mother's courage and 'sacrifice' for the family when times became hard. Sacrifice was a recurring theme of the narratives and was generally associated with the 'hard work' performed by mothers to support and raise the family. Hardy (2009, p.170) argues that this notion of sacrifice is implicit in the myth of Matka Polka placing a 'duty on women to sacrifice themselves for the family, and in particular for the good of the children, in order to support the reproduction of the Polish nation'.

After the collapse of state socialism the rapid removal of state supported welfare in the context of high unemployment had profound impacts upon the family and, as Siemieńska (2010, p.6) stresses, 'getting by became, above all, the concern of individuals, not of the state'. In this context the family was perceived as an institution in crisis (Ignatczyk, 1999; Minkiewicz, 1995). Ornacka and Szczepaniak-Wiecha (2005) point to the combined effects of an ageing population and shifting demography, structural changes in employment and social life and wider processes of globalization.

> *"The reduction in the size of the family, the lack of community, the low level of societal control, and the anomie of individuals are each leading to the destabilisation of contemporary families" (Ornacka and Szczepaniak-Wiecha, 2005, p.217).*

Echoing the forecasts of Beck et al. (2004), Ornacka and Szczepaniak-Wiecha (2005) chart the corrosion of the family alongside the socio-economic and cultural transformations of post-socialism suggesting a shift in moral values among young people in relation to family life. They emphasise the contemporary pre-occupation with personal wellbeing and individual success as superseding the self-sufficient family and the decline of traditional occupations around which cohesive values of family and community were based (Ornacka and Szczepaniak-Wiecha, 2005). The decline of the 'traditional' Polish family has also been attributed to global changes in the 'image' of the family, a reduced 'solidarity' among multigenerational families and the fall in the number of 'functions' performed by the family, such as care, education and emotional support (Jacher, 1987 as cited in Ornacka and Szczepaniak-Wiecha, 2005, p.197). Buchowski (1996, p92) argues, however, that 'there remains the conviction that the family is still the only sphere that counts in realising one's aspirations' suggesting that despite the changing functions of everyday family life in Poland, it remains a valued space for shaping future orientations. He views this feature as an 'obstacle to the new 'western' forms of civil society' and suggests that Poland is charting its own route analogous to western prescription and prediction. Moreover, as Ornacka and Szczepaniak-Wiecha (2005, p.218) assert, 'Poles have not yet adopted the postmodern style of life' and according to opinion polls the family remains a central unit of socialisation with high levels of family contact and close residential proximity and the significance of the Church in family life.

7.2.1 The Politicisation of the Family

The gloomy portraits of the decline of family in the context of modernity have leaked into mainstream political discourse on the family in Poland and frequently polarise the political arena. Poland's accession to the EU has intensified these debates with warnings that EU mobility is a threat to Polish family life. In a review of three Polish weekly news magazines on the cusp of EU accession in 2004, Agnieszka Graff (2008) discusses the views of an article printed in the conservative magazine *WProst*.

"According to the author, the traditional family – stay-at-home-mom, dad driven to succeed by the need to "feed" his brood, numerous children educated to be real patriots – constitutes "the best capital" and a "perfect micromarket" which serves one well in "liberal economy.""...we are told, the family remains under threat in Europe (as opposed to the U.S.A.) due to high taxes and the excesses of the welfare state (which makes reliance on loved ones redundant)" (Graff, 2008, p.7).

The gender politics present in this extract reinforce the myth of Matka Polka as the 'stay at home mom' and protector of family values, suggesting that anxiety remains over the impact of the EU on 'normal' families. The preservation of family values, alongside de-communisation, anti-corruption and battling crime, was a feature of the electoral campaign of the winning Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS, Law and Justice) party in 2005, leading to what some have referred to as a revival of conservative Catholic and nationalist parties in the post-socialist era (Hardy, 2009). For example, in the run up to EU accession the League of Polish Families (LPF), a populist (and widely regarded extremist) party based on Catholic nationalist values and campaigning in opposition to European integration, grew in electoral strength becoming part of the governing coalition between 2005 and 2007. The LPF discursively constructs the traditional Polish family around values of Catholicism and nationalism and against communism and Eurocentrism. The family exists in a private space of hetero-normative reproduction and pious tradition, vehemently opposed to the secular and civic codes of liberal democracy, most controversially demonstrated in their opposition to reproductive rights for women and LGBT rights. Between 2001 and 2007 the LPF made significant electoral successes, helped along by support from the Catholic, right-wing radio station Radio Maryja whose listeners share 'a conservative, nationalistic, and anti-liberal agenda' (de Lange and Guerra, 2009, p.536). These discourses, awash with rhetoric of 'moral certainties' and a 'deep commitment to what it calls 'normality' construct Polish national identity as the combined force of faith, family and nation, which is highly gendered and exclusionary (Graff, 2009, p.133). Within this politicised discourse the issue of migration has been a sensitive issue with different moral valuations on different types of migration (Garapich, 2008a; White, 2011b). As Garapich (2008a) notes 'migration for political reasons has higher moral status than economic migration' (p.130) and this has played out in contemporary religio-political arenas whereby leading religious clerics have criticised labour migration as contributing to the erosion of family values (White, 2011b).

However, in 2011 the electoral support for the LPF is almost non-existent and, in fact, by 2007 the LPF had declined significantly in popularity achieving no seats in the Sejm. This decline has been attributed to a combination of political wrangling with coalition parties and shift in public perception with many more people looking to the pro-EU parties and loosing trust in the extremist LPF as a legitimate entity (de Lange and Guerra, 2009; Szczerbiak 2007). As Hardy (2009, p.199) notes, the public support of right wing parties should not be overstated and should be taken in context, rather than consist of a 'demonisation of the Polish public as 'Far Right''. The most recent presidential election in 2010 saw the defeat of the Jarosław Kaczynski for the PiS by a more moderate, pro-EU and neoliberal Bronosław Komorowski aligned with the Civic Platform party.

Photo 21: Komorowski 'consensus building' election poster in Wrocław market square, July 2010 (photo by KB)

The election results (53%-47%) were split along geographical lines (though not exclusively) with large support for Kaczynski among rural communities in the East and Komorowski gaining votes from a predominantly young, urban electorate in many of the major cities in the West, and around Warsaw. I was conducting interviews in

Kraków during the election and conversations with young people regarding the election highlighted the desire for progressive representation over a conservative, family-oriented position with some people worried about the possibility of a victory for the PiS, particularly in light of the circumstances surrounding the Presidential election[32]. Interestingly, the message of the PiS has shifted in the past few years from a regressive, ethno-nationalist, Catholic conservatism to a more moderate mix of tradition and modernity. This has been a strategic move to re-locate the family in the context of contemporary, neoliberal society and a strategic move away from the nationalistic language of far right parties like the LPF.

For mobile young people the situation is more complex with personal meanings of family intersecting with political discourse. The engagement with a different set of civic codes based more firmly on principles of tolerance and liberalism has possibly generated a shift in perspective on the conservative values proclaimed in some corners of political discourse. White (2011b) suggests there is evidence of a shift in values around family life with national opinion polls showing a move towards the dual carer/dual earner family model as opposed to the more traditional male breadwinner model. Moreover, despite the mainstream belief in hetero-normative family practice both in Poland and among many Polish people in the UK, the willingness to engage with discussion and protest on, or at the very least 'tolerate', diversity in family policies attempts to challenge the traditional meanings of family. Campaigns for gender equality, reproductive rights and same-sex partnerships are examples of some of the movements on the fringes of Polish politics, which extend across borders. For example, in 2010 Poland's first 'tolerance' march took place in Warsaw.

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[32] The election was called as a result of the death of the former President Lech Kaczynski, twin brother of Jarosław and former leader of the PiS party, in a plane crash at Smolensk

Photo 22: Poland's first 'tolerance' march, Warsaw, July 2010 (photo by KB)

Furthermore, Polish community groups in Edinburgh are often vocal in these campaigns demonstrating a transnational practice of community activism. This will be the focus of chapter seven where the extension of these issues beyond the individual and the family and to communities at home and abroad will be discussed. However, alongside these movements nationalist groups, such as the Młodzież Wszechpolska (All Polish Youth movement), have engaged in protest against what they perceive to be the decline of family through 'militant homosexuality' campaigning for the 'support and fidelity to traditional values such as respect to tradition, family and patriotism'[33]. While groups such as this exist on the fringe on the political mainstream they are visibly and violently present in opposition to, only recently sanctioned, 'tolerance marches' in the major cities of Poland (see photo 22), contributing to a forceful re-affirmation of traditional meanings of family. In spite of the political discourse and fringe movements around family, election results and the packaging of political campaigns do not reveal as much about the personal interpretations of the meaning of Polish family and what is perceived as 'normal' as detailed narrative insights.

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[33] http://www.polish-youth.org/

7.3 A Normal Life: Mobility, Family and Belonging

In chapter five, it was argued that for many young people mobility involves the pursuit of self-definition and a retreat from what some referred to as '*Polish traditional typical life'* (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh). In the narratives Polish family life was discussed in the context of normality with different interpretations of what constitutes a normal life and to what extent family is complicit in this. For some, normality was perceived as boredom and stasis, a site of familial habits and expectations. In this context, the restrictive and immobile aspects of family were highlighted and individual mobility was constructed as oppositional to parental expectations. Here Maciej portrays his parents' working life as predictable and 'routine'.

> *"My mother was unemployed, she never worked, she was a housewife basically and my father is an IT engineer...so he was kind of the guy who was going to work at 8 and coming back at 4, reading the newspaper and...he would come home, just change the channels on the TV after work and I thought 'Jesus that's not for me'...I wanted to do something...I didn't want to be closed in some sort of life routine" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice)*

Maciej's perception of family life in Poland is strongly based in the memories of his father's working life and the limited leisure time shared by the family. As has been shown in previous chapters Maciej's narrative is embedded in a 'moral individualism' (Beck, 1992) to pursue a different life from that of his parents and his return to Katowice is influenced less by a longing for family re-union but rather an attachment to a strong friendship group. Again, his idea of Polish family is directly related to the intergenerational relationship between parents and children and the experiences of growing up in the family home. Some saw 'the pressure of tradition' as setting their parents apart from themselves, often regarding the celebration of particular customs and recognition of religious holidays, as Ania reflects here.

> *"my mother's approach to holidays and celebrations were it's a really hard job – she felt she had to clean the windows, scrub the floor and we told her 'don't do that'. My father was in charge of windows and she was baking. She wasn't a big housewife or something, she wasn't keen on cooking or baking but she felt the pressure of tradition or other generations" (Ania, age 34, Edinburgh).*

Photo 23: Ania and her family celebrating Easter (photo by Ania)

Ania chose this picture because it featured her mother, father and grandmother at dinner together, with her grandmother 'sitting in the same place' as usual. This photograph sparked memories of funny family rituals but also tension for Ania. She remembers having an uncomfortable relationship with her father, noting that *'I was looking the other way, I didn't feel comfortable with him...his expectations'*. In this sense, the memories of family life spark a range of contradictory emotions for Ania. She reflects on the changes that have occurred over the past few years and the effect this has had on the celebration of Easter within her family. Since her grandmother died last year and she is now living in Edinburgh her family do not celebrate in the same frenetic style – *'there are just three of them, I am here, the main core of the family is not there, there is just three of them, there used to be more, it used to be different. It used to be more celebration, more gathering, more holiday, more family'*. Ania's narrative is both a critique on the *'pressure of tradition'* and a lament for its loss and, with echoes of post-communist nostalgia, a longing for the family life now gone.

The desire to return to the familiar structures of belonging –family, community and nation, was expressed by some as a quest for normalcy in the context of the uncertainties of a mobile life. Some of those who had returned to Poland expressed the relief at coming back to a settled and 'normal life' as opposed to the temporariness of the migratory experience, as Teresa reflects,

> *"I thought this year in England was like a kind of gap in my life – so 'now I'm working and later on I can live normal' – but after two months you find out that it's not possible ... here it was just a normal life as I had [before]" (Teresa, age 26, Katowice).*

Similarly, Szymon associates a 'normal life' with the sense of familiarity and belonging he feels living near family in Poland rather than being alone in the UK.

> *"I can't explain everything what I mean but what I said that I don't think that Polish people can have normal life in England – the same for German people in Spain, Russian people in Italy, for Italian people in Sweden, it's different cultures, different expectations" (Szymon, age 33, Kraków).*

Szymon makes reference to 'different cultures' and 'different expectations' among different national groups in Europe suggesting that he equates normality with national identity and places value on belonging to a national group rather than a cosmopolitan ideal. For others, the idea of fitting back into normal life with their family was more problematic following a substantial emigration experience. Dorota, who has lived in Edinburgh for 5 years, sees mobility as a positive opportunity to engage with difference.

> *"...the nice thing about travelling in Europe and living in different places is you get these different habits, they are nice, you made the best of everything you find...when I go home I eat different things – it's not my life, I just know, I feel I have to adjust ... I'm adjusting to what my parents do... I kind of feel that if I came back I would have to do that, it would automatically happen with my life, I would have to fit in" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

The idea of fitting in implies the adoption of and alignment to particular habits of Polish life which are judged alongside Dorota's personal transitions away from the family home. She now feels that upon returning home for temporary visits, she makes an adjustment to comply with her parents representing an ongoing dynamic of inter-generational relationships and her increasing independence from family structures. As discussed, independence was viewed as both a driver and an impact of mobility and for some the routines and relationships of family life led to a feeling of being *'under surveillance'* in the family home (Helena, age 28, Edinburgh). In Poland, it is common for young people to live with their parents during their 20s, often returning to the family home after University since the housing market is difficult to enter without a stable income (Stenning et al, 2010). Jola reflects on the typical housing arrangements for young people in Poland, typifying dependent living as a cultural trend linked to family values.

> *"A lot of young people my age in Poland still live with their parents and I wouldn't like it. There's less of a culture of having your own flat like here…Hiring a flat in Poland is rarely done, unless they go to study in a different town – a good excuse. Maybe it's more of a family system – strong family connections. It's quite a big part of life" (Jola, age 27, Edinburgh).*

Jola describes herself as having *'disappeared from family life'* in Gdansk to study at University in Lublin when she was 18. For others too, leaving the family home was a key driver in the decision to emigrate, as Teresa claims in her reasons for leaving Poland – *'first – money, second- relationship, and third – I lived with my parents so I thought I had to go'* (Teresa, age 26, Katowice). Dawid also associates his emigration with leaving his mother and the family home – *'Leave mother, leave the family home and start my own life, it was the main reason to go'*.

A number of people who had returned, or who thought to return, saw the family home as a sanctuary for temporary stay to re-consider their aspirations, plan their goals and prepare for the next move. After graduating from her studies in Edinburgh, Emilia moved back to Bytom to live with her parents while she works as an accountant in Katowice.

> *"Unfortunately, I live with my parents right now, this is also kind of problematic because I haven't lived with them for five years and now coming back is difficult. This is one of the main reasons I want to go somewhere else" (Emilia, age 25, Katowice).*

Coming back to Poland and returning to the family home is one of the difficult transitions of mobility and as Emilia suggests, moving back in with parents after an emigration experience can be 'problematic'. Emilia goes on to state that returning to live in the family home also contributes to the decision for further mobility.

7.3.1 Family Support for Mobility

While some saw their emigration to the UK as an '*escape*' from the strictures of family life and traditional expectations, others discussed the role of family in *encouraging* mobility. Family histories of mobility had instilled values for exploration and mobility in young people, not as a counterweight to family but rather as central to it. Often grandparents were portrayed as representing the family heritage, with many people describing the mobile histories of their grandparents and great grandparents who had

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moved from place to place within and beyond the changing borders of Poland. Jacek recalls the inter-generational mobility from east to west

> *"my family came from Ukraine originally...during the Second World War my great grandparents fled to Poland, on the Eastern side and that's where they stayed...when my dad was 18 my grandfather got a job in Bielsko Biała, he was a builder and he couldn't say he was not going to go so he went"(Jacek, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Parental encouragement for mobility, both as travel and student mobility, was an implicit driving force for migration to the UK, and also return, demonstrating the readiness with which mobility was extolled as an intergenerational value. Maria moved to Edinburgh in 2005 and had previously lived and worked in Ireland, the Netherlands and Sri Lanka since leaving her parental home after University. She views parental encouragement as habitual and contributing to a feeling of confidence in travel.

> *"Your parents are always repeating 'you are so lucky you have this passport and you can go wherever you want' and if you hear this through your youth and have this passport and can go and see all your friends going somewhere, if I stay at home I would feel a bit like I didn't use the opportunity given" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).*

As discussed in chapter five, many had experienced travel with parents as they grew up. Sabina describes her family as atypical in respect to their values for mobility,

> *"My values come from my parents – I think my family is not a typical Polish family...My family always practice a lot of sports, my dad is a sailor – not meaning his profession, he just sails a lot and is well skilled. Every year we spend holidays in Italy, Croatia, Greece or sometimes Polish lakes...I started skiing with them when I was about 5 years old...I started travelling with them from when I was born, they took us everywhere...my mum works in a travel agency and my dad is working in the coal mine" (Sabina, age 25, Katowice).*

In Sabina's narrative the *'typical Polish family'* emerges as something different to that of her own family suggesting that a further characterisation of the traditional Polish family as immobile. It could be argued that the symbolic representation of the Polish family is similar to that of the Polish migrant in that many people distance themselves from these imagined categories, portraying themselves and their families as representing a different version of Polish family and a different understanding of Polishness.

Some people discussed the parental encouragement they had received for undergraduate and postgraduate student mobility and for some this led to a temporary move abroad. As Julia notes,

> *"my mum was a teacher...but she said 'I don't want you to be a teacher, learn a lot and get an education – you can go somewhere and do what you want without thinking all the time about ' sorry I don't have time to go'. It was something like that in my house, she was able to build everything but it was hard, we both knew that you need a good job to get somewhere' (Julia, age 25, Kraków).*

Teaching is among the worst paid professions in Poland and predominantly done by women (Hardy, 2009). Julia's recalls her mother's disillusionment with the profession and her determination to *'build'* a life for her children to follow a different career trajectory and *'go somewhere'*. English language tuition was seen as a significant investment in the social mobility of young people by parents. Here Ewa equates her parents' funding of private English classes with providing the opportunity for social and geographical mobility. As Ewa notes,

> *"[my parents] have always been really encouraging about learning English, giving me money for private tuition and stuff like that...they've always recognised education and being able to communicate around the world as key" (Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).*

In some cases the mobile experiences of young people had an impact on parental experiences of mobility and visits to a migrant son or daughter were occasionally the first experience of foreign travel for some parents. Elzbieta paid for her parents to visit her while she was living in Manchester. In photo 24 Elzbieta's mother and father stand in Trafalgar Square on a short trip to London whilst they were on a visit to the UK.Her mother had never previously travelled on an aeroplane and, influenced by her mother's lengthy illness, Elzbieta felt it was the right time to facilitate the opportunity for her mother to travel.

