Women on the Move

Women on the Move:
Refugees, Migration and Exile

Edited by

Fiona Reid and Katherine Holden

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

Women on the Move: Refugees, Migration and Exile,
Edited by Fiona Reid and Katherine Holden

This book first published 2010

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-2568-9, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-2568-9

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED TO

TREVOR JOHNSON

URSULA MASSON

NEIL EDMUNDS

PATRICIA CLARK

ANITA HIGGIE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This edited collection was drawn from papers presented at the thirteenth annual conference of the West of England and South Wales Women's History Network: "Women on the Move: Refugees, Migration And Exile" held at the University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol in June 2007. We would like to thank both the UWE History Department and the Women's History Network for supporting the conference and for jointly financing the index for this book. We are also grateful to the History Departments at UWE and the University of Glamorgan for giving us time at work to edit this collection. Thanks are also due to Dr Jane Finucane for help with formatting and to committee members of the West of England and South Wales Women's History Network for general support and encouragement.

During the period between the conference and publication of this book, the editors and some of the contributors have had to cope with an unusually high number of serious illnesses and bereavements among family members and close colleagues. We have chosen therefore to dedicate the book to colleagues, partners and friends who have variously been cared for, remembered and greatly missed during these past four years.

INTRODUCTION

WOMEN ON THE MOVE

KATHERINE HOLDEN AND FIONA REID

Katerina Rancans was born in Tsarist Russia. She left the country in 1919 with her grandmother and during the interwar years she lived in Constantinople, Naples, Oporto, Bordeaux and Riga. She later married a Latvian although she always insisted that she had never given up her Russian nationality. During the war she did her best to avoid both Soviet and Nazi armies, and eventually ended up in the British zone of Germany. There she found some material security but worried endlessly about her son. "Her heart yearned that the seven-year-old Artur should have a respectable education. 'He'll be just like me, a vagabond!' she said, weeping despairingly into a handkerchief."[1]

Katerina Rancans' story contains many of the tropes we associate with female migration: loneliness, desperation, a fear of physical, masculine power, an inability to bring up children properly. The lack of a home is always painful, and possibly it is seen as being even more painful for women, given the strong cultural associations between women, mothering and home-making. Certainly women on the move are more likely to have dependants than men in similar circumstances. Rancans' life was shaped by the forces of revolution and war in the twentieth century but there is something universal in her anxiety about being "a vagabond." The fear of banishment and of being outcast has long been central to notions of European civilization. Being forced to leave the city state – and face the perilous, unsafe world outside – was one of the most ruthless punishments of the ancient world.[2] Moreover it is the first, and the most severe, punishment in the Bible. In Genesis Adam and Eve are flung from Paradise and forced to wander the world in anguish: the essence of the human condition is to regain the home we lost in that first Fall from grace. Expulsion has always been one of the most extreme penalties. Late nineteenth-century Russian nobles still feared being banished to their estates, and the imperial European powers established penal colonies far

from the homeland. Whether a prisoner was sent to Siberia or Australia the message was the same: you have been banished from home; you no longer belong.

This process of expulsion or banishment requires clear boundaries, and as settled communities developed throughout Europe, the boundaries marking the community from the outside world became more marked. Medieval towns and cities were walled, and during the early modern period land became increasingly enclosed. Nineteenth-century bourgeois Europe became a place in which the ownership of clearly-marked property denoted citizenship. This idea remains powerful, especially in Britain where there is a widespread aspiration to be part of a property-owning democracy. The nations that developed throughout nineteenth-century Europe became more clearly marked by legislative and bureaucratic boundaries too. European restrictions on movement became increasingly rigid after the political upheavals of 1848, and quickly came to be seen as a normal part of government activity. Britain maintained a particular commitment to the freedom of movement throughout the nineteenth century but the Alien Act of 1905 introduced a period of far stricter border controls.[3] The passport, a document once associated with Oriental despotism, became widely accepted throughout Europe during and after the First World War. To be without state papers rapidly became an impossible condition. In response, Fridtjof Nansen, the first High Commissioner for Refugees, issued the Nansen passport to key stateless groups during the early 1920s.[4] After the Second World War refugees from Eastern Europe petitioned the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for "stateless status," mainly because they were unwilling to return to homelands dominated by the Soviet Union. Yet a life of non-belonging, a life outside of a clearly defined nation-state had become impossible and the ICRC made it clear that these requests could not be considered.[5] One example of the changing nature of European peripheries will suffice. In Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, a novel set largely in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, the main characters move easily and often between Continental Europe and Britain. Such a story would seem simply unfeasible had it been set in mid-twentieth century Europe where the rigid national boundaries were overlaid by the even more unyielding boundaries of the Cold War.

