



New Female Migrants in Portugal: A State of the Art

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Introduction

This paper provides a brief review of literature on the issue of female immigration to Portugal, and more specifically the migration of women over the last ten years.¹ There are still few works specifically dedicated to immigrant women in Portugal, particularly recent migration. Scholars addressing immigrant women issues ritually deplore the lack of academic research in the field (Hellermann 2005; Peixoto *et al.* 2006), although some visibility has been gained of late. This knowledge gap, and the recent focus on immigrant women, is not surprising if one takes into account that Portugal is considered a new migratory space and, more relevantly, that scientific research on women was only recently established here. The academic field was reluctant to consider areas such as youth, daily life, the body, the family and women as “noble objects of study” (Joaquim 2004). It was not until 1995 that the first Master’s course on Women Studies was founded at the Open University of Lisbon (Vaquinhas 2002; Joaquim 2004). Research on immigration and ethnicity on the one hand and gender on the other have both been active in recent years, without however significant crossing. As a matter of fact, ethnic and migration studies seldom encompass issues of gender whilst gender studies seldom encompass issues of ethnicity/immigration. The lack of research on immigrant women, as well as media coverage of the topic, are both reflections of *academic* as well as *social marginalisation* of this issue. An analysis of the media’s social representation of migrant women revealed that these women are referred to in papers with concise and factual data, illustrating a process which abandons people in the margins. Female migration is bestowed the status of an “event” rather than that of a real “*issue*” (Santos 2005). Migrant women are generally denied the status of being an object of interest.

The feminisation of migration in the wake of family reunification and the autonomous migration of women contribute, however, to explain the growing interest in and visibility of migrant women (Albuquerque 2005). In 2003, the Foundation for Science and Technology² and the Commission for Equality and Women’s Rights³ signed a protocol aiming to stimulate research and the development of investigations “about factors contributing to inequalities between men and women” in the country.⁴ Included within the lines of research proposed are areas dedicated to migrant women and the identification and analysis of factors creating a

¹ The author thanks Mirjana Morokvasic for her comments on this paper.

² Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT).

³ Comissão para a Igualdade e para os Direitos das Mulheres (CIDM).

⁴ Protocolo entre a Comissão para a Igualdade e para os Direitos das Mulheres e a Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, in: http://www.fct.mctes.pt/projectos/Protocolos/protocolos_CIDM/ (accessed 21.02.07). This protocol was their second one. The third dated 2005 proposed the same lines of investigation.

vulnerability to certain forms of violence such as “human trafficking” and “prostitution” which are presumed to target immigrant women. The research project “Migrant women: labour trajectories and socio-economic modes of insertion of migrants in Portugal”⁵ (Peixoto *et al.* 2006) was, for instance, financed in the frame of this protocol. The Foundation for Science and Technology provided funds for research entitled “Female prostitution in Portuguese semi-peripheral border areas”⁶ (Ribeiro and Sacramento 2005) and financed an international conference to present the results of this research aiming, among other things, to inform representatives of government organisations including members of the Commission for Equality and Women’s Rights as well as feminist circles.⁷ Still other research has been financed by the European Commission: Karin Wall conducted a study in Portugal in the frame of the Project Female Migration Vision (2005-2006) which notably explored the trajectories of women from recent migration flows (the Ukrainian and the Brazilian) (Wall, Nunes and Matias 2005); the FEMIPOL project⁸ (2006-2008) addresses new female migratory flows; and the project IDEA (2007-2009)⁹ is investigating new migratory destinations, namely Mediterranean and Eastern European Countries, and proposes a gender perspective. The third sector is also engaged in the process of producing knowledge about immigrant women. In a compilation of articles contributed by scholars and students, including NGO activists as well as feminists, the anti-racist NGO SOS Racismo book (2005) “*Migration and Ethnicity. Living experiences and trajectories of women in Portugal*”¹⁰ aims to shed light on women’s diversity (ethnic, confessional, in terms of sexual orientation, etc.).

Some research centres include migration and gender studies as major distinctive areas of research such as the Centre for the Study of Migration and Intercultural Relations¹¹ founded in 1989 at the Portuguese Open University in Lisbon (Teixeira and Albuquerque 2005). Academic work concerning migrant women has also been conducted at centres specifically dedicated to migration studies such as the Centre for the Study of Migrations and Ethnic Minorities¹² founded in 2000 at the New University of Lisbon, although gender is not an area of research *per se*.

