

Exile vs. Exodus:  
Nationalism and Gendered Migration from Ukraine to Italy and California

By

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## Abstract

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The post-soviet economic transformation and the rise of a new Ukrainian nationalism are interconnected gendered processes producing both a new structural reality which has decreased the employment opportunities for women in Ukraine and a new discursive terrain including a contested moral order and a reification of mothers as the symbol of a still fragile Ukrainian national identity. It is in this context that Post-Soviet Ukraine has become the site of mass emigration.

This dissertation is a cross-national comparison of two patterns of Ukrainian emigration: the exile of older women to Italy and the exodus of entire families, lead predominantly by older women, to California. Italy and California are the largest and most politically significant destinations for post-Soviet Ukrainian migrants where they provide cleaning and caring labor to the elderly. The sending site, Ukraine, as well as key characteristics of the migrants are held constant. Therefore the migration literature argues that variation between the discourses and practices of migrants in Rome and San Francisco must be due to the “context of reception.” However, by following these migration streams back to Ukraine, I discovered that while variations in the contexts of reception are important, the sending site also has significant effects. In fact, I show that there is a classic “interaction effect” between sending and receiving sites constructing different subjectivities and practices for those in exile to Italy and those in exodus to California. Individual migrants in exile maintain a forced and painful connection to Ukraine, not only through their families left behind, but to Ukraine’s future position in the global hierarchy of nations. In contrast, families in exodus, are able to choose the extent to which they are engaged with Ukrainian nation-building. If carework is a sit of Ukraine’s Europeanization project in exile, it is instead a vehicle for integration in exodus.

In addition to 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork, this study also relies on 158 interviews conducted in Russian with migrant careworkers in Rome and San Francisco and with family members left behind in L’viv, Ukraine. Through this comparative approach I elaborate on the theoretical debates about gender and migration and bring together empirical work on sending and receiving countries while drawing connections to national and global level processes.

To my husband, Davide Cis, who loves me not despite but because I want to be a sociologist.

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**Exile vs. Exodus:  
Migrant Ukrainian Domestic Workers in Rome and San Francisco**

On a Sunday morning in November 2004, I took Rome's metro from St. Peter's Square and rode 40 minutes outside Rome's city center to the Garbatella metro stop. Among Ukrainian migrants in Rome, "the Garbatella" also refers to a large parking lot behind the station where every Sunday, 50 Soviet era courier vans arrive from all over Ukraine filled with photographs, letters, and Ukrainian products sent from family members in Ukraine to those working in Italy. Over 5,000 Ukrainians visit the Garbatella every Sunday.

This morning I am with Tanya,<sup>1</sup> an energetic woman in her 50s. As Tanya and I exit the metro, we pause on a platform that overlooks the Garbatella. Looking out over the crowd, it is immediately obvious that those below are almost all women. Even more interesting, while most migrant populations tend to be in their 20s or 30s, these women are in their 40s, 50s and 60s, many of them grandmothers. Most of the women were teachers, accountants, or engineers in Ukraine. Tanya sighed and turning to me she said in Russian, "Do you see all those women down there? They carry Ukraine on their shoulders and don't think they don't know it...and don't think they are happy about it either."<sup>2</sup> Down at the Garbatella I walk among the throngs of people. Most Sundays women share with me photographs of cars, computers, or fashionable clothes bought with the remittances they send back to their families. These photographs are often cited as proof that Ukraine is "Europe" and that they too are part of Ukraine's national project of joining Europe. Ethnographic experiences such as these continued to highlight a particular intersection between gender, migration, and Ukraine in the context of post-Soviet transformation. A deep and even tortured relationship to Ukraine emerged from my interviews with Ukrainian domestic workers providing care to the elderly in Italy. Discussions about the kind of life their migration made possible for their children and grandchildren back in Ukraine and the kind of nation the "new" Ukraine would become dominated Ukrainian spaces in Rome.

In San Francisco, there were few instances when recent Ukrainian immigrants gathered in large groups. Unlike in Rome where the Ukrainian churches were packed to overflowing and promoting unabashedly a "Ukraine for Ukrainians" message, Ukrainian churches in San Francisco were sparsely attended with one frustrated priest declaring that his congregation was not even made of "real" Ukrainians who left due to Soviet discrimination against ethnic Ukrainians or as religious refugees which is seen as tied to Ukrainian culture. Rather he called them "economic immigrants" which is a derogatory term in this context. The most regular organized gatherings were homecare worker union

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<sup>1</sup> All names are pseudonyms.

<sup>2</sup> Exchanges that occurred in the field where translated by myself and written down directly in English in a notebook I carried with me in the field. I then typed these notes up at the first opportunity so that ethnographic experiences were fresh in my mind when recorded. Interviews were transcribed and typed up in Cyrillic by a native Russian-speaker. Therefore I am responsible for the English translations of interview data as well.

meetings run by, Svitlana, a Ukrainian organizer which drew recent immigrants from Ukraine but also other former Soviet countries. Informal conversations often revolved around children's schooling and careers and their children's romantic life with many concerned about sons and especially daughters waiting "too long" to marry "like Americans." These women wondered if they would ever become *babushki* or grandmothers while they had the energy and health to be actively involved in raising their grandchildren. On this day Viktoria gave a presentation in Russian on how to vote in the upcoming election for city supervisor. Viktoria, formerly a Russian language and literature teacher, is 58 and works as a homecare worker. She also works for the voter registration office during election cycles. As she started to walk her coworkers through a sample ballot, people began chatting. Yuliana, a large, animated woman with a blonde beehive hairdo said with a sparkle in her eye, "Ladies, ladies –oh excuse me and gentlemen," she said winking at the two men in attendance. "Quiet! This is important. We are government workers for the United States of America and so we must learn how to vote." Viktoria continued, "Yes, Yuliana is right. We are American citizens now and it is our duty to vote." Galina piped up in an exaggeratedly whiny voice, "But Vika,<sup>3</sup> how do we know who to vote for? They all seem the same." Heads nodded and people laughed. "I cannot tell you who to vote for, this is America. Right, Cinzia?" Viktoria exclaimed turning to me. "Don't say I am not doing my job properly!" I feigned shock and exclaimed, "Who me? Never!" Viktoria smiled and said as if relaying a secret, "But I can tell you who our union is supporting." Galina clapped her hand together over her chest and looked at the people seated around the large meeting table and said with a smile, "We must come here to learn how to be Americans!" The group erupted into laughter.

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What became clear as I explored the worlds of Ukrainian domestic workers, most providing care to the elderly, is that the meaning informants in Rome and San Francisco assigned to this work was radically different. In the case of migrant domestic workers in Rome, performing domestic work abroad was tied to a specific experience of migration and a particular relationship to Ukraine. Those in Rome experienced migration as exile, a forced expulsion from a homeland they yearned to return to. And yet their relationship to Ukraine was conflicted. They realized that by doing domestic work abroad they were "carrying Ukraine on their shoulders" as Tanya noted, even if they "weren't happy about it" but at the same time were ambivalent about this "new" Ukraine their migration, in part, makes possible. Those who migrated to San Francisco could have ended up in Rome, but for reasons particular to each family, a visa or green card for the United States became available. For immigrants to California, migration was experienced as exodus, a "choice" to start a new life in California. As such, even those individuals who continued to follow the many transformations happening in Ukraine, supported Ukraine's new nationalism,<sup>4</sup> or still had children and grandchildren in Ukraine, it was finding a way to

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<sup>3</sup> "Vika" is the diminutive of Viktoria.

<sup>4</sup> Of course nationalism and nationalist movements are not "new" to Ukraine, but the form Ukrainian nationalisms has taken since the dissolution of the Soviet Union is experienced as new by my informants and most Ukrainian citizens.

integrate into “America” that dominated their migration experience. As we saw in the opening vignette, domestic work<sup>5</sup> does not serve as a vehicle for “building the new Ukraine” but rather as a site for building connections to the US state.

### **Migrant Domestic Workers: The Conflation of Work and Migration**

When I started this ethnographic project, I expected to write a dissertation about work. I conducted a small study of Russian-speaking homecare workers in San Francisco where I found two “discursive practices” or dominant ways of understanding and performing caring labor (Solari 2006a). Some workers understood their work as “professionals” and others “saints.” While the literature suggests that dominant gendered understandings of caring labor determine the divergent ways men and women perform this work, I found that both men and women adopted discursive practices at work as professionals and saints. I applied the immigration literature’s emphasis on “contexts of reception” to a single city showing that within San Francisco immigrants were being channeled into different resettlement institutions on the basis of religion which were, in effect, two different contexts of reception. This explained the emergence of the divergent discursive practices allowing for the renegotiation of notions of masculinity and femininity that I had uncovered. Following this line of inquiry, I expected to join other feminist ethnographers who have seen domestic work as an important site for gendered theorizing precisely because of the type of labor involved: paid cleaning and caring labor in private home. I hoped my contribution would come from thinking deeply about migration and place the work these migrants do in the context of a global care industry.

#### *Domestic Work: A “Special” Occupation*

Paid domestic work is understood in this literature to be unique for a number of reasons. First paid domestic work challenges notions of universalism in feminist theory. It is difficult to argue that all women experience oppression in the same way when the exploitation of domestic workers happens “between women” (Rollins 1985). Looking at the relations between women employers and women domestic workers reveals the inequalities between women along the lines of race, class, and increasingly immigrant status (Glenn 1992). Domestic work is also theorized as being “special” because the work site is the home, because reproductive labor is both paid and unpaid depending on who is doing it, and because the work often requires caring and emotional labor (Abel and Nelson 1990; Stone 2000; Tronto 1993). The focus of these studies is on the labor process. As such, discussions about how domestic workers make sense of the labor they

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<sup>5</sup> I would like to clarify terms that are often used interchangeably in the literature. The term ‘domestic work’ is sometimes used to specify only cleaning labor but often used as an umbrella term to describe both cleaning and caring labor which is I use them here. In this manuscript I uses the term ‘domestic work’ or ‘domestic labor’ to indicate both cleaning and caring labor and sometimes use the term ‘careworker’ to emphasize the priority given to providing personal bodily and emotional care to their elderly clients. I believe that the terms domestic work and carework also sometimes indicate two different schools of thought about this type of labor: respectively a “Marxist school” of feminist thought (Glenn 1986; Romero 1992) and a “Scandinavian school” of feminist thought (Hochschild 2002; Tronto 1993). Finally in San Francisco, the term ‘homecare worker’ refers to those working through a California state agency to provide care to low income elderly and disabled.

perform is also tied to a close examination of the worker-employer relationship and struggles of control over the labor process. Here the debate focuses on unpacking the ways in which domestic work is organized. Evelyn Nakano Glenn's (Glenn 1986) study of three generations of Japanese domestic workers found that workers thought of their employers as "family." As a result, they were part of what Nakano Glenn calls a "premodern" organization of work, in which unspoken understandings of mutual obligation rather than contracts govern the terms of the work arrangement. Mary Romero (Romero 1992) found in a study of Chicano domestics that workers resisted their employers attempt to see them as "one of the family" which workers understood as an exploitive strategy to extract more labor at the same cost and control the labor process. She argued Chicano domestics attempted to construct themselves as professionals and make rights claims on the basis of this worker identity.

Yet professionalization did not lead to greater worker autonomy in Nicole Constable's (Constable 1997) study of Filipina domestic workers in Hong Kong. In fact, she draws on Foucault to argue that as Filipina domestics attempted to professionalize their occupation in order to resist abusive treatment, they actually subjected themselves to more rigid forms of discipline as they policed themselves and participated in their own production as "docile bodies." Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001) also suggests that professionalism may not be the solution to managing the inequality between employers and those doing paid domestic work in employer's homes. She found that middle class Latinas performing domestic work in Los Angeles saw personalism, not pure professionalism, as a way for employers to demonstrate respect for them as whole people, not just domestic workers, and to validate their individuality.

The domestic work literature focuses on just that, the performance of domestic labor and the micro negotiations between employers and workers in a social space that is constructed as "home" governed by duty, love, and obligation and the opposite of "work" governed by contracts, emotional detachment, and hierarchy. While the strength of this approach is that it allows us to unpack the various intersections of race, class, gender, and power "between women," taken together, these studies suggest that whether it is Filipinas in Hong Kong or Taiwan (Constable 1997; Lan 2006), Black women in Italy (Andall 2000a), Latina's in Los Angeles (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001) or Third World women in the United States (Chang 2000) what emerges is a picture of how doing domestic work is a common experience no matter who does it or where.<sup>6</sup> While there is recognition that immigrant women have largely supplanted native born women of color as domestic workers, "immigrant" becomes just another subordinate identity marker that is added to the list of being female, poor, and racial-ethnic. In fact while immigration scholars study immigrants in all types of occupations, domestic work has generally been left to scholars steeped in the literatures of gender and work rather than immigration.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> My study draws inspiration from two previous studies in particular which looked at domestic workers but rather than focusing on the micro negotiations of power between workers and employers, used domestic work as a site for thinking about the production of the middle class in India (Ray and Qayum 2009) or to understand coalition building in labor unionism (May Rivas 2008). I, in turn, look at domestic workers in order to think about migration and the differential effects of migration patterns.

<sup>7</sup> See Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) for a notable exception.

## *The Resurgence of Domestic Work and the Feminization of Migration*

In the 1970s, scholars predicted that domestic work, considered a premodern labor arrangement akin to slavery, would simply become obsolete as a job category as societies developed (Coser 1973). Yet in the decades that followed the demand of domestic workers has drastically increased creating what (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001) calls a “new world domestic order.” Both Italy and California have experienced an increased demand for domestic workers due to similar trends such as increasing wage inequality (Milkman, Reese, and Roth 1998; Osterman 1999; Smith 2001), decline of manufacturing (Campani 2000; Freeman 1994), increasing numbers of middle and upper class women in the paid labor force (Campani 2000; Hochschild 2000; King 2000), and reduction of the welfare state (Kofman et al. 2000). In fact, this increasing demand for domestic cleaning and caring labor is also a factor in the increasing number of women migrating (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Oishi 2005; Sassen-Koob 1984). Between 1960 and 2000, the number of women migrants around the world more than doubled from 35 million to 85 million (Oishi 2005) and, according to the World Bank (Schiff, Morrison, and Sjöblom 2007), women comprise half of the world’s migrants with expectations that both the number and the percentage of women migrants will continue to increase. In this context, Rhacel Parreñas’ work takes an important step in seeing migration as playing a more nuanced role in the lived experiences of domestic workers. (Parreñas 2000) builds on Nakano Glenn’s (Glenn 1992) analysis that looks at the intersection of race, class, and gender in the micro context of domestic labor in private homes and uses it as a site to think about global inequalities. She links the migration of domestic workers to globalization arguing that it leads to “an international division of reproductive labor”—another axis of inequality between nations. In her book *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work* (Parreñas 2001), Parreñas looked at Filipina domestic workers in Italy and California, precisely where I studied Ukrainian domestic workers.

Parreñas sets up her book by noting that immigration scholars focus on “contexts of reception” to explain variation in immigrant outcomes. As explained earlier, by contexts of reception immigration scholars mean that differences in the labor markets, immigration laws, and immigrant institutions between countries or cities within the same country means that immigrants are literally “received” differently and the kind of structural landscape they encounter affects immigrant outcomes (Bloemraad 2006; Menjivar 1999; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Solari 2006a). Therefore, if one finds variation in immigrant outcomes, often measurable assimilation variables such as wages, education levels, or naturalization rates, then variation can be explained by differing contexts of reception. Since Italy and California are indeed different receiving contexts, Parreñas suggests that immigration scholars would expect to find differences between migrants’ experiences in Italy and California. And yet Parreñas found similarities rather than differences arguing that Filipina migrant domestic workers in Rome and Los Angeles live what she calls “parallel lives.” This is the research puzzle that she sets out to explain: why did she find sameness when the immigration literature predicts difference. Parreñas, while recognizing that there are many differences between Rome and Los Angeles, ultimately dismisses “contexts of reception” as an explanation arguing that it

does not apply to this “special” category of worker doing this “special” work. Rather than knitting the migration and domestic work literatures together, Parreñas dismisses the former in favor of the latter. Therefore Parreñas extends notions about the particularity of domestic work as an occupation that permeates the domestic work literature to a global context. She argues that migration should be understood as a “process of subjectification,” which in the case of Filipina domestic workers, results in similar experiences of migration (Parreñas 2001). According to Parreñas, the reason why Filipinas experience parallel lives despite differing contexts of reception lies in their “shared role as low-wage laborers in global capitalism” so that that “the macro processes of globalization should be given greater consideration when accounting for the influences of different contexts of reception on settlement” (Parreñas 2001). If we were to extend Parreñas’ analysis to migrants from other countries, then all women migrant domestic workers, regardless of their country of origin, occupy this same location in global capitalism and so they too should all experience migration in similar ways.

Migration is indeed a process of subjectification, but I argue that process is linked to the migration pattern in which the individuals are operating. These migration patterns are shaped not merely in the abstract by “globalization” but concretely through an interaction between sending and receiving contexts. In my study of Ukrainian domestic workers in Rome and San Francisco I did not find that migrant domestic workers lived “parallel lives.” In fact, I uncovered two divergent migration patterns that I call exile and exodus which produce radically different migrant subjectivities. The similarities that are now well documented common to the particular micro constellation of power between domestic workers performing cleaning and caring labor in private homes and their employers certainly was similar for Ukrainian migrants in Rome and San Francisco. However, in Italy for example, work was not what my informants understood as most salient in their lives. I quickly discovered that informants were not interested in talking about the intricacies of performing cleaning and caring labor. Rather the experience of migration including the type and intensity of transnational ties to Ukraine, the construction of national and civic identities, relationships to the receiving countries, and the meaning assigned performing domestic work all differed between Ukrainian migrants in Italy and those in California. Why might this be? I suggest the answer is not that receiving contexts not matter, but rather that both receiving contexts and sending contexts do matter when it comes to migrant domestic workers. There is an interaction effect between sending and receiving contexts that shape the migration patterns themselves, in this case exile to Italy and exodus to California, and the migrant subjectivities produced within these patterns.

### **Receiving Contexts, Sending Contexts, and Transnationalism**

The immigration literature clusters around two key questions: why do people migrate and how can we understand their integration into host countries. This reflects a well established division in migration studies where scholars tend to *either* study the sending country *or* the receiving country but rarely both (Schmitter Heisler 2008). These two questions also reflect a methodological division between those who engage only with the sending site (Massey et al. 1998; Sassen 1988a), often through abstract models and rarely by actually traveling there to gather data and those who conduct research at the receiving site where the focus is on economic (Portes and Rumbaut 1996), occupational (Waldinger

and Lichter 2003), and political integration (Bloemraad 2006b). The division between research on sending and receiving sites obscures the important ways conditions in the sending country shapes the ways immigrants construct and conduct their daily lives in the receiving country.

A growing literature on contexts of reception is pushing the immigration literature towards two types of comparison. The first is to look at immigrant groups from many different sending countries to the United States. Once scholars control for variables such as age, education, and sex, the groups are comparable and their sending countries are no longer important. The second type of comparison is to look at a group from the same sending country in two different receiving sites. Here the sending country is considered unimportant in terms of affecting immigrant outcomes because the sending country is being held constant and therefore should have the same effects regardless of where they migrate to (Bloemraad 2006; Parreñas 2001; Reitz 1998). Therefore, in both types of comparison, variation in immigrant outcomes or practices is attributed to differing contexts of reception with a focus on the unique institutional landscape that “receives” immigrants in each site.

A growing literature on transnational migration, while not usually comparative, does conduct research in both sending and receiving countries and highlight the ways in which local sending and receiving sites are connected (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1994; Kyle 2003; Levitt 2001). The focus here is on showing that immigrants in the United States do still maintain meaningful connections with the sending country. This transnational perspective is struggling to find a way to talk about the “transnational space” that is created between sending and receiving countries. Levitt and Glick Schiller (Levitt and Schiller 2004) have offered one way to think about this space between. They suggest, following Bourdieu, that we think of migration as creating a “transnational social field” arguing that it allows us to see how this field is shaped by relations of power and includes those left behind in the sending country (non-migrants whose lives have nonetheless been shaped by migration) as participants in this transnational social field. Additionally, the leverage of this concept, according to Levitt and Glick Schiller, is that it allows us to see “simultaneity”—that is that migrants are not either transnational or assimilated but engage in both practices of transnationalism and assimilation at the same time. People are both rooted in their receiving contexts and are also part of transnational ties. The analogy they offer is of an “anchored pivot between new land and transnational incorporation and people swing in one or the other direction at different points of their lives” (2004:1011). They argue that the challenge is “to explain the variation in the way that migrants manage that pivot, and how host country incorporation and homeland or other transnational ties mutually influence each other” (2004:1011). This reasoning is convincing and useful in thinking about exodus. However this analysis seems to presume permanent migration in which immigrants settle in the receiving country and is more applicable to exodus than exile.

In this dissertation I systematically compare migration patterns from the same sending country to two different receiving countries while holding migrants’ job category constant. I found that differing contexts of reception in Rome and San Francisco had important affects on the practices of Ukrainian migrants but were unable to explain the emergence of two divergent migration patterns—individual women over 40, in exile to Italy and families, often led by women of this same cohort, in exodus to California—nor

did it explain the contrasting migrant subjectivities and accompanying practices produced in exile and exodus. This dissertation builds on these studies of transnationalism which highlight the connections between sending and receiving sites. However I suggest that it is not enough to simply study both sending and receiving sites but to see that migration patterns and migrant subjects are produced in their intersection. This means that the same sending context can produce different effects depending on the receiving context. Exile and exodus attempt to capture this “interaction effect” between sending and receiving countries which produces both the structural and subjective dimensions of these contrasting migration patterns. In the literature on immigrant domestic workers, migration is reduced to immigrant status—documented vs. undocumented. However, adding the adjective “immigrant” to the list of descriptors fails to capture the complex meanings about work and Self nor the macro level meanings about morality and nation that are created through migration.

### **Exile vs. Exodus: Comparing Migration Patterns**

Exile and exodus are synthesizing concepts. Exile and exodus have a structural dimension that is descriptive of the migration pattern: What are the demographic characteristics of those who migrate? Are they permanent or temporary (im)migrants? Where do they migrate to? What work do they perform in the receiving country? Do they have documents? Exile and exodus also include a subjective dimension of the migration pattern: How do migrants experience their migration? What narratives do they tell about their migration that both shapes and gives meaning to their migration practices such as sending remittances? How do they understand the work migrants are performing abroad? How do family members, politicians, and others in the sending country understand mass emigration? What kind of connections do migrants have to both the sending and receiving countries? The literature on migration and immigration is not only bifurcated geographically as I suggested earlier between those who study sending countries and those who study receiving countries, but it is also bifurcated analytically between those who look at the structural dimensions of migration and the few who emphasize the subjective dimension. Exile and exodus as synthesizing concepts illustrate three key points: (1) The structural dimensions of migration patterns can only be explained through the interaction of sending and receiving contexts; (2) The migrant subjectivities produced within the structural constraints of the migration pattern is similarly a product of the intersection of sending and receiving contexts; and (3) These structural and subjective components are inseparable and have consequences for the discourses and practices of both the migrants themselves and those they leave behind.

#### *Exile to Italy: The “Gulag”*

The migration pattern from Ukraine to Italy is a temporary labor migration and it is 80% women. It is not just any women who migrate, but specifically women over 40 years-old. In the Ukrainian life cycle where 40 year-old women are often *babushki* or grandmothers making this a “grandmother migration” and it is experienced as “exile.” In the Soviet Union, millions of people were exiled to remote places such as Siberia to work in the gulags, the forced labor camps and many of my informants had personal or

family stories about Soviet exile. The experience of Soviet exile is vivid for my informants in Rome. In *The Gulag Archipelago*, Solzhenitsyn argues that the Soviet government could not govern without the threat of exile and that the Soviet economy depended on exiled laborers. So the Soviet Union was, according to Solzhenitsyn, built on exiled labor. In an attempt to make sense of exile, these laborers were forced to come to terms with the moral implications of the gulags for the entire Soviet system and for themselves as Soviet citizens.

While the current Ukrainian state is not forcibly deporting women to Italy, I nevertheless suggest that there are striking similarities between Soviet exile and today's post-Soviet exile. I argue that two profoundly gendered state-driven processes—the economic transition to some form of market capitalism and Ukrainian nation-building based on ideas of an ethno-nation—are driving older women, often grandmothers of *babushki*, out of Ukraine. The new Ukraine has no place for them as Soviet women and they experience this as painful expulsion to Italy. Italy's lax immigration laws, its aging population, and embattled welfare state requires low-paid workers, specifically women. Therefore Ukrainian *babushki* in Italy do the “dirty work” of cleaning and caring for Italy's elderly in their homes which they refer to as a “prison” or a “concentration camp”—the gulag. The Soviet Union was built on exiled labor and so too is post-Soviet Ukraine being built on the labor of exiled migrant women. Tanya from the opening vignette about Rome's Garbatella was right. These migrant women are carrying Ukraine on their shoulders, but it is a very particular Ukraine, a Ukraine that sees itself as part of Europe rather than part of Russia. In exile these migrant women are pulled into a constant and intimate engagement with the gendered meanings and moralities of the “new” Ukraine. All Ukrainian migrants to Italy, even those whose characteristics deviate from the dominant pattern, for example men or those who manage to bring their families to Italy, are nonetheless constrained by the structural and subjective realities of exile.

### *Exodus to California: The “Promised Land”*

The migration pattern from Ukraine to California is a permanent migration of families. While the migration stream is almost evenly divided between men and women, it is often women over 40 years-old, those who might have ended up in Italy, leading the migration to California. This migration is experienced as exodus and has parallels with the biblical story of exodus in which Moses leads the Israelites, entire families with their livestock, out of bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land. However, in order to settle the Promised Land, the Israelites must enter into a covenant with God and pledge their faithfulness much like Ukrainian immigrants to the United States who understand quite clearly that they are expected to “assimilate” upon arriving to California, the Golden State.

Ukrainians who came to California in 1940-1956, the majority of whom left Ukraine for political reasons or were displaced during WWII, founded the organized Ukrainian Diaspora whose primary goal was an independent Ukraine. These Diaspora immigrants and their descendants understood the situation of those toiling behind the Soviet Union's iron curtain as bondage not unlike that experienced by the Israelites. In fact the organized Ukrainian Diaspora in North America actively compares itself to the Jewish Diaspora seeing Ukrainians as an ethnic group that experienced genocide under

Stalin. This, combined with the large migration of Soviet Jews to California which began in the 1970s before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, makes the analogy of exodus a vivid one for my informants in California.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the visa requests for family members soared as those already in California sought to lead their extended family out of Soviet bondage. The very process of exodus, collecting family members in California through the family reunification allotment of US immigration law, requires US citizenship and therefore an identification with the US state. Ukrainian immigrants look for ways to integrate and for this older cohort of Ukrainians, connects are created with the US state. Therefore it is not an engagement with the “new” Ukraine which dominates the subjective experience of exile but rather an engagement with “America” that characterizes the experiences and practices of migrants in exodus. All Ukrainian immigrants, even those that deviate from this dominate pattern such individual migrants who have left their family in Ukraine, are nonetheless constrained by the structural and subjective terrain of exodus.

This dissertation seeks to explain the emergence of these two migration patterns from Ukraine—grandmothers in exile to Italy vs. families in exodus to California—with attention to both structural and subjective dimensions (see table 1). In doing this I show that the large scale economic and social transformations in Ukraine affects the discourses and practices of Ukrainian migrants in Italy and California. However these effects are not uniform. The interaction between Ukraine and Italy and Ukraine and California produce different structural realities which in turn constrains the migrant subjectivities produced with macro level consequences for Post-Soviet Ukraine as well as for the individual migrants and those they either bring with them or leave behind.

Table 1: Comparison of key structural and subjective dimensions of exile vs. exodus

	<b>Exile</b>	<b>Exodus</b>
<b>Structural dimension</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Middle-aged women (Soviet generation)</li> <li>2. Individual migrants</li> <li>3. Temporary Migrants</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Women and men of different ages (led by middle-aged women of Soviet generation)</li> <li>2. Family migration</li> <li>3. Permanent Migration</li> </ol>
<b>Subjective dimension</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Forced connection to sending country</li> <li>2. Limited identification with receiving country</li> <li>3. Carework tied to sending country (Europeanization project)</li> <li>4. Motherhood Discourses (tied to migration; boundary drawing between migrants; good/bad mothers)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connection to sending country is choice</li> <li>2. Deep identification with receiving country</li> <li>3. Carework tied to receiving country (vehicle for integration)</li> <li>4. Motherhood discourses (tied to integration; Soviet/American parenting norms)</li> </ol>

## Studying Exile vs. Exodus

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukrainians migrated not only to Italy and the United States but also to many other countries including Greece, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Russia and in much smaller numbers to Canada. Nonetheless, Italy and the United States, more specifically California, are the two most significant receiving sites of Ukrainian emigrants after 1991 for two important reasons. The first has to do with Italy and California as receiving sites. Italy is, by far, the largest receiving country of Ukrainians in Europe (SOPEMI 2001). In fact, migrants from the former Soviet Union (especially women from Ukraine and Moldova) have entered Italy in astounding numbers since the collapse of the Soviet Union and have become the largest group providing paid domestic labor in Italy (Kofman et al. 2000; Capone 2004). California, however, is not the largest receiving site of Ukrainian immigrants in the United States. While New York State still has the largest overall Ukrainian population in the United States, California is the largest receiving state for Ukrainian immigrants arriving after 1991.<sup>8</sup> This is consistent with Ruth Milkman's (2006) argument that, because of the particular development of California's economy over the past several decades, there has been a large increase in immigration to California across the board. In 2002, California received 27.5% of immigrants to the United States for that year (Gage 2003). The state that comes closest to matching California's total during this time period is New York with 11 percent (Gage 2003). As in Italy, Ukrainians and immigrants from the former Soviet Union in general are filling domestic work positions in numbers disproportionate to their population. Milkman persuasively argues that California is the immigration state in the United States and I would add that Italy is the immigration country in the European Union. Italy and California are in fact the key destination sites for post-Soviet Ukrainian migrants.

While this first reason for a focus on Italy and California has to do with characteristics of the receiving sites, the second reason that Italy and California are comparable has to do with the sending country. Inside Ukraine the migration patterns to Italy and California are the most qualitatively significant in terms of Ukrainian politics but also in the popular imagination of ordinary Ukrainian citizens. Discussions and debates about these two migration streams are central to Ukraine's nation-building projects, the Ukrainian state's attempt to break with its Soviet past, and the constitution what my informants call the "new" Ukraine.

In order to study exile vs. exodus, I conducted 16 months of ethnographic work and 158 in-depth interviews, mostly in Russian, between June 2004 and November 2006 in Italy, California, and Ukraine. Having already spend time in San Francisco site for an earlier project (Solari 2006a), I began in Italy, first conducting participant observation in the Italian organizations that represent and service domestic workers and then in the Ukrainian women's union and the offices of Rome's Ukrainian and Russian language newspaper. I conducted ethnographic work in a Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) and a Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) where I attended weekly services, meals, and activities. During my six months in Rome informants certainly spoke about

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<sup>8</sup> Thanks to Marcel Parcet for running the IMPUS data through 2006 and providing the evidence for this claim.

work, complained about employers, and asked each other for help finding work, but it was themes of gender, migration, and nation that were at the center of Rome's Ukrainian spaces. They were also at the core of the in-depth interviews I conducted with women and some men from Ukraine providing care to the elderly. Three months into my fieldwork a contested presidential election in Ukraine sparked the Orange Revolution. I spent countless hours observing Ukrainians demonstrating in solidarity with the mass protests in Ukraine in addition to attending cultural events and informal gatherings.

It became clear that I could not understand what was happening in Rome and San Francisco without going to Ukraine. Therefore I rode the migration bus from the Garbatella, the meeting site of Rome's Ukrainian community from the opening vignette, to L'viv in Western Ukraine, the region most of my informants are from. I stayed in L'viv for three months and conducted interviews with young adults who had one or both parent working abroad. I then completed the migration circuit by riding the bus back with Ukrainians heading to Italy to work.

While I had remained in contact with my research site in San Francisco over several years, I returned to it intensively for seven months. I attended Russian-language union meetings for homecare workers, participated in the parishes of two Ukrainian churches, attended community cultural events, and conducted interviews with workers caring for the elderly. I paid attention to the ways in which people spoke about their connections to Ukraine but also about their connections to the United States.

I conducted and recorded 158 formal interviews: 61 in-depth interviews with Ukrainian domestic workers in Rome and another 18 interviews with priests and other community leaders; 41 in-depth interviews with Ukrainian domestic workers in San Francisco; and 38 interviews with family members of migrants, especially adult children, in L'viv. The interviews were embedded in countless hours of participant observation. The domestic workers I interviewed in both Italy and California all had some higher education and professional work histories and all migrated from Ukraine after 1991. Ukrainian migrants in Italy were mostly between 40 and 60 years-old and so that was the age group of my Italian interview sample. I controlled for occupation, therefore participants in my California sample were also between 40 and 60 because that is the age of the Ukrainian population doing domestic work.

### *Global Ethnography*

As in all research projects, my method drives both my findings and my analysis. Taking my cues from the domestic work literature, I began this project with the idea that I would attempt to look at the construction of work identities and, like most US-based immigration scholars traveling to the sending country was not part of the original research design. While it was quite obvious that Rome and San Francisco are different receiving contexts, the data pushed me consider that the sending country also produced effects for migrants in these cities. Including the sending country in the project required the adoption of a transnational lens. However, transnationalism, still a concept in formation, suggests sending and receiving countries are discrete entities between which people, social remittances, money and other objects flow. In fact, transnationalism is a perspective under fire. Many scholars, especially those who study immigration to the United States and adopt an assimilationist frame, wonder if the phenomenon of

transnationalism even exists and if so suggest that it is limited to first generation immigrants with negligible effects in subsequent generations. Others want to know how many letters, phone calls, or trips to the sending country justify the label “transnational.” Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997) have critiqued this literature for focusing too much on the physical flow of people without paying enough attention to the transnational practices of settled migrants who may be in the United States permanently but continue to mother transnationally.

The perspective of global ethnography, while connected to a transnational perspective, offers a slightly different way to understand migration. Rather than assuming that sending and receiving sites are discrete entities, global ethnography suggests that sending and receiving sites are profoundly connected and perhaps even mutually constituted. In his call for a “global ethnography,” Burawoy (2000:149) argues that “global ethnography opposes itself to the abstract schema of globalization with a study of ‘globalization from below’.” He argues we must “demystify” transnational connections between individuals or communities by understanding the experience of migration and the flows of discourses and information as well as goods and labor. While theories of globalization that place migration in large global schematics as part of global economic restructuring or the inequality of nations are important, what this case study of migrant domestic workers from Ukraine illustrates is that individuals in these large systems act, think, and construct meanings and experiences locally. The intersection between sending and receiving contexts produces migration patterns in which migrants are embedded.

The post-Soviet world is a unique site of globalization. With the collapse of the iron curtain, global capital, market relations, capitalist moralities, and “Western” ideals have flooded into Ukraine, heightening the visibility of global processes on the ground. Most scholars studying the region focus on top down economic transformations. They study the “transition to capitalism” by focusing on elite players, the so-called “oligarchs” (for notable exceptions see Burawoy and Verdery 1999b; Mandel and Humphrey 2002). And yet what the approach of global ethnography reveals is that Ukraine’s economic transformation is constituted by people in their everyday negotiations with nationalisms, markets, and the moralities that accompany them. Gendered migration is a constitutive element in Ukraine’s economic transformation and the construction of a new Ukrainian nation which aspires to be both capitalist and European.

## **Overview**

Chapter 2 reveals the gendered basis of post-Soviet economic transition and a particular iteration of Ukrainian nationalism. Through a reorganization of work and family structures, older women, mostly grandmothers, and subjected to a process of double marginalization that excludes them from both the labor market and their family responsibilities. These women then lead the migrations of exile to Italy and exodus California. The dissertation then looks at exile and exodus in turn. Part I, Exile, begins with chapter 3. Here I show that the particular structural and subjective conditions of exile are produced not either in the sending site nor in the receiving site but through the profound ways in which Ukraine and Italy are connected and interact. Ukrainians in exile are pulled into a profound and at time torturous relationship with Ukraine and its nation-building project that is based both on material and discursive connections. Migrants in

Italy experience migration as exile to the post-Soviet gulags where they inhabit a space of contradictions. Migrants feel ambivalent about the “new” Ukraine they are toiling so hard to build. Chapters 4 through 8 draw on my ethnographic and interview data to illustrate the contours of both the structural position of migrants in Italy and the migrants subjectivity produced in exile. Chapter 9 offers a summary of exile and sets up Part II, Exodus.

Chapter 10 shows that even in California, Ukraine is not simply a control variable that has little affect on the way Ukrainian immigrants construct their lives in California. Rather, in the intersection between Ukraine and California, different aspects of Ukraine’s transformation than those highlighted in exile become salient context. The central project of exodus is collecting one’s immediate and often extended family in California. The orientation of immigrants in exodus is not towards Ukraine like those in exile but towards the United States. Paths to integration are varied but the dominate path is through a connection with the US state as low-paid careworkers to the elderly for a state agency. Chapters 11 through 15 draw on ethnographic and interview data in order to illustrate both the structural aspects of exodus by offering examples of immigrants at various stages of bring their family to the United States as well as presenting the variation migrant subjectivities produced in exodus. Chapter 16, the conclusion, argues that exile and exodus are concepts that are transposable to other cases. I show that exile and exodus could be helpful in adding nuance to the most studied example of women-led migration: Philippine migration.

## **Genesis: Markets, Moralities, and Motherhood in Transition**

Yulia Tymoshenko, a co-leader with Viktor Yushchenko of the Orange Revolution and Prime Minister of Ukraine January to September 2005, and again from December 2007 to March 2010 is a key figure in Ukrainian politics. As part of her second bid for prime minister in 2007, Yulia Tymoshenko made a documentary titled *Mother and Step-Mother* which was widely viewed inside Ukraine. In it Tymoshenko argues that Ukraine has been a “bad mother” to its people who have had to seek nurturing and sustenance in the arms of “step-mother” Italy. Walking through the streets of Naples, Tymoshenko speaks with Ukrainian domestic workers about their lives and informs viewers that 5-7 million Ukrainians are forced to search for work abroad and 3-4 million Ukrainians are working in Italy.<sup>9</sup>

The documentary opens with Tymoshenko, dressed in a flowing white dress, on a windy hilltop overlooking the Ukrainian countryside and leaning on a large white cross, a burial marker. The scene recalls a famous Ukrainian short story, *The Stone Cross* (1900) by Vasyl’ Stefanyk, detailing a father’s tortured decision to emigrate to North America with his wife and adult children. The father leaves a white stone cross for fellow villagers to remember him and his wife by. Staring poignantly into the camera, Tymoshenko says, “If every person who has left for a foreign country set a stone cross today, all of Ukraine would look like a cemetery.” In a symbolically powerful move, Tymoshenko revives this classic Ukrainian image from the period of the “Great Migrations” —the stone cross— and applies it to the mass emigration of the Post-Soviet period. It is no coincidence that Tymoshenko’s focus is on Ukrainian migration to Italy which came to include what my informants call “the masses” in 1994-95. In the post-soviet era, it is the migration of its women, those who migrate as individuals to Italy and to a lesser extent those who take their families with them to California, which is Ukraine’s “cross to bear.”

### **Why Women Migrate**

When women migrate as individuals, it is obvious that migration is women led. However when older women migrate with their families as is the case of exodus to California, the assumption is that either their husbands or young adults are driving the migration. I found that it was older women leading the migration to California with discourses of motherhood framing why they made the decision and convinced the rest of their family to migrate. While most immigrants are in their 20s, these women were 40-65 years-old, a generation of women born in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s who came of age in Soviet Ukraine. It is this same generation of women who left for Italy.

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<sup>9</sup> According to the Italian governments official statistics, there are 154,000 officially registered Ukrainian in Italy (Istat 2009) however Caritas (Caritas 2006), estimates there are over 500,000 Ukrainians if the undocumented are added to the count while *Forum*, Rome’s Ukrainian language newspaper, puts the estimate at 2 million Ukrainians in Italy.

Migration is usually explained by neoclassical theories in which individuals move in search of higher wages from regions where labor is relatively abundant and capital is scarce to regions with labor shortages and capital surpluses. In particular, the migration of individual women who perform caring and domestic labor abroad, is usually explained by poverty in Third World countries that “push” women who desperately need to provide for children to migrate to First World countries where there is a simultaneous “pull” of higher wages in a global context of increasing demand in rich or developing countries for domestic labor. While the migration of women with their families garners little attention since it is assumed that their husband is the “migrant,” the migration of women, especially those that leave children behind is of particular interest and seems to lend itself to simplistic understanding of push-pull models. There are many reasons considered reasonable for why men might migrate and leave children behind, but for many of us in the First World, both in the popular media and in academic studies, abject poverty seems to be the most frequently offered explanation for why mothers would “abandon” their children (Andall 2000a; Anderson 2000; Chang 2000; Hochschild 2000). Looking closely at the socio-economic changes occurring in Ukraine since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the connections between Ukraine and its receiving sites challenges some of the basic assumptions we have about why women migrate and further illuminates how migrants construct narratives to make sense of their lives and those of their children and grandchildren.

There have been many critiques of push-pull (Burawoy 1976; Oishi 2005; Piore 1979). Saskia Sassen (Sassen 1998b, 2003) explains the “feminization of migration” in the post-1965 era by arguing that immigration or the “globalization of labor,” is not poverty-driven but rather is the counterpart to the “globalization of capital.” Sassen’s take on world systems theory argues that the redeployment of capital investments and manufacturing to less developed countries erodes traditional work structures which leads to the internal migration of especially rural women to Export Processing Zones (EPZs). According to Sassen, women working in EPZs are quickly replaced in favor of younger women who are considered more “docile” but also free of the health problems those doing repetitive factory work in poor conditions acquire. EPZs create economic, cultural and ideological links with industrialized societies so that these women become “westernized” (Sassen 1988b:19, 116), presumably transformed by their employment experience, so that high turn over rates may create a labor pool of women willing to migrate (Sassen 1998). While some cite this as the reason for the increase of women migrants (Parreñas 2001), others suggest that the data do not support Sassen’s claims (Oishi 2005).

The case of Ukrainian migration challenges Sassen’s argument about the effects of First World economic restructuring. Both theories of push-pull that understand migration as individuals moving between discrete countries and world systems theories that understand migration as part of a global system of labor are characterized by a First and Third World. Therefore Sassen’s argument about the links between First and Third World do not match up with the economic reality in Ukraine or other post-soviet countries which are “Second” World. In post-Soviet countries women have had high participation rates in the paid labor force. This has less to do with economic restructuring in the United States and the First World leading to outsourcing or capital investment abroad than with the Soviet industrialization and modernization projects. Neither push-

pull or world-systems theory are able to explain why it is mostly *grandmothers* emigrating from Ukraine, a highly unusual migration stream or can they explain the emergence of exile and exodus.

I argue that Ukrainian migration to both Italy and California is produced in part by changes in Ukraine's gender order which underlies Ukraine's nation-building project and the shape of post-Soviet economic transformation.<sup>10</sup> When Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, it faced many challenges. Perhaps the two most salient were: (1) constructing a national narrative that constituted Ukrainians as a people separate from Russians and gave it legitimate claims to a territory governed by Ukrainians and (2) an opening to world markets and the imperative for economic transformation. Nation-building and the coming of market capitalism to Ukraine are not a gender neutral process nor do they have uniform effects across generations.<sup>11</sup> Ukrainian nation-building hinges on a particular construction of Ukrainian femininity which reifies young mothers and devalues older, "Soviet" women. Post-Soviet economic transformation in the form it is currently taking in Ukraine has at its core a gendered reorganization of family and work institutions which doubly marginalizes specifically older women from both the labor market and their expected familial responsibilities. It is specifically grandmothers who are displaced inside Ukraine and suddenly find themselves in a position where migration is not only feasible but understandable. These women could migrate either to Italy or to California. Exile to Italy is the larger of the two migrations in sheer numbers and informants in California often noted that they might have gone to Italy but got "lucky" with a visa or green card for the United States. Let us take a closer look at Ukraine's nation-building and economic transformations since Ukraine's independence and the resulting double marginalization of older women which is the genesis of exile and exodus. A rearticulation of gendered relations is constitutive of Ukrainian emigration and gendered migration, in turn, provides the building block for Ukrainian nation-building and economic transition.

### **Post-Soviet Ukraine: Constructing a Nation**

The disintegration of the Soviet Union left Ukraine in a state of economic collapse. The decline in gross domestic product over the 1990s was calculated at 54%, worse than Russia at 40%, and twice as severe as the general estimate for economic decline in the United States during the Great Depression; not until 2000 did Ukraine experience positive economic growth (Kubicek 2008). However of equal if not more pressing urgency is that Ukraine became a state without a modern nation when it declared independence in 1991 (Kubicek 2008; Wanner 1998).<sup>12</sup>

While there had been several unsuccessful attempts to create an independent Ukrainian state before 1991, the political boundaries of today's Ukraine are largely a

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<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of the use of the term post-soviet "transformation" rather than "transition" see Burawoy and Verdery (Burawoy and Verdery 1999a).

<sup>11</sup> There is debate about how "capitalist" Ukrainian truly is and many scholars challenge the notion that there are no other alternatives to capitalism in the post-Soviet region. Nevertheless, it is clear that while there are both market and non market-based economic practices in Ukraine, the meta narrative of market capitalism produces tangible effects inside Ukraine. For further discussion see (Burawoy 2000; Williams and Round 2008; Zhurzhenko 2001).

<sup>12</sup> For more an interesting look at the complexity of "nations" and "nationality" see (Slezkine 1996).

legacy of the Soviet Union. Ukraine is bifurcated between so-called Ukrainophone or “Ukrainianized” Ukrainians in the West and Russophone or “Russified” Ukrainians in the east and therefore rife with conflict.<sup>13</sup> Ukraine now finds itself engaged in the process of building unity out of diversity, a nation-building process similar to that of other nations in earlier historical periods. Following the dissolution of the USSR, Ukraine was considered an unlikely candidate for independence because of its ethnic, linguistic, religious, and regional diversity. Therefore the emergence of an independent Ukraine came as a great surprise to the international community (Wilson 2000).

Not only does Ukraine face the challenge of constructing a fully independent state out of a territory inherited from the Soviet Union, but of primary concern to the Ukrainian elite is transforming much of what Ukraine inherited from the Soviet Union (bureaucracy, laws, military forces) and making these things *Ukrainian* for a population who suddenly finds themselves members of a new state (Kubicek 2008). In fact, all three elements that usually come together for the creation of a nation-state—people, government, territory—continue to be contested and in flux in Ukraine making their fusion difficult and fraught with tension.

#### *A Ukrainian People: “Moskali” and “Banderite”*

Forging a single people with a national identity has proved to be highly contentious in Ukraine. Nearly 80 percent of the population identifies itself as Ukrainian however a substantial 17% identify as Russians (White and McAllister 2008). Yet there is great diversity within the category of “Ukrainian.” The regional, ethnic, religious, and historical variations are many but the dominant difference is between Russophone and Ukrainophone regions of Ukraine which generally translate into the eastern and western parts of Ukraine. The eastern and southern regions of Ukraine are heavily russified having been part of the Russian empire for centuries. This is also where most of the ethnic Russian population lives and it is Russian language dominant. Western Ukraine is predominantly ethnically Ukrainian and Ukrainian-speaking. The region, sometimes referred to by its historical name, Galicia,<sup>14</sup> was formally part of Poland and the Habsburg Empire and conditions here allowed for the development of a Ukrainian national consciousness.<sup>15</sup> Western Ukraine did not become part of the Soviet Union until 1936 and possessed a well-developed Ukrainian ethnic identity, whereas ethnic Ukrainians in the East and South, part of the Russian empire for 300 years, did not develop the same “sense of ethnic and national identity anchored in culture, language, religion, and historical memories” (Wolczuk 2000). As part of the Soviet Union, Western Ukraine was subjected to an often violent Russification campaign but a struggle for an

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<sup>13</sup> It is evidence of the importance of language in Ukraine but in many post-Soviet countries that language, in this case whether one is a native speaker of Ukrainian (Ukrainophone) or Russian (Russophone) is a deep marker of nationality and culture. Sometimes the terms Ukrainophile and Russophile are used interchangeably with Ukrainophone and Russophone while at other times they refer specifically to one’s political stance about whether Ukraine should be politically tied to Russia or Europe. For example, in my fieldwork I met many Russophones who were in fact Ukrainophiles.

<sup>14</sup> The region that was once Galicia, also referred to as Galacia or Halychyna, is now divided between Poland and Ukraine. The nucleus of historic Galicia is comprised of three regions of western Ukraine: L’viv, Ternopol, and Ivano-Frankivsk.

<sup>15</sup> For more on this history see (Wilson 2000).

independent Ukraine was maintained abroad and underground in the region. One of the organizations driven underground was the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC).<sup>16</sup> Under Polish rule, the UGCC became a stronghold of Ukrainian religious and cultural identity and has long championed the creation of an independent Ukrainian state (Plokhly and Sysyn 2003; Wolczuk 2000). Today the UGCC continues to be an important player in Ukrainian nation-building and is a significant presence in both Rome and San Francisco (Solari 2006a, 2006b).

It comes then as no surprise that Western Ukraine overwhelmingly supports distancing Ukraine from Russian power and champions becoming part of Europe by joining the European Union and NATO. Instead Eastern and Southern Ukraine emphasizes Ukraine's cultural and historical affinity with Russia and favors maintaining close political ties to Russia.<sup>17</sup> Although a majority of all citizens in all regions of Ukraine, including those in the East, voted for independence in 1991, Western Ukrainians together with elements of the elite in Kyiv, have been the architects of Ukrainian independence and continue to attempt to propagate a singular national narrative about Ukraine's ancient origins, linear historical trajectory, and distinct cultural characteristics from which a claim to independent statehood can be made. The Western Ukrainian nationalist narrative, also referred to as Galician nationalism, might be summarized as follows: the Ukrainian ethnic nation (*natsiia*) originated in the mists of time from an ethnocultural collectivity (*ethnis*) and is bound by unique qualities molded in a thousand year history. It was Russia's imperialism that disrupted the nation's linear progression and severed it from its European roots. Ukrainian Cossacks, who had created a "Ukrainian Cossack state" in 1648, entered into an alliance with the Russians to fight a common enemy. However Russia betrays Ukraine at the Treaty of Pereiaslav in 1654 turning Ukraine into its colony and not only subjected it to economic exploitation, political oppression, and cultural Russification, but also inflicted genocide in the form of the *Holodomor* or Great Famine of 1932-33. Yet the development of the Ukrainian ethnos continued despite Russian tyranny and created the indigenous nation (*korinnyi narod*) which exercised its right to self-determination in 1991.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The UGCC was established in 1596 as the Uniate Church in an attempt to move closer to their Roman Catholic rulers. Metropolitan Mikhail Rohoza of Kyiv and other Orthodox bishops signed the Union of Brest, pledging allegiance to the Vatican but retaining Eastern rites and practices.

<sup>17</sup> Crimea in Southern Ukraine has had a separatist movement since 1989 whose goal is to rejoin Russia. Crimea is part of Ukraine because of an administrative transfer of territory made by Soviet leader Nikita Krushchev and has a majority ethnic Russian population. Ukrainian authorities consented to grant the region the status of an autonomous state within the borders of Ukraine in 1991. Crimea is also the site of the much disputed Black Sea Fleet. While Crimea's separatist movement has not been active for over a decade, there is fear that Russia's military invasion into Georgia in 2008 could instigate a resurgence of separatism in Crimea with renewed hopes that the Russian military may intervene on Crimea's behalf against the Ukrainian state.

<sup>18</sup> Galician nationalism is not the only form of nationalism in Ukraine although it is referred to as the "minority majority." For more on the variations in Ukrainian nationalisms see (Wilson 2002). Wilson (2000) also notes that this narrative is a Ukrainian national myth which takes some liberties with historical facts. Russia maintains its own national myth regarding the relationship between Russia and Ukraine. Russia continues to follow Soviet historiography which adopted a Russian imperial scheme and tells the history of Ukraine and Russia in this way: The Muscovite state emerges in the 14th Century as direct patrimony of Kiev Rus. In order to restore Kievan unity, Great Russia and Little Russia (Ukraine) are reunited in 1654 when, in the Treaty of Pereiaslav the Cossacks, led by Hetman Bohdon Khmelnytskyi,

While this most strongly stated view of Ukrainian nationalism is far from universally accepted in Ukraine, it has been adopted by the Ukrainian Diaspora and by political elites within Ukraine. Politically speaking, it is difficult to lead an independent country that could just as well be part of Russia. In order to acquire international recognition for Ukrainian statehood, Ukraine had to establish its separateness from Russia and did embark on an uneven process of Ukrainianization after independence.<sup>19</sup> This involved promoting the Ukrainian language, replacing Russian narratives about Ukraine's history in textbooks, and constructing Ukraine's national symbols (Wanner 1998). This encountered resistance from the Russified eastern and southern regions and alarmed Russia which continues to see Ukraine as part of Russia.