Photo 24: Elzbieta's mother and father on holiday in London (photo by Elzbieta)

> *"She was always saying that she'd really like to do it and when she was really ill I promised myself that if everything is ok I'm going to buy her a flight to anywhere...because I knew she wanted to do it and she never had the chance"* (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków)

This final example supports Stenning et al.'s (2010, p.231) suggestion that generation is another 'axis of inequality' illustrated by the disparity in access to mobility across generations.

7.3.2 Family Networks

As discussed in part one of this chapter, the transformations that occurred in Polish society and the increasing geographical mobility in the wake of EU accession led to forecasts of a breakdown of family brought about by a predicted weakening of family ties across large distances. Discourses of abandonment relating to mothers and fathers leaving their children, dubbed 'euro-orphans', in Poland in order to earn money abroad caused concern about the durability of family networks across borders. However, Siemieńska (2010, p.11) suggests that in Poland social networks supporting the family 'constitute an element of traditional ties that have lasted to this day', and many have

researched the extent to which these networks have been cultivated across borders (Ryan, 2010; Zontini, 2004) claiming that 'long distance kinship networks are not necessarily associated with a decline in social capital' (Charles et al, 2008, p.164)

Both inter- and intra-generational networks were influential to mobility strategies and many felt these were essential to their entry to the UK. Brothers, sisters and cousins were commonly discussed in relation to migration strategies and aspiration for mobility was, in part, influenced by the perceived successes of these relatives, as Zosia notes,

> *"My cousin is there with his wife for five years and they're doing so well. He's working for a company that hires plumbers...he's working as a manager, he's really high in the company and he started just like a normal person – that was so successful for him" (Zosia, age 22, Kraków).*

Zosia looks up to her cousin for his success in becoming upwardly mobile in Ireland and plans to return to Ireland to live with them. These networks were a common route into the UK, providing access to work or housing as well as setting the family precedent for mobility. Others felt more compelled by their parents to 'find something' for a relative or vice versa. Maria explains the growing numbers of Polish relatives and friends living in her small Edinburgh terrace.

> *"My cousin lost his business at this time and my mother was saying 'please find something for him', so he came over. My other friend came, a sister of my best friend came and it seemed like the house was full at this point" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Conversely, Jozef recalls the push to move from both his cousin and his mother,

> *"At the time the work wasn't really good money but it was never about the money...there was an opportunity, I remember my cousin came and talked with my mother and maybe decided that I follow her there. I was just directed probably, diverted" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

Jozef moved to London in 2002 with his cousin, Aga who had been living in London for 5 years at this time. A few years later Aga moved to Edinburgh for work and Jozef followed not long after to be *'near family'*.

Some of those interviewed were the first in their immediate family to migrate and others had followed. Jacek is the oldest of three siblings who moved to the UK. Jacek's migration journey began when he moved to Warsaw from his home town of Bielsko Biała to study at a technical college; he then emigrated to Dublin, then Sheffield and is now living in Edinburgh. His brother and sister moved only once to Sheffield when Jacek was living there and where they continue to live. This example could be read as a

type of intra-generational family reunion and demonstrates the variation in mobile biographies within the same family. This variation was noted by Teresa who compares her own ambition for travel with that of her sisters

> *"I'm 26 and my sister's are 31 and 32, so it's only five or six years difference between us and when they studied we were not in EU so they had no possibility to go abroad to study, maybe when you had lots of money but not possible without-no. We had exchange programmes, we could go to work in another country so between us it's not big difference of the age but it's a different style of life. They don't even have a need. They like to go abroad and actually both of them speak very good English but it was enough for them to be here and for us, our generation it's not enough to be here"* (Teresa, age 26, Katowice).

Teresa suggests that in spite of shared family upbringing, her and her sisters do not have the same desire or *'need'* for geographical mobility due to the different *'possibilit[ies]'* on offer to them as individuals. She is suggesting that opportunities for youth mobility have been more restrictive for her sisters and this has led to a resignation to stay in Poland, while the opportunities for mobility among those in their early 20s has cultivated a voracity for choosing a mobile life. However, Teresa's desire to return to Poland and live a 'normal life' suggests that she is making reference to a more general trend among younger people – *'our generation'*-as having an insatiable appetite for travel and migration, rather than basing these views on her own personal values and practices.

For those living in Edinburgh, however, the impact of intra-generational chain migration has been an ideological shift in the *place* of home and settlement. Since her emigration to Edinburgh, Dorota's brother and sister have also moved to the city and she views the gradual relocation of her family to Scotland as minimising reasons for return to Poland.

> *"When we think about it logically there's no point us going anywhere, my family is here, my brother and my sister are here...my Church is here, I've got a job, I've got my friends, My parents can come at any time, I mean really why would you move"* (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).

The durability of kinship networks both across borders and within a migration destination support and extend Siemieńska's (2010) assertion that social networks constitute a source of self-reliance and self-sufficiency in Polish families and contradicts claims that the decline of the family model is connected to the breaking of family ties through mobility.

7.4 The Transnational Practices of Family

Transnational families are described as a product of globalisation whereby families 'maintain links across national boundaries, across cultural divides and across spatial distances' (Goulbourne et al, 2010, p.9). Advances in communication technology and the growth of 'the network society' (Castells, 2000), has facilitated the maintenance of transnational ties between families, which Goulbourne et al (2010, p.9) argue 'minimizes the importance of physical distance and proximity'. However, as Ryan (2010, p.8) stresses 'migrants do not live their lives only in transnational spaces. They negotiate their daily lives; their access to jobs; commute to work; social interactions with colleagues, friends, and neighbours; involvement in schools; experience of discrimination, harassment or abuse in localized spaces'. The practices of 'transnational families' are also viewed as 'highly relative' (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002 as cited in Goulbourne et al., 2010, p.7). Acknowledging these cautionary appendages, the following section focuses on 'transnational practices' that families engage in and presents some of the benefits and challenges of transnational family networks (Adamson, 2002; Levitt et al, 2003).

Transnational family networks rely on communication technology to sustain family interaction so that interactive technology has become a widespread transnational practice. Joanna runs her own hairdressing business in Edinburgh. She describes the communications she has experienced with family whilst living there. In photo 25 Joanna's mother and sister are featured on a computer screen which sits on a desk in Joanna's house in Edinburgh. Beyond this the view of outside space reveals the context in which she lives. Joanna chose this photo to show that her family are integral to her life in Edinburgh and in spite of the distance, these transnational communications are embedded in her everyday life.

Photo 25: Joanna's Skype chat with her mother and sister (photo by Joanna)

"This is a picture of my mum and sister on skype...my sister is like, we're great friends...She now lives in Łodz but she is coming over. She also lived in London... but then she went pregnant so then she couldn't manage with baby so she went to stay with mum but then mum was ill and now she is on her own there, she is coming over here next year. That's the plan. I've got a place for her...she will live in this place with her boy and I got her job [at the salon] as well" (Joanna, age 31, Edinburgh)

Joanna and her family in Łodz have a strong 'kinship network' characterised by the willingness to engage in transnational mobility for interdependent familial goals (Jordon and Duvell, 2003). Joanna's sister has been involved in a dual care role looking after both her mother and son in Poland whilst Joanna supports the family through remittances from Scotland. Following the death of their mother the family networks in Poland have diminished and the family will become less geographically dispersed when Joanna's sister moves to Scotland. This suggests that physical proximity to family members is sometimes more important than sustaining ties across borders, particularly in the context of bereavement and changing family circumstances. Similarly, Jozef extols the virtues of new technology for transnational communication whilst simultaneously feeling guilty for not *being* with his mother in Poland.

"I remember my mum finally bought a computer...I remember in London if she didn't call me, I didn't call her but now we are close...Skype is brilliant, it is fantastic, and I thought she is so old and I feel sad...I want to go there and spend some time with her because all her life she was in bloody work, working for us. When she came home she could barely move because she was so tired and just watch the movie, all we could do for her was leave her alone to rest...And then I moved in 2002 after my grandma died and then my sister in 2005 and now she's alone. She's been alone for 6 or 7 years and I feel like I owe her something, to be with her" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).

In many cases the opportunities for mobility and independence from the family home were counterbalanced by a sense of family responsibility, a duty of care for ageing parents and elderly relatives and a longing for *being* at home. Ryan (2009) suggests that while EU mobility has increased opportunities for maintaining transnational ties, it has also improved the chance to engage in 'family reunion', which may alter the nature of these transnational attachments.

Remittances are regarded to be a significant transnational practice that enables economic links to family and friends in the home state, which have been a vital contribution to small 'developing' economies (Bertram and Watters, 1986; Portes and DeWind, 2004). Remittances can also be part of a migrants' long-term plan to invest back into their home state, thus contributing towards the future economic growth of a sending region (Brown and Connell, 1993). Wanda and her partner Grzegorz moved to Edinburgh from Białystok, a region of high unemployment in Eastern Poland, in 2005. Here she explains her family set up;

"Between me and my partner we've got 8 [kids], four of his kids are in Poland and three of my daughters were here-one has just gone back to Poland- and we've got little Scot. My eldest daughter is working in a Warehouse or something like that in Poland...my middle one has gone back to Poland now, because they've got two kids and she not working and he have problem to find a good job because they have family to keep so they need good job with a good salary because if not their life is too harsh. They went back to Poland because her partner's parents have got a nice home and they help him to find a job" (Wanda, age 35, Edinburgh).

Wanda's family is not the 'typical' Polish family. Whilst she and Grzegorz are remitting some of their wages from the UK to his children to fund their studies at Polish Universities, Wanda's own children have decided to return to Poland to seek better opportunities for themselves and their own families. As a young grandmother Wanda feels responsible for the entire family in spite of distance and her own longing for return is mediated by a sense of responsibility for her extended family – *'it's not possible to go back to Poland...how would we help them? To go back to Poland for our life – of*

course, but we know we got kids and we are responsible for them'. This extends Zontini's (2004) notion of 'transnational mothering' which sees mothers emigrating and sending remittances back home for their children's care. Wanda continues to provide financial support for her adult children suggesting a continuation of mothering beyond dependency and reflecting the 'gendered moral rationalities' that guide care structures across particular socio-spatial contexts (Duncan and Edwards, 1999).

For some the 'transnational mothering' occurred the opposite way round with young people living in Edinburgh the recipients of financial support from parents and grandparents living in Poland. For these young people mobility is less an economic imperative or 'livelihood strategy'[34] but a cultural 'rite of passage' where dependency on family in Poland transcends national borders. This circumstance contradicts traditional understandings of remittances as flowing from receiving to sending region characterised by North-South or West-East regional imbalances. In analysing the different transnational practices, young people had their own interpretations of these two conditions. Both Teresa and Maciej suggested that families make different choices for mobility and engage in different transnational practices based on their responsibilities to '*buy food for your kids'* and a simple cost/benefit analysis of which location would offer greater economic opportunities to earn a living, as opposed to students who generally *'feel free to choose'.* However, it would be remiss to make, what Duncan et al. (2003) call 'the rationality mistake' that assumes rational choice calculations in relation to family processes. Rather, it should be recognised that complex moral negotiations shape and are shaped by particular socio-spatial contexts and emotional dynamics.

In some families there was an expectation that their emigrant relatives would send money home or return with substantial gains to share with family. Meeting this expectation was difficult for those on low wages in the UK and, as Jozef recalls, lead to the accruement of debt when he returned to Poland for his brother's wedding in 2004.

> *"I go to my country because my brother got married and I remember I wanted to show off and I gave him lots of money and I spent lots of money ...that was in 2004 and I'm still paying it back. It was over £1100 overdraft.... I had maybe £500 pounds – but I spent that and the whole overdraft so I spent £1700 or something like that. But my first trip to country – the fatherland [laughing]"* *(Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

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[34] See Nyberg-Sorenson and Fog Olwig (2002) for discussion of livelihood strategy as lens to research migration. See White (2011) for research on Polish families using a 'livelihood' approach

Jozef talks as if he has something to 'prove' to his family (and his nation), a recompense for his absence from the family and an espousal of his success. Throughout his narrative Jozef refers to the women in his family as strong and determined, comparing their successes to his own weaknesses. Talking about his sister and her achievements working for a pharmaceutical company in Barcelona he says,

> *"She has her time, my cousin has her time, they all do something and I'm just doing nothing. That's what I think. I think I need to push myself because men like to vacillate and it's like, if someone is better they think 'no, she is a woman, I have to prove I can be at least the same as she is (laughing)" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

Here, the expectations of family go deeper than economic expectation and are bound to contemporary ideas about 'redundant masculinities' (McDowell, 2003). Jozef's uncertainty about his own achievements reflects his family's experiences of breakdown and paternal absenteeism and he chastises himself through the lens of gender, parodying traditional gender stereotypes. Jozef's narrative illustrates the complex negotiations that underpin transnational practices and the emotional impacts of intergenerational relationships.

7.4.1 Care

Svašek (2008, p.216) suggests that 'the emotional life of migrants is often characterised by contradiction, as migrants are morally pulled in different directions in social networks that stretch over large distances'. From the narratives this was particularly salient in relation to the maintenance of inter-generational relationships and the duty of care for elderly relatives. At times inter-generational relationships were viewed in tension with mobility. This was particularly present in discussions of grandparents who were perceived as encourage the nurturing of family and community bonds over values of mobility and the aspiration for foreign travel. Marcin lives with his wife and two children in a village near Kraków in a house built by his uncle, next door to his grandparents.

> *'I can live here and help my grandparents so we live together now, we're lucky because we have a place to live and we don't worry about the future' (Marcin, age 34, Kraków).*

Photo 26: Marcin with his grandmother (photo by Marcin)

A strong and implicit sense of family togetherness weaves throughout Marcin's narrative depicting family at the centre of decision making for mobility. He chose this photo (26) to show the importance of intergenerational memories and reflect on the caring role of his grandmother towards him as a young child. It has been suggested that this strong sense of mutual help across generations is an almost 'institutional' aspect of farming families living in rural areas with a commitment to keep care in the family (Synak, 1990, p.336).

Stenning et al (2010, p.177-178) argue that Poland, among other post-socialist states in ECE, has undergone a 'neoliberalization of care' characterised by the rapid extension of market reform, a reduction in welfare provision and the 'individualization' of care within households and families. This has been further consolidated through the influence of Catholicism and the emphasis on provision of care and welfare to be kept within the family (Stenning et al, 2010). As a result of these transformations the quality of care provision in Poland is highly variable enhancing the sense of responsibility for care among young people, particularly related to their parents and elderly relatives. Kasia works in a residential care home in Edinburgh and makes a comparative assessment between practices of care in the UK and Poland

> *"I'm assuming that as soon as [my parents] retire they're going to need help and I'm planning to help them. It's normal in Poland. That's the big difference*

for me and my work makes it possible to see in that in…[UK] …children aren't so involved with their parents' care" (Kasia, age 28, Edinburgh).

Kasia claims that there is little mainstreamed care provision in Poland and complains that *'the public ones are horrible, they're more like hospices and the private ones are very, very expensive and the waiting lists are enormous, basically people die before they manage to get there'*. The duty of care for relatives was a commonly held value among young women. This supports the assertion that 'gendered expectations, particularly about women's caring role, still guide behaviour, and...individuals operate according to a set of values that balance the needs of both self and other' (Charles et al, 2008, p.16). For some their caring role was regarded as a personal choice rather than an outright obligation. Kasia remarks *'I had a very good childhood...it's not like I feel obligated, I just want to do it for them, I think they deserve that'*. However, others described care as a formidable expectation. Dorota explains that *'the only reason when I would be forced to go'* would be in a caring capacity for her parents as they become elderly.

Photo 27: Dorota and her family in 1988 (photo by Dorota)

Here, Dorota is pictured with her family in 1988 and she reflects on being the 'favourite' daughter of her father, who is looking at her in this picture. She chose this photo to talk about her parents as people who sacrificed for their children and always taught her to 'fight for better'. As a result she maintains that parents' care in Poland is *'always within the family'* and *'struggles'* with the thought of putting her parents into institutionalised care because she feels a need to redress the balance. In their own way, both of these examples suggest particular 'gendered moral rationalities' (Duncan and Edwards, 1999) that continue to affect women's decisions about care and 'which are relatively unaffected by structural changes in gender relations and individualization processes' (Charles et al., 2008, p.21).

All of these examples maintain the importance of physical closeness to parents in order to perform caring roles and there is little sense of a transnational notion of caring. It has been suggested that geographical proximity is a key variable in the ability to engage in care-giving practices (Rogerson, Burr and Lin, 1997; Warnes, 1986) and this was often referred to in the narratives as a key challenge of migration. Some of those who had returned to Poland expressed reservations about the possibility of making a life permanently in the UK expressing the 'threats' associated with EU mobility.

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

Proximity to family is of key importance to Szymon, he views the family as a source of support and kinship in difficult times and for him, emigration threatens the stability of this support network. Others felt that mobility presented a threat to family stability, restating anecdotal stories of friends who had broken marriages and the existence of children being abandoned by their parents, dubbed 'euro-orphans'[35]. White (2011a, p.116) suggests that as norms and livelihood strategies change in Poland, so does the willingness to tolerate separation from family – 'self-sacrifice is going out of fashion'. Migration without children has been theorised as 'incomplete migration' adding weight to the importance placed from both inside and out on the geographically self-contained family model (Okolski, 2001). Marcin explains that he found the *'separation'* from

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[35]Euro Orphans is a media created term used to describe variable circumstances relating to children and migration. 1) children whose parents have migrated abroad, they are dubbed 'orphans' in the sense of abandonment they feel as a result of the separation from parents; 2) Children who are left in orphanages following parental emigration (Iglicka, 2008). See White (2011) for a critique of 'irresponsible sensationalism' of media representations and Walczak, (2008) for quantitative analysis of euro orphanism.

family the most challenging aspect of him migration experience and describes the experience of his friend who has recently returned from the UK after 10 years.