Of course the refugees petitioning for "statelessness" after the Second World War were unusual. Those living outside the protection of a state have traditionally been vulnerable to persecution, with Jews and Gypsies being the most common European examples. Even our language indicates the reviled state of the outsider: the foreigner is, by definition, foreign,

strange and alien. Unlike the citizen, the local or the native, the foreigner simply does not belong. A life of movement is widely seen as being unsettled, on the contrary, becoming settled is the first step towards developing community, society and civilization.[6] Whereas the "outsider" has always occupied a difficult role, this has become even more problematic in the modern period. The growth of patriotism has ensured that the nationally-defined outsider has come to be seen as essentially different and as a potential threat to the body of the nation. In addition, technological changes, especially the development of modern, industrial warfare, have resulted in massive waves of refugees and displaced people.[7] The extent of this change cannot be under-estimated: in the summer of 1945 there were about sixteen million displaced people in Western Europe alone; in western and central Europe combined there were almost thirty million homeless people.[8] The problem of displacement continued throughout the twentieth century and at the end of 2008 the UNHCR estimated that there were about twelve million stateless people in the world.[9] In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the scale of population movement exceeded all historical precedents as people fled from wars, revolutions and environmental catastrophes.[10] In addition, the last two centuries have been marked by a rapid increase in the level of forced population movement. As Bessel and Haake have demonstrated, the forced removal of people from their homes is not new but "its occurrence across the world as a mass phenomenon is peculiarly modern."[11] Current statistics are hard to access but according to UNHCR there were approximately forty-two million forcibly displaced people worldwide at the end of 2008.[12]

Whether voluntary or forced, population movements often evoke hostility and resistance but there is also a widespread recognition of the necessity of population movement. The "imagined community" of the nation state may be stable and homogenous but the boundaries of nation states have always been porous.[13] Moreover, some movements have been associated with status, even glamour. Merchants have grown rich on the exchange of goods and services, a process which almost inevitably involves some migration; political exiles and *émigrés* – whether notables from the French revolution or key contemporary figures such as the Dalai Lama – have often seemed exotic in their exile. The universality of religion has provoked much physical movement too. Women were politically active as religious exiles in early modern Europe and later were accepted as missionaries across the world. Whereas refugees tend to be displaced and powerless, the processes of empire-building and the workings of international capitalism have encouraged movement amongst

the relatively privileged. Furthermore, the status of the immigrant is not fixed, and the persecuted refugee can become part of a new and vibrant culture. Before 1917 exiled Russian socialists formed part of a dynamic anti-Tsarist community; after 1936 the exiled Spanish republicans represented the "real Spain" in stark contrast to the fraudulent dictatorship of Franco.[14] Yet whether persecuted or privileged, the immigrant tends to remain "the other," and "immigrant history is a separate history."[15]

The chapters in this volume offer insights into many of the concerns discussed above and also pose new questions. They may at first glance seem disparate in subject matter, ranging from Sharif Gemie's acute, critical dissection of autobiographical narratives told by twenty-first century Muslim women who moved from Islamic countries to the west to Virginia Bainbridge's account of the biblically inspired exile stories told by and about sixteenth century English nuns. The book also ranges widely in time and space. While the bulk of the material is focussed either on early modern Europe or in the twentieth century, the latter period includes accounts of women moving from Muslim and European countries to the USA; and we have also included a perceptive analysis by Evelyn Spratt of how an aristocratic woman from *ancien régime* France chose to perpetuate a French cultural identity in the early years of the American Republic. This article raises questions of broader significance about the intersections between gender, class, familial and national identities.

A focus on individual or small groups of women set in a broader historical context marks out most of the chapters. Raingard Esser's chapter on the recent historiography of migrating women in Early Modern Europe is an important exception, offering a valuable overview of migration literature themes, some of which can be connected to the work of our other contributors. For one of the advantages of our approach, for readers who are interested in the book as a whole, is that it enables us to make links between chapters which may not naturally seem to fit together.

One of the connecting themes across the book is the focus on elite women. Esser argues this has been a limiting factor for most early modern migration research and points to some important studies which have broken out of this mould. Yet despite this apparent limitation in subject matter, several of our authors have paused to consider the invisible "others" who are connected to their elite subjects and who are rarely given a voice. Thus, Gemie discusses his authors' maids and speculates on how differently they might have viewed the Islamic world, while Bainbridge points out the advantages for poor English female recusants who gained the opportunity to become nuns and travel abroad by being in the service of richer and more influential women. Linda Martz's chapter takes us into

different territory again. She considers the appeal of an elite Canadian migrant Pentecostal preacher in Los Angeles, Aimee Semple Macpherson, not simply to comfortably-off mid-western women migrants but also in out-reach work to marginalized populations of Hispanics, African-Americans and poor people displaced by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Essays in this book also prompt us to consider the relative advantages and disadvantages of supposedly elite status. Gibbons writes of Catholic gentlewomen in early modern England. Their status clearly gave them opportunities but their political strategies were defined and limited by their roles as wives, daughters, mothers and sisters. Evelyn Spratt's work on Josephine Du Pont also highlights the limitations faced by elite women. Du Pont's determined efforts to maintain her French identity in the new American Republic indicates the restrictions on her own power. This woman, albeit privileged in many ways, was living a life which the men in her family had chosen for her.