⁵ Mulheres migrantes: percursos laborais e modos de inserção socioeconómica das imigrantes em Portugal.

⁶ Prostituição feminina em regiões de Fronteira.

⁷ Colóquio Internacional « Mulheres da vida », mulheres com vida : prostituição feminina, Estado e políticas, Universidade do Minho (20.10.2005).

⁸ “Integration of Female Immigrants in Labour Market and Society. Policy Assessment and Policy Recommendations”, <http://www.femipol.uni-frankfurt.de/>

⁹ “Mediterranean and Eastern European Countries as New Immigration Destinations in the European Union”, <http://pascal.iseg.utl.pt/~socius/investigacao/index.shtml>

¹⁰ *Imigração e etnicidade. Vivências e trajetórias de mulheres em Portugal.*

¹¹ Centros de Estudos das Migrações e das Relações Interculturais (CEMRI).

¹² Centro de Estudos de Migrações e de Minorias Étnicas (CEMME).

Research centres with a more general aim, selectively conduct research on immigrant women¹³, the SOCIUS, the CISEP and the CESIS for instance conducted the above mentioned study on immigrant women labour trajectories which was coordinated by Peixoto (2006). The issue has also inspired film makers. Recently, Christine Reeh shot a documentary « Waiting for Europe », produced by the Portuguese television and ACIME¹⁴ organisation, relating the story of a young Bulgarian woman and her migration to Portugal.¹⁵

Under more or less demand-driven research, some key themes do emerge from the literature, such as the statistical evaluation of migration broken down by gender and legal status (Cruz 2005; Gonçalves 2006); the socio-demographic characterization of diverse feminine migratory flows enabling comparisons between recent and older ones (Gonçalves and Figueiredo 2005; Gonçalves 2006); the issue of women migrating alone, their access to and use of social capital (Hellermann 2005); the socio-economic insertion of female migrants (Gonçalves and Figueiredo 2005; Peixoto 2006); the social representations and self-perceptions of immigrant women, specifically Brazilians (Pontes 2004; Santos 2005); and prostitution (Ribeiro and Sacramento 2005; Téchio 2006; Santos 2007) or female trafficking (Peixoto *et al.* 2005; Sabino and Pereira 2005). Monographs, university works and dissertations, reports, either financed by international or national institutions, have made use of diverse methodologies: statistics analysis, questionnaires, press analysis, fieldwork and participant observations, informal discussions, interviews with representatives of governmental and non governmental institutions and, more systematically, with immigrant women. It is also worth mentioning that official data are not systematically broken down by gender, subsequently the gendered statistical information presented in some papers were obtained through special demands (Cruz 2005).

To give an overview of the research, we will first disclose the results of studies which primarily aim to compare older female migration flows with more recent ones, shedding light on the differences and similarities between them. In the second section we will present another topic raised in the literature: the social construction of stereotyped images of immigrant women leading

¹³ To name just a few of these centres: the Institute of Social Sciences (Instituto de Ciências Sociais – ICS) which is located at the University of Lisbon; the Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology (Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia - CIES) which is a centre of research of the ISCTE (University Institute of Management, Social Sciences and Technology) also located in Lisbon; the Centre for Social Intervention Studies (Centro de Estudos para a Intervenção Social - CESIS) is developing among other areas of research, research on migrants and minority studies and research on gender equality; the Research Centre in Economic and Organizational Sociology (Centro de Investigação em Sociologia Económica e das Organizações - SOCIUS) located in Lisbon is also a participant in the European research project IDEA; the Research Centre on the Portuguese Economy (Centro de Investigação sobre a Economia Portuguesa, CISEP).

¹⁴ Alto Comissariado para a Imigração e Minorias Étnicas (High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities).

¹⁵ ACIME, Mulheres imigrantes: documentário « Waiting for Europe », in : <http://www.acime.gov.pt/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1335> (accessed 04.02.07)

to their ethnification and sexualization, and the massive consequences they produce in terms of social and labour market integration. In the third section, we will address the development of more diversified, if not newer, forms or patterns of mobility involving recent immigrant women and their possible effects.

I. Diversity in migration associated with a weak ethnic division of labour

The works distinguish and highlight diverse female migratory flows according to several criteria: statistical representation and legal status; length of stay; educational level; social class and social mobility; family reunification migration or independent migration, etc. (Gonçalves and Figueiredo 2005; Wall, Nunes and Matias 2005; Gonçalves 2006).