The animosity between Eastern and Western Ukraine over questions of culture, language, and religion cannot be underestimated. I have often heard Western Ukrainian informants speak of Easterners as *Moskali*. *Moskali* is a derogatory term for Russians or Russified Ukrainians who "behave as Russians." The implication is that *Moskali* dislike Ukrainians and Ukrainian culture, insist on speaking Russian and refuse to even learn Ukrainian (now the official language of Ukraine), and generally disrespect the Ukrainian nation. Those who were more sympathetic to Russified Ukrainians portray them as "victims of history" and refer to Easterners as "lost Ivans:" Ukrainians who must be taught their own forgotten Ukrainian language and culture. Eastern Ukrainians I met in my fieldwork retorted that Russian *is* a language of Ukraine and were insulted by accusations that they are not "real" Ukrainians.<sup>20</sup> They in turn said Westerners were "more like Poles" than Ukrainians and dismissed Westerners as "radical nationalists" often referred to derisively as *Banderite* after Stephan Bandera (1909-1959), the controversial leader of the Ukrainian national movement in Western Ukraine. He declared an independent Ukrainian State in L'viv in 1941 but at the cost of making an alliance with Nazi Germany.<sup>21</sup> Many who participated in this drive for independence migrated to the United States and created the infrastructure of the organized Ukrainian Diaspora under accusations of being "Nazis" which the Ukrainian Diaspora vehemently denies. The term *Banderite* carries connotations that Westerners hate Russians and even fellow Ukrainians living in the East, want to divide peoples who have historically been

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recognized the supremacy of the Tsar. Russians, Belarussians and Ukrainians were united by fraternal feelings of solidarity stemming from a shared historical umbilical cord, Kiev Rus, and a general commonality of feelings. From the 1930s onward, Soviet authorities outlawed challenges to this historical interpretation.

<sup>19</sup> Leonid Kuchma, the second president of an independent Ukraine (1995-2005), was elected by Russophone regions of Ukraine. He originally rejected Galician nationalism arguing instead that Ukraine's place was in Eurasia. Yet he too softened his position over time and ultimately proclaimed Ukraine's place in Europe.

<sup>20</sup> There is in fact some debate even in academia about who should be called a considered "Ukrainian." This is a complex identity and there is variation between how scholars label different groups in Ukraine and how people from this region self-identify. Wanner (1998), for example, considered *Ukrainian* to refer to those of Ukrainian origin who speak Ukrainian as their primary language. Although not all people born and raised in Ukraine consider themselves Ukrainian, most informants in this study, even most Russian speakers, did consider themselves Ukrainian. Therefore, I use the term *Ukrainian* to refer to people from Ukraine.

<sup>21</sup> Bandera later turned against the Nazis and was imprisoned by them. On 22 January 2010, the outgoing Ukrainian President, Viktor Yushchenko, awarded Bandera the title of Hero of Ukraine. See (Levy 2010).

friends by abandoning their common Russian language and insisting that they speak Ukrainian, a “peasant” language for uneducated and uncultured people.

### *The Orange Revolution and the Promise of Europe*

The cultural divide between Ukrainophone and Russophone Ukrainians is a formidable obstacle to forging a common narrative of Ukrainian history and national identity. These divisions play out in Ukrainian politics where whether a politician speaks Ukrainian with a Russian accent or Russian with a Ukrainian accent is a source of great political interest. It also manifests itself in disagreements about what policies Ukraine should have towards Russia and towards Europe resulting in highly fragmented and weak governments. Ukraine’s weak governments and internal divisions fuel the Russian state’s claims that Ukrainians and Russians are in fact one people and should therefore be one territory.

On almost every issue of national importance, this bifurcation between East and West is evident. The contested presidential election of 2004 that led to the Orange Revolution and the formation of the government under President Viktor Yushchenko is the premier example. The two leading presidential contenders were Viktor Yushchenko who campaigned on a “pro-West” platform and the “pro-Russia” Viktor Yanukovich backed by Russian president Vladimir Putin and Ukraine’s incumbent president Leonid Kuchma. November election results declared Yanukovich the winner; however, evidence of fraud led to mass protests in Kyiv’s Independence Square where orange-clad protesters (Yushchenko’s campaign color) camped out in the snow. A new round of voting was ordered and in January 2005. Yushchenko, with the support of Yulia Tymoshenko and her political party, won the majority vote with just 52%. I was in Rome during the Orange Revolution and Rome’s Ukrainian community was ablaze with activity. Yushchenko declared that the peaceful Orange Revolution showed the world a “genuinely different Ukraine... a noble European nation, one that embraces democratic values” (Kubicek 2008). On the other hand, the Orange Revolution also revealed a deeply divided population with Yushchenko winning overwhelmingly in Western Ukraine and in most of Central Ukraine and Yanukovich winning in the heavily Russified eastern and southern regions.

The Orange government with Yushchenko as president and Tymoshenko, “Goddess of the Revolution,” as prime minister proved too weak to realize many of the expectations of the revolution. The European Union did not embrace Ukraine as a candidate country and charges of corruption and in-fighting between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko paralyzed the government leading to the “Orange divorce” and Tymoshenko’s dismissal in 2005.<sup>22</sup> Precisely because Ukraine is on a democratic path unlike its neighbors—Russia has fallen into authoritarianism and Belarus has a dictatorship—politicians in Ukraine are tied to their diverse constituencies. Parliamentary elections in 2006 saw the election of the Russophile Yanukovich win the seat of prime minister. With Yushchenko as president and his rival Yanukovich as prime minister,

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<sup>22</sup> Informants at San Francisco’s Ukrainian Day festivities in 2008 joked that the “Orange divorce,” after just one year, was a legacy of “red marriages.” Communist policies that made both civil weddings and divorces easy to obtain was often noted as the cause of high divorce rates in Ukraine and Russia by my informants.

power struggles over policy and the symbolic discourse of Ukrainian nationhood intensified, forcing Ukraine to “stumble along without a clear direction” (Kubicek 2008). Just a year later parliamentary elections brought Tymoshenko back to the position of prime minister. However the Ukrainian presidential election of 2010 saw a run off between Tymoshenko and Yanukovich splitting the country once again between West and East (Medish 2009). The result was a Yanukovich victory and Tymoshenko was pushed once again into the opposition.

### *Territorial Integrity and the Soviet “Other”*

Russian elites continue to argue that Ukraine is part of Russia and the pro-West stance of Yushchenko’s Orange government has only intensified the feuding between the two countries (Arel 2009). Yushchenko’s push towards Europe and especially his penchant for joining NATO was seen as both threatening and a betrayal of loyalty by Russia. Yushchenko’s attempts to have Stalin’s Great Famine of 1932-33 recognized as genocide against the Ukrainian people had emotions running high as even Alexander Solzhenitsyn came to the defense of the Russian Motherland (Solzhenitsyn 2008). Russia’s five day war in Georgia in August-September 2008 and Yushchenko’s public support of Georgia’s president Mikheil Saakashvili has made a Russian military incursion into Ukraine seem all the more plausible. In fact, worry mounted in Ukraine as reports that Russia was giving away Russian passports to ethnic Russians and other Ukrainian citizens in the East and South, despite the Ukrainian State’s non recognition of dual citizenship. Russia followed a similar tactic with the South Ossetians in Georgia before invading (Goble 2008; The New York Times 2008). As recently as April 2008, Putin described Ukraine as an “artificial” entity with lands given to it by Russia and the USSR and a “failed state” that needs Russian oversight (Kuzio 2009b). Ukraine’s former ambassador to the United States, Yuriy Shcherbak, responded arguing that Russia’s state-orchestrated ideological campaign against Ukraine is “ideological-propaganda preparation of a future operation for the seizure of the territory of a sovereign state” (Kuzio 2009b).

While one might expect such a threat to Ukrainian sovereignty would help unify Ukrainians, even the most basic question of Ukrainian territorial integrity is not immune to Ukraine’s internal divisions precisely because these issues are played out on the terrain of culture. It is on the terrain of culture—whether Ukrainians are indeed separate culturally from Russians—that political disputes between Ukraine and Russia such as the fate of the Black Sea Fleet, the “gas wars,” NATO membership and even which country can claim Gogol as their national literary heritage are played out (Bojanowska 2007; Kuzio 2009a; Velychenko 2007). These confrontations have intensified the war of narratives or the “culture war” between Russia and Ukraine but have also exposed the extent of the polarization within the Ukrainian population with large segments of Ukraine’s own population sympathetic to Russia’s point of view. There are many examples of how questions of whether there really is a Ukrainian people, a viable Ukrainian government, and legitimate claims to an independent Ukrainian territory are intertwined and play out on the terrain of culture. Vladimir V. Bortko’s movie, *Taras Bulba* based on the novel by Nikolai Gogol was a \$20 million production financed in part by the Russian Ministry of Culture and commissioned by the state-owned *Rossiya*

television station. It featured Ukrainian Cossacks moved by the “Russian soul” dying for the “Orthodox Russian land” while driving the Poles out of Western Ukraine (Barry 2009). The Ukrainian-born Bortko stated in an interview the aim of the movie was to show that there was “no separate Ukraine” and that “Russians and Ukrainians are the same people” with the real enemy being the “West” (Resunkov 2008). The film was received amongst much patriotic fervor in Russia but was also well received in parts of Eastern Ukraine. Many Eastern Ukrainians found the historical narrative of Ukraine as the southern part of ancient Rus’ convincing with viewers agreeing that Ukraine had more culturally in common with Russia than Europe or the United States (Barry 2009). The Ukrainian state found Bortko’s film sufficiently threatening that they produced a counter film which gave a different interpretation of the Cossack Taras who spoke Ukrainian, not Russia, and aired on Ukrainian state television. While nearly all Ukrainians speak Russian, few Russians speak Ukrainian. Therefore one might surmise that the goal of the Ukrainian state was not to convince Russians that Ukraine does indeed have historical claims to independence, but rather convince its own citizens that this is the case. Despite continued reports that Ukraine’s economy has been hit hard by the global financial crisis (Stern 2009), given the challenge to Ukraine’s most fundamental right to exist from both without and within, we can understand why badly needed state funds might be diverted to reinforce a separate Ukrainian national identity.

### **The Other “Post:” Post-Colonialism in the Post-Soviet Context**

Finding a singular national narrative of an independent Ukraine is not easy task. The Orange government and many scholars understand Ukraine as post-colonial (Korek 2007; Verdery 1993). In most other instances of colonialism, post-colonial countries have had clear ethnic/racial lines dividing colonizer and colonized around which to forge identities and resistance. This is not the case in Ukraine. While for Ukrainophones Russia is a sufficiently distinct and morally compromised “other,” the situation is more confused in Russophone regions of Ukraine. Arguably, Ukraine is the post-Soviet country whose historical and cultural trajectory is most closely intertwined with Russia. As a result, anti-Russian rhetoric might galvanize the Europe-leaning citizens of Western Ukraine, but it alienates many in the eastern parts of the country. Ukraine finds itself unable to define what *is* Ukrainian without a suitable “Other” with which to illustrate what is *not* Ukrainian. Therefore, while not all citizens of Ukraine can passionately agree that Ukraine is radically separate from Russia, all can emphatically agree that Ukraine is NOT Soviet. As a result, Ukrainianess is being defined against all things Soviet. In Western Ukraine “Soviet” and “Russian” are interchangeable while in Eastern Ukraine this not necessarily the case.

#### *Gendered Nationalism: The Popularization of Berehynia*

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev famously argued that many of the Soviet Union’s problems could be attributed to women’s employment which resulted in weak families and argued for women to recommit themselves to their duties as wives and mothers and “return to their purely womanly mission.” As Gorbachev put it, “many of our problems ... are partially caused

by the weakening of family ties and a slack attitude to family responsibilities. This is a paradoxical result of our sincere and politically justified desire to make women equal with men in everything” (Gorbachev 1988).<sup>23</sup> Gendered relations has come to be one of the key areas Soviet thinkers “got wrong.” In Ukraine, where there was an explosion of women's organizations in the early 1990s, activist women were divided between those who advocated for maternalist activism drawing on pre-existing Soviet discourse and those advocating for the kind of feminist activism advocated by international women's groups which were well represented in Ukraine (Hrycak 2005). Those who drew on the Soviet maternalist discourse and make it “Ukrainian” sought to engage women as “activist mothers” in politics as *Berehyni* or “guardians of the family hearth.” Under Ukraine’s President Leonid Kuchma (1994-2005), politicians adopted the newly invented discourse of the *Berehynia*, praising women as guardians of the Ukrainian nation while ignoring their policy demands (Hrycak 2005). This wave of women’s rights organizations was unable to develop enough political leverage to push forward neither a Western inspired nor a maternalist rights agenda. In fact, many activists, especially in University-rich Western Ukraine, believed that the struggle for women’s rights should be put on hold while they joined forces with other political groups to first fight for Galician nationalism and secure Ukrainian independence (Hrycak 2006). However, gender, nationalism, and economic transition in Ukraine have become inextricably linked. I argue that it is a particular kind of maternal femininity embodied by *Berehynia* that comes to bridge the divide between Ukrainophone and Russophone Ukrainians. *Berehynia* implies a strongly anti-Soviet organization of gendered relations and helps unite all Ukrainian citizens who perhaps cannot agree on Russia as “Other” but can certainly agree that whatever Ukraine is, it is *not* “Soviet.”

### *Gendered Economics: Babushka’s Double Marginalization*

Nearly all of the Ukrainian workers I spoke with in Rome and California are university-educated with professional work histories, and most assert that they never imagined they would go abroad to work. Rather, they expected to finish careers, retire, and raise their grandchildren. In Soviet Ukraine, women with young children were expected to work while their mothers as grandmothers or *babushki* cared for the children, did the housework, and stood in bread lines freeing their daughters and daughters-in-law for the labor market (Verdery 1994). The migrant women I met in Rome and San Francisco identified deeply as mothers and *Babushki* and told their migration stories through this idiom.

Roxalana, a woman I met in Rome, expected to do for her daughter what her mother had done for her. She says: “I am a *babushka* and I thought I would be with my grandson during the day and take care of the house while my daughter worked.” Roxalana was a high school teacher. She found that the Ukrainian state was unable to pay its teachers and she was pushed into early retirement. Roxalana’s daughter, like many

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<sup>23</sup> Ironically, while labor statistics indicate that young Ukrainian women have to some extent “returned” to the home or at least have been increasingly excluded from Ukraine’s labor market, Russian women’s labor force participation rates have held steady (Ashwin 2000b). I would suggest that Russia has not had the same intertwining of gender and nation that Ukraine has experienced. I would also suggest that Ukraine’s post-colonial experience also influences these divergent results for women in Ukraine and Russia.

other young women in post-Soviet Ukraine, was unable to find work in her field and is a housewife. Roxalana explains:

I felt useless at home. All I was doing was fighting with my daughter over, you know, what to feed my grandson, how to dress him, and how to discipline him. And with just my son-in-law working and my small pension there was not enough money. So I came here [Rome].

A relatively young retirement age supported the extended family so that grandparents were still physically able to provide child care and other reproductive labor. The official retirement age is 55 for women and 60 for men. Those who performed jobs considered “dangerous” retired at even younger ages. Many of the migrant women I met in Rome were high school teachers like Roxalana who were able to retire even in their early 40s after 20 years of service. Roxalana and other women of her generation are doubly marginalized. They are marginalized from both the labor market and from their expected role as primary caregivers to their grandchildren.

It was not only women I spoke with in Italy who experienced this double marginalization. In fact just the anticipation of grandma’s double marginalization was enough to convince Vlada, a 45 year-old physician, to seize an opportunity to migrate to California with her husband and two daughters. Vlada’s husband is Jewish and they decided to join his extended family in San Francisco. Vlada explained:

You know, I thought like everybody did in the Soviet Union: Ok at 55 I’m going to retire and I am going to help my daughters raise my grandchildren. It was a set plan, everybody’s plan! And now what do I see? No future for me and my daughters sitting at home. I made up my mind to leave.

It is specifically women over 40 who are leaving Ukraine in droves and finding their way abroad, especially to Italy and California. Migrants to Italy and California are subject to the processes of double marginalization and whether they migrate to Rome or San Francisco is due to the availability of visas and in large part to chance.

While it is almost exclusively grandmothers who are in exile to Italy, this same cohort is often the driving force in exodus to California as well. The migration stream from this region to the United States is significantly older than other migration streams. While this is often explained by noting that adult migrants bring their parents with them (Portes and Rumbaut 1996), I found that it was in fact the older generation—specifically older women—that were often the driving forces behind the family’s decision to migrate. Most of the World’s migrants are young adults in their 20s. It is unusual to uncover grandmother-led migrations. In Ukraine there is a confluence of structural and discursive factors that produces these unique migration patterns from Ukraine.

#### *Markets Moralities: Berehyni and Babushki*

In this nexus of gender, nation, migration, and economic transformation post-Soviet Ukraine—what my informants call the “new” Ukraine—is being constituted. The coming of capitalist markets to Ukraine and widespread unemployment has lead to a

gendered reorganization of work and family which has also been connected to a new Ukrainian nationalism. The Soviet state needed full employment to meet production quotas in a labor intensive, production based socialist economy. To facilitate the employment of women and “liberate” women from the “triple burden” of housework, mothering, and wage work, the Soviet state attempted to socialize domestic labor and provided maternity benefits, state-run childcare facilities, and collective dining halls (Verdery 1994). The state usurped certain patriarchal functions and responsibilities pushing men to the periphery of Soviet families while women were “married to the state” (Kiblitckaya 2000b). Women achieved near full participation rates in the labor force, but, while the Soviet state did reorganize domestic labor to some extent, women continued to take primary responsibility for the home as well as perform wage work. The Soviet state relied on youthful retirement ages (generally 55 for women and 60 for men) who became responsible for rearing their grandchildren and performing other unpaid household labor all living in an extended family household (Verdery 1994). Therefore a particular gendered understanding of the relationship between men and women and women and the state driven by and economic need for women’s employment not only made “mother-workers” a structural reality, but was accompanied by state discourses that exalted mother-workers as Soviet “heroes.” This is the context in which the women and men I met in Rome and San Francisco came of age.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the socialist economy was dismantled and with it this Soviet gender order. True gender equality was never achieved in the Soviet Union: women rarely achieved top level jobs, were channeled into sex segregated occupations, and earned lower wages than men. However, since Ukrainian independence, these trends have been exacerbated. Top management and executive positions are still male dominated, sex segregation of the labor market has increased since independence, and women currently earn wages 30 percent lower than men (United Nations Development Programme 2008). Women face considerable gender discrimination on Ukraine’s expanding free market: job advertisements that ask only young, attractive women apply, sexual harassment at work, and discrimination in hiring against young women and mothers have been well documented (United Nations Development Programme 2003). As the state shifts the economic burden of social entitlements to private industry, women, as potential mothers, become expensive to employ (LaFont 2001). Additionally, the number of state-subsidized childcare facilities has drastically declined due to budget cuts and the transformation of the workplace from state-run to private industry forces women who can no longer rely on the state for childrearing support to take substantial time out of the labor market (Perelli-Harris 2008). The socialist welfare state had once taken on some of women’s nurturing and care-giving roles but this is now considered too costly in a free market economy and the Ukrainian state is de-volving these responsibilities back onto the shoulders of women (Verdery 1994). Indeed, the gender organization of capitalist households cheapens the cost of labor for capital by assigning reproductive labor to women and calling it “housework” which is unpaid. This cheapening makes post-socialist economies more viable.<sup>24</sup> Given these

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<sup>24</sup> Verdery writes, “The chief alternative Eastern Europe’s women might anticipate is what has happened in more-advanced economies: the commodification of household tasks into services (day care, cleaning, meal provision, and so forth) for which a working couple pays something closer to their real cost than is paid when these are “housework.” Until the commodity economy becomes as pervasive in Eastern Europe as it

structural barriers to employment for women post-Ukrainian independence, it is not surprising then that “in every age group the level of employment is lower for women than for men” (United Nations Development Programme 2008). Highly educated women clustered in state-run services and enterprises such as education, health care, and scientific research institutes have been especially hard hit by the Ukrainian state’s closure of these institutions, reductions in staff, or inability to pay state employees (United Nations Development Programme 2003). In fact a disproportionate number of Ukrainian migrants in both my Italy and California samples were high school teachers forced into early retirement because the state could no longer pay them. Once unemployed, women have a harder time finding employment than their male counterparts (United Nations Development Programme 2003).

These structural changes in Ukraine’s labor market have coincided with a reorganization of gendered relations. In Post-Soviet discourse, the way to deal with unemployment is to send women back to the home where they “belong” (Attwood 1996). It suggests that Soviets were “enemies of nature” by trying to force humans to act contrary to their gendered nature, creating “weak” men and “masculine” women. Socialist paternalism and women are jointly accused of having destroyed the ethno-nation (almost extinct due to low birthrates), the national character, and “traditional” national values.<sup>25</sup> After independence, already low fertility rates declined from 1.8 in 1991 to 1.1 in 1999 (Perelli-Harris 2008). The decline is due to a drop in second births since almost all Ukrainian women have one child in their early 20s and then stop (Perelli-Harris 2008). This has led the Ukrainian state to launch a campaign to increase birth rates to save the ethno-nation through population growth among ethnic Ukrainians, especially in rural Ukraine where it is believed traditional culture has been preserved to a greater extent in order to produce “bearers of authentic Ukrainian identity” (Zhurzhenko 2004). The Ukrainian state criticizes “Soviet” one-child families as causing “egocentrism and communication problems” and attempts to encourage instead two-parent families with three or four children suggesting that large families are a Ukrainian trait (Zhurzhenko 2004).

Compared to the Soviet era when the state pursued a policy of full employment, Ukraine’s economic transformation has meant high rates of unemployment and underemployment for both women and men. However, market reforms were supposed to raise the economic welfare of families and make the one-earner family possible; that “one-earner” was typed male (Zhurzhenko 2004). The new, Ukrainian family with a mother-housewife and a father-patriarch is the basis of the “modern” and “Western” Ukrainian nation. This modern Ukrainian family is juxtaposed against the Soviet family which generally had an absent father, a working mother, and a strong grandmother with the state at its head. Many informants characterized the pattern of Soviet marriage and child bearing with the following saying: “Married at 18, pregnant at 19, and divorced at

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is in the developed world, however, post-socialist Eastern-Europe will be returning to the housewife-based domestic economy superseded at least in part by both socialism and advanced capitalism.”

<sup>25</sup> Verdery (Verdery 1994, 1996) and Gal and Kligman (2000) further argue that nationalist policies driving women back to their “proper” nurturant role, an increasingly visible ethno-nationalism coupled with a anti-feminist and pro-natalist politicking are features common to post-Soviet Eastern European countries. They suggest that these processes are tied to the post-Soviet experience. However, the way in which this plays out in individual countries varies. See for example Groven (1993) and Haney (2002) on Hungary, Verdery (1993) on Romania, Ashwin (2000) on Russia.

20.” For my benefit they often added that the only reason why marriages lasted even that long was because Soviet law stipulated that one could not divorce during the first year of a child’s life.

In this way Ukrainian nationalism and a particular family structure are linked in present-day Ukraine. The “natural” order between the sexes is now best exemplified by the capitalist, European, nuclear family. In Ukraine, this “return” to a traditional patriarchal family and the rise of neofamilialism has become part of nationalist discourse as well as tied to a Catholic and Christian revival in Ukraine (Predborska 2005; Zhurzhenko 2004).<sup>26</sup>

As alluded to earlier, the new icon of ideal Ukrainian womanhood is *Berehynia*, an ancient pagan goddess, who has come to embody the protectress of the family hearth and the Ukrainian nation (Rubchak 1996). *Berehynia*, the “hearth-mother” is the “perfect Ukrainian woman, the spirit of the Ukrainian home, the ideal mother, who played an important role in Ukrainian history, the preserver of language and national identity” (Pavlychko 1996). Like ordinary Ukrainian women, *Berehynia* is strong but committed to maternal duties, independent but family-oriented and respectful of husbands. She symbolizes a pre-Soviet and distinctly Ukrainian national culture in which Ukrainian men and women had separate responsibilities but were equally respected. It is this respect accorded to women for their “separate responsibilities” that makes Ukraine “modern” and “European.” In fact, some argue that historically, Ukrainian society was matriarchal compared to patriarchal and “backward” Russia (Rubchak 2001).

It is not only Ukrainian women who are called to embrace new “Ukrainian” norms.<sup>27</sup> There are new moral rules for men as well. Ukrainian men must reject the “weak” and “effeminate” position of their Soviet fathers, reclaim their masculinity through breadwinning, and take back from the state their rightful place as the head of the family. Nevertheless, in this narrative about Ukraine’s national identity, it is “our women” that make Ukrainians Ukrainian and not Soviet. The power of the *Berehynia* image lies in part in the fact that it is a symbol of an independent Ukraine that all Ukrainians from east to west can embrace. The image is ubiquitous from the statue of *Berehynia* atop a 40-foot-tall column that has replaced the statue of Lenin in Kyiv’s Independence Square—it is under her outstretched arms that the events of the Orange Revolution unfolded—to Tymoshenko’s peasant plait which none too subtly associates her with Ukraine’s national goddess (Rubchak 2005).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> While in popular discourse this is framed as a “return” to a provider-housewife family structure that is characteristic of Ukraine’s pre-Soviet past, LaFont (2001:213) reminds us of the reality that in most former bloc countries, societies were agricultural and women worked alongside men in the fields until the communist push for industrialization. Therefore the “bourgeois family of a man as provider and woman as homemaker was certainly not the norm” and in most cases did not exist in the first place.

<sup>27</sup> For a look at changing identities in post-Communist Russia see (Bonnell 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Rubchak writes, “In 2001, President Leonid Kuchma unveiled a monumental statue of a woman, arms held high above her head, reminiscent of the Praying Virgin of the Eastern Orthodox, known as Oranta, except that instead of raising her hands in prayer and adoration, she holds aloft a sprig of the snowball berry. Folk wisdom has it that the berry is the bearer of human souls, making this *Berehynia* a powerful representation of generational continuity. Initially, the statue was dubbed *Berehynia-Oranta*, but Kuchma christened it *Oranta-Berehynia*, elevating this Ukrainian archetype to sacred status. No longer was she simply *Berehynia*, mother of the nation; the ideal Ukrainian woman had been reconceptualized to signify the “mother of us all.” A pagan matriarch, or domestic Madonna, had been conjoined with the Virgin Mary to form an even more compelling symbol of Ukrainian womanhood.”

The dilemma is that this new traditional, nuclear family formation embodied by *Berehynia* and considered the foundation of the Ukrainian nation and the essence of Ukrainianess does not happen spontaneously with capitalism. Men's wages are not high enough to support this family formation. In order to produce Ukrainian women as *Berehyni* and Ukrainian men as patriarchs, someone must go abroad and send back remittances. Older women, many *babushki*, are pushed out of state-based occupations and as their daughters are increasingly housewives by default if not by choice, their expected role of providing primary care to their grandchildren also becomes obsolete. Many informants reported that they felt the most useful thing they could do for their family was to labor abroad. Grandmothers who migrate to Italy leave their children and grandchildren behind while those who migration to California, as best they can, bring their families with them.<sup>29</sup> It is important to note that migrant women, Soviet women, expressed deep ambivalence both about Ukraine's new gender order and about the kind of lives their migration and remittances made possible for their sons and daughters left behind.

While the articulation of *Berehynia* as the essence of a nation elaborated above is specific to Ukraine, Anne McClintok (McClintock 1995) notes that studies of colonialism reveal that the cult of domesticity historically has been produced by Europeans as central to the idea of progress and the "natural" division of labor. In nationalism discourse, women are often constructed as the symbolic bearers of the nation responsible for both its biological and cultural reproduction and the examples of this range from India to Romania (Radhakrishnan 2006; Verdery 1993).

In many ways, migration poses a challenge to nations and nationalism. Oishi (Oishi 2005) notes that emigration policies are as much a product of national identity as economic concerns and argues that this is especially true when the migrants are women. According to Oishi, the kind of emigration policy a state has towards its women and whether or not the state is "protecting" their women, is understood as an expression of the kind of values that nation possesses, a reflection of the national identity as well as an indicator of where the nation-state lies with respect to the accepted global markers of development: democracy, human rights, and gender equality. The sexual abuse and exploitation of women by foreigners, for example, is experienced as a humiliation for the state and nation where the abuse of migrant women abroad means a violation of "male property and of the symbolic property of the nation" (Oishi 2005).<sup>30</sup> Oishi (2005:100) writes, "Women are not a value-neutral workforce: they symbolize a nation's dignity and constitute the foundations of nationalism and national identity."

This is heightened in Ukraine where one of the few claims to national identity that this bifurcated population can all agree on hangs on a particular idealized conception of an authentic Ukrainian family with Ukrainian women as *Berehynia* at its center. Mass emigration challenges Ukraine's international prestige. At the same time as Ukraine is making claims to Europe and the "First World," nothing signals "Third World" in the international arena quite like the mass emigration of your women to perform domestic

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<sup>29</sup> The argument here is not that grandmothers are the only people who migrate, but it is clear that the migration from Ukraine to Italy is predominately individual women over 40. While the migration to California is more diverse, within my sample it was clear that the migration was grandmother-led.

<sup>30</sup> Also see (Nixon 1997) and (Pateman 1988).

labor abroad (Solari n.d.).<sup>31</sup> Ukraine and its emigrants are acutely aware of Ukraine's position in the global hierarchy of nation. It is struggling to join the First World even as slipping in the Third World is recognized and feared possible outcome of post-Soviet transformation.

### **Motherhood Discourses: Going Global**

It is no coincidence that “motherhood” is the language of Tymoshenko's documentary and the focus is Ukrainian domestic workers in Italy. Motherhood is a condensed symbol in Ukraine. As one unpacks “motherhood,” one finds the non-maternal roots of maternalism (nation, development, economics, ethnic identity and so on). When women migrate, everyone has an opinion about who is a “good” and “bad” mother including the migrants themselves. Here I would like to explore the ways in which motherhood and migration is constructed in Ukraine first because it helps explain the ways in which motherhood discourses are enacted by Ukrainian women and men in Rome and San Francisco but second because it illustrates the differing significance of exile and exodus as migration patterns inside Ukraine. To this end I draw on interviews I conducted in L'viv and present the experiences of a woman who attempted to migrate but was unsuccessful, a daughter whose mother is in Italy, and a son whose family is in California.

#### *Zoya: Too Good a Mother to Migrate*

During my time in Ukraine, I rented a room in a convent for Ukrainian Greek Catholic nuns. Sister Mariya, a thick-boned woman with large brown eyes who radiated kindness was in charge of bringing me meals. I grew to look forward to her visits every evening where she checked to make sure I had made it back by the 10pm curfew and we shared stories about our day. Today, Sister Mariya had a visitor, Zoya, from her home town outside L'viv and sat her down to lunch with me. Sister Mariya suggested Zoya and I talk about life in Ukraine and left us to go about her work much to Zoya's displeasure. Zoya scowled at me over the small plates that held canned sardines, boiled potatoes, cabbage topped with a swirl of mayonnaise, and black bread. Zoya began by explaining in Ukrainian that even though her husband is Russian, they are patriots and speak only Ukrainian at home. She scoffed, “I don't even remember Russian!” I apologized profusely for my lack of Ukrainian and Zoya, in perfect Russian, began explaining that she took a trip to Italy the year before with the her Greek Catholic parish and was hosted by a Catholic Italian family. Once there Zoya decided she would look for work. Zoya, 38, lives outside of L'viv in a one room apartment with her parents, her husband, and her 13 year-old son. Zoya said of the tight living quarters:

You just don't feel like a normal person like this. You can't have a normal sex life; you can't have a fight because your son is there and understands everything.

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<sup>31</sup> It is worth noting that in Italy, domestic work is the only work available to Ukrainian migrants while in California some Ukrainian immigrants do filter into higher status jobs. However this older generation of Ukrainian immigrants do perform a disproportionate amount of cleaning and caring labor even in California (Solari 2006).

We expect that by 40 you should have your own home. My husband is reaching 40 and despite the fact that he works 12 hours a day, we don't have anything and he doesn't feel like a man and I as a woman and wife can do nothing about this.

Zoya is the director of a school for the arts and she earns \$10 a month. She said that enrollment is low since there are always fewer children and she is afraid they may close the whole school. She suggested that the low birthrate was part of a Russian plot to "eliminate the Ukrainian population." Russians were also responsible for the lack of jobs, the low wages, and the cramped living spaces. Zoya reasoned that long hours of work, constant worry, and no outlet to express frustrations at home would turn the population "into zombies" that would be unable to stand up against Russian aggression. Zoya thought she would work in Italy and earn money like so many women do and save enough money to live separate from her parents. Zoya only stayed in Italy a month. While on the one hand Zoya explained that she made the "ultimate sacrifice as a mother" by going abroad to work, it turned out she was "too good" a mother to stay. Zoya explained:

My son cried for me and asked why I abandoned him. I called home every day. My husband explained that I hadn't left them that I was working for our bread but it didn't work. And then I realized that I could not live without my family. What kind of a mother can live without her child?

Zoya clearly felt uncomfortable that she was not able to "make it" in Italy. She was unable to find steady work. However, women who migrate to Italy are overwhelmingly labeled as "bad mothers" and denigrated as "prostitutes" in public discourse. Zoya taps into these discourses about motherhood to justify her "failed" migration. Zoya reveals that for individuals negotiating with the mass migration they see around them, it was not clear if "good" mothers are those who migrated or those who remained. Regardless motherhood was the language of migration.

*Olha: You'll be a Prostitute like your Mother*

Olha, 17, was a journalism student at L'viv University. Her red hair and freckles would have given her a girlish appearance but her eyes were intelligent and she had the poise of a young woman. Olha explained that in her hometown, a small village an hour outside of L'viv, there are "no women left" they are "all in Italy." Her mother has been working in Italy for three years. Olha said that at first she cried and asked her mother not to go. I asked Olha how her mother responded. Olha replied, "Mama looked at me and said: Someday you will want to study and then you will look at me and say Mama, why didn't you go?"

Olha was left in the care of her stepfather and her stepfather's mother, Olha's stepmother. Olha said that her stepgrandmother "hated her" and her younger half sister. Olha's mother had been sending remittances to Olha's stepfather who in turn gave the money to his mother to run the house. They did not buy Olha clothes, the things she needed for school, or even nourishing food. Olha's stepgrandmother would not let Olha

Olha speak with her mother on the phone for fear that she would tell her how she was being treated. Olha's eyes smothered with quite rage:

It was bad enough that they said my mother was a bad mother for leaving, but my step-grandmother would call my mother a prostitute. When I protested she said she knew it was true, even President Kuchma had said that our women in Italy were prostitutes and my mother was no different. She would tell me that I would never go to university that I was not smart enough, and I'd just end up being a prostitute like my mother.

Olha shook her head. She said that her mother was a school teacher and earned 80 *hryvni* (\$16) a month. Her first husband told her she was "nothing" because she did not earn enough. Now, Olha explained, she is in Italy where she earned 20 to 30 times that but this was also "not good enough for her second husband" and they too have grown apart.

Olha's mother now sends her remittances directly to Olha. Olha rents a room in L'viv and goes back to her village every weekend to monitor the renovation on their home. Olha's mother is still married to her second husband and allows him to live in her house "because she feels sorry for him," but Olha says there are no longer feelings between them. I asked Olha how she felt about her mother's migration now. She replied:

Mama calls herself a feminist and I am the daughter of a feminist. Both mama and I are stronger for what we have lived through. Mama made the absolute right decision to go. She did what she needed to do for her kids. What choice did she have, really? If mama was not in Italy I would not be in University. I am grateful to her.

Most of the young adults I spoke with in L'viv expressed gratitude and pride in their mothers who went abroad. While in other contexts migrant mothers are not given credit for being providers (Parreñas 2005), earning income was part of mothering in Soviet Ukraine and the adult most of the children of migrants I interviewed recognized that.<sup>32</sup> Olha, however, was the only Ukrainian I who used the word "feminist."<sup>33</sup> For Olha, being a "feminist" meant not finding a man who would be "her partner." Olha's mother has just visited from Italy and Olha explained with tears in her eyes all the wonderful things they did together and all the nights they had stayed up talking. Olha explained, "Some say that feminists cannot be good mothers, but I say my Mama is the best mother I know."

### *Kolya: It's been 10 Years since I saw my Mother*

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<sup>32</sup> This of course does not mean it was easy for Olha or any of the young adults I spoke with to have a parent abroad. No one I interviewed was happy to have a parent leave. However in sharp contrast to the children of Filipina migrants, Ukrainian children did not report feeling "abandoned" by their mothers like Filipina children reported (Parreñas 2005). Unlike Filipina children who Parreñas argues refused their migrant mothers' attempts to expand the meaning of mothering to include being a provider or even primary breadwinner, Ukrainian children, because of Ukraine's Soviet past, saw earning money as part of mothering.

<sup>33</sup> Feminism is considered a "dirty word" in the post-Soviet contexts (see Goldfarb 1997).

Kolya arrived to our interview with the air of someone who was very busy. He kissed his pregnant wife who waved to me and walked off to run her own errands. The nerves on one side of Kolya's face have collapsed he said due to stress. His inability to move one side of his face, his tired eyes, stocky build, and short cropped blonde hair all combined to make him look older than his 24 years. He was distracted as he spoke. Kolya is in medical school studying to be a family practitioner but, he explained, doctors do not make enough money, just \$100 a month therefore—after asking me to turn off the recorder—he explained that he has many “businesses” on the side. He took a call from an “associate” with whom he owns a billiard club while I sipped my tea. He huffed as he put his cell away that there are a series of problems and believes it is “time to sell.” Kolya's wife works for an international cigarette company earning \$700 a month which combined with Kolya's “business” means a combined earning of \$1,000 a month. Kolya noted that with this income, “we can live well in L'viv.” He has plans of opening another business, “maybe cosmetics this time” he mused, “since I have a lot of friends in dermatology.” He gave me the impression that many of his ventures were not exactly legal and he had the aura of a “shady” businessman that gives the term such bad connotations among Soviet folks for whom calling someone a “business man” is still considered an insult.

Kolya's parents left for California in 1995 when he was 14 years-old. They had an aunt and uncle who had went first to Chicago and then California in the upheaval around WWII. After the Soviet Union collapsed, Kolya's parents started to correspond with a cousin who was born in the United States and eventually sponsored them. I asked Kolya what it was like when his parents first left:

It wasn't hard. My mom was 19 when she had me and she was in medical school and my father was also studying engineering at university so I was raised by my grandparents. This is normal. We all lived together in a two story house. My parents were on the first floor and my grandparents were on the second floor. My bedroom was on the second floor so really my grandmother did everything for me. Of course I was sad to see my parents go, but it didn't really change my daily routine much.

Kolya's parents have not returned to Ukraine since emigrating. He noted that this too was “normal for those that went to the United States. It isn't like going to Italy and being able to come back by bus.” After four years Kolya's parents sponsored his younger sister, Lena. I asked why they sponsored Lena, but not him:

Kolya: Many reasons. First I didn't want to go. I was 18 already and wanted to go to medical school. I knew I could not do this if I went to California. Then my mother, she thought it was more important for Lena because she is a girl.

Cinzia: Why is it important that she is a girl?

Kolya: I don't know ... I my mom was afraid that she would marry the wrong man or that she would go to university and then sit at home ... I don't know. It is hard to find work that pays well and it is harder for a woman to find business opportunities.

I pointed out that his wife was earning the highest salary of anyone I had met in L'viv. He nodded but said that would all end now that she was having a baby. Regardless, Kolya explained that he thought it was too late now for him to leave Ukraine. He is married and expecting a baby: "My life is here."

In the beginning, Kolya said that his parents sent money, about \$100 every month and this was "good money." But now they only send money on birthdays and holidays. Kolya explained:

They have everything on credit over there. They bought a house and two cars all on credit. They work and they don't even see their money! My sister is attending university and that is on credit too. Before my uncle, my mother's brother, used to ask for money from her. You know \$1,000 to do a little business here, \$1,000 to do a little remodeling there, but he doesn't ask anymore. He knows that they have everything on credit plus their second child to support over there.

Kolya was able to visit his parents for the first time in 10 years just two months before. He had tried to go to the US consulate in Kyiv once before, he even said he wanted to visit an uncle rather than his parents, but they said he was at risk of becoming a potential immigrant would not give him a visa. He noted that it was not fair that "Ukrainians are not allowed to go to the United States and look around the way Americans can come here and look around." This time Kolya had a pregnant wife in Ukraine so he was deemed unlikely to remain in the United States and they gave him a visa. Kolya had recently returned from spending three weeks with his parents in California:

I didn't recognize them. They were both older and fatter...[laughing] My mom was offended but it has been 10 years. I think they did the right thing; they made the right decision to leave when they did just after the Soviet Union collapsed. They have realized themselves in the States and I wouldn't have been able to go to medical school ... my sister and I wouldn't have had all that we do if they didn't leave. They want me to join them there and my friends think I am crazy not to take this opportunity ... but my parents, they think about how everything was better before the Soviet Union collapsed. They don't know Ukraine anymore. In 10 years it has changed and it is changing. We won't join Europe tomorrow but we will someday soon. I think we can live in Ukraine.

Kolya's parents received their US citizenship last year making them eligible to sponsor Kolya. Kolya is married and over 21 and therefore low priority for family reunification according to US immigration laws and the wait time would be many years. As of yet, however, his parents have not started the paperwork. "What for?" Kolya insisted. "I am not going anywhere."

### **Gendered Migrations: Global Motherhood Scripts and Local Negotiations**

Markets, moralities, and motherhood are bundled together in Ukraine's nation-building process. Ukraine's most potent national symbol is now *Berehynia*, the mother goddess and goddess of the nation. It is on the terrain of motherhood, then, that Ukraine

is criticized as a sending state for being a “bad” mother, forcing her children into the care of “step-mother” Italy as a receiving country. Much of the uncertainty of Ukraine’s economic transformation and its new nationalism is spoken about in terms of motherhood.<sup>34</sup> The Ukrainian state is concerned that it is facing a true demographic crisis that threatens the ethno-nation of which individuals like Zoya are well aware. Campaigns to increase birth rates, such as the one being carried out in Ukraine, glorify motherhood and this too underlies the *Berehynia* imagery (Solari n.d.).

Therefore, emigration is a transgression of the Ukrainian nation in two fundamental ways. First, women who migrate seem to flout the *Berehynia* ideal of what is now considered true ethnic Ukrainian womanhood. Second, the image of mass emigration in general but the emigration of women in particular is governed by global scripts that suggest that mothers who leave their family behind would only do so under extreme economic duress in order to “escape poverty.” This is the only reason that is considered acceptable for the migration of mothers in the global area and is the only reason that allows migrant women to make credible claims to being “good mothers.” Yet, this global script is at odds with national level discourses about Ukraine’s glorious journey into Europe and the First World. Therefore, the Ukrainian state attempts to deter migration and in the process stigmatizes its emigrants. Inside Ukraine, women migrants are blamed for a range of social ills including the “degradation of the family,” “orphaned” children, men’s alcoholism, and even men’s moral debasement by driving men into the arms of mistresses. However exile to Italy and exodus to California, the two most salient migrations in Ukrainian public discourse, are not stigmatized in the same way or to the same degree. The comparison reveals that not all migration patterns are equal.

This comparative ethnographic analysis of two migration patterns from Ukraine reveals that migration patterns, an analytical framing that requires a consideration of both sending and receiving countries, can be positioned differently in the processes of the sending country (Solari 2010). In the case of Ukraine, exile and exodus are differentially implicated in Ukraine’s nation-building project. The exile of mostly grandmothers to Italy is productive of Ukraine’s nation-building project and part of a large-scale reorganization of gendered relations. This gendered reorganization has a structural dimension which consists of a shift from an extended to an increasingly more nuclear family and new moralities for men and women as well as a changing labor market that includes men as breadwinners while simultaneously excluding more and more women as mothers or potential mothers. It also has a discursive dimension that constructs this

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<sup>34</sup> Poretskina (1996:134-135) argues that the most important predictor of a “successful” future for children during this time of economic transformation is parents’ “own adaptation to the contemporary conditions” because the “family is main agent of socialization in unstable society” and parents are “moral guides.” She further argues that parents’ decision to emigrant represented a rejection of the changes in post-Soviet society. I would argue that, especially in the case of exile to Italy, emigration is instead an active engagement with the future of both Ukraine and their children. For Ukrainians in both Italy and California, migrations represents a deep negotiation with moralities that is much more complex than simply accepting or rejecting changes to the Soviet moral order. Indeed when it comes to “survival strategies” in the region Burawoy, Krotov, and Lytkina (2000) uncovered that the center of economic activity is no longer the factory but the household where women as mothers become ever more central as men become even more peripheral to the economic well being of a household. In Ukraine, migration exacerbates this trend for the older generation while encourages young men to return to the center of family life.

particular family formation as “modern,” “capitalist,” and “European” as well ethnically and culturally Ukrainian. This gendered reorganization of family and work structures is constructed by the Ukrainian state as the building block of a new Ukraine. However exile and exodus are differentially implicated in these processes.

One might assume that the Ukrainian state would view exile to Italy favorably. After all, the physical removal of these women as grandmothers and the monetary remittances earned through their labor power abroad helps build this new Ukraine. And yet, while the migration pattern to California is benignly tolerated by the Ukrainian state, those who leave to work in Italy are negatively stigmatized by the Ukrainian state as “prostitutes” and “betrayers” of the Ukrainian nation. In fact, while former Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma famously addressed Ukrainian women inside Ukraine as the “*Berehyni* of our people,” every informant in Italy repeated with indignation that he called all Ukrainian women abroad “prostitutes.”<sup>35</sup>

In Italy migrant women wrestle with the connections between poverty, migration, and nation. Motherhood is one of the terrains on which battles for honor and status are fought. Migrants in Italy placed remittances at the center of their narratives as proof of being a “good mother.” Migrant women I interviewed in Italy often lived on a bare-bones budget. They denied themselves basic needs or small comforts in order to send most of their wages to their family, usually adult children, in Ukraine. While official statistics are difficult to come by and are subject to debate since the majority of migrants from Ukraine in Italy are undocumented, there is popular and media recognition within Ukraine that remittances from temporary labor migrants abroad (*zarobitchany*), including those in Italy, have a significant impact on the Ukrainian economy (Keryk 2004; Shelburne and Palacin 2007). According to one estimate, these remittances total \$8.4 billion, about 8% of Ukraine’s GDP (Drach and Najibullah 2009).

In the context of post-Soviet transformation, informants exclaimed that it seemed all the rules governing what one does to be a successful or honorable woman or man have been “turned upside down.” Exactly what one should do to be a “good” mother in this time of cultural flux and uncertainty is unclear. Confusion about which moral teachings and behaviors the older generation should pass on to their children when the Soviet moral system they came of age in has been discredited gives questions of morality tied to capitalist markets, mothering norms, nationhood, and their migration experience abroad heightened meaning. The ways in which migrant women resolve this has consequences not only for their children back in Ukraine, but for how they negotiate the way they should be perceived and treated by Italian employers as they work in Italy.

The women who led their family to California are also stigmatized by the Ukrainian state as “defectors” and are accused of abandoning their country (Solari n.d.). However this

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<sup>35</sup> Kuchma’s comments reinforce a meta narrative in the public media that it is young women emigrating from Ukraine as sex workers rather than older women doing domestic work. Alexandra Hrycak (In press) argues that while evidence suggests that young women from Ukraine do constitute a small percentage of the labor migration from Ukraine to Europe, the vast majority are middle aged women doing cleaning and caring labor. She argues that both Western policies and NGOs address the needs of migrant women mainly by funding anti-trafficking initiatives. In order to gain access to these funds Ukrainian women’s organization must have trafficked women. In this way both the Ukrainian state and NGOs perpetuate the myth that all of Ukraine’s migrant women either go abroad as prostitutes to earn high wages or become the victims of transnational prostitution rings causing problems for these women upon reentering Ukraine.

label was not deeply felt nor usually mentioned by informants in San Francisco and did not have political bite inside Ukraine. One might think that mothers who leave children behind and do not see them for 10 years, as in the case of Kolya and many others who have parents in the United States, would be more heavily stigmatized as “bad mothers” than those who go to Italy and visit regularly as does Olha’s mother. Those in exodus, even those who have a child left in Ukraine, tend to stop sending remittances as they attempt to improve their living standards in California and have car payments, high rents, or even mortgages. Once again, we might expect that those in exodus would be more subject to accusations of “bad mothering.” But the migration to the United States, while noted, is benignly tolerated or even ignored by the Ukrainian state. I suggest that this is because, at this historical moment in Ukraine, it is the cultural project of forging a Ukrainian nation that is of utmost concern. Exodus is peripheral to this nation-building project.

Once in California, immigrants who arrive with their families or with the expectation that their families will soon follow are spared the painful negotiations of determining who is a “good” mother. Good mother/bad mother discourses are not as salient among Ukrainians in San Francisco as among those in Rome. The underlying assumption is that these mothers have made great sacrifices to bring their children to a place with more opportunities. However, Ukrainians in exodus have a different iteration of markets, moralities, and motherhood with which to struggle. As the adult children of my informants assimilate into American culture through market mechanisms, informants in California, like those in Italy, come to realize that markets are attached to moralities (Mandel and Humphrey 2002; Wanner 2005). For example, adult children in California delay having babies to attain certain labor market goals. They are not only upwardly mobile through markets in terms of living standards and status but they are geographically mobile and sometimes move away for jobs bringing grandchildren with them. Finally informants complained that adult children became “too American” when it came to the ways they parent their own children, my informants’ grandchildren. These developments placed the moralities and familial practices of adult children at odds with my informants’ Soviet moralities that shaped their desires for a particular organization of family life and their role as *babushki*. Questions of morality, specifically what values and lessons a parent should pass on about how to be “successful” in light of a discredited Soviet moral order and an unfamiliar set of moral codes tied to capitalist markets was salient in exodus as well as exile.<sup>36</sup> However, struggles over motherhood in exodus took a significantly different form than struggles over motherhood in exile.

While little attention has been paid to how migrant women create identities and subjectivities through migration, I have discovered that in the Ukrainian case, national processes of post-soviet transformation impacts how migrant women and men understand their migration experience and how they understand what kind of person, parent, and national subject they are or are becoming. However the effects of these changes in Ukraine are not uniformly experienced in Italy and California.<sup>37</sup> The varied effects of the

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<sup>36</sup> Wanner (2005) argues that one of the legacies of Soviet socialism in Ukraine is a “moralizing lens” through which to evaluate wealth and consumption practices. After state-driven ideology that celebrated unite and collectivism we now find competing notions of morality concerned with balancing individual and collective interests in the pursuit of wealth. Is the burgeoning inequality in a fair price to pay for the “bright future” market capitalism offers? The answer is a moral one.

<sup>37</sup> The reverse is also true. The effects of the migration pattern to Italy and to California had different effects inside Ukraine as well (Solari 2010).

sending country in the contexts of reception can only be understood by deeply connecting sending and receiving contexts and analyzing the migrations patterns produced through their intersection. In the case of Ukraine what emerges is exile vs. exodus.

PART I:  
EXILE



The Garbatella outside Rome's city center. On Sunday mornings 5,000 Ukrainians come to send goods and money to family in Ukraine, collect letters, photographs and foodstuff sent from home, and meet friends.

### **Italy's Context of Reception and Connections to Ukraine**

Italy was historically a sending country with a substantial out-migration and little in-migration until recently. Beginning in the 1970s, Southern Europe has been receiving immigrants, especially those without documents (Kofman et al. 2000; King 2000). Western Europe has had decades to create immigration laws limiting those trying to enter creating what has been referred to as “fortress Europe” (Kofman and Sales 2000). Instead Southern Europe—Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece—is just beginning to see immigration as a social problem that needs regulation. Many immigrants understand that entering Southern Europe is both easier and entails less risk of deportation than Western Europe documents (Kofman et al. 2000; King 2000). Of the Southern European countries, Italy has the highest influx of immigrants (SOPEMI 2001). Migrants from the former Soviet Union, especially women from Ukraine and Moldova, have entered Italy in astounding numbers since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 and have become the largest group providing paid domestic labor there (Capone 2004; Kofman et al. 2000).

The migration literature tends to study migrants from the perspective of the receiving country. However exile cannot be explained by the context of reception alone. In what follows I will document the emergence of Italy as a receiving country and the Italian state's immigration laws, the development of domestic work as “women's work” and an increasingly large sector of the Italian labor market, and Italy's care crisis for the elderly. These developments taken together explain why migrants, especially women, find work in Italy and tend not to bring their families. But it does not explain why it is specifically older women entering Italy from Ukraine. There are also important factors that shape the organization of Ukrainian communities in Italy. However the subjectivities embedded in exile only make sense in relation to the movement of people and ideas between Italy and Ukraine at times quite literally by sitting on a courier van or bus that transports goods and workers between the two countries and sometime more abstractly through migrants women's subjective experience of building the new Ukraine through migration.