The significance of religion is another theme which connects the chapters. Bainbridge's Brigittine nuns were in exile in the Low Countries in the same period as the English Catholic noble women whose lives Katy Gibbons reconstructs. Both groups of women were fleeing persecution from the Elizabethan Protestant church, an experience which links them to Gemie's Muslim women four centuries later, several of whom became refugees after fearing or experiencing religious persecution in their native countries. Both the sixteenth century Brigittine nuns and the migrant woman preachers in twentieth century Los Angeles drew upon Biblical prophecy and visions to legitimate their missions. The former British suffragette Christabel Pankhurst turned to religious fundamentalism using the prophecy of Christ's return while Macpherson's work was inspired by a vision that God had told her to make her home in California. The visions and miracles which inspired and legitimated the nuns' wanderings also drew on a homecoming myth. Bainbridge argues that remembering Syon, (the Abbey from which the nuns had been compelled to flee and to which they would one day return), gave them the strength to survive as a religious community, like the Israelites in Babylon. Most of the women who feature in this collection are defined by their spiritual lives: the nuns of Syon Abbey, the Catholic noblewomen of Elizabethan England, Christabel Pankhurst and Aimee Semple McPherson, the numerous articulate women currently writing about their own experiences of Islam. Du Pont's writings are an intriguing exception. As an aristocratic French woman one might have expected her to focus on the importance of Catholicism as a symbol of her *ancien régime* identity. Yet for Du Pont it

is the French language and a broadly defined French "culture" which act as the key markers of identity.

All of the essays in this collection point to the difficulties of re-creating the female experience of migration. As Esser has noted, migration could sometimes be liberating and exciting, offering women opportunities for adventure and financial independence. On the other hand migration sometimes imposes tight boundaries and re-enforces socially-conservative gender roles. It is the diversity of female migrant experiences that are best captured in this collection yet we need to ask ourselves what conclusions we can draw. Esser and Gibbons express genuine frustration at the gaps in the sources which prevent them from piecing together the lives of the women in their studies. On the other hand Du Pont's highly-detailed accounts leave us with still further questions: was Du Pont's insistence upon her own "Frenchness" typical? And in what way did her sense of authentic French identity become modified during her years in America? In a sense this is the question that underlies Gemie's essay: what can we make of one woman's narrative? Or even many women's narratives? If there is no "innocent reportage" how should we respond to women's stories of migration, refuge and exile?

Taken collectively, our authors all highlight the wide range of exile experiences. This is something we need to consider given that we live in a world increasingly characterised by movement. Globalisation has led to a sense of uniformity across much of the world. "McDonaldization" has produced a wealthy international elite as well as a more rootless poor, relentlessly in search of the work opportunities offered by international finance, industry, global food production and tourism. The classic model of forced migration has remained a potent force as people flee from wars and environmental catastrophe. Recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have produced vast population movements; the extent of displacement produced by the 2010 floods in Pakistan has yet to be ascertained but the impact will clearly be colossal. The forced migration model does however ignore women's agency. Aid workers who have chosen to move abroad to work in education and health projects in developing countries sometimes help the women they work with to make informed choices about where and how they want to live. This may ultimately result in those same women moving away from their own cultures and communities to seek improved conditions for themselves and their families in the developed world. Yet at this time of great movement we also witness a great hostility towards movement. This is particularly the case in Western Europe and other parts of the developed world where incoming migrants are often seen as threatening the viability of the nation state, or threatening the stability of

what has come to be seen as the natural order. In response to these political conflicts historians must emphasise the long and varied history of population movement, displacement, exile and immigration. We should also stress the particular role of women in population movement. Currently about eighty per cent of all refugees are women or children: they require our attention.[16]

Notes

1. Margaret McNeil, *By the Rivers of Babylon: A Story Based upon actual Experiences among the Displaced Persons of Europe* (Great Britain: Lincolnshire Chronicle, 1950), 67; 218.
2. Anthony Pagden, *Peoples and Empires: Europeans and the Rest of the World from Antiquity to the Present* (London: Phoenix, 2002) .
3. Michael R. Marrus, "The Uprooted: An Historical Perspective," in *The Uprooted: Forced Migration as an International Problem in the Post-War Era*, ed. Göran Rystad (Lund: Lund University Press, 1990), 52.
4. The League of Nations established the High Commission for Refugees in 1921, and the Nansen passport was awarded to White Russians escaping the new Soviet state and Armenians who had escaped from the genocide of 1915.
5. See for example, correspondence of Otto Beilke, Comité Internationale de la Croix-Rouge, Genève, G68 932 February-April 1948.
6. For comments on civilization and settlement see A. Pagden, *Peoples and Empire* esp. 1-12.
7. M.R. Marrus, "The Uprooted," in *The Uprooted*, ed. Rystad, 50-51.
8. Mark Wyman, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951*(Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 17; UNRRA, *Helping the People to Help Themselves: The Story of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1944), 11.
9. United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-Seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons Country Data Sheets, 16 June 2009 http://www.unhcr.org/4a375c426.html (accessed May 9, 2010).
10. For the links between the growth of empire, capitalism and environmental catastrophe see Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London: New York: Verso, 2001).
11. Richard Bessel and Claudia B. Haake, *Removing Peoples: Forced Removal in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.
12. United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-Seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons Country Data Sheets, 16 June 2009 http://www.unhcr.org/4a375c426.html. (accessed May 9, 2010).

13. For the nation State as "imagined community" see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).
14. Sharif Gemie, Laure Humbert and Fiona Reid, "Shadow Double: Refugee and Citizen," *Planet: the Welsh Internationalist* 192 (December/January 2008-2009): 64.
15. Kathy Burrell and Panikos Panayi, "Immigration, History and Memory in Britain," in *Histories and Memories: Migrants and their History in Britain*, ed. Kathy Burrell and Panikos Panayi, (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), 12.
16. *Refugees Magazine*, 126 "Women Seeking a Better Deal," 2 April, 2002, 6.