The statistical presentation of immigrants commonly considers 2001 to be a turning point in Portuguese migration history, diversifying its landscape. Decree-Law 4/2001 established a new regularisation process which substantially modified the composition and socio-economic characteristics of legal migrants in Portugal (Baganha 2004) or gave light to the presence of new migratory flows (Pires 2002). Importantly, it also created a precarious new legal status: the permit to stay (*Autorização de permanência - AP*), a short-term residence permit for the period of one year and renewable. A step which basically divided the migrant population into two groups: the latter and persons holding conventional residence permits (*Autorização de residência - AR*) (Baganha 2004), who acquired a more stable status. 2001 is also a point of reference as the last Portuguese Population Census to be carried out by the INE.¹⁶ Ana Cruz (2005) gave a statistical overview of residence permit issuance to immigrant women in Portugal, distinguishing between these two legal statuses. Based on data transmitted by the SEF¹⁷, her presentation emphasised that women were under-represented among holders of residence permits (*Autorização de Residência - AR*) in 2004 (provisional data), with the exception of a few migratory flows: Brazilians, Ukrainians, and migrants coming from São Tomé and the Príncipe islands. Women represented about 45% of foreigners holding residence permits (AR). More detailed data by nationalities, although older information (up through 2002) was presented by Gonçalves (2006), who showed that women coming from the former USSR, Russia, Ukraine and other East-European countries (except Bulgaria, Moldavia and Romania) were over-represented among residence permit holders, although they were not really numerous.

¹⁶ Instituto Nacional de Estatísticas (Institute of National Statistics).

¹⁷ Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (Foreign Nationals and Borders Service).

Foreign women are even more significantly under-represented among bearers of the short-term AP permits (Autorização de Permanência). As a matter of fact, they represented 25 % of such permit holders in 2002 (Cruz 2005). Furthermore, in 2002, East-European women represented 46,5 % of foreign women holding AP permits, Brazilian represented approximately one third and women from Portuguese speaking African countries (PALOP) about 19 % (Gonçalves 2006).

Concisely summarizing the data explored by Gonçalves (2006), Peixoto (2006) gives a clear picture of the statistical trends observable in the country: the above presentation was enhanced by figures representing rises in relative proportions of female migrants up through the end of the 1990s (immigrant women represented 40,9 and 45,5 % of holders of residence permits in 1980 and 2004). This is in contrast with subsequent declines in this relative number, percentages of women among bearers of the “new” AP permit have become far less pronounced and, by extension, are found in lower numbers in new migratory flows. In other words, and although the absolute number of immigrant women rose, we cannot confirm a feminisation in recent migration as the gender ratio in recent flows has become increasingly unfavourable to women. Eastern European and Brazilian women are furthermore over-represented in recent flows in comparison with women from the PALOP area (as shown by the figures regarding holders of AP permits, although men are also predominant in recent flows among Brazilian and East-European). PALOP women are, on the contrary, more highly represented among holders of residence permits (AR). This confirms that PALOP female migration is older. Another figure presented by Gonçalves and Figueiredo (2005), who offer a socio-demographic presentation of female migration to Portugal which is presented in more detail by Gonçalves (2006), provides confirmation that female East-European migration is more recent than influxes from Brazil and Portuguese speaking African (PALOP) countries. Thus, according to the 2001 Census only 14,7% of Eastern European female immigrants residing in Portugal were already residing in the country in 1995, in comparison to 39,7% of Brazilians and 64,4 % of women coming from PALOP countries.

Both presentations further confirm that women from Portuguese speaking African countries are substantially less skilled than women coming from Brazil and that a large proportion of female East-European migrants are skilled. When putting skill levels and female professional insertion into perspective, one finds a close match between education and occupation among women from Portuguese speaking African countries (unskilled women work in unskilled occupations); a complete mismatch in the case of East-European female immigrants (skilled and highly educated women occupying unskilled jobs), the case for Brazilians is relative. Despite