### **Catholics vs. Communists: the Creation of Italy's Domestic Service Sector**

Italy was a country of emigration until the 1970s and “immigration” in the 1960s and 70s referred to the return of Italians working abroad. There are a number of reasons that Southern Europe and Italy in particular saw a large increase in immigration with the number of immigrants tripling in the decade 1981-91 (King 2000). Since the 1970s the “developmental divide” between Northern and Southern Europe closed. However Southern European expansion was not based on the expansion of industrial employment as in Northern Europe but rather tertiary employment in tourism, which requires much seasonal and temporary labor as cleaners, kitchen staff, and personal services, including domestic work and carework (King 2000). This form of economic expansion occurred at the same time that Italian internal migration from Southern to Northern Italy all but came to a halt.

Looking back historically to the 1700s, domestic servants as they were referred to then, were mostly men and organized in guilds with a measure of social status (Sarti 2004). In the 1800s, men began to be absorbed into factory work and domestic service was taken up by single, rural, and Southern Italian women. While the communist party and its trade unions attempted to organize domestic workers, it was the Catholic Church through an organization called ACLI-COLF (*Associazione cattolica di lavoratori italiani-Colaboratrice familiare* or Association of Italian Catholic Workers-Family Collaborators) that, after a series of labor struggles, succeeded.<sup>38</sup> ACLI is still the national representative of domestic workers in Italy today. Domestic workers in Italy are referred to as *Colf* from the acronym COLF for “family collaborators.” This reflects the Catholic understanding of this position which until recently was filled by young, single Italian women, often migrants from Southern and other depressed regions of Italy, as joining the employer’s family in order to support the family unit through her labor. The employer had a responsibility to treat this worker as a member of the family and make sure that she did not fall into sexual transgression. *Colf* in turn were asked to see this role as an extension of their maternal role as future mothers and accept subservience (Andall 1998, 2000b).

This familial construction of domestic workers was challenged in the late 1960s early 1970s. ACLI-COLF adopted a more radical approach influenced by changes in the trade union movement, a growing Italian feminist consciousness, and a leftward shift in Catholic activism. While there was emphasis on the inequality between men and women when it came to domestic work and concerns about “women exploiting other women,” it was largely a class-based analysis that defined ACLI-COLF rhetoric in this period (Andall 1998). During this time, it was almost exclusively elite Italian families who could afford to hire poor Italians as domestics. Therefore the social injustice was made visible in class terms. A class perspective was also more palatable to the Catholic Church than a gendered analysis which was seen as breeding discord within couples and destabilizing families. Yet, this class-based understanding of domestic work turned out to be a double edged sword for those interested in protecting the rights of domestic workers. It was advantageous because it laid the ground work for *Colf* to be seen as workers. Until then the domestic work sector in the Italian civil code was atypical in that the individual employers rather than the state were expected to protect the rights of domestic workers based on the assumption that the paternalism of the family should provide enough protection. In 1969, this article was abolished and replaced with article 3 of the Italian Constitution which stated that all citizens were equal before the law. This paved the way for national collective bargaining for the sector that would eventually provide more protections through national contracts for domestic workers. On the other hand, while job participation rates for Italian women are still low compared to other Western developed countries (it is 13 percentage points below the EU-15 average), they have dramatically increased within the Italian context (Campani 2000; Sciortino 2004; Zontini 2001). As opportunities for Italian women in the labor force increased, they moved out of low status domestic work jobs leading to a strong demand for foreign workers. With more Italian women in the labor force, not only elite families but also middle-class families began hiring *Colf* and today it is a widespread practice in Italy. With middle-class Italians joining the ranks of employers of domestic workers, ACLI-COLF was no

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<sup>38</sup> For a detailed discussion of the fight to organize Italy’s domestic workers see Andall (2000).

longer able to claim that the rich were exploiting the poor and found its class-based perspective unsustainable.

In the 1990s ACLI-COLF commissioned a series of articles to create a new theoretical framework with which to analyze domestic work. Discussions about Italian men sharing in domestic work were no longer on the table and Italian feminism never left academia to become a women's movement. Instead, the debate centered on the *need* of Italian women for domestics and obscured issues of gender, class, migration, and ethnicity. The analysis focused on lack of early childcare options, schools that only operated for half the day, and the increased number of elderly who also needed time consuming assistance. According to the report, more women in the labor force meant that women had "no option" but to hire domestics. The mantra of "women exploiting other women" fell to the sideline as did an awareness of the transformation of the domestic worker sector as foreign women replaced Italian women as domestic workers and the particular dynamics of power they must negotiate. While ACLI-COLF recognized that for Italian women, live-in work seemed anachronistic, they did not extend this to the migrant women, many professionals in their countries of origin, coming to Italy from Ethiopia, the Philippines, South America, and most recently Eastern Europe.

### **Italy's "Care Crisis" and the Italian Welfare State**

It was not just women moving into the labor force driving these shifts but also demographic reality that led to an increasing demand for domestic workers, especially careworkers for the elderly. Italy has an aging population, the oldest population in Europe, as well as one of the lowest fertility rates ever recorded in work population history (Chell 2000:109; King 2000). The Italian state recognizes it has a care crisis on its hands and sees immigration as the solution (Bonifazi 2000; Sciortino 2004; Scrinzi 2004). The Italian welfare state is dependent on the household as provider of personal services and relies on money transfers to households rather than the provision of services. Sociologist Giuseppe Sciortino (2004) argues that migrant domestic workers are the "pillar of the Italian welfare regime" and, given Italy's demographics and labor market imperatives, it is not only that migrants in Italy have a strong incentive to do domestic work since there are few other work options available to them but that the Italian welfare state depends on them to provide these services. According to a study done by the Catholic association "Viva Gli Anziani" in 2000 which surveyed 5,398 elderly Italians in seven Italian cities, 13.3% of those over 64 years-old were being cared for by a non-Italian caregiver while this percentage increases to 24.1% for those over 80 years-old (Sarti 2004).

Ukrainians are now the largest immigrant group performing domestic work in Italy. The majority are *badanti*, a term that refers specifically to those providing care to the elderly.<sup>39</sup> Employers understand these positions as live-in positions. Since there are few nursing homes, the only option for someone who needs round the clock care is either a family member willing to take this responsibility on as unpaid labor or to hire a live-in.

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<sup>39</sup> While *badante* in the singular and *badanti* in the plural is the term used in the media and on the street, among Italian academics there is some debate about this term. The verb *badare* is usually used in reference to children and so the noun *badante* may be offensive, not to the worker, but to the elderly Italian receiving care.

In fact while in California the immigration debate brings first to mind Mexican agricultural workers, in Italy it brings to mind eldercare and increasingly migrants from Eastern Europe. Most immigration services and academic research is sponsored by the Catholic Church which generally has a progressive view of migration. While Catholic organizations such as Comunità di Sant'Egidio, which provided many important services to informants I spoke with in Rome, advocates for less restrictions on migration and even publicly thanked Ukrainian migrants in Rome for caring for Italy's grandparents at a gathering I attended, when it came to individual negotiations between *badanti* and those for whom they cared, the moral waters were murky.

Migration and end of life care are so closely connected that public discourse in Italy about migrant careworkers is laced with moralism. To give an example, I was invited to a conference in Trent to present my research in Italian as part of a panel of researchers who had funded a series of studies using EU grant money to study domestic workers and the eldercare sector. I presented interview data that suggested migrants often found providing bodily care to an elderly person difficult and at times found the emotional labor required to be time draining and requiring great patience. I was shocked to find myself publicly attacked by the other panelists as "unchristian" and was lectured that providing care to the elderly was morally just, honorable, and fulfilling work. They also expressed indignation that, in their perception, I had "chosen sides" picking foreign workers over "my own" given my Italian heritage. I was not given an opportunity to respond but even after much reflection and not sure how I would respond to an attack of my personal morals and lack of solidarity with other Italians rather than my research method or analysis. At the end of the panel I was quickly surrounded by domestic workers, many Ukrainians, who had been trying to found their own group and had hopes to access some of the EU funds in question. They said things like, "if this is such great work, why don't Italians do it?" and "Italians, they think their mother always smells pretty. Well, they stink like everyone else when they go to the bathroom! Why can't they understand this work is hard?" While those I had interviewed ran the gambit on how fulfilling they thought eldercare was, and I felt I had presented that variation in my talk, all careworkers must negotiate difficult personalities, bodily care, and emotions that can range from love to disgust. What became clear, however, is that the moral terrain for discussing carework and migration was more fraught in Italy than the discursive universe in California to which I was accustomed.

No where were these tensions between foreign careworkers and Italian clients more evident than in the ACLI offices where, according to Catholic ideals of labor, ACLI workers represented both employers and workers while acting as mediators of labor disputes. I conducted several weeks of participant observation in ACLI placement offices where they helped both match migrant domestic workers in search of work and Italian families searching for a *Colf* or *badante* as well as attempted to resolve conflicts that arose between domestic workers and their Italian employers. While these workers were supposed to be impartial, they contributed to unequal power dynamics sometimes in small ways such as calling migrants by their first name but Italians with the term of respect, *Signora* or *Signore*, and at other times in ways that had material consequences in migrants' lives by generally siding with Italian employers when it came to questions of cultural practices. However I also witnessed ACLI employees help employers and workers complete the paperwork detailing back wages in vacation days, overtime, and

liquidation payments and side quite forcefully with migrants when it came to issues of wages. Nevertheless, after attending a 3 day yearly conference for ACLI management in Rome, it became clear that ACLI, the only organization charged with protecting the rights of domestic workers, has an identity crisis. ACLI management attending the meeting was torn about whether they should be protecting Italian families who are left in such dire straits by the Italian state or foreign careworkers. One attendee, a woman from Latin America in Italy over 25 years became frustrated with the indecision about “whose side we are on” and pointed out that it was not difficult for them to choose sides back when both workers and clients were Italian. She exclaimed, “Our job has always been to protect the workers. Just because those workers are no longer Italian, does not mean we stop protecting them!” Another attendee, a Roman woman, explained that the migrant women, especially those from the Philippines and from Ukraine did not seem “poor” and this made her less sympathetic. She stated, “I just don’t know anymore...I don’t know who is the weak subject? Is it the migrant woman who is here to work so she can send her children to private school or build a big house or the elderly Italian who needs care?” She continued, “Who is the weak subject? The migrant woman who only makes €400 euros a month or the elderly Italian whose pension is €600 a month and is living on just €200 because he’s giving €400 to the *badante*?” In fact, some in the ACLI management felt that perhaps ACLI had been “too” successful in negotiating on behalf of workers so that domestic work has improved with the adoption of the national contract for domestic workers in 1986 to such an extent that it is now Italy’s elderly that needs protecting.

### **ACLI and the National Contract for Domestic Workers**

My fieldwork in Rome revealed many abuses of migrant domestic workers: sexual harassment, confiscation of passports, verbal and emotional abuse, and unlawful withholding of wages. Nonetheless, compared to the United States, domestic workers in Italy are provided with many protections that do not exist in the United States where there are no federal laws governing domestic work. The National Contract of Domestic Workers sets a minimum wage per hour for live-out hourly work and a minimum monthly wage for live-in work. It requires that live-in workers receive Thursday afternoons and Sundays off. If workers agree to work those days they are entitled to an hourly wage in addition to their monthly salary. Domestic workers are also entitled to a paid month of vacation time per year.<sup>40</sup> Like other Italian workers, they are entitled to the *tredicesima* or the “thirteenth month” which is an extra month’s salary usually paid at Christmas time. They are also entitled to a liquidation pay should their employment be terminated. Liquidation pay amounts to one month’s salary for every year of employment. Legally, even undocumented workers are covered by the terms of the

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<sup>40</sup> There are wage and hour regulations that cover paid domestic work in private homes in the United States but few are aware of this since, unlike in Italy, few US employers and workers know about them (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001). However important to note is that those who work as “personal attendants” such as baby-sitters or caregivers to the elderly or inform are explicitly excluded from the right to earn minimum wage or overtime pay; only domestic workers who can show that they devote at least 20% of their time to housekeeping duties are covered (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001: 212). Issues such as paid vacation time are not even on the table in the United States and getting a National Contract to govern the domestic work sector also seems far off into the future.

national contract negotiated by ACLI but, for obvious reasons, the undocumented are less able and willing to hold employers accountable.

Much of the demand for domestic work in Italy is for live-ins who are willing to provide care to the elderly around the clock. In fact all but a handful of my informants in Rome were doing live-in work. Migrants tend to move towards live-out work when at all possible (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001). This is the case with Filipina domestic workers in Rome for example (Parreñas 2001) and was certainly a complaint I heard among Italian employers at the ACLI offices. Filipinas, employers complained, were no longer willing to do live-in work and had learned to “game the system.” They also were more highly paid than other migrant groups doing domestic work in Italy and middle-class Italian employers argued they could not afford “a Filipina.” This creates the need for more migrants to fill the gap and it is women from the former Soviet Union, especially Ukrainians, who are arriving to Italy in great numbers.

### **All Roads Lead to Rome ... and Most of Them start in Ukraine**

Informants told a remarkably uniform story about how they arrived in Italy from Ukraine. Informants reported going to “travel agencies” in Ukraine where they put in a request to purchase a 10-day tourist visa. They explained that they could not choose the country or the timing of the visa. While there were some visas especially in the early 90s for Greece, by 1994 and 1995, visas were granted increasingly exclusively for Italy with 1998 and 1999 being the years of the “masses.” As one informant put it, “They say all roads lead to Rome—it’s just that those starting in Ukraine have no detours.” While those who were among the first to enter Italy reported paying several hundred euros for the entry visa, by 2004 and 2005 informants were reporting prices at €2,500 (\$3,300). Informants, who generally reported salaries between \$50-80 per month in Ukraine, received help from family members and often had to borrow money at high interest rates in order to purchase the entry visa.

I heard only two minor exceptions to this pattern in my interviews. Two informants entered Italy in 2000 as part of a van sponsored by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church for the Catholic Church’s Jubilee celebrations. When it was time to return, only the director of the program and Lesia, who was her assistant, turned up at the designated meeting spot. The other 30 women had disappeared into Rome. I interviewed Orysia in Rome and also spent time with her and her husband in L’viv. Lesia said that she stayed in Rome because she was afraid to return to Ukraine. She feared that the border guards might think that she had purposely smuggled people into Italy. UGCC priests in Rome also advised her to stay and provided her with temporary housing until she found work. Lesia mused that with barely an overnight bag of clothes, she’s been in Rome five years.

The second exception is several men I interviewed came to Italy by way of Portugal and/or Spain. Ukrainian men are also migrating to Europe although in much smaller numbers than women. In fact, anthropologist Diana Blank in her ethnographic study of a South Eastern Ukrainian city reported informants repeating that Ukraine had “dumped its women into Italy” and that the post-Soviet migration had the opposite demographic effect than war leaving only “men and children in the villages.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Personal communication of the author.

Nonetheless, if the migration to Italy is approximately 80% women with the largest age bracket is 40-55 (ISTAT 2004; Shehda and Horodetsky 2004), then it is 20% men. I found that men in Italy often went first to Portugal or Spain which was experiencing a boom in the construction industry in the early 1990s (Fonseca 2008; Marques and Góis n.d.). They too entered those countries by overstaying entry visas. As those construction jobs disappeared, Ukrainian men reported traveling to Italy where they knew there were large numbers of Ukrainian women. Italian employers understand domestic work as “women’s work” and when I asked women why they migrated rather than their husband (if they had one), the answer was always that it is easier for women to find work abroad. Often, although not always, this was accompanied by a gendered discourse about “weak,” “irresponsible,” and “ineffective” men that is a dominant discourse in the region (Ashwin 2000a; Lissyutkina 1999; Utrata 2008). Men in Rome do perform domestic labor, often caring for elderly Italian men. They also had more opportunities as domestic workers in the outskirts of Rome where a villa required gardening or maintenance and where driving was more likely to be part of the job.<sup>42</sup> Many men, however, continue to look for work in construction and reported being dependent on Ukrainian women who were working inside Italian families for help finding construction jobs. In a few instances I met men who worked as a *badante* just long enough to get their papers and then moved on to other work.

For both men and women, acquiring documents was the only way to be able to return to Ukraine and then re-enter Italy without once again having to pay the large sum for the 10 day tourist visa. This is why acquiring an Italian *permesso di soggiorno* or a permit to stay, was so important for migrants. Here Ukrainian men doing construction work were severely disadvantaged since the Italian government singles out domestic work for special treatment creating limited but important paths to legalization for *Colf* and especially *badanti*.

### **Italy’s “Immigration” Laws and Routes to Legalization**

The most common explanation of increased migration into Italy beginning in the 1970s is that the closing of Western Europe’s borders creating “fortress Europe” made Italy an easier country of entry for migrants. However, Sociologists Asher Colombo and Giuseppe Sciortino (2003) argue that increased immigration to Italy can best be explained by looking internally to Italian law. They note that it was not legal immigration but illegal immigration that increased in the 1970s and these migrants were not regularized until Italy’s first immigration law in 1986. This regularized the undocumented residing in Italy but did not limit or regulate the entry of new migrants. The first piece of immigration legislation that attempted to do so was the Martelli law of 1990. It set up requirements for entry visas as well as launched a general amnesty for all those who could demonstrate they entered Italy before 1990, regardless of their labor market status. Many scholars argue that one of the results of this “back door” policy of regularizing immigrants after the fact has encouraged immigration to Italy.

During my time in the field, some informants had acquired papers in the amnesty law of 1998, and others were still involved in the legalization process authorized in June

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<sup>42</sup> Most Ukrainian women I met in Rome could not drive and attending driving school and applying for a driver’s license was an important activity for a subset of my informants.

2002. This law, attacked by Italy's political left and the Catholic Church as racist and anti-immigrant, is called the Bossi-Fini Bill after Deputy Prime Minister Gianfranco Fini, leader of the post-Fascist National Alliance political party, and Reform Minister Umberto Bossi of the anti-immigration party the Northern League. The bill makes it easier to deport illegal immigrants and makes staying in Italy contingent on proof of a labor contract. While this bill is detrimental to certain immigrant groups, especially migration streams from North Africa that are comprised mostly of men, the bill seems to have had some positive effects for immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Immigrants from the former Soviet Union accounted for 53% of the requests for resident visas under the Bossi-Fini law (Capone 2004). The number of legalized Moldovans increased five times while the number of legalized Ukrainians increased eight times jumping from 14,808 registered Ukrainians in Italy in 2002 to 127,000 in 2003 making them the fourth largest immigrant group in Italy and immigrants from the former Soviet Union the largest immigrant group overall (Capone 2004; ISTAT 2004). This dramatic jump in the number of legalized immigrants from the former Soviet Union suggests that many were already in Italy illegally. The Bossi-Fini Bill makes domestic workers and care providers to the elderly privileged job categories facilitating their legalization process. Precisely because immigrants from the former Soviet Union are mostly women, and recent arrival to Italy, and are there in large numbers, they benefited more dramatically from the amnesty program than any other immigrant group in Italy.

Despite demonstrations and activism on the left with the goal of repealing the Bossi-Fini Bill, an even more restrictive version of the bill was passed in 2009. Again the goal of this law was specifically for *badanti* and *Colf* although there were a number of restrictions that made the number of foreign domestic workers regularized smaller than expected. The restrictions included a €500 fee to be paid before filing papers for legalization and requirements that the worker earn €20,000 per year. Most informants I interviewed in Italy earned €600-800 per month which, if their employer respected the 13<sup>th</sup> month meant earnings of €7,800-10,400 per year. The highest paid person I interviewed earned €1,000 per month. Therefore while the amnesty law did regularize *Colf* and *badante*, only wealthy Italian employers were able to meet the requirements.

Italian immigration laws recognize migrants solely in their capacity as workers allowing few opportunities for migrants to bring their families with them or even for the migrant herself to stay permanently in Italy.<sup>43</sup> I met informants whose elderly ward died just as their *permesso* was up for renewal, or workers who fell and broke limbs or otherwise became ill and could not work just as their *permesso* expired. They had to quickly find a new employer willing to deal with the renewal paperwork and take on the responsibilities of hiring a documented worker or else lose their legal status. While the majority of Ukrainians I met in Rome were undocumented, once regularized, Ukrainian migrants in Rome worked hard to maintain their legal status. Nonetheless migrants moved between documented and undocumented status.

Italy is still adapting to its status as a receiving country. Colombo and Sciortino (2003) argue that the Italian State's preference for "backdoor illegal migration" and then mass amnesty, have, "weakened the regulatory function of [immigrant] networks and

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<sup>43</sup> The rate of Italian naturalization is negligible (Colombo and Sciortino 2003).

paradoxically made it easier to arrive in the country without having to count on help from fellow countrymen, friends, or relatives” and has led to an increase in migrant flows into Italy. This, in conjunction with Italy’s long coastline and mountainous borders which are difficult to secure, may also explain other particularities of Italian immigration. For example one needs to count up 14 nationalities in Italy to reach 50% of the total migrant population in Italy. This is in sharp contrast to the immigration into Northern Europe where labor migrants are drawn from a more or less homogeneous set of Mediterranean Basin countries (King 2000).

While the state has made it easy to legalize domestic workers compared to migrants in other occupational categories, many employers still resist for several reasons. One point of resistance is that once a foreign domestic worker has a *permesso di soggiorno*, they are free to switch employers. Searching for work with a *permesso* already in hand is attractive to a certain subset of Italian employers and can yield higher wages. In order to successfully renew her *permesso* when it expires, the worker must have proof of employment; it does not have to be the employer who originally sponsored the paperwork. Therefore employers often fear that a worker will leave once they receive their documents. A second concern of employers is that once a worker is legal, the employer must begin paying the equivalent of social security benefits called *contributti* to the Italian state. Once foreign workers retire, there is no way for them to remain in Italy legally and most informants had plans to return to Ukraine. None of my informants—workers, community leaders, and union representatives—believed that workers would have access to these funds from the Italian state. In fact, many informants set money they earned in Italy aside to sustain them in their old age since pensions from the Ukrainian state were too low to live on (most informants cited \$60 per month as their pension) nor did they believe they would receive back any of the funds they paid into the Italian social security system. And yet *contributti* was the most cited obstacle to legalization. While the law is very specific that *contributti* are to be paid by the employer in addition to the workers’ wages, many informants reported agreeing to pay their own *contributti* by suggesting to employers that the fees be deducted from their salary in the hopes of attaining their legal documents.

Every single migrant Ukrainian I spoke with in Italy wanted to be legalized. Concerns about people’s *permesso di soggiorno*, the problems of renewal, and attempts to convince employers to legalize them in the first place were constant topics of discussion. Without a *permesso*, workers could not go home to Ukraine. Without a *permesso* informants could not leave Italy. Those without documents cried in interviews at missing children’s wedding, parents’ funerals, and holidays with their families back in Ukraine. Those who were most bitter were those with legal documents but could still not return to Ukraine while they waited, sometimes for a full year, for the Italian state to renew a *permesso* they already had. They too could not leave Italy until the renewed *permesso* was in hand. With requirements that migrants renew their *permesso* every 1-2 years, the renewal process for those with legal rights to work in Italy as documented migrants and the undocumented alike found themselves trapped in Italy and documents an never-ending topic of anguish.

## Rome's Ukrainian Community

The Ukrainian community in Rome is highly visible. On Thursday afternoons and especially Sundays when most *badanti* have time off, Ukrainians walk through the streets of Rome in large groups or congregating in public parks or squares. Ukrainian migrants, in Rome without family and often closed inside with the elderly person they care for all week, meet for picnics, explore the city, and attend church in large numbers. They also taught classes in Ukrainian language and history to the few children migrants succeeded in bringing with them, wrote for local Ukrainian newspapers, sang in choirs, rehearsed in folk troupes, and organized and performed talent shows. Ukrainians in Italy participate in a collective life that simply does not exist in California.

### *Rome's Post-Soviet Churches*

There are three Ukrainian Greek Catholic Churches (UGCC) and one Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) in Rome. The UGCC on Rome's Aventine regularly has 400 to 500 Ukrainians who come for mass, to meet with friends, and ask the priests for help in all kinds of work-related and personal matters. During inclement weather, Ukrainian live-ins often have nowhere else to go to be indoors except church halls. Churches usually serve a meal at a nominal fee after services and allow migrants to use church spaces to meet, play cards, and the like. While there are many interesting comparisons to be made between Rome's ROC and UGCC parishes (Solari 2006b), it is the UGCC with strong transnational ties to Ukraine that helps shape the way Ukrainians in Rome, regardless of whether or not they attend religious services, understand their migration. Bishop Simenovych, during an interview in his office, explained to me that in 2000, the UGCC had two "communities" in Italy, both located in Rome. In 2004 there were over 90 Ukrainian Greek Catholic communities throughout Italy with new ones being founded all the time. Communities are formed through UGCC outreach or Ukrainian migrants who self-organize and call the UGCC office in Rome stating they have a group who would like to celebrate the liturgy. A priest is then sent from Rome to meet with the group and work with local Roman Catholic priests to find a church facility able to host them.<sup>44</sup> There are a total of 35 UGCC priests who are actively involved in pastoral work in Italy. Twenty of them are stationed in larger cities throughout Italy. The remaining 15 priests, many of whom are pursuing graduate-level studies, are stationed in Rome and travel to smaller cities to celebrate the liturgy every week or every other week, depending on the size and needs of the community and the resources available.

Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests I interviewed in Rome saw providing social work, or what they called *carità* given the Italian context, as an integral part of their work

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<sup>44</sup> The UGCC is part of the Universal Catholic Church, recognizing the pope as its head, and is in full communion with Rome. There are 22 Catholic churches that make up the universal Catholic Church. One of these is the Roman Catholic Church, which follows the Latin rite and has about 800 million followers worldwide. The remaining 21 Catholic churches, of which the UGCC is one, follow the Byzantine rite and have a combined total of about 15 million followers. In fact, the late Pope John Paul II, himself from post-communist Poland, possessed what many felt was a keen awareness of the special problems of post-Soviet republics. The UGCC received special attention from the Vatican under John Paul and is part of the Catholic Church's institutional structure. This institutional support from the Roman Catholic Church helps the UGCC provide services to Ukrainian migrants in Italy.

in Rome. Social work drew potential converts to the church, and this type of active engagement with parishioners was also a way for priests to realize a political vision. Greek Catholic priests saw settlement practices as a vehicle for fostering a Ukrainian national consciousness in migrant Ukrainians that they believed would eventually return to Ukraine and constitute an activist or at least a sympathetic base for the creation of a Ukrainian nation tied to Ukrainian ethnicity (rather than Ukrainian citizenship), a national language (Ukrainian rather than Russian), and a national church (the UGCC rather than the ROC). The UGCC, after seeing much of its clergy perish in the Soviet gulags, has emerged from the underground to continue its fight for Ukrainian independence. Many UGCC priest were educated or have lived in Europe. The UGCC sees itself as a European church, part of the Universal Catholic Church which recognizes the Pope in Rome as its head, and therefore more “modern” than the ROC (Solari 2006b). The UGCC in Rome engages in an ethno-nationalist project and priests see providing services to Ukrainian migrants in Rome as an opportunity to instill national and religious consciousness in Ukrainians expected to return and participate in constructing the new Ukrainian nation. The importance of the UGCCs in the collective life of Rome’s Ukrainian community and the type of deep connections it fosters between Italy and Ukraine was thrown into sharp relief during the contested presidential election that sparked the Orange Revolution.

During that first Sunday of the Orange Revolution I walked into the UGCC church I had been attending regularly for several months and was stunned as I looked out into a sea of orange. There were more than 400 Ukrainian immigrants, mostly women, wearing orange scarves and other orange paraphernalia to show solidarity with Victor Yushchenko. I saw an informant, Oresta, near the back of the church and went over to say hello. She introduced me to her friends, switching from Ukrainian to Russian for my benefit. Oresta picked up her story, telling the group that I was there with her in St. Peter’s Square this week when Pope John Paul II acknowledged the events in Ukraine saying, “Beloved, I assure you and all the Ukrainian people that I am praying these days in a special way for your dear homeland,” a phrase I heard repeated by Ukrainians all week.<sup>45</sup> Just then my attention was diverted to the priests who solemnly processed into the church carrying an orange flag with *Tak Yushchenko!* (*Yes Yushchenko!*) printed on it in large block letters and began the liturgy.

Rome’s UGCC clergy were tireless supports of the Orange Revolution. They worked relentlessly to mobilize Ukrainians to vote in Rome’s Ukrainian consulate in both the presidential election and the re-vote; they organized demonstrations including releasing hundreds of orange balloons in Piazza Venezia; they sponsored a Ukrainian school to teach Ukrainian history and culture according to nationalist historiography; they hosted countless cultural events such as a night dedicated to the reading the poetry of Taras Shevchenko; finally the UGCC ran a Ukrainian language newspaper called *Into the Light*. In many ways the UGCC in Rome acted as migration brokers, helping Ukrainians enter and negotiate life in Italy all the while suggesting that these same migrants return to

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<sup>45</sup> The role of Catholics in the Orange Revolution was acknowledged at a press conference in Poland on April 4, 2005, following Pope John Paul II’s death. Newly elected Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko said, “I know that millions of people and Pope John Paul II personally prayed for the Orange Revolution. Without his prayers, the revolution would undoubtedly not have had such success” (Religious Information Service of Ukraine 2005:paras. 1-2).

Ukraine armed with their new found understanding of Ukrainian culture and history in order to build the new Ukraine.

*The Garbatella: Ukraine is a Bus-ride Away*

Like the post-Soviet churches, the Garbatella is also a site of collective meaning-making for Ukrainian migrants in Rome. Every Sunday between 8AM and noon 5,000 Ukrainians pass through a large parking lot behind Rome's Garbatella metro station. Fifty white courier vans, most at least a decade old, line the perimeter of the rectangular lot. Some vans carry workers with valid documents between Rome and what seems like most cities and even villages in Ukraine, but drivers earn the bulk of their money carrying packages back and forth. Most Ukrainians in Rome pass through the Garbatella intermittently and some come every Sunday to send packages and money back to their families in Ukraine, building relationships of trust with specific drivers who they know will personally hand the money or package to their loved-ones. Loved-ones in Ukraine may then send with this same driver letters, photos, medicine, mayonnaise or Ukrainian sausage to their family member working in Rome, nostalgic for anything from home. All the vans have their double back doors thrown wide open in front of mountains of plastic bags stuffed to capacity. Women stand in small groups fussing over whether the breakables are well packed, sharing the latest pictures of their grandchildren, and comparing notes about employers. In the center of the rectangular space, lined with courier vans on all sides, is a row of tented booths selling newspapers, magazines, and books in Ukrainian and Russian. Thousands of people are browsing the books, chatting with long lost friends, or hurrying to find their courier van, arms weighted down with bulky plastic bags.

I spent many Sundays at the Garbatella where conversations included discussions of children and grandchildren back home, the desire to go home, and their relationships with their Italian employers. Those without documents looked longing at the courier vans that would drive for 3-4 days and be in their home villages, while those with documents planned their next visit home. For those with documents, migration had a circulatory feel with migrants going home regularly for both quick visits and for extended stays taking great care to re-enter Italy before their *permesso* expired. However it was questions of gender, migration, and nation that dominated Ukrainian spaces in Rome. Migrant women in exile are implicated in Ukraine's nation-building project and bear its painful contradictions.

For example, the question "Is Ukraine 'Europe' or 'Africa'" seems to always be hanging in the air at the Garbatella. Italians often presume that Ukraine is a Third World country. Many Italians assume that Ukrainians and all migrants *del'Est* (from the East meaning Eastern Europe) come from a place that is undeveloped lacking running water, electricity, proper housing, and an education system—a place that in their popular imagination is like "Africa." Italians assume such abject poverty is the only reason why all these women would come to Italy to do low status cleaning and caring labor. Ukrainians in Italy fought against this characterization. First because it is their greatest fear that Ukraine might indeed go the way of Africa; it seems a plausible outcome of economic transformation. Second, because they believed it led Italians to treat them with less respect. Klara, a 52 year-old violinist explained:

We are of different nationalities and Italians do not think highly of us. They say we are people from the Third World! Yes, this is how they translate us—Third World women—and it isn't true at all!

For migrant women, the nation-building project was not just about what was happening in Ukraine, but also about how they were being treated in Italy. Migrants often showed me pictures or postcards of Ukraine and pointing at the architecture exclaimed that Ukraine is “not Africa” or said indignantly, “Italians think we live in mud huts like in Africa!” For Ukrainians in Rome “Europe” refers to an ideal of plentiful consumer goods and democratic freedom while “Africa” symbolizes a condition of abject poverty, starving children, and stunted human potential. And yet Ukraine’s claim to Europe is tenuous and the fear that Ukraine might become like “Africa” is quite real.

Ukraine is caught somewhere between “Europe” and “Africa.” Neither First World discourse of “Europe” connected to developed capitalist markets, nor Third World discourses of “Africa” isolated from global markets captures the complexity of Ukraine in transition and its relation to migration or more specifically exile. Exile forces migrants to engage with Ukraine’s nation-building process in both very personal but also quite abstract ways. It is concretely about their children’s future, but they also connect their own migration to global questions such as concerns about what this “new” Ukraine will look like and where this “new” Ukraine will fall in the hierarchy of nations. Exile produces a migrant subject that is required to engage in a deep and painful interrogation into the meaning of Ukrainianess, gendered personhood, and Soviet vs. capitalist moralities.

Whether informants embraced the view that they were agents in “building the new Ukraine” or not, the “new” Ukraine, defined through an idiom of gender and nation, is being built in part on the shoulders of these migrants. The physical removal of grandmothers to Italy through migration and the remittances sent back to their families makes possible the shift in workforce composition and family construction seen as fundamental to the creation of the new European and capitalist Ukraine. This involves a replacement of the Soviet extended family comprised of mother-workers, grandmother-childcare providers, and peripheral men to a nuclear family comprised of men as breadwinners, women as housewives, and peripheral grandmothers. The conditions of exile are not produced by processes inside Ukraine alone but through an interaction with Italy as a receiving site which makes permanent stay and family reunification in Italy difficult to achieve. In addition, the way in which the domestic work sector is organized in Italy produces a collective life that does not exist in California, for example, where domestic workers tend to be more isolated from one another. The interaction between sending and receiving contexts, Ukraine and Italy, produces constraints. While there are variations within exile, the structural and experiential reality is fairly homogeneous both in terms of who migrates and why as well as what the possible discursive frames are that influence both subjectivities and practices.

One of the key characteristics of exile is that migrant women inhabit a space of contradictions. They are school teachers, economists, and engineers doing paid domestic work abroad, a job category considered so lowly it did not even exist in the Soviet Union in which they grew up. They do paid domestic work abroad so that their university

educated daughters can do unpaid domestic work back in Ukraine. Through remittances, these women are making economically possible a nuclear, European family that has no place for them as Soviet *babushki*. They are agents in building the “new” Ukraine, one that scorns the “old” Soviet Ukraine and the moral system that shapes their way of understanding the world. These *Soviet* women are building *European* Ukraine. While the nation-building work older women do through migration is unrecognized in public discourse or denigrated by the label “prostitute,” these women are painfully cognizant of their sacrifices. Indeed, as Tanya said standing on the cement platform looking down at the expanse of women at the Garbatella: “They carry Ukraine on their shoulders and don’t think they don’t know it.” Yet, these women believe Ukraine’s European future is not guaranteed. Despite all their efforts, they fear their children might end up living in “Africa”—an economically depressed nation populated by “broken” families and “weak” men and racked with corruption.

Riding the migration circuit between L’viv and Rome, I met Slava. As the bus moved us closer to Ukraine’s border, Slava began sobbing as she kissed a wallet-sized picture of her 11 year-old son. Slava’s husband had left for Poland two years earlier. He had been working off and on and sending back what money he could, but it was not enough to send their son to university one day. Slava had a sister already in Italy and was on her way to joining her in the hope of finding work as a live-in. Slava’s sister gave her half of the €2,200 (US\$2,860) it cost to buy a 10-day tourist visa and Slava borrowed the rest with an interest rate of 12 percent. The plan was that Slava’s husband would come home and take care of their son while she was in Italy. But one never knows when the visa will come through and Slava had to leave today, the day before her husband was supposed to return. Slava shook her head and said, “Already I have not seen him for two years and now I don’t know when I will see him again. When will I be able to go home?” Her question hung answerless between us.

They took our passports at the Austrian border, the border with the European Union, the border that mattered most. I was terrified for Slava. Nothing about her looked like a tourist and I was afraid they might not let her through. Slava was too preoccupied by the photo of her son—wondering if she will find work right away, if her husband will really make it home from Poland, and if her aging mother could keep up with an active 11 year-old boy—to worry about crossing the border as well. I sighed with relief as the bus pulled into Austria. Slava’s tear-filled eyes met mine as she offered me a piece of fried fish. Slava explained, “You see, when my son is grown he will either say to me, ‘We have nothing. Why didn’t you go abroad like everyone else?’ Or ‘Why did you abandon me?’” She did not like her “choices.” If Slava stays, she risks that her son will live in “Africa.” In order to ensure that her son will live in a “European” Ukraine, Slava must migrate to Europe, leaving Ukraine and her son behind. The mutual constitution of migration and nation, achieved through the manipulation of gendered relations in Ukraine has forced Slava to join the other migrant women in this space of impossible contradictions, sometimes negotiable, sometimes exploding to the surface, but always experienced as a deep ache by the individual women and the loved-ones they leave behind.

## Living in Exile: Stories from the Gulag

Exile, like exodus, is an ideal type with a structural and subjective dimension. At the level of structure, gendered processes of transformation in the sending country and aspects of the receiving country's context of reception have interacted to produce a migration pattern with a specific demographic profile. Migrants from Ukraine to Italy are mostly middle-aged, university educated women. In the case of Ukrainians in exile to Italy, migrants are, in effect, "forced" to leave as their structural position as workers and grandmothers in Ukraine becomes increasingly obsolete. Instead they become temporary labor migrants with few prospects of remaining in Italy permanently and equally few prospects for being able to return to Ukraine. Structurally, exile is productive of the new Ukraine because remittances from Italy and the physical removal of older women from households allows daughters and daughters-in-law to become housewives and sons and sons-in-law to take their place at the head of the nuclear family. Exile makes economically feasible the family and work structures understood by the Ukrainian state to be both the basis of capitalist transition and the basis of an authentically Ukrainian nation.

The subjective dimension of exile also has several characteristics. Embedded in exile is a painful and forced connection to the sending country. While there may be variations in opinions about Ukraine's nation-building process, the structural reality of exile forces all migrants to have a stake in the shape of Ukraine's future. It leaves migrants not only longing to go back, but making material preparations for their eventual return from exile. Migrants in exile have little or no identification with the receiving country and are oriented towards the sending country where they are diligently remitting their wages to family members.

In the following chapters I present the experiences of five Ukrainian migrants in exile to Italy. These examples illustrate the characteristics that are common to exile as well as the variations. Olena (chapter 4) and Tatiana (chapter 5) occupy the dominant structural position of exile. They are both middle-aged grandmothers who have experienced double marginalization from work and family in Ukraine and both feel they were forced to leave Ukraine and their family to perform low status domestic work abroad. However their juxtaposition illuminates variation along the subjective dimension of exile. Two ways of experiencing exile emerged from the data collected in Italy and Olena and Tatiana are representative of these two migrant subjectivities. While Tatiana embraces the global script that mothers only ever leave their family due to poverty, Olena, even if originally motivated by material need, rejects poverty discourses as incompatible with the new Ukraine. Olena understands Ukraine as "Europe" and part of the First World all the while fearing the trajectory of Ukraine's economic transformation may instead lead to Ukraine becoming like "Africa" and part of the Third World. Olena embraces her role as an agent in Ukrainian nation-building, whereas Tatiana is unconsciously an agent of Ukraine's post-Soviet transformation but an agent nevertheless. The two migrant subjectivities collectively produced in exile results in different sets of discourses and practices in exile.

While Olena and Tatiana illustrate variation along the subjective dimension of exile, Oksana (chapter 6), Yuriy (chapter 7), and Lydmyla (chapter 8) highlight variation along the structural dimension of exile. Oksana, never married and without children,

nonetheless lives a painful connection to Ukraine in exile. Oksana finds great meaning in a vision of Ukrainian women as nurturing mothers and supportive wives made tangible in national(ist) imagery through the revival of the goddess *Berehynia* and enacted by fellow migrants in the talent shows they produce and attend in Rome. This ethno-national identity with nurturing motherhood at its center is meaningful to Oksana in her construction of a Ukrainian identity, and yet, a childless woman, it simultaneously excludes her from a key component of this ethnic identity. Despite the profound individual pain Oksana feels given what she understands as her expulsion from Ukraine and downward mobility in status to a “lowly” careworker, it is the collective pain of exile overlaid with the aching desire for a Ukraine yet to come and the need to show themselves and others that they are not just careworkers but *Ukrainians* that makes the talent shows performed by her fellow migrants such satisfying meaning-making experiences.

While women as a result of their structural position in Ukraine’s gendered economic transformation bear the brunt of exile, new post-Soviet gendered expectations of ethnic Ukrainians necessarily affect men as well as women. Yuriy (chapter 7) understands that post-Soviet men are expected to move from their peripheral position in the family during Soviet times to the center of family life. And yet Yuriy realizes that in many ways men have lost a former prestige as workers and breadwinners in the Soviet Union. Yuriy, like most of the migrant men I interviewed in Rome, is fiercely nostalgic for the Soviet system in which work, and therefore his social standing, was guaranteed. Yuriy described a commitment to his family, and yet, without steady work abroad for men, he sends back little in remittances relying instead on his sister to support his family through her labor in Rome. Yuriy finds his masculinity under siege pushing him ever further into the periphery of his children’s lives with whom he rarely speaks. He too finds himself in a “concentration camp” where he is in a limbo of time—“waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting”—unable to find his footing at a historical moment in which neither Ukraine nor Italy offers the security he yearns for.

Whereas most Ukrainians in Italy are there without their families, Lydmyla (chapter 8) was able to bring her family with her. She too feels the pain of exile. On the one hand she is invested in Ukraine’s Europeanization project, in fact she has no choice but to be since it is not clear how long she and her family will be able to stay in Italy. On the other hand, her two children speak fluent Italian and have adopted many attributes that are culturally Roman even if, as Lydmyla and many others pointed out, their “Slavic race” and ethnic features such as broad faces and high cheekbones prevent them from ever becoming “Italian.” Lydmyla’s hope is only to make sure her children do not feel like *stranieri* or foreigners as they negotiate the contradictions of exile where they simply do not know whether exile is a temporary or permanent condition. The following five chapters, while attentive to variation, underline what all informants in Italy have in common: exile.

### **Olena: Building the New Ukraine**

I had been in Rome almost two months and still not a single interview. I had begun to think that I would have to abandon this research project since I could not convince anyone to speak with me. I was doing participant observation in the ACLI offices, going to Ukrainian churches on Sundays, hitting the union offices, and going to every immigrant aid organization I could find. I met Carlo at the Comunità di Sant'Egidio offices in Rome. He showed me around the church and school. This Catholic organization works tirelessly to help migrants in Rome. They teach Italian language courses, help register undocumented kids in school, hold cultural festivals, and welcome interfaith sharing for immigrants of all religions. Donatella, the director, introduced herself. When Carlo explained who I was Donatella asked me if I had read the book *Global Woman*.

I could tell that Donatella was the real gatekeeper here and I was excited by her question thinking this was the bonding moment that would get me in the door. I told her that not only had I read the book but I had taken a course with one of the editors, Barbara Ehrenreich, and worked with the other editor, Arlie Hochschild, who was a professor in my department. She looked at me coolly and said, "I didn't like it. I didn't like it because it put careworkers together with exploitation and trafficking in women. Caring for the elderly is not either of those things. Carework is the best job available to immigrants. It is the most regular and offers the most protections." Donatella never did let down her guard around me. Nonetheless, Carlo introduced me to Olena. Olena became a key contact and a dear friend.

I had already spent quite a bit of time with Olena before we sat down together over tea and my digital recorder. Olena, 49, is a slender woman with a broad face, defined cheekbones, and energetic eyes. Her smile reveals a chipped front tooth and she curls her hair in a way that evokes 1950s America.

Olena was born on the border with Poland in Western Ukraine. She later moved to L'viv where she completed a technical degree in electronics. Olena worked in a factory producing army equipment but after two years she felt this was not work she enjoyed and enrolled in the department of foreign languages at L'viv University. When she graduated she moved with her husband to a small village of 8,000 people I'll call Vidmovapol, about an hour and a half outside L'viv. There she taught German at a high school. Olena has two sons, Ivan and Oles, now 28 and 23. When I first met Olena she had one grandchild but soon she would have two.

Olena had been in Italy for four of the past six years. Like all the women I met, Olena never expected to leave her home town, but she explained that life played "many tricks on her:"

The collapse of the Soviet Union was also an economic collapse and Western Ukraine no longer gave enough for your family to live on, so I left for Italy. . . . Those who worked in administrative offices could make money through bribes, those who had tools or property attached to their

work could sell them, but what does a teacher have? Nothing. There is nothing to sell, no property to claim. Look here, this is what they gave us, worthless pieces of paper.

Olena come to Italy in 1998 at the beginning of the migration from Ukraine to Italy and returned to Ukraine after two years. In 2002, Olena migrated once again to Italy and had been in Italy two years when I met her in October 2004. Olena laughed at how little she knew about what life would be like for her in Italy when she first arrived:

I actually thought that I would teach foreign languages here! I didn't even take the address of these acquaintances [here in Rome from L'viv] because I thought I would stay at a hotel like a normal person. Now everyone comes to someone but I came thinking I would stay in a hotel and left without even a phone number to call. And then when I got here I realized that a hotel was 40-50 euros a night ... or maybe dollars at that time. I realized that on the \$500 dollars I arrived with I would sleep one week and then be on the streets!

Olena bought her first job in Rome from an agency that she said was run by a British woman and an Italian man for \$150. The job they found her was "simply an insult." Olena was to care for an elderly couple and the husband told Olena that, since his wife was too ill to have sex with him, this would be part of Olena's job. Olena quit this job after a week and went back to the agency. They said it was not their fault she was not happy with her job and would not return her money. Olena spent \$200 to buy her second job from a migrant who was returning to Ukraine for \$200. The woman told her employer, an older woman with multiple sclerosis and in a wheelchair, that Olena was a life-long friend and vouched for her as a worker even though they had only just met. Olena worked as a live-in for this woman for two years and Olena said that they had a very good relationship:

She was an intelligent woman. She understood that I, how to say it, that I was a teacher, that I am educated ... and she treated me that way. She treated me as an equal. She understood my situation that it was the government that forced me to leave and it was not my choice. I wasn't just roaming around the world for any other reason except that the government forced me to leave. I worked for her without documents, I wasn't legal all this time because the *sanatoria* (amnesty) was in 1998 and I had only one month to do the paperwork. But this women wasn't able to do the paperwork and her children didn't want to do the work needed so for this *sanatoria* I remained without documents. But she always paid me even if I was working, we say working in the black.

This employer did not pay Olena vacation days or the other benefits she was entitled to but when Olena left she did give her four months pay and had Olena sign a document stating that she would not try to sue her for any more money. Olena felt she was treated fairly.

Olena returned to Ukraine in 2000 for a confluence of family reasons. Ivan was graduating from the military institute and Olena wanted to be present at his defense. In addition, Ivan was getting married. Olena noted that it was not only happy events which brought her back to Ukraine. Her father was dying of cancer and she needed to care for him. She had returned to her old teaching job but shook her head as she said:

But nothing had changed at home. I understood that if I wanted my youngest son to study, I would have to come back to Italy. After my father died I came back. Now I am already here two years. Oles still has three years to study and I am paying his education so I have three more years to go here!

Olena distinguished herself from other Ukrainian women in Rome for whom “money was the object of life.” I had interviewed her roommate Larisa the week before. Larisa worked around the clock and it was the remittances she sent back to her family in Ukraine that gave her migration meaning. Olena drew a contrast between the two of them:

It is good that you spoke with Larisa. Larisa works all the time. Sunday she works and Saturday she works. This is our mentality work until you can no longer stand. Work, work and again work! I work during the week and I have one job cleaning on Saturday but it is not serious work. I always have my eye out for more work but for now I just have one job. I go to these courses. I go to school and am never bored. I don't have free time. If I have a little free time I study Italian.

Olena has a full-time job and works Saturdays but still feels that compared to others she works less. In fact, two ways of living in exile emerged in Rome. For some like Larisa, the global script that women migrate due to poverty was worn like an honor shield justifying both their migration and their claims to being a “good” mother. For other like Olena, poverty was not what gave her migration meaning but rather Ukraine's nation-building project.

Olena calls herself a “patriot” and speaks passionately about Ukraine's European future. She often shared with me her worries about how Ukraine would make this transition to Europe and what this would mean for herself and her sons. The majority of migrants in Rome are from Western Ukraine like Olena, the center of a Ukrainian nationalist movement that mimics the European model of nation-states: one people, one language, and one religion that are Ukrainian and not Soviet. Olena said:

Imagine, Cinzia, that all the rules change, that all the things that you learned growing up about what you were supposed to do are gone. I am supposed to tell my children what to do to be successful, to live a normal life and be respected. Some of this I learn here in Italy. My children will stay in Ukraine and help build the new Ukraine. I do not want them to have to go abroad. I must help my sons and also our Ukraine from here.

Olena used exile as a way to learn about what it meant to be European and attempted to share what she learned with her sons. Olena sent home most of her wages in remittances, but, while she worked more than full time, she also made time in the evenings and weekends to attend language classes, take driving lessons, and explore Rome. This meant that she was not earning money during this time and in the case of driving lessons actually spending money.

Olena has pushed both her sons to learn foreign languages, because she believes that this will help them in a Ukraine destined to join the European Union. Olena often spoke of bringing back more than just money to Ukraine. During our formal interview she phrased it this way:

You see now I have this ... well this dream but maybe it is not a dream because when you are already 50 years-old it is strange to think too far ahead, yes? But even at this age, it is early to retire and too early to lay in a body bag ... therefore I thought to myself that maybe I could take another course here at an Italian university and then return to Ukraine and be able to teach Italian when I go home. I could teach European culture. We need this in Ukraine. That is why you met me at school.

Olena had another more tangible dream as well. When she first left for Italy she thought she would pay for Ivan's university and medical expenses for her in-laws. She also put in a water line to their house so they did not have to use the well anymore. Yet the house was small so Olena and her husband, Dmytro, decided to build a large house in Vidmovapol where they could all live. She thought Ivan and Oles would marry and they each would live in a section of the house. Then Olena would retire to raise her grandchildren. Olena proudly showed me the pictures of her very large house under construction. As she asked me to imagine a completed bathroom here, another bedroom there ... her eyes practically sparkled. Olena continued:

You see? Italians, they think Ukraine is Africa. They think we live in mud huts like in Africa! Does this house look like Europe or Africa to you? .... I show these pictures to my employer so they know I am educated and not poor; so they will know how to treat me.

Sending remittances home was important for Olena, but it was not the act of remitting that gave migration its meaning but rather the symbolic value attached to what that money could buy seen through the lens of Ukrainian nation-building. Olena believed she was an actor Ukraine's Europeanization project. We were interrupted by Olena's roommate Larisa who had arrived home a few minutes earlier and paused to look at Olena's pictures. Larisa shook her head and exclaimed emphatically, "Who, Olena? Who is going to live in that big house?!" Olena, collected her photos protectively and shrugged her shoulders saying, "That is all to be seen. It doesn't matter. It is my monument (*pamyatnik*)." Olena explained that life had played another "trick" on her. Her oldest son, Ivan, had a gift for languages and she pushed him to learn English and join the military as

a translator since the military was still paying salaries. Ivan was assigned to Kyiv and was earning a good salary, but in order to maintain his station he had to become a resident of Kyiv. So Olena spent the money she earned her first two years in Italy to buy Ivan and his family a small two-room apartment in Kyiv. Now, several years later, Ivan and his family had no intention of moving back to a small town like Vidmovapol. Her youngest son, Oles, was renting a room in L'viv while continuing his university education and he too hoped to join his older brother in Kyiv. Olena joked that after all this time in Rome, it would be hard for her to live again in the countryside especially knowing that her children and grandchildren were in Kyiv.

Olena continues work on the house even though she knows in her small town, no one can afford to buy such a large house or, as Larisa pointed out, “even keep it warm during the winter.” Nonetheless the house is her monument. It is a monument to a particular understanding of a European Ukraine and her family’s place in this future Ukraine. It is a rejection of the dominant narrative that Ukrainians are all “poor” and come from a place that is “like Africa.” Olena and others like her felt that you cannot be “poor” and make claims to Europe. For Olena poverty also implied low education levels and a traditional society without modern values. In their narratives, this may characterize the Third World represented by “Africa” but not Ukraine which experienced a Soviet modernization process and enjoys high education levels. Yet Olena’s monument did other symbolic work as well. It was “proof” that while Olena may spend some of her time taking Italian classes in Rome, she was also working and sending her money home to sustain this very visible project. This helped to shield her from accusations of being a “bad mother.” Showing the pictures to Italian employers also helped to signal to them how she should be treated in Italy: not as a “poor” migrant but as a fellow European whose country was about to “arrive.” Olena felt that by building her house, she was also building the new Ukraine.