CHAPTER ONE

OUT OF SIGHT AND ON THE MARGINS? MIGRATING WOMEN IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

RAINGARD ESSER

Every reflection on women and migration still begins, as Christiane Harzig has recently observed, by stating that women have generally been ignored by migration research and that the dominant image of a migrant in history is still male, young and unconnected.[1] This lack of a gendered view on migration, which Harzig has aptly named "malestream", is for instance, still prevalent in one of the most recent, large-scale publications on the topic: an *Encyclopaedia of Migration, Integration and Minorities in Europe since the Seventeenth Century*, currently being completed by the International Institute of Migration Studies at the University of Osnabrück (Germany) in collaboration with its Dutch counterpart at the International Institute of Social History at the University of Amsterdam. The Encyclopaedia attempts to define terminologies and theories in migration history. Here, norms and concepts taken from traditional migration studies such as assimilation and integration are applied to the complex phenomenon of cultural change in migrant communities.[2] The initial introduction to the project sent out to the contributors in 2002 listed an article on "Gender" as one of the key parameters for the study. For the final version, however, the (all male) team has decided to rearrange the volume and replace the specialist articles on approaches and methodology by a lengthy introduction to terminology and concepts of migration research followed by a number of articles, firstly on migration countries and secondly on migrant groups.[3] This new introduction does not cover the category "Gender", but makes some fleeting remarks on female migrants scattered throughout the text. Of the 213 specialist articles, only ten are distinctly dedicated to female (labour) migrants – mostly in the twentieth century.

In spite of this retreat into non-gendered migration research witnessed here, migrating women as a distinct topic of historical study are becoming increasingly important, not only as subjects of investigation in their own right, but also in providing a corrective to the abovementioned single male migrant, the "uprooted" of earlier scholarship.[4] Female migrants need to be counted and accounted for, their particular migratory strategies - if they exist - need to be analysed. The female migrant experience can also support the study of a gendered perspective on migration which is still missing. It can offer important insights into experiences and perceptions of female (and male) migrants and their self-fashioning, which are at the heart of more recent research.[5] Although differences between migrating men and women have been noted, they have not yet been mapped or described systematically over an extended period of time. Researchers such as Leo Lucassen have stressed the need for such an approach.[6] In the Netherlands, with its strong research culture in migration studies, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NOW) funded Vici-Project "Differences that make all the difference: gender and migration (the Netherlands 1945-2005)" at Leiden University has responded to this agenda. This interdisciplinary research programme, which began in September 2006, brings together recent historical and sociological research focusing on female "guestworkers" and immigrants from the former Dutch colonies to the Netherlands. It offers the first long term study on migration from a gendered perspective. Moreover, a view on the programme of the Seventh European Social Science History Conference (ESSHC) in Lisbon in February 2008 demonstrates the current interest in this area: seven sessions particularly focus on various aspects of gender and migration (mainly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries). These developments reflect a growing awareness of and interest in the particular roles that women had in migratory processes.

The following pages try to map recent scholarship on early modern female (and, to some extent, gendered) migration with a strong emphasis on English, Dutch and German publications in the field. Possible future areas of research will be outlined. What is suggested here might be part and parcel of modern historians' approaches to the topic, but for migration historians of the early modern period, restricted by a paucity of sources - in quantity as well as in variety - a gendered perspective on migration is still in its academic infancy. The focus will be on the migration experience rather than on strategies of immigrants once they have reached their places of destination. The linear route from emigrant to immigrant to minority to indistinguishable member of the host society, which had dominated earlier migration research, has become a bit more nuanced in recent years.[7] With

an increased interest in the transitional process itself, historians have started to look at the links between the "old", home-land identity and identity in the migrants' place of destination. They also look at migration as a potentially lasting experience. It has been suggested, for instance, that *émigrés* might find a stable identity within the diaspora, that is, within the expatriate community of persons sharing the same culture outside the geographical space that gave rise to that culture. Other emigrants might lose that sense of belonging and need to re-define their identity without, however, necessarily making an effort to integrate themselves into the new host society, thus becoming exiles but not immigrants. Studies into Huguenot memoirs have demonstrated convincingly how refugees from seventeenth century France constructed a self-contained world turned inward on itself. Ego-documents have shown how effectively this exile identity could shield men and women from potential dissonances of cultural encounter with others, mitigate the shocks of displacement and neutralize the consciousness of the loss. In this process, "negative" aspects of the home culture were often re-interpreted or written out of the exile identity, while "positive" values and characteristics taken from home were (over)emphasized.[8] However, these observations might not be restricted to refugees' experiences, they could possibly also be applied to other forms of migration.