these differences, women share similar experiences of professional insertion (they are channelled into the lower segments of the labour market). The authors conclude that despite the diversity of migration flows (in terms of length of stay, skills, etc.), the professional insertion of immigrant women seems to roughly converge (Gonçalves and Figueiredo 2005; Gonçalves 2006). Some differences showing certain ethnic divisions of labour do however surface: Brazilian women were more highly represented in activities such as the hotel industry, catering and trade and, as far as the first wave of migration is concerned, they were also active in technical and skilled activities, while women coming from Portuguese speaking African countries as well as East-European women are essentially engaged in cleaning activities, and domestic and personal services (the latter are also more represented in industrial activities and agriculture) (Gonçalves and Figueiredo 2005; Gonçalves 2006; Peixoto 2006). The ethnic division of labour and its ties to theories of labour market segmentation (immigrant women being confined to lower segments of the economy) (Peixoto 2006) is, as a whole, still under-theorised and should be addressed more thoroughly. This process of labour ethnicisation has been partly explained by ethnic preferences in recruitment practices, based on widespread assumptions that female East-European possess valuable skills and Brazilians can generally be ascribed natural characteristics such as a good temperament (Figueiredo 2006). This point is further developed in Section II.

The downward social mobility inherent in female East-European immigrants has also been confirmed in other empirical studies (Wall, Nunes and Matias 2005) and illustrated by some portraits of women – and men – compiled by Santos (2004) in *Vento de Leste* (“Wind from the East”). One such case is Raísa Zolotco, a Moldavian who studied languages and Russian literature at the University of Tiraspol before joining her husband, who was engaged in the construction sector in Portugal, and was herself engaged in different precarious jobs: domestic employee; elderly caregiver; waitress. Raísa even temporarily left her marital home to work as live-in maid. It is only after working in a journal that she founded a matrimonial agency, mainly establishing contact between Portuguese men and foreign women (most of whom are from Eastern countries). Some of these women had already experienced downward social mobility in their country of origin such as Nádia Kormych, from the Ukraine, who worked as a design director in the garment industry before the collapse of the Ukrainian economy led her to assume precarious jobs and eventually migrate to Portugal, alone. Nádia works as a part-time domestic employee and part-time in the cleaning sector. According to the portrait, one can find her evenings in a well-know shopping centre of Lisbon where she sells her paintings.

Often highly skilled, East European immigrant women (they were physicians, teachers, etc. in their country of origin), sometimes symbolically compensated for this downturn by

engaging in social activities. They often turn up in language, computer and professional training sessions, in new university courses, as volunteers in NGOs or religious group activities (Hellermann 2006).

Another line of diversity raised in the literature is the existence of family-centred or autonomous migration. Women, and more particularly East-European immigrants, although not necessarily single, increasingly *move on their own*, in other words without men and children which, according to Hellermann (2005) as well as other authors, is in sharp contrast with the stereotype of passive migrant women reuniting with their partners (Morokvasic 1993). Migrating alone may explain that their first occupation in Portugal is often as a live-in maid, their primary goal is often to save as much money as possible, leading them to renounce any expenses related to creating social networks, therefore intensifying their loneliness. Based on research concerning the experiences of such migrant women in Portugal, Hellermann (2006) discusses the applicability of the concept of *social capital* in the case of women migrating alone, considering their individual experiences. In line with work done by Portes, and developing a critical approach to theories celebrating social capital, Hellermann sheds light on some of the negative aspects related to using or turning to social networks.¹⁸ The author starts by providing evidence of the impact of social and economic capital on the arrangement of the journey to and arrival in Portugal. Migrant candidates may choose to purchase a complete « packet of services » or a basic one: in other words they can pay in advance for documents, a visa, the journey as well as arrangements for accommodations and a job in Portugal (« pre-arranged work »), or merely papers and travelling expenses. In line with research orientations developed by Bourdieu, it is stated that economic capital is necessary for social capital production. Social capital facilitates access to social networks, labour, accommodation, as well as logistic and emotional support. Social capital produces social capital. However, social capital is gendered. These women face stigmatisation if they are moving on their own. Stigmatizing representations (shared by immigrants and locals) associate them with easy women looking for sexual adventure. Such disgrace may take the form of “defamation”: namely being labelled as prostitutes. They also fall under the financial control of men, the main suppliers of material aid in these social networks, and are thereby subject to suspicion as they are under their social control. By trying to avoid being under the control of men, their renunciation of social networks plunges them into lasting solitude (Hellermann 2005, 2006). Stereotypical ideas attached to East European women migrating on their own and the necessary distance taken to social networks (Potot 2005),

¹⁸ The author understands « social capital as that which a person can offer in order to get access to networks, and consequently to resources, help and knowledge ».

deepening their solitude, were phenomena described in other migratory contexts. However, stereotypification and stigmatizing images extend beyond women migrating alone and East-European women.