I was often shown pictures of cars, furniture, computers, and other consumer items that were bought with remittances earned abroad. For some women, like Larisa, a computer was a computer with no more meaning than evidence of their self-sacrifice in Italian exile. Yet for Olena and others like her who prioritized Ukraine’s nation-building process in their migration narratives, consumer goods took on a more pointed meaning regarding Ukraine’s Europeaness which they felt was constantly under siege in Italy. Later on in my fieldwork, after many conversations about the kind of computer Ivan should buy to help him with his continued language studies in the military, Olena finally showed me a picture of Ivan working at his new laptop and told me that he had an internet connection at home in his apartment. Olena nodded her head and exclaimed, “You see? Ukraine is not Africa, we’re connected!” For Olena, the laptop is not simply a laptop, but a symbol of Ukraine’s Europeaness and evidence of her role in shaping Ukraine’s future.

Soon it was Olena’s 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Olena invited 15 friends out for dinner. Everyone brought a dish or a bottle of champagne to share and then we ordered the main course from the restaurant. When the bill arrived, the table of guests that had otherwise been on their feet making toasts, reciting poetry, and singing songs with glasses raised and swinging, fell silent. It was like the whole table was holding its collective breath. Olena turned over the bill, and her face flushed red. She announced, “It’s nothing! It’s normal! I do not live for money and it’s my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday!” The guests exhaled in

unison—except me. I was sitting close enough to have seen the bill when Olena turned it over and was horrified at a bill of almost €500. That is nearly a month’s wages. Olena winked at me and clinked her glass with my glass still on the table. A dark-haired woman, a friend of Olena’s I had not met before, stood and raised her glass for yet another toast. She spoke in Russian to their collective sadness about leaving families, friends and neighbors to work in an unknown place. She continued:

We are all stuck sitting in Italy, but we also should remember that many Ukrainians want to come to Italy but are unable to come. We who are here should not forget this. Italy is a beautiful country and we should all study its culture, history, and art. We should not complain or be sad that we are not back in Ukraine but value the gifts that Italy has to offer us.

When you are away from your family you look for something else that is like a family. We have found this in each other. It is difficult to find kindred spirits here, to find people with goals more interesting than just making money. We are lucky to have found family in each other.

To Olena and to all of us!

For Olena and these women there was a recognition that that they were more than their remittances. That in fact, consumption, even 50<sup>th</sup> birthday parties, is infused with meanings about what kind of Ukrainian one is or aspires to be.

Over eight months later on a Sunday in mid-August, 2005, I boarded a bus in L’viv with Olena. We are on our way to her home in Vidmovapol. I had been unable to contact her upon arriving in L’viv. Olena had just come into the city to find me. It seemed a miracle that she did find me wandering the streets of L’viv’s city center. She had hoped that we could be on a bus to Vidmovapol that very evening but concluded that we had to go back to the room I was renting to grab some of my things even if it meant having to stay the night in L’viv. “No,” Olena sighed. “You’ll need your things because it’s my home but isn’t like I live there. I don’t have more than a towel to offer you.”

Olena was anxious to get back and was fidgeting as we waited for the bus to depart. She explained, “When you haven’t been home for so long, you have so much to do and then you also want to be home to cook meals for your family.” She had been back in Vidmovapol for three months and had just a few weeks left before the family she worked for in Italy was expecting her back. Olena explained that her mother-in-law was ill and she had been by her bed night and day until she passed away almost a month before. She wondered out loud how she would get done all she needed to before she had to return to Italy. Olena was busy managing the construction of the new house since her husband was unable to follow the project on his own. She had contractors to meet, work to inspect, and tiles to pick out as well as the house they are currently living in to maintain. I had spent a lot of time with Olena in Rome and I had never seen her looking so tired and stressed out.

During our time together in Ukraine, Olena was often frustrated by the what she perceived as the gap between the reality of present-day Ukraine and what she saw as its glorious European future. Looking out the bus window was one of these moments. Olena

sighed, “It makes me sad to see the countryside.” “Why does it make you sad?” I asked. “Because before there used to be collective farms (*kolkhozy*) that made sure that people worked the land but now it is fallow. When people pooled resources, they could afford to buy tractors and equipment but now individual farmers have gone back to working the land by hand. And look, abandoned. In Italy you don’t see a single strip of land that isn’t cultivated.” Ukraine, of course, used to be the bread basket of the Soviet Union.

Our rickety bus pulled into the center of Vidmovapol, a small square dominated by the statue of a female figure from the 16thC who, born in Vidmovapol which was then part of the Kingdom of Poland, went on to influence the Ottoman Sultan to deal favorably with her homeland. This motif of women and nation was echoed in many of the city squares I visited in Ukraine. Olena’s husband, Dmytro, was waiting for us in a battered and dusty 15 year-old red car that they had purchased for \$1,000 with remittances Olena sent back from Italy. At 58 Dmytro still had jet back hair. He was in what most men were wearing: shorts, flip flops, and an old t-shirt that covered a large round belly. Outside the town’s center many of the roads were unpaved and Dmytro was dusty. It would only be a matter of hours before I too would be powdered in dry earth. Dmytro used to be an engineer but he now works as a taxi driver, using his car to drive local people to nearby cities or the train or bus station. He had kind eyes and gave me a shy smile as he drove us home. Later on, during an interview in L’viv, Ivan would tell me how worried he was for his father. He said:

It was not traumatic for me to have my mother go abroad. I was already out of the house, living in L’viv [for university]. I am very grateful that my mother was able to send me to university. And then, you know, she bought us an apartment in Kyiv. I think going to Italy has been good for my mother too. I mean it was hard and some of it was awful but overall it has been good for her. It has broadened her horizons. It has been hardest on my father. He is uncommunicative. He has no friends and now I am in Kyiv with my own family and Oles is in L’viv. These past three months that my mother has been home, he has come back to life.

Olena explained that it was hard on Dymtro to have to depend on her for money. She quickly added that he earned well now as a driver and so her remittances were no longer used for daily expenses but for bigger projects. For a Soviet man whose primary responsibility to his family was his paycheck and whose identity was defined by his occupation, the situation was delicate and Olena often praised him as a provider to me when he was in earshot. My fieldwork was filled with stories of “weak men” who had found other women or gambled or drank or neglected the children and Olena felt “lucky.” Dymtro was always involved with his sons and, Olena noted, where most children seem to become more detached from their fathers once their mothers leave, she has watched Dymtro, especially with their youngest son, Oles, become increasingly close.

Six weeks later I met Oles for a beer in L’viv and turned on the recorder. I asked if his relationship with his parents had changed since his mother went abroad. His eyes filled with tears stating that he was 16 when she left:

She was among the first to go to Italy. Lots of people then left and came back within a few months, only the strongest or the scrappiest, like my

mother, remained .... No, my relationship with my mother is the same but my relationship with my father, yes it changed over time. If before I used to go to my mother for advice, now I go more to my dad. We spend more time together and we became better friends I guess. But my relationship with my mother is the same.

I was staying at Olena and Dmytro's house. It was small house inherited from Dymtro's parents. It had one bedroom, a living room, a kitchen, and an outhouse that so embarrassed Olena I almost regretted coming and causing such discomfort. But soon I was at the site of the new house. I stood in awe in front of the "monument." It is large even by American standards. The bottom floor is 4 rooms a kitchen and a bathroom. An elegant spiral staircase takes you up to an equally spacious second floor with another 4 rooms and a second bathroom. The two floors sit on a garage and full basement giving the house an imposing height. The house is four times larger than the house they currently live in.

Over lunch Olena asked if I had spoken with Ivan who would host me in Kyiv later that summer. He would be in L'viv for a visit the next day so we would have a chance to meet beforehand. I replied yes that we had spoken on the phone and he was very gracious in inviting me to his apartment in Kyiv where he lived with his wife and toddler. "We paid for that apartment so he has to be gracious! You are *our* guest!" Olena wanted to know if I had spoken with him in English and what I thought of his English skills or if he was shy and had spoken with me in Russian. "Olena," I exclaimed truthfully, "He speaks beautiful English! He even answered all my questions with our American accent!" Dmytro stood in the doorway and paused, visibly moved. Olena's eyes also welled up with tears. "See," said Olena, "Papa is happy that our money is not wasted."

After lunch we walked down Shevchenko Street, Vidmovapol's central street with 214 houses. If every US city has a Main Street then every Western Ukrainian city has a Shevchenko St. in honor of the famous poet considered to be founder of modern Ukrainian literature and preserver of the Ukrainian language. Olena walked me down the street and we decided to count how many of the houses had someone working abroad. Olena gave a nod to each house and recounted a short story about each household explaining how many people were abroad and where as I took notes. "This house is really a sad story," Olena sighed. "They are just too poor to send anyone abroad. Lyubov is my age and willing to go to Italy to work but they cannot afford to pay for the visa." Those going to Italy must pay a "travel agency" to buy a 10-day tourist visa. They then enter Italy and overstay the visa to work. "People think, isn't it terrible, all of our women must travel abroad to work but, I don't know." Olena paused and she looked out at her neighbor's houses, "Maybe what is truly terrible is not having enough money to go and being left behind." I replied that it sounded like, for different reasons, that it was hard to go and hard to stay. Olena smiled, "Tough time to be Ukrainian."

By the time we had reached the end of our walk down Shevchenko Street, we had counted that 55 of the 214 houses relied on remittances from abroad: 22 households had someone in Italy, 11 had someone in the United States, seven in Spain, seven in Portugal, six in England, one in Germany and one in the Czech Republic. Olena asked to look at my notebook for the tally. "So," she exclaimed. "That's what? More than 25% of the

families on this one street survive on money from abroad. And Cinzia, I am surprised it isn't higher ... it probably is higher. I am sure I am missing people." As we walked back to Olena's house, we shared the road with cows sauntering freely and carts of hay drawn by horses. Olena shook her head and asked, "What European country still has cows walking in the middle of the street?" Olena became quiet and withdrawn and I shared her melancholy mood as we walked back in silence looking at our dust covered feet in sandals. "Yet another thing that doesn't happen in Italy," she said jocularly pointing at our feet. We both laughed as she put her arm through mine and we finished the stroll towards home.

### Tatiana: Working in Exile

I was sweating despite the chilly mid-November day. There was a delay on the metro and I was racing towards Piazza Venezia to meet Olena and some of her acquaintances. These were not the women Olena usually spent time with and I was nervous and excited to meet a new group of women. It was not difficult to spot them on the piazza, huddled in conversation. Something about their winter coats and hats suggested they were from Ukraine or *donne dall'est* as Italians say meaning “women from the East.” Simply the fact that they were standing outside on this cold morning suggested they were certainly not Italians who were hurrying to be indoors lest they catch cold. These women, live-in domestic workers with Sundays off, had no other place to go. As one woman told me, “If we stay home then we have to work. Rain or shine we walk the streets outside.”

I hurried towards the group of five women. Olena hugged me and introduced me as her friend, one of “ours” (*nasha*). Olena, who had taken me on as her personal project, was always on the look-out for interviewees for me and she had launched into “the hard sell” explaining my project to the group who looked at me skeptically and a bit annoyed that they were being bothered by such things on their day off. I, forever grateful to Olena for all her help, was at the same time embarrassed by her blunt and pushy introduction. I squeezed Olena’s arm and announced that today we just enjoyed each other’s company. The group soon pulled me into their discussions with three of them speaking in Russian for my benefit and two insisting on Ukrainian for close to 30 minutes more until they too slipped into Russian in order to participate in a discussion I now was quite used to having: Why was I childless? The fact that I married at 25, quite young by the standards of my social milieu but barely finding a husband before being condemned to being an “old maid” by Ukrainian standards did not win me any points with this crowd. Everyone switched to Russian to make sure I understood: “You’ve been married five years almost and no baby?!” Women shook their heads, exchanged looks of pity, and debated if they should scold me or comfort me because I may have a “feminine problem.” “Cinzia, it is time to have a baby. Your dissertation will not take care of you when you are old.” In the Soviet Union and now in Ukraine, motherhood is the marker of adulthood while a husband is secondary. Children and grandchildren were why these women were here in Rome at all giving motherhood discourses heightened prominence. For women who has lost their jobs and professional identities as well as their role of providing daily care to grandchildren, being a mother who sacrificed for their kids was what gave their lives as migrants meaning. In fact, “mother” was one of the few identities they had left and they held onto to it tightly.

Olena announced that she was cold and that we should go inside somewhere to have coffee. The group was reluctant but Olena insisted making a fuss as is her way and pushed us into a café. A waiter signaled a table for us. We sat down but the group was somber. In Italy you can either have a coffee at the bar standing up which means you only pay for the coffee, or you can sit down which means you also pay for the table. In a tourist spot such as Piazza Venezia, that table can be quite expensive and this made

everyone, myself included, very nervous. Olena went on about how they work hard and can afford to have their coffee brought to them while the other women looked as if they were being bullied and were extremely tense. Suddenly Tatiana burst into tears. Another woman promptly said, “We do not belong here” and stood up. Soon the whole group hurried out the door before the waiter could even get our orders. It was Tatiana who Olena would later convince to meet me for an interview. Out on the sidewalk the women looked as if they had narrowly escaped financial ruin. Olena turned to me and said loudly, “Fine just the two of us will go in.” Without so much as a goodbye to the others, she pulled me by the arm into the café. Once inside, Olena insisted that they do belong here and that the women she was with today was not her usual company. “We are not Italian; I don’t pretend we are Italian. We have Slavic features and will never be considered Italian. But we are civilized! Don’t we also enjoy to sit while we drink our coffee?” My housing costs—now for a place in Berkeley *and* Rome—flashed through my mind as did the amount of my research grant which barely covered said housing not to mention plane tickets to Italy as I nodded feebly at Olena feeling a bit bullied myself. Olena squared her shoulders, looked the waiter in the eye and said, “*Un caffè macchiato per favore.*” Cinzia, what would you like?

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Tatiana and Olena represent two variations of living in exile. While both women feel the pain of expulsion and are intimately connected to Ukraine through family but also a deep engagement with the direction of Ukraine’s post-Soviet transformation, the money that is earned in Italy has different symbolic meanings. For Olena and others like her who declare they are “not poor” and Ukraine is “not Africa,” being able to spend the money needed to sit at the café was a symbol of her Europeaness. For Tatiana and the others, spending the money that was destined for home was not only distressful but not part of their frugal Soviet pasts or their even more frugal post-Soviet present where remittances legitimated claims to self-sacrificing motherhood. In fact, spending money on oneself was considered by many migrants as the behavior of a “bad mother.”

A week later I met Tatiana at the apartment Olena shares with 3 other women. She had a dark-colored knit hat that she kept on despite the warmth inside. Her short reddish-blonde bangs and her hair just below her ears peeked out from under the cap and framed her face lined with worry. Olena prepared us tea and shook the powdered sugar over the pandoro, a common Italian Christmas cake I had brought. Tatiana, 54, had been in Italy almost four years. She came to Rome in 2001 from a city of 300,000 people located on the on the Dnipro River in Central Ukraine outside Kyiv. Tatiana worked in a medical drug factory as a technician. Women retired at 55 under the Soviet system but because Tatiana handled chemicals, her work was considered dangerous and therefore qualified her for early retirement. Tatiana had retired at 45. She explained:

In Soviet times early retirement was a reward for doing dangerous work, but now it feels like a punishment. They push you out of your job early and give you a pension so small you cannot live ... \$25 a months! I couldn’t live on this. I could either eat or pay for my rent. If you pay for your apartment there isn’t enough money for food. If you want to pay to eat well, then you cannot pay for your

apartment. This is why I left for Italy. And there is not just me; I have a son and I am a grandmother! Just thinking of it, ah, horrible!

Tatiana was still nervous as she tried to make sense of me and my tape recorder. She sipped her tea uncomfortably. Olena joined us and said:

Tanichka, do you know Cinzia's parents are immigrants like us? Cinzia's mother left Italy to clean other people's house in America and we left Ukraine to clean other people's house's in Italy. Tell me life isn't crazy! Italy was not so different from Ukraine 40 or 50 years ago.

Tatiana's eyes went wide as she asked me if this was true. I nodded and shared with her some of my own family's migration story. I shared with her pictures of my family that I carried with me specifically for this purpose. It seemed only fair that I if was expecting informants to share of themselves that I should be prepared to do the same. Tatiana told me my husband was handsome and I should not leave him alone for too long. I answered that I was not nervous about him. He grew up in Italy and knew Italian men so *he* was the one who was nervous. We laughed and Tatiana removed her coat and settled in visibly more comfortable:

Tatiana: Now I understand why you are interested in talking to me. Before I thought, who am I? No one important! But yes I understand.

Olena: Understand Tanichka? Her parents didn't even go to school. Cinzia is not a *bolshoi chelevek*. [This literally translates to not a "big" person meaning I am not a person with high status.] You tell her everything. She is writing the story of our Ukraine. We are part of the story. This is way I help her. Plus look at her Tanya; she is sweet. If we do not help her who will? Think of her poor mother. No babies until she finishes the dissertation she said!

Olena moved back into the kitchen and Tatiana went on to tell me about her son Zhenya and his family. Zhenya is 32 and a computer programmer with a university degree. He used to work in their home city where he earned \$60 a month. His wife worked in the same factory Tatiana worked in and also earned \$60 a month. Tatiana explained that this was not enough to live on. It was barely enough to keep her grandson, Danya, fed. Tatiana took care of Danya while her daughter-in-law worked. Her daughter-in-law's own mother had died and there was no one else. But then something unexpected happened: her daughter-in-law got pregnant again. Tatiana explained:

We were not expecting this. So now we have Danya who is 10 and Anuchka who is 4. My daughter-in-law lost her job when she got pregnant so now Zhenya works in Kyiv during the week where he can earn more money and then goes home during the weekend. He earns more but he pays \$200 [a month] in rent in Kyiv! It is hard but lots of people do this back and forth now.

I asked Tatiana what made her decide to leave for Italy. “Where did the idea even come from?” Tatiana pulled her chair in closer to the table and leaned in:

Now I’ll tell you. Zhenya did not need me to stay with the children, he needed money. I wanted to help my son. But also the idea came from the fact that here you are 45 years old and you are destitute and without work! You are already destitute but you still have to live. Even for these last years of life you need money. They have laid us bare because even when we worked they paid us very little. I have to renovate the apartment and the television is already old and the washing machine broken.

You see our women in Ukraine like all of our things to be clean, pretty. She might be there and she herself hasn’t had enough to eat but she will buy something or do some renovation, we have this kind of women. They will do the work themselves; they try somehow to do something by themselves, by their own strength. And so us too. The TV is broken, the washing machine doesn’t work, the faucet drips, and the wallpaper has fallen off. In general I see something must be done because it is impossible to live like that.

I asked Tatiana if she was married or had other sources of financial support. She waved her hand dismissively in the air and announced that she was divorced long ago. In Italy, she continued, men “protect their families,” but in Ukraine “our men are useless. It is women who carry the family. It is women who go abroad to Italy to work while men become alcoholics.” Returning to the discussion of her apartment, Tatiana says that her apartment is small, just two rooms (bedroom, living room, and kitchen) but she wants it to be comfortable so she will not be embarrassed to have friends over. Tatiana watched many of her friends leave for Italy and she felt she had to do something too. Her younger sister, a structural engineer for whom Tatiana said there was no work in Ukraine, left for Italy just before Tatiana did. Tatiana sighed and wrung her hands:

This was a very difficult decision to make. It was a heavy decision because I am a home-body, I never went anywhere in my life and it was very difficult to come here. I did not want to come. Life forced me to. The collapse of the Soviet Union forced me to.

When Tatiana first arrived, she stayed with her sister in Rome who was doing live-in work. The elderly Italian person she was caring for was kind and allowed Tatiana to stay with them until she found work. In 2001 when Tatiana arrived, there were many Ukrainians already in Rome looking for work and after six weeks of searching she took a job caring for an 80 year-old man that lived in a small village six hours south of Rome. When she arrived the man told her that not only was she to be his house cleaner, but a replacement in his bed for his wife

who had died. Tatiana looked at me shaking her head and repeated that he was 80 years-old! She returned to Rome the following day.

Next she took a job in the mountains outside Rome where she was in charge of cleaning a large, two-story villa and cooking for a couple in their mid-forties who she referred to as “the Doctor and his wife.” Like most of the women I met doing live-in work, Tatiana described it as “being in prison.” Tatiana felt she should have been paid €1,000 a month for all that work but was being paid €516 instead. Nonetheless she stayed because “I had debts to pay. I needed money quickly to pay for my ticket, the bus ride, and the visa.” Tatiana agreed to work Sundays and holidays and worked without rest from 7am to 9pm. She described the wife as withdrawn and sullen while the Doctor yelled at her all day. After a month, on her first pay-day, the Doctor told her he would only pay her €400 instead of the promised €516. Two weeks later Tatiana said she could not take it anymore and she left.

Soon after she found the family she works for still now, almost four years later. Here the situation is more complex. Tatiana was caring for an elderly couple, a 90 year-old woman with dementia and her 82 year-old husband. The woman died a year later and the man, who she calls alternately Signor Antonio or Grandfather, treats her well. She said that she has opportunities to rest during the day and to study Italian. They give her plenty to eat and she takes her meals at the table with Signor Antonio. If his daughter Lara is visiting they all eat together. At her previous employer, after cooking the meals and setting the table the Doctor sent her to the kitchen to eat alone “like a dog,” a humiliation Tatiana says she could never accept. Tatiana sighed that the problem with her current job is that the pay is too low. However, given her previous work experiences, she is afraid to change jobs since “you never know where you might end up.” Once Tatiana was sick and Lara took her to the hospital, stayed with her for all the tests to be done and made sure she rested. She said:

So in this way I feel a little bit protected since I am in a foreign country. Others have their employer say, “You’re sick? Go home [to Ukraine] and rest there. Here we need you to work.” I don’t have this, we have a good rapport.

After four years Tatiana also has sincere affection for Signor Antonio. “I am used to him and he is used to me and he doesn’t want anyone else.” And yet her pay is simply too low. In hindsight, she says she would not have accepted this position in the first place had she known her rights. Tatiana explained:

They want me to be a domestic, a *badante* [careworker], and a companion all in one for 500 euros [a month] with one day off. This is the difficult work we came to Italy to find: First we do not know the language; second we do not know our rights. If I had known the language and had know my rights I would not have accepted this job because the pay is very low and the grandmother was very sick; you had to put diapers on her and

everything. And then they gave me only one day off when by law they have to give me a day and a half off and the pay is supposed to be higher.

Domestic workers are covered by a collective bargaining contract which set the minimum wage at the time of the interview at €548 a month. So Tatiana was indeed being paid below the legal minimum. Tatiana was the only live-in in my sample earning less than €600 a month. The salaries for live-in work ranged from €600-800 with most reporting a salary of €600. She is also entitled to Sundays and Thursday afternoons off and is supposed to be paid an additional hourly wage if she works during those times. Tatiana is extremely bothered that she does not have Thursday afternoons off. However even this is tempered. Tatiana explained that if she tells Grandfather that it is someone's birthday, always an important event for Ukrainians, and there is a celebration he usually gives her permission to go. It is not lost on Tatiana that at 54 years-old she must ask permission.

Tatiana also learned that her employers are supposed to pay her what is called the *tredicesima* or the 13<sup>th</sup> month. All Italian workers, including domestic workers, are entitled to an extra month's salary in December as a kind of Christmas bonus. Domestic workers are also entitled to a paid month of vacation per year. All domestic workers, with and without documents, are covered by the National Contract for Domestic Workers. Tatiana repeated several times, "I came here to work and earn money for my family, not just to look around!" As she learned about her rights, Tatiana began to ask Lara and Signor Antonio about them. First she asked to be paid the 13<sup>th</sup> month. Signor Antonio was not pleased, but he did pay her the 13<sup>th</sup> month for that current year although not for the previous years which he is still required to pay according to Italian law.

In 2003, during the Bossi-Fini Law, Signor Antonio and Lara did the paperwork required for Tatiana to receive her *permesso di soggiorno*. Tatiana's eyes filled with tears as she explained how having documents meant you could go home. You were no longer "completely stuck" in Italy, just "a bit less stuck" she said with a weak smile. Tatiana spoke of how difficult her first months in Italy were. She said that her mother often told her to go to church and she would feel better, but Tatiana said that she is from Central Ukraine and is not used to going to church like the women from Western Ukraine. Instead Tatiana told her mother, "I'll feel better when they start to pay me more!" Tatiana shrugged her shoulders:

At the same time we are here and we have to be strong here because some women stay 2-3-5 months and then go back. They cannot overcome the nostalgia. Oh the first year is so hard, *mamma mia!* But now I have calmed down a bit. It is better when you know you soon will have your documents and then you go home to visit. Before then you see people leave for home and you think: maybe you will never be able to go back. You think that you'll be stuck in Italy for ever. But now I have my documents and I know I can go home, not to stay but to visit at least.

In fact soon after her *permesso* arrived, with Lara's approval, Tatiana decided to go home after being away two and a half years. She planned to stay in Ukraine three months. Tatiana said:

And this is where the daughter [Lara] tricked me. She placed a document by the accountant in front of me literally 15 minutes before we had to leave for the airport. *She* was driving me to the airport! She placed this paper in front of me and said, here Tanya, sign that you have received everything we owe you, and I didn't even understand what it was. In that moment, I was all emotions and was already thinking about home and wanted to go so I signed. And now I think, 'What have I done? Our lawyers warned us never to sign under any circumstances because they could put you in bondage, they could make you work for free.' And I signed.

After three month home in Ukraine, Tatiana said she had put out of her mind that she signed those papers where she relinquished all claims to back pay. While she was away, Signor Antonio called her incessantly to ask her when she would return and beg her to come back soon. Tatiana felt that she had a little more power in this relationship than she originally thought.

Back in Rome she found a leaflet explaining the terms of the domestic worker contract and she brought it to Lara explaining that she had never had vacation pay and it was written there that she was entitled to it. Additionally employers are supposed to pay INPS (*Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale* or National Institute of Social Security) *contributti* or social security payments. Even foreign domestic workers in Italy should have access to monthly benefits when they retire since they are paying into the system, but no one I spoke with thought they would ever have access to those funds. Many informants thought of it as a "tax" for the benefits of having a *permesso*. In Tatiana's case, she paid the monthly fee herself even though payment is the employer's responsibility.

All workers' unions are able to calculate, according to a form, the back pay in vacation, liquidation pay, and the 13<sup>th</sup> month owed to workers. Lara again became worried and went to friend who worked in a union office asking her to fill out the forms detailing the money they owed Tatiana. Lara brought Tatiana these forms and told her to sign them. Lara indicated on the form that Tatiana only worked 25 hours a week. Tatiana could not contain her indignation as she exclaimed, "I work almost 12 hours a day!" Lara also listed Tatiana's start date as a year and half after her actual start date. This would release Lara from paying back wages for that time period. This time Tatiana refused to sign:

Now I know a bit more Italian and I could read what was written there and I said, "No. First I have been working for you since January 2001 and here it is written June 2002." She [Lara] replied, "And who knows it?"

Tatiana paused to stare at me and let Lara's response sink in. She continued:

“And second,” I said, “I have already worked for you three and a half years and I was paid my 13<sup>th</sup> month for only one of those years and no vacation pay for all those years. She [Lara]replied, “All the time you have been with us since Mamma died you have been on vacation.” This means don’t say anything and sign. But I said no and I didn’t sign. You already know my character, Cinzia, I said no and it is no. I won’t sign even if you hold a gun to head. And so she started to scream. Grandfather who saw all this got very nervous because when I went home [to Ukraine], he cried all the time. He cried because he thought I wouldn’t come back. He knows very well that they do not pay me as much as they are supposed to. But he is used to me like all elderly people who become attached. I felt sorry for him because he is like my father. He’s 85 years-old, and he is good, I cannot say anything against him. And so the noise came.

Tatiana went to the Garbatella where Ukrainians trained as lawyers but now doing domestic work in Italy set up booths and charge a fee on Sundays to help others navigate Italian law. She asked them to calculate how much her employers owe her in back pay minus her *liquidazione*. Tatiana’s employers are required to pay her what is called a “liquidation” or a severance payment which is roughly equal to one month’s pay per year of employment. The employer may pay this in a large lump sum when the worker is let go but many employers pay this yearly to avoid such a large lump sum at the termination of the work relationship. Tatiana was afraid she would be out of the job if that fee was added to the document which already showed that she was owed a hefty payment of €2,000. Lara and Tatiana were now barely on speaking terms after this, so Tatiana went directly to Signor Antonio:

So I went to this employer very calmly and I said, “Signor Antonio, look please at what you are obligated to pay me. Do you know how offended I was when I went home and all our women received pay for the full year including their vacation pay except me? Some have worked two and some four years already. I was the only one who didn’t receive anything from you. Please, look at the paper.” Grandfather looked at me and paid me everything that was required. And now for the liquidation I was afraid to even talk about it. For now I will keep quiet. They haven’t even mentioned this topic. Maybe they think I don’t know I am owed this or maybe they are pretending that they do not know that they have to pay me this. For now I am waiting but in the end I think it will not be resolved without a lawyer.

After this Lara refused to speak with Tatiana and what Tatiana calls “the noise” or the “war” began. Tatiana asked Signor Antonio to go to INPS with her so they could see together what the minimum salary is and what the true fee is for *contributti* or social security. He finally agreed but Tatiana now wants to wait until next month, January, to go. She thinks that the minimum wage may go up with the new year and she does not want to miss out on this because they went to the office the month earlier. Tatiana began to cry:

To take even one ruble from us, one euro is a hardship for my family. Grandfather may not be so well off but his children are rich! They own 6-7 apartments and rent them out. I don't say it to them but when they say "Oi, Tanya, you are like a member of the family" I want to scream, "You are not my family. My family is at home and I am here to work in order to help my son and to try and support myself and that's all!"

In fact, Tatiana lived extremely frugally in Rome. Unlike Olena who attended Italian language classes, paid entrance fees to museums, and was willing to pay the table fee to be served espresso in a café, Tatiana spent as little money as possible on herself sending every euro back home. She is always thinking of how to earn more money. She decided to take another tactic with Signor Antonio. She explained her idea:

I told him, "If you can't pay me, let me work two hours a day cleaning for someone else to earn more money. You can help me find a job." He is the president of a sports club where many elderly men gather. Maybe one of them needs a woman to clean or just prepare lunch or iron. But he feels this is not prestigious. Then people will say that he has a woman who lives badly. Cinzia, he does have a woman who lives badly! I have two grandchildren and an apartment to fix!

Tatiana feels that things are still going badly in Ukraine and she is desperate to earn more money to send home. She explained that from Italy it seemed things were better back home, but when she returned she exclaimed, "It was actually worse!"

While she was home Tatiana visited her mother who is now ill. Her sister left Italy to return to Ukraine to care for her. I asked why it was her sister who returned. Tatiana said her sister is younger so they thought she had a better chance of finding a job in Ukraine. Tatiana explained:

You cannot abandon your own mother to care for strangers. I also care for mama. I send her money and packages.... Before medicine was free now you have to pay. It is supposed to be free but if you don't pay bribes you will not be seen. The more serious the operation the more you have to pay. Our mama was in the hospital and I needed to send right away €100. Some people are in the hospital a month and still haven't been seen by a doctor because they didn't pay. And you have to bring them food because the hospital only gives them tea without sugar and a piece of bread. Really, you have to bring them food to eat and there are people who cannot do it because they have their children to feed. Every woman and mother tries first to feed her child, this is understandable, and children pass out if they are hungry. And these elderly people lay in the hospital, nobody needs them, they are abandoned, abandoned to God or to death. They simply do not want to live; they do not want to live because they know they are not

useful to anyone. Not only because they are no use to anybody, but because their children cannot afford to care for their parents because they themselves are hungry. The bureaucracy is awful, there is no one to protect you [the elderly and infirm], no one to turn to for help with your problems—no one needs you.

I asked Tatiana if she ever worried that no one would need her. She was quiet for a long time. She said she supposed that was part of the reason why she left, to make sure she was needed, that she was still useful. Many women described that they had become “useless” in Ukraine and migration was the only way they saw to be “useful” to their families. Tatiana is afraid of the day she will no longer be able to work because it will mean she must go back to Ukraine where she is afraid her money will “vanish and it will be as if I never left for Italy.” She asked, “And then what?” Tatiana shook her head. She voted for Yushchenko during the presidential elections like most migrants I spoke with in Rome in the hopes that that the economic situation there will improve. Yet she fears that in the end it does not matter who one votes for. “Whoever is president will become a millionaire but Ukraine will have the same problems.” She went on about how Ukraine is a beautiful country, how hard-working and resilient Ukrainians are and laughed as she recounted a childhood memory:

I never thought I would be forced out of Ukraine. I had an aunt, my father’s sister, who lived in America with her husband. I grew up hearing the story about how they had not a single dollar in America but worked night and day. She sent us photos and packages when I was small. . . . I wrote letters to her and was curious because I didn’t know any capitalists and hearing their struggles I thought, thank God I live in the Soviet Union because there [in the capitalist world] everyone is so poor. [Tatiana laughed covering her face with her hands.] Then there was a long time when no letters would get through. Then, just before Gorbachev, we received letters again from them. They were 90 years-old. They sent a picture of their house. They worked all their life and they owned something. We worked all our life and we have nothing. We are destitute. They have stolen everything and sent us to Italy.

Tatiana alternated between hope that the Orange Revolution will bring about a new economic situation that will raise Ukraine’s standard of living and fear that things would get worse before they got better. Tatiana participated in some of the demonstrations in support of the Orange Revolution in Rome and voted twice for Yushchenko at the Ukrainian consulate in Rome standing in a line many hours long. I asked her why she had voted for Yushchenko. Tatiana replied, “For the same reason we all voted for Yushchenko: so we can go home.”

### Oksana: Talent Shows from the Gulag

I met Oksana in the packed auditorium of one of Rome's Basilicas. One of the particularities of immigrant groups in Italy is that they are rarely run by immigrants but by Italians. The Association of Ukrainians in Italy is an exception. It is run by a group of Ukrainian women domestic workers who on Thursday afternoons and on Sundays plan cultural events, especially Ukrainian talent shows. I was fortunate to have an interview with the group's director, Olga, a slight, dark-haired woman in her mid to late 50s bursting with energy. She invited me to their show, a Ukrainian Festival, at the end of October. She explained that the mission of the group was to do outreach to Italians and teach them about Ukrainian culture. These talent shows were one way to do this. As I continued my fieldwork it became clear that these talent shows were also reconstructing a particular version of Ukrainian culture for fellow Ukrainians perhaps even more so than for Italians.

I walked into the auditorium and introduced myself to the women selling *Mist*, meaning "bridge," is a newspaper publication sponsored by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. *Mist* is a transnational project with the issues published in Rome catering to the concerns of the Ukrainian community in Italy. Not knowing anyone, I was relieved to catch sight of Olga as she seated spectators. Olga came to welcome me with a large smile and hurried me to my seat. She quickly provided introductions to the woman sitting next to me, Oksana. Oksana smiled and we continued with our own introductions. I explained the research I was doing and Oksana nodded enthusiastically exclaiming that she was a journalist and understood perfectly what I was up to and she thought it interesting and important work.

The lights went dim and the Ukrainian Festival was about to begin. While the mission of the group was to do out-reach to Italians, it was clear that I was one of the few non-Ukrainian spectators in the auditorium and the show began with Italians addressing the Ukrainian audience. First the *Consigliere* from the City of Rome addressed the crowd. He stated, "Thank you for caring for our elderly. You are not only here because you need us, but because we need you." The crowd cheered. A representative from the Mayor of Rome's office spoke about the upcoming presidential election in Ukraine where she said that Ukraine would decide "whether they will join the EU or the Russian Federation." A man's voice from the back yelled in Italian, "We are Europeans, not Russians!" The representative continued, "We Italians do not know Ukraine well. We will have to learn because Ukrainians are becoming important in the mosaic of nationalities in Rome."

Next was Donatella, the director of Comunità di Sant'Egidio where I had met Olena (chapter 4). She said, "Most of you know us and we know most of you. We have been friends since 1994. We are now fighting the battle for dual citizenship so that Ukrainians can become Italian citizens without giving up their Ukrainian citizenship." The reality is that Italy's naturalization rate is negligible and citizenship rights seem unlikely but her words were well-received (Colombo and Sciortino 2003). Oksana turned to me and said, "Why shouldn't we become citizens. This is part of the goal here, to show

that we are not just *badante*, but artists, musicians and more!” Finally a representative from *Domina* walked up to the microphone. I thought this an odd choice. In Italy, not only do domestic workers have union representation but so do Italian families and *Domina* is the employers’ union. I conducted an interview in their office and was struck by the discrepancy in resources between the dingy union offices I had visited and the professionally decorated and climitized offices of *Domina* where everyone, including the secretary who seated me in the waiting room, was *Dottore* or *Dottoressa* so-and-so, a much used title of respect indicating the individual in question had completed university. While my Italian husband had advised me to embrace the title of *Dottoressa* myself in Italian contexts, I never felt comfortable doing so although, at times, the ethnographic situation would have warranted it. The *Domina* representative stated:

I am a representative of the families that host you. We need to thank you. If our mothers can go to work, it is thanks to you. If our elderly are cared for, it is thanks to you. Sometimes there are misunderstandings and our families at times do not know what their responsibilities are. But, we are fighting for your *permessi di soggiorno* because our families say I can see that the woman who lives with us cries and is not tranquil. We understand the National Contract [of Domestic Workers] is up in March and that you want to work less hours and earn more money. But our families also have monetary problems. Many are retired and share their small pensions with you. So also you, please have patience with us.

After a weak applause, Lesia came out on stage and introduced herself as mistress of ceremonies. In addition to MC, she would also be providing a translation into Italian. What followed was a series of choirs dressed in Ukrainian peasant garb singing traditional folk songs that the whole audience knew and was not shy about singing along. There were songs about the Cossacks recast as Ukrainian liberation fighters, folk songs of beautiful Ukrainian maids and fertile lands, and partisan songs about Ukrainian independence. People in the audience waved Ukrainian flags as a woman recited the poetry of Shevchenko, Ukraine’s national poet credited with preserving the Ukrainian language from near extinction under Soviet Russification policies. The Ukrainian Festival differed from other talent shows I would attend because the various choirs that performed came from all over Italy, not just Rome. Naples, Bologna, and Trent as well as other Italian cities sent Ukrainian folk groups. Oksana explained that they invited the representatives of Rome’s government and organizations to show them that “Ukrainians are all over Italy and in every village. If there is an old person there, then there is a Ukrainian taking care of them.”

The following week I met Oksana at the apartment I was renting in Rome. She arrived with chocolate, a cake, coffee, and clementines! I was a embarrassed since I was well aware of the financial burden these offerings represented. We agreed that I would interview Oksana first and then she would interview me for *Mist* to which she often contributed articles.

Oksana, 51, has been working in Italy for almost four years. She is from a town an hour outside of L’viv, but as a young student she won a competition to enter a five-year university program in literature and writing at an institute in Moscow. She hoped to get what she called a “literary job” in film, theater, radio, or newspaper but her religious

leanings always kept her out of the *Komsomol*, the Young Communist League, and without membership, she was denied access to those jobs. Instead she taught classes at a local university. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Oksana landed a job at a publishing house where she translated religious texts from Russian, Polish, and Church Slavonic into Ukrainian. She also wrote for a religious newspaper. Her economic problems increased as her parents became ill and their pension barely paid for one trip to the pharmacy a month. A neighbor who had already been working in Italy suggested Oksana go to Italy with her for the Year 2000 Catholic Jubilee, and she did, overstaying her visa to work as a live-in domestic worker.

This was one of my first interviews and I was caught off guard by Oksana's tears. I felt uncomfortable but soon discovered that at one point or another, all my interviewees in Italy would break into tears with many sobbing into my recorder for several hours at a time like Oksana. I learned when to pause and give the informant space, when to continue to ask questions through the tears, when a hand on an arm or shoulder was appropriate and when declaring that we must really have more tea was the best course of action. I was usually rewarded with hugs at the end of our session and women declaring that they felt better. I had assumed that migrants discussed these topics amongst themselves all the time but many told me that they have no one to speak with about their problems. They must put on a brave face for family back home and others here are carrying around so many of their own problems that they do not want to carry someone else's as well. I was not always perfect and certainly made mistakes. My face still goes red when I think of another interview early on where I nodded my head and said, "I understand" periodically, I thought in a supportive fashion. My informant stopped mid-sentence to stare at me in the eye with great emotion and a hint of hostility and said, "How could *you* possibly understand?" Here, in the kitchen of my rented Roman apartment, I was still a novice and I fidgeted wondering how to react to Oksana's steady stream of tears.

Oksana has been at her current job for two and a half years but she went through six jobs in the first year and half. Oksana paid an Italian placement agency \$350 for her first job and they "deceived" her. They said that the job was in Rome, but really it was 50 kilometers outside Rome where Oksana felt isolated. After three months the elderly woman she cared for died. Oksana found herself without a job and without a place to live. She stayed with her neighbor from Ukraine and found an elderly woman to care for in Rome. This woman was 88 and had five children whom she felt did not visit her enough. The children hired Oksana because a short time earlier their mother had a mild heart attack and lay on the floor for three days before someone found her. Oksana said she left this job because the woman told her children that Oksana beat her and insulted her. Afterwards the woman would apologize to Oksana and say she knew it was not true and that Oksana treated her well. She thought her children would come visit her more often if they believed she was being treated badly. Oksana was not unsympathetic, but this created conflict and Oksana said that it was "too difficult on her morale" and she left. Her third job she simply called a nightmare, so she stayed less than a month and did not have much more to say about it.

Oksana said her fourth job was the best period for her in Italy. The woman she cared for was very ill and did not speak. She no longer recognized her son and yelled a lot but, Oksana sobbed, the son was a general and a good son and a good person. Through her tears Oksana explained:

This was the best period when I worked for this family. The best. Because they treated me like a person, a real person. Not just like some slave. He was that kind of person. .... I started on Sunday and then Monday the second day he brought me a big atlas and he said, tell me about Ukraine because I don't know anything about Ukraine. And I told him about Ukraine and about who I am. So they treated me very well.

Although Oksana had told the general that she did not have documents, he misunderstood and became very concerned, given his position, that he had an undocumented migrant living with him and his mother. The next *sanatoria* or amnesty was expected to come out that year, so he told Oksana not to worry and he would do all her paperwork as soon as the law was passed. Unfortunately his mother died before then and Oksana found herself once again without work.

After two more stints in families that she said were so unbearable she had to leave, Oksana found her current position. Oksana continued to cry as she explained that the woman she cares for now is Roman but of an old Roman family that traces its ancestry back many generations:

And as they explained to me here [in Italy], this is a completely different genealogy. They are very proud... in general nothing interests them besides themselves. At the beginning for me it was very difficult. I arrived there as the amnesty law came out and so I couldn't leave because I didn't know if in a new job they would do my documents and here they said they would do my documents. And so I bore it. I suffered many things that now I do not want to remember.

Oksana explained that things have gotten better but still, "Understand Cinzia? It is difficult for us to do this work. It is easier for a simple woman to do it." By this Oksana meant that it was easier for women without University degrees and professional work histories to do domestic work.

Oksana has two brothers in Ukraine. One is divorced and unemployed and the other is married and is working. Oksana's mother has difficulty walking but her father is still able to care for himself. Her brothers check in on their parents and they have a neighbor who goes to Poland every three months and looks in on them when she is home. Oksana would like to pay someone to care for her parents full time but she said, this is work that does not exist in Ukraine and she says neither her parents nor a paid caregiver would accept this. I asked if she ever thought of returning home. Oksana answered:

Everyday I think about returning home. But my parents, now they don't speak about this but I feel that they are worried that I might return. All his life my father worked as an architect and he has a normal pension, the most you can receive. Before the Soviet Union collapsed he lived without worries and he continued to work until he could. His money was enough and they lived well. But now on this pension he can go once or twice to the pharmacy and that's it. They still need to pay for the apartment, for

food, and they are used to living well. I feel that there is this fear that all of a sudden I will return and everything will end. And again there will be the problem of money for medicine and this is what I understand. My father says on the telephone, “If it wasn’t for you, I don’t know what would happen to us.”

I asked about her brothers and whether they are able to help. Oksana replied:

One also has the possibility to help our parents [the one with a job]. The other one says come home and I will go and do your job. [laughing] But no, I already did the hardest part and I tell him what kind of job could you find? Italy is not for men. It is too difficult for them to find jobs. It is very difficult for our men here. There is more work for women.

I asked Oksana if she ever thought she would go back to Ukraine and she replied she would. Unlike most women who had children and grandchildren back in Ukraine, Oksana has never married and has no children. She said that she was helping her parents as well as her niece with her university fees. (In L’viv I met Oksana’s niece twice and noted that Oksana seemed to greatly enjoy her role as benefactor.) However, Oksana also had no apartment for herself. Under the Soviet system, you placed your name on housing lists and waited to be assigned an apartment. Oksana stated bitterly that if the Soviet Union lasted just one more year, she would have gotten her apartment. But now she needs to buy an apartment and she is saving money to do so. “I’d like to go back but I can’t,” she exclaimed.

Oksana had gone on earlier about how people were not free under the Soviet system and how terrible it was not to be allowed to go to church or to display other ethnic symbols of Ukraine. She recounted some of the phrases shared with her during an interview she did with a Ukrainian dissident who had spent 12 years in Siberia. But here she tempered her thoughts:

I cannot say that everything under the Soviet Union was bad; I can’t say that. I have to speak truthfully. There were many good things: free medicine, free education and all these things were thrown away. Why shouldn’t these things stay? Why can’t we throw away all the bad things and keep the good things that there were? We had a very high education system. Very high. It was said that in the whole Soviet Union, ours [in Ukraine] was the best education. And in the cosmos, we worked in the cosmos and on medicine ... and all this was thrown away.

After a long pause Oksana looked at me and wondered if the post-Soviet period really did usher in more “freedom.” Her words reminded me of another interview with Larisa, Olens’a roommate, where she stated that in Soviet times she was not “allowed to go abroad” but now she was “forced to and not to look around but to clean toilets!” Oksana continued, “I think your book on women working here in Italy should be the companion book to Solzhenitsyn’s Archipelago.” I looked at her and said laughing, “Really? You mean here people think you are in Rome the city of art and culture and you’re saying

“Welcome to the gulag?” Oksana looked at me with a straight face and said, “Very good, Cinzia. Exactly. Welcome to the gulag.”

I spent time with Oksana on many occasions over the next politically charged months. Ukraine was in the midst of the Orange revolution. We decided to go together to the next talent show organized by Olga and the Association of Ukrainians in Italy. It was the end of January and given the Orthodox Christian Calendar it was called the Christmas Concert. Unlike the Ukrainian Festival several months earlier where I was still struggling for access to this community, I now knew many of the women performing and many in the audience. It was a wonderful opportunity to check in with informants and friends as well as a social occasion for myself since I had been missing my own family and felt like a lonely researcher during the holiday season.

Oksana and I settled into seats near the front because I would need to slip out and help Sveta, who was performing in two pieces back-to-back, with a costume change. If I was surprised by the overt nationalism of the earlier Ukrainian Festival, having now spent more time in Rome’s Ukrainian community and having observed the many demonstrations in Rome in support of the Orange Revolution, I did not even bat an eye at the stage lined in orange and yellow balloons, Yushchenko’s campaign colors. The auditorium was once again packed and Lesia once again translated the skits and lyrics into Italian despite the Ukrainian audience. The show opened with a skit.

A woman came out in peasant Ukrainian garb: a white peasant shirt with colorful embroidered flowers and a long full skirt also with flowers embroidered on it. She carried a loaf of bread on an embroidered cloth and a salt shaker. Lesia explained in Italian to the crowd that the bread represents hospitality and the salt friendship and is a traditional way to welcome guests to one’s home or in this case to a “feast” of Ukrainian talent. The woman then carried the bread and salt to a table where her husband and two children, also dressed in traditional garb, sat at the table. Each then gave a small speech about what their role in the family was. The woman declared that as a Ukrainian mother and wife she supported her husband and cared for her children who she would raise to be proud Ukrainians. The man stood up and declared that as a Ukrainian man his role was to protect the family and provide for them. The children, a boy and girl, recited in unison that their role was to obey and respect their parents and be the pride of Ukraine. Oksana felt that she needed to provide me with a running cultural narrative about what was happening on stage. She explained that the family was the foundation of the Ukrainian nation:

Do you understand, Cinzia? This is what makes us different from Russians. Russian women are cold and selfish. Do you think a Russian woman would come to Italy and make the sacrifices that our Ukrainian mothers make for their families? Do you think they would lower themselves to do the work we do here even if there is great need? No! Ukrainian women are different. They do everything for their family, everything! Ukrainian women are nurturers, it is in our blood. That family on stage: that is Ukraine. Write that down, Cinzia.

I squeezed her arm in thanks and scribbled down her words in my notebook. I also scribbled down a note to myself, “Aha, now I know why Oksana says that

sometimes she does not feel she has done enough for Ukraine because she has no children of her own.” Oksana, satisfied, sat back in her seat and I noticed she was crying. I looked up at the audience and saw that everyone was crying! People were leaning on each other’s shoulders as tears streamed down their faces while others patted their neighbors’ shoulder and stared off in their own thoughts. Others still waved Ukrainian flags or the “*Tak Yushchenko!*” (Yes, Yushchenko!) banners of the Orange Revolution. Then it occurred to me that not a single person in the audience had the ideal Ukrainian family portrayed on stage. Many were divorced and nearly everyone was separated from their family.

The “degradation of the institution of the family” was a phrase I heard often in my Roman field site. Even Oksana, perhaps precisely because she does not have children and therefore has not fulfilled what is now not just a womanly but a nationalist duty, often spoke of the *Ukrainian* family. In our interview months earlier she explained:

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, we experienced a degradation of the institution of family. All of our families fell apart. Why? Because the family cannot survive now. Who is supposed to protect the family? The man. The husband has to. The woman has to raise the children and be a housewife. Then if she goes to work, I don’t know, she can be president of a company, but at home she must be wife and mother and support the family. But she cannot do this because she has to think about earning money because the men aren’t bringing anything home. All the factories closed. And women organize the men, they organize the children and they go abroad to work for money. She sends the money home. The men drink this money or they find another woman. The children see all of this and start to fight with their father for the money. And if they do not succeed they threaten to tell everything to their mother.... I mean this money that was earned with much hardship, a lot of hardship on the part of their mother, then the kids buy drugs and whatever they want. So this money does not always do good. I don’t want to say it is like this for all these families. There are very good, decent families where the husband waits for his wife and raises the kids well, but I am telling you what the negative is.... And the institution of family, which is the base of the government, falls apart.

This discourse of the “degradation of the family” existed alongside an alternate discourse among migrant women who had children. In their narratives, older women saved the institution of marriage by migrating themselves because if they did not go, they argued, their daughters would have to. Migrant women noted that they were divorced, widowed, or in a “mature” marriage while the marriages of their children would not survive migration.

For Oksana and many I interviewed in Rome, the construction of the Ukrainian nation hung on a particular and traditional conception of the Ukrainian family. According to Oksana, Yushchenko’s chances for success also ride on the

construction of a two-parent family that teaches children Ukrainian values. She wondered how much they could really expect Yushchenko to do:

Because people during this time, these 13 years when we can say Ukraine has been free, 13 years when Ukraine does not depend on Russia. Ukraine learned many bad things. It learned to curse; it learned to steal. All the bad things. The young generation who grew up during this time learned these things. And now these people have to change because they are used to the idea that they have to swear, they have steal, they have to be dishonest. If you don't you'll just sit at home [without work]. This is already a minus. So even if a new, decent, smart, educated president arrives, what can he do with the past of this country and with these people who now do not believe in anything or anybody? What can he do if we do not have stable Ukrainian families where the young can learn Ukrainian values? I don't know. Then most of our intelligentsia, they work in America, in Canada, in Italy, in Spain, in Portugal. They are dispersed in the whole world. Their people need them now, the people who are specialists, but they are not there. We have to make it so they all return. I am not a mother so I can work. I want to work for Ukraine, and I help as much as I can. Yes? I can do many jobs. But now they have to also pay me so I can help my parents and live normal myself. I just need to live normal. I don't need anything more than this.

Back at the talent show a series of skits and songs took the stage. The skits were once again about Cossacks and Ukraine's democratic roots. One woman read an original poem about "the day she woke up and realized she was Ukrainian and not Russian." Another gave a speech on a similar theme of ethnic self-discovery when he realized "the milk he drank from his mother's teats was Ukrainian milk not Russian milk." Others spoke about the new President Yushchenko and the peaceful victory of the Orange Revolution to thunderous applause. Yulia Tymoshenko was also present in the presentations and often referred to as the "Berehynia of our people like all Ukrainian women." Oksana explained how proud they were to have their first ethnically Ukrainian president, "but maybe we love Tymoshenko even more." A large picture of Yushchenko surround by his wife (born in Chicago of a well-known Ukrainian family) and five children was brought on stage. It is an image I had seen many times in Rome. The audience cheered and Oksana leaned in and said, "That is a real (*nastayashi*) Ukrainian family and a real Ukrainian man! We have hopes that he will fix things and soon all of us can go home."