The demographics of migration are notoriously difficult to assess for medieval or earlier migrants. It is, therefore, not surprising, that research on these movements is rare and that a gendered perspective is even more difficult to detect from the few sources discussing medieval men and women on the move. Recent studies in this area have particularly focused on female pilgrims, who can be described as only temporary migrants with the clear aim of returning to their places of origin.[9] Here, the changes of the physical environment of these women on the move are closely linked to their spiritual journey and are described as such.[10]

Although exact figures are certainly also missing for early modern migrants, a quick look at what material is available, for instance, for seventeenth-century Amsterdam, shows that female migration was indeed substantial. The marriage registers of the city reveal that from 1600 to 1800 144,337 women from outside the city got married in Amsterdam. In other words, twenty-one per cent of the brides registering their marriages in Amsterdam in this period were outsiders.[11] With about as many as a quarter of all women in Amsterdam remaining single, the rate of unmarried migrant women in the city must have been substantially higher.[12] Likewise, we cannot account for women coming to the city as spouses or as widows. So, again, numbers must have been considerably

higher, although it seems that family migration to Amsterdam was outnumbered by immigration of single men and single women. Even in group and family migrants, which, in the early modern period, dominated the numerous waves of confessional migration within Europe and to the Americas, women participated to a larger extent than was initially suggested. A survey of householders, listing the members of the Dutch Church in Norwich in 1568, counted 314 married persons, but sizes of households varied remarkably. The list included twenty-five maidservants, whose names are not recorded, and nineteen female relatives, usually sisters, sometimes mothers of either the husband or his wife. 193 single householders were listed, of which twenty-four were run by single women, who lived either alone or, quite frequently, with their unmarried sisters. Seventeen widows (and thirty-five widowers) were also listed as heads of households.[13] By the nineteenth century, numbers of female migrants had further increased. The most intensive period of Prairie migration in the United States, for instance, in the 1840s to 1860s, saw more than forty per cent female migrants.[14] Irish migration in the nineteenth century was similar: almost fifty per cent of Irish migrants were women. The twentieth century, finally, marked the turning point for greater female migration over longer distances. Today women account for approximately half of all global migrants, while eighty per cent of refugees are female.[15]

Research into migrating women has been explored, so far, rather unevenly. Studies of nineteenth and twentieth century women on the move far outnumber research into early modern female migration.[16] This tendency reflects migration studies in general, but is further accelerated by the distinct paucity of women's voices in the early modern period. Moreover, while modern and contemporary historians of female migration can make and have often made extensive use of sources gathered "from below" such as diaries, oral history interviews, letters etc., migration research in early modern history is strongly biased towards elite groups, such as members of the aristocracy and the higher echelons of urban society and towards members of religious organizations, where women had a higher degree of literacy and also of independent agency. However, other approaches to the study of early modern migrant women have been explored quite innovatively in recent years making use of indirect sources, which were not intentionally produced to record migratory processes. These can include marriage registers, as mentioned above, but also broadsheets and ballads, woodcuts and engravings, registers of minority churches and court records. Not surprisingly, perhaps, given the relatively high literacy rates and the closely monitored structure of social institutions such as almshouses, hospitals, guilds and parishes, towns and cities in the

Netherlands often provide better insights into female migration than other parts of Europe and it is here, where research has been unfolding in recent years with an attempt to offer a "lower class" addition to our knowledge of migrant elite women. Erika Kuijpers' recent study of Amsterdam with a particular focus on poor(er) migrants, mainly from Germany, which constituted the largest group of non-Dutch immigrants in the city in the seventeenth century, has painstakingly reconstructed the female migrant experience – as far as that is possible.[17] Here, again, records of particular institutions, such as Amsterdam's uniquely generous hospitals which offered free health care and support for pregnant women, regardless of their place of birth, have been helpful in detecting motives and female migrants' life stories. Kuijpers concludes that the pull-factor of the social support from Amsterdam's institutions, but also the knowledge of established immigrant networks, attracted women of all ages and in all stages of their lives - single girls as well as widows with or without dependent children - to the city. Lotte van de Pol has used court records to reconstruct prostitution in the city as a trade of immigrant women, who constituted by far the majority of convicted prostitutes in Amsterdam from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century.[18]

As seen in these examples research on women, as on migrants in general, was, and still is, to some extent, dominated by historians interested in labour migration and the economic factors behind migratory processes. Researchers have assessed the role of women in adapting to, but also shaping the labour market of their host societies. Given the guild restrictions of the early modern period, a large part of this research has been and is directed towards women in domestic service, which is, it seems, again, a growth area for female migrant work.[19] Exceptions to this emphasis on non-guild work cover research into female immigrant textile workers in the Netherlands and in Italy.[20]

Traditionally labour migration has been undertaken with a view to female contributions to the labour market at their places of destination. More recently, researchers have suggested looking at migrants' places of origin and their impact on the economy and the society that they left behind. This has been done firstly to assess the economic motives behind female migration through an analysis of the economic milieu of their places of origin, but, more importantly perhaps, researchers see migration within a network of communication and mobility not only between old and new homes, but also between family members in different parts of the world.[21] The transport and media revolutions of the last one hundred years have made it increasingly easier to keep in touch with a migrant's place of origin and have also facilitated the development of networks of migrant