> *"I think the worst thing was the separation, for other people it is the same. So half of familylive abroad and half live here so I think there are a lot of people who live like this. My friend worked in UK for 10 years and was only a few times a year with family. He spent two days a year with family – 10 years! For me it's...and now they have problems because after 10 years he is all the time here to find a job in Poland, of course much less money and their relationship is not very good. It is very difficult" (Marcin, age 34, Kraków).*

Svašek (2008, p.219) suggests that 'even though long-distance family connections can be maintained through the creative use of communication technology, return visits have a specific quality that cannot be reproduced 'from a distance'...the multi-sensorial dimension of co-presence...allow for a unique for of intimacy which is irreplaceable by communication at a distance'. It is clear that young people have different expectations and values in relation to care and caring and through mobility the nature of family relationships and the shape of family structures continually evolve. Mason (1998) suggests that mobile people can be typologised as 'distance thinkers' (who make distance work for them and their families); 'reluctant distance thinkers' (who tolerate mobility for a temporary goal); and 'local thinkers' (who place strong emphasis on proximity to family members). While Mason's typology presents a neat characterisation of different value systems among migrants, the context-specific and evolutionary nature of migration and mobility compels us to consider that individuals can be one and all of these types in different socio-spatial contexts (Ackers and Stalford, 2004). Elzbieta returned to Kraków in 2008 for both economic and to be closer to her family who live in Bytom. However, she is somewhat ambivalent about how close is close enough, responding to this question:

> *'KB: Is it important for you to live close to family?'*
>
> *'E:It's a difficult question because in one hand I'd like to be close to them, not necessarily living on the same housing estate, this situation is good because it's close enough that if anything happened I could get back home in a few hours but at the same time, living right next to them wouldn't be good. Also I still want to travel and see other places and live in other places, it's complicated' (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).*

This example demonstrates the way in which family and mobility intersect for Elzbieta and show that she is both a 'local thinker' and a distance thinker'. While she wishes to maintain the emotional bonds of family where physical proximity is an important factor in the strength of these bonds, she also aspires for further travel and does not wish to

live 'right next to them' indicating a move away from traditional family structures in spite of being back in Poland. For Elzbieta a move back home is not a backwards step but a step up to an adult life in her home country, independent from but connected to the family home and involving some inter-regional mobility. Kinship relationships change through mobility but the emotional geographies that span borders demonstrate that bonds of intimacy require connection in spite of distance. As Ackers and Stalford (2004, p.127) assert 'whilst distance inevitably modifies kinship, the reverse may also be true- kinship modifies distance'.

7.5 Making Family and Making Friends

It is often assumed that most Polish youth mobility to the UK is undertaken by single, highly educated individuals with few ties or attachments and as such family migration among young Poles is not widely acknowledged[36]. However, as I have been arguing throughout this chapter, family plays a important role in decisions for mobility and the experience of mobility, likewise mobility has a significant impact upon families – ideologically, emotionally and practically. For some the migration experience has generated the foundation of new relationships and the making of new family structures, for others it has re-shaped existing relationships. Among the sample 50% were living with a married or non married partner (25% married, 25% non-married), and a further 16% were in a relationship. Of those married, half got married whilst living in the UK but most returned to Poland for the ceremony. For both Olga and Zosia the temporary goal of emigration to the UK was to save money for their weddings and *'start a life'* suggesting that mobility, for them, has been conducive to the maintenance of traditional family values. Paradoxically, Wanda emigrated with her partner after divorcing her first partner, she feels that migration has enabled her to *'start a new life'* with her partner in a *'new place'*.

> *"we met when I was in Poland and both of us we've got previous marriages and when we started thinking to start a new life it was very difficult because we found ourselves a place to live and I not prefer to stay in my place [home] because you know in Poland when people get divorced, the oldest people are not happy with divorce – they not nice so we prefer to find a new place, it was very difficult to find space"* (Wanda, age 35, Edinburgh).

Wanda's narrative implies a feeling of being trapped by convention in an environment where she felt it was *'difficult to find space'*. Here mobility is viewed as a way out in

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[36] An exception is White (2011) who comprehensively studies Polish families irrespective of age

defiance of traditional moral rationalities, and it is clearly preferable route for Wanda in spite of the complicated transnational caring responsibilities her and Grzegorz have. Now, Wanda and Grzegorz have a son, Scot, who was born in Edinburgh and now attends the local nursery so their family priorities have shifted once again increasing the likelihood of permanent settlement in Scotland.

The desire to 'start a new life' was common in the narratives of those with partners and some had definite visions of their future family life. Zosia equates the economic goal of migration with saving for family life and she has a determination to return to Ireland and start a life with her new husband in order to make a secure future.

> *"I want to have a family one day, an actual family with dog and cat and kids but I need money to give them the best that I can. I can't have kids now because I don't have money for this, or time for this, they would be so unhappy. I would like to give my family the best that I have so I have to be smart" (Zosia, age 22, Kraków).*

Here family is viewed as a future orientation with mobility as an aspiration linked directly to family outcomes. For some, discussions about family were centred around the possibility of creating a family of their own rather than bounded to inter-generational relationships that were often viewed as existing in the past. Magda asserted many times in her narrative that she is *'not that close to my parents'*, and her discussions of family were pre-emptive and of her own creation rather than a celebration of a personal or familial heritage. She talks with pride about her American husband, Paul, whom she met in London when they worked together in a publishing house. Magda does not envisage a return to Poland and emphasises that the bond between her and Paul supersedes her connections to Poland and family as home - *'now he's my just incase'*. Similarly, Dorota and Pedro, her Spanish husband, discuss the implausibility of returning to Poland as a mixed-national couple since Pedro speaks little Polish.

> Dorota: *"my plans for the future are always connected with [Pedro], so there would have to be incentive for him as well..." (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh)*
>
> Pedro: *"...the only thing that scares me about Poland is the language. I would live in Poland if she finds a job I would happily move to Poland because my skills are required everywhere but I don't know the language" (Pedro, age 31, Edinburgh).*

This dilemma is a common tension for mixed-national couples, in Dorota and Pedro's case they have an arsenal of EU languages at their disposal - they met on an Erasmus exchange in Germany and now live in Scotland so speak German, English, Spanish and

Polish between them- however, language barriers remain a significant deterrent in mobility to certain places.

The narratives contained few instances of family migration – i.e. couples with children moving together from Poland – but in some cases this was discussed. Marcin arranged to go for the summer to Dover to work with a friend – *'I said ok but with my whole family'*. Photo 28 shows Marcin and his wife on their wedding day, a photo he chose to represent the importance of his marriage and family. The second time Marcin returned to the UK for work he went alone and reflects on the challenges of being away from family.

Photo 28: Marcin and his wife on their wedding day (photo by Marcin)

> *"...it was very difficult, I never want to do it again, never...I am very homesick, for me it is difficult and for my family too" (Marcin, age 34, Kraków).*

There is a rich literature around family reunification in which typically an individual migrates to a new country for a temporary goal and as they settle into life in a new environment they 'send for spouses' and a new level of settlement occurs (Castles and Miller, 2009, p.33). Classic migration theory assumes the pioneer migrant is male and wives would follow, often sacrificing their own careers to 'follow' the partners and engage in 'trailing migration' (Ackers and Stalford, 2004, p.52). However, contemporary migration patterns involve significant independent female mobility and

Polish women in particular have long been the instigators of post-wall labour migration (Morokvasic, 2004; White, 2011a). In some cases it was evident that women had moved to the UK to 'be with' their partners. Interestingly, among these women their aspiration was temporary and they expressed the decision to 'follow' their partners alongside the opportunity to earn money, learn a language and experience living outside of Poland. Agata moved to London in 2004 to *'join'* Ryszard who had moved there a few months earlier,

> *"He was there and I never treated it seriously as a plan for life being in Great Britain or London – I just didn't have it in my schedule for the longer term. So, it wasn't for me in my so-called career a serious thing but I think I practiced speaking and I just came there because I graduated and here there was nothing to do because we had huge unemployment and he was there and there was also this plan to be back sometime late Summer... I treated it not so seriously, not at all"* (Agata, age 32, Kraków).

For Ryszard and Agata the short term nature of their migration at this particular life stage meant that permanent settlement was not considered as an option, although the couple did stay in London beyond the Summer and returned to Poland in 2006. Following their return Ryszard made a second migration to London but this time for only a few months and he returned to Kraków feeling disillusioned with the UK, he explains why,

> *"[I had] the realisation that the serious job I had was not the thing I wanted and of course [Agata] being here and me being there"* (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).

For Ryszard the pull to return to Poland is influenced by his relationship with Agata revealing that contemporary patterns of Polish migration often involve men following women back home. This was the case too for Weronika, who moved to Dublin to be with her partner, Paweł, but has since returned and is waiting for him to join her in Kraków. Here, Weronika and Paweł are in Dublin on his graduation day, symbolising to her the goal of their mobility to Ireland.

Photo 29: Weronika and Paweł at his graduation in Dublin (photo by Weronika)

> *"This was the reason we went to Dublin and that's why I brought this picture – he did it, he got his degree and it's the day his dreams came true. This was November 2009 after almost two and half year. So I was waiting for this day to go home!" (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).*

For many women the decision to move to be with their partners does not fit into traditional gender roles since there are often other personal and independent reasons for mobility and, as has been discussed, a temporary goal rather than a move to settle with a husband or family. Elzbieta's experience challenges the traditional gender roles further as her English boyfriend, Mark moved to Poland to live with her rather than the other way round. The couple met in Poland and Elzbieta emigrated to the UK for short period of time for a number of inter-related reasons, Mark joined her in the UK and after she returned to Poland he followed her once again and now work as an English teacher in Kraków.

7.5.1 Friendship

In some circumstances the aspiration for and process of mobility caused the break-up of relationships, but for some this end was seen as necessary for the purpose of self-discovery through mobility, as discussed in chapter six. Ania, Magda, Jola, Kasia and Joanna all experienced relationship breakdowns prior to migration or as a result of

moving. Some of those who had moved with partners from Poland had experienced relationship breakdowns whilst living in the UK. Łukasz moved to London with his Polish girlfriend but ended the relationship after a few years and moved to Edinburgh in order to *'change something'*. Tomek reflects on the possibility of combining mobility with meaningful and lasting relationships, reinforcing the idea that mobility occurs in transitive space.

> *"...because of the temporary life experience I don't usually plan other people, I don't know a year's a long time. It's great but I know from experience that people are coming and going, there is no reason that in this time it will be different, but there is no reason to say it will be the same"(Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Tomek celebrates the mobile life as one of uncertainty and flux and after 5 years of living in Edinburgh he still views his life experience as *'temporary'*. In this environment the possibility of forming and sustaining meaningful relationships is a source of concern for some people. Maria explores temporality in the context of friendship.

> *"When I travelled through my life I travelled from friend group to friend group – that's what changed in a sense. Family always stayed the same you know...the unfortunate thing about all this is you drop your friends, you stick with them for a while and you are so close, you are such a community and then you move and something new and you lose them...you cannot cope with so many friendships" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Maria compares the durability of friendships with that of family suggesting that '*family always stayed the same'*, revealing her comfort in the constant, the known and familiar. Here the importance placed on family networks emerges again, whether transnational or re-united, and represents security, stability and support during the transitive spaces of mobility.

However, what 'counts as family' is again differential and context-dependent (Weeks et al., 2001, p.9). For many of those living in Edinburgh it was the friendships they cultivated that constituted a re-configured form of family, as Łukasz remarks,

> *"...someone said the modern person's family is not the actual family, it's the friends, especially immigrants. So I see them as my family, I see these people that I trust and I love… I let them influence my decision, I value them as friends...I think they are one of the reasons I am still here because I've met a lot of people who do not have friends, not acquaintances, but friends they've had for years, tried and tested that they can rely on and that would be hell I think" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Friendships were viewed as important sources of support in the absence of family networks, as Helena who moved to York from Łodz to move in with her friend, notes *'my friends are a substitute family'*. She selected this photo (30) to represent her friendship circle in Edinburgh. The collage was made for a Polish friends' birthday a few months before she was due to leave Edinburgh for Warsaw. Each letter of the collage is backdropped by a memorable place in Edinburgh, such as Leith docks, the Botanic Gardens, Portabello beach. The collage was made to demonstrate lasting friendships that extend across national borders – *"to keep in mind that we are still here and we are friends"*.
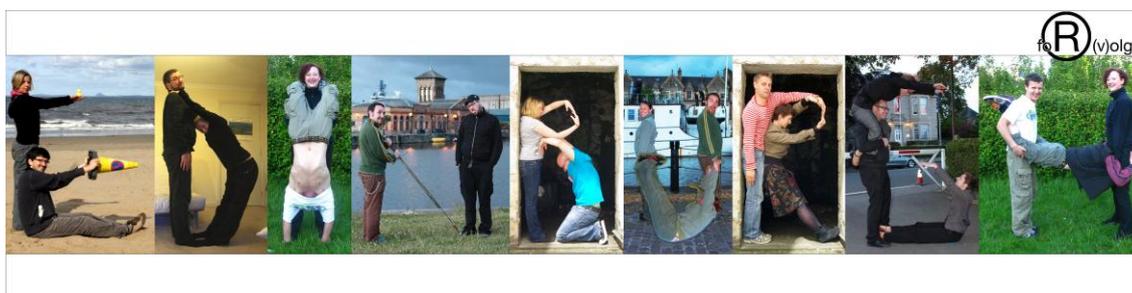
Photo 30: Polish Edinburgh Collage (made by group of Polish friends for another– Figuratively spelling 'EDINBURGH') (photo by Helena)

The majority of young people interviewed in Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice cited the influence of friends on their decision to migrate. Most people knew at least one person in the UK and the location of their friends largely dictated their choice of destination. Ewa moved to Edinburgh four years ago on her friend's suggestion,

> *"a friend just gave me a call and said 'I'm going to Edinburgh, there's this really exciting festival happening, do you want to come?', and I said 'yeah sure', because I just didn't really have anything else to do" (Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).*

For some these networks were essential starting points from which to *'build up a life'*, with many people relying on friends to arrange their paperwork and in some cases find them a job and a house. Roseneil and Budgeon (2004) argue that single-person households cultivate networks of support within diverse living situations. Sharing houses with other Poles and other migrants led to a view of friendships as supportive and familiar in the sometimes uncertain and transitive spaces of a mobile life. Ryszard and Agata remember fondly the development of a 'Polish community' among young people in London in the mid 2000s describing them as a *'close knit'* group who were mutually supportive of each other, living together and working together. For others,

however, there was a reluctance to *'make friends'* with other Poles and the cultivation of friendship groups were not always based on shared nationality, as Helena remarks,

> *"If I met a Polish person and in the first two sentences the will ask me 'how much do I earn' and 'where do I work' and 'how much hours per week do I work', that's the end of the conversation with me"(Helena, age 28, Edinburgh).*

Despite this assertion, Helena has a predominantly Polish friendship group in Edinburgh but characterises them as interested in *'what's happening culturally in Edinburgh'* rather than *'work or money'*. Again the economic migrant stereotype pervades the narrative here and reveals that within national migrant cohorts divisions and tensions continually emerge. This will be explored in chapter eight during a discussion on the nature of Polish migrant community in Edinburgh.

The proliferation of friendships within the context of migration and the perception among many young Polish people that their friends *are* their family lends weight to the notion that the family is a socially constructed phenomenon that shifts within different socio-spatial contexts (Temple, 2001). Moreover, following Weeks et al (2001) it could be argued that these interpretations demonstrate the emergence of 'families of choice' in migrant settings as opposed to 'families of fate' bound to traditional, sedentary practices. However, returning to Maria's comparative assessment of friends vs. family it is clear that the nuclear family remains an important reference point for many young migrants living away from home - it represents the other side of the coin, immobility, or perhaps nostalgia for a sedentary and assumed to be uncomplicated life. Moreover, throughout this chapter I have argued that for most young people family matters: shaping decisions for mobility, persisting and evolving in transnational spaces and influencing aspirations for return. In light of this, Pahl and Spencer's (2004) typology of 'personal communities' is a useful heuristic device to employ and avoids polemic representation of family and friendship as either a matter of choice or bound to fate.

7.6 Concluding Remarks

Throughout this chapter the Polish family has been presented as both historicised and evolving in contemporary socio-spatial contexts. In the context of youth mobility the Polish Family is a multi-scalar phenomenon extending across multiple households, communities and nations. While many yearn for the sanctity of the 'normal' life connected to family, home and faith, others retract from the 'traditional Polish family'

associating it with an antagonistic and redundant value system. Within this, however, proximity, intimacy and care intersect and are both supported by and undermined by transnational family practices, for many the act of not *being with* family is a cost of mobility.

The tension between the individual aspiration for a mobile life and the collective expectations of family and community in Poland has been a recurring feature of modern Polish migration. For many mobility is viewed as a enterprise of the individual, an opportunity not to be missed and an aspirational value, however, the importance of family structures and networks serves to balance the desire for perpetual geographical mobility contradicting Beck's (1992) claim that a 'moral individualism' is rendering the family obsolete. For some, as shown in the example of Wanda and Grzegorz, the experience of mobility is bound to the notion of family, providing for and advancing the opportunities for their own family through mobility since they perceive the alternative, sedentary life in Poland as fruitless. This reveals the importance of family within the context of mobility, whether this related to nuclear families, extended kinship networks and friendships, which, for some are taking the role of family. Family, friendships and community networks are a source of stability in the context of mobile livelihoods (Pahl, 2001) demonstrating that family and mobility are not mutually exclusive categories.