It seemed every performance—song, dance or poem—reminded the crowd that Ukraine is a strong and independent nation. It seemed that Ukrainian nationhood was being invented on stage before my eyes as audience and performers negotiated the content of ethnic Ukrainianess. Of course the images and themes were grounded in what was happening back in Ukraine. I wondered if, like with many ethnic folk traditions, it was only abroad that Ukrainians wore this traditional dress. For example, my mother participates in an Italian folk group in

the United States, but I never saw anyone in Italy wearing the Italian peasant costumes she and her group don for performances. Yet, when I was in L'viv, I was surprised to see the streets one day filled with school children wearing the peasant garb, apparently a new tradition for the first day of school. I also attended a political rally in L'viv's city center where a folk group came and performed Ukrainian folk songs dressed in these same traditional costumes. It is a historical moment in which Ukrainianess is being constructed not only transnationally across geographic space but also across historical time.

The focus on the family is also part of nationalist rhetoric in Ukraine as is an emphasis on women returning to their feminine responsibilities which is framed as a nationalist act. The emphasis on large families as being inherently Ukrainian is also emphasized by government policies that encourage the birth of a second child by offering a stipend. Having a single child is now considered very "Soviet" and passé. The nationalist cachet of Yushchenko's five children was clearly not lost on his publicist given the ubiquity of this image of him surrounded by his wife and children.

Many of the performers I recognized from the last show. A woman who was a professional bandura player performed again. The bandura is a Ukrainian plucked-string folk instrument which looks to me like the lute a medieval minstrel might play. A band of young Ukrainian men who played at the Ukrainian Festival took the to the stage again singing nationalist songs set to a modern beat and I refer to them affectionately as the "Ukrainian boy band" in my field notes. I find them remarkable because, in their early 20s, they too are in peasant garb with a rock sound singing, not about love had and love lost as we might expect but about how much they love *nash Ukraina* or our Ukraine. As I watched them sell CDs after the show I thought them boys any Ukrainian mother would want for a son-in-law.

The grand finale was the church choir under Masha's direction. Masha was a classically trained chorale director and I had sat through a couple rehearsals in Rome's Santa Sofia, a Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and listened to Masha mercilessly extol her choir to do better. After a particularly trying rehearsal, Masha said to me:

Every Sunday I am running around like a crazy woman trying to organize practice and pull this choir together. This church it is like our family. We could not survive here without it. My *signora* tells me that I am crazy to run around all day Sunday instead of relaxing. But I do this—we all do this—so that we feel like people and not animals. That is more important than relaxing, no?

I helped Sveta with her costume change back stage just as the group went on. They sang Ukrainian folk songs which always turn into a communal sing-a-long and perhaps the most beloved part of any show for those watching. They also sang both popular and classical Christmas songs. The audience showed their appreciation through endless applause. At the end of the show Sveta pulled me onto the stage, perhaps the most publicly embarrassing moment of my fieldwork,

as people continued to take pictures of the choir and me dressed in jeans and a green sweater. In hindsight I could have at least worn orange.

I lingered to speak with informants after the show and tried to make myself helpful in cleaning up. I saw Taras, a dedicated church volunteer who was a key organizer of the campaign to get Ukrainians in Italy to vote in the presidential elections. He was looking pensive and I asked him why. Taras smiled and answered:

I don't know... You know one of the things that I like about Italy is that all Italians from the North to the South call themselves Italians. This just doesn't happen in Ukraine and it is a strong disappointment especially when you see how beautiful Ukrainian culture is like we saw tonight. I worry for Yushchenko. My hope is that the minority that carried out the Orange Revolution will drag the rest of the country into nationhood.

He gave me a kiss on each cheek as is Italian custom and excused himself to speak with someone across the hall. I saw Nataliya and Vira at the *Mist* stand still packing up newspapers on my way out of the auditorium. I yelled over to them, "You two, always working!" They smiled and Nataliya yelled back, "I work for my country, so I am happy!"

I waved to Nataliya and Vira over my shoulder but kept walking forward and straight into Olga, the director of the Association of Ukrainians in Italy and the force behind the show. She had her usual harried air about her and hugged and kissed me asking me how I enjoyed the show. I told her she had out-done herself but she was already moving towards the lights, threatening to leave those still left in the dark. The cold January air hit my face as the lights dimmed behind me. Taras was on the sidewalk still chatting and yelled, "What do you think Cinzia? Lights out on a dream?" I glanced at the dark auditorium and replied, "Dreams, realities, sometimes it is hard to tell them apart." Taras laughed, "You sure you do not have any Ukrainian blood in you?" I signalled maybe with arms and shoulders, winked, and hurried toward the warmth of the metro.

### Yuriy: Papa is Papa

I met Yuriy, 43, at the Ottaviano metro station and we walked to a *tavola calda* which is like a small cafeteria and, unlike cafés, the seating is free. Despite the cold winter air, we sat at the tables outside as far away from the entrance of the *tavola calda* as possible in the hopes that no one would make us buy anything. Yuriy hoped we would remain unseen because he could not afford it and I hoped the same because, while the women I interviewed accepted my offer to pay for the tea or coffee on the rare occasion we met at a café, it would be a trickier gender negotiation with a man. Yuriy looked distraught when after 45 minutes a waiter did ask us for our order. He nervously put out his cigarette. We both ordered coffee and I paid the tab as soon as the waiter came out with them. Yuriy looked pained and said that he was “ashamed” because he was “not used to that.” Without mentioning the money, just a couple euros, I thanked Yuriy for coming out to speak with me. At the same time, he was also relieved and he spoke in a much more relaxed fashion now that we were not wondering if we would be able to finish before a waiter noticed us.

Yuriy’s hair was almost all white and he had a strong if slender build with hands that looked like they worked in construction. Yuriy, born and raised in L’viv, was an electrician by training and he described himself as having “golden hands.” He had worked many years in L’viv’s Kinescope factory where they made picture tubes for televisions. He said he enjoyed this work because it was not monotonous and every day there was something new:

But then when these hard times came to Ukraine, I went to work as a driver. I worked at this for a little while but then even this work disappeared. I was left without work. For a long time I didn’t work at a steady job. I worked some in different places and then I realized there was no way out, I had to go abroad and start earning money. After all, staying at home and sitting on the stove [as the expression goes] doesn’t accomplish anything. Because I have to provide for my family. ... I am divorced but my children live with me therefore I have to support them. It is the responsibility of parents to support their children until they are adults.

Yuriy and his wife had been divorced many years, but without an income he was unable to buy or rent a place of his own. Therefore, he continued to live with his ex-wife and children. Several people I spoke with had a similar arrangement and it caused all the tensions one might imagine and more when the ex-wife is abroad. Her remittances, whether she likes it or not, continue to support the household in which her ex-husband lives. I asked Yuriy why he decided to go abroad. He answered:

First many had already left. Of course it is mostly women who go. Men, if they go at all, it is usually to Russia, to Moscow. Men very rarely go abroad for many reasons. First of all, in Italy for example, there is almost

no work for men. There is work only for women. This is why men sit at home and do not take the risk because you have to lay down big money to then sit here without work—this is very difficult. [...] Yes, usually women go abroad because they have a more mature sense of responsibility, a more mature sense of motherhood. They are always more for the children; they sacrifice for the children, always. Men there [in Ukraine] less so. ... Therefore the decision falls onto women. She drops everything and leaves for far corners of the world to work.

While a handful of women of the women I had interviewed reported shuttling goods back and forth across the Polish border, usually illegally, to earn money, Italy was generally the only place they had worked outside Ukraine. However for Yuriy, like most men I spoke with in Rome, Italy was not his first stop. In 2000, he went to Germany on a visa that allowed him to stay 90 days. He did that twice and realized that going to Germany for three months once a year was not “the way out” of his “situation” so he paid \$1,700 to a “tourist agency” and left for Portugal. If Ukrainian women migrated to Greece and especially Italy, Ukrainian men who migrated west went to Spain and especially Portugal to work in the construction industry. Unfortunately he arrived a week too late to apply for documents under Portugal’s legalization act. Without documents it was hard for Yuriy to find work. He was in Portugal for one year and two months but he only worked six months of that time. After four months without work in Portugal, he called a friend in Italy who told him to come and they would help him get by somehow. He got on a bus headed for Italy. In France they stopped him and asked for his passport, but Yuriy guessed that he did not look threatening because they let him go and somehow he made it to Italy.

Once in Italy he borrowed money to live on and was without work for five months. Then he found work with two men from Moldova building pools. Yuriy said that this was “very heavy work,” but he did not mind. Unfortunately, after five months he was again without work. Finally he decided he would never pay off his debts if he did not have steady work. Many Ukrainian men find themselves doing carework in Italy and so he too looked for a job caring for an elderly man. He met with a family and it seemed everyone was in agreement. However for some reason they never called him back and Yuriy does not know why. While he was waiting, a construction job, this time working with Italians, came his way and he has been working consistently with them for the past four months. I asked Yuriy how he found this job. He explained:

It is very difficult for men to look for work like I said before and there is only one way for men to find work: help from women, our women who work as live-ins. They are the ones who speak with the [Italian] families and offer our services. They say, I know a guy, if you need someone to do this, this, or this. Then slowly something might come up. This is the only way. It’s the way that it happens 99% of the time and then 1% is chance.

Carework and cleaning generally pays less than working construction, but it is steady work. It is also easier to find work caring for an elderly person in their house without documents than it is to find construction work where the work site is visible and more open to regulation. Yuriy said that he is paid less than Italians but more than Romanians which “have not made a good reputation for themselves.” Given this, he feels he is paid well. He reported earning €65-70 a day. Working 5 days a week that comes to €1,300-1,400 a month, but when Yuriy laid out his expenses, he put his monthly income at less:

With this money you can rent a room that is normal, the way a human lives. You can eat the way we are used to because our cuisine differs some from Italian food. We are used to eating more meat—meat is expensive. This is already a bigger help to your family. Apartments here are expensive and for our workers it is very expensive. If you earn €800 a month, one fourth you must give for your bed—not for a room for a bed—plus, for example, €100 for food. Then without a cell phone you cannot live here and this is a minimum of €50. If you smoke you must pay €80 unless you smoke more, €150. So half [of your pay] disappears on nothing, let’s put it that way.

I asked Yuriy if he sent money home and he answered, “of course!” While he spoke about supporting his family and even his ex-wife, as the interview continued it became clear that Yuriy actually sent very little money home. He sends home a gift on his children’s birthdays and holidays but he says he is unable to send home more than that. He has been in Italy two years now and reminded me again that the first five months he lived in debt and still has to pay this debt off. Those who have steady work are able to send money back every month but as long as he has work two months yes, two months no, he will not be able to send money home regularly. Yuriy continued: “But what choice do I have? In Ukraine practically everything is closed, practically every enterprise is closed, especially in Western Ukraine.”

Yuriy has a son, Kostya, 19, and a daughter, Inna, 15. He took out his wallet and showed me a photo of each of them. They looked about 14 and 10 in the photo. Kostya is in his third year of university where he is studying economics. It seemed many of the children of those I met in Rome, especially the sons, were studying economics or “international business.” Yuriy said he was unhappy that Kostya was taking this route and noted that “everything in Ukraine has changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union.” Like most others, Yuriy noted that before healthcare and education were free, apartments were affordable and most important for Yuriy, work was “guaranteed”:

Now everyone wants to study but you have no money; there is no money! Therefore many women work here so they can educate their children. . . . Many say that we lived badly [during Soviet times] and I am telling you honestly, we lived well. Some doors were closed, maybe this was bad or maybe this was good, but we lived well. . . . Now there is medical service,

there is education, there is the possibility to vacation, but only for big money. Where will you get this money if there is no work?

I asked Yuriy if there would be work for Kostya when he finished university. Yuriy shrugged his shoulders and replied that you must give doctors “presents” if you want them to care for you, teachers “presents” if you want to pass your exams, and he was sure he would have to pay someone in order to get Kostya a job. Yuriy had hoped that Kostya would go to Germany with him and work for a bit but Kostya refused. So Yuriy suggested that he become a lawyer, a profession that Yuriy felt would almost guarantee Kostya a job. But an economist?:

Who needs an economist? Economists, now every university has an economics department, every university. How many economists do they turn out a year but again, where are the jobs for them? .... I wanted him to leave with me and work a while and than go study what he wanted. Because I agreed with the way of being in Germany, I agreed with the way of life in the West. It would be useful for Kostya to learn this. There are many pluses, there are. But, until 18 years-old, yes parents help their children; after 18 you are already an adult. You already smoke, you have already met a girl or a boy, and so you are an adult. You can do as you like.

Yuriy spoke with great sadness about his daughter who he said must be beautiful now. Since he is still without documents he has not been home in four years. I asked him what his plans for the future were:

Plans, I no longer make plans for the future because you just cannot know what the situation will be tomorrow or the day after. I have no plans. Today I have work, tomorrow maybe I will not. I want, of course, I want to have steady work and earn like a human being and live like a human being. Yes, I will return home, I will return home.... Home is home. Probably this is so for everybody and here I am not home. This is not my native land.

Yuriy has met a woman here, Raisa. Raisa is also from L’viv and he said it is a serious relationship. She is the person he says he will spend the rest of his life with. They have lived together for almost two years now. He hopes to earn enough money to buy an apartment for them to live in back in Ukraine and earn enough money “for a rainy day” because he knows there will be no work for them when they go back. They will need to earn enough money to see them through their old age. Yuriy has hopes that the family Raisa works for will sponsor his *permesso di soggiorno* even if he is only doing odd jobs for them every once in a while. He is angry that people from the former Soviet Union are not given documents even though they work hard:

Yes, we live in many countries. But they push us aside, I speak truthfully, they do not accept us. This is very...it doesn't only offend but it angers you because our people almost all have higher education. They are all specialists, because we did not sit on our hands at home. We all worked. We do not need computers or calculators. For us it is easy to carry out mathematics in our heads. We are used to this and we can do this faster than any other person including an Italian. .... And yet they do not accept us. They do not want to go to the meeting to get us our documents. They do not give us the right to live here and to work. They do not give us rights. On the television we see people on boats crossing the Mediterranean Sea to arrive here on Italy's shores and then they all get a *permesso di soggiorno* and are their own people. But us, for us it is a concentration camp [*lager*']. We toil here. I know people who have worked here for 7 years and still cannot get their documents. They would like to go home and return here without having to work in the black, but to work honestly and pay taxes and be free and not hide from the police or hide from anyone. Taxes we pay them not just because we pay them but because from these will come our pensions. This is right, no? But they do not give this to us. So now we just wait for some change to the law or I don't know. Wait, wait, wait, wait.

An hour and a half into our conversation Yuriy asked me to turn off the recorder. He did not want to talk politics on record. We continued to chat for quite a bit longer and Yuriy repeated the common refrains I had heard many times from informants. We spoke about the Orange Revolution. He shared his skepticism that Yushchenko would be able to do much to curb corruption. Like many conversations I had with Ukrainians, Yuriy went through the list of corrupt politicians and bemoaned the extent to which corruption had become part of daily life. He feels that human relations have been lost, that people do not help each other as they once did now that the most important thing is money. When I told Yuriy I was planning to go to L'viv, he gave me the contact information for his son, Kostya, in L'viv. He said that he would let him know that I would contact him.

Seven months later I was standing in front of the Opera House in L'viv's city center, waiting to meet Kostya. Kostya arrived with his girlfriend on his arm. I noticed that the young men tended to bring a girlfriend or wife to our interviews while the young women I met with came alone. Sometimes I was introduced to the wife/girlfriend and she left, in this case Kostya's girlfriend stayed with us and quietly sipped tea while we spoke. Kostya looked older than his 19 years. He was heavysset with angular features and white already peppered his black, short-cropped hair.

The first thing Kostya asked was if his father had shown me a picture of him and his sister. He smiled when I said yes and said he was happy to help me. He wanted to know if I had anything for him from his father. He had such pain and longing in his watery eyes that my heart skipped a beat and I froze. I thought to myself that Yuriy did not even give me message for him. I was under the

impression that Yuriy was in regular contact with his children and that Kostya would have been told to expect a call from me. Kostya filled my frozen silence by saying that they have barely heard from Yuriy in four years. I told Kostya that I was sorry, but I did not have anything from his father. I will forever regret not telling this boy that his father had asked me to tell him that he thought about him and missed him which, though Yuriy did not say this, I believe to be true. This was a moment in my fieldwork when the ethics were not clear. I was thinking about me—was this interview coerced because he agreed to it thinking he would have news of his father? Was I a terrible sociologist exerting power in an inappropriate way? I was also thinking about my own conscientious. I made a point of always being up front and honest with informants about what I was doing and what my intentions were. I reasoned that being truthful was not only the right thing to do, but I believe people responded to that honesty by opening up themselves and offering me better data. I would shed many of my own tears during my fieldwork, some for myself and some for my informants, but I do not regret any decision I made in the field like I regret the decision on this day to prioritize my sensibilities as a researcher over Kostya's needs as a son.

Kostya nodded and looked down at his hands and explained that Papa went abroad to work four years ago but he has had little chance of finding steady work. His aunt, his father's sister, is also working in Rome caring for an elderly person. Kostya said that she calls every week and they hear news of their father from her. Yuriy had told me that his sister, eight years his senior, was in Rome, but he did not tell me that, in addition to supporting her own son, she also supported their mother as well as sent €100 every month to Kostya and Inna. Kostya continued:

But Papa, he practically doesn't work over there. He works a month and for two he doesn't work....He is often sick there because the climate is different; he is always sick. He very rarely calls because he just doesn't. Even with money, he doesn't help because he doesn't work. On our birthdays he sends money or for New Year's, and even this with varying success. In principle, if someone asked me to go abroad, I would tell them I will never go abroad to work.

Kostya was unique among my interviews with the children of migrants in L'viv because he was one of a few whose father was abroad instead of his mother. Children who had mothers abroad, all wished their mother did not have to go and missed having her at home. Yet they also spoke of their mother's migration with pride and gratitude. Many noted that not everyone was able to make it abroad but their mother, despite great difficulty, was able to adapt. They explained that they would not be able to go to university or support their child or start a small business without the money their mother sent back, and they were grateful. There was variation in how children described the changes in their personal relationships with their mothers, but they all spoke of their mother as "carrying the family on their neck." Without his father sending back remittances or

remaining in regular contact, Kostya simply could not understand why his father would not return.

Kostya explained that, due to his good grades, his studies are sponsored by the state and he receives a small stipend but it is not enough to live on. His sister receives a small pension because she is an “invalid.” I was embarrassed to ask pointedly what qualified his sister for such a pension. I gleaned from the conversation that she has a mental disability of some kind. This is why Kostya’s mother did not go abroad. She continued to work as an accountant and care for Inna. Kostya went through their finances counting up all pieces of their income and explaining it fell far short of what they need to live. They would not survive without the money his aunt sent them. Kostya looked at me earnestly:

In principle, I don’t know, maybe everything now will get better, maybe we will live normally, maybe people will even come here to work [*na zarabaty*] instead of us going somewhere. Now we need the young people to stay nearby. Soon they will be of age and they will not only do good for their pocket, but do good for everyone, for Ukraine.

Kostya continued that he was not afraid of work. He worked construction over summer vacation and earned €100-150. He is also looking for a job in the evenings maybe at a café. He lamented the social problems that beset families who have a parent abroad. He gave examples of friends who lived with grandparents who are too old to control them and used the money their mother sent back for drugs. He said that he remembers that five years ago when the masses started to leave Ukraine, that most of his classmates had a parent abroad and that this has now become “normal.” “But this is not normal,” Kostya exclaimed. He explained forcefully that he would never even go to Kyiv to work, only L’viv since no place else in Ukraine were the people as cultured as in L’viv. And he would never leave his children to work abroad. At the same time he noted that others who had a parent abroad received €200, €300 or even €400 a month in remittances and this was helpful. “It depends on what the elderly person pays” explained Kostya. However, Kostya underlined that his father’s situation was different:

My father has to rent an apartment and he said this is around €200. I do not understand who he lives with but I understand that it costs €200 to rent a room there and live. Plus there is food. In principle if he worked, all that is left is €100-200, not more. This is why I do not know why he went there. He of course wanted to earn money; he did not think it would be so difficult.

Cinzia: How did he explain to you why he went abroad?

Well, he went so that ... well, in principle so that he could provide me with an education and an education to my sister and in order to collect

money to buy an apartment. He thought he might buy an apartment so he could live on his own. But I do not think any of this will come to pass.

Kostya simply could not understand why his father did not come home. Kostya believes that things in Ukraine are a bit better and Yuriy could find work in L'viv or even Kyiv. "At least Kyiv you sit on a train for six hours and you are there." Kostya reasoned that work in Ukraine may not pay what work does in Italy but it would be steady and he would be home where he was needed. Kostya explained with great sadness:

There is not enough [of him] because I am alone. There is mama, my sister, and my grandmother and then even my second grandmother, and there are not enough men at home. I am simply not enough. There might be something to do at home, and it happens that it simply does not get done. Sometimes I wish I could just sit with him a while in the kitchen with tea or something and simply sit a while and have a talk between men. [...] I have no one to talk to, no one to ask for advice. The first days that Papa left, I would forget he left and then remember he was gone and I would sit and have such sad thoughts. I'd think, "If only he was here everything would be normal. [...] Papa knew exactly how to help me in any situation. If I went to Papa he would quickly say do this, this, and this. If I went to mama, mama would tell me the opposite, it is simply like this. Papa is papa. Papa is for a son what mama is for a daughter.

Kostya says that even though his parents were divorced, even his mother wished Yuriy would come home. Kostya continued: "Maybe, maybe some day I will travel to him, I will look him in the eye...I want to, in principle, simply look at him in the eye and ask him why he left. Because I call him, I write, but he doesn't answer." Kostya does not believe that his father will come back and wonders if he even wants to come back. Kostya asked me to describe what his father looked like because when he left he was "big guy" and he wondered if he still was. He hung on every word of my description. Kostya was disappointed that Yuriy never sent a single photo although they send him photos. Kostya said, "Some say he has married another woman there." Having promised Yuriy and all my informants confidentiality, I could not answer and remained silent. Kostya continued:

Maybe he will return, maybe not, this is his right to decide now. I will no longer ask him to return. This is up to him now. At this point...I am already an adult. Well he told me in principal you are an adult already. Take of your sister; help your mother; help them all as best you can. And this is what I try to do. But it also happens that I do not always listen, it happens that I do things that are not right but in general I try to help, I try not to fight. But in principle this is difficult and I often think of him and sometimes with anger: Why did you go? Why did you abandon everything and there you do not work? Because now I am able to find him a job for €200-300 here if he wanted. But maybe there he is well and he thinks it is better to live there without work than here and fight with mama, and fight

with me because he sits at home and doesn't do anything. But in principle there he sits [without work] and it still happens that he fights with us by telephone: Why do you sit there if you could work here? There is work here; come back here. He says, "No, I just do not want to come back." He says it doesn't make sense to come back until, I don't know, maybe until everything is good. But for this we need a minimum of 10-15 years. We need to wait for us young people to start doing everything because the old people, they all lived under the Soviet Union, under Soviet laws, and this is no longer now. Us young people who were born in Ukraine, we can do things.... I know that the young people can do a lot better than the old people who are now in power.

Kostya had participated in the Orange Revolution traveling to Kyiv and several other cities in Eastern Ukraine. He has hopes that when Ukraine joins the European Union that things will indeed be better. In fact, he believes that Ukraine has such a hardworking people that Ukraine will save all the economies of Europe. At that point, his father will have to come home.

### Lydmyla: A Family in Exile

Lydmyla, 42, is petite with straight, auburn hair down to her shoulders and a bounce in her step. She fussed about the kitchen as we spoke preparing tea and cookies to offer me. It was clear that Lydmyla was not used to sitting. After a period of intense, animated talking, she bounced out of her chair to grab a picture of her family or the Italian toddler she cares for, hang a jacket that she suddenly noticed was on the floor, or get something from the kitchen. Lydmyla was a unique case in many ways. She was young relative to most other Ukrainian migrants, 36, when she first arrived to Italy. In a migration pattern of mostly older women with teen-age and adult children back in Ukraine, she managed to bring her husband and two young children to Rome. She had secured an apartment and a job that was *lungo orario* or a day job rather than the 24 hour live-in positions or *lavoro fisso* most women I encountered had. Lydmyla had also been in Rome longer than anyone else I had met and had a good sense of how the situation had changed for Ukrainians in Italy over time.

I conducted almost all interviews in Russian, but Lydmyla was one of the few interviews with Ukrainian migrants in Italy conducted in Italian. While some interviewees would declare themselves Ukrainian nationalists and refuse to speak in Russian on principle insisting that they had forgotten all their Russian, a couple phrases in American-accented Ukrainian and much apologizing for my American university which offered Russian but not Ukrainian always won them over. They softened and noted that not all Ukrainians speak Ukrainian, how can we expect people coming from abroad to know more Ukrainian than many Ukrainian citizens. They then continued the interview in flawless Russian, which it turns out they remembered after all. However in this case, Lydmyla had been in Italy eight years and for all that time she spoke mostly Ukrainian at home and with her friends or Italian with her employers and everyone else. She said she would be happy to speak Russian as best she could but at this point felt more comfortable speaking Italian. She laughed as she shook her head, “Who would have thought that I’d be more fluent in Italian than Russian?!” She spoke Italian with an accent but fluently and correctly so we continued our conversation in Italian.

Lydmyla had arrived in Italy in 1997 from a small town outside L’viv. She explained that during this time Ukrainian women were migrating to Greece and few went to Italy. Greece was “already full” according to Lydmyla, since it had been four years that Ukrainians were migrating there, so it was becoming increasingly difficult to get in. Lydmyla noted that there were already 20 women from her home town in Italy. She and her friend Yelena with whom I spent a day later on, had had no contact with these women but their presence nonetheless influenced Lydmyla and Yelena’s decision to come to Italy.

Lydmyla finished university with a degree in finance and worked as an accountant in a hospital. Her husband, Orest, an engineer who worked in a factory producing TVs and radios, had been going to work everyday but had not received a pay check in two years—sugar, butter and flour, yes but no money. She explained:

I earned little money. I decided to go somewhere in the world where people earn more money so that I could raise my children better. My parents were able to give me the opportunity to study and I want to give this to my kids. Every mother wants their kids to have more than she had, not less. Can you imagine, my husband and I went to university but my children no? Everything in Ukraine is too expensive and now that you have to pay for University I knew I would not be able to send them to study. What choice did I have? No choice, Cinzia. But now I am happy, I am at peace. I did the right thing. I hope my children believe I did the right thing.

Like most women I spoke with, Lydmyla arrived with a 10-day tourist visa that she said cost \$300 in 1997. In 2004 women were reporting fees as high as \$3,300 for the same tourist visa. Lydmyla and Yelena got off the bus at Porta Portese in Rome:

Most people on the bus were going south to Naples but my husband wouldn't let me go south of Rome. He was afraid of the mafia. There were 50 women here in Rome, not more. This was the very beginning of Ukrainians arriving to Rome, before the masses arrived. Thank goodness that my husband was both mother and father for my kids. He cooked and cleaned and did everything himself. So I left knowing that I wasn't leaving my kids on the streets like many women do.... We knew it was harder for a man to find work abroad than for women. So we decided that I would go to work and he would stay home with the kids.

When Lydmyla and Yelena got off the bus, they were greeted by Ukrainian women who helped them find a place to sleep. They brought them to an apartment in Ostia, an hour train ride from Rome. There they were asked to pay £12,000 (lira) a night. There were four women to a bed and two beds in each room. "And they were our Ukrainian compatriots, not Italians, and they earned money this way!"

Lydmyla and her friend had used up the money they came with in a week. After two nights of sleeping on the beach, Lydmyla and Yelena met two young men in their early twenties from Poland. They were renting a small apartment and they allowed Lydmyla and Yelena to sleep there for six months without paying rent. Lydmyla reflected on her relationship with "the boys" today:

Sometimes when they need help they come to me. I tell them if they need help I will always help them. Sometimes they come they need €30 or €100. I tell them I am in debt to them and I give it to them. One is now without a job. He says he'll pay me back and I say yes, if you have the money fine, if not fine. Do you know how many people are lost in this world? People say that they will help them and then they rob them or do something bad to them and they are left on the streets. They saw our need and they helped us. We were lucky.

Lydmyla could only find occasional work and was earning £30,000 (\$15) a week until “the boys” found her a job as a live-in caring for a young child. Lydmyla said that the job was fine but her one regret was that she did not get her *permesso di soggiorno* during the 1998 *sanatoria* or amnesty. The couple she was working for was getting divorced and while the woman she was working for took Lydmyla’s passport and said she would do the paperwork, she was preoccupied and never did. Lydmyla decided to go to the office on her own. Lydmyla said:

I went to the office but I didn’t realize I was two days late. The *sanatoria* was over. The woman I spoke with there said, “Thank you for coming. I think you will have Christmas with your children this year because we are going to deport you.”

Lydmyla laughed at my expression and nodded her head to emphasize that it really happened. She continued:

But then the woman said, “But I know that you are going to go home all by yourself by the end of the week, right?” I said yes and she gave me my passport back. I didn’t get my *permesso* until the next *sanatoria* in 2002 but I decided right then to bring my kids to Rome. My kids came as tourists just like me. It was hard because I was one of the first to bring my family here.

Lydmyla explained that in order to bring her family to Italy, she could not work as a live-in. She needed to find an apartment, no small task in Rome where apartments are hard to come by even for Italians. It is even harder to convince a land lord to rent to a *straniera* or foreigner.

Yet Lydmyla was able to pull this together. She was hired by an Italian man, Roberto, to care for his 80 year-old mother. Then in 1999, a year and a half after Lydmyla arrived in Rome, she brought her family to Italy buying tourist visas for each of them which they then overstayed. Lydmyla worked six days a week and then went home to care for her family. Two years later her employer, Roberto, married and they soon had a daughter. Roberto asked Lydmyla to care for the baby as well and his mother. So she now works 10 hours a day Monday through Friday. Lydmyla explained:

Now I take care of two children, one who is 86 and one who is three. They are a wonderful family. I am a big sister [to Roberto and his wife] even though we are the same age. Because they tell me you know life better than us because you have passed such difficult times, so they listen to me as if I was the head of the family. I am very happy because it is difficult to find a good family. I am sure others will tell you different stories. Some treat you like a slave, but I never felt this. If they need to decide something we all three sit at the table and discuss it. If there is something that they don’t like ... no one ever raises their voice. If someone does then right

away they say sorry. First they say sorry to me and then they ask it of each other.

Lydmyla repeated several times that she was very lucky to find this family. She even had an easy relationship with Roberto's elderly mother who Lydmyla simply called *Signora*. "Many elderly folks can be hard and have old fashioned ideas that I am in service to her but my *Signora* isn't like that and I am happy. I hope everyone finds a family like I did." The toddler Lydmyla cares for calls her "Nana." Lydmyla said, "I love her like my daughter. There is no difference between my kids and that girl. My kids are already grown and don't need me anymore. But that girl, she needs me. I know it. I feel it."

Lydmyla noted that, unlike now, in 1999 when her children and husband came, Italians were completely unfamiliar with Ukraine. "No one at school, not the kids not the teachers, knew where Ukraine was on the map." Lydmyla went to the *Comunità di Sant'Egidio*, a Catholic charity which provides many services to Rome's immigrants. It is the organization, with the exception of the Ukrainian churches which Lydmyla also frequents, that came up most often in my interviews (see chapters 4 and 6). Lydmyla learned that school is obligatory in Italy until 14 years of age and that her children had the right and also the obligation to go to school even without documents. At *Comunità di Sant'Egidio*, they helped her enroll her boys in public school. I asked Lydmyla why she thought she was able to bring her family to Italy while most others were not. Lydmyla explained:

I don't know really. I guess it was a combination of things. First it was easier back then than now. The visas were less expensive to buy and my husband was willing to come even though we knew it would be even harder for him than for me here to find work. My husband is sweet but he doesn't take the initiative. If I say we should do something, he does it, but I have to propose it. I am the man at home. I have to make the decisions because I am stronger. Maybe this is why I came to Italy instead of my husband. And I am happier here in Italy now than him because he is closed and doesn't like to communicate. I mean ... I cried every day the first year but I did not show it to others or my employers that I was unhappy. Some women come and they cry in front of everyone for their kids and grandkids and I don't think this is right. It may not be fair but we are here in Italy so you have to do well here or go home!

Lydmyla paused to wring her hands and sip some tea. She was visibly struggling with the contradiction of exile. On the one hand she feels she was forced out of Ukraine and looking around her she realizes that it is women who were forced to go abroad. The responsibility of helping their families and Ukraine falls to women and Lydmyla feels the great weight of this responsibility. On the other hand, the process of expulsion, precisely because it is systemic with no one ordering her to go, no violent conflict driving her out, is then presented to her and others as a "choice." Lydmyla seemed to collect herself and gave me a sad smile as if apologizing for getting excited and raising her voice. She continued:

I don't mean to be so hard on our women. I was lucky, I am sure you will hear different stories, horrible stories as you speak with more women. I was also lucky to find a good Italian family that helped me. I don't think, "Oh I did it so other women could have done it too." No, I was determined but at the beginning I didn't have anyone telling me it was impossible and I was also lucky. Ukraine has kicked us out, Cinzia. We are all women here. Understand? But I said, fine, I will go but I am taking my family with me!

Lydmyla explained that coming to Italy was hardest on her husband, Orest. Many times she thought that she had made a mistake insisting on bringing her family here. They would have saved more money if she came as a live-in like most women from Ukraine and sometimes she even envied those women who did not have to cook and clean for their own family after a long day of caring for others. Orest was an engineer in Ukraine but now he is a jack of all trades: a bricklayer (*muratore*), a plumber, and an electrician. He had to learn these trades when he arrived in Italy, because, Lydmyla explained, he had never done "manual labor" before:

For men it is very difficult. It is difficult for men to find work because they need a *permesso*. Then the Poles arrived here before us in the 80s and they have occupied all the spots for men. The first years Orest was unemployed a lot; he stayed home more than he worked. We lived on my wages: €650 [a month] and €250 went to rent for a room. He was so unhappy. He said, "In Ukraine I couldn't help you because even if I went to work they didn't pay me. Here in Italy it is again all on you because I can't find work." I was afraid to come home at night to see how he was doing. It was awful. Then he found six months of work and was only a couple months without. And then he found work for a year and this really helped because he said, "I have contributed something." Now he has his documents and he is happier. Now for the next five months until Christmas he works Monday through Friday in Florence. It is very heavy work and he comes home tired but he earns €1,500 a month.

Lydmyla considers herself lucky that her husband does not drink. She listed a number of her friends whose husbands drink too much and then forget their families. She explained, "This is a big problem. Ukrainians did not drink before. This is a Soviet problem." Most migrant women in my sample were divorced but I was struck by how many widows explained their husband's death by saying that he fell down when he was drunk and hit his head.

Lydmyla helped her sister and her brother come to Italy as well but neither of them stayed for long. Her brother and his wife worked in Naples for two years and then went back. Despite finding a live-in position with "a very nice Italian family" Lydmyla's sister only stayed in Rome seven months:

My sister is a pharmacist and she said I can't do this service work. She lost 29 kilos in four months! There are some people who just cannot do service work. They really feel like slaves. In my opinion my sister felt like that even if the family was nice. They treated her like a sister. But she felt bad and humiliated and she said, "I can't do these tasks. I prefer to earn less money in my country with my friends around me than earn more money this way."

Lydmyla used to send clothing, food stuffs, and things that she knew were unavailable in Ukraine. Now she says, you get anything you want in Ukraine if you have money. Lydmyla sends €50 to her sister, €50 to her mother, and €50 to her mother-in-law every month. She gives the money to a van driver at the Garbatella. The same driver has been carrying her money for six years. He charges her a fee of 4% of the money she sends and 2% if it is over €1,000. Lydmyla has a friend who has five children and she sends boxes of clothes and things she is able to collect to them as well. She also organized with some of the van drivers at the Garbatella to transport boxes of donated goods for free to an organization helping the poor in Ukraine. Lydmyla explains:

I feel an obligation not just to my friends and family in Ukraine but to Ukraine as a nation. We were under Russian rule and now we thought we had a chance to be free. We thought we would join Europe not migrate there to do the work we do! Once I read in the newspaper about a community at home helping the poor and I was so upset. We collected 25 kilos of stuff and the driver took it to them for free. 25 kilos of stuff! I did it 3-4 times and then I said, I can't do it alone. I feel guilty but what else can I do? My heart will always cry for Ukraine, always.

Lydmyla's guilt is not just a form of "survivor's guilt" or about wishing she could single-handedly solve Ukraine's problems, but she is torn about what living abroad will mean for her children. On the one hand Italy's immigration laws makes it difficult for Lydmyla to plan to stay in Italy, on the other hand she does not see going back to Ukraine as a possibility for her—at least not for quite some time. Lydmyla still maintains her apartment in Ukraine and thinks that perhaps when she retires she and Orest will return even if she believes there is little chance her sons will live in Ukraine again. The whole family went back to Ukraine for the first time since leaving this past Christmas. She said the trip home was both wonderful and frustrating. Lydmyla recounted:

All this time Ukraine is supposed to be European but there unfortunately life hasn't gotten better. This is something that makes me sad of course. Why can't I go back to my country and live there and work in the job I spend six or seven years at university to prepare for? Of course I want to but for now it isn't possible. Then we'll see...later on I don't know. But who will want me then at 50 with my youth all spent and my university degree? ... This means we need to live here and then when my

grandchildren are born I'll help raise them and this is all. We will have to find a way.

Lydmyla's sons Roman, 19, and Pavlo, 13, have been in Italy almost six years. While Lydmyla and I were speaking, Roman came in the front door and sauntered into the room. He is handsome, of medium height with a slender build and long sandy blonde hair. He was dressed in the style of Italian urban youth and kissed his mother's cheek as he walked in and put his backpack on the ground. He flashed me a smile as his mother introduced us and told him to tell me about his visit to Ukraine while she prepared him something to eat. He sat down heavily on the couch and I could not help but smile when he began speaking to me in a colloquial Italian and a thick Roman accent. He seemed at ease with the jocular style characteristic of Roman men that makes them distinctive when compared to men from other regions of Italy. Roman explained that he had wanted to go back to Ukraine for a long time because when he left for Italy it happened so fast that he did not have time to say goodbye to his friends. He joked, "When I left at 13 I was the tallest of my group of friends and when I returned I was the shortest! All my friends are a head taller than me and wanted to know why I didn't grow in Italy!" Roman continued:

It was fun to catch up with people after five years. I asked about their life there and they asked about my life here. My grandmother cried the whole time. I think there are good and bad things about living in Ukraine and good and bad things about living in Italy. Overall our material life is better here and I think I will go back to Ukraine many more times but I want to live in Italy. My parents, they may go back to live in Ukraine but, for better or worse, we will stay here.

Lydmyla came out of the kitchen with hard boiled eggs and mayonnaise. She spoke at length about the different school systems, her concern that children in Ukraine are more disciplined, more respectful, and generally get a better education than in Italy. She insisted that I speak with Roman in English which she said he had been studying in Ukraine but the Italian schools are "way behind" and are teaching him only the most basic things he has already studied. Roman, clearly wishing he was anywhere but here at this moment, agreed with his mother explaining that he is bored at school and so does not want to study. He did so in English. Lydmyla anxiously awaited my assessment and did not settle back down into her chair until I told her he spoke English very well. Roman winked at me and gave a quick wave as he made his escape and slipped out of the living room.

At the same time the front door opened and a Ukrainian man came in. Lydmyla explained that he sleeps on a cot in the living room. Lydmyla mused:

People think that money falls from the sky here and you don't have to work for your money. And they don't think that you have expenses. People say, you've been in Italy seven years haven't you earned €100,000 yet? But after six years of doing *lungo orario* I spent €60,000 just in rent!

Lydmyla laid out her expenses. She now earns €900 a month, one of the highest salaries in my sample, but still needs to rent out a cot in their very small apartment to help pay the rent. When her children first arrived they were undocumented and so they could not apply for programs that assist low income families. Therefore, she had to pay for books and school lunches. Now they receive help from the Italian state. But Lydmyla said she had a different philosophy about money than most Ukrainians. She explained that for many Ukrainians in Italy money was the “object of life,” but not for her:

I can't say that I am saving money because with a family here you can't save. If you are here alone and work as a live-in then you can save. You eat and sleep with them [your employers]. But I don't care about saving. I want that my kids to have everything they need to live well. I don't care about saving. During the summer we go on vacation. We went to Capri, to Genoa, to Florence for a week, we went to Naples. We travel and this is expensive. In four people you spent always at least €1,000 but instead of saving we take these trips and I am happy. Even my husband says saving isn't important. If we need money we will work and earn more. I love money but just to live. I don't say today we won't eat because I have to save. If I don't feel like cooking we go out for pizza or we buy a [precooked] chicken. I earn to live not just to exist. Money is not the object of my life. My kids don't waste money but they know that money isn't what is most important. These experiences will shape them, make them more open minded. The way we grew up, we wanted always the secure way—stability—and so we saved. But I see that is not the way here. My kids must learn to take chances and take risks and to not be afraid. They must be everything I am not.

Lydmyla feels acutely the generational divide. The rules for success and even what constitutes success has changed. Whether or not “money is the object of life” was a common phrase I heard over and over again in this community. It was a marker of how tied one was to the “old” ways of doing things. Interestingly, Lydmyla who only went to church at Christmas and Easter before migrating is now very committed and involved in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Rome. Her children attend Ukrainian school on Saturdays and Lydmyla believes that one day Ukraine will join Europe and it will be important for her children to be connected to Ukrainian culture and language. She believes there will be opportunities for them. In fact, Lydmyla had many questions for me as the daughter of Italian immigrants to the United States. She hoped to “catch a glimpse of what her sons will be like and what kinds of understandings they might come to have about their move to Italy.” Yet in many ways my experience and the experiences of Ukrainians I spoke with in California is quite different. Ukrainians I interviewed in San Francisco spoke about their children becoming “American.” Lydmyla and the others I met with children in Italy never said they thought their children would become “Italian” just the opposite. Lydmyla explained:

No I cannot save also because I have to buy clothes! All the kids at school dress well, so I can't buy cheap stuff for my kids. I buy designer clothes

for them because I don't want my kids feel bad, to feel that they are foreigners (*stranieri*), I mean really foreigners. There shouldn't be this kind of difference between them and other kids. They were 8 and 12-13 when they arrived here. But I am a patriot ... It is difficult to know if I have done the right thing. Ukraine is becoming European and we must help Ukraine in this. My boys, they may not ever be Italian but they will be European.

Italian citizenship is nearly impossible for Lydmyla and her children. After 10 years of living in Italy continuously with a *permesso di soggiorno*, showing that the family earns enough to live on (for a family of four that is a yearly income of at least €13,324.56) and producing all the appropriate documentation they will be able to apply for an indefinite residency permit (*Permesso di Soggiorno per Soggiornanti di Lungo Periodo*) that must be renewed every five years and does not permit you to vote (Hansen 2008; Luciano 2002). They do not meet citizenship requirements and Italy has one of the lowest naturalization rates in Europe. Yet Lydmyla was not referring to citizenship. Lydmyla and others noted that racially, Ukrainians were part of a different race, a Slavic race, and would never be Italian. Italy traces membership through blood ties and Lydmyla and her family have "Slavic blood" not "Italian blood." However, if Ukraine becomes part of the European Union, Roman and Pavlo are no longer *extracomunitari* in Italian which translates literally to people "from outside our community." For Lydmyla, Ukraine's nation-building project is not only about what happens in Ukraine, but about her family's status in Italy. It would help her sons feel a little less like *stranieri* or at least not "very foreign" as they go about their daily life in Italy.

### From Exile to Exodus

Olena and Tatiana are representative of two migrant subjectivities produced in exile. Most migrants I met in Rome looked like either Olena or Tatiana. Both women experienced the structural aspects of exile through a process of double marginalization. Both found themselves in early retirement with pensions too low to live on and few prospects for work as older women in Ukraine. At the same time Olena and Tatiana's expectations of raising their grandchildren evaporated as their daughter-in-laws found private businesses unwilling to bear the financial burdens of maternity leave, sick days for ill children, and other costs associated with working mothers and became housewives if not by choice then by default. Olena and Tatiana share a subjective experience of migration as painful expulsion.

While Olena and Tatiana differ in whether they see themselves as active participants in Ukraine's nation-building project, they are both inextricably linked to Ukraine's future trajectory and recognize this with concerns for Ukraine that are global in nature. Whether they see themselves as bringing about Ukraine's forward march to Europe like Olena or simply hoping desperately for it from the sidelines like Tatiana, they both aspire to "Europe" all the while fearing "Africa." Whether remittances are symbolic of "Europe" for Olena or the sacrifices of a "good mother" for Tatiana, all these women send the majority of their remittances home. With claims to identities as workers or grandmothers now untenable, motherhood has become the discursive terrain for drawing the lines between people "like us" and people "like them." Whether one permits themselves the time and resources to study language or culture becomes the terrain on which those in exile, much like prisoners in concentration camps, draw moral distinctions between themselves.

The ascendancy of Galician nationalism in Ukraine has tied the production of a European Ukraine to the production of a particular kind of Ukrainian woman and mother and a particular family structure. Through the remittances Olena, Tatiana, and others send back, they are producing the ideal Ukrainian family of women as "*Berehynia*" and men as "patriarchs," the very building block of the new Ukraine, an economic reality. And yet there are many painful contradictions inherent in exile. Carework, an occupation considered one of exploitation turning worker into "slave" and so immoral it did not exist in Soviet Ukraine, is now a production site of the new Ukraine. At the same time daughters and daughter-in-laws are referred to as the "*Berehyni* of our people," migrant grandmothers find themselves denigrated by the label "prostitute." However, as they seek to learn about what it means to be "European" and take this cultural knowledge back to Ukraine, they aid in dismantling the old Soviet Ukraine and the moral system that shaped their most basic understandings of the world so that Olena does not know how to advise her sons so that they will be "successful" and "respected" in a capitalist world and Lydmyla feels her children should be "everything" she and her husband "are not" as Soviet persons. These women are building a new Ukraine that has no place for them as Soviet women. This makes toiling in the "gulag" all the more painful. Even if one day

they are permitted to return to Ukraine, they will return to a Ukraine that has erased them from the social landscape and they will have had a hand in making themselves obsolete.

Oksana, Yuriy, and Lydmyla, all exceptions to the dominant pattern of exile in their own way and illustrate the limits and contours of exile. While they may not occupy the same structural position of expulsion in Ukraine's gendered transition to capitalism as Olena and Tatiana, they do share the subjective characteristics of exile. All three of them are linked in painful and tortuous ways to Ukraine's nation-building process. Oksana is working to build the new Ukraine where, not only are the claims of Soviet women to a European identity at times tenuous, but, because of her non-mother status, even her most basic claims to Ukrainian ethnicity are challenged. Yuriy says he "agreed with the way of life in the West" and desperately wants European living standards, but simultaneously mourns for a Soviet cultural past where men and men's jobs were considered high status.<sup>46</sup> Lydmyla too is forced to maintain connections to Ukraine and participate in the construction of a European Ukraine not only because she and her family may return to Ukraine, but because it will improve the status of her children even if they should stay in Italy. While Lydmyla feels they will "never be Italian," they could be European making them just a little less "foreign." Like all migrants in Rome, Oksana, Yuriy, and Lydmyla also negotiate the meaning of remittances, have a limited identification with Italy as their host country, and must perpetually wonder how long exile will endure as they live lives of great uncertainty.

Exile, both its structural and subjective dimensions, is shaped by the interaction between processes unfolding inside Ukraine and the specificity of Italy as the receiving site. In Part II I turn to exodus to California. While San Francisco is a significantly different receiving site than Rome, Ukraine as a sending site is not a "constant" but rather the interaction between these two sites produces radically different migrant subjects. While migrants in Rome understand migration as expulsion, those in San Francisco understand their migration as "choice" or "luck." While migrants in Rome are forced to participate in Ukrainian nation-building, those in San Francisco eschew such global concerns for the localized concerns of material well-being and integration. Whereas carework is a site of Ukraine's Europeanization project in Rome, carework is a vehicle for identification with the US state and even integration in San Francisco. It is to exodus that I turn to next.

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<sup>46</sup> Kiblitkaya (2000a) argues that the male breadwinner was key to masculine Soviet identity and the post-Soviet transition has challenged men's gender identity. She offers this as a possible reason why the life expectancy of men has plummeted while that of women has remained largely stable. Men's only link to the home in Soviet times was through the money he brought home and men, especially middle-aged men, now find themselves unable to do this. Men cannot come to grips with the declining prestige of old-style male jobs when the more lucrative transition era jobs are connected with trade which are not seen by these men as "worthy of 'real men'". They grew up believing that work in heavy industry was a "noble calling". The Soviet value system which despised trade as a capitalistic, parasitic venture is deep-rooted. For professional men the decline value of scientists or academics in favor of being a business man is also difficult. Kiblitkaya argues (2000a:102) that masculine professional identities—being professional, noble, and honest—developed under communism—"have become an obstacle to success in the transition period." Since male status at work was key to their overall identity at home and among peers, a fall in professional status is a huge blow to the individual man.

Part II:  
EXODUS



Dancers from Canada performing for a small crowd in San Francisco to celebrate Ukrainian Day.

## California's Context of Reception and State-based Integration

California has a long history of immigration, both documented and clandestine. Immigrants from the former Soviet Union are still the largest refugee group to enter California and make up an important but largely invisible population in California (Gage 2003).<sup>47</sup> While Ukrainians in Italy were a highly visible and racialized as a group in Italy, Ukrainians in California are simply understood as “white.” The context of reception, especially US immigration laws, certainly shapes exodus, however it cannot explain why this is a grandmother-led migration. The dominance of family reunification as well as refugee status for this population means that, unlike exile to Italy where the migration is more homogenous dominated by older women migrants with almost no employment options beyond domestic work, Ukrainians coming to California are about evenly divided between men and women and filter into a variety of jobs at all skill levels. Immigrants are also of all ages although the migration stream from Ukraine and other former Soviet countries tends to be older compared to migration streams from other parts of the world. This is usually explained as migrants from the region, assumed to be young men, bring their parents with them. However in my sample the explanation seems to be that older migrants, middle-aged women, bring their adult children with them.

We must look to the particular gendered dynamics of Ukraine's economic transition in a post-Soviet and post-colonial context in order to understand why it is older women that push for migration to the United States. These women may have migrated to Italy—the gulag—but instead they believe they were given an “opportunity” or “lucky chance” to migrate to the United States—the promised land. While some adult children are happy to join their mothers in San Francisco, others stay behind because that they were able to find a place in Ukraine's changing economy. These children who had steady professional work in Ukraine said things like, “Why would I want to go California and have to clean houses or work construction?” Adult children of my California informants also delayed joining family in California to finish university degrees that were more affordable in Ukraine or specialized in areas that positioned them well in Ukraine's economy and decided not to leave at all while others completed specializations they knew would serve them well in California. While Ukrainian immigrants in the United States filter into all levels of the US economy, for older women especially but older men as well, carework is one of the few options available.

### US Immigration Law: The “lucky” green card

Unlike Italy where a renewable, temporary work visa is the best one can hope for, most Ukrainian immigrants to California are applicants for “lawful permanent residence” in the United States. In the United States overall, family reunification accounts for

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<sup>47</sup> According to the Census 2000, there were 44,953 foreign born Ukrainians in California, The foreign born from the Ukraine in California constituted 16.3 percent of the 275,153 foreign born from the Ukraine in the United States ( <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/whosresults.cfm>).

approximately two-thirds of total permanent immigration to the United States every year (McKay 2003). The other channels are employment-based immigration, refugees and asylum seekers, and diversity-based immigration also known as the green card lottery. These four categories account for more than 99 percent of immigration into the United States (McKay 2003).

The shift in US immigration law in 1965 to a focus on family reunification means those with family already in the United States are greatly advantaged when it comes to acquiring legal immigration documents. When the Soviet Union collapsed, Ukrainians who found themselves in the United States after WWII and Ukrainian Jews who arrived in the late 1970s and 80s began sponsoring their family members. The visa system gives preference to immediate family members. Therefore Ukrainians sponsor family members in stages with the availability of visas following up and across family trees. Embedded in exodus is a process of collecting one's family in California over time that requires acquiring US citizenship and relinquishing Ukrainian citizenship.

While there was little variation in how migrant women came to be in Italy with most buying a work visa and then overstaying it once in Italy, there was a lot of variation in how Ukrainian immigrants came to California. Nineteen of 41 informants came to California as part of family reunification laws. Of these 19, nine had a family member, often an in-law, whose family arrived to California as Jewish refugees and were able to act as sponsors. Four informants had family that came to California after WWII. Two had connections to Baptist refugees who were able to sponsor them. Three informants, after migrating to the United States on temporary visas and urging their children to fill out an application were sponsored by children who had won green cards in the lottery. Finally one woman came on a fiancée visa having met her American husband at one of the many gatherings organized by agencies that help American men find Ukrainian brides. Sixteen informants gained legal status as Jewish, Baptist, or political refugees. Three entered as domestic workers through a "nanny agency" that placed them with families in California as live-ins. Two were green card lottery winners themselves, one of whom was first sponsored by a Chicago-based Ukrainian organization because her daughter needed medical attention as a "Chernobyl baby" before applying for and winning a green card. Finally one individual was sponsored by a Ukrainian organization based in Chicago as a community artist. While a small handful of informants were illegal at some point, only three informants did not have legal status at the time of the interview. These three were sponsored on guest visas from a family member and then remained in California overstaying their visa. The variation and range of ways Ukrainians came to the United States increases the sense of randomness or "luck" involved to migrating to California in contrast to the experience of "expulsion" for those in Italy.