II. Sexualisation and ethnicisation of foreign women

Another issue emerging from the literature is the construction and diffusion of social representations, which contributes to the sexualisation and ethnicisation of women and impacts gendered integration. Clara Almeida Santos' analysis of the press coverage of immigrant women shows that words such as *prostitution* and *clandestine* are often associated with female migration. A suspicion of illegality is hung over these women as well as an association with illicit or evil repute practices. Migrant women are often depicted in the media as Brazilian women, who symbolize erotic exoticism, willing to engage in sexual activities for money. The author hence presents the social construction of a stereotype: namely that Brazilian women are closely associated with prostitution (Santos 2005). Another study conducted by Luciana Pontes (2004), which examined the image of Brazilian women in the media, reveals interesting mechanisms involved in this social construction which contribute to deconstructing this process. In Portugal, the image of Brazil "is feminised" (advertisements for Brazilian products frequently use images of undressed women, supposedly to capture the essence of the country), a process which is closely tied to Portugal's colonial history, globalisation as well as international, and more precisely, sex tourism. The social construction of the image of Brazilians in Portugal is based on exoticism and references to the tropics. The author refers to a Portuguese TV program which represented a Brazilian maid as a scantily dressed woman wearing green (flashy) short skirts, aiming to seduce her boss's son. This (hyper)sexualisation of Brazilian women intersects with class and ethnic relations as they are constructed in the course of the migration process. The author mentions that this ascribed ethnicity has actually been (re)appropriated by Brazilian women themselves. For instance sex workers endorse and reproduce in their discourse a sexualised image of themselves, they claim that they are highly sought after by their Portuguese clients as they are very accessible and because of their kind disposition (e.g. warm persons). One of the most interesting aspects of Pontes' paper is that it illustrates ethnicity (Brazilian and Portuguese in this case) as a product of interacting or contrasting/opposing relations and that the examination of ethnic boundaries forms a dichotomy between insiders and outsiders (« us » and « them »). A specific event is highly significant: women from northern Portugal (in a reference to the city of Bragança) claim themselves to be the « mothers of Bragança » who oppose the

Brazilian prostitutes they accuse of “depraving” their husbands. The choice of the designation « Mothers of Bragance » is essentially « assimilating sexuality to legitimate and reproductive motherhood, associated with domesticity and children’s care » (Pontes 2007: 247). In the construction of ethnic boundaries, negative attributes such as dissolute life, unbridled sexuality rest with Brazilian women, not to mention their ascribed function as corrupters of social peace.

Furthermore, social representations of Brazil sexualise gender. In Portugal, Brazilian people are typically associated with attributes such as *happy* or *sensual*, and they are supposed to be endowed with a special virtue which is their *sympathy*. Nevertheless, this evaluation is positive when men possess such characteristics and negative when applied to women (Machado cited by Pontes 2004 and Machado 2004). These attributes, for instance, help men find careers in what Igor José de Renó Machado calls « the entertaining market »¹⁹ (occupations related to entertainment or implying a public contact such as trade activities), while the same qualities confine social representations of Brazilian women to sex work – which represents an indubitable mark of asymmetric gender relations. This, in other words, shows that attributed competencies are the result of gendered and ethnicised processes. Labour and sociability are central, says Machado, to understanding the « construction of essentialized identities referring to stereotyped images of Brazil ». Turning thus to sociability, we discover that trying to match these stereotyped images as closely as possible to representations of Brazilian men (who outnumber their female counterparts in the matrimonial market) guarantees raises in their social capital. The insertion into networks controlled by intermediaries who appear to be more established immigrants, often dating or married to Portuguese women, not only allows one to learn the codes of practice in Portuguese society, but also enables encounters with Portuguese women in the matrimonial market. Matrimonial meeting opens new doors to Portuguese society, and consequently these unions produce social capital. In this case the use of Brazilian attributes, which Machado calls « the game of centrality » (the strategies of distinction among Brazilian people to match as closely as possible the social representations about Brazilians), is also more favourable to men as they are the ones who contract unions (Machado 2004). While comparing Hellermann’s works (2005; 2006) on female East-Europeans migrating on their own and Machado studies (2004) on Brazilian men, it is striking to note that men are more likely to benefit from social networks – which provide help but are also means of social control.