Chapter Eight

Re-defining Community through Mobility

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the ways in which young Polish migrants understand and practice community *through* mobility. While there is no universal meaning of community as expressed by Polish migrants, the idea of belonging to and engaging in a common goal or purpose is significant. Community is perceived and expressed in different ways - as a recovery of solid ground in an otherwise uncertain environment (Bauman, 2001), a re-connection with home and family through transnational networks (Basch et al., 1994; Portes, 1997a; Ryan, 2009) and, for many, a quest to recover a sense of belonging and common understanding through the practice of both traditional and new social and cultural modes of cooperation. Throughout this thesis I have engaged with key thinkers of modernity and mobility. These theories predict the decline of traditional social ties and collective social arrangements in an increasingly mobile world in which processes of individualization compel individuals to choose and interpret reflexively their own social position and the communities they engage with (Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2000; Giddens, 2004). In this context, the meaning of community is still under review. Ways of thinking about community range from the dystopian (Etzioni, 1994; Bauman, 2000) to the material (Joseph, 2002). This chapter engages with these debates to consider how mobility transforms meanings and practices of community for Polish migrants in the UK. As Hannam et al (2006, p.2) argue changes associated with mobility also 'transform the nature, scale and temporalities of families, 'local' communities, public and private spaces, and the commitments people may feel to the 'nation''.

The chapter begins by discussing *why* community is important to young people in the context of a mobile life. While some engage in community out of a sense of loss or yearning for older forms of community amongst the transient experience of mobility, others retreat from traditional community structures and existing forms of representation carving out new spaces of 'cosmopolitan' community. Following this I focus on *how* community is practiced in specific locations. Here new models of

community are considered including the prominence of friendship, the Catholic Church, and other 'places of community'. Finally, I present three case studies using data from interviews in Edinburgh - the community centre, the virtual community and the community event. It is argued that these particular forms of community have emerged *through* mobility and in reaction to the limits on existing forms of community currently on offer in Edinburgh.

8.2 Why Community?

8.2.1 Losing Community through Mobility

Delanty (2003, p.4) discusses the idea of community as contained in a 'discourse of loss and recovery', suggesting that it has been conceived by late modern Western scholars as either something 'irretrievable', 'recoverable' or 'yet to be achieved'. As such, community is often portrayed as nostalgic and idealistic at its heart and, as Raymond Williams contends, 'community is nowadays another name for paradise lost – but one to which we dearly hope to return, and so we feverishly seek the roads that may bring us there' (cited in Bauman, 2001, p.3). Here, community is lost but not forgotten and requires an imagination of community to set in motion a process of recovery. It has been suggested that such 'imagined communities' are lived out in particular spaces, such as the nation state (Anderson, 1983), or can exist only in the mind and in direct contrast to particular lifestyles and practices[37]. Bauman (2000b) differentiates between a type of community that is 'imagined' and 'really existing community' that is located and positioned. He suggests that we imagine community in myriad ways - we see community as a 'good thing' and as a secure space, but this nostalgic reference is less evident in 'really existing community', one that is marked by a compromise of freedoms, defined often by what it is not and thus exclusive or exclusionary, freedom-inhibiting and, at times, oppressive. The idea of community as countering uncertainty in an increasingly complex, fractured and globalised world again connects to theories of individualization (Beck et al., 1994) and the development of theories of communitarianism in response to global capitalist threat to community (Etzioni, 1994, Putman, 2000).

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[37] In an earlier study Pahl (1970) uses the smaller scale of an urban district to suggest that people can inhabit a 'village in the mind', simultaneously existing in the cosmopolitan space of the city whilst leading a rural or countrified lifestyle (Day, 2006)

In the narratives, community was often imagined in relation to memories of childhood and student experiences. Maria reflects on her *'vision'* of community as something existing simultaneously in the past memories of childhood and in the future as aspiration for the solid ground of community.

> *"I would like to live in a small town, peaceful, just like my childhood really, maybe that's what it is. Even though people quarrel and have misunderstandings they are stuck in this place, they have to work, not 'I've had enough, I'm changing myself, changing my scene now'. The community is responsibility, the responsibility of living in a place and being responsible for people around you and enjoy the really small things like walking around and just reading or organising stupid barn dances" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Maria affiliates community with 'responsibility' and being fixed in place rather than the transient fluidity associated with a mobile life. She uses specific, if comedic, examples, such as organising a barn dance, to portray her vision of community life, largely based upon memories of growing up in a small town and emphasising the simple, *'peaceful'* nature of community, despite the everyday *'quarrels'*. For Maria, small town life is perceived as solid and grounded rather than the shifting and impatient transitions of dwelling in cities or living a mobile life.

The remembered places of home and youth are portrayed with the reflected glow of simplicity, security and warmth, and compared with the less secure, often temporary and uncertain spaces of a new locality.

> *"If you are emigrating you have the mindset that I am here for a short time so why should I bother to build or put down roots…it's not like there's great community spirit in Edinburgh…I know my neighbours, I made an effort, they made an effort fine. I know the man in the corner shop who gives me coffee, we always chat and so on but it's such a constant mix and constant change, there is no boundaries – that's the problem of the cities I think" (Jola, aged 27, Edinburgh).*

It is perhaps due to this feeling of being de-rooted and un-grounded that many of the young Polish people in Edinburgh are involved in active community engagement. The temporariness of some migrant experience is reflected in the short-term and often purpose-driven community activity. Maria reflects on her own instrumental role in getting people involved in a local event to promote Polish culture - the Polish Cultural Festival Association (PCFA)[38];

> *"…these people wanted to feel they were important, they wanted to feel that they can do it because they were all in the same stage of mind as me, they were*

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[38] A description of the PCFA can be found on p.235

frustrated doing jobs really below their qualifications" (Maria, aged 30, Edinburgh).

For Maria the PCFA was an attempt to mobilize a frustrated community as a way of countering lack of social mobility at work. These community practices echo Bauman's (2000. P.16) notion of 'peg communities' as groups of individuals who seek 'pegs' to collectively 'hang their fears and uncertainties' as a type of collective insurance. The recovery of community through migrant agency involves a re-creation of the idea of community – building on traditional values and re-interpreting them in a contemporary context of a mobile life. While this version of community can be seen as both constructed and constructive, often community is reactive and emerges out of what it is not.

8.2.2 Recognition and Representation

As Nash (1989) writes, in relation to ethnicity in the modern world, the nightmare of the contemporary world 'is to be deracinated, to be without papers, stateless, alone, alienated, and adrift in a world of organized others' (as cited in Bauman, 1991, p.246). As such, the pursuit of community among marginalized and minority groups in some cases portends to a struggle for rights and recognition. Portes (1997a) discusses transnational communities as 'counter narratives to the nation', which, through emancipatory struggle, contribute as much to the geopolitical landscape as do transnational corporations and global actors. This 'from below' theorising reminds us that migrants are agents of change and the (re-)formation of community is often an active process (Guarnizo, 2003). Later in the chapter I will discuss in detail some case study examples of community activism among Polish people in Edinburgh in a discussion on 'how' community is being (re-)formed in migrant spaces. For now, it is simply worth noting that being recognised as a legitimate and valuable member of society is a key motivation to the development of migrant communities. Łukasz has been involved with various expressions of Polish community in Edinburgh, such as organising a Medieval Re-enactment tournament as part of the PCFA (see photo 31). He expresses pride to be involved in representing Polish culture and history through his engagement with the festival.

Photo 31: PCFA Medieval Tournament Poster (photo by Łukasz)

> *"That got me really proud...the Polish Eagle...my deeply hidden patriotism. It felt nice, you know, the random event that doesn't normally happen in Edinburgh organised by a migrating force of minority, the local people being interested in it, not looking at something that represents a bunch of people who came to steal benefits and jobs but something that contributes to society as well" (Łukasz, age 28, Edinburgh).*

The positive representation of Polish culture and history was considered by many as a key feature of Polish community in Edinburgh motivated by the desire to overcome marginalisation and prejudice and promote integration, tolerance and respect.

However, the struggle for recognition is intimately connected to relations of power and is at times fractious and divisive. Olga has been involved with Polish community activities in and around Edinburgh for some time and reflects on some of the negative aspects of community organising

> *"We have an expression in Poland – 'we cut the skin on the bone when he's alive'...it's like we were doing something and...people were already planning who is getting what before the festival ended...I just cannot combine doing something for community and doing something for money, it's like either/or and that's how my mum is...you have people who want to do it because they want to do it, or you have people who want to do it so they can tell someone they're doing it...'it will look good on my CV'. That is shocking, I think it's terrible" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).*

Olga has had some negative experiences whilst co-operating with the local Polish community and as a result holds some resentment towards the idea of community for recognition or prestige. She admits herself becoming drawn into the rewards associated with becoming a valued 'member' of the community and conversely feeling used when that recognition fails to materialise. The idea of community participation as a CV exercise echoes work on the professionalization of community whereby the invocation of particular types and forms of community have become associated with a professional discourse of community development (Laurie et al, 2003; Rose,1999). Olga goes on to talk about the way in which the Polish community has developed its role as a talking head of Polish life tasked with representing the collective concerns of Polish people living in the UK. In relation to the recent tragedy in Smolensk, in which President Kaczynski, his wife and political colleagues were killed in a plane crash, Olga has received calls to discuss the possibility of publicising a Polish response from the UK but has suspicions about some of the motives behind the response.

> *"There was a discussion that we should do something, like we should show the grief to Britain. I was like 'are you trying to do something because you feel grief or because you want to show it'. I just hate the grey line between doing something because I feel to do it and doing something because I want to get money of to show off to someone" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh)*

Again, Olga values the idea of participating in a community but is wary of the abuses of community by those intent on personal gain and individual prestige. Bauman (2001) argues that community is as exclusive as it is inclusive and it is this tension that appears to be central to Olga's concerns where both inclusion and exclusivity should somehow be rewarded.

8.2.3 Cosmopolitan Community

The term 'Polish community' evokes different meanings for young people and some are reluctant to conform to, what they perceive to be, a singular Polish community. There is no single vision of community that unites young Polish migrants living in the UK and, for some, the idea of participating in any sort of 'Polish community' holds no appeal. Some young people wished to distance themselves from what they perceived to be the 'Polish community' in their migration destination, claiming they found *'no common ground'* with many of the Poles they had met. Many had been involved previously with certain parts of the community but over time had moved in *'different circles'* regarding

the community as operating in an out-dated, traditional format, while others had chosen not to get involved in the first place. As such, these were expressions of what could be referred to as cosmopolitan communities, defined by the pursuit of an alternative or different community outside of structured notions of a Polish community.

Many of those living in Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice reflected on the choices they had made to exclude themselves from any formal Polish community settings. Maciej recalls arriving in Edinburgh with a friend to work during a summer holiday, which led to a move to Dublin for study.

> *"I was never involved in Polish environment, basically choice – there's loads of Polish people you wouldn't like to spend time with them in Poland so some of the people are just socialising because they can't stand socialising with Irish or English and they keep together with Polish even if they wouldn't be friends in Poland. I like to spend time with people I like, not just because they're Polish or English or Irish or whatever...I was working in Dublin for two years and I can't remember if there was any chance to join any Polish community" (Maciej, age 27, Katowice).*

Maciej's conception of a Polish community is contrary to the friendships he has chosen to cultivate. This idea of socialising with *'people I like'* whether Polish or non-Polish is a common theme in the narratives and although many of the young people have a predominantly Polish friendship base, this is rarely associated with the 'Polish community'. Instead, they saw community as constructed or organised formally by someone else and considered as agenda-driven setting for those *'who can't manage'* (Jacek, age 29, Edinburgh). It could be argued that there are limitations to the discourse of community that repel young Poles from engaging with it. For example, vocabulary such as 'collective' and 'solidarity' are terms that evoke an historic repulsion among those who associate them with both the political repression of communist times and the thorny transitions to market socialism and neoliberalism in the 1980s and 1990s. Moreover, some reflected on the heightened sense of suspicion among Poles towards each other and towards the formation of a collective organization among them as in some way relating to individual abuses of power as seen under communism. It has been suggested that there is a lack of trust among Polish migrant populations as a hangover from state socialism and the expectation of corruption and collusion that became a feature of the period (Jordon, 2002; Grzymała-Kozłowska, 2005). The lack of trust between Polish emigrants was discussed as an intergenerational trend by those whose parents had experiences of emigration in the 1980s. Magda moved to Edinburgh last

year but lived in London for three years prior, her parents also emigrated to Canada when she was a young child.

> *"I think I got it embedded from my parents – a strong message that you don't stick too much with Poles because they might put a knife in your back – that's an expression in Polish" (Magda, aged 33).*

For most, however, the choice for non-participation in any sort of Polish community was not grounded in mistrust and suspicion but rather the desire to express individuality and an identity beyond the national construct. Some criticised what they perceived to be a '*Polish ghetto*' constructed as a space belonging to non-English speaking Poles with a certain '*mentality*' who '*huddle together around the Polish centres*' and '*get stuck like that*' (Łukasz, aged 28, Edinburgh). This imaginary is perhaps a class-based assessment of certain community spaces and a reluctance to be portrayed in this light. It conjures up representations of the '*economic migrant*' as being '*stuck*' in a community yearning the loss of the Polish homeland and clinging onto nostalgic customs and traditions. Such a representation is also contrary to the integrationist logic which pervades many of the narratives of young Polish people in Edinburgh.

Non-involvement in Polish community networks was in some cases motivated by a more practical decision. For example, Dorota lives with her Spanish husband, Pedro, in central Edinburgh and they have chosen not to participate in Polish community activities due to the language difficulties Pedro would face. Instead they mostly socialise with a more broadly international friendship base. Dorota reflects on her social circle and the ability to normalise difference within certain contexts.

> *"We're not fairly well embedded within the Polish social community here because [Pedro] is not Polish and we have lots of other people as well, through work...we'd rather have more non-Polish friends than Polish friends. I think that makes a big difference in what things become normal for you" (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).*

It could be argued that the expression of wanting to belong to a more diverse collective demonstrates a type of 'situated cosmopolitanism' (Datta, 2009). As discussed in chapter four, access to a cosmopolitan lifestyle is differential suggesting the need to analyse the intersecting processes of gender, class, ethnicity and wealth and how they impact upon choices for or against community.

Another example of the differentiation between the 'types' of Polish migrants is offered by Elzbieta, for whom the difference lies in 'personality'.

"It depends on your personality and why you go to England, if you just go to get a good job and save a bit of money, that's what a lot of people do – they don't really care about meeting English people and spending time with people like that because their aim is to save money and come back – they don't want to make friends because they'll have to leave them. But if somebody goes and is a bit adventurous about it – 'I want to meet people, I want to have fun', they're much more open minded" (Elzbieta, age 25, Kraków).

For Elzbieta, the difference is in what motivates the decision to migrate – again she portrays the economic migrant as uninterested in making friends or putting down roots due to their rationale for temporary economic gain, while the more 'adventurous', 'open-minded' and perhaps cosmopolitan migrant is less concerned with this fixed goal and thus more socially unguarded. This assessment of 'personality types' suggests particular classed subjectivities among Polish migrants and, as shown in chapter five, contributes to the reproduction of class-based distinctions between Polish migrant groups.

The idea of cultivating a 'different' community implies that it is often defined by what it is not. Building on Jock Young's (1999) contention that 'just as community collapses, identity is invented' (cited in Bauman, 2001, p.15), I would add a further stage and suggest that as identity is invented, another community is created, whereby the recognition for difference and subalterity is another basis around which a community may be formed. Opting out of a certain form of community then suggests not that community per se is in decline but that the meaning of community is being re-shaped to fit certain socio-spatial contexts – the anti-community is becoming the cosmopolitan community.

8.3 Enacting Migrant Community in the UK

Studies on Polish migrant communities have highlighted the changing nature of the community in various places, and some of the divisions within it. In her study on undocumented Polish workers in Brussels, Grzymała-Kozłowska (2005) suggests that in the post-socialist era there has been a transition from 'ethnic co-operation to ethnic competition' in line with changing economic climate and the availability of work in the informal market. The increasing diversity of jobs available to Polish migrants has led to new forms of community other than those formed initially along political or work-based lines. Over time the emergence of transnational networks of Polish migrants has burgeoned into what some have called a 'migration industry' (Castles and Millar, 2003).

As discussed in chapter six, resources for mobility are differentially patterned. While some rely on the informal networks of friends and family to find work and housing, others have more direct access to the 'institutions' of the migration industry. Intermediaries such as recruitment agents, lawyers, employers, educational establishments, voluntary groups, smugglers and traffickers have become the institutions whose survival is dependent on continuing migration flows, thus their very existence perpetuates mobility (Goss and Lindquist, 1995). Some of these institutions are well established, such as the Polish Ex-Combatants' Association (`Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantó' or S.P.K.) and the Polish Catholic Mission in Scotland, and have over time developed a sense of community among Poles of different generations. However, Garapich (2008b) critiques the ability of such migrant institutions to effectively represent different migrant communities. On the one hand, they create structures and platforms for migrants to have a voice in civil society, on the other they are biased to a 'normative, neo-Toqueville republican philosophy of communal engagement' which views the immigrant community as homogenous, failing to recognise different groups and power relations within immigrant communities (Garapich, 2008b, p.738). For young Polish migrants the cultivation of community in the UK is based on a mix of inherited values for community and new forms of community action in both traditional and non-traditional settings. The following sections present some examples of these in Edinburgh.

8.3.1 Przyjaciele-Koledzy-Znajomi: Friendships as Community

Delanty (2003) views friendships as constituting a form of postmodern community through their role in performing the traditional duties of family and kinship networks. As shown in chapter seven, increased mobility has led to greater distances between family members and an increased reliance on friendship networks as providing support, replacing family relations. It is clear that friendships are of key importance to young Polish people, both in their decision to migrate and in their involvement in community and construction of new community spaces. Friendships with other Poles (and non-Poles) developed whilst living in the UK prompted the development of a quasi-community. This was perceived by many to instil a sense of belonging in place whilst also reinforcing connections with home. Łukasz describes the close friendships he has made in Edinburgh and why they are important to him.

> *"I can't put my finger on it, it's the relationship, the like-mindedness and I find myself quite special that I manage to get all those people around me...these are the people that inspired me...It gives a good spirit, a spirit that describes the bond we have..." (Łukasz, Edinburgh, age 28).*

In their study on young New Zealanders in London Conradson and Latham (2005) assert the centrality of friendships in their mobility and suggest that young people are increasingly engaging in 'cultures of mobility' with friends and the likelihood of meeting other young migrants involved in similar or *'like-minded'* patterns of migration is relatively high. Friendship is viewed as an important mechanism for self-identification and discovery (Pahl, 2000), suggesting that the *choice* of friendships is related to a goal of self-realisation and development. Within this it is important to recognise that the affective bonds of commonality are integral to what makes friendships sustainable and the 'social topologies' of young migrants are constantly evolving (Conradson and Latham, 2005).