Once in California, all informants sponsored family members with the exception of the three people without legal status who nonetheless hoped to sponsor family members in the future. There are two broad categories within family reunification: "immediate family of a US citizen" and "family sponsorship according to a preference category." In order to sponsor immediate family, green card holders must hold a green card for five years. After five year they become eligible to become naturalized US citizens. At this point a naturalized US citizen can sponsor immediate family which includes unmarried minor children under 21 years of age and the parents of a US citizen over 21 years of age.

The second category within family reunification is family sponsorship according to preference category. There are four classifications and they are ranked in order of preference with longer wait times as you move from the first to the fourth preference classification. First preference is given to US citizens sponsoring unmarried, adult sons and daughters over the age of 21. Second preference goes to spouses and unmarried sons and daughters of US permanent resident aliens or green card holders. Third preference is given to married sons and daughters of US citizens. The final classification is brothers and sisters of adult US citizens.

This categorization system can pose a challenge for Ukrainian families since Ukrainians marry and give birth to their children young. The vast majority of Ukrainian women gave birth to their first child by their early 20s regardless of education level (Perelli-Harris 2008:770). In 2000, the mean age at first birth was 22.8 (Perelli-Harris 2008:769). Adult children who marry are ineligible for sponsorship if their parents are only green card holders and it bumps them down into the third preference classification even if their parents are US citizens leading to long wait time for the paperwork to go through with informants reporting wait time of up to ten years.

### **Homecare workers and the State of California**

Over the past 15 years, homecare workers have become an increasingly visible part of the US direct care system. According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, the need for direct-care workers will increase by 49 percent between 2006 and 2016, compounding the care crisis (Public Health Institute 2008). Nation-wide 40% of homecare workers are immigrants (Reddy 2005). While Ukrainians in California certainly do perform informal cleaning and caring services, the majority of the immigrants I spoke with worked through a state office called in-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).<sup>48</sup> Russian-speaking immigrants make up 25% of the 8,000 homecare workers in San Francisco County despite only making up 3.4% of the county's population (Delp and Quan 2002; United States Census Bureau 2000).

Created in 1973, IHSS is a division of the California Department of Social Services that administers public financing to the elderly and disabled who meet low-income and disability criteria. This office matches homecare workers with eligible clients, processes the workers' paychecks, and negotiates with the homecare workers' union. IHSS pays workers from government funds. Social workers from the Department of Human Services determine the number of work hours per month each client will receive and the tasks the homecare worker will provide. While individual clients do not pay the workers, they are the actual employers with the power to hire and to fire the homecare worker. Most negotiations around tasks to be completed and how the work hours will be distributed throughout the month are ultimately conducted with the client rather than the absent social worker. While some respondents cared for native-born clients, most of them cared for elderly immigrants from the Former Soviet Union. Since the majority of the immigrants in 1970s and 80s were Soviet Jews, many were caring for elderly Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. California also allows

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<sup>48</sup> In California care providers to the elderly are called homecare workers. There are about 300,000 working through IHSS public authorities in California and they are unionized under the SEIU in what is considered one of greatest union victories in the last decade (Delp and Quan 2002; Reddy 2005).

immigrants to care for their own family members. Many informants cared for an elderly parent as well as other clients found through the IHSS office. IHSS workers receive health and dental insurance if they work a minimum number of hours and this loomed large as a benefit of performing homecare work among middle-aged Ukrainian immigrants. Churches and Jewish resettlement services in San Francisco channeled especially older women but also men into homecare work (Solari 2000a).

### **Divided Communities: Pre-Soviet, Soviet, and Post-Soviet Migration Waves**

Ukrainian migration to Italy is a post-soviet phenomenon, but migration from the region we now call Ukraine to the United States is not new. The characteristics of those who migrate, however, has changed over time. Scholars usually report four waves of immigrants from the region and I will suggest there is currently a fifth wave. The first wave of immigrants from the region we now call Ukraine arrived in the United States in the 1880s along with the “Great Migrations” from Europe (Satzewich 2002). While other countries such as Italy saw its migrants return in large numbers, WWI and the Russian Revolution of 1917 left what is now Ukraine divided between four different political units: Eastern Ukraine, part of the Russian Empire since 1600, became the Ukrainian Socialist Republic within the larger Soviet Union while Western Ukraine was divided between Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. Between 1917 and 1920 there were three attempts to create an independent Ukraine. Many partisans, along with those displaced by the territorial upheavals, fled to the United States and Canada as part of a second wave of Ukrainian migration. Those partisans who remained were deported to the gulags. In 1939, Western Ukraine was annexed to Eastern Ukraine as part of the Soviet Union and during the turmoil of WWII yet a third wave of Ukrainian immigrants came to the United States, most political refugees after another failed attempt to found Ukraine as an independent country (Satzewich 2002). This wave is known collectively as “displaced persons” (or derisively as DPs) and in San Francisco, since this wave has indeed had the greatest impact on Diaspora institutions, they were referred to as Diaspora Ukrainians. Between 1955 and the mid-1980s, Soviet Ukraine’s borders were sealed. In the 1970s and 80s, the United States, as part of its cold war policy, encouraged migration from the Soviet Union to the United States as a way to further its ideological campaign against Communism and enhance its prestige on the international stage. Inside the Soviet Union, defectors were vilified as traitors to the Motherland. This fourth wave of immigration to the United States from Ukraine was comprised mainly of Ukrainian Jews (Gold 1992; Orleck 1999; Slezkine 2004).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was another surge in migration from Ukraine to the United States, but it differs enough from the 1980s migration wave that it warrants being called the fifth wave. Through family reunification programs and green card lotteries which seem to favor this region, the ethnic and religious make-up of Ukrainian immigration to the United States has diversified with ethnic Ukrainian Baptists and evangelicals, Ukrainian Greek Catholics and Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox immigrants joining relatives from both the third and fourth waves. While the largest receiving state of fourth-wave immigrants from Ukraine was New York with its

concentration of Jewish refugee services, California is the largest receiving state of fifth wave immigrants.<sup>49</sup>

If fourth-wave Ukrainian immigrants were mostly Ukrainian Jews, fifth wave Ukrainian immigrants are diverse in their ethnic and religious make-up. While Ukrainians immigrants do continue to come to the United States as refugees, most often on religious grounds, much of the fifth wave is comprised of ethnic Ukrainians and ethnically Russian citizens of Ukraine who have no claims to refugee status and had no ability to come to the United States until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Fifth-wave immigrants also differ from third-wave immigrants or Diaspora Ukrainians. Unlike Diaspora Ukrainians, fifth-wave immigrants were not Ukrainian partisans or political refugees or left Ukraine for ideological reasons. Fifth-wave Ukrainian immigrants are people who, in the turmoil after Ukraine was opened up to global markets, found themselves disadvantaged in Ukraine's post-Soviet labor market and, in the case of this grandmother-led migration were older women doubly marginalized and could very well have ended up in Europe but simply had relatives willing to sponsor them in California.

Third, fourth, and fifth wave Ukrainian immigrants are divided by more than simply migration wave but also according to claims of being "authentic Ukrainians." Third wave immigrants who left Ukraine before the Soviet system took hold think of themselves as the preservers of an authentic, pre-Soviet Ukrainian culture and language. They and their descendants form the organized Ukrainian Diaspora that worked to document Soviet atrocities and lobby Washington on behalf of certain humanitarian causes and worked tirelessly for an independent Ukraine. The Ukrainian Diaspora paid little attention to fourth wave Ukrainian immigrants. Most people from the region still follow Soviet nationality policies which considered "Jewish" a nationality. Diaspora Ukrainians generally recognized fourth-wave immigrant from Ukraine and Jews rather than Ukrainians. In fact it was the organized American Jewish community, not the Ukrainian Diaspora, that pushed for the United States to put pressure on the Soviet Union to grant not just Ukrainian Jews but all Soviet Jews the right to emigrate. In fact, the hope was that Soviet Jews would reinvigorate American synagogues and the American Jewish community was disappointed to discover that this did not happen (Gold 1994; Markowitz 1993).

Diaspora Ukrainians, like the organized American Jewish community, had high expectation for fifth-wave Ukrainian immigrants who were able to come to the United States in part through the effort of the organized Ukrainian Diaspora which takes credit for Ukraine's ability to declare and independent Ukrainian state. However, in San Francisco, Diaspora Ukrainians were shocked and offended to hear recent Ukrainian immigrants speak Russian and felt that they were "Soviet" rather than "Ukrainian." While young Ukrainian immigrants simply assimilate into American culture, older Ukrainian immigrants who noted they were unable to learn English or "become American" and turned to the Ukrainian Diaspora for help in integrating into American society found themselves stigmatized as Soviet and felt unwelcome and excluded from existing Ukrainian and Russian organizations at the same time as Diaspora Ukrainians complained that their organizations were dying out.

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<sup>49</sup> Thanks to Marcel Parcet for running the IMPUS data through 2006 and providing the evidence for this claim.

Therefore, while Ukrainians in Italy experienced a collective life that tied them at times painfully to each other and Ukraine, recent immigrants in San Francisco lived atomized lives that served to reinforce immediate family relations and the local concerns of settlement over the global concerns of Ukrainian nation-building or attention to the production of a European Ukrainianess at the individual level. Father Jaroslav,<sup>50</sup> a middle-aged man with a slight build, a moustache, and thinning hair attempted to explain some of the divisions. His parents left Ukraine in the 1940s and he identifies with the third wave Diaspora Ukrainians. The mainstay of his parish is about 200 families, all WWII immigrants and their children. But the post-1991 immigrants, Father Jaroslav explains, they are different:

The WWII immigrants are concerned with preserving Ukrainian culture and language while the new immigrants are concerned about assimilating. WWII immigrants care about having an independent Ukraine, about Ukrainian language, having the world recognize the atrocities committed against Ukrainians by the Russians. The recent immigrants are Soviets, not Ukrainians. They speak Russian for example and since we only speak Ukrainian and English in our church they prefer to speak with me in English! The recent immigrants, well you can't mobilize them over an issue like the Great Famine. I mean this was an engineered genocide of our people and for some reason they can't go that far back in history. Maybe they'll go as far back as Chernobyl because they feel sorry for the kids or they may come out for a Shevchenko poetry night because the women like the poetry. But basically they are just here to earn money.

As I made the rounds of Ukrainian organizations, I heard over and over again that the most recent wave of immigrants from Ukraine were "Soviet" and not Ukrainian. They expected "free handouts" from the Ukrainian community and from the US state and were not appreciative of the sacrifices WWII immigrants made to preserve Ukrainian language, culture, and tradition for their children. Father Jaroslav expected to teach the Soviets who have lost their Ukrainian culture how to be Ukrainian and was frustrated to find they were not interested in learning.

The informants I interviewed, part of this fifth wave of Ukrainian immigration, reported feeling excluded from churches and other Ukrainian organizations because they were not "Ukrainian enough" and yet felt out of place at the Russian Community Center because, as inhabitants of the Soviet Union's "hinterlands," they were considered lower status than ethnic Russians. Marina had immigrated to San Francisco from Ukraine less than a year ago. She said:

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<sup>50</sup> Father Jaroslav's parish is a UGCC located in Los Angeles, California where I conducted three months of fieldwork: 12 interviews with Ukrainian immigrants and several more with local parish priests. This is the only piece of data from the Los Angeles site presented in this document. I found few differences between Ukrainian immigrants in San Francisco and Los Angeles with the exception that I was able to find and gain access to organizations that had a meaningful connections to my target population in San Francisco and was unable to do so in Los Angeles the Ukrainian community that was so dispersed I could not find a meaningful node from which to conduct my research. Therefore, San Francisco made more ethnographic sense as a comparison to Rome.

The Ukrainian Diaspora claims that they are preserving the “real” Ukrainian language! They look at me and say I do not speak “real” Ukrainian! I spoke Russian at home but studied Ukrainian at school and lived in Ukraine where Ukrainian is the official language! How can they think they are protecting the true Ukrainian language? They are protecting a dead Ukrainian language that peasants spoke over half a century ago! Language is a living thing! Real Ukrainian is changing everyday by people who live in Ukraine and interject new words and phrases that then become part of everyday speech! How can they believe that they are more Ukrainian than me? Let me ask you, Cinzia, are you more Ukrainian if you left Ukraine decades ago or have never even lived there at all *OR* if you spent the past 50 years of your life there. Who is more Ukrainian?

Ukrainian migration found an institutional blank slate when they arrived in Italy and they set about organizing their own institutions. Ukrainian immigrants to San Francisco found a fully formed institutional landscape, but were not absorbed into these institutions. Even the churches felt empty in San Francisco compared to Rome.

### **Post Soviet Churches in San Francisco**

Ukrainian churches, such a vibrant facilitators of the Ukrainian community in Italy and its transnational connections to Ukraine, were sparsely attended in San Francisco. I regularly visited the UGCC in San Francisco. There were often no more than 20 people at Sunday services. There were usually a handful of recent immigrants and the majority were second and third generation Ukrainians. During a holiday or a festival more people attended, but the church was not the focal point of a dense community. During an interview with Father Lysko, the priest for the San Francisco UGCC, he expressed great frustration at his inability to mobilize the Ukrainian community. His wife and daughter were in Ukraine and Father Lysko had been in San Francisco with his son for two years and wondered what he had accomplished. Like the UGCC priests in Italy, Father Lysko says he is running a mission more than a parish. However, in contrast to the UGCC priests in Rome who took phone call after phone call from migrants seeking help—a place to sleep, a place to store suitcases, help with legal documents and much more—Father Lysko says he rarely has a recent immigrants come and ask for help and if they do, he is poorly position to provide it. Father Lysko said he tried to organize a fund to help recent immigrants but he could not get enough support. He explained, “The WWII immigrants are American now and they have abandoned those who have after them.” Like Father Jaroslav, Father Lysko says he wants to teach Ukrainians about Ukrainian history and culture but no one wants to listen. He continued:

The recent immigrants, they are economic migrants and care only about money. I have one family that is truly Ukrainian and came as [Ukrainian Greek Catholic] refugees, but the rest are here for money.

Observing Father Lysko interact with his parish, it is clear that he is well-loved by parishioners and that he is involved in the lives of this small group. Ukrainians in San Francisco were well aware of the Ukrainian migration to Italy. When the topic arose, it

was usually to criticize Ukrainian women in Italy for “abandoning their families” or becoming “prostitutes.” I was surprised, therefore, when Father Lysko spoke of the migration to Italy as being morally superior to the migration to the United States. In fact, he followed up a discussion about the complicated ties between the explosion of churches in Ukraine and their ties to political parties with the following sentiment:

Do you know what political party those [Ukrainian] women in Italy belong to? Family and Church. Those women are doing everything for their families. They understand that our Church is a European Church. That we have much to teach about Ukraine’s history and culture. Those that do not have documents cry for their families and for Ukraine and are unable to go home. That is what is so peculiar about the American migration is that they could go home if they wanted to but they don’t! They have abandoned Ukraine. They don’t care what government Ukraine has. They’re just interested in making money and living well.

The Russian Orthodox Church held much more institutional power than the UGCC in San Francisco and generally had large parishes, aided recent immigrants and most of the organizations that service the Russian-speaking community. San Francisco was recognized as an important Russian Orthodox community when the Russian Orthodox Church in America moved its headquarters to San Francisco in 1870 and built the Holy Trinity Cathedral on Geary Boulevard which is also where businesses that cater to the Russian-speaking community are clustered. This cathedral became the center of support for the new influx of émigrés<sup>51</sup> during the 1920s, and today, the Russian Orthodox Church continues to play an important role in settlement for immigrants from the former Soviet Union. However, Ukrainians, even Russophone Ukrainians, at times felt they were looked at suspiciously by members of a church that did not support Ukrainian independence or Ukrainian “nationalists.”<sup>52</sup>

### **Living in Exodus: Stories from the Promised Land**

The women I present in the following five chapters could have ended up performing caring labor to the elderly in Italy. Instead, through various channels they found their way to California. The women and men I met from Ukraine in California experienced their migration as exodus. While many of the women I met in San Francisco were subject to the same gendered process of double marginalization from work and family that underlies economic transition and a new nationalism in Ukraine as the migrants to Italy, immigrants in California did not understand their migration as

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<sup>51</sup> It is interesting to note that in the literature those that left the region before the Soviet Union or as political refugees and of the intelligentsia are given the more prestigious title of “émigrés” rather than “immigrants.”

<sup>52</sup> One informant put it this way: “Why is it that when a Russian says, ‘I love my country’ he is a patriot but if a Ukrainian says ‘I love my country’ he is a nationalist?” The difference in connotation in the Soviet context is a fundamental one. A soldier fighting for Mother Russia during World War II was a *patriot* and may be rewarded with a medal. A *nationalist*, on the other hand, was considered a threat to the very existence of the Soviet Union, an entity composed of many nationalities that maintained “internationalism” as an official policy. Being labeled a *nationalist* was the state’s reason for sending thousands to the gulags.

expulsion but as opportunity. Most informants in San Francisco were not any better off economically than those who left for Italy, however they experienced migration to the United States as haphazard and a function of “luck,” “fate,” or “destiny.” While individual immigrants may have strong feelings about Ukrainian nationalism and nation-building, unlike exile, exodus does not position them collectively to be a constitutive part of the transformations occurring in Ukraine. Instead, embedded in exodus is the need to search for ways to identify with the United States and the moral imperative to give family members the same opportunity they to come to California they have had.

The following chapters in this section on exodus are organized along a continuum of family reunification: family unit in the United States, divided family where migrants have one child in the United States and one child in Ukraine, and individual migrants in California without family. These chapters illuminate the characteristics of exodus. We can think of these characteristics of exodus in comparison to the characteristics of exile, and they are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparative characteristics of Exile vs. Exodus

	<b>Exile</b>	<b>Exodus</b>
Family Reunification	Return to Sending Country	Bring to Receiving Country
Transnationalism	Embedded	Individual Choice
Integration/Assimilation	Collective Choice	Embedded
Wages	Remit to Sending Country	Spend in Receiving Country
Divisions among migrants	Nationalities	Migration waves
Motherhood discourses	Good/Bad Mothers	Soviet/Western Mothering

Viktoria (chapter 11) is representative of the dominant migrant subjectivity produced in exodus based on my sample. While the project for migrants in exile is finding a way home to Ukraine, the project for migrants in exodus is finding a way to bring their family to them in California. Viktoria arrived to San Francisco with her husband and two sons and later sponsored much of her extended family as well. Viktoria, like most of my informants, performs caring labor for the elderly through IHSS which pays workers from government funds. Informants working for IHSS saw carework as a vehicle of integration through identification with the US state. In the Soviet Union, women were “married to the state.” Viktoria and others experienced the economic crisis that followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union as a “divorce” and the weak government of a newly independent Ukraine as a “failed provider.” Viktoria and others contrast the Ukrainian state with the US state which “provides” for them—their pay check and their health insurance—in what they understood as a personal way. This interpretive framework for conducting low status, low paid carework as a vehicle of integration is surprising and specific to this population. Unlike exile where migrants were oriented to Ukraine, in exodus migrants were oriented to California. Most informants in Italy hoped their children would remain in Ukraine. In contrast, Viktoria and all those in exodus not only hoped their children would join them in California, but further hoped that these children and grandchildren would become “American” not through an identification with

the US state—this is a strategy reserved for the older, Soviet generation—but rather through market mobility.

Dariya (chapter 12) also brought her three children and extended family to California. Despite identifying herself as a Ukrainian “patriot,” Dariya was particularly concerned about her daughter and the limited opportunities she had to pursue dreams beyond becoming a wife and mother in Ukraine’s post-Soviet economy. She, like Viktoria, also believed that her children’s success depended on them learning how to navigate capitalist markets. Dariya was unique compared to others in the San Francisco sample. She was the only informant whose orientation to the United States was not through the state but the market. Dariya has come to identify with America and the “West” through a process of individuation, what she called discovering her “I,” a personal journey to becoming a Western subject. Despite her unique path to identification with the United States, she still holds on to Soviet ideals of motherhood. Dariya wants her children to become Western subjects, but simultaneously struggles over what the adoption of American parenting norms means for her own relationship to her daughter and grandchildren as a *babushka*.

Kateryna (chapter 13), like Dariya, considered herself a Ukrainian “patriot.” With one son in the United States and one still in Ukraine, Kateryna felt personally invested in Ukrainian nationalism and politics. Transnationalism is embedded in exile as a collective process, a structural reality of exile. In contrast, transnationalism is an individual choice in exodus. Kateryna, despite her individual desire to maintain transnational ties with Ukraine, finds no institutional outlet or collective processes that facilitate a meaningful connection Ukraine and its nation-building project. Even the Ukrainian community’s celebration of Ukrainian independence in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park—a performance of Ukrainian culture—is framed in terms of Ukrainian and Ukrainian American contributions to the United States rather than seeking to foster connections to Ukraine. This is profoundly different than the talent shows from exile that are oriented to Ukraine rather than Italy. While Kateryna, still a Ukrainian citizen, voted for Yushchenko in San Francisco’s consulate during the Orange Revolution, in order to bring her youngest son to California she must relinquish Ukrainian citizenship and become a US citizen. It is integration rather than transnationalism that is structurally embedded in exodus. Where Viktoria is happy to sever ties with Ukraine and identify with the US state through work and citizenship, Kateryna is forced to do so in the hopes of reuniting her family.

The gendered processes of Ukraine’s economic transformation do not only affect daughters who sees few opportunities for meaning work beyond motherhood, but sons as well. Dariya left Ukraine in part because of what the coming of capitalism meant for her daughter, but Zhanna (chapter 14) left in part because of what it meant for her son. The highly masculinized ethos of “bandits” and “bribes” in Ukraine’s unregulated free market led Zhanna to come to California. Like Kateryna, Zhanna has a “divided family” with her daughter and granddaughters in Ukraine and her husband and son in San Francisco. In exile where ethno-nationalism is a dominant discourse, divisions between migrants from Ukraine is expressed in terms of nationality or division between “real” Ukrainians and “Russified” Ukrainians. In exodus this divisions exists but is downplayed in light of divisions between migration waves. Zhanna illuminates the ways in which earlier migration waves from the region which informants referred to as “Diaspora Ukrainians”

and “Old Russians” exclude recent immigrants from organizations that may facilitate transnational connections. Zhanna is unable to convince her daughter to join them in California and therefore is unable to participate in the daily care of her granddaughters. Instead, Zhanna lays roots in San Francisco by caring not only for the client she is paid by the state to care for, but by also becoming a *babushka* to her client’s Ukrainian-American children.

Exodus shapes the experiences even of individual immigrants who have left their whole family behind. Halyna (chapter 15) has no family in California and simply overstayed a guest visa to work caring for the elderly. Viktoria and Dariya do not send remittances back to Ukraine because there is no one left to send them to. Kateryna and Zhanna regularly sent remittances when they first arrived, but they no longer send remittances even to their children in Ukraine. Halyna, whose demographic profile is identical to the individual migrants in Italy, also sends few remittances back to Ukraine. Halyna has her own living expenses in San Francisco. This is in sharp contrast to the practices of individual migrants in Rome where remittances and the social meanings attached to them were an important part of their migration narratives and constructing themselves as “good mothers.” Despite being undocumented, Halyna expects to find a way to stay in California and hopes to bring her daughter and granddaughter to San Francisco. In a migration pattern where things happen by “chance,” “luck,” or “fate” Halyna believes her daughter too could win the green card lottery. In the meantime, Halyna focuses on learning English and settling in America so she will be ready when her family arrives.

Exodus leads these immigrants to focus on localized concerns of children’s schooling and job searches. Immigrants in California, those who have their children with them as well as those with divided families, are shielded from the good mother/bad mother boundary drawing that is salient among informants in Rome. Whereas exile forces migrants into a painful connection with Ukrainian nation-building, the extent to which individual migrants in exodus even follow Ukrainian news or politics is a choice. Embedded in exodus is the push to “integrate.” While Ukrainian nationalism was not a discursive frame that produced meaningful ways of constructing their migration narratives in San Francisco as it was in Rome, a discourse that runs through all the interviews with Ukrainian women in California and Italy is the importance of being a *babushka*. Whereas migrant women in Italy were forced to leave their children and grandchildren behind, one of the promises of exodus is that, surrounded by your family, one will be able to fulfill the role of *babushka* and participate in the daily care of grandchildren. Yet even in exodus this remains elusive. Ukrainian women in California must continue to work well past the retirement age in Ukraine of 55 in order to maintain health care benefits, qualify for state-based pensions, and out of economic need. This prevents them from being able to pick grandchildren up after school or care for them while parents work. Other immigrants find that their children delay having babies until they are too old to care for grandchildren. Others still wait long years while the paperwork for adult married children comes through and grandchildren grow up without their *babushka* in the meantime. It was on this terrain of assimilation through markets that struggles over motherhood and grandmotherhood took place in exodus. Informants wanted their children to live the “American dream,” but they simply hoped that dream would include a place for *babushka*.

### **Viktorina: Turnips and Triumphs in Exodus**

Every research site has gatekeepers and San Francisco was no exception. Svitlana, a gregarious and energetic woman from Ukraine, was the union organizer for the Russian-speaking members of the SEIU's homecare workers' union. She held monthly meetings in Russian. The meetings not only addressed union business, but forged a community between workers from all over the former Soviet Union. Several informants said that Svitlana was their same age or perhaps even younger, but she was nonetheless "a mother" to all of them. Svitlana invited me to union events, introduced me to homecare workers, and tirelessly searched for informants willing to sit down to an interview with me and. It was at one of Svitlana's union meetings that I met Viktorina. Viktorina was explaining to those attending how to vote in the upcoming local elections while the union organizer explained which candidates for San Francisco's Board of Supervisors the union was supporting. Her enthusiasm for California politics and her strong conviction that as naturalized American citizens they all had an obligation to vote and "engage with the US state" was infectious.

After the toasts and speeches in honor of those members who had birthdays that month, I chatted about local politics with Viktorina over a plate of food and cake. She was thoughtful and articulate, interested in US politics but also in its intersections with American culture. I worked up the courage to ask Viktorina if she would be willing to sit down to an interview with me. I thought to myself that I was too shy to be an ethnographer as the knot in my stomach tightened and I braced myself for the usual response I received in San Francisco: Sorry, I'm too busy. But instead Viktorina smiled warmly and gave me her phone number telling me that that when the election was over, she would have more free time and would be happy to speak with me at her apartment. I exhaled in relief. Even those who agreed to interviews often were nervous about having me at their home. I remember one informant who told me to go to the opera house in San Francisco. There I would find a pay phone. I was instructed to call her cell from the pay phone and she would tell me where she was waiting for me. I sang the 007 theme song in my head as I dialed and worried that either my Russian or my notoriously bad sense of direction would keep me from finding her. When I called she told me she was sitting on a particular bench in a square whose name I did not recognize. I happened to spot a police officer on foot and stopped him to ask for directions. I hoped that my informant did not see me talking to the police least she think her prudence justified. When I found her we talked on a bench out in the cold for two hours where I learned, like most informants, she had a green card and no reason I could think of for such fear. At the end of the interview she hugged me, apologized for not inviting me to her apartment, and asked if I was single and interested in meeting her son who was "very nice." I thought of the nasty cold I had caught outside on that bench and was thrilled to know the interview with Viktorina would be in a warm place given San Francisco's November chill.

I ran into Viktorina again a couple of weeks later at a naturalization ceremony for New Americans. My husband, Davide, an Italian national, had just become an American citizen. I was distracted, already analyzing the ceremony, a large ad campaign for the

USA, in my head and was smiling at Davide who had been swept up in the fervor. He was having his picture taken with two young people in army fatigues and rifles in front of the American flag. Davide was holding open his own American flag, one with only 48 stars. It was a family heirloom brought back to Italy by a great uncle who had worked in the coal mines in Chicago in the 1930s before returning to Italy. Viktoria spotted me as she held voter registration cards over the crowd exiting the building and called out in Russian, “Register to Vote!” She was clearly enjoying herself. I was surprised to see her and squeezed her arm as she congratulated my husband on becoming an American citizen. Viktoria winked at my husband and said in English, “Don’t forget to register to vote!” Turning to me she added in Russian, “I will see you next week, agreed?” As we pushed through the lobby to the exit I looked over my shoulder and saw Viktoria, her arms outstretched toward the ceiling and the throng, like the parting of the Red Sea, continually dividing and then regrouping behind her.

As I sat in Viktoria’s kitchen a week later, Viktoria, explained that she had graduated university in pedagogy and was sent by the Soviet government to the Caucasus region to teach Russian language and literature. While her grandmother worried about Viktoria’s safety, Viktoria called the years she spent in the Caucasus a “golden period.” She loved learning about a new people and thought she might have stayed if she had not met her future husband at a bus stop on a trip back to Kyiv. She soon married Sergei and moved back to Kyiv. She was unable to find a teaching position and instead found work as an administrator at what she called a “luxury hotel.” She was one of the few working there who had a university degree and she was soon made director. “There,” Viktoria reminisced, “I saw a different life, a rich life—happy, interesting, wealthy—completely different. . . . Tourists arrived from all over the world and I really enjoyed working there, really enjoyed it.” She worked there 20 years.

Viktoria’s husband, Sergei, also had higher education and he worked in a factory as an engineer. They had their first son, Andrei, soon after they met and would have a second son, Igor, 18 years later. Viktoria said:

Now I remember how funny this is! My family then was considered wealthy! We lived well. I worked at the hotel and my husband at the factory. As far as we were concerned, we were rich. Now I think, how could I have thought I was rich if I couldn’t even eat bananas? Bananas were expensive, but I ate a banana once a week with a friend. We hid ourselves outside so our husbands wouldn’t see that we had wasted money this way.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Viktoria explained that everything changed and for the worse. She paused to urge me to take another *blini*, a folded pancake in this case filled with tvorak. Tvorak is a cheese curd not unlike cottage cheese but with a pungent flavor people have been telling me for years I would learn to love, but I still find difficult to enjoy. Viktoria continued:

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union. . . for me it was painful. I liked it when we were all one country. The Soviet Union was mighty. . . understand? When it collapsed I of course felt this was bad. First you sit on the train and they need to verify that you are from Ukraine. [Unlike the Soviet period, you now need

documents to travel between former Soviet countries.] Second they decided that it was obligatory to speak Ukrainian. I wanted to speak in my native language, Russian. But Ukraine: “We are going to speak only in Ukrainian.” I did not like this. And all of a sudden there was all this nationalism in Ukraine: “This is Ukraine, and we are Ukrainian, and want to be independent.”

Viktoria, like the majority of Ukraine’s population, did not know Ukrainian and as a teacher of Russian language and literature she said she “did not want to know Ukrainian.” In the Soviet period, Ukrainian was considered a lowly language for uneducated “country bumpkins,” not the language of the intelligentsia to which Viktoria felt she belonged. In addition, Viktoria’s mother was Ukrainian from Kyiv but her father was Russian. She had lived in the Caucasus “like one of them” and felt that the rise of nationalism created unnecessary divisions and tensions between peoples who had always been “friends” and had “the same mentality.” Viktoria had complained about Ukrainian language requirements when we met at the union meeting for homecare workers as well. There she noted:

If I speak my native tongue I am no longer Ukrainian? The United States government lets me speak Russian and says I am an American citizen. I feel I have more rights here than in the country I grew up in! The United States government does not say you cannot work in the elections because you prefer the Russian language.

While this debate about language and the division between Ukrainophone and Russophone Ukrainians was present in Rome, this debate had heightened meaning in San Francisco where there were immigrants from all over the former Soviet Union, not predominantly from Ukraine like in Italy. Insisting on only speaking Ukrainian meant you refused to communicate with other immigrants from the region.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Viktoria continued, the economic situation in Ukraine also worsened. Viktoria’s husband, Sergei, lost his factory job. “Very bad, the 1990s were very poor. I woke up in the morning and couldn’t make blinchiki because I didn’t have any butter to fry them in; there were no eggs; there were problems getting flour.” Viktoria pointed at my plate, “Eat! Now we have no problems making blini!” I lathered on the homemade jam to cancel out the tvorak, politely nodded my appreciation of the blini, and watched her bustle around the small, cluttered kitchen. A large ball of soft tvorak wrapped in cheese cloth was hanging from the faucet and draining into the kitchen sink. I noticed that the wall paper was peeling and discolored. In fact everything in the apartment gave the impression that if you touched it or turned it, it would most certainly break. Despite what to my eyes was cramped quarters and chipping paint, Viktoria said they were lucky to have such a comfortable apartment. I put my fork down in relief. It turned out that homemade tvorak is not as strong tasting as store-bought and to my surprise I ate yet another quite happily, and this time went easier on the jam.

While most Ukrainians I spoke with in Italy talked about how difficult the decision to go abroad was, Viktoria, like many of my informants in San Francisco felt that having access to a green card was an opportunity. Viktoria said no one from her

circle of friends left for abroad, and they had simply been “lucky.” When I asked Viktoria if the decision to leave Ukraine was a difficult one she replied:

You know, no. I, personally, was dying—I wanted to leave. I wanted to change something in my life. . . . I tell you honestly, there was something psychological: America, all the time America, as so many said . . . How to explain this? Propaganda: America is the best. Everything—the best in America.

Cinzia: Where did you hear this?

Movies, radio. . . American radio and everywhere they showed: America, America, America. They planted this and it became like a psychological revolution in my head and we decided to leave.

Viktoria’s sister, Liya, worked as an English interpreter for a large state-run tourist agency. While she occasionally traveled abroad and had visited England and India, her main responsibility was to manage foreign visitors to Ukraine and the access they had to the USSR. Liya was supposed to propagandize the foreigners but it seems they propagandized her. She worked with Americans and always told Viktoria that there was “no country in the world better than America.”

I asked Viktoria how she was able to come to San Francisco. Viktoria answered, “My husband has a mother and his mother has a sister. This sister pulled mama here. Then mama pulls her son [Sergei], the son is married with kids . . .” She laughed, “It is a chain!” They were already so far “down the chain” that Viktoria was not sure how her husband’s aunt was able to come with refugee status in the first place and set the family reunification process in motion. She explained it by recounting a famous Russian children’s limerick:

Do you know the story “Turnip?” Grandfather plants a turnip and the turnip grew to be enormous. He pulled and he pulled but he couldn’t pull it out [of the ground.] So grandfather calls grandmother. Grandfather held the turnip and grandmother held grandfather and they pulled and pulled but they couldn’t pull it out. So grandmother calls granddaughter. They pulled and they pulled and they couldn’t pull it out. So the granddaughter calls the dog and the dog calls the cat and the cat calls the mouse . . . they make a chain and they finally pulled the turnip out. That is how we came to America.

I laughed and Viktoria again repeated the last line from the story which is a tongue twister in Russian: *Myshka za koshku, koshka za Zhuchku, Zhuchka za vnuchku, vnuchka za babku, babka za dedku, dedka za repku, tyanut-potyanut--vytyanuli repku!*

When Viktoria got on the plane for San Francisco, they had sold all the possessions they could in order to buy plane tickets. Viktoria, Sergei, Sergei’s mother, and 6 year-old Igor were on the plane. Her oldest son, Andrei, 24, stayed behind with his wife. He wanted to finish his doctorate. However, a year later, Andrei and his wife arrived just two weeks before their son—Viktoria’s grandson—was born. He was the first to be born an American. Viktoria’s mother also arrived with Andrei and his wife. After

five years in San Francisco, Viktoria became a US citizen. She “continued the chain” and “pulled” her sister and her brother. Her sister Liya remained in San Francisco with her son and daughter-in-law. Liya has two granddaughters. The youngest is now six months old and Liya, who Viktoria says was simply unable to accept doing domestic work, is a full-time *babushka*. Now they are doing the paperwork to bring Liya’s daughter-in-law’s mother to San Francisco. “You see?” smiled Viktoria, “Turnip!”

Viktoria’s brother stayed in San Francisco six months. He worked long hours, earned money, and returned to Ukraine. His daughter is married and has a daughter who has a “good job” in Ukraine, “an important position,” but nevertheless she and her husband do not earn enough money to move themselves and their daughter out of her parent’s apartment. With the money he earned in San Francisco, Viktoria’s brother was able to buy his daughter and her family an apartment so they could move out and live on their own. Viktoria explained that her niece does not want to come to the United States. There her niece is an important person. Viktoria asked, “Here who will she be? There she goes home at 5 o’clock. Here she will have to work two jobs if not three.” Therefore, with the exception of her brother, Viktoria says her whole family is in San Francisco.

Viktoria was 48 when she first arrived to San Francisco. She said that she had looked at America through “rose-colored glasses.” In some ways this made the first year in San Francisco even more difficult. Viktoria said, “I suffered from depression, without a doubt. I had no friends. I closed in on myself ... Everything was just awful. America, I was in AMERICA—I had this kind of association. And then suddenly I arrived and I was unhappy.” Viktoria said that working for the US state “brought her back to life.” Viktoria explained that “the government helped us, the government gave us welfare. Of course this was a big help—we were able to pay rent for an apartment.” Six months later they realized that Viktoria’s mother-in-law was eligible for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and for a state-paid homecare worker. Then the real relief came when they discovered Viktoria could be that state-paid homecare worker. Viktoria began working for IHSS, at first caring for her mother-in-law and then picking up other clients. When Viktoria’s mother arrived, she too was eligible for a homecare worker paid for by the state so Sergei took on his mother’s hours and Viktoria took on her mother’s hours. In addition to providing care to the elderly through IHSS, Viktoria found work cleaning houses and was paid under the table. Viktoria explained:

We call this “day laborer” .... I never in my life, nev-er, worked so hard. NEVER! I worked at school, I worked in a hotel, but such physically demanding labor as I do here I had never done in my life.... You know, we all came with higher education, we all completed university. And here I am doing this work. I clean toilets and I clean all kind of dirt. This is awful! But, we needed money, we needed the money so I stepped over this line.

Sergei started working in construction but he had never done such “heavy work” before and he left construction and joined Viktoria in caring for several elderly clients through IHSS. Viktoria said they were a team and, regardless of who was officially registered for the hours, they shared clients. For example, Sergei does not cook so Viktoria would do the cooking while Sergei picked up extra cleaning. She joked that in Ukraine she and Sergei saw each other in the morning and then not again until evening whereas in San

Francisco they spent much more time together and it was “rebirth” of their relationship. She also came to see this carework as important, as “very humane” and as an expression of “the Russian soul,” but also as an integration strategy.

Informants in California certainly understood that they were supposed to be “assimilating.” And yet for those of Viktoria’s generation, cultural assimilation, even if they aspired to it, was elusive. In Rome, most Ukrainian migrants who had been in Italy for some time spoke Italian, often quite well. They were, after all, working in Italian families and buying groceries daily, as is the custom, in Italian shops. In California, every homecare worker in my sample was caring for Russian-speakers, either immigrants who arrived in an earlier migration wave or the elderly members of this post-Soviet migration. Most spent time in Russian-speaking shops along Geary Boulevard, participated in union meetings run in Russian, and had access to social services delivered in Russian. Therefore Viktoria and others in California spoke limited English. This was seen as a barrier to “assimilation” a word I never used in the field but my informants used themselves often to indicate the “success” of their adult children who speak “beautiful, literary English” and their own “limited success.” Viktoria said, “I have not assimilated. No of course not. I think in Russian, I read Russian newspapers, and read Russian novels.” Andrei and Igor have “become American” and her grandson just “is American.” Yet Viktoria and others I spoke with were orientated to “America.” It is just that they felt connected not to American culture but the American government.

Viktoria received payment for the carework she perform through IHSS from the state of California as well as her health insurance and Viktoria repeated that “the US government takes care of me” and she feels a deep connection to the US state as a result. Another informant, Lidiya, put it this way:

I love America because its policy towards the elderly is very humane... Look at how much money the state spends on her [indicating the elderly woman she cares for]! They pay her SSI, they pay me to care for her, and they also pay for my benefits. I am very grateful to the US government because they support me in a way the Ukrainian government never did. The Ukrainian government doesn't give you the opportunity to make money and live well.

The US state is understood as a provider with whom they have a personal relationship. Viktoria, however, has yet another connection to the state. Viktoria exclaimed, “And then God sent me the City Hall Department of Elections. I was resurrected! I was so happy. How I love to work there! A fine collective—simply wonderful!”

Viktoria juxtaposed what she understood as her “limited success” in San Francisco with her oldest son’s Andrei success in “becoming an American.” She thanked God that he is now 34 years-old and was always very smart, even as a boy. He finished school with a medal for getting highest marks and completed university with a “red diploma” (*s krasnim diplomom*) or honors. He then went to graduate school in accounting but was unable to complete his dissertation because they came to the United States. Once in San Francisco he enrolled in university courses and quickly completed an accounting certificate. He landed a job at a large accounting and consulting firm. Viktoria’s whole face was radiating pride and joy. “He earns big money: \$100,000!” She continued, “And he works for an American firm. He works with Americans. There are no Russian-

speakers there.” Andrei travels a lot for work and has visited many countries. Viktoria says she is not sure why he must travel so much but she notes they could “send someone who was born here” to represent the company abroad, but they send Andrei.

Children’s success in becoming Americans was judged on three criteria: Speaking English not just competently but elegantly, earning a good pay check, and not needing to rely on other immigrants from Ukraine or the former Soviet Union. This is why announcing that there are no Russian-speakers where your child works or in the neighborhood where they live— something I heard over and over again—is a sign that your child has made it and that your sacrifices as a mother were worth it. Viktoria explained that Andrei and the young people do not need other Russian-speakers because there are no “connections here.” In the Soviet Union Viktoria explained that she got everything through connections (*po blaty*). She explained:

We had connections (*blat*). I worked in a hotel. There was never a room available at the hotel, never. In America, there is always a room available in a hotel but in our country no, there were no rooms available. Therefore I gave away rooms, but for this room I could gain everything I wanted. Yes, it was interesting... I could get chicken, food stuffs, objects, or permits. We call this *blat*—connections.

In San Francisco, Viktoria noted, “There are no connections.” The turn over is so high at the elections office that every election season it is all new people—“no connections,” Viktoria exclaimed. “You do not need people to help you get what you need in America, just money.”

Viktoria explained that while there are people from all ethnic backgrounds working at the elections office, each targeting their own immigrant population, there are also some Americans there. Sergei has now earned his CNA (Certified Nurses Assistant) and while Viktoria joked that there was not a single American in his classes and CNAs are almost all immigrants, there are also some Americans there too. Sergei works nights at the hospital and cares for his mother, who is now very ill and has been assigned many hours from IHSS, during the day. Viktoria repeated how hard they all have to work in America, harder than in Ukraine, and how difficult and unexpected this is especially at their age. Sergei is 60 and Viktoria 59. She reminded me that in the Soviet Union retirement ages are 55 for women and 60 for men and “this is how it should be.” Viktoria wondered, “How can you raise your grandchildren if you have to work even at our age?” Yet, she says she is happy in San Francisco. Viktoria says they sometimes buy fresh fruit and eat it by the ocean and think: “We are living a fairy tale.”

While Andrei has been upwardly mobile through the market and works in private industry and Viktoria has the same hope for 16 year-old Igor, Viktoria, and others of her generation who arrived to California middle-aged, finds herself unable to “become Americans” culturally. Therefore Viktoria and many informants identified with the US state through citizenship status and working for a government agency like IHSS. Viktoria feeds this association with the US state further through her work at city hall during election seasons and her commitment to convincing others to vote and participate in the political process. Viktoria is passionately interested in US and California politics. We had a long discussion about American national politics and the past 2004 presidential elections. “It is not often you meet an American who speaks Russian and can give you an

American perspective on these issues,” Viktoria explained. I shifted the conversation to Ukrainian national politics. Viktoria exclaimed that she was not interested in Ukrainian politics at all. With the exception of three or four phone calls a year to her brother, she says she has no connection to Ukraine whatsoever. I asked her about the Orange Revolution. Viktoria declared:

I have absolutely no interest [in the Orange Revolution], absolutely none! .... My brother sent me a beautiful picture of this Yulia Tymoshenko. He sent me a picture of her—I am not interested in her. I don’t need her and I am not interested .... I live here now and I work here now. This is what I am absorbed in, this is what I have in my head. Schwarzenegger, this is interesting to me. Learning about who the candidates on our ballots are, this is much more interesting to me! This I like.

Viktoria has never been back to Ukraine and does not want to. She says that she is more interested in traveling in the United States. While Viktoria notes that she is not able to travel as much as she did in the Soviet Union, they do travel during her grandson’s school vacations. She says her grandson is American and therefore is much more interested in snowboarding in Tahoe than going to Ukraine. They have been to Los Angeles, Disneyland, Calistoga, Las Vegas, and Hawaii several times. Viktoria said that, for an ESL class she took when she first arrived, they were asked to write an essay about why they came to the United States. Viktoria, leaving out that she could not afford to make blini, said she wrote that she “loved adventure.” “I adore traveling,” Viktoria exclaimed. “This is why I came to America,” she continued laughing. “Of course this was a one-way journey!”

### **Dariya: Discovering my “I” in Exodus**

I drive out to a San Francisco suburb to interview Lyuba who I had met through a connection at San Francisco’s Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC). I rang the bell of the large suburban home. Lyuba, 63, a sturdy woman with straight blonde hair, answered the door and welcomed me in. A group of people were still finishing up lunch and Lyuba pulled a chair up to the table for me. I politely declined the meat and potatoes offered but accepted the tea and cookies and added the Ghirardelli chocolates I brought to my San Francisco interviews to the table. Lyuba ate snatches of food seated at the table between trips to the kitchen to slice more meat, clear dishes, or make tea. Seated at the head of the table was Lyuba’s husband, Myron. He was American of Ukrainian decent and was likely 10 years her senior by my eye. Myron owns a small pharmaceutical company and the laboratory is based in Ukraine. Dariya was at the table and Lyuba introduced her as a friend who was also willing to give me an interview. There was a young couple at the table. In my embarrassment for interrupting their Sunday lunch, I did not ask who they were and Lyuba did not introduce me. Myron asked me about my research and I felt I was being vetted before being given permission to speak with Lyuba. I saw that Dariya was uncomfortable at the table and I sensed an inequality in power dynamics that made me nervous and cautious about my answers. I explained my interest in Ukrainian migration broadly and explained that I had done interviews with Ukrainians in Rome and was now interested in the experiences of Ukrainian immigrants in California—all the while letting them know that I was a student and no one of consequence. The young man at the table spoke English well and with a Ukrainian accent. He explained that he did not like the word “immigrant” which implied people of a lower class and culture than Ukrainians in the United States. Dariya coughed in her napkin and, covering her face from the man’s view, rolled her eyes at me. I gave her a slight nod of acknowledgement but maintained a blank expression on my face for my interlocutor. He continued that he was well aware of the phenomenon of Ukrainian women in Italy. These women were simply “shirking their motherly and wifely duties” in order to be “prostitutes in Italy.” Dariya and Lyuba’s jaws hit the table in shock. The young man’s beautiful, blonde wife in expensive looking jewelry sat quietly beside him and seemed not to hear any of the conversation. I politely replied that the women I had spoken with were working hard to support their children back home. Myron seemed intrigued and asked more about my assessment of “our women” in Italy. The young man scoffed as I spoke but it was Myron who was in charge. Myron, a large, imposing man, stood up, said it was very nice to meet me, and retired for an afternoon nap. I was relieved as we all stood up and the couple left. Lyuba, Dariya and I sat in the living room. It was a dark room with an old fashioned décor. There were Ukrainian religious icons and Ukrainian folk art displayed upon an embroidered piece of cloth on the mantle.

Lyuba and Dariya both came to the United States through the same “placement agency.” Lyuba said that she was a high school teacher of Ukrainian language and literature as well as Russian language and literature in L’viv. In 1996, she was 54 with “less than two years until retirement” and she thought she was a “spent woman” with no

idea that a year later she would be in California. Yet “life,” she said, “gave her a surprise.” Lyuba explained that many people who worked in the “budgetary sphere” such as doctors and teachers were no longer receiving their wages. Many people, Lyuba said, had already left to work abroad. “In those days, few people went to Italy. Most went to Greece and some Turkey but mostly Greece.” At school Lyuba said that many of her students had a parent abroad, usually their mother, and you could tell who they were because they were “dressed better and already had jeans.” But Lyuba conceded:

I did not look at those who left with respect. I said we have to build Ukraine, an independent Ukraine! You know I was this kind of patriot—People’s Movement... I came straight out of the Ukrainian Language Society—Who are you to leave? But you cannot live on that, so here I am.

Lyuba explained how she came to have a change of heart and realized that she must leave Ukraine to work abroad.

Over the summer, Lyuba tutored students for university entrance exams. Lyuba told me that in general her generation was raised to be ashamed of accepting money for services. She explained, “We did everything for free, for the greater good.” Dariya jumped in, “In other words she was Soviet.” Lyuba smiled bashfully. Lyuba would spend hours with a child and then say, “Oh, no need to give me anything.” If the mother of the child worked in a perfume factory then she would give a bottle of perfume as payment. “It was a barter system,” Lyuba stated. That summer Lyuba tutored a child whose mother, formerly a history teacher, worked in Greece. She walked in and put \$50 down on Lyuba’s kitchen table. Lyuba exclaimed, “Who are you? (*Vi’ chto?*) I have never seen so much money!” Lyuba laughed explaining that, there they were, peeling potatoes that they had grown in the garden. In a small one-bedroom apartment Lyuba was living with her oldest daughter, a doctor, her husband and their two children as well as with her youngest daughter, a teacher, and her husband. Lyuba shook her head. “That is seven people in one room!” Lyuba said for emphasis. Both her daughters were no longer being paid at work and one of her sons-in-law, a civil engineer who had lost his job, was working three months on three months off in Poland. The women watched them peel potatoes and said, “I know what your life is like, Lyuba, and there is no place for us here.” This woman told Lyuba that she had to go abroad and should start studying Greek because when she went back, she would take Lyuba with her. “She even came by to make sure I was studying,” exclaimed Lyuba, “And she practiced Greek with me.” Lyuba thought about it and concluded that she already “did not have a kopeck to buy bread with” so “what did she have to lose?” Plus, Lyuba said, she was “single.” Her husband died young leaving her at 34 with two daughters, 14 and 10 years-old, to raise on her own and she never remarried. Lyuba thought it would be much worse if her oldest daughter was forced to go leaving two small children behind or if her youngest daughter went abroad leaving a young husband alone to “pick up vices.” Lyuba said that she continued to study Greek.

Then her youngest daughter found an add in a L’viv newspaper: “Looking for women between the ages of 39-54 to care for children in Ukrainian-American or Russian-speaking families.” They wrote for an information packet and learned that Lyuba would earn \$180 a week. Her daughters thought that they would be rich! Lyuba went to Kyiv to

find the company's office. There a young woman, Marina, in a large office with a Ukrainian and American flag in the background brought Lyuba to a comfortable room and asked her to listen to a tape. On the tape there was a dialog, a woman preparing to go to America asking questions and a man answering. The man started to speak: "If you," Lyuba said lowering her octave with a serious expression on her face and then collapsed into Dariya's arms as she laughed. "This is so funny!" Lyuba muttered as she collected herself and again impersonated the man's voice on the tape: "If you are an officer's wife, if you worked your whole life as a boss, if your character is one in which you do not obey orders, you can get up from this couch and leave, because this means you should go there." Lyuba and Dariya collapsed into another laughing fit, a laughter that came from nervous tension rather than joy. The tape went on to say how middle-class American families differ from Soviet ones. For example, "They pay you and so they expect you to work." "You may not use the phone and you may not watch TV." Lyuba became very serious and said, "I haven't even told my children the things I am saying into this recorder. To be honest, it was frightening." Marina entered the room when the tape was done and said, "Well?" Lyuba answered, "Normal. Everything is normal." Marina said, "Really? Maybe you didn't hear it well. You need to hear it one more time." She turned on the audio tape again and walked out of the room. Lyuba said she listened to the tape again and told Marina when it was over, "I'm going." Marina helped open a visa for Lyuba and then told her that they could send her to New York or San Francisco. Lyuba asked Marina to put herself in Lyuba's shoes: where would she want to go? Marina replied that she would want to go to California. Lyuba asked, "Why is California better?" Marina answered, "Have you seen the soap opera *Santa Barbara*? THAT is California." Lyuba said through the laughter, "So I told her: I want to go to Santa Barbara!"