families, whose members are often scattered across more than one country or, indeed, one continent. But this phenomenon has not been restricted to the nineteenth, twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Lien Luu has convincingly demonstrated that Dutch migrants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries kept regular contact with their places of origin. They migrated without difficulty between home, their English exile, and also the Northern Netherlands when career opportunities seemed increasingly restricted in London, and incentives to migrate were created by the new economic centres in the United Provinces which particularly targeted this adaptable, and often highly skilled, workforce.[22] Similarly, Steve Murdoch has presented a highly complex system of kinship networks maintained by Scottish emigrants in early modern Europe.[23] Neither of these two studies has undertaken a distinctly gendered approach to their work. They have, however, sharpened our understanding of migration as a process which is closely related to family dynamics. A new research agenda, therefore, focuses on family and kinship relations with their gendered and generational hierarchies (on a micro level) which negotiate migration patterns in the context of cultural, social and economic criteria prevalent both in the country of origin and the country of destination of potential migrants. Overtly economic reasons for migration can have deeper, underlying motives relating to family relations such as a flight from an abusive relative, the hope of concealing an unwanted pregnancy, or family breakdown through death and divorce. Moreover, the perceived profitability of migration might not always be based on the "rational choices" of families or family members. The decision to migrate, therefore, is as much dependent on the position of the prospective migrant in her own family as on wider economic opportunities or lack thereof. This has been explored, for instance, by Ide B. O'Carroll in her work on Irish female emigrants and sexual abuse at home in the twentieth century. It has also been discussed by Lotte van de Pol in her analysis of the "lure of the big city", i.e., early modern Amsterdam, for prostitutes.[24] The life stories of these women, written down from oral testimony in court records, recurrently mention broken families, sexual abuse and the broken promises of partners as reasons for the loss of reputation and honour in their places of origin, and a subsequent drift towards prostitution and petty crime. Although, clearly, these stories were presented in a male-dominated court scenario with the aim of showing the accused women in the best possible light, they cannot be dismissed as complete fabrications. If they were to help to limit the punishment of women on trial, they needed to demonstrate credibility and we have to take these testimonies seriously.[25]

It has been argued that women's migration relies more on extended networks than that of their male counterpart. These can be family and kinship networks, but also institutions such as religious communities. Not surprisingly, therefore, research on early modern female migration has focused on religious orders and on the role of churches in facilitating both the migration process and support in the place of destination. The works of Leslie Choquette and Natalie Zemon Davis on French nuns in Canada, Andrea Knox's recent article on Irish nuns in early modern Spain and Claire Walker's study of English convents in France and in the Low Countries are examples of these female migratory networks.[26] These studies have emphasized the degree of independence that nuns could find as migrants. For lay women church membership at their place of destination was also often an important safety net, and not just in case they fell on hard times and would need financial support. As an institution their church could vouch for their honourable conduct, an aspect that was particularly important for single women who were always under the suspicion of prostitution. It is therefore, not surprising that immigrant women entered the (minority) Lutheran church in Amsterdam in larger proportions than men.[27] For a number of early modern women, the migrant experience, therefore, can be interpreted as a liberation from the dilemmas of existing gender roles at home. Frequently, women went to Amsterdam to deliver their children, left them anonymously at the city's hospital, and returned home with a seemingly untarnished reputation to pick up the lives that they had left behind. Others tried to escape shame and ostracization through the flight into the anonymity of a big city.

Migration, however, can also perpetuate existing gender roles and fix women in their place in the family. In her study of two autobiographical accounts of a Huguenot family, written independently by a mother and her daughter, Carolyn Lougee Chappell discusses the migrant experiences of expulsion, flight and exile of two members of a French aristocratic family, who both make the category of "family", the centre of their escape stories.[28] They hold on to the idea of family solidarity, although they had been deserted by the father of the family, who did not join them in their flight, and at one stage the daughter Suzanne, a teenager at the time, was separated from her mother and elder brother and was left with some of her younger siblings to fend for herself abroad. This focus on "family" might be seen as a particular interest of an aristocratic family, whose credibility and social capital rested on reputation and lineage, but popular prints depicting German immigrant women in service in Amsterdam in the seventeenth century frequently emphasize their networks and their solidarity with the families back home. This was not always presented as

an asset. A popular topic of these catchpenny prints, and also of popular plays, is the young maidservant, who marries an old widower, takes over the house and invites her impoverished extended family to the city, where they are clad, fed and entertained at the expenses of the Dutch burgher.[29]

More complicated seems to be the picture of migrating women and their role within early modern armies, that is, in communities which were non-sedentary by definition and which constituted, in times such as the Thirty Years' War, a large segment of early modern life. Not only migration historians, but also New Military Historians increasingly incorporate a gendered approach to their topic. This includes notions of masculinity, but also studies on the role of women as camp-followers, combatants and officers' spouses accompanying their husbands to the battlefields of Europe. In the seventeenth century, these women made up to fifty per cent of the armies on the move. Early modern research into gender roles in these military societies has been dominated by German and German-speaking researchers. This probably reflects the geographical focus on the Holy Roman Empire and its borders in most major conflicts of the early modern period.[30] So far, a somewhat controversial picture has emerged. One camp of historians, represented by Peter Burschel and Matthias Rogg, suggests that military life was an extension of civilian life, which perpetuated and intensified traditional social norms and gender roles. Other historians, such as Bernhard Kroener, point towards the fragility of established gender relations during campaigns, where men were at constant risk of either losing their lives or becoming invalids and thus were dependent on the income of their female partners through their services as cooks, cleaners, seamstresses, nurses, pedlars or prostitutes in the camps.[31] Moreover, where women were not accompanied by a male partner, they could acquire a form of independence through their work, which was not restricted by male rules and regulations. However, as Bertold Brecht's *Mother Courage* rightly reminds us, few women got rich in wars.[32] Desperation, lack of opportunities at home and the experience of violence also formed a substantial, if not the most prominent part of the camp-followers' lives. For dishonoured and destitute women on the margins of respectable society, life in a camp could offer a niche existence which allowed them to be integrated into a group which operated on its own terms. Voices of these women are, again, few and far between. Most research in this area has been undertaken either through the use of images produced by men for largely male buyers or through male voices such as the diary of an unknown mercenary in the Thirty Years' War, published by Jan Peters.[33] This man's story, a rare voice of an ordinary soldier on campaign, reveals the dependency of the soldier on his two (consecutive)