Friendships were subjectively important to the idea of community. However, this is complicated by the vernacular delineations of friendship in the Polish language. Jozef talks about the different kinds of friendships he has had whilst living in London and then in Edinburgh, from *przyjaciele* (close friend) to *znajomi* (acquaintance).

> *"I discover Polish people can work very well together...in London, we were close to each other but it is not the same as it is here....we had fun, but here we're close to each other – like from heart, so I think it's a big difference" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

This demarcation between close friends and other friends denotes Jozef's variable degrees of attachment to people. He compares his friends in London, whom he met through work, with those in Edinburgh at the community centre, with whom he has a close friendship. Jozef is perhaps suggesting that the friendships he has made through the community centre are in some way stronger and more meaningful because he views this as a space of comfort and security rather than merely a workplace. However, Jozef maintains that '*Polish people can work very well together'* suggesting that friendships emerge out of the bonds of common language. Circles of friends as meaningful, safe and secure during times of uncertainty echoes again Bauman's (2001) notion of 'peg communities'. For many, out of this chaos emerges a sense of optimism and stability with deep, meaningful bonds between people and a desire to make a community wherever you are, as Maria who moved to Edinburgh in 2005 says *'if I can build a wee community around me, I am happy'*.

Catholicism was viewed by some young people as central to their personal biographies and sense of community through mobility. As discussed, the re-emergence of Catholicism during the late Socialist era meant that many young people have grown up with the regular practice of attending Church or participating in annual Catholic youth camps. It has been estimated that in the post-socialist era around 95 percent of the Polish population is Roman Catholic (McManus-Czubińska et al, 2003), making it a significant form of community practice for Poles. Through the process of migration these traditional forms of community are an important source of support and spiritual comfort and the Catholic Church has been the cornerstone around which the Polish community in the UK has been organised. In Scotland, along with the Polish Ex-Combatants' Association (S.P.K.), the Polish Catholic Mission in Scotland has been a key umbrella organisation for other clubs and activities, such as the Polish Scouts and the Saturday School movement. Using oral history research on the role of community among the post-war generation Smith and Winslow (2000, p.95) suggest that 'through these organisations a cohesive identity was maintained, cemented by the bonds of common experience'. Moreover, Stachura (2004) argues that during the post-war era of political and economic tensions, the community held strong through values of Catholicism.

The Catholic Church is a valued community space for Polish people in Edinburgh. With the large number of practicing Catholics among the Polish population, there is a wide range of committed parishioners at the Polish Churches in Edinburgh. Ks. Grzegorz Olszewski has been the priest of a Polish church in Edinburgh for almost 20 years and he reflects on the change in the parish community over this period explaining its growth from a small community of around 100 people to a much larger congregation with many more young people, particularly in the past five years. He regards the young people who attend Church as those who have been *'brought up in the Catholic tradition'*. He remarks also on those whose attendance is less dutiful and based more on habitual expectation.

> *"I ask them if they are not practicing, if they do not come, I cannot certify. They feel shameful, some people keep contact, some do not – they feel free, they do not feel obliged"*

Ks. Olszewski reflects on those who do not attend church as feeling *'free'* and not feeling *'obliged'*, perceiving their non-attendance as an individual choice rather than aligned to a collective obligation. Many young people were honest about such non-participation at Church justifying their absence through private meanings of faith rather the collective gesture of congregation. Many felt suspicious of Church structures, reflecting on negative memories of Catholic institutions in Poland. Łukasz and Tomek both expressed a deeply held suspicion of the Church and the particular forms of idolatry associated with faith and collective worship. Here, Tomek makes a satirical comparison of the idolatry of Jesus to that of Lenin through a photograph (32) he took at a Ukrainian market. In this photo Tomek makes a point about the iconography on offer in a marketplace, he reflects on how these artifacts were of little value at the market but represented to him a 'cool' example of how different people or images are heralded over others at different historical junctures.

Photo 32: Idolatry at a Ukrainian Market (photo by Tomek)

Others were more ambigouos claiming that their relationship with Catholicism was *'complex'* and some were still questioning their personal beliefs. Jola has lived in Edinburgh since 2004 and remarks that she was surprised at the assumptions made by Scottish people about her religiosity. She claimed people were *'expecting me to go to Church every Sunday because I'm Polish'*. Jola and others expressed frustration with some of the more formal Church structures and the *'rules'* and *'expectations'* of

Catholicism. Occasionally, the Polish Church in particular was criticised as having a stringent ethic of participation through fear of being outcast and associated with communism, as Olga remarks,

> *"Here you can believe in God, go to Church, or you might not be bothered but nobody will call you a Communist if you don't go to Church. If you don't go to Church in Poland you're bad basically" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).*

For those who identified as Catholics, there were varied reasons for non-participation in the Catholic community and some felt ambivalent towards church as the foundation of community. Wanda moved to Edinburgh with her partner and four of their eight children in 2005. She describes her reason for emigration as predominantly economic but reflects again on the *'rules'* of the Catholic faith which led to her feeling pushed out of her *'home community'* because she ended her marriage and met someone else;

> *" In Poland, if the people get a new partner they are almost like excluded because...it's not only in Poland, it is general Catholic rules" (Wanda, aged 35, Edinburgh).*

Wanda is now a divorcee and revealed that as a result her status in the Church has been compromised. While she was accepted within the Edinburgh Catholic community initially by a *'great [Polish] Priest'* in Prestonpans, his departure to London and the appointment of a new Polish Priest in the parish has caused her to feel less welcome at the Church. This demonstrates that the rules and expectations of the Church are perceived to create barriers to formal worship and that these structures of belonging that are cultivated in different faith spaces requires some further analysis. Moreover, it suggests that for some the process of migration has resulted, whether intentionally or not, in a distancing from the expectations of Church and family in Poland. Olga reflects further on her complicated relationship with the Church based on its particular manifestation in Poland.

> *"I do go to Church, I feel some connection...I would go to the Church and pray and everything but it's because I don't like Church in Poland...I just hate it and that's what's putting me off from Church and religion" (Olga, age 25, Edinburgh).*

Olga continues to attend Polish Mass in her local area but makes explicit her irreverence of the Catholic Church structures in Poland suggesting that there are perceived differences between the practice of Catholicism in Scotland and that in Poland, bringing into question the idea of the Catholic Church as a transnational institution that cuts across borders (Levitt, 2004). In her study of the Polish clergy in Aberdeen,

Trzebiatowska (2010, p.1067) emphasises the inextricable bond between Polish national identity and the Catholic faith, viewing Catholicism as a 'key ingredient of the national habitus'. She goes onto argue that there are 'dilemmas of integration' between Polish and Scottish Churches in Scotland since they operate with different agendas based on distinct historical and political rationales. For Polish bishops, the parish is a space of preservation and consolidation of the Polish Church, while Scottish bishops emphasise the transnational and integrative nature of the Catholic faith.

> *"Both sides struggle over access to resources and legitimacy of their respective capital, while the banner of integration is being flown over them by the higher echelons of the Catholic Church in Scotland" (Trzebiatowska, 2010, p.1068).*

This impasse has implications for the durability of community – in what sense do Polish Catholics view the Church as having a sense of community, or aiding the process of integration in the wider Scottish community? The narratives revealed little to resolve this quandary, but it is clear that both the Catholic faith and the Church structures mean different things to individual migrants and there is a sizable Catholic and non-Catholic community who do not participate in the formal Church structures, many of whom are negative about these structures and expectations in particular.

Ks. Olszewksi maintained that the Church played a positive role in the integration of migrants through the support it offers in finding work for migrants experiencing unemployment or destitution. In a study of Central and Eastern European Catholic migrants in London, Davis et al. (2006) found that the 77% of this group viewed the Church as helping to 'integrate into local society' and local parishes were a continual source of support for newcomers (as cited in Trzebiatowska, 2010, p.1059). However, for Ks Olszewski the situation is changing with a greater reluctance among some parishioners to take advice from the Church and turning down offers of low-wage work in the hope of finding better paid work by themselves. For many this means remaining on the margins.

> *"Some people, it is sad...Before people ask for work and I would arrange work, now they say they wouldn't take the job – it's better for them to sit by Cathedral and drink"*

Michał Garapich's (2010) recent work on the experiences of homeless Polish men in London highlights many of the key barriers to work and housing for some Polish migrants. Garapich considers the role of alcohol as a 'social bonding mechanism' which both connects and divides homeless communities. He argues that the Polish Catholic

Church institutions are excluding this group from their community and criticises the Church for their unwillingness to 'recognize the problem or engage in any long-term meaningful action to offer assistance' to homeless men with alcohol dependency issues (Garapich, 2010, p.52). The opportunity for young Polish people to find work and make a livelihood in Edinburgh is marked by differentiation. For some the economic gains, social and cultural lifestyle is a positive step towards upward social mobility; for others the lack of access to opportunities and the challenges associated with processes of migration and integration means some lives are marked still by poverty and immobility. For Ks. Olszewski, the Church is open to all who need sanctuary and more research on the specific role of the Polish Church in providing support for this group in Edinburgh is needed to assess the extent to which these communities intersect.

8.3.3 Sites of Community

In social theory community has been framed as a group dynamic related to social identity and/or territory, whereby shared values, culture or interests form a common bond or 'understanding' among a group of people in a shared space (Gregory, 2009). This implies particular sites or places of community. Classic sociological and geographical studies link community to neighbourhood (Tönnies, 1955). For Tönnies community was connected to traditional village life, which he saw as threatened with decline through processes of industrialisation and urbanization, a trend echoed in later theories of modernity (Etzioni, 1994; Bauman, 2000; Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994). In the context of mobility, the sites of community are presumed to be weaker since conventional understandings of community are based on an idea of society as bounded territories with fixed populations. Transnational migrants operate in unbounded space, rendering the idea of a fixed community space obsolete where people no longer rely on face-to-face contact and physical interaction as the foundations of community (Gupta and Fergason, 1992; Basch et al, 1994). Transnational communities (Portes, 1997a) of friends and family bridge the transitive and often temporary experiences of migration by providing a network of support and resource to migrants in a host destination but also to return migrants to ease the transition back home. However, despite the emergence of transnational practices and networks among Polish migrants 'locality remains significant' (Ryan, 2009). As discussed in chapter four, mobility is always 'located and materialised' and subject to uneven 'power geometries' (Massey, 1993) and socio-spatial contexts. This section provides examples of three key sites associated with

community formation and discusses how far these particular spaces facilitate a sense of community among migrants.

Home and Neighbourhood

As outlined in chapter seven, single person households are viewed as sites of mutual support and friendship (Roseneil and Budgeon, 2004) and therefore could be viewed as a significant site of community. From the narratives, migrant house-shares were viewed with mixed feelings as a site of cultivating community in a host society. As discussed, many young people emigrated with friends or to join friends and house-shares were often based around these networks, at least initially. When reflecting on their housing pathways most experiences changed over time and the duration of stay was strongly linked to the number of occupants in a house. For newcomers it was typical to be sharing a house with up to 15 Polish people and/or people from other migrant backgrounds. Maria comments on her first housing experience upon arriving in Edinburgh in 2005, at which time she shared a house with 12 other Polish people.

> *"So we lived there and we were called 'Little Poland' to the people on the street and I don't think they clearly know how many people lives there because we looked similar. So it was quite a nice time but we were all saving for something, every single one of us had some kind of a goal...[Basia] was saving to go back to Uni, [Ola] was saving for god knows what, my cousin was saving because he had his wife back in Poland. We had such different life stories in this little house... we were all different ages, different sex, different backgrounds from Poland even...I'm still interested in how we managed to live quite ok with so many people" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh)*

Maria notes the shared aspiration for economic gain among her fellow house-mates and portrays economics as the common goal despite the *'different life stories'* of each individual. After five years Maria now lives with her Scottish partner in rented accommodation in Edinburgh's West End. She remains in contact with many of the people she shared the house with but despite her ongoing contact with other Poles in the city she does not consider the idea of community as linked to her housing or neighbourhood experiences. Rather, she is critical of the policy-related invocation of 'community' as rooted in the discrete confines of the neighbourhood,

> *"...all the policies in this country are like community building. Community building - it's like give people chances for community – the last people you would go and see in a pub would be your neighbours" (Maria, age 30, Edinburgh)*

Others who had returned to Kraków were similarly hesitant to regard their temporary housing upon arrival as a site of community building, such as Stanisław who described

his experience of living in shared house in Northern Ireland as *'very strange company'*, and Jan, who *'preferred to live with friends'* after moving seven times in London from one house-share to another. For Weronika, the arrival of family and friends from Poland led to a much more comfortable house-share in contrast to her initial experience in a house share with *'strangers'*.

> *"We lived with my boyfriend, my best friend (a guy) – mine and Peter's best friend, then Peter's sister and her husband. So we all knew each other and it was a three bedroom apartment – very nice and very modern. For us the lifestyle was really fun. That's why things started changing because people came to us and moved in together. No more strangers – before I lived with two other girls and I had only bad experiences – they were Polish but from a different world – there was nothing to talk about and these girls were not fun at all, I don't want to say anything bad about them but I could"* (Weronika, age 25, Kraków)

Photo 33: Weronika's house-mates and friends in Dublin (photo by Weronika)

Despite their common nationality Weronika described her first house-mates as *'from a different world'* to her friends pictured here (photo 33). For her, the most meaningful relationships are cultivated through shared meanings beyond that of the Polish nation, despite the visual association here.

Migrant house-shares are often transient and shifting entities and as people come and go from one locality to another what was once viewed as a quasi-community disintegrates and becomes more disparate. Some people commented on the disintegration of

transnational community networks over time, particularly those who had returned to Poland alone. Ryszard lives in Kraków with his Polish partner, Agata, and their young son. He reflects on the nature of the Polish community in London whilst he was living there with Agata.

> *"There was about 15 people in this small community...When I was there work was a big part of it but having this, being in this community was also important because that was a good time, it was fun somehow. We had parties, we had a good time over there and right now their social life is not existing anymore, they work, they all live separately somewhere and don't make new friends somehow…I've heard that those who stayed were worried about their jobs, especially those who had mortgage...almost everyone is back in Poland, two people stayed and they don't get along anymore, they are not in touch anymore" (Ryszard, age 33, Kraków).*

Ryszard comments on the social disintegration of the community in London, for him the changes to the community in London signify a loss and have helped to justify, along with other economic factors, his decision to return. He recognises the value of mobility but it is recalled as a memory or a finished experience rather than a continuing transnational experience. He perceives the Polish community he was once part of in London to have disappeared, despite the continuation of relationships with specific individuals from that community who have returned to Kraków. For example, Ryszard currently runs a surveying business in partnership with two other friends he met in London, yet he doesn't see this as a continuation of the London community. This suggests that Ryszard comprehends community as something rooted in a specific social context and physical location and again demonstrates the temporariness of transnational community. The lifespan of transnational communities is variable and it is evident that while transnational 'networks' are important during the migration experience, for many who have returned these connections weaken over time bringing into question the sustainability of transnational communities.

Local Shops

Since 2004 and the significant wave of Polish migration to the UK the availability of Polish produce in shops has grown rapidly, with the emergence of Polish speciality shops, predominantly Polish owned, and the allocation of space within other Eastern European or more general supermarket chains to Polish products (Rabikowska and Burrell, 2009). Research into Polish consumption practices has indicated that Polish shops can 'promote a feeling of belonging, recreate a feeling of home, empower its customers as citizens and mark ownership of territory' (Rabikowska and Burrell, 2009,

p.219). Such a sentiment implies that these shops could be considered a site of community interaction and a meeting point for a social exchange. However, as Rabikowska and Burrell (2009, p.219) contend, this is 'more an aspiration than a reality'. The act of shopping rarely involves any interaction with other Poles but instead cultivates a 'feeling of home' and 'reinstates the meaning of home', often imagined as the home of childhood and closely linked to memories of family mealtimes (Rabikowska and Burrell, 2009, p.220).

Weronika recalls the widespread availability of Polish products in Dublin and the recreation of the Polish Christmas.

> *"In Dublin you have a Polish store on every corner so loads of Polish people are doing their own Christmas – it's so expensive to go home so we bring our own meals and traditions. Everything I had in my fridge was Polish – cottage cheese, ham, sausages, milk – everything Polish" (Weronika, age 25, Kraków).*

The food and drink of Poland and the circulation of these products from Poland to the UK through Polish shops, as well as in the luggage of Polish migrants is considered as significant in understanding the material worlds of Polish people in the UK (Rabikowska and Burrell, 2009). The opportunity for Poles to 'transform their immediate spaces into places of familiar rituals, smells and tastes' is viewed as an emotionally symbolic recreation of something lost or distant (Rabikowska and Burrell, 2009, p.216). Like Weronika's description of the availability of Polish food for Christmas, the Catholic ceremonial traditions of Christmas and Easter are important events around which familiar food and drink is used to evoke shared meanings of home. Taking examples from the different Polish communities in Edinburgh: the volunteers at Świetlica contribute home-made Polish food to community events at Christmas and Easter while those involved with Edinburgh.com.pl run an informal, bi-monthly 'vodka party' for those involved with the website and other Polish and non-Polish friends. The following quote and photo 34 illustrate the purpose and function of Tomek's 'vodka party'.

> *"...Vodka party! it's one of the parties where my friends meet and friends of my friends... this shows something, what kind of environment and at my party there could be a person I don't even know their name. And there is Scottish guy, English guy, Italian guy and a bunch of crazy Polaks and I think that shows quite a lot of how we live here...it's quite inspiring as well and it's also good when there is people from different nations coming over so it's another set of new ideas and stuff like that" (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Photo 34: Polish vodka party in Tomek's kitchen (photo by Tomek)

Tomek's vision of *'vodka party'* is more an excuse for cross-national sharing of ideas and facilitating a creative environment fuelled by the national drink of Poland.

In Edinburgh, Russian, East European, Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian shops have all opened in the past five years in the areas of Leith and Gorgie. Konrad owns a Polish restaurant on Gorgie Road and feels the demand for Polish and Russian food in the area has prompted the entrepreneurial drive to cater for the Polish consumers. Interestingly, he remarks that this is less true for his own restaurant, claiming that his main customer base is Scottish rather than Polish.