Dariya had used this same agency in 1996, a year before Lyuba. Dariya nodded at Lyuba's story about how when she arrived in San Francisco, they took her passport and told her she would have to work six months for free to pay for her ticket. Dariya interjected, "The ticket was \$600 and they wanted her to work six months! This is enslavement! I worked three months for free but Lyuba is nicer than I am so they made her work six months." Lyuba explained that the family she was working for were Russian-speaking Jews. There she cared for two children. After six months the agency told Lyuba that her visa had expired and she was now illegal. Dariya shook her head, "Same with me! This is good for them because if you are illegal, you have no rights here and you are in their hands!" Dariya says that the UGCC helped her get an extension on her visa but Lyuba was less fortunate. The family Lyuba worked for warned her not to take public transit or a police officer could ask her for her documents and put her in prison. They told her there were no Ukrainian Greek Catholic or Ukrainian Orthodox churches in San Francisco. Lyuba said, "I thought I was the only Ukrainian in San Francisco." Dariya nodded, "Lack of information, Cinzia. Write about that. The hardest thing for immigrants is lack of information." Lyuba continued that, here she was, a woman with a university degree who worked 30 years at school and she was "cowed and downtrodden." Lyuba nodded to emphasize that it was true. "My husband doesn't believe me. He says why didn't you just pick up the Yellow Pages? Cinzia, who knew about the Yellow Pages?"

One day Lyuba was home alone with the children and the TV repairman came into the house. He was a Russian-speaker and told Lyuba that there were Ukrainian

churches in San Francisco. He returned to the house the next day with an English language tape so she could learn basic phrases in English. He also encouraged her to walk out the door on her own and go to Church. During her free time on Sunday, Lyuba ventured out by herself for the first time. She stopped someone to ask directions and it was Dariya. They exchanged phone numbers and have been friends ever since. Lyuba smiled warmly at Dariya, "Next Sunday I got on a bus and went to Church. I entered the Ukrainian community and that is how I was extracted from captivity!" Even though the Church helped Lyuba find an immigration lawyer, the lawyer warned her that the court could go either way on her case and that getting married was the only sure way to be able to stay. Lyuba had an acquaintance who said she knew a man who was willing to marry and Lyuba agreed. They were both whispering now and Lyuba kept looking over her shoulder to be sure that Myron was not up from his nap. Dariya continued, "Every immigrant has his path. If she had information sooner maybe it wouldn't have gotten to this." Lyuba said her situation was fine. She works for Myron's company and he pays her. She has been able to go back to Ukraine to visit her children and grandchildren twice. She sends them money regularly. They have passed their marriage interview and Lyuba now has her paperwork. Dariya whispered, "He gets a good pension, but she has signed away her right to it." Lyuba flushed red and explained that she does not want to "steal money from his children and grandchildren." Lyuba feels Myron is good to her and takes care of her kids and this is enough. Dariya looked at me and with a serious expression, "She is too shy and too nice. She thinks everyone is as good as she is!" Lyuba stood up and suggested we move outside since it was getting too warm inside. We moved to the patio and Dariya announced that it was "her turn now."

Dariya explained that in 1996, they would give you a visa if you had an address of a relative in the United States and said you wanted to visit them. You did not need a formal letter of invitation. Dariya landed in New York with only an address but her relatives no longer lived there. She found the same agency that had placed Lyuba but walked into their New York rather than Kyiv office. They sent her to work with a family in San Francisco and her story is similar to Lyuba's except while Lyuba stayed with the agency for three years, Dariya left after six months. Dariya was able to find work cleaning houses and caring for the elderly on her own. She rented an apartment with another women "without a social security number" like her.

Dariya has three children and already had two grandchildren when she decided to migrate the first time. Her oldest daughter, Marta, is now 30, her son Nazar is 23, and her youngest daughter, Marianna, is 22. Like Lyuba, they were all, including her daughter's husband and two children, living together in a one bedroom apartment. Dariya said:

I came only with the goal of earning some money. But living here for two years, my outlook on life changed. My opinions about life and my relationship to my obligations towards my children and my family changed. I decided I had to go back and find a way bring my children here because I feel that the educational system in Ukraine does not give children a sufficient level of learning, one that is based on current world-wide requirements....I saw that my children would not be successful in the global marketplace.

If Dariya's first intent was simply to earn money for her children, she came to see that what she wanted to give her children was a new life. She also saw that in the United States, this was possible.

In fact, Dariya started the process of collecting her family in California right away, telling her son-in-law to apply for the green card lottery. In 1998 Dariya's son-in-law won a green card and came to San Francisco with Dariya's oldest daughter, Marta, and her two grandchildren. Later that year, Dariya returned to Ukraine for her other two children. Dariya says she was tired, bone tired. She had been working night and day in San Francisco and she was no longer sure she wanted to return. After eight months back in Ukraine, Dariya went to church to pray and told God that she did not know if she was supposed to return to San Francisco, but she would go if it was her destiny. She went back to the consulate and applied for asylum and it was granted. Dariya said she was granted refugee status because her family had been partisans in the 1940s and had been "suppressed by the Soviet Union." "This means that it was destiny. I was supposed to leave, and so I did." This time she brought Nazar and Marianna with her and Marta, of course, was already waiting in San Francisco.

Dariya said she was most concerned about her youngest, Marianna. She was a talented student, had studied well in high school, was already conversant in 4 languages, and wanted to go to university. Dariya recounted a conversation she had with Marianna:

[Marianna] said to me, "Mama, I do not see myself in this country. I have to go abroad because in this country I will end up like everyone else. This is what awaits me: get married and this is the end. I don't feel that I want to start a family now; this does not call me. I want to study, Mama. If we wait until Marta becomes an American citizen to get me then I can wait but my brother cannot because he will be older than 21. When he is grown he will remember that because of you he did not have the opportunity to leave." After this conversation I felt that if I did not go just because it was hard, that I would feel that I did not give my children all the opportunities they wanted. I, their mother, did not want to be the one to stand in their way. I am a mother. If I wanted all my obligations to be easy, then why am I a mother?

Dariya stated that Marianna might never have a family and that was fine with her. I raised my eyebrows, never having heard such a thing from a Ukrainian woman. Dariya's whole family, with the exception of Dariya's mother, was now reunited in San Francisco. Dariya's sister also won a green card in the lottery and is in San Francisco with her husband and children.

I asked Dariya about her husband. She replied that she had lived with her husband 17 years and then he just "walked away from his family obligations" and had no contact with Dariya or the children. Dariya said, "I understood that I had to take the family role into my hands, become both mother and father for my children, and I divorced him." Dariya had been back to Ukraine recently because her mother passed away. Her ex-husband came to the funeral. He told Dariya that he had changed and wanted her to take him back. I remembered an informant in Italy who said that she received 2-3 marriage proposals every time she went back to Ukraine, men hoping that she will support them.

Dariya did not mention she suspected a financial motive, but she did say that she told him “No”:

I think that America has changed me. In America women start to feel that they are women, people, that she is not a thing or object of love of another person or husband. For some reason in America women start to believe that their opinions, their feelings are important and should also be taken into account. It is not like this in Ukraine.

While many women I spoke with, both in Rome and San Francisco, expressed unease with ideas that “real Ukrainian women” should marry young and drop out of or not enter the work force despite their university education, no one else of Dariya’s generation spoke about gender relations in this way. The focus was usually on “weak men” who should “protect their families” or women who were “strong” but asked to carry too much on their shoulders without help from husbands or the state. In fact what these women wanted was for men to want to care for them.<sup>53</sup> But Dariya was talking about something completely different. She was talking about, if not independence, then individuation.

While most informants like Viktoria, who more “representative” of informants in San Francisco, spoke of localized concerns, Dariya spoke about “world-wide educational requirements,” worried about the ability of her children to “compete on the global market,” and told me that it was not Russia that was the number one threat to Ukraine but “globalization” which threatened to “eradicate Ukrainian culture” more completely than any Russification policy through a process of homogenization. Thinking more deeply about the interview, I realized that perhaps what had me most intrigued by Dariya’s interview was how different her presentation of Self was from my other informants in San Francisco. It was not just her clothes and hair style although these did her apart from other informants, but it was the way that she identified with America. She did so not through a “husband” whether it be the US state in Viktoria’s case, or, much less common in my sample, marriage to an American citizen like Lyuba, but rather through an abstract notion of a Western Self. Dariya came to understand that what it meant to be Western was to be a clearly delineated individual. Dariya continued:

When I arrived the first time and stayed for two year, inside of me I felt...I did not know what was happening to me but it awoke something, something that I never was. I began to look at life differently; I started to analyze what was happening around me differently. And I started to study myself deeply because I felt my mind and soul were at war with each other. And I started to deeply study myself and read a lot of literature. I don’t know if this is because...I believe that all of us who come here as immigrants and arrived in another country, we fall into a vacuum. In the vacuum of the lack of communication, in the vacuum of lack of access to

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<sup>53</sup> See Kiblitkaya (2000b) for an interesting discussion of the kind of resentment women-breadwinners report towards “unreliable men” in Russia who “drink their wages” and are unable to see that you “need a job just for your soul, but to feed your family” at a time when the state no longer supports women in their role as mothers. Kiblitkaya concludes that women in Russia wish that men and not women were the breadwinners

one's own culture, in the full vacuum of isolation from one's family, especially the separation from your children, which for me was very stressful ... and when I collected all these factors together, I woke up to my work: I started writing.

Dariya said that, after writing poetry for many months, she realized that her poetry was an important commentary on the "real life circumstances of immigrants." She realized that it was her "destiny" to organize these poems into a book. She had just recently self-published her book of poetry written in Ukrainian. The book is called Two Vectors and in it she argues that if the mind and soul are not running in parallel you lose the "meaning of life." If these vectors intersect then "we cease to be human." Dariya continued:

People do not understand that and I didn't either until I had to write this book. This book was my destiny and through this destiny I found myself. I hope that every emigrant who has the opportunity to be in the vacuum of extreme situations in life is able to find themselves.

I caught myself thinking, "Whoa, who is this woman?" While a subset of the women I interviewed in Italy spoke of "reconstructing themselves" (*perestroika*) in the language of late socialism and Gorbachev, none of my informants in Italy and certainly none in California had invoked such a deep interior journey of self-discovery. It occurred to me that I had not yet asked Dariya what work she did in Ukraine, perhaps I was speaking with a professor of literature. It turned out that Dariya held a high ranking government position as Deputy Director of Economics for her oblast. I replied with surprise, "Well that is an entirely different set of questions, isn't it?" Dariya agreed:

This just awoke in me. This is why I didn't even want to study these questions because it seemed that I was abandoning my work. But we never know what reserves our organism has. That is why I think that every person, regardless of his professional work, if he finds himself in an extreme situation in life, a second "I" will appear, a second outlook, a second "I" that we did not know before. We appear to ourselves.

Dariya explained that she would not have been able to find her "I" if she had not returned to San Francisco to live because she would not have had the time and the tranquility needed to think and read if she was either in San Francisco by herself without her family or in Ukraine worrying about her "material conditions." It is through exodus that Dariya is able to find her "I" and cultivate a Western subjectivity.

She was quite a juxtaposition to Lyuba whom Dariya had called "Soviet." In Lyuba's narrative there is no "I" only "we" or as Lyuba put it "the collective good." At first I was surprised that Dariya was a former high ranking economist. And yet economics and the construction of Selves are deeply connected. Dariya recounted that when she returns to Ukraine to visit, people often tell her, "Come back and show us how to organize ourselves; help improve our country." However Dariya argued:

I think if I really was to return, I wouldn't be able to change anything and it would be mentally and physically too difficult for me to explain to these people how to live, understand? There the economic and political environment is different and the worst are the basics of the laws. People are still wasted in the black market. The whole mentality has to change.

It is questions of "culture" and "mentality" that are inextricably tied to economics that Dariya is most critical of in Ukraine and justifies her need to bring her children to the United States. Dariya was hyper aware that Marianna, a bright and talented student, would have little opportunity to find meaningful work even if she managed to somehow pay for university. The gendered dynamics of Ukraine's economic transformation create conditions that, as Marianna herself noted, encouraged her abandon ambitions beyond marriage and children. Dariya explained that most of her generation went abroad to Italy, Greece, Poland wherever they could find work but most painful was following Marianna's classmates from her high school which specialized in languages. The girls were either "wasted sitting at home" or, those whose parents were not able to go abroad and earn the money to send them to university, went abroad themselves. According to Dariya, one girl was cleaning airplanes in Germany and another was in England working in a bar. "Wasted talent," Dariya said sadly. Dariya continued:

The second time I came [to San Francisco] I came with the goal of staying and helping my children break away from this information landscape, this closed circle in which children lose their talent. They cannot reveal themselves because their parents do not have the opportunity to give this to them. We have very intelligent children in Ukraine, but they do not have an educational basis, you understand? They are not given the basis upon which to develop their "I", develop their talent.

Dariya continued that in Ukraine everything is done on bribes. Children enter university and pass exams on bribes. "What kind of specialists can they be?" Dariya had an intuitive sense that markets are attached to moralities. "What does the market teach kids in Ukraine?" she asked. While she maintained her poised manner I could see the force of her conviction: "not religion but corruption" and "not love but pornography" which, she emphasized, "before was forbidden." According to Dariya, Ukrainian children are unable to make it in the "Western market" and this, she explained resolutely, "is the main reason why I left."

Dariya is proud that she was able to pay for Nazar and Marianna to complete university in the United States. She believes that through their American education they now understand and are able to "move in Western markets." But it was Marianna she was most interested in speaking about. Marianna has completed a Masters and will begin a PhD at Oxford where she is studying European integration with Ukraine as her case study. Marianna stopped cleaning houses and caring for the elderly in favor of getting her CNA. But she

said the work of a nurse's aid was too hard on her and she now has her massage license. She is registered as a small business! While Viktoria was able to pick up part time government work in the department of elections, there were only four people in my sample who were able to move out of performing cleaning and caring labor: Lyuba who worked for her husband, two women who found administrative positions in government agencies delivering social service to Russian speakers, and Dariya.<sup>54</sup> Dariya stood out because she was on the only one of my informants to work in the marketplace rather than the governmental sphere or performing cleaning and caring labor on the black market for cash. She complained that carrying a massage table to people's houses and giving massages was physically demanding work. At 52, she did not know how much longer she could do it:

But I have to. My daughter wants to defend her dissertation at Oxford. Therefore I want to continue to support her because I feel my obligation before God and before people to respect my children's talent. Then when they are able to buy their own bread by their own work, then I will say that my duty is done. Then I will arrange my life as I see fit.

Dariya noted that in Ukraine she would be close to retirement and being a full-time *babushka*. "No matter what the country," Dariya exclaimed, "civilization would win if the government gave grandparents the chance to raise their grandchildren." Dariya reasoned that this would be a big help to young women who need to study or are working and studying and it is much better for the children to be with their grandparents after school rather than "strangers." After all, "Grandmother is grandmother."

Dariya regretted that she had to keep working and had little time to dedicate to the everyday care of her grandchildren. "This is why," Dariya continued, "I do not think it is normal that young people marry and they have their first child between 30-35 years-old. In our culture this is not normal." I smiled. First, because I was relieved to finally hear something familiar to my population coming out of Dariya's mouth. Second, because I had suspected Dariya's hope that Marianna would one day marry and have children was not completely sacrificed to her gendered understanding of American individualism. And third because Dariya did not know that I was one of those 30 year-olds who was two months pregnant with my first child. She continued about how daughters used to defer to their mothers on questions of child-rearing. Dariya complained, "Now children say, 'We are smarter than you and will raise our kids alone.'" I could feel the tension that must exist between Dariya and Marta over this question. At the time I did not know how often I would hear my own mother and her Italian immigrant friends make the same complaint about their daughters who "thought they could learn how to raise kids by reading a book" and discounted their advice as "old-fashioned" or "unscientific." The medicalization of infancy where nearly everything—loose bed sheets, crib bars spaced too far apart, and

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<sup>54</sup> This should be understood in the context of my sample where I was specifically looking for careworkers to the elderly.

placing a baby to sleep on their stomachs—could lead to the infant’s death combined with the American cult of “intensive mothering” to which my position as a sociologist does not make me immune, often led my own mother to exclaim in exacerbation, “I raised three children and somehow you three are still alive!”

While Dariya might feel that Marta has become “too American” in her parenting style, Dariya was committed to her children becoming American or Western subjects. Dariya was also concerned with her own relationship to the United States. For Dariya, her mode of integration was not the state like Viktoria, or American culture like her children, but a Westernized Self. Yet even for Dariya, the internal journey to a Western, individuated “I” ends when it comes to the ingrained notion of one’s grandmotherly responsibilities. Dariya may have found her “I” in exodus, but that “I” still hopes to be a *babushka*, with all of the Soviet values attached to the term, no matter where she lives.

### **Kateryna: Talent Shows From the Promised Land**

Every year at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, the Ukrainian community celebrates Ukrainian Day. This year the stage for the 2006 celebration was set up in the grass and people had brought lawn chairs, blankets, and snacks to enjoy during the show. My husband and I arrived with our own chairs and settled in. Kateryna, who I had interviewed two months before and had introduced me to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church one Sunday, smiled when she saw me. She came over to say hello and exclaimed, “You really *are* pregnant!” At her dining room table two months earlier her husband Boris kept offering me vodka and she joked that she thought I was just saying I was pregnant to get out of drinking. She says the Americans are always worried about being polite and come up with the strangest excuses for why they cannot drink vodka. I laughed and told her of an American colleague who, during her time as a researcher in Russia, told people that she was a recovering alcoholic because it stopped the flow of vodka immediately. “You see, Cinzia! I was right. I understand something about Americans.” I thought to myself that I too understood something about Ukrainians. At four months pregnant, my belly was now starting to show. While I waited the three months that is customary among educated older women who are hyper aware of the increased chance of miscarriages before sharing our happy news with family and friends, I wasted no time in letting every Russian-speaker in San Francisco know I was pregnant. In Rome, getting that first interview was difficult and time consuming but once the interviews started, they snowballed quickly even though most people I spoke with were undocumented. Interviews in San Francisco were a completely different story. Even though almost everyone had a green card and many were already US citizens, people were afraid to meet with me. Others were simply too busy with work and family to carve out time to speak with an American researcher. Also I was much more “exotic” and interesting to my informants in Rome. My interviews in San Francisco never snowballed and I found interviews in many haphazard ways. I did have two people who helped me greatly, Svitlana, the Russian-speaking organizer for the careworkers union and Mila, a placement counselor in San Francisco’s IHSS office. I sat in Svitlana’s office as she called members and asked if they would speak with me, “Anya, yes, she is a very nice young woman. I’ve known her for four years already and Anychka, she is pregnant! We have to help to help her finish the dissertation before the baby comes!” I do not believe I would have gotten 41 interviews in San Francisco if I was not pregnant. I did feel guilty that I was using my pregnancy and the cultural norms of Ukrainians around motherhood to speed up my research, but since I was being truthful—I was pregnant and I did need their help and I was desperate to finish my interviews before the baby came—it was only a vague pang of guilt.

Standing in the middle of a field in Golden Gate Park, I was struck by how different the talent shows I had attended in Rome were from Ukrainian Day in San Francisco. First, in contrast to the hundreds of migrants packed in the Roman auditoriums, here there were about 40 adults plus a handful of children in attendance. The mistress of ceremonies came out dressed in traditional Ukrainian dress: an embroidered peasant top and brightly colored skirt. She spoke fluent English and only occasionally

addressed the crowd in Ukrainian. She explained to the audience that August 24, 1991, Ukraine became an independent country and we celebrate independence from Soviet rule every August 24 with a showing of Ukrainian culture. She went on to talk about the great contributions of Ukrainian-Americans to the United States, a great country made even greater by the presences so many talented Ukrainians. She had even convinced me that America was the “promised land.” The MC then sang a Ukrainian song in operatic style as Kateryna leaned in to explain that she was a professional singer in Ukraine. There followed a couple short acts: a bandura player, a poem about the friendship between Ukraine and the United States, and another song from our MC. If the talent shows in exile saw teaching Italians about Ukrainian culture as their goal, talent shows in exodus focused on highlighting Ukrainian contributions to America and sought to instill pride in Ukrainian immigrants and Ukrainian-Americans about the role of Ukrainians in US history and culture. The heart of the show was a dance troupe of young men and women in their twenties that danced a series of traditional Ukrainian folk dances. They had elaborate costumes and even though I know very little about dance, I knew these dancers were good. The crowd clapped and cheered as the men in stage leapt in the air and the women twirled. As I clapped I exclaimed, “They are good! Where do they practice?” Kateryna replied, “Canada.”

I was at first surprised that they had invited this troupe from abroad to celebrate Ukrainian contributions to America but it also made sense to me. I could not imagine any of the children of my interviewees dressing in Ukrainian costumes and doing Ukrainian dances. There were no “Ukrainian boy bands” in exodus as there were in exile. Chatting with three of the dancers at the reception hosted by San Francisco’s Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church over a plate of vareniky, Ukrainian potato dumplings, I learned that they were mostly third generation Ukrainians whose grandparents left for Canada during WWII. They did not speak any Ukrainian and the dancers I was speaking with at least had never been to Ukraine. I asked, “How did you become interested in Ukrainian folk dance?” One woman looked at me matter-of-factly, “It’s just what you do if you are Ukrainian in Canada.” She looked at her friends who nodded in agreement as they chewed.

Two months earlier I had arrived at Kateryna’s apartment in a secluded corner of San Francisco at 11am and did not leave until 4pm. Kateryna, 56, is a stout woman with thinning brown hair cut short on the sides and slightly longer and curly on top. She was dressed plainly in slacks and a button down short sleeve shirt and smiled warmly as she hustled me in the door. She sat me down at the living room table and poured tea as we chatted. Kateryna is from Eastern Ukraine but moved to a large city in Central Ukraine outside Kyiv after completing her law degree. Kateryna’s city was the capital of the *oblast* or region, an administrative center which kept the law firm Kateryna worked for busy. She worked for this firm almost 30 years before she left for San Francisco.

Kateryna has worked caring for the elderly through IHSS for the past five years since 2001. She had a fuller worker in the beginning but now she feels she is supposed to be retired. She works five hours a day at the home of an elderly client and three evenings a week she cares for a handicapped boy through IHSS. She explained that at first she did not want to care for a handicapped child because she thought it would be too sad. But Kateryna met the boy’s grandmother at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The family is also from Ukraine and they were desperate for help. Now Kateryna is so attached to the

boy that she said, “At this point I do not watch him for the money. I see that it is very difficult for this family. She [the boy’s mother] does not work. He [The boy’s father] alone works and they have a second child to care for as well.” Kateryna shared this client with Natasha who joined us for lunch later on.

Kateryna came to the United States for the first time in 1995 and worked for two years. She says she ended up in San Francisco by “chance.” When a Jewish colleague left for San Francisco as a refugee, he sponsored Kateryna on a visitor’s visa, paid for her plane ticket, and found her work as a live-in nanny for an infant. The family she worked for were Ukraine Jews and had come to San Francisco as refugees. It was a difficult adjustment for Kateryna who said that the work was not hard, it was “just housework,” but explained that “women of her generation” did not know what it meant to be a housewife which Kateryna and others referred to as “sitting at home.” While this family was kind to her and she still sees the boy she cared for, now a teenager, Kateryna said:

Understand, the only thing is when I arrived in America and then decided to stay and work, you have to make a break with yourself. You have to forget who you are; you have to forget who you are in this life, what your title and your name is because, understand, yes at home I did something around the house but I was used to other responsibilities. And to look after a child, someone else’s (*chuzhoi*) child as we say, prepare food, clean, take him for a walk and you know this is not your child—this is very difficult on the morale. And then of course you must reinterpret this.

IHSS and being “protected” by the government and being a “government worker” helped with Kateryna’s reinterpretation of carework. Kateryna says she knows of many cases where people ended up working in “bad families—even our Russian-speaking families” that treated workers terribly, but she felt she was fortunate. She had her own room, her own bathroom but nevertheless:

It is difficult to live in someone else’s house and I know people who couldn’t do it and went home [to Ukraine]. During the day it was normal. They [the parents] went to work and I was with the baby all day, but evenings were horrible. They came home and they had their private things to talk about, their family. They’d say ‘go relax’ both to be kind and to have their family time, and I would feel alone and think about my family and my children. The only thing that kept me going is that I needed to earn that money for my children so that my oldest son finished institute there in Ukraine and the second studied as well. I helped them.

Kateryna had left two sons, Sasha and Vitalik, then 22 and 16, in Ukraine. She noted, “Of course I earned more money as a nanny in America than working as a lawyer in Ukraine.” Kateryna could not have sent her sons to university without the money earned from working abroad.

The friends that sponsored Kateryna also helped her oldest son, Sasha, enter the green card lottery, and he won. In 41 interviews I conducted with Ukrainian careworkers in San Francisco, six came to the United States or were legalized because either they or a

relative won a green card in the lottery. However many others reported siblings or in-laws or married children who also won green cards. The possibility of winning a green card loomed so large in the community that before I actually counted, I would have guessed incorrectly that close to half my informants arrived through the lottery. Sasha came to San Francisco a year after Kateryna and enrolled at a local community college. Kateryna completed her second year of work, left Sasha in San Francisco, and returned to Ukraine to wait for Sasha to sponsor her through legal channels. After five years Sasha would be eligible to acquire his US citizenship and apply for a green card for his mother.

Kateryna returned to Ukraine in 1997 just as the mass migration to Western Europe got under way. Kateryna continued:

Therefore, this was a difficult period and it seemed to me that little-by-little everyone was leaving. They abandoned family, said goodbye to their relatives and left for different countries, especially to Italy, but also to Spain. A few even went to Moscow to work or outside Moscow there in the government dachas to care for children as we say, other people's children (*chuzhi*)—you abandon your own. But, what can you do?

Kateryna went back to her old law firm and worked a full year without pay. She said that Sasha is unable to explain to his friends—all Americans—that his mother worked for a year and was not paid. Kateryna explained:

Americans ask, 'She is a volunteer, a saintly woman? And he says, 'She is not a volunteer. She went to work every day and they simply did not pay her.' Americans cannot understand. How is it possible that you work but you do not get paid?

In the meantime Sasha spent his time in California finished community college. Even though he was raised in the city, Sasha always preferred spending time in the country where his paternal grandmother lived. He found San Francisco both too expensive and too crowded. He found a job as a driver delivering tractors and relocated to Okalahoma where there is more nature and the great expanses he prefers. Kateryna kept reminding me that Sasha had completed a degree in computer engineering in Ukraine at the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, but he could not find work in his field. Kateryna said:

So he started with this work [truck driving], he said he had to. He said 'Mama, don't worry about this,' he said, 'I want to see America like this.' And he did. He has driven to every state. Now that he is married, of course, he quit this job because you cannot have just two free days a month. This is very difficult. But while he was young and until this interested him he drove. Of course he earned good money, not bad. He bought himself a house there. He managed to build a good life for himself and he tells me (laughing) 'Mama, soon I will retire!' I reply, 'God willing!'

Although Sasha is not working in his profession, Kateryna believed him to be successful because he earns well and he speaks “beautiful English.” She also emphasized that “he knows more about America than most Americans” because of all his traveling. Kateryna has placed much emphasis on the fact that Sasha has moved to a place that has no Russian-speakers. This is an important marker of successful integration among the immigrants from Ukraine I spoke with. In fact, when Sasha became a US citizen and sponsored Kateryna in 2001, she joined him in Oklahoma with her second husband, Boris. But they simply felt too isolated there where there were hardly any Russian-speakers. Kateryna explained:

My son learned English quickly. He finished college and was able to go there where it is rare to meet a Russian-speaker. He was able to be absorbed into this American life! Of course when you have a language barrier and you are unable to express yourself as you want then you have to “boil in your own” as we say and you must converse with Russian-speaking people. [...] But Sasha, he is happy, thank God. Maybe someday when I know the language well, I will move there [to Oklahoma] too.

Sasha now works in a factory that produces farm machinery. What was important for Kateryna is that there are no other Russian-speakers who work there. She also noted with pride that Sasha’s friends are American.

While Kateryna was proud that Sasha was able to “move among Americans,” the one American tendency that Kateryna and most other women I spoke wished their kids would not adopt is waiting to have children. Sasha, now 33, is married but without children. Kateryna shook her head as she exclaimed, “He says, ‘I am still young!’ But I say, “Come on already! Give me a grandchild while I am still able to watch them!” Kateryna had recently returned from a trip to Ukraine to visit her mother who is ill and being cared for by Kateryna’s sister although she noted that her brother and son also help. Kateryna sends \$100-200 a month to her mother, brother, and sister. Kateryna said, “Here the government helps the elderly. If someone needs care the government pays me. They help the elderly and they help me. There [in Ukraine] nobody helps.” She also has several friends who she sends money to on their birthdays. Once she said, the people she was working for gave her a whole box of old toys in good condition so she mailed them to an orphanage in Ukraine. I was surprised to learn that Kateryna does not send money to her son Vitalik except on his birthday and for New Year’s. Kateryna says Vitalik works as a lawyer and earns enough to support himself. Nonetheless Kateryna is consumed with the process of exodus, of reuniting her family in San Francisco. She exclaimed, sobbing, that “it is easier for those who have their whole family here.”

When Kateryna got on the plane for her second trip to the United States, she had a green card in hand and sitting next to her was Boris, Boris’ ex-wife, and his daughter. But Vitalik was not permitted to go. In fact, Kateryna has tried to have Vitalik come visit them. She is especially concerned that her sons have not seen each other in the ten years since Sasha left. Sasha has never returned to Ukraine and Kateryna thought it unlikely that he ever would. In fact, Kateryna noted that “my generation may go back [to Ukraine] to visit, they might even go back to live, but the younger generation, they are here to stay. They will not go back, not even to visit.” Sasha, who is now an American citizen,

formally invited Vitalik and completed the paperwork for his visitor's visa. "But," Kateryna explained, "They did not let him go. The Consulate didn't let him because they believe that since he is young, there is a possibility that he will stay here."

Kateryna worries that Vitalik, now 26, may not even want to come to the United States anymore although she continues to hope her family will be reunited. I wondered if she felt that if she sent Vitalik money, then he would have less reason to join her in California. Kateryna noted that even Sasha hesitated to apply for US citizenship when he became eligible, because he would have to give up his Ukrainian citizenship. However he soon changed his mind. Kateryna recounted their phone conversation:

Sasha said to me, "Mama, I don't want to become a US citizen and lose my connection to my country." I answered, "It is nothing bad! If *you* do not become a citizen that means *I* will not be able to come to you and your brother will *never* be able to come." He listened to me and passed the citizenship exam and filled out the paperwork. Literally four months later, I received my green card. And as soon as I received my green card I did the paper for family reunification for my youngest son, but it takes time. As a unification from brother to brother, before it was fast but now, [Sasha] as a US citizen, to request his brother for reunification you have to wait 10-12 years. This is very long, understand. And I feel this is not right, but where and with whom do you argue this? ... I said, I will sit and write a letter to the president. I always have this thought in my mind. I am a government worker...I will write the president and say that I miss my youngest son, I'd like him to come here. Please permit him to come.

Kateryna explained that Sasha thinks she is crazy but Kateryna feels connected to the US government. Kateryna, like most of my California informants, spoke of the US government as "provider," and entity with which she has a personal relationship. Kateryna does not feel she will ever "become American," but through her position as an IHSS careworker, a "government worker," Kateryna feels she is able to make personal claims on the US state. In three years Kateryna will be eligible to apply for US citizenship. Reunification requests for an unmarried child have higher priority and a shorter wait time. However, Kateryna worries that Vitalik may marry and this will make bringing him to the United States more difficult. No only will it decrease his priority making the wait for his green card to be processed even longer, but his future wife will also need to agree to come. Kateryna notes that it will be difficult for Vitalik. Kateryna looked at her hands as she said, "America is a beautiful and good country, but living here is also not easy. Even here you have to earn money, you have to work. The only thing is what I have already told you, that here if you work your labor is valued." She said that Sasha is so well settled (*ystroalis*) that she hopes God will provide a way for Vitalik to be settled here as well.

I asked Kateryna what her plans were for the future and whether she planned on staying in the United States herself. Kateryna replied:

Well, you know, look this apartment, we have it through section eight housing and our rent is low, so this worked out. And we work, well of course I told you that here I live 100 times, maybe even 200 times better

than I lived there. Even if there I worked and as a lawyer no less, it doesn't matter. I now look at my classmates, yes, most still have work, but you have to get in contact with them to understand what kind of work. They may even be part of the criminal world there, understand. None of them are tranquil. To say it briefly, they do not give money away easily there either, but here you work and they give you your money. Here there is tranquility.

Kateryna plans on staying in the United States. She continued to say that all of this possible because God has given her good health. But she notes, that the US government, through her work, has given her health insurance so that she is not worried if she does get sick. "So," Kateryna continued, "thank God the US government takes care of us." Health insurance was of utmost concern to Kateryna and others in my sample. I was often mentioned as something they were grateful to the US government for and used as evidence that the state cared about them.

Boris is 63 and Kateryna says he is unable to work and is on welfare. "There [in Ukraine] he was an electrical engineer. He too has higher education...well this is how life turned out that here you have to forget who you are." Kateryna notes that there are benefits to performing carework as well:

I tell you, for 30 years I worked with my mind. You I am sure know what this means to work with your mind and with people. Now I do physical work. Sometimes my legs feel like they will fall off, but morally and in my head I am free and I feel satisfied with this. Now I can walk in the park, I can travel some where, I can go to the Ocean and the like. At home, you understand, I always had work on my mind: tomorrow there will be a trial, tomorrow something else is going on the prosecutor's office, someone has tried to block our work, there someone did something incorrectly...and when you head is tired it much more complicated than this. Therefore we can say that I am satisfied with the destiny that God sent me. We can even say that I came back to life her, we can say that.

The themes of "coming back to life" or being "resurrected" through state-sponsored carework was a common one.

The doorbell rang and Natasha, a woman in her early thirties, walked in. She was slender with a mop of curly hair and a "don't mess with me attitude." Kateryna was telling me of a friend who went to Italy and her husband left her for another woman. Natasha, who is from Belarus, jumped into the conversation and exclaimed, "Well that is the women's fault. You cannot leave a man for more than a month." Kateryna nodded but explained that her friend and women in Italy were working to earn money for their families. In fact they earned similar monthly wages to them. Natasha insisted that they were "bad mothers" for leaving their families, but she did acknowledge that the money was not bad. Most informants in California were aware of the Ukrainian migration to Italy. Kateryna, who

follows Ukrainian politics, explained how migrants in Italy are for Yushchenko like her.

Kateryna said that when she gets her US citizenship, she will vote in the United States, but for now she is still a Ukrainian citizen as so votes in the consulate for election abroad. She says that she votes for democracy in Ukraine so she votes Yushchenko. "I am a lawyer, understand. I know how power works." Living in the United States, she says, makes her want democracy for Ukraine even more. Vitalik votes for Tymoshenko but Kateryna says that that is fine with her since she likes Tymoshenko too. Kateryna explained:

Maybe if I did not live in America, maybe I would think that Ukraine should be only for Ukrainians, with their own language but now I believe Ukraine should be part of Europe ... but follow an American model. The national language should be Ukrainian and everyone should learn Ukrainian. Then if people want to speak Russian or learn three or four other languages, that is great. If Russians want to live in Ukraine and speak Russian at home like we do here, fine. But at school, in government offices it should be in Ukrainian.

Kateryna's husband, Boris, had come home from fishing and was sitting at the table already offering me vodka. Natasha told Kateryna that she was ridiculous. "If someone comes to the hospital and tells me they will only speak Belarusian, I tell them I love Russian and get someone else to help them!" "Natasha, I love Russian too. That isn't the point." Boris waved at us as if to say, "Hello, I hear you!" Boris was Russian but had lived in Ukraine 12 years before coming to San Francisco. Kateryna stood behind Boris seated at the table and put her arms around him and said, "We always joke that Boris wants to annex Crimea!"

Natasha went on about how she hates "nationalists." Kateryna sighed as she told us to begin eating. Kateryna complained that when she arrived in California she suddenly became "Russian." She said, "Natasha, just look here in San Francisco. We have Russian newspapers, Russian TV, Russian stores but there are very few Russians here. I am Ukrainian and you are Belarusian; we are not Russian." Boris yelled, "I am Russian and I want to see Cinzia drink vodka!" Kateryna slapped his wrist. "She says she is pregnant. That means "No thank you" in American. Leave her alone." Boris changed tactics, "Ok, Cinzia, and then you must eat for two. Eat!"

### **Zhanna: Reinventing Babushka across Migration Waves**

I met Zhanna, 60, at her place of employment, a private home in San Francisco. Zhanna is a large, matronly woman with a mass of black hair piled high on her head. She immediately struck me as a *mother* who knew how to get things done. I found myself standing in the foyer resisting the urge to throw myself into her capable arms and ask her to fix all my troubles. Zhanna was dressed in elegant clothes—black pants with a black lace short sleeve cameo and crocheted vest on top. Her clothes, along with her hair style, large glasses, and bright pink lipstick, signaled the region she was from. She wore a large gold cross around her neck. I was relieved to learn that she was indeed Ukrainian and I silently thanked Mila, the IHSS counselor who referred Zhanna to me. I had come off of a number of referrals from Svitlana, the Ukrainian union organizer, only to realize the person she referred was not actually Ukrainian but from Estonia or Belarus or Russia. When I went back to Svitlana and explained how grateful I was for her help but I could only interview people from Ukraine, her response was, “Oh, we are all the same! Just say they are from Ukraine!” The opposite also happened. I would be speaking with some who told me they were Russian and it is only after some time that I realize that they are actually Ukrainian but perhaps thought that “Russian” would be a more understandable label for me. Mistaking a Ukrainian for a Russian or vice versa would be unthinkable among Ukrainians in Rome where Ukrainian nationalism was a defining discourse of migration.

I found that informants had different levels of sensitivity around nationality and identity in San Francisco and whether one spoke of the “Ukrainian community,” “Russian community,” or the most popular “Russian-speaking community” revealed quite a bit about their perception of where they fit in San Francisco’s multi-national post-Soviet landscape. Dariya and Lyuba (Chapter 11) spoke of the “Ukrainian community.” Viktoria (Chapter 10) felt at ease getting the vote out in the Russian-speaking community while Kateryna (Chapter 12) felt she was stuck in the “Russian-speaking community.” Zhanna joked that she thought “maybe I’ll become American in San Francisco, but I didn’t know I would become Russian instead.” In fact, Zhanna, who is Ukrainian by nationality as is her husband, noted that there are many Russians in her home city, many mixed marriages between Ukrainian and Russians, and she used “Ukrainian” and “Russian” interchangeably during our conversation.

Zhanna is from Odessa, a resort city in Southern Ukraine on the black sea. She is a gregarious and rambunctious person and she described the beauty of her city and its women with drama and flare. After three years in San Francisco she went back to Odessa and now she visits yearly. She explained that Odessa fared better economically than other parts of Ukraine, mostly due to its working naval port, and experienced less emigration. Zhanna’s father was a military man and they traveled a lot. Zhanna lived in Germany for seven years as well as Poland and Czechoslovakia. Since they moved around so much, Zhanna’s mother, a doctor by training, was unable to practice medicine. Instead she studied to be a fashion designer and Zhanna proudly stated that her mother was well known and even designed gowns for Miss Ukraine. Zhanna taught German at the

university and her husband, Viktor, was a radiologist. They have two children together. Ruslana, 39, is married and has two daughters 8 and 17. She works as a psychologist in Ukraine. Zhanna's son, Tolya, is 34, unmarried, and works in San Francisco's finance industry.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Zhanna lost her university job so she and her mother decided to open a "private enterprise." She explained the differing effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union on men and women by telling a joke. It was about a foreigner who visits Ukraine and compliments the host on his wife, so beautiful and articulate. Then he eats a wonderful meal and the foreigner says: You have a talented cook. The man says: Yes, my wife. And then the man's three beautiful children come in, one works, one studies and one is still in school. And the foreigner says: You must have a nanny to raise your children. And the man says: Yes, my wife. Then he invites the foreigner to the dacha and they drive there in a nice car. The foreigner says: You must have another source of income to be able to afford such a car. The man says: Yes, my wife. She works full time. They get at the dacha and the foreigner says: What beautiful flowers and vegetables. You have a talented gardener. And the man replies: Yes, my wife. The foreigner is beside himself and thinks that it is impossible that his wife can do all this and says: Your wife is beautiful, is a wonderful cook, raises three kids, works full time, and gardens in the dacha? I have decided what souvenir I want to bring back to my country, a Ukrainian wife! Zhanna nodded her head laughing. And yet, she said:

And yet it is true that women are not valued there. I tell you truthfully, look even now with all that has happened in our country. When it was difficult times with work, many, many institutions of higher learning were closed down. Men lost their jobs—women also lost their jobs—but women are more tenacious more enterprising, understand. Each in his own way does what he is able to do. Women baked cakes to sell, went to the collective farms to buy vegetables and then brought potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers to the city to sell at the bazaar. This is a tragedy, you understand. Imagine putting an American in a Russian woman's place with a husband who still loves to eat, sit on the couch and watch TV! And yet he still commands: "Hurry up! Where is dinner? I don't understand why this isn't done and that isn't done." The men fall into a real depression but the women of course, because they are mothers, they work their way out of it and find a way.

Zhanna continued explaining when men lost their jobs, they drank, but when women lost their jobs, they made one up. "While the men drank," Zhanna said, "my mother and I organized other mothers who had to feed their children into a sewing cooperative." The rule was that each woman had to have her own sewing machine. They worked with leather goods and Zhanna traveled to Kyiv and even Russia to buy quality leather. They also sewed clothes and Zhanna went to Turkey to buy cloth. Zhanna declared, "There is no fashion in the United States, none whatsoever! But in Odessa," Zhanna explained, "women always dressed beautifully. Even if at home there was nothing to eat, your clothes were always beautiful and fashionable: beautiful shoes, beautiful dresses, our women are like

this.” Therefore Zhanna’s business was doing well, “enough to live on.” But then, Zhanna said, the possibility to leave appeared and they “did not want to lose this opportunity, this chance.”

Zhanna’s husband, Viktor, has two sisters, one older and one younger. His younger sister, Ivana, married a Ukrainian Jew who later developed lung cancer. His family was already in San Francisco as Jewish refugees and they wanted him to come to San Francisco and receive treatment in the United States. So Ivana left for San Francisco with her sick husband and young child. Unfortunately Ivana’s husband died of cancer five months later. Before he died, Ivana did the paperwork that made it possible for the whole family, including her brother Viktor, to leave for California. According to Zhanna, Ivana was an architect with a degree from a prestigious school, however in California she found herself “cleaning toilets” and this was “very hard on her morale.” Ivana wanted someone to come and watch her son while she studied English and looked for other work so Zhanna’s mother-in-law left for San Francisco. Yet, she returned to Ukraine after only a few months because her husband, Zhanna’s father-in-law, became ill. Ivana then asked Zhanna and Viktor to come to San Francisco. Zhanna says they were surprised because they had not seriously thought about going to the United States. They felt they were too old to leave their home and besides they needed to help care for Viktor’s father. They decided instead that their nephew with his wife and child would go to San Francisco to help Ivana. A year later Viktor’s father died and his mother joined Ivana in San Francisco. Zhanna stayed in Ukraine and continued to live in a small apartment with her son, daughter, and granddaughters. In fact, Zhanna said, they did not make use of their documents for five years because they lived “normal” in Ukraine:

How normal? We all worked. My son studied at university in economics and had a very good department he finished in banking matters, operation of international currency and he knew English perfectly. He was the best student in his class at university. He created a plan for himself to live in Ukraine and we thought he had a good future there.

It was not until I had sat in the kitchen for three and half hours, tasted the cabbage she was preparing for dinner, and suggested a tad more salt, that I finally got the story about why, after five years, in 2000 they decided to leave Ukraine. Zhanna had gone on at great length about how intelligent and talented Tolya was. He completed his university degree in economics at the top of his class and then started graduate school. Zhanna remained in Odessa because it seemed Tolya would have a “bright future” in Ukraine and she did not want to uproot him. According to Zhanna, when the documents finally arrived for her son to leave, the director of the university said, “What are you doing? You are taking away a future economics minister from Ukraine!” Yet Zhanna felt she was doing the right thing:

If you are going to have kids, you have to give them everything. You can deprive yourself of something or even lose yourself but give everything to your child so that then you will not have problems in your old age. You won’t have shame in front of your children, isn’t it like that? If you are not

able to do this, then it's better if you don't have kids and that is what I think. That means in my life I have deprived myself of many things because my salary was not enough to give my kids all that I wanted. I wanted to give them always more, give them better knowledge.

Zhanna felt that now she had to give her son America. Zhanna's priest also told her not to go that her "soul would not find sustenance in America." Yet Zhanna had reason to believe that Tolya's soul and perhaps his physical life was in danger in Ukraine. Zhanna said with great sadness, "Ukraine has become a bandit state."

While Tolya continued his graduate studies, he also became finance director of an important firm in Odessa. Zhanna recounted that there were multiple firms trying to close a contract with a particular client, but it was Tolya's company that succeeded in signing the contract. Zhanna said that Tolya had just left the house to go to work and she happened to look out the window and saw two expensive foreign cars with tinted windows on the street. Two men wearing sunglasses stepped out and Zhanna watched in horror as the men forced Tolya into one of the cars and sped off. Zhanna was beside herself with terror and called Tolya's boss right away. Tolya's boss said, "Oh God, I know who they are. Don't worry!" and hung up. It turned out these men brought Tolya to a remote place and wanted to know the details of how his firm got the contract, how much it was for, and what would it take for them to get the contract themselves. They beat Tolya but Tolya's boss knew who they were and who to call and they let him go. Zhanna wondered:

But what if he didn't know who to call? Tolya has never in his life accepted a bribe or done anything illegal but after this—I am speaking to you honestly—I thought it was only a matter of time before someone dragged him off the right path and he would be hurt, not just physically but in his soul. I said, "Tolya, you know what? We are going to leave. We are not going to wait for you to finish graduate school or for someone to hurt you. We have this opportunity for you and we are going to take it."

Zhanna's daughter Ruslana, was sad to lose her mother and the help Zhanna provided as a grandmother to her two daughters. Ruslana, Zhanna assured me, understood why she had to go. Zhanna said matter-of-factly, "Do you think that this wasn't also dangerous for my daughter and for my grandchildren? Who was going to protect them when these bandits are on their way to Tolya?"

Zhanna emphasized that they are not refugees in San Francisco but came as part of family reunification joining Viktor and his family. Zhanna wanted her mother to come with them but she refused and Zhanna concluded that maybe in the end it was for the best. Zhanna said, "Now I work with these elderly people and coming here at that age is a psychological tragedy for them." Once in San Francisco, Tolya who already spoke "beautiful, elegant, literary English" before migrating, had few problems completing some college courses and earning a finance industry exam certificate. He now works for an auditing company in San Francisco where "he is the only Russian-speaker" and he earns "big money." Zhanna explained that everything worked out for Tolya, except that they ended up

with a “divided family.” Also, Zhanna said expressively, he is 34 and still single. “When Svitlana told me she was sending a nice Italian girl to talk to me about our Ukraine I asked right away: Is she married? To bad because I see we understand each other.” She jumped out of her chair, “Oh my cabbage! Taste it now, better?”

Zhanna’s mother died three years ago. When she was alive Zhanna sent money to Ukraine for her care and her operations. Zhanna exclaimed, “The older generation, they were abandoned by the government to die! This is awful! They don’t have money for medicine and you have to pay bribes to the doctors or they will not look at these sick people! Oh, they are left to die.” Zhanna said she sent \$10,000 all together for her mother’s care. Zhanna has tried incessantly to convince her daughter Ruslana to bring her family to San Francisco but she refuses saying they have all they need there. Zhanna says she does not send Ruslana money because her husband is a sailor for a foreign company that brings oil to America and earns well. Zhanna is now trying to convince her oldest granddaughter, who is just starting university and is studying foreign languages including English, to come to San Francisco to study.

Zhanna understands why her daughter refused to come. Zhanna said, “When I got here, I did not know I could hurt so much.” Zhanna exclaimed that even with her out-going and open personality, when she first arrived she was “in shock:” she did not like anything in San Francisco. The houses seemed fake, “like a theater” and the whole city seemed closed. She never saw anyone walking on the street except on Geary Boulevard where “our Russian people walk.” Other Russian-speaking immigrants told Zhanna she was “depressed” and should go on welfare. But Zhanna answered that she was not used to that:

When we lived there, none of us knew what depression was, you know. There you had to survive. You had to work. You had to think about your family. I never had time there to think about “stress.” Every once in a while you took a little valerian, maybe a little something else, and then you worked and you addressed your problems.

The is the best cure for depression, according to Zhanna, is to work. By her second week in San Francisco she was in the IHSS office saying: “Give me the most difficult and the sickest people you have.” Zhanna said, “I need to work with people. I need to see grateful eyes. I need to do some good for people. This is what I am used to.” Zhanna took on four different clients right away and worked every day from 7am to 9pm. Over time, one of these four clients was given more and more hours so Zhanna eventually left her other three clients and now works full time caring for Vera. Zhanna is completely enmeshed with the goings on of this family.

Vera, is 45 and she is now no longer able to walk, speak, or feed herself. She began to experience the debilitating effects of multiple sclerosis at age 35. Vera’s husband, unable to deal with the disease, left her with two children. Vera’s mother, Nina, works full time and does the best she can with two teenage grandchildren. Zhanna has been with this family for seven years. She is there Monday through Friday. She is paid to work 8.5 hours a day but she stays for 10

since her husband drops her off in the morning on his way to work and then picks her up in the evening on his way home. IHSS sends another woman to care for Vera on the weekend. Zhanna went into the details of Vera's children's lives proudly declaring that the older daughter is in college on the East Coast while the son, who Zhanna worried about terribly because he had "fallen in with the wrong crowd," is now back on track since Zhanna convinced his father to send him to military school. Zhanna said the children spoke almost no Russian when she first started and now they speak quite well. The kids tell Zhanna that they love her like a second mother. Zhanna showed me countless pictures of the children, looking at them lovingly. Zhanna explained that in Ukraine she lived with her grandchildren and did absolutely everything for them. When she no longer had her grandchildren Zhanna felt that she had "all this love to give," so she gave it to Vera's children. Zhanna says she did the right thing and has the "good results" to prove it. Zhanna says that some people do this work by putting in their hours and nothing else interests them. Zhanna says the woman who cares for Vera on the weekend comes, does her work, and leaves as quickly as she can, but she is "one of those who has depression:"

And I know so many so have this depression. I think depression is an illness of the lazy to tell you the truth. You just have to be occupied with something, you have to be involved with people and live other people's problems not just your own.

Zhanna says she was not able to do carework "half way." She was not able to "close her heart" and Zhanna noted that the results were not only good for Vera's children, but for herself:

This was also medicine for me, positively. Maybe I too would have had depression, I would have missed my granddaughters too much because the love you have for children, your family, it is so strong. But I am here and I helped these kids. I gave them all the love I would have given to my granddaughters. And I too have received from them. I have received respect, and love, and affection, and everything. Understand?

My interviews in San Francisco were filled with longings to be a grandmother and for many this seemed out of reach either because grandchildren were left in Ukraine or because children in California adopted the late childbearing norms of educated, middle-class Americans. Informants often wondered out loud if their children were "waiting to have kids until they would need to put pampers on me and the baby." For yet others, their children followed American norms of privacy and childrearing keeping *babushki* and their "old fashioned advice" at arms length.

Zhanna says that she sometimes goes to the union meetings that Svitlana organizes. There they say:

"Zhanna so you cannot do this. You undermine our credibility. You should only occupy yourself with the woman you are paid to care for.

Why are you doing anything with these kids? What for?" I say, "Well they are just children. It is not their fault that they are left we can say without a mother considering that she is like a doll and does not remember anything. And here we have to work with a conscience."

Zhanna says at the union meetings they think she is "crazy." Vera has a dog. He is an old dog and the "children love him like crazy" and he needs to eat and go for a walk so Zhanna cares for him too. And then there is a cat and the cat too needs to eat and Zhanna says she loves cats. "What am I supposed to do? Not feed the cat?" Zhanna has found a way to be a *babushka* in San Francisco and this has proven to be of vital importance to her.

In many ways Vera's family is Zhanna's anchor in California. But Zhanna is very aware that she will live in San Francisco and the search for community was important to her. Zhanna explained that she is from Odessa and people have a temperament similar to Italians, something she felt I could relate to given my cultural background. "We are emotional and communicative; we care deeply and we live closely." Zhanna exclaimed, "Half the city was my friend and has been to my house for dinner." But San Francisco is different. Zhanna knew that at her age, she would never learn English and would not have American friends, but she was unprepared for how tricky it would be to find other Russian-speaking friends. On the one hand, she found that the animosity between Western and Eastern Ukrainians was much less in San Francisco than inside Ukraine or what I found to be the case in Italy. Zhanna explained that language, whether you speak Ukrainian or Russian in your family, was a big issue. She noted that Western Ukrainians she met in Odessa would not even consider her Ukrainian because she speaks Russian but, "Here it doesn't happen. Oh, you are from Ukraine? *Rodnoi, Rodnoi, Rodnoi* (meaning compatriot or person from the same country)." Zhanna explained that in Kharkiv or Odessa people hear that Yanukovych is for the Russian language and they vote for him right away. In San Francisco, however, "we are mostly all for Yushchenko here. It doesn't matter if you are from Odessa, Kharkiv, or L'viv." According to Zhanna, Ukraine has "big problems" to talk about and she asserts that the "in which language we talk about them" is the least of their troubles.