wives to keep some form of household. Women were, indeed, indispensable in that they supplied physical and psychological support in times of war and uncertainty. How the women themselves viewed their role in the camps can, so far, only be reconstructed through diaries of aristocratic women such as Maria Cordula Freiin von Prank, verwitwete Hacke, geborene Radhaupt, an officer's wife from Carinthia, who accompanied her husband to the battlefields of the seventeenth century and who clearly saw herself as a mobile housekeeper who tried to maintain the domestic standards she was used to at home.[34]

Gender roles were certainly also converted by women who disguised themselves as men and undertook active service in early modern European armies. Not surprisingly, figures of those women are notoriously difficult to obtain, but Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol have detected 120 women in armies in the Netherlands alone in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[35] Their study of female transvestism in early modern Europe tried to detect the self-perception of these women, who were mostly from the lower social strata of society, and who took decisive steps to transgress their traditional gender roles mainly to escape desperate situations and destitution at home. Yet they also cited curiosity and the prospect of adventure as motives for their re-invention. Upon discovery the women had to leave, but a distinctly negative connotation of disguised women in uniform and their dismissal as unnatural became particularly prevalent only in the eighteenth century, when, in general, women were squeezed out of early modern military life.

Within the complex of "war and female migration" however, another aspect needs to be mentioned, which is particularly associated with the twentieth-century female migration experience, but could also be applied to early modern case studies. Three out of the ten articles dedicated to female migration in the abovementioned Encyclopaedia are dedicated to brides – Filipina "mail-order brides" in Europe since the 1980s and war brides after the Second World War. Subscribing to a traditional gender role offered, for instance, German women after 1945 the only opportunity to leave their war-torn country in search of a better future. Many of these women emphasized their attributed qualities as home-makers and dedicated housewives in order to attract a husband from overseas.[36] For the eighteenth century, Andrea Knox has recently demonstrated how Irish exile women in early modern Spain used their ascribed qualities as well-educated and trustworthy companions to gain positions at court and to marry into Spanish aristocratic society.[37] Further research into the marriage strategies of migrating women, based on national, regional or religious stereotypes which women could use to their advantages could

certainly also be found in other early modern scenarios. The marriage strategies of Huguenots, for instance, would probably reveal to what degree these women were able to exploit the qualities ascribed to their community, not least through their own efforts to present themselves in exile in the best possible light. So far, research has focused on the self-fashioning of the groups through their historians and community leaders. A gendered approach could certainly enrich our understanding of the community in exile and the longevity of their distinct identity abroad.[38] This aspect raises further questions of a gendered migration experience, expressed in a gendered language. It is noticeable, for instance, that female interviewees asked about their migration experience to North and South America used the words "homesick" and "homesickness" which are missing from the vocabulary of male commentators. [39] Does that mean that women are more willing to express fear, anger, frustration and disappointment in the migratory experiences undoubtedly shared by large numbers of migrants? Or is it true, as Carolyn Heilbrun suggests, that "women writing their lives conceal their pain"?[40] Marie de Rochefoucauld, in her escape *mémoire* cited earlier, blends out unwanted memories. She describes the unification of her family at their place of refuge, but omits the fact that her youngest daughter, baby Therese, had been left behind in France. She does not comment on the fact that her husband had left them alone teetering on the brink of conversion to Catholicism and only joined the family eighteen months later. She does not mention any contact which she had - inevitably - with foreigners on her travels but reduces her escape story to the help and support that she received from fellow Huguenots in different parts of Europe. Her ascribed role is the role of a steadfast Christian mother. Is it, therefore, the silences that need to be analysed as much as the accounts of women writing about exile, flight and migration?

For many migrant women religion certainly provided a framework in which they could understand and describe their journeys. But even the famous Marie Guyart de l'Incarnation, a French Ursuline nun in seventeenth-century Canada, brought to life in Natalie Zemon Davis' *Women on the Margins*, admits that it was not just her vocation and her desire to do God's work overseas, but also a sense of adventure and curiosity, that had brought her to the New World. For Maria Sybilla Merian, another migrating woman again portrayed through her own writings by Natalie Zemon Davis, migration from Frankfurt firstly to the Netherlands and then to the Dutch colony of Suriname, is seen as a spiritual journey, but also as a journey to fulfil her professional desire as a scientist and artist.[41] The letters and diaries of both women also reveal a distinctly gendered view of the world around them, which was shaped by

their Eurocentric perception of the world, but also by their experiences as women and as professionals - missionary and scientist - which moderated the European claims of superiority made by their male contemporaries.