> *"Polish people mostly cook at home so sometimes they pop in for a sandwich and then leave. Scottish people prefer to eat out. Polish people always cook at home"* (Konrad, age 29, Edinburgh).

Photo 35: Konrad's Deli, Gorgie road (photo by KB)

The idea that Poles *'always cook at home'* reinforces Rabikowska and Burrell's (2009) contention that homemade food which relates closely to the bond with the relationships of home and family is viewed as 'the most emotionally significant'.

Communities at work

In many of the narratives the workplace was viewed as an important site for community, echoing assertions that the relationship between work and community remains important in the context of migration in spite of the dislocation of traditional work-based communities (Stenning, 2005b; Garapich, 2006). The social relations of work were highly valued, particularly by those working in low-wage occupations, and seen as a significant factor in developing a feeling of belonging through shared meanings of work. Jola works in a factory in Edinburgh and remarks on the workplace as a key community site for Poles and suggests that the attachments made among the predominantly Polish workforce are a barrier to social mobility.

> *"Although they are living here for sometimes four or five years, they didn't change their mentality because they live among Polish people so they are very, very attached to work for example even though it's not a very nice job... they're happy that they have work and they are not fussy that they are doing not related to their studies" (Jola, age 27, Edinburgh).*

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Again, the word '*mentality*' is used evoking an image of a certain Polish 'type' characterised by an economic rationale for work with limited prospects for mobility. This classed interpretation presents a further claim that those who are tied to a community at work are averse to the development of a diverse or cosmopolitan community outside work

Contrary to this, Jozef regards his experiences at work as important in setting up an initial sense of community for him when he first arrived to work as a kitchen porter in London. This photo (36) shows his work colleagues at the restaurant he worked in who he describes as a primarily migrant and low waged workforce.

Photo 36: 'Victims of the System' – Jozef's London Colleagues (photo by Jozef)

> *"I call this picture 'victims of the system' because we all work hard there...The main thing which brought us together was the hard work you know. Everyone was the same but we all came from different countries" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

Jozef recalls the camaraderie at work among the predominantly migrant workforce and their collective *'strength'* through the shared experience of *'hard work'*. Wills et al. (2009) have written comprehensively on the 'migrant division of labour' in London's low-pay economy, reporting on limited prospects of social mobility for some migrants over others which leads to the perpetuation of ethnic divisions in the labour market. Jozef's reference to 'victims of the system' implies recognition of this inequality and

the sense of community he felt through the shared status of victimhood among low wage migrant workers in London.

In a different example, Dorota has had a number of various jobs in different EU countries, from low-wage work in the catering industry in Spain and Scotland to her current work on transnational research projects between Scotland, Germany and Poland. She reflects on the valuable relationships she has gained through work declaring that *'all the real relationships are created when you work with people and you start doing things with people from work'*. The transnational nature of her work experience has, in her view, not limited the opportunity for cultivating meaningful relationships and has nurtured in her a sense of belonging to different places. Dorota compares her transnational friendships to those in Poland, viewing the latter as more *'difficult'*. The flexibility she has come to know through her transnational lifestyle contrasts with that of her friends from Poland who have not experienced a mobile life.

> "I*n Poland it is more difficult, when I go back it is not like people have the time or money to take the day off to meet me and they don't live in one place anymore so it's me that has to make the effort and go and see them"* (Dorota, age 30, Edinburgh).

She claims her friends in Poland have neither the *'time'* nor *'money'* to *'make the effort'* because they don't *'live in one place anymore'*. In one sense these constraints are paradoxical, while Dorota views her life as more mobile and cosmopolitan than that of her old friends, she laments that she is no longer able to reconnect with them *'in one place'*, in Kraków. Whether these evolving friendships constitute a community to Dorota is not made explicit, but the idea that different places evoke a sense of belonging, where *'you can leave traces behind you'*, suggests that community can exist simultaneously in different places and backs up to the idea of transnational communities as multiple and shifting rather than between 'here' and 'there'.

The following section will present some of the specific and located examples of community practice in Edinburgh and explore the dynamic of community formation, differentiation and re-negotiation within one city landscape.

8.4 Re-forming Polish Community in Edinburgh: Three Case studies

8.4.1 The Community Centre - Świetlica ('Meeting Place')

Fig.4: Świetlica advertisement

Among the young Polish people living in Edinburgh there are both commonalities and differences which have led to many different articulations of community. As would be expected, the common bonds of language and nationality have been the cornerstones around which the Polish community, in its broad sense, has been sustained. A Polish community centre, 'Świetlica', meaning 'meeting place', has been operating on a weekly basis in Leith for the past four years. It was founded in response to a number of incidents relating to discrimination and violence against the 'new' Polish population in the local area in order to provide a 'safe and secure space for migrants'. There are now around 25 volunteers who help to provide advice on welfare issues, English language support, activities for children, a Polish language library service and a supply of free meals, including traditional Polish cuisine. The centre is also a remote reporting centre and has regular Police representation for the secure and private reporting of hate crime in the city.

The centre is based in the 'community wing' of a primary school in a residential area of Leith and Świetlica have allocation of the facilities on Monday evenings between 4pm and 9pm. Along with a little funding from Edinburgh city council the drop in is designed to help promote integration of migrants into the local Scottish community rather than acting as a discrete Polish space. As such, regular attendees include families from the local neighbourhood, representatives of third sector organisations and statutory bodies. Though the volunteer base is predominantly Polish, there are a small number of Scottish, second generation Polish and other non-Polish volunteers, such as Peter, a local Scottish policeman whose remit has been to act as a 'safe' and 'trustworthy' community figure and overcome the suspicions associated with the police force within the Polish community. The centre is becoming a recognised third sector organisation within Edinburgh and links with other organisations such as Shakti Women's Centre and the Multicultural Family Base, have strengthened the profile of Świetlica in the city.

Świetlica is viewed by its members with a mixture of patriotic warmth and functional necessity, particularly by those who spoke little English when they arrived. Keeping up with Polish language and national customs was viewed by some as a positive role of community, particularly for those with small children whose English language skills are developing faster than their Polish language skills. Wanda has three children who go to school locally and has been volunteering at the community centre since it began. She reflects on the reasons for her sustained participation at the centre, having lived in Edinburgh for five years.

> *"I come because we've got kids, the kids need contact with other Polish kids because at school...they were the only non-Scottish children at School and they need the contact with Polish kids...I'm so worried about Paulina [her second child], she just says she sometimes prefer to speak English than Polish"*
> *(Wanda, age 35, Edinburgh).*

For Wanda's family, the presence of a Polish community that is arranged around being and speaking Polish is of key importance as it provides a space of linguistic and national commonality. Świetlica is viewed as an important community space for the preservation of Polish culture and tradition, not only to individuals but to families through its educational role for children. Ewa moved to Edinburgh in 2008 and currently volunteers at the community centre in Leith. She reflects on the importance of having a supportive Polish community to share Polish traditions and maintain the Polish language among the younger generation. She sees this as closely related to family, whereby the role of

community is to maintain and strengthen family ties, often through celebration of the traditional customs to instill a sense of community away from home.

> "*I think it is important, it scares me you know. One woman...we tried to convince this seven year old girl to read in Polish and to learn Polish letters and stuff and she said 'no, I don't need that, I go to a Scottish school', and we said 'well, do you ever see your Granny and your Grandfather...would you like to write a letter to them, they probably don't speak English', ...'well yeah ok, maybe', it's stuff like that – otherwise kids just don't really care" (Ewa, age 24, Edinburgh).*

Ewa sees the community centre as having practical advantages that support the continuation of Polish community through the retention of intergenerational, transnational links to ensure that family remains central to community in spite of distance through active engagement with language, culture and custom. The transnational extension of a locally based community re-configures the traditional assumptions that family and community are bound to locality, however to what extent this exemplifies a transnational community is unclear.

For many the centre was viewed as a space of comfort for those 'in need', particularly new arrivals to the city. Jozef is a volunteer at the centre and has been living in Edinburgh for almost two years working as a kitchen porter in a local restaurant. He reflects on why this community is important to him;

> "*I get closer to my people...I feel like someone needs my help. This is so powerful because there is nothing more important than the feeling that someone needs you and everyone wants to be needed...I remember after all those years in the kitchen when they push you down and they say 'Polish rubbish'...I feel more like relieved here and I start to do what I really want" (Jozef, age 33, Edinburgh).*

For Jozef, the security and comfort of this community is supported by a sense of purpose and wanting to be 'needed', having this sense of mutual commitment to a group of like-minded people is of key importance to him. The community centre is an active community organisation performing an integrative, social role to its members - offering support for 'everyday problems'. This requires a flexibility of approach among the volunteers and whilst the centre appears to be constructed as a ready-made secure space of comfort, advice and support for newcomers it is also responsive to need or utility. How far these 'needs' are based on policy-related goals for community cohesion and integration is a source of tension for some of the volunteers. The invocation of community through policies of 'integration', 'community cohesion' and 'neighbourhood management' is ever-present in migrant spaces, particularly where third

sector bodies play an active role. Nikolas Rose (1999) argues that the discourse of community has become associated with voluntarism and self-organised care admonishing the state of responsibility for it. The self-regulation of this particular form of community through volunteering is constrained by a lack of resource, the turnover of (predominantly migrant) volunteers and the pressure to continually re-negotiate the identity and goals of the centre to appeal to ever-changing funding streams. This has led to its development into a generic 'migrant drop in' operating once a month rather than a weekly Polish meeting place. In Edinburgh, Poles are no longer considered a priority as a migrant group in need of integration because there is an assumption that many Polish migrants are returning home, as a local housing development officer in Edinburgh Council remarked, *'they are all going home, aren't they?'* It is not yet clear how this development will affect the Polish attendance but there have been significant changes to the rationale, such as the shift in emphasis from the maintenance of Polish language to the importance of English as an integrative linguistic device. Returning to the example of Wanda and her reason for participation as based in linguistic commonality, it is clear that for some loosing this will be detrimental to their sense of community.

Joseph (2002) suggests that the 'invocation' of community does not make it less valuable or authentic and it seems that despite the agenda-driven construction of this community space the community itself has evolved through the actions of the people within it through what Raymond Williams (1989) refers to as 'habits of mutual obligation'. While the re-branding of Świetlica to a more general 'migrant drop in' has been informed by policy goals, it has also been stimulated by an increasingly diverse membership of the community. Over time the community centre has become well known as representing a marginalised section of society and thus other marginalised groups have become affiliated with it, such as LGBT Youth Scotland, Elrec and Shakti, which has diversified attendance. Despite this integrative development, the centre is not wholly inclusive and while there is a mix in age, gender and family status there are no major links with the older generation of Poles whose designated community forum appears to be the SPK or SPCA. The differences are not only age related, within both the older and younger generation different forms of community exist along gendered and class based lines demonstrating that 'common understanding' is based on more than nationality and language. This reinforces Garapich's (2008) assertion that the boundary construction inherent between migrant cohorts, and their respective representations of

community, demonstrates that the discursive construction of migrant community as organized around discrete national groups is simplistic and inappropriate.

8.4.2 The Virtual Community - Edinburgh.com.pl

Fig.5: Edinburgh.com.pl website logo

The value constructions that set one community apart from another are related intrinsically to questions of self and identity. Edinburgh.com.pl was established in 2007 by brothers Tomek and Mariusz to *'create a community that, outside of work...is also interested in culture, arts and tourism'*. With a dual role of promoting Polish culture to Scots and Scottish culture to Poles, the site is an interactive forum in which its members post links to or stories about events, activities and organisations related to culture in Edinburgh. The remit of the website designers was to represent Edinburgh as a city *'rich in opportunity and possibility'* and cultivate a sense of *'home'* to the Polish *'exiles'* living in the city. Tomek's vision of community is something *'alternative'* and cultural rather than economic.

As discussed in chapter six, the 'economic migrant' or 'migrant worker' is a label that is problematic for many young Polish people in Edinburgh. Here, Tomek justifies why he developed Edinburgh.com.pl in response to hackneyed media representations of Polish community.

> *"The perception that the media creates is so shallow in understanding, it's like obvious that no-one gives a *** to find out what those guys are about, what are they doing here, there are stereotypes that were created – there was this moment where everyone was coming for money – but the people who are here only for money are back in Poland – they're not here anymore. So people who are here now are quite different I guess" (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Tomek's vitriol against the economic label suggests that the term is loaded with emotive meaning, and he has exercised choice in distancing himself from it. Discrediting the economic rationale for migration has historic and political undertones that set apart Polish migrants in the UK. Garapich's (2008a, p.7) suggests that there are a set of moral

judgments that underpin the 'political' and 'economic' divisions that have been said to exist between the different generations of Polish emigrants. These judgments are based on the historical discourse of Polish emigration whereby 'political exile is seen as a sacred act in the fight for freedom and economic migration as a necessary evil, a manifestation of weakness or simply cowardice, egoism and an ambiguous act of turning away from the fate of the nation'. While this is not to suggest that Tomek's disavowal of the term 'economic migrant' is directly comparable, the distinction serves to illustrate the complex meanings behind the different classifications of migrant status and how these historical classifications may factor in the development of 'different' or 'alternative' Polish communities in Edinburgh.

In building *Edinburgh.com.pl* Tomek is attempting to mobilise an alternative community within the wider Polish population of Edinburgh in a virtual space using a bi-lingual, interactive forum.

> *"...there is another Polish website which has no background and there are people from every kind of people basically and they usually argue with each other so we created an alternative for people who don't just want to chat...they want to do something, create, organise exhibition, paint, whether they're artists or people who want to organise things"* (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).

On the one hand Edinburgh.com.pl is an attempt to be antithetic to the 'economic migrant' label and to be proactive in developing an inclusive and creative space for recognition of the alternative - or, perhaps the marginalised within the margins. On the other, it is a boundary-drawing space which excludes one community from another through its cultural remit and its virtual platform.

There are a number of websites set up by and for Polish people in Edinburgh, from UK based social networking sites like Mojawyspa.co.uk (My Island) to localised sites, such as Emito.net which provides a forum for Polish migrants to express their thoughts about being a migrant, socialise and engage with other Poles and they offer practical guidance and signposting facilities on work, housing and welfare issues. These sites have cultivated what some have referred to as 'virtual communities' - new social forms that exist in cyber-space rather than being fixed in place in which belonging is grounded in online communication (Rheingold, 1993; Castells, 2000; Calhoun, 1998). Virtual communities have been referred to as 'thin' communities which are not rooted in place or tradition but rather they operate as a 'global market of strangers exchanging information' (Turner, 2001, p.29). However, the estrangement of the virtual setting is

confounded by the familiarity present in the shared interests and shared experiences of being Polish or being a migrant in place (Edinburgh), suggesting that interaction in a virtual space demonstrates a new kind of 'dwelling' where 'communion' can exist without 'propinquity' (Urry, 2000). Moreover, virtual communities are not static entities and the Internet is more important as a 'supplement to face-to-face community organisation and movement activity rather than a substitute for it' (Calhoun, 1998 as cited in Delanty, 2003, p.179). Tomek describes how Edinburgh.pl.com has evolved through its signposting to real events and led to the concurrent development of a corporeal community whose shared interest in cultural activities bring them together.

> *"...through the website there was so many people moved that at some point within this group we started to meet each other" (Tomek, age 30, Edinburgh).*

Tomek goes onto explain how this group of people have been instrumental in making a community who meet regularly around shared interests and motivations and specific events have been organised to express the community interests, such as the Polish Cultural Festival which took place in 2009 as an event to promote Polish culture in Edinburgh. The following section will focus on this mobilisation of community across different spaces focusing specifically on the Polish Cultural Festival as an expression of migrant community.

Fig.6: Polish Cultural Festival Association Logo

The Polish Cultural Festival Association (PCFA) is an organisation that was set up two years ago by a small group of Polish young people who had decided to organize a festival to promote Polish culture in Edinburgh and *'bring together our communities'*. In the programme to the 2009 Festival the introductory statement proclaims that the PCF has been organised by *'a voluntary network of Polish people most of whom are under 30 and all of those who work full time alongside these commitments'*. It also heralds theatre and visual art productions that *'speak in the voice of young Poland'*.

The act of making community in a new space is something that had been cultivated by many of the young Polish people living in Edinburgh. Those involved in the PCFA are predominantly a young generation of Polish people who are finding new ways to express community and represent different Polish cultural voices. Łukasz was a volunteer at the first Polish cultural festival in 2009 and prides himself on *'becoming active in the local community and contributing'*. The language he uses to portray his activities with the PCFA indicates a desire to be productive, to achieve and *'contribute'* to the community rather than to be seen to be a passive member of society. He associates this attitude with his self-development through migration maintaining that *'it's a completely different attitude and a different me from what I remember in Poland'*. Others also discussed community in this way and felt that showing Polish culture to Scottish people was a valuable contribution to the wider Edinburgh community and a

means of integration rather than assimilation. Building on Pahl's (2000) notion that the choice of friendships is connected with the self, so is the choice to participate in a community and 'contribute' something of oneself in order to gain a rewarding feeling from active involvement in community. This echoes McKay's (1998) writings on DIY culture, where the idea of doing it your*self* is bound to collective goal of activism as a community. PCFA volunteers emphasise community as a habitual practice and a positive aspiration. Maria reflected on the habit of collective organisation – *'we all organise around something'*, from faith, to nationality, to politics to art. In this sense, imagining community fits alongside expressions of active community participation, suggesting that there are many ways to practice the different imaginations of community.

The PCFA, Edinburgh.pl.com and Świetlica remain important sources of community for young Polish people in Edinburgh and since the research was conducted there have been many developments within these settings. People and events have come and gone and new ideas have been developed, such as the re-organisation of Świetlica around project-oriented goals with re-branded elements to appeal to different communities in the local area, including refugees and asylum seekers, LGBT groups and youth groups. Świetlica now describes itself as a 'migrant drop-in' in order to appear more 'inclusive' for migrants of all nationalities. As stated, the centre remains predominantly Polish but there seems to be little objection to the re-branding – instead it seems that the supportive space on a soon to be demolished estate in Leith cultivated by parts of the Polish community is becoming less based on linguistic and national commonality but rather on a common goal for, or at least to be recognised as contributing to, integration. In each case, these communities do not signify a static entity but rather an evolving endeavor based on shared meanings and practices; enacted both by temporary and more permanent migrants and located materially and virtually around the city of Edinburgh.