If the divisions between Western and Eastern Ukrainians are less salient among immigrants to San Francisco, divisions between migration waves runs deep between these post-Soviet immigrants and both the Third wave, WWII era Ukrainian immigrants along with their descendents called collectively "Diaspora Ukrainians" and what Zhanna and others called the "Old Russians" (*stariye rooskiye*). This was a common theme among informants in San Francisco. "Old Russians," Zhanna explained, are those who left during the Russian Revolution. Since the "Old Russians" arrived first, most Russian-speaking organizations in San Francisco were founded by this previous migration wave. Zhanna explained that Old Russians "do not look at us with respect." She felt that Old Russians believe they came to the United States for lofty moral reasons and convictions while the post-Soviet immigrants are economic immigrants, money being a crass reason to leave one's homeland according to Old Russians. Zhanna continued that Old Russians "do not love America." Their children do not assimilate since they

still speak Russian and get married “among themselves” while “our children,” those of the new arrivals, “become Americans.”

Zhanna and others I spoke with translated the divisions between migration waves via the religious landscape of San Francisco’s churches. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, while appealing to a small set of recent migrants, was generally poorly attended. Like the UGCCs in Rome, it was interested in teaching Ukrainians about being “Ukrainian” and was concerned with Ukraine’s nation-building project. Yet this found few recruits in San Francisco who tended to see the UGCC as a place for Ukrainian-Americans. Visits to San Francisco’s Ukrainian Orthodox Church revealed a similarly small crowd with an elderly congregation and a handful of second and third generation families. They offered a buffet lunch and I asked three people in line as we waited for our meal and no one even knew the priest’s name. I later spoke with the priest, a kind, elderly man, who was completely disconnected from any concerns recent immigrants might have. He was much more interested in issues such as getting The Great Famine of 1939 recognized as genocide against ethnic Ukrainians. Zhanna could not fathom why anyone would waste their time arguing about hungry people then when there are people in Ukraine who are hungry now. Diaspora Ukrainians and their children, however, saw this as vital both as a way to gain international recognition that Ukrainians are indeed a separate ethnic group from Russians and as a way to create moral distance from the Soviet past where Ukraine is seen as a victim rather than an actor. A second generation parishioner at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Oleg said that he felt that his parents and Ukrainian immigrants of that WWII generation had made many sacrifices to preserve Ukrainian language and culture and fight for Ukraine’s freedom. Then in 1991, when Ukraine became independent, the Ukrainian community eagerly welcomed a new wave of immigrants and yet Oleg feels they are “opportunists” that behave “like the Russians we worked so hard to liberate them from.” Oleg explained that “new arrivals are ‘Ukrainians’ when they want services from our organizations, and are ‘Russians’ when speaking with others.” He continued, “They anger us by speaking Russian at our functions and they come without paying for tickets” which, Oleg contended, “They can afford. Just look at how they are dressed!” At the same time he lamented that “our Ukrainian organizations are dying out and going broke.” However, recent immigrants like Zhanna felt unwelcome in Ukrainian Diaspora and Old Russian organizations.

Zhanna explained that Tolya studied Ukrainian and speaks it “beautifully” but she is not conversant in Ukrainian and never once spoke of the “Ukrainian community.” In the reality of present day Ukraine where most of the population prefers Russian to Ukrainian, this does not make her any less Ukrainian in her mind. Zhanna says she loves to go to the large Russian Orthodox Church on Geary Boulevard. “This was our Church in exile!” She used to attend one of San Francisco’s other Russian Orthodox Churches and said that the priest called her and all the new immigrants “communists.” Zhanna could barely control her outrage:

I said, “Well who are you?” The priest said, “I came from *Russia*, you all are *Soviet* and come from communist countries, and we don’t want to speak with you.” I said, “If I am a communist then you are a fascist! How did you come here?” He answered it is none of my business how he arrived. I answered, “And you know nothing about how I arrived or why.” And I said, “I don’t want to speak with Old Russians because your parents and grandparents abandoned their country when they should have stayed and fought for her. We had to live for 70 years with what you Old Russians left us!” I said, “If you didn’t abandon your country and your king and fought against the revolution then maybe the revolution wouldn’t have succeeded and we wouldn’t have had to live 75 years under all those regimes: Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, then there was Chernenko, then there was the KGB man, what is his name [Andropov], then Gorbachev, Yeltsin... Every time everything changed! Every time the economy collapsed and there was no money and the people scrapped bottom!

Zhanna banged the table in disbelief at how a priest of all people could say such a thing. Other people could be “ignorant” but a priest? She felt that his job was to “create connections” and “foster love” between all people from the region. Zhanna’s scowl gave way to her customarily boisterous self. She announced, “That is why I like the church on Geary. They send a new priest every two years so he doesn’t have time to learn these things.” Zhanna said that she went to San Francisco’s Russian Center a couple of nights but it is really “for Old Russians, not for them.” Zhanna said, “They are not interested in us. We are more interested in them. They keep their distance and do not want to converse with us.” Zhanna laughed that she thought “assimilation” would be a big problem for her. But “assimilating” in the “Russian-speaking community” was the real issue. But now Zhanna says, she has a “women’s collective here. Of course it not the same as the friends back home.” Under the Soviet Union, Zhanna says she and her friends in Odessa depended on each other for survival. “Friendship needs to be cultivated during hard times. If you do not help each other through hard times, then friendship remains superficial.”

This is why, Zhanna says, her connection to Vera’s children is so strong. “How much harder of a time could a *babushka* have then leaving her grandchildren? And how much harder of a time could children have than to lose a mother slowly over time like this?” Zhanna noted that America had changed her. She became a “homecare worker,” a job she never thought she would do. She became an “immigrant,” a “Russian” and even a “communist”—“I had to come to America to become a communist!” And yet Zhanna did bridge the divide between migration waves in becoming a *babushka* to Vera’s children. Of all her new identities, this was the most important one of all.

### **Halyna: Undocumented in Exodus**

At 56, Mycola made me smile when I opened the door to his apartment and found him at about 5'2" with a buzz cut, moustache, and wearing an oversized plaid button down and calf length jean "rapper" pants with the wide pant-leg and a chain that secured his wallet in his back pocket to the front belt hook. Mycola was animated, smiled a lot, and struck me as having a sunny disposition as he showed me around his apartment. Mycola was a painter and his apartment walls were covered with his artwork. Some was very traditional, Ukrainian churches snuggled in a surrounding wood or flowers in green fields, but others more fantastical like a portrait of his daughter in jeans shot through with Cupid's arrows and the wind blowing through her hair. Mycola arrived to Chicago about 10 years earlier. He explained that he grew up in an orphanage in Kyiv, finished art institute, and then joined the army where he was stationed in Germany and traveled to many countries. Mycola found a Ukrainian organization that sponsored Ukrainian artists but upon arriving to Chicago he found himself working in construction with Polish immigrants instead. He had never done construction work before but said he learned quickly: electricity, plastering walls, putting down parquets and more. "Everything Americans do not want to do, I can do," Mycola announced.

Mycola did not like the Ukrainian community in Chicago which he said had few recent immigrants and he found it difficult to connect with those from earlier waves. He had a friend in San Francisco and moved to the city. He worked in construction and also provided care to the elderly since those hours are "more flexible" and give him more time for his art. Mycola explained:

I was earning good money in construction but what is the point if you do not do something for your soul? In the United States you live well economically but your soul suffers. To be an artist you must be happy and have lightness in your soul. This is difficult here. Ukrainians here think only about money—work and money. But an artist must live life not just go to work and come home but live for the soul, be in nature, understand?

I asked about his experiences as a caregiver but he was only interested in talking about it in terms of what it allowed him to do, namely paint. He did say that the work was not difficult for him since he loved to cook which is also a "creative act." I was not expecting a meal, our meeting was at 1pm, but Mycola pointed to the pots on the stove and declared that it was already prepared. We continued over an amazing dinner he had prepared and I found myself looking at artwork, talking about politics, and doing the best I could to get Mycola to share information about his family life over a delicious vegetable borshch with sour cream, a rich soup, followed by holubtsi, wonderful rolls of cabbage stuffed with ground beef and rice, that his girlfriend Halyna had made.

Mycola has two daughters, 23 and 26. He said that when he became a US citizen, he invited both daughters to come but his oldest daughter has always been "timid" and was married already and now has two children and did not want to leave Ukraine. She

works as a cartographer using computer imaging to produce maps digitally. Her husband works in construction. Mycola said that they do not earn much money but they were lucky because, after the Soviet Union collapsed, they were able to hold on to their apartment. Mycola says he used to send her money but not anymore. He does not send money to Ukraine at all repeating what most informants said, “They do not give money away here either and it is expensive to live here too.” Mycola’s younger daughter came to San Francisco three years ago, met a Ukrainian man, married, moved to Sacramento and already has a child. Mycola is rarely in contact with his daughter in Ukraine and does not see his daughter in Sacramento much. He continued on at great length about how terrible it is that Americans put their elderly in nursing homes or pay other people to care for them. He insisted that one should be surrounded by family and grandchildren in old age; this is the way it is in Ukrainian culture. I asked if he thought he would live with his daughter in Sacramento when the time came that he needed care. He replied that he did not now what would happen to him but he was positive he would not live with his daughter. Mycola seemed to have a fantasy about an active family life that he did not have. Mycola and his wife divorced when the girls were young and, from what I could understand, he little contact with them growing up.

Mycola rents an art studio space and has been producing work he hopes to sell in Ukraine. While he has not been back to Ukraine in the past decade, he has plans on going to Ukraine this year. He has friends in Kyiv and L’viv and Mycola hopes he will be able to find a way to sell his artwork. Mycola explained as he served me blini, thin pancakes filled with a fresh blueberry sauce for dessert, “I think that you work for your family until you’re 50, and then it is time that you work for yourself. My art, that is for me.” I was simply too full to try the two kinds of homemade bread he had made, one with poppy seeds and one with apples, and he gave me a slice of each to take home. He also sent me with an invitation to return the following weekend to meet Halyna.

The following week, with Mycola’s wonderful appreciation for cooking in mind, I arrived to his apartment with homemade cookies. Halyna was shocked that I had made them since she did not think Americans baked or cooked anything at all. “Biscotti!” she exclaimed. Halyna looked a youthful 53 with her straight blonde hair pulled back from her face in a low ponytail. She completed L’viv University with a degree in chemistry and worked as a high school chemistry teacher in a medium-sized city outside L’viv where she taught for 25 years.

Halyna was one of only three people in my sample of 41 who was in California without family. The strong connection she has to her 28 year-old daughter, Anna, and almost eight year-old granddaughter, Nataalka, could not have been more different from Mycola’s relationship with his daughters. I thought it ironic that Mycola barely saw the daughter he was able to bring to California while Halyna was in constant contact with a daughter she was desperate to have join her in California with no obvious way for how to make that happen.

We sat at Mycola’s kitchen table with tea and cookies to speak while Mycola went about his business in other parts of the apartment. Halyna repeatedly said that Anna did not want her to go to California and is waiting for her to return. Halyna’s greatest sadness is for her granddaughter with whom she had spoken just the day before. Halyna recounted:

I speak with Natalka on the phone very often, at least once a week if not two. Just yesterday she said, “Baba (diminutive of grandmother), come home. Mama is at work and I have to stay with other (*chuzhoi*) people. It would be better if you were home. You could pick me up from school and we would be together.” Natalka stays with a neighbor now after school.

The pain of not being present as a grandmother for Natalka and a help for Anna was constantly with her. Halyna’s daughter Anna graduated from L’viv University in the Philology with a focus on English. She works for an important newspaper for the L’viv oblast but, according to Halyna, she “works a lot and is paid little,” \$50-60 dollars a month. Anna’s husband also finished university in economics. He worked as a tax inspector but when Yushchenko came to power—“of course we were all very happy Yushchenko came to power”—but Yushchenko “brought his own poeple” as is “to be expected” leaving her son-in-law unemployed for the past two years. Halyna continued:

Hopefully he will be able to find another job in his field, I don’t know. He has been working so we are lucky. He has not abandoned his responsibilities. He has a friends who started a business selling cars in Poland. It is very difficult now at the Polish border but my son-in-law drives a truck and is carrying cars back and forth across the border. This is the way it is, Cinzia. You have to support your family somehow.

I asked Halyna what made her decide to come to California. Halyna explained that her father became ill and they could not afford to pay to have the surgeries he needed done. She also wanted to help her daughter build a home in L’viv’s periphery which she says costs less than buying an apartment in L’viv proper where you still would have to contend with L’viv’s water problems. I recalled the interviews I conducted in people’s apartments in L’viv where bath tubs and buckets were filled with water to hold them over until the next time water was turned back on in their part of the city. Halyna thought she would try to go to Italy like most of her friends and acquaintances. However a friend who had recently moved to Sacramento as a Baptist refugee told Halyna that she would sponsor her to come to California and Halyna felt that it was an “opportunity” that she could not refuse. Halyna arrived in San Francisco and decided to overstay her visa. Halyna said:

Everyone went abroad then. From just my school I would say 10 teachers went abroad. They abandoned everything and went. But most people went to Italy or Spain. Very few people came here to the United States because it is very difficult to come here if you are Ukrainian and not Jewish. I only have one friend who ended up in the United States.

Halyna shrugged her shoulders joking that “all of Ukraine went to Italy” and she ended up in “America.” “No one is jealous if you go to Italy,” Halyna explained, “but if you say you are going to America ...hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo!” Halyna’s head danced and she whistled to indicate that you were a “hot shot” if you went to

“America.” Halyna’s mouth smiled but her were eyes were sad as she explained that her daughter was not impressed:

Anna did not want me to come here because she says it is too far. Those who go to Europe they can sit on a bus and go home. Every day she tells me to come home but I have hopes that I can get a green card. Many people get it and then she can come here. She studied English philology. My dream is that I can do this for her and Nataalka...I am a patriot. I voted for Yushchenko even from here. But it will be a long time before the government will allow its people to support themselves. I wish it was possible for me to live there. Here material life is better, but for my soul I wish I could live there. It is bad economic times in Ukraine and everyone has left so they can help their children.

Halyna noted, “The first year here I sent \$8,000 home. I would send \$300 or \$500 at a time. Now already I send less; before I sent more.” Halyna’s remittances have decreased because her father passed away last year and she no longer needs to send money for his care. But she also sends fewer remittances because she has more expenses in San Francisco. When Halyna first arrived, she worked as a live-in for “very bad people.” She made a friend at church who helped her leave this family after five months and she went to work in another family of Ukrainian Jews with a 6 year-old daughter and an elderly mother to care for. Halyna said the relationship in this family was good and she stayed a year and a half. Now, however, she has her own apartment. She is unable to care for clients through IHSS since she is undocumented but she hopes that she will receive her green card she will be able to work for IHSS where she feels workers are “more protected,” you have health care, and you “work for the US government.” Currently Halyna works full time caring for an elderly woman who is from Ukraine but arrived to California in the 1950s. Halyna was studying English and just started a course for her CNA. “I have finally accepted that I will never be a chemistry teacher here!” she exclaimed laughing.

I did not push Halyna for more information about her documents since she clearly did not want to discuss it especially with the recorder on. There was nothing I could see in our conversation, however, that suggested that she would be able to apply for a green card unless she married Mycola. Despite being undocumented, Halyna’s life did not have the unsettled and often frantic air of those in Italy. Halyna voted during the Orange Revolution elections for Yushchenko and kept up with news in Ukraine. Halyna was Ukrainophone but said she understood that if you are Russian (*rossiyanin*) you want to speak Russian but “you must learn Ukrainian if you want to live in Ukraine just as I must learn English in I want to live in the United States.” Nonetheless, Halyna did not experience a painful connection to Ukraine’s nation-building project like those in exile. She was most concerned with her local situation: work, English classes, and exploring ways to bring Anna and her family to San Francisco. I asked Halyna how she explained to Anna that she was staying in San Francisco. Halyna sighed heavily with great sadness and replied:

I am single. My husband and I divorced long ago but my daughter is married. She has her husband. She has her own family. Before I left everything was good. I watched the baby while Anna worked and Mama Halyna cooked for everybody. For three and half years we did this. Of course Anna had fewer obligations when I was home. But now I have been gone almost four years and she has gotten used to running the house without me. Mama Halyna sent money so it wasn't so bad! (Laughs) Of course materially life is better for them now. What can you do? For me everything is fine so far except I miss them so very much. Maybe they will win a green card and come here. (Laughs) I don't know. This is our life, Cinzia.

Halyna had Anna and her son-in-law both apply for the green card lottery. "So many win their green card, why not them?" Halyna asked. The promise of exodus is alluring. While other informants waited for the chain of family reunification to arrive at the point where they could offer a green card to their loved ones, Halyna struggled with how to become the first link in the chain for her family. In the meantime, she lived a life focused on integrating into her local context on the assumption that she will somehow be able to stay in California.

### **Exile and Exodus: Transposable Concepts**

The immigration literature is fragmented with studies typically focusing either on sending countries or on receiving countries. Studies that focus on sending countries are usually interested in the causes of migration asking the question: why do people move? Studies that focus on receiving countries are usually concerned with the consequences of immigration such as what happens to immigrants after they arrive and how do they affect the receiving country. These studies tend to think about the effects of immigration in terms of economic or political incorporation with the production of migrant subjectivities largely ignored. Furthermore, when it comes to migrant domestic workers, the academic field is further divided between gender scholars and migration scholars with migration studies largely conceding this particular group of migrants to scholars of gender.

An analysis of exile vs. exodus provides a way to move beyond this fragmentation. Contexts of reception is important for understanding immigrant outcomes as well as the migrant subjectivities produced in migration. However sending contexts are also important, not simply as background that situates a case of migration, but as a factor that affects the lives of migrants in the receiving country. After all, it seems reasonable to assume that why people migrant and the types of discourses and practices deployed both in relation to the receiving country and the country of origin are connected. The concepts of exile and exodus highlight the migration pattern that is produced in the intersection between sending and receiving contexts so that the sending country is not a control variable with uniform affects but produces different effects depending on the receiving country.

#### **Comparing Receiving Sites vs. Comparing Migration Patterns**

In chapter one I referred to Parreñas's study on Filipina domestic workers. She finds that Filipinas in Rome and Los Angeles share a similar experience of migration and live "parallel lives" despite the prediction of immigration scholars that since the contexts of reception of different, Filipina migrants should have divergent outcomes. To explain her finding, Parreñas sets the immigration literature aside. Instead, following cues from studies of gender that see women domestic workers as a special category with shared experiences of work, Parreñas constructs women, migrant domestic workers as a universal category that, due to a similar subordinate position in global capitalism, also have a shared experience of migration. While evidence from this study of Ukrainian domestic workers does not support her argument, Parreñas does provide an important first attempt to bring together the literatures on immigration and domestic work by focusing on the migration experiences of migrant domestic workers rather than solely the work experiences of migrant domestic workers. Nevertheless, Parreñas missed an opportunity to connect sending and receiving contexts. The analytical framework of exile and exodus suggest that the answer to the puzzle Parreñas poses cannot be that contexts of reception do not matter, but rather that sending contexts do matter. While studying

Filipina domestic workers in Italy and California is a comparison between two receiving sites, they represent one migration pattern—exile.

### **The Philippine State and Exile**

The Philippines is an important case in migration studies and the paradigmatic case of women-led migration in the literature. Much of what we know about women migrants is influenced by the Philippine case. In her book, *Migrants for Export: How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World*, Robyn Rodriguez (2010) presents the highly rationalized and bureaucratized management of emigration by the Philippine state. Rodriguez argues that the state produces workers for export—one might think of this as exile—through a centralized, state-run process for exit, what she calls the “bureaucratic assembly line.” In fact, workers are the Philippines’ most lucrative export (Rodriguez 2002). According to Rodriguez, the Philippine state is entrepreneurial, brokering labor deals for temporary labor migration with receiving states around the globe while discouraging and preventing permanent migration. She argues that family separation is a deliberate strategy of the Philippine state to keep migrants and their remittances tied to the Philippines. In fact, state bureaucracies are so efficient at extracting remittances that, in cases where a family in the Philippines feels their relative abroad is not sending enough money, the family may seek aid from government offices who have various bureaucratic strategies to compel migrants to remit more of their wages (Rodriguez 2002, 2010).

Emigration is not only managed bureaucratically at home but also abroad through a web of overseas offices and consulates that offer citizenship rights to Filipinos abroad as part of the state promotion of “Global Philippine citizenship” while also enforcing the obligations of citizenship (Rodriguez 2002, 2010). This system, along with nationalist discursive tools that cast emigrants as national heroes, is a way for the state to manage or discipline its emigrants and to keep economic resources flowing into the Philippines (Constable 1997; Rodriguez 2002). In fact, the Ramos government replaced the official term for migrant laborers from “Overseas Contract Workers” to “Overseas Filipino Investors” (Oishi 2005; Rodriguez 2010). There is nothing subtle about the state’s program of labor export as a development strategy. Emigrants are seen by the state as “investors” in the Philippines’ development through remittances but also as the nation’s representatives abroad, ambassadors who, through their exemplary behavior, attract foreign investors to the country (Constable 1997; Rodriguez 2010). Therefore the Philippine state produces migrant subjects for export, aggressively channels their remittances, and then celebrates them as heroes sacrificing for the greater good of their country and nation. Considering the role of the Philippine state in the production of migrant subjects for export as domestic workers abroad, it is of little surprise that Parreñas found similar migrant subjects in Italy and California. Studies of Philippine migration suffer from the same fragmentation between sending and receiving contexts that characterizes the immigration literature more broadly. As a result, the influence of the Philippine sending context in the receiving sites of Filipina domestic workers has been underestimated.

One may wonder if the interaction of Ukraine and Italy and Ukraine and California produces divergence, then does the interaction of the Philippines with Italy and

the Philippines with California produce sameness? After all my argument up until now is that sending contexts have differential effects depending on the receiving site. The answer does indeed lie in the particular relationship between sending and receiving country. Rarely do sending and receiving sites exercise equal influence over the structural and discursive reality of a migration pattern. In the case of Philippine migration, the Philippine state has such tight control over the migration pattern that it dominates the migration pattern to both Italy and California.

Ukraine has a weak state with little bureaucratic control over its emigrants. Nevertheless, Ukraine does exert influence over the migration pattern of exile and exodus as we have seen. In the case of exile to Italy, Ukraine and this migration pattern are mutually constitutive. Italy, as the receiving context, is certainly important in shaping the migration experiences of Ukrainian migrants, but it was gendered processes of economic transformation and Ukrainian nationalism that exerted greater influence in exile. In the case of exodus, the opposite is true. While the sending context is certainly important in exodus and shapes the possible modes of integration recognizable to Ukrainian immigrants, but it is the context of reception in California that exerts greater influence in exodus. This is only made visible through the perspective of global ethnography where sending and receiving sites are studied in relation to each other within a larger context of historical, national, and global processes.

## Methodological Appendix

I quickly decided on a cross national comparison for this project because I believed, and still do believe, that comparing two different migration patterns would force me to highlight migration as a central theme for a literature on domestic workers in which issues of migration are poorly integrated. The original project design did not include research in the sending country or what I believed at the time would be multiple sending countries in the former Soviet Union. While there is a growing recognition that post-Soviet countries have taken radically different trajectories since the collapse of the Soviet Union, many Western scholars who study the region still tend to think of peoples from the region as more or less the same and perceive distinctions between nationalities as relatively insignificant given the processes of homogenization in their Soviet past. I too ascribed to this view at the start of this project thinking distinctions between migrant domestic workers from the region would be slight, but it did not take much time in Rome to disabuse me of this assumption.

### Choosing the Research Sites

I discovered that Italy and California were indeed the two key receiving sites of Ukrainian migrants after 1989 (see Chapter 1), but only once my research was underway. Personal experiences and resources as well as my sociological intuition are what first led me to begin exploring Italy and California as possible comparative research sites.

#### *Following the road to Rome*

Family trips regularly brought me to Northern Italy where my mother-in-law had hired Dasha, woman from Moldova, as a live-in careworker to her mother. During a trip in 2000, Dasha told me that there were so many Moldovans caring for the Italian elderly in this small valley of 1,500 people that it warranted courier vans that came every week to shuttle goods and women between Italy and Moldova. These courier vans captured my sociological imagination. On my second day in graduate school at Berkeley, a faculty member asked me if I had any dissertation ideas yet. I was unprepared for the questions but felt I had to give some sort of an answer. I described Dasha's courier vans and said that I wanted to ride a van to understand post-Soviet migration. I tested out several other dissertation ideas, but I eventually returned to a variation on this one.

By 2004 I had found enough data suggesting that Italy was indeed a key receiving country for migrants from post-Soviet countries and I spent June of that year on an exploratory research visit. My goal was to confirm that I would be able to find the post-Soviet migrants indicated in the statistics and, if so, to pick the Italian city that would be my ethnographic field site. To that end I met with migration scholars in the sociology departments of the University of Trent and the University of Bologna including Carlo Ruzza, Bob Stone, Gianfranco Poggi, Francesca Decima, Giuseppe Sciortino, and Asher Colombo. While in Trent I met with the director of Trent's Caritas, ACLI and several other agencies that focus on domestic workers. Trentino, an autonomous and wealthy

region of Italy, had many projects on domestic workers underway paid for with EU funds and therefore was an anomalous place from which to study migrant domestic workers.

In Bologna Professor Decima helped me negotiate the ISTAT office to gain Italian migration statistics broken down by region. From this data and my meetings with Italian Scholars I learned three important things: First, the migration from the former Soviet Union was largely a Ukrainian (and secondarily a Moldovan) phenomenon. Second, this population was largely ignored by Italian migration scholars. This was because of the language barrier, the migration was so new that few women from the region spoke Italian, and because Italian scholars were just catching up with the recent migrations from North Africa. Third, I learned that I had to go to Rome. I was hoping to conduct my research in Bologna where I had spent a year on an exchange program as an undergraduate studying, of all things, Russian and Eastern European history at the University of Bologna. I had friends and contacts in Bologna that would make it a more comfortable research site. However, Bologna was a site where many specific and particular initiatives that focused on domestic workers were underway making generalizing from the case of domestic workers in Bologna to the rest of Italy as problematic as Trent. While Italy has regional differences and no one city is representative of the country, the consensus of Italian scholars was that Rome would be the best choice for this comparative study. The only dissenting voice was Victor Vzaslavski, a professor at Rome's private University, Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali (LUISS). He believed that if I had contacts in Bologna, that I should base my research there even if Rome was the more representative choice. He reasoned that Rome was big, I had not a single contact in Rome, he felt that without anyone to introduce me the population I was targeting, no one would speak with me. I appreciated his practical advice and, in light of my research experience in Rome, he almost turned out to be right.

In addition to Professor Vzaslavski, in Rome I met with Ferruccio Pastore. Pastore worked for a public policy institute that focused on migration. He was able to give me a sketch of the ethnic map of Rome. I headed to the Garbatella and Ostiense Station where Pastore indicated Ukrainians congregated to see for myself. At this point I was nervous that I would not be able to conduct the project because I spoke Russian, Italian, and English but not Ukrainian. I was relieved to learn, even from a short stint at the Garbatella, that I would have difficulty gaining entrée to this population, but it would not be language that prevented me from doing so. I continued to meet with many people in Rome: priests at the Russia Ecumenical Center and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, staff in Rome's ACLI offices and at various labor union offices such as CISL (Italian General Confederation of Labor), and in Catholic services such as Caritas, Comunità di Sant'Egidio and others. I left Italy convinced that the project was feasible and Rome was the most logical choice for my research site.

### *San Francisco by way of Los Angeles*

At the start of the project I thought that Los Angeles, a global city, would be the best comparison city in California to Rome. I spent three months during the summer of 2005 in Los Angeles. In-home Supportive Services (IHSS) in Los Angeles would not let me speak with IHSS staff much less give me any access to workers. I attended Ukrainian

Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, and Ukrainian Greek Catholic Churches and met with priests. However, as in San Francisco, the congregations were mostly Diaspora Ukrainians and not recent arrivals. Therefore, despite the willingness of priests and church workers, there were few referrals. All the challenges of conducting research with my population in San Francisco were exacerbated by LA sprawl. After three months in Los Angeles I had conducted only 12 interviews and the prospects for continued interviews seemed bleak. There was no compelling reason to insist on Los Angeles as my California research site and I decided to return to San Francisco where I already had connections through my previous project on Russian-speaking domestic workers. The LA interviews were useful in that they revealed similar findings to those in San Francisco, but I do not include them in the data for this project. While finding interviewees in San Francisco was more difficult than in Italy, over seven months I conducted 41 interviews with domestic workers. I was also able to embed those interviews in the context of meaningful ethnographic research which ultimately made San Francisco as a receiving site of this particular immigrant group more comparable to the research I conducted in Rome.

### *Riding the Bus to L'viv*

I did not return seriously to the idea of riding the migration circuit between Italy and Ukraine until I was well into my research. It became clear that I could not understand what was going on in my Rome or San Francisco sites without going to Ukraine. I rode the bus from Rome to L'viv with migrants returning to Ukraine to visit. Three months later I rode it back from Ukraine to Italy with migrants both returning to Italy and going for the first time to work. I have written about this bus ride elsewhere (Solari In press). L'viv was an obvious choice for my research site in Ukraine. While informants came from all over Ukraine, the vast majority of Ukrainians in Italy were from Western Ukraine and the L'viv Oblast or region in particular. Since I was looking for informants who identified as "Ukrainian," Western Ukrainians, for the reasons discussed in great detail in chapter 2, also make up the majority of my San Francisco sample. L'viv is not representative of Ukraine. However, it is the center of Galician nationalism which has a disproportionate affect on discourses of Ukrainian nationalism both inside Ukraine and abroad.

I had many contacts in L'viv before I even arrived. Some informants I met in Italy gave me contact information for their children and relatives in L'viv. A UGCC priest to whom I am very grateful organized a place for me to stay in a UGCC nunnery in L'viv's city center. I also went to L'viv in August when several key informants from Rome were in L'viv visiting family. This not only made the ethnographic experience richer, but I benefited greatly from invitations to their homes, close and sustained ties to their children, contacts to organizations and future interviewees, and even historical tours of the city.

### **Gaining Access**

Gaining access to informants could not have been more different in each of my three sites. However there were some constants. For example, I did not offer informants

payment for the interviews. I did, however, pay for the coffee or tea we had together if we met in a café. If we met at the informant's home or their client's home, I certainly could not arrive empty-handed and brought pastries or chocolates. Most interviews lasted anywhere from two hours to all day with interviews in San Francisco tending to be shorter, on average, than those conducted in Rome.

In Italy it took almost two months of laying the groundwork before I had my first recorded interview with a worker. I attended church services, spent time at the Garbatella, conducted interviews with priests, and spent countless hours in ACLI offices observing as domestic workers (very rarely someone from Ukraine) and employers came in for assistance. I met with the leaders of the Italo-Italian Christian Cultural Association (*Associazione Culturale Cristiana Italo-Ucraina*) which are in charge of organizing the Garbatella on Sundays. I volunteered at *Forum*, a Ukrainian and Russian newspaper and with the Association of Ukrainian Woman Workers run out of the same office. I even worked in a Caritas soup kitchen hoping to meet Ukrainian migrants with little luck.

Finally several things came together that got the interviews rolling. First I met Olena at Comunità di Sant'Egidio (chapter 4) and then Oksana (chapter 6) at the Ukrainian Festival. Both women helped recruit interviewees. Then the UGCC priests, interested in studies of Ukrainians in Italy, finally agreed to introduce me to parishioners many of whom had already seen me at church services on a weekly basis for months. Finally, after months of attending the ROC and having Sunday lunch with the same immigrant women week after week, many now felt comfortable talking into the recorder. *Forum* published my picture and a piece about my research in their newspaper. For a population who was both largely undocumented and had stories of family members who were sent to the gulags during Soviet times for discussing some of the very issues I was asking them to discuss with a recorder present, I was amazed at how quickly referrals came once they started. I was invited to Birthday parties, political demonstrations, poetry readings, and cultural shows. While one cannot conduct a traditional workplace ethnography of domestic workers since each worker labors alone in private homes, I was nonetheless deeply embedded in this community and consider this project an ethnography of migration.

In contrast, interviews in San Francisco never snowballed. I attended Svitlana's SEIU union meetings for Russian-speaking careworkers (see chapter 11). I attended church services enlisting the help of priests and attended cultural events. I even spent a day lobbying in Sacramento on behalf of the homecare workers' union. While the vast majority of informants in San Francisco had green cards and some were already US citizens, ironically there was much more fear and reluctance to sit down to an interview than in Rome where most informants were undocumented. While in Italy interviewees were happy to recommend friends for an interview, this almost never happened in San Francisco. Many informants said that they did not know another homecare worker and, since the community in San Francisco was more dispersed and diverse than in Rome, this may well have been true. Most interviews came through my contacts at IHSS and the homecare workers' union. I also conducted interviews through people I met at the various churches I attended, again after several months of attending services and lunches on a weekly basis as well as cultural events.

Perhaps the easiest site in terms of recruiting informants was L'viv. I conducted a total of 38 interviews with the adult children of migrants, many university students. Ten

of these interviews were with the children of informants I had interviewed in Rome. These one-to-one interviews are some of the most informative about the ways migration is experienced both by migrants and those left behind. I spent extensive time with the families of six migrant women then in Rome learning about daily life, remittances, and negotiations with migration from the point of view of non migrants in Ukraine. Some interviewees came from referrals of informants from Rome visiting L'viv. They helped to recruit the children of friends who they knew worked abroad in either Italy or the United States to speak with me. I also found interviewees through the Italian Center at L'viv University. Since I also wanted to interview people who had a parent or parents in the United States, I also visited English language classes at the university and was permitted to recruit interviewees in classes. Italian and English classes were filled with students who had parents abroad. I also conducted a handful of interviews with grandmothers who were caring for grandchildren in L'viv while their daughters worked in Italy or the United States. The snowball method worked well especially among students. My identity as a dual citizen of Italy and the United States who grew up in "America" made me an interesting for them to meet. Young Ukrainians were full of questions about life in Italy and the United States, some were curious to know how typical their family experiences were, and still others were happy to have a native speaker with whom to practice English or Italian.

### **Becoming *Nasha***

I am not Ukrainian or of Ukrainian descent. However, all ethnographers seek to forge connections of trust with their informants. There were many ways informants signaled that I had gained their trust and the most obvious was when I was referred to or introduced as *nasha* or "one of ours." There are many paths to becoming *nasha*. Sometimes becoming *nasha* was an event. For example, at San Francisco's UGCC, I found that the women in the parish became comfortable with having me around rather quickly while I felt the men still sometimes checked their political discussions when I was at the table. Discussions soon switched from politics to soccer with the 2006 World Cup. I became a subject of great interest to the men as Italy continued to advance in the competition. I was the recipient of many handshakes and congratulations as an Italian at church on the Sunday after Italy won and became World Cup Champions. Before then however, I was standing with group of Ukrainian men in the church basement when one informant looked at me said, "Do you know who Shevchenko is?" I replied, "The soccer player or the poet?" The men burst into laughter exclaiming to each other, "She's *nasha*! She's *nasha*!" The following week I began interviewing men who had, until then, deflected my requests. Of course becoming *nasha* did not make me "Ukrainian" and I also benefited from my outsider status in being able to ask questions about cultural meanings that would seem strange coming from someone who was from the region themselves. Informants also assumed that I would not understand many cultural references and provided cultural translations of events that enriched my data.

More likely in my research, however, becoming *nasha* was a process and not an event. In Rome, for example, I came to belong at the Sunday lunch at the Russian Orthodox Church because I went every Sunday over a period of six months or in San Francisco, I came to belong at union meetings because I attended them over an extended

period of time. People came to know my personal story because I shared it with them. I was a young researcher, the same age of many of my informants' children, and I framed the interviews as help for a student conducting a university-based project. For women of this age and generation, many of them school teachers, a plea from a student for help was a request they could not refuse.

Not only was I negotiating my position as “insider” and “outsider” as all ethnographers must, but I also found myself actively highlighting either my Italian or US identity depending on the situation. Conversely, I found that informants assigned me an Italian or US identity at different times as well. In Rome, emphasizing my Italian heritage was advantageous in the many Italian bureaucratic and social services agencies to which I would not have had access without fluent Italian and some insider currency. I found myself in. However among Ukrainian informants in Rome, I tended to play down my Italian identity. Informants often exclaimed, “You are not an Italian presence” or “You do not *feel* Italian.” This was a relief to informants. Informants who began interviews saying that Italy was a wonderful place and treated them well, became much more critical of their situation, Italian laws, and Italian employers as they came to feel I was not *really* Italian.<sup>55</sup> In a profound cultural sense this was a correct observation since I did not grow up or receive my schooling in Italy. Informants in the United States also varyingly perceived me as Italian and/or American but it was much less likely that I was considered “not American” in California even during those moments when I was considered also Italian. As a result, I feel some informants felt uncomfortable being critical of the United States for fear of insulting me and this was something to which I paid close attention.

### **Choosing my Sample**

I limited my sample to Ukrainian domestic workers who migrated after 1989. There is much debate about who really is or is not Ukrainian even among scholars, but for this study, if informants were from Ukraine and self-identified as Ukrainian, I considered them Ukrainian. I did not intentionally limit the age of participants but, because most workers doing domestic work are middle-aged women, they are over-represented in my sample.

As I coded 158 interviews and hundreds of pages of ethnographic notes, I had to decide what ethnographic data to include in the text and what data was either redundant or tangential to the core analytical narrative of the dissertation. The analytical narrative of this dissertation emerged from the data gathered over 18 months immersed in the field. Once the categories of exile and exodus come into focus, I decided to choose five key interviews to make tangible and give nuance to those analytical categories.

Immediately after every interview, I typed up a summary of everything I could remember from the interview: what was said, where we met, what they offered me to drink and eat, and what informants looked like and were wearing. I listened and

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<sup>55</sup> This was also true among Italians. In chapter 9 I discussed delivering a paper in Trent about my research. I was introduced as a colleague from the United States but my family was from Italy “so we can call her one of our own.” As the conference continued and I was perceived as taking sides with foreign migrants rather than Italians, panelists no longer even referred to me by my very Italian name but simply called me “*la Americana*,” the American.

translated directly into English a sub-set of the interviews from each of the three sites and I also paid native Russian-speakers to transcribe interviews in the original Russian and then poured over the transcriptions myself. For every interview there is a detailed summary and for just over half the interviews for each site there is a full transcription. Therefore the first cut for the five interviews was already made here as I choose which interviews were thought provoking and or offered new information compared to previously conducted interviews and therefore warranted the expenditure of scarce resources in the form of time and money to be transcribed by either myself or a paid transcriber.

### *Exile: The Sample*

In the case of exile, Ukrainian migrants in Italy formed two distinct groups represented by Olena and Tatiana. The majority of migrants in Rome experienced exile in a way similar to Tatiana, orientated always to Ukraine with a focus on remittances and the material conditions of family back home. Yet those like Olena who rejected discourses of poverty as incompatible with a European Ukraine. This group of migrants had a split orientation between Ukraine and Italy. They believed that Italy had cultural tools about how to be “capitalist” and “European” to offer them and that these, in addition to monetary remittances, were important. Olen and those like her made up a powerful minority in Rome. They are likely over-represented in my sample because I recruited informants through organizations such as churches and Ukrainian immigrant organizations where people committed to the cultural work of nation-building tended to congregate.

The remaining three data chapters in this section illuminated other facets of exile. I found little variation in the subjective dimension of exile and high level of cohesion around the two migrant subjectivities discussed above. There was, however, limited variation on the structural dimension of exile and I chose the remaining three informants on that basis. Oksana was one of four middle-aged migrants that did not have children. Since motherhood discourses are prominent in both the reasons for migrating and the way nation and migration are mutually constituted in exile, one might suppose that childless women are not influenced by exile. Instead, Oksana and the other three informants in my sample without children show that exile shapes the experiences of even these women. I might have used Lesia, the MC of the talent shows, as my example. Lesia found herself in Italy unexpectedly (chapter 3) and while she, like all migrants in Italy, was renovating her house in Ukraine and putting money aside for retirement, Lesia also spoke about saving money for fertility treatments to have a baby. While in other contexts planning on having a baby at 42 through artificial insemination is a possibility, in Lesia’s cultural and financial context this seemed highly unusual and I watched as other migrant women chuckled or raised eyebrows at the idea. However, Lesia’s desire is less surprising in the context of exile where the connection between motherhood, migration, and ethnic nation is so profound.

Yuriy was one of ten men in my sample. I argue that gender is a constitutive element of exile and, since gender is also a relational concept, I had to include the experiences of men. I chose Yuriy because I had also interviewed his son in L’viv and this gave the interview more depth and provided a fuller comparison with the experiences

of Ukrainian women in Italy. The data illustrate that even the experiences of men in Rome is shaped by the dominant analytics of exile even though men do not occupy the same structural position in exile as women.

Finally Lydmyla was one of six informants who had their family, either spouse and children or just children with them in Rome. While I am unable to explain with certainty why this handful of informants were able to bring their families with them, all informants with families were part of the early wave of migrants arriving in 1997 or 1998. At that time there were several factors that made bringing children to Italy slightly easier. First the actual cost of visas and bus trips to Italy was much less making it more affordable for some to bring family members. Those that did bring families tended to be younger migrants like Lydmyla with young rather than adult children. Informants did not want to see adult, university educated children in Italy only to perform domestic labor or work in a restaurant, whereas young children would attend school. Informants also explained that it was easier to rent apartments as foreigners in the late 1990s when laws discouraging landlords from renting to foreigners were not yet on the books. Of all the exceptions to the dominant migration pattern, an entire family in Italy provides the greatest challenge to exile and some of the most compelling evidence for the usefulness of the concept.

There is a subset of my sample that I did not include in the data chapters of exile. Six interviews in my sample, four men and two women, were with careworkers in their 20s. The young men and one of the young women had all joined their mothers in Rome and in once case their fathers in Italy. The second of the two women was married to a UGCC priest who was finishing his graduate studies in Rome and she worked as a live-in in order to be able to see her husband at least Thursday afternoons and Sundays. She had plans to return to Ukraine once her husband finished his studies. These interviews, while interesting, are part of the story of families in exile. It is also worth mentioning that I had only one informant who married an Italian man in my sample. While this is likely an underrepresented group in my sample, my time in Italy and California do not support the phenomenon of Ukrainian women of this generation are seeking to “ensnare” foreign men that is now part of popular culture is widespread.

Figure 1: Complete list of 61 informants, all domestic workers in Italy with the exception of Yuriy who attempted to acquire work as a domestic but never performed this work.

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b># of yrs in Italy</b>	<b>Profession in Ukraine</b>	<b>Documents (Permesso) Y/N</b>
1	Anastasiya	42	4	Manager in factory	N
2	Olena	50	4	High school teacher (languages)	Y
3	Larisa	53	3	Head accountant	Y
4	Bohdanna	62	2	Supermarket cashier	N
5	Rita	29	3.5	Nurse	N
6	Bianca	42	5	Electrical engineer	N

7	Rosaline	40	4	Housewife	N
8	Alexandra	54	3	Librarian	N
9	Lydmyla	42	8	Accountant	Y
10	Kalyna	53	7	Nurse	Y
11	Lidiya	47	7	Factory worker	Y
12	Oksana	51	4	University teacher; Editor; Journalist	Y
13	Diana	57	7	Factory worker	N
14	Margarita	52	6	Electrical engineer	Y
15	Yalena	45	8	Accountant	Y
16	Tatiana	54	4	Factory worker	Y
17	Valentina	34	4	Cashier	N
18	Yana	53	3	High school teacher (Russian language and literature)	N
19	Klara	52	4.5 over 6 years	Music teacher; Professional musician	N
20	Evgenia	54	4	Accountant	Y
21	Sonya	50	5	Head accountant	Y
22	Marika	50	4	Therapist (Disabled children)	N
23	Veronika	50	4	High school teacher (Ukrainian language and literature)	N
24	Dina	58	5	High school teacher (Ukrainian language and literature)	N
25	Valeriya	52	3	Publishing house editor	N
26	Hanna	24	2 over 3 years	Nurse	N
27	Zina	48	4	Customer Service (Airline industry)	N
28	Valya	52	3	Accountant	N
29	Hennady	48	2	Chemical engineer	N
30	Marusya	46	3	University teacher (Fashion design)	N
31	Daniela	55	3	High school teacher (Geography)	N
32	Yulia	35	5	Housewife (University degree in information sciences)	Y

33	Vasylyna	54	3	Chemist	Y
34	Natasha	36	1	Music teacher (Conservatory); Professional choir director	N
35	Khrystyna	27	3	Accountant	N
36	Svetlana	52	4	High school teacher (History)	N
37	Katya	54	4	Librarian; Newspaper editor	N
38	Margarita	53	4	Electrical engineer	Y
39	Alyona	45	4	Grocery store clerk; Factory worker	Y
40	Rada	48	4.5	High school teacher (Ukrainian language and literature)	Y
41	Miloslava	55	5	High school teacher (Science)	N
42	Lesia	40	5	High School teacher (Math)	Y
43	Maks	28	6	Archeologist	Y
44	Valentin	48	3.5	Locomotive mechanic	N
45	Oleksiy	51	3	Military	N
46	Ostap	21	1	University student (Computer programmer)	N
47	Volodymyr	34	4	Military	Y
48	Inna	50	6	High School teacher (Music)	Y
49	Slavo	54	3	University Professor (Poetry)	N
50	Milyena	35	7	High school teacher (Russian language and literature)	Y
51	Andriy	58	4	Supplier (Electronics factory)	N
52	Valery	29	3	Sailor (Cook)	N
53	Evgenii	23	1	University student	N
54	Pavla	40	2	Tourist agent	N
55	Yuriy	43	3	Factory worker (TV and radio)	N

56	Galya	53	3	University Instructor; Journalist	N
57	Roksana	54	3	High school teacher (Russian Language and literature)	N
58	Tetyana	50	5	High School teacher (History and music)	Y
59	Arina	48	4	High School teacher (Language)	N
60	Manya	58	6	High school teacher (Science)	Y
61	Sofiya	44	5	Accountant	Y

### *Exodus: The Sample*

Unlike exile where migration was a collective process and two distinct migrant subjectivities emerged, integration defined migrant subjectivities for all informants in exodus. However, there was variation in the mode of integration. While all informants were attempting to collect family members in California, informants were at different points in that process resulting in variation along the structural dimension of exodus as well. In order to illustrate the process of exodus, I choose interviews at three points on the continuum of family reunification: family unit in the United States, divided family where migrants have one child in the United States and one child in Ukraine, and individual migrants in California without family.

In my sample of 41 domestic workers in California, 24 informants arrived or were quickly reunited with their entire nuclear and in some cases even extended families. I began the data chapters on exodus with Viktoria because she is most representative of exodus where migrants come to California with their nuclear families and continued to collect extended family members, never returned to Ukraine, and focused on integrating in the United States. For the majority of interviewees, homecare work was a vehicle for producing connections to the US state which fostered a sense of belonging to the United States as well as continuity with their Soviet past and a site from which one could make claims on the US state for rights or even personal favors. I paired Viktoria with Dariya who shared the same structural dimension of exodus but had a different mode of integration. Despite Dariya's uniqueness with respect to the rest of the sample, we see many of the same themes of exodus in her interview data.

There were 14 informants in my sample who had divided nuclear families with one child in Ukraine and one in the United States. As in the case of Viktoria and Dariya, I chose Kateryna and Zhanna by sampling on the structural dimension of exodus but showed variation on the subjective dimension in their mode of integration. Such juxtapositions also highlight what is common to exodus.

I only had three informants in California as individual migrants. All three were undocumented. Just as Lydmyla with her entire family in Italy is the last data chapter for exile, Halyna, an individual migrant in California is the final chapter of exodus. These

interviews with individual migrants in exodus and families in exile illustrate that the analytical categories cannot be reduced to one of the descriptors of the migration pattern such as temporary vs. permanent migration or family vs. individual migration. Rather, the dominant structural and subjective realities of exile and exodus come to shape the experience even of migrants who may be exceptions to the rule.

There are two subsets of my sample that I did not bring attention to in the data chapters on exodus. The first is that 13 informants came with refugee status. Nine informants identified themselves as Jews with refugee status as well as Ukrainians and four were Baptist refugees. In relation to the rest of the sample, refugees were more likely to migrate as a family unit. The Jewish refugees were more likely to cut all ties with Ukraine and reported a rejection of Ukraine because they had experienced discrimination there. Refugees were even more likely to identify with the US state in ways very similar to Viktoria because they also received other state subsidies that became part of the narrative of the US state as “provider.” I spent several Sundays at the Baptist church where I recruited, with the help of the pastor, the four interviewees. Despite reporting overt discrimination and not having any family left in Ukraine, these refugees were more likely to have transnational connections to Ukraine and Ukrainian culture than others in the sample. Through the Baptist church, adults and children sang songs and recited prayers in both Russian and Ukrainian. The church hosted guest pastors from Ukraine. Many parishioners hosted students on exchange programs from Ukraine in their homes. Through their church these informants were generally connected to a vibrant transnational religious community (see Wanner 2007).

The second subset that I did not include in my data chapters on exodus was interviews with men with the exception of Mycola (chapter 15). I conducted seven interviews with men in California but, unlike exile, gender was not a defining theme of exodus. While gender featured prominently in discussions of performing carework, there was little specific about the experience of men that deepened the concept of exodus. With few exceptions, men were committed to their families and children both in California and in Ukraine making them look similar to the women in my sample. Men are underrepresented in my sample with respect to the overall pool of Ukrainian immigrants in California where the population is roughly half women and half men. However, men are a minority of domestic workers in California and therefore are a justifiably small part of this sample as well.

Figure 2: Complete list of 41 informants, all domestic workers in California

	Name	age	# of yrs in U.S.	Profession in Ukraine	Stage of Family Migration (Family unit in US; Divided family U.S./Ukraine; Individual Migrant)	Documents (Green card or US citizen) Y/N
1	Kateryna	56	7 of last 10	Lawyer	Divided family U.S./Ukraine	N then Y
2	Zhanna	60	7	University	Divided family U.S./	Y

				Instructor (languages)	Ukraine	
3	Mycola	56	10	Military	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Y
4	Oleksandra	55	11	Pediatrician	Family unit in U.S.	Y
5	Ganna	56	2	High school teacher (Russian language and literature)	Family unit in U.S.	Y
6	Elyzaveta	46	12	Factory worker	Family unit in U.S.	Y
7	Lada	62	12	Hairdresser	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine (husband)	Y
8	Halyna	53	4	High school teacher (chemistry)	Individual migrant	N
9	Orysia	56	11	Manager (grocery store)	Individual migrant	N
10	Yadviga	62	11	Nurse	Divided family U.S./ Canada	Y
11	Raina	59	6	High school teacher (physics)	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Y
12	Agata	66	26	Nurse	Family unit in U.S..	Y
13	Agnessa	48	10	High school teacher (history)	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine (Married US citizen)	Y
14	Sviatoslav	60	2	Engineer (quality assurance for consortium of 5 factories)	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	N
15	Dariya	52	10	Deputy Director of Economics	Family unit in U.S.	Y
16	Lyuba	63	9	High school teacher (Ukrainian and Russian language and literature)	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine (Married US citizen)	Y
17	Emiliya	59	8	high school teacher (history)	Family unit in U.S	Y

18	Tereza	28	3	Accountant	Family unit in U.S. (Married US citizen)	Y
19	Kyrylo	70	8	Engineer	Individual migrant	N
20	Tanya	59	5	Hydroelectric Engineer; Instructor at Technical Institute	Family unit in U.S.	Y
21	Susanna	53	6	Chef	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine (Married US citizen)	N then Y
22	Nadezhda	68	7	Factory worker	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Y
23	Ida	63	7	Civil engineer	Family unit in U.S.	Y
24	Eleonroa	70	5	Orchestra conductor; music librarian	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Legal status in flux
25	Arkady	60	8	Physicist	Family unit in U.S.	Y
26	Nastya	51	6	Seamstress	Family unit in U.S.	Y
27	Vladimir	60	6	Factory worker	Family unit in U.S.	Y
28	Anita	55	9	Engineer	Family unit in U.S.	Y
29	Klarysa	50	17	Housewife	Family unit in U.S.	Y
30	Lavra	48	8	Grocery Store clerk	Family unit in U.S.	Y
31	Karyna	54	10	Photographer	Family unit in U.S.	Y
32	Alisa	54	8	Scientist (Electrical research)	Family unit in U.S.	Y
33	Antoinina	45	>1	Music Critic	Family unit in U.S.	Y
34	Oliya	51	4	Civil engineer	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Y
35	Tosha	42	18	Nurse	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine (husband)	Y
36	Vladislava	62	8	English teacher; Technical editor	Family unit in U.S.	Y
37	Anzhela	68	11	Photographer	Family unit in U.S.	Y
38	Mychailo	63	6	Engineer	Family unit in U.S.	Y

39	Bohuslava	53	6	Chemical engineer	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Legal status in flux
40	Marko	55	6	Pediatrician (sports medicine)	Divided family U.S./ Ukraine	Legal status in flux
41	Viktoria	58	10	High school teacher (Russian language and literature); Hotel management	Family unit in U.S.	Y

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