A last aspect that needs to be addressed in this context covers the area of migration and memory. Can historians detect distinct commemorative strategies amongst women and if so, how do they differ from male practices? Are, perhaps, distinct life stories about female migration experiences transported through the female family line?[42] All these questions are difficult to answer for women in early modern society, but the growing interest in a gendered approach to migration history will, it is hoped, open new interpretations and new research for these women, who will hopefully no longer remain out of sight and on the margins of migration research.

Notes

1. Christiane Harzig, "Women Migrants as Global and Local Agents. New Research Strategies on Gender and Migration," in *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical and Global Perspective*s, ed. Pamela Sharpe (London: Routledge, 2001), 15-28.
2. Klaus J. Bade, Pieter C. Emmer, Leo Lucassen, and Jochen Oltmer, "Migration and integration: a conceptual guideline for authors of the Encyclopaedia Migration Integration, and Minorities since the Seventeenth Century: a European Encyclopaedia." Communication from Klaus Bade and Jochen Oltmer (July 2002).
3. Communication with Jochen Oltmer (June 6, 2007) who has kindly send me the introduction and the table of content of the book. The German version of the Encyclopaedia was published in 2007. Klaus J. Bade et al., *Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Paderborn: Munich 2007) [2nd edition 2008]. The English edition published by Cambridge University Press is scheduled for 2010.
4. Thus the title of Oscar Handlin's seminal study on migration in the United States [first published 1951]. It painted the picture of contemporary Americans as descendents of men (and women), who had cut their "Old World" European roots and formed a new society developed under the conditions of the frontier. The book was a major success and has seen various re-editions with the latest in 2002.
5. Pamela Sharpe, "Introduction: Gender and the Experience of Migration," in *Women, Gender and Labour Migration*, 1-14. Anthropologists have offered insights into migrants' multiple identities, which can be usefully applied by historians for their research. For an overview see, for instance, Caroline B. Brettell, "Theorizing Migration in Anthropology. The Social Construction of Networks, Identities, Communities and Globalspace," in *Migration Theory. Talking Across*

Disciplines, eds. Caroline B. Brettell and James Hollifield (New York; London: Routledge, 2000), 97-137.
6. Leo Lucassen, "Grensoverschrijding. Vrouwen en gender in historische migratiestudies," in *Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis* (Gaan & Staan, 2001), 9-35.
7. For an overview on migration research, particularly in Germany see Klaus Bade, "Historische Migrationsforschung" in *Migration in der europäischen Geschichte seit dem späten Mittelalter* (IMIS Studien 20), Osnabrück 2003, pp. 21-44. For a recent overview on early modern migration research in Britain see Ian D. White, *Migration and Society in Britain 1550-1830* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan), 2000.
8. Carolyn Lougee Chappell, "'The Pains I took to Save My/His Family': Escape Accounts by a Huguenot Mother and Daughter after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes," *French Historical Studies* 22/1 (1999): 1-64.
9. See, for instance, Andrea Rottloff, "Stärker als Männer und tapferer als Ritter," Pilgerinnen in Spätantike und Mittelalter (Mainz: Zabern, 2007).
10. Susan Signe Morrison, *Women Pilgrims in Late Medieval England. Private Piety as Public Performance* (London: Routledge, 2000). There is also an interesting and growing literature on women and the crusades: See Sabine Geldsetzer, *Frauen auf Kreuzzügen 1096-1291* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003); Christoph T. Maier, "The Roles of Women in the Crusade Movement: A Survey," *Journal of Medieval History* 30/1 (2004): 61-82.
11. Lotte van de Pol, Erika Kuijpers, "Poor Women's Migration to the City: The Attraction of Amsterdam Health Care and Social Assistance in Early Modern Times," *Journal of Urban History* 32/1 (2005): 46. See also Jan Lucassen, "Female Migrations to Amsterdam. A Response to Lotte van de Pol," in *Women of the Golden Age. An International Debate on Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland, England and Italy* eds. Els Kloek, Nicole Teeuwen and Marijke Huisman (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994), 85.
12. Lotte van de Pol, Erika Kuijpers, "Poor Women's Migration to the City," 48.
13. W. J. Charles Moens, *The Walloons and their Church at Norwich: their History and Registers, 1565-1832* (2 vols.)(Lymington: Huguenot Society of London Publications 1, 1887-1888) Vol. 2: 207-216. Although a number of historians have studied the Dutch and Walloon immigrant communities in England in recent years, none of those have incorporated a gendered approach to their topic. See, for instance, Nigel Goose and Lien. B. Luu, introduction to *Immigrants in Tudor and Early Stuart England*, eds. Nigel Goose and Lien. B. Luu, (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 1-40.
14. Harzig, "Women Migrants as Global and Local Agents," 17.
15. Sharpe, "Introduction. Gender and the Experience of Migration," 2; Harzig, "Women Migrants as Global and Local Agents," and the literature cited here.
16. For an overview see Sharpe, "Introduction. Gender and the Experience of Migration," 1-14.
17. Erika Kuijpers, *Migrantenstad. Immigratie en sociale verhoudingen in 17e eeuws* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005).