8.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has re-energised the debate on migrant communities. Young migrants demonstrate agency in their performance of community and uphold community as a valued ideal whilst engaging in a range of mobilities. However, while some forms of community are enabling others are constraining and representational. The limitations of traditional structures of community are recognized and re-configured by young people through their experience of mobility. Drawing on the reflexive modernization thesis, it

could be argued that some people do experience a sense of loss for community and tradition. A yearning for what has been lost contributes to the development of new forms of community. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that processes of individualization are affecting the nature of community and the fragmentation of community from solid organisation to a range of disparate entities, although these are, nevertheless, tangible and rooted manifestations of community.

The discourse of community is inflected by policy directions and agendas linked to the discourse of mobility and integration. This chapter shows that this discourse has shaped migrant perception of community in the UK. It is exhibited in particular forms of cosmopolitan community that support the integrationist logic and reject bounded and traditional notions of migrant community. However, community functions in different ways for different people. Even those who bemoan particular community structures reminisce a 'paradise lost' suggesting that the idea of community holds value for those engaged in mobility. Many go further and engage in the act of community whether to seek recognition, equality and tolerance, alternative representation and/or cultural enlightenment.

This chapter has also emphasised the importance of place in the practice of community and shown the ways in which migrant community is differentially located and positioned, whether in the liminal spaces of temporary migrant experience, or localised in a neighbourhood community centre. However, the traditional conceptions of place-based communities, such as the neighbourhood and the workplace, are being re-configured through the transnational *practices* of migrants. A critical reading of transnational community has been offered and it is argued that it is more useful to consider transnationalism as a set of practices rooted in or between particular socio-spatial and temporal contexts, rather than unfixed, limitless and fluid. Moreover, taking the example of virtual communities, it is clear that while these are important networks that link communities transnationally and generate a shared sense of belonging, the most valuable and arguably sustainable are those linked to face-to-face community activity.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have explored the contemporary mobilities of young Polish people in an enlarged European Union. I have considered both the spatial and social mobilities of young people migrating between Poland and the UK, arguing that such mobilities are experienced differently and relationally. Furthermore, the thesis has shown that in the context of these mobilities young people experience certain transitions of the self, the family and the community, whereby social forms and relations are re-configured and new forms of family and community emerge in the context of post-socialist and post-accession mobility. These central arguments have been grounded in empirical evidence gleaned from narrative and photo interviews with young Poles in Edinburgh, Kraków and Katowice and through ethnographic participation with the Polish community in Edinburgh. As a result, the thesis is an intimate reading of the personal transformations experienced through mobility, taking into account the personal histories, practices and relations of young people's mobile biographies. Furthermore, these portraits have provided a micro-level analysis of broader theories of migration, mobility and social transformations, grounding meta-narratives in the lived realities of young people's experience. In this sense, I have responded to calls for empirically grounded studies on mobilities (Cresswell, 2006) and to calls for studies on the intersectionality of class, gender, ethnicity and faith in shaping mobilities (McDowell, 2006). Furthermore, the use of a mixed-method approach and incorporation of innovative methodological techniques has cultivated a multi-layered study of individual migrant subjectivity that goes beyond many of the existing studies of Polish migration to the UK.

9.1 Thesis Summary

The thesis is theoretically positioned within the inter-disciplinary study of mobilities. A critical assessment of key theories of migration, mobility and modernity was presented in chapter three. Here, conventionally disparate strands of theory have been integrated to present a holistic approach to understanding the differentially experienced mobilities

of young Polish people. Using this approach the research was grounded in the following questions.

1. How is mobility understood, practiced and represented by young Polish migrants
2. How do family and community shape mobility decisions, values, aspirations and outcomes
3. In what ways are self, family and community *transformed* through mobility

In each chapter I have considered a different aspect of mobility in order to contextualise, analyse and interpret young people's mobilities at different life-stages and in relation to significant social structures and processes. In chapter five, the personal memories of post socialist mobility and immobility contextualised both the individual experiences of mobility since 2004 and more general trends of youth mobility in the post-socialist era. Through this analysis it is clear that young people's values and aspirations for mobility preceded EU accession but it is important to recognise the effects of social, economic, political and cultural transformations on shaping decisions for, and access to, mobility. 2004 marked a shift in access to mobility for new populations in ECE and legitimised many pre-existing routes into the UK. However, despite wider access channels and the discursive representation of opportunity and choice through mobility in the EU, I argue that the experience of mobility is highly differential. Despite the common misconception that 'everybody had the same amount' in socialist Poland access to key services was highly differential. For example, the narratives reveal very different experiences of education among young people with some having access to private English tuition, while those on state language programmes experienced patchy provision subject to high staff turnovers and regional disparities. The experience of growing up in these uneven and uncertain transitional contexts has shaped young people's perceptions of mobility and of the EU. Moreover, growing up is itself a transformative process. Therefore, a discussion of childhood experience is a significant contextual device for understanding how the personal histories of mobility relate to and affect the potential futures of mobility.

In chapter six, post-accession Polish mobility was discussed as a series of personal transitions of the self. The experience of becoming mobile was explored alongside broader lifecourse transitions and I have shown that young people's representation and experience of mobility is contingent on particular subjectivities and particular relations. As young people's subjectivities shape the way in which mobility is understood,

practiced and represented, these subjectivities are also re-made *through* mobility. From the individual narratives it was evident that class position, for example, is negotiated and re-configured in the context of mobility. The thesis suggests that young migrants have a *reflexive class position* that is relative to a historic understanding of class (and its absence) under communism as well as an adapted class position that relates to the UK class system and the positioning of migrants within it. Many young people react against the representational discourse of the 'economic migrant' or 'migrant worker' because it connotes a money-oriented, lower class and culturally bereft individual, an imaginary that is far removed from their own experiences of mobility in the UK. However, this imaginary is at once contested and reproduced through the typecasting of 'other' Polish and non-Polish migrants in this way. I argue that these representational categories, expressed both within and outside of the Polish community, are ineffective indicators for engaging migrants in policies for integration and community cohesion and serve only to reinforce divisions within and between communities.

One of the key findings of the thesis relates to the way in which mobility has affected the family and the community. I have shown that for young Polish people moving to the UK does not signal a break from families and communities back home. Transnational networks and practices are commonplace among young Poles and the preservation of family ties is often viewed as a functional necessity in the context of mobility. Chapter seven considered how the meanings of family are often linked to socio-historical constructions of family life based on gendered and faith-based values and practices that extend transnationally. While some celebrate and preserve these normative moral codes, others retreat from traditional family expectations and judgements. However, this is complicated by the desire to maintain bonds of intimacy and care with family members demonstrating that mobility is not rendering the family obsolete. In sum, young people have different imaginations of family which are constructed through personal memories, values and meanings but also subject to re-construction as people experience different life transitions in the context of mobility.

In chapter eight I presented some examples of the way that community is understood and practiced by young Polish people showing that community is a valued ideal for mobile people. Manifestations of community in migrant settings are both enabling and constraining, some are disparate and transient while others are rooted in tangible form. The experience of mobility has shaped the nature of community – migrants re-construct community in non-traditional spaces that are temporary, virtual and transnational, such

as the many different invocations of Polish community in Edinburgh. The discourse of community cohesion and integration has also shaped young people's aspirations for developing communal goals alongside wider integrationist goals. This invocation of community has implications for its durability and membership, with some formal structures perceived as limiting an 'authentic' community feeling. As such 'cosmopolitan' communities emerge in reaction to what is perceived to be a static notion of an inauthentic community, underpinned by classed notions of an alternative, diverse and inclusive agenda.

9.2 Contributions to Knowledge

This thesis has made a series of theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions to knowledge. Theoretically, the thesis engages with three broad narratives of social change – transnationalism, 'new mobilities' and theories of modernity. Drawing on these diverse conceptual frames I have developed an integrated approach to the study of contemporary mobilities that considers the social and spatial aspects of mobility and how they interrelate. In this sense, my study carves out a new theoretical space concerning a *social geography of mobility*. In the literature mobility is a contested term because of the range of meanings and interpretations it generates. I engage with mobility in the context of transnational migration to highlight the relationality of migrant experience and recognize the connections between social and spatial mobility. The thesis converges with many of the claims made in new mobilities approaches, such as the emphasis placed on social solidarities and structures on influencing mobility opportunities. However, there are also areas of divergence. My thesis has been less concerned with proving the centrality of mobility in everyday life, but rather has aimed to explore how particular forms of mobility (i.e. transnational migration and social mobility) operate across different socio-spatial contexts. This is shown through an empirically-grounded study of the mobile histories, practices and relations of young Polish people. At the heart of this is a claim that mobility reproduces inequality in new places and new forms, pointing not only to a 'politics of mobility' (Cresswell, 2010) but also to a *social geography of mobility*.

The overall empirical contribution of the thesis is a bridging of broad theories of migration and mobility with an empirical study on the 'actually existing' mobility of young Polish migrants in the UK and Poland. Thus, the thesis responds to calls for empirical studies on reflexivity (Atkinson, 2010), calls for more grounded studies on

mobilities (Cresswell, 2006), and calls for closer consideration of the emotional geographies of mobility (Conradson and McKay, 2007).The data shows the differential social and spatial mobilities of young Polish people migrating between the UK and Poland - their expressions of class, gender, ethnicity and faith; and their personal meanings of family and community in the context of mobility. These textured empirical portraits present an intimate reading of grand theory demonstrating the ways in which the everyday negotiation of processes of reflexivity, individualization and mobility corroborate and refute different aspects of these meta-narratives. The empirical contributions of the thesis therefore overlap with much of the theoretical content. I will now present three central contributions thematically.

Firstly, I have explored the relationship between *mobility and tradition*. In chapter four I summarised Giddens' notion of a post-traditional society. In some respects I have argued for a Giddensian perspective agreeing that mobility is rendering tradition less important, though not obsolete. Mobility involves making new connections in new spaces, inevitably rendering older connections and identifications less manageable or less sustainable. As such, I have found evidence of de-traditionalization (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994) in the Polish context, particularly relating to the emergence of cosmopolitan attitudes among young people as they engage in mobility. The pursuit of an *alternative* to tradition, as narrated by Tomek, Łukasz and Maciej in chapter six, suggests uprooting from the familiar and the known to embrace the uncertainty of a mobile life. However, I have argued that this is not necessarily suggestive of compelled individualization or a retreat from outdated social forms (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2000). As demonstrated in the re-making of virtual community by Tomek and his friends in Edinburgh, the pursuit of alternatives is a collective practice within which class and culture intersect. Here, Giddens' (1994) 'lifestyle politics' can be drawn upon but with a cautionary appendage. For many, mobility is an unsettling negotiation of uncertain transitions and unexpected choices. Consequently, tradition also re-emerges as a significant mechanism for reasons of security and wellbeing in the context of mobile transitions (Adam, 1996). Indeed, much of the traditional is represented as nostalgia by those living in Edinburgh, such as the affective narratives of Maria and Dorota in their memories of socialist community in chapter five. For others, however, the maintenance of traditional social ties and practices through faith, family and community shows that tradition is more than a discursive comfort blanket or a habitual continuation of local customs, as shown in the narratives of Wanda and Ewa in chapter eight, who view

community as serving both an emotional and practical function in the context of mobility. Among Polish migrants in the UK there is evidence of the re-invention of tradition and the recovery of community through engagement with traditional practices in new spaces. This was reflected in some of the new forms of community operating in Edinburgh, such as the Polish Cultural Festival and Świetlica. Both these spaces involve the active engagement of young people in re-vitalising or *transforming* Polish traditions in new, multicultural settings.

Secondly, I have explored the idea of a *mobile subjectivity* in response to Sheller and Urry's (2005) introduction of this concept. I have developed this idea to consider how mobility in the modern world is transforming the self and whether the notion of a mobile subjectivity can be taken seriously. In this thesis I understand a mobile subjectivity as one that is taking on multiple subject positions and involved in a reflexive negotiation of identity in relation to actual movement between places. This understanding relates again to transformation and asks to what extent the self is being transformed through mobility. It is clear that many of the transitions associated with mobility are consistent with broader transitions of the lifecourse. The experience of mobility is linked to particular junctures in a person's life, such as graduation from University, starting a family, the beginning or end of a relationship. However, I argue that becoming and being a migrant adds a spatial dimension to these transitions which requires further analysis. In chapter six I have shown that young Polish migrants are engaged in a series of personal transitions through mobility that require multiple reference points – relating to language, culture, work, class, faith and nationality. Here I draw on the work of Beck, Giddens and Lash (1994) in their discussions on the 'reflexive project of the self'. At face value, my argument converges with Beck et al. (1994) by arguing that reflexivity is taking place in a context of increased mobility and discontinuity from older social forms. However, my argument differs through a contention that reflexivity is itself subject to the social forms rendered obsolete by Beck et al. (1994). For example, I have argued that people have a *reflexive class position* in different times and spaces because the self is positioned relationally. Young people reflect upon and express their (classed) position in relation to other people, places and systems, both past and present. Throughout the empirical chapters, many people have talked of self-fulfilment, self-realisation, self-growth but always in relational contexts. For example, the self-denigration of Jozef as 'redundant masculinity' is intimately related to his perceptions of the success of the women in his family; the self-

aggrandisement of Lukasz, Maciej and Jacek in relation to other Poles viewed as less aspirational; the self-fulfilment of Weronika and Marcin in relation to being re-united with family; and the self-satisfaction of Helena, Ania, Dorota in relation to the independence and achievements gained through mobility in relation to what they would have become in Poland. Furthermore, the individualized, aspirational discourse of EU mobility disguises the relational contingencies that shape access to different types of mobility. Not all life-chances are life-choices and I have argued throughout this thesis that young people's reflexive biographies contain different meanings of mobility, with varying degrees of choice and freedom involved in negotiating mobility.

Thirdly, I have framed mobility as transformative in that the perception and experience of mobility affects and shapes social forms that are assumed to be solid and fixed. This relates not only to the individual's sense of self but also the ways in which *family and community* are being re-configured through mobility. Uteng, (2006) argues that 'routes' of mobility disrupt 'roots' of genealogical order, impacting upon identity and belonging. This unfixing of social forms compels a re-negotiation in new socio-spatial contexts through which new meanings of the family and community develop. However, there remain certain fixities in the practices of migrants to re-engage with families and communities transnationally. The everyday transnationalisms of young Polish migrants extend beyond engagement with new technologies to keep in touch from afar through instant mobile communication. While many people talked of the importance of Skype, for example, in being able to reconnect with families, these narratives also revealed the underlying intimacies and longing for co-present situations, as shown in the narratives of Jozef and Joanna. In this sense, family and community values and expectations also extend transnationally so that the everyday practices of Polish migrants are shaped by them in spite of distance. This is not only the immediate family, but also extended family members and close friends whose influence extends across borders. In chapters seven and eight I have shown that meanings of family and community are sometimes interchangeable for young migrants. For some the family is the main source of social support and solidarity taking on the role of community in the absence of a broader social network in unfamiliar places. For others, particular forms of community in unfamiliar places take on the role of family – made up of close friendships and common bonds developed through shared experience of mobility and national heritage, such as the many articulations of community among Polish friends in Edinburgh. Within this, social structures like class, faith and gender, are complicit in the development of these

meanings. However, they too are often subject to transition and reflexivity as class positions are blurred through shared experience of migrant work, for example. In summary, the thesis has presented a more nuanced picture of what has been a largely stereotyped Polish community, taking into account individual subjectivities and relations of community.

Finally, the thesis makes an important methodological contribution to the field of Polish migration studies. As an empirical study that focuses on the individual biographies of young migrants moving between Poland and the UK, it is a new approach to recording the experiences of *both* current and return migrants. The mixed-method approach employed in this research also offers a unique combination of methods that elicit the subjective meanings of mobility. Used together, these methods have prompted a textual, visual and participative involvement from the research sample that provides a well-rounded interpretation of their experiences. There have, however, been some challenges to the method. As discussed in chapter three, the interactive blog seemed at first an innovative opportunity for participatory research with young Polish migrants. The challenges of blog administration alongside other methods, as well as the pitfalls of digital research, as outlined in chaper three, meant that this method did not yield the anticipated results. While the narrative and photo interviews were a success and yielded immensely valuable material in large quantity, the blog was less successful. From this experience, I have developed an understanding of digital methods in a practical sense that would not have occurred had I not engaged with this method at all. In principle, I am committed to the inclusion of digital research methods in this type of research project, however, it is clear that much more time and resources are required for this method

9.3 New Research Directions

There are two broader ambitions of this research that connect to particular research agendas in the social sciences. Firstly, my research is applicable and contributes to the field of Polish migration studies through its focus on particular urban geographies of Polish migration and a focus on youth subjectivities. Moreover, the discussion of different forms and versions of family and community within the Polish migrant population provides a nuanced and contextualised perspective of these social forms. The centrality of family to young people's mobile biographies was an unexpected outcome of the research and one that has featured heavily throughout this thesis. Using a

biographical narrative approach undeniably provoked a re-telling of stories related to personal relationships of growing up, however, this research has shown that family is central, not only in an historic sense as a key influence on decisions and life chances, but is of continuing importance for current and future mobilities, relating to issues of intimacy, trust and care in later life. Moreover, the variation in what family means to young people is striking – while some reveal the gendered moral rationalities of care and a commitment to marriage and heteronormative partnership, others are repelled by traditional meanings of family and find new ways of making family in a transnational form. There is scope to ask further questions about how and why family matters to mobility, and in what ways mobile practices change the meaning of family for young people, particularly given the plurality of family forms in contemporary society.

Further research in this area could make both academic and policy contributions. Academically, the research could feed into a broader research framework within the field of Polish migration studies on post-socialist and post-accession migrant subjectivities and migrant families leading to a deeper understanding of how mobility and family intersect. Further to this, the in depth analysis of personal relationships at a particular juncture on the lifecourse contributes to interdisciplinary lifecourse studies and attends to particular thematic priorities in social geography relating to the geographies of young people. In terms of policy implications, the research develops an understanding of migrant families and communities that challenge the stereotyped representations of political and popular discourse, upon which policies for community cohesion and integration are often based. Therefore, the research is a provocation to re-think and re-frame policy for migrant families and communities in the UK and Poland.

Secondly, while I have drawn upon wide-ranging inter-disciplinary theories and concepts in this thesis, I have developed an approach that attends to particular sub-disciplinary priorities in human geography. In developing a social geography of mobility, I am combining the issue of mobility with particular themes in human geography that relate to inequality, social justice and everyday social life. While I have discussed mobility as a fairly common practice among a particular cohort of young Polish people, mobility is by no means a universal right. There is further scope to address the janus-face of mobility studies by considering how the mobility of some render others immobile. Moreover, among those who do move, the meanings and experience of mobility is highly differential. The generational impasse between those who feel 'free' to move and those for whom mobility is a constrained choice is just one

aspect of differential mobility. For example, in chapter seven Teresa's narrative about the different attitudes to mobility between her and her sister shows how geopolitical changes in Europe have shaped youth subjectivities in relation to mobility. The difference in 'possibility' between Teresa and her sister to move freely in the EU has led to a palpably different propensity or 'need' for movement between them, based on access to language and access through borders. This example illustrates that the impasse between those who reached coming of age before 2004 and after is a significant indicator of the desire and opportunity for mobility. There is potential here to explore in more depth the geopolitical dimensions of mobility in relation to different generations of young people. Beyond this, the study of particular social geographies of mobility is not only applicable to the Polish case, but could be employed as an analytical lens in different contexts to gain a better understanding of the ways in which social categories and relations facilitate or constrain different mobilities in or between particular spaces. Such an approach could be drawn upon in subsequent empirical studies to provide a grounded and evidence-based resource for policy audiences. The wider cultural ambition of this research is to raise awareness of the socio-spatial inequalities that are produced and reproduced through mobility which, in the context of growing youth unemployment and increased securitisation of migration in Europe, has far-reaching implications for global social justice.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1   Socio-demographic Profile of Research Sample

Table 6: Socio-demographic profile of current migrants living in Edinburgh

Name	Age	Gender	Date of first migration to UK	Home Location	Level of Education	Current Occupation
Jola	27	F	2004	Gdansk	Graduate	Factory Worker
Helena	28	F	2006	Łodz	Graduate	Administrator
Olga	25	F	2005	Chrzanów	Graduate	Recruitment Agent
Magda	33	F	2005	Warsaw	Graduate	Administrator
Tomek	30	M	2001	Zielona Gora	Postgraduate	Junior Architect
Wanda	35	F	2005	Białystok	High school	Community worker
Ania	34	F	2007	Warsaw	Graduate	Teaching Assistant
Dorota	30	F	2005	Kraków	Postgraduate	Transnational Officer
Ewa	24	F	2008	Szczec"	Graduate	Care worker
Joanna	31	F	2006	Łodz	Graduate	Small Business Owner
Jozef	33	M	2002	Poznań	High School	Assistant Chef
Kasia	28	F	2007	Wrocław	Postgraduate	Care worker
Konrad	29	M	2005	Radom	High School	Small Business Owner
Maria	30	F	2005	Kraków	Postgraduate	Research Officer
Łukasz	28	M	2003	Torun	Graduate	Learning Assistant/ IT support
Jacek	28	M	2006	Bielsko Biała	Graduate	Web programmer

Table 7: Socio-demographic profile of return migrants living in Kraków/Katowice

Name	Age	Gender	Date of Migration to UK	Date of Return Migration	Place of Migration	Level of Education	Current Occupation
Szymon	33	M	2003	2004	Stanton, Suffolk	Postgraduate	Sales Manager
Emilia	25	F	2007	2007	Edinburgh	Postgraduate	Accountant
Ryszard	33	M	2004	2006	London	Graduate	Small Business Owner
Agata	32	F	2004	2005	London	Postgraduate	No formal employment
Dawid	29	M	2006	2007	Stoke on Trent	Graduate	Engineer
Elzbieta	25	F	2008	2009	Manchester	Postgraduate	Translator
Weronika	25	F	2007	2009	Dublin	Postgraduate	Events co-ordinator
Julia	25	F	2007	2008	Edinburgh	Postgraduate	Accountant
Marcin	34	M	2006	2007	Dover	Graduate	No formal employment
Maciej	27	M	2005	2009	Dublin	Postgraduate	Small Business Owner
Sabina	25	F	2007	2007	Mansfield	Graduate	Recruitment Agent
Teresa	26	F	2008	2009	Southampton	Graduate	Recruitment Agent
Stanisław	29	M	2008	2009	Newry, NI	Postgraduate	Architect
Bartek	34	M	2003	2004	Blackpool	Graduate	No formal Employment
Jan	34	M	2002	2008	London	Postgraduate	Small Business Owner
Zosia	23	F	2008	2010	London	High School	No formal employment

Appendix 2 Interview Schedules

Interview Schedule - Edinburgh

1. **Could you tell me about when you first moved to the UK?**

   - *Location(s);*
   - *work history (jobs, training, barriers to work);*
   - *home life (family set-up);*
   - *feelings about the UK (uncertainty, excitement, expectations);*
   - *feelings about Poland (nostalgia, dislocation);*
   - *interactions with people (at work, migration industry, socially);*
   - *personal relationships;*
   - *consumer behaviour*

2. **What made you decide to come here?**

   - *family;*
   - *perceptions of place;*
   - *language;*
   - *frequent traveller;*
   - *economic incentives*

3. **What were your perceptions of the UK before you arrived? What did you imagine it would be like? What did you want to achieve here?**

   - *Positive and negative;*
   - *memories;*
   - *rumours;*
   - *aspirations;*
   - *expectations*

4. **Thinking more about your life in Poland, could you tell me a bit about your family and your experiences of growing up there?**

   - *Location(s);*
   - *family background (parent and sibling occupations and skills levels);*
   - *experiences at home;*
   - *interactions with friends and neighbours and wider family network;*

- *housing pathways (type of house and location);*
- *family values*
- *School/College/ University pathways*
- *Perception of achievement in education*
- *(Un)Employment experiences (perception of status, employer, opportunities for progression)*

5. **In what way, do you think, have all these experiences shaped your aspirations for mobility/influenced your decision to move to Scotland?**

- *value system;*
- *perception of success;*
- *perception of status;*
- *perception of mobility*

6. **How has your experience changed, what is your life like in Edinburgh/place you live now?**

- *Location(s);*
- *work history;*
- *home life;*
- *interactions with people (at work, migration industry, socially);*
- *personal relationships;*
- *feelings about the area*
- *Perception of status and achievements*

7. **Do you think you'll move elsewhere or back to Poland?**

- *plans to return;*
- *culture of mobility;*
- *type of mobility (circular, settlement) regional/national differences;*
- *individual or family choices;*
- *the future*

Interview Schedule – Kraków

1. **Could you tell me about when you came back to Poland from the UK?**

Prompts: direct and indirect reasons for return; location(s)

2. **Could you tell me about when you first moved to the UK?**

Prompts: Location(s); work history (jobs, training, barriers to work); home life (family set-up); feelings about the UK (uncertainty, excitement, expectations); feelings about Poland (nostalgia, dislocation); interactions with people (at work, migration industry, socially); personal relationships

3. **What made you decide to go to the UK/leave Poland?**

Prompts: Economic incentives; family; perceptions of place; language; frequent traveller

4. **What were your perceptions of the UK before you arrived? What did you imagine it would be like? What did you set out to achieve?**

Prompts: Positive and negative; memories; rumours; aspirations; expectations;

5. **On reflection, do you think your experience in the UK was *positive or negative?***

6. **In what ways did all these experiences influence your decision to return to Poland?**

7. **Thinking more about your life in Poland, could you tell something about your family and your experiences of growing up there?**

Prompts: Location(s); family background (parent and sibling occupations and skills levels); experiences at home; interactions with friends and neighbours and wider family network; housing pathways (type of house and location); family values;

school/college/university pathways; perception of achievement in education and leaning environments; (un)employment experiences; perceptions of job status or success at work; opportunities for progression

8. **In what way, do you think, did all these experiences shape your aspirations for mobility/influenced your decision to move to the UK?**

Prompts: value system; perception of success; perception of status; perception of mobility

9. **How has your life changed since moving back to Poland?**

Prompts: economic; social; cultural; family; perception of status; perception of EU

10. What are your future plans?

Prompts: mobility; work; family; home;

Appendix 3   Blog Questions and Results

1) **Do you think opportunities for young Polish people for living, working and moving in the EU have improved?**

2) **Is/Was life in the UK better, worse or the same as you expected?**

    a. Better

    b. Worse

    c. The same

3) **Do/Did you feel pressure to return to Poland?**

    a. Yes, always

    b. Yes, sometimes

    c. No, never

4) **What are/were your main reasons for emigration from Poland?**(choose two most important)

    a. To find new experiences

    b. To earn money

    c. To leave Poland

    d. To improve English language skills

    e. To work for a particular company

    f. To be with a particular person

    g. Other, please specify

5) **Have you experienced any of the following whilst living in the UK?** (Choose all that apply)

    a. Unemployment

    b. Underemployment

    c. Discrimination

    d. Problems with English Language

    e. Competition for jobs

6) Do you think there are more or less opportunities for young people in Poland since 2004? Please comment on how things have changed.

a. More opportunities in Poland for young people since 2004
b. Less opportunities in Poland for young people since 2004

7) Do you have positive or negative memories of growing up in Poland?

a. Positive
b. Negative
c. Both

8) If you have experienced discrimination, for what were you discriminated against?

a. Being Polish
b. Your Gender
c. Your sexuality
d. Your employment status
e. Your language skills
f. Your ethnicity

Screenshots of Moving Stories blog and Poll results

**Fig.7: Blog Homepage**
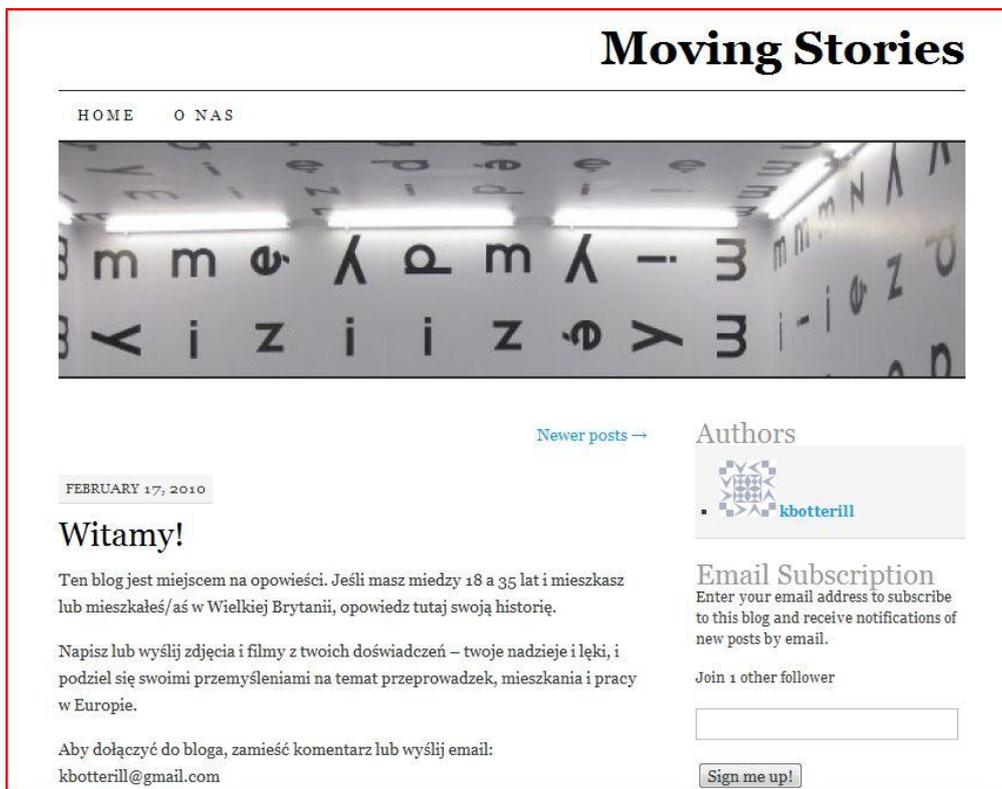
Fig.8: Blog 'About' page
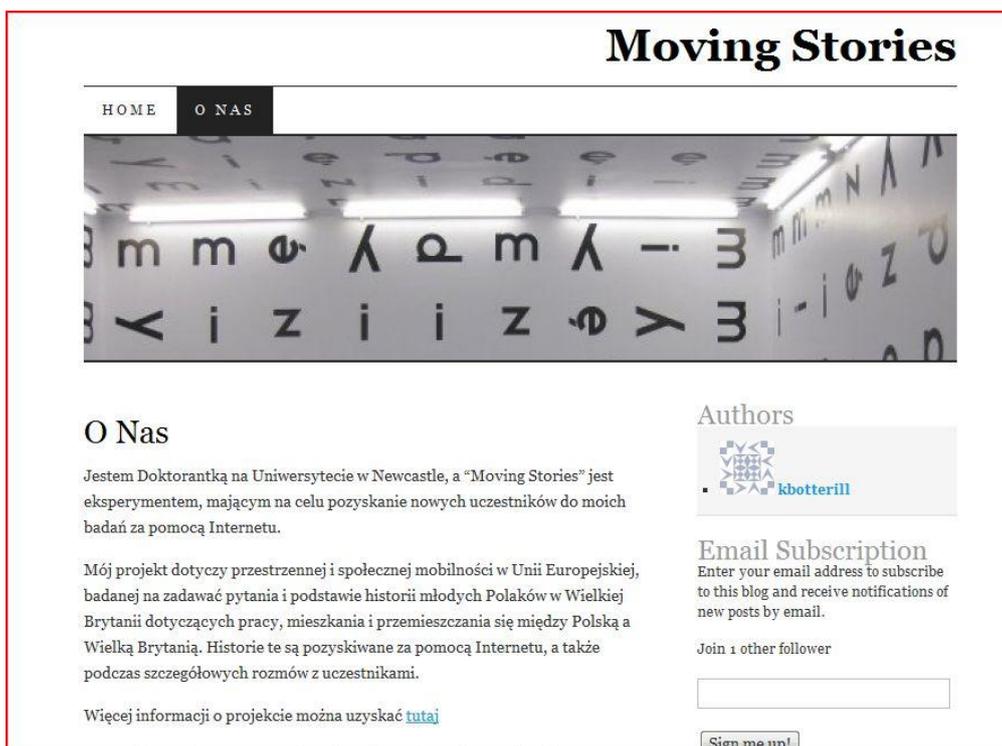
Fig.9: Blog poll results
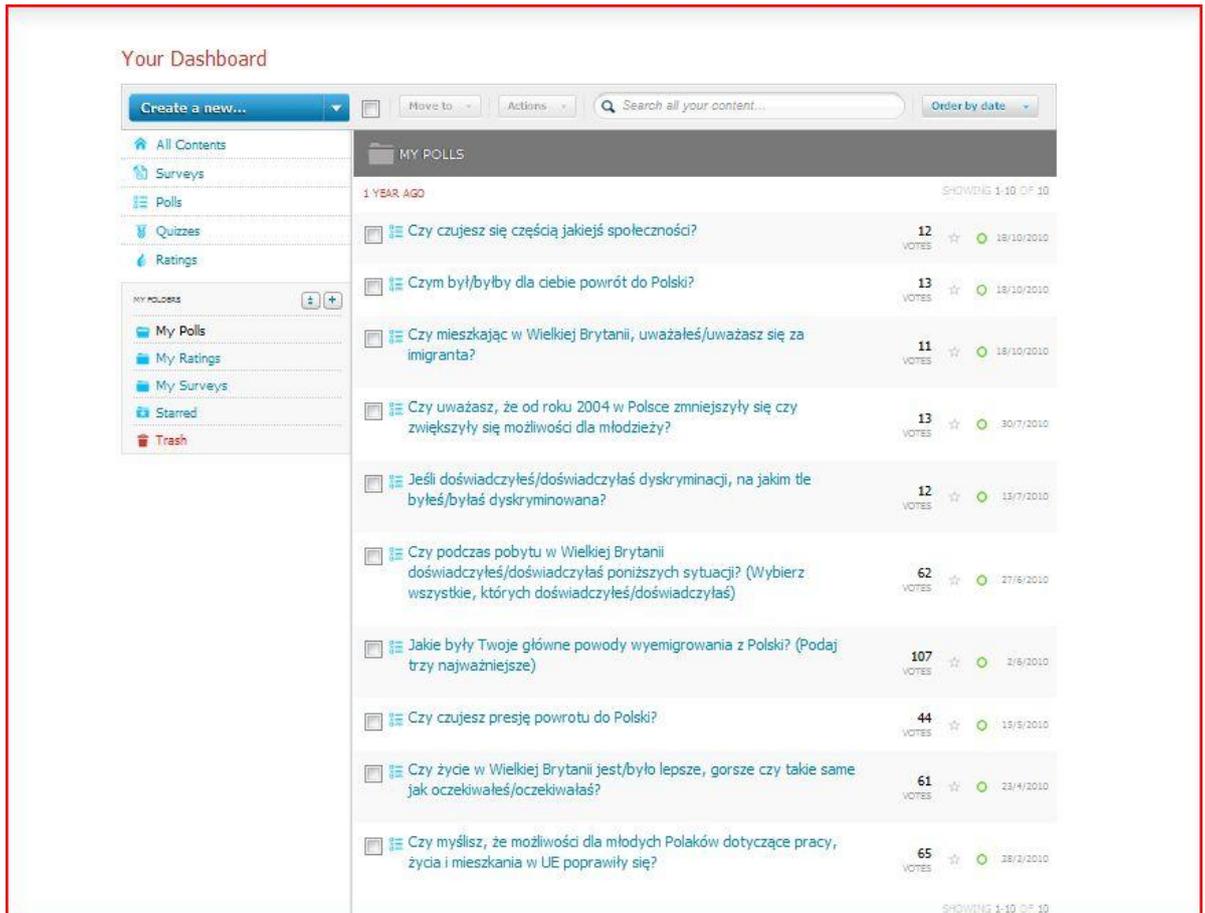
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