Joana Correia dos Santos (2007) conducted fieldwork for 6 months in 2004 in the neighbourhood of la Baixa in Lisbon. Immersed in a team, she observed several groups of female prostitutes: « established » Portuguese, Africans and East-Europeans. These groups use different

forms of dress and self-presentation strategies to attract male clients. As in other national contexts (Deschamps 2006), native women accuse migrants of unfair competition, for instance inferring they charge lower prices in exchange for unprotected sex. This defence of their territory is all the more crucial for the native Portuguese women in that clients often prefer migrants and younger women. The attempt to curb competition takes the form of rumour propagation, verbal conflicts and even physical violence. The ethnisation of labour practices is still marked by specific practices of mobility and the availability of prostitutes. Some of the Romanian women placed the observation team on the track of pending/circular prostitution rings which travel and out of Portugal, Spain and Romania. These women admitted that they come over with 6-month visas and, according to the author, are later « placed » in Spain, and then return to their native country and so on.

III. Increasingly diversified mobility patterns

The existence of what is sometimes called *new forms of migration* – transnational, pendular, circular, forced migrations – constitutes another relevant issue which may provide some insight into the impact they have. We find such transnational migrations among other migratory flows such as Latin-American migrants (and more particularly Brazilians) engaged in prostitution in the Spanish-Portuguese frontier region (Ribeiro and Sacramento 2002, 2005). These women move from club to club in Portugal and between national territories (Portugal, Spain) in the border regions of the country. In the first stages of their research findings, the authors (2002) depict the different forms of mobility deployed in this activity *as well as their functionality in the eyes of the three categories of actors concerned*: the employers (club proprietors); the prostitutes and the clients. This mobility and “volatility”, as defined by the authors, results in a quick suspension of a club's activities, they can be easily set up and closed down; the fast change in proprietors; and women's mobility from club to club. The advantage for the club proprietors a reduction in visibility and the risks associated with the illegality surrounding activities in prostitution. Furthermore, periodic changes in the supply of prostitutes in clubs, induced by their geographical movement, also hinders clients and prostitutes from forming established/stable relationship, these points are beneficial to the “sex trade” and for capital accumulation.²⁰ Another phenomenon worth mentioning is the social isolation of women who live in their workplaces and rarely go out, this effect accentuates novelty as these women are invisible in public places and are

¹⁹ « Mercado da alegria ».

²⁰ Close and affective relationships may interfere with the fees prostitute charge, either reducing or cancelling them.

seen only in the clubs. Turning to the second factor, prostitute women are often undocumented, and may voluntarily choose to be on the move to avoid police control as well as to augment their earnings. But clients also take advantage of mobility – as we saw it allows them to accrue new paid sexual partners and they can also move from one club to another, from one country to the other. Client mobility is a way of dealing with the lack of supply in prostitutes in some areas of the country and guarantees their anonymity. The crossing of frontiers (geographic and symbolic), as well as the distance that this movement implies, helps to pacify guilty feelings among clients who are married and are being unfaithful to their wives. One of the most interesting aspects of this study is that it shows evidence of *common interests*, if not collusion, among the three actors (club proprietors, prostitutes and clients) well as the fact that mobility serves the same mentioned interests which interact and sustain one another. In addition, although prostitute circulation is widespread throughout Europe, some structural factors – namely the characteristics of border regions (geographic, symbolic) – enhance or stimulate prostitution development in the context of open internal frontiers within the EU and a strengthening of control over external ones. More generally, the “frontier thematic” is important in understanding the practices and social representations of this basic triangle of actors: symbolic aspects as far as clients are concerned, and legal aspects as far as (undocumented) prostitutes and club proprietors are concerned.

Later, the same authors (2005) pointed out some of the negative aspects of mobility for these women. The circular mobility presented, or was celebrated in other contexts, as a means to avoid *migrating*, and as a way to preserve a way of living (« to be settled in mobility ») (Morokvasic 2004) in this case discloses negative consequences or is perceived negatively. This continued mobility would be source of symbolic violence on top of the stigma of prostitution with its share of humiliation, loss of self-esteem, etc. Basing their statements on the time use of prostitutes (« time-budget survey »), the authors defend that this violence is a “pervasive and omnipresent feature of prostitutes’ ostensibly private off-duty (non-working) time and space”. Prostitutes residing in their workplace are confined to impersonal environments (they lack the time to appropriate and personalise the place in which they live) with an ever-changing work collective (their colleagues often change frequently), which reduces opportunities for friendships to develop. Off-duty time is usually spent lazily, with poor integration into social life (except superfluous relationships within the prostitution milieu). “Faced by the excessive standardization, sedentarization and trivialization of their daily round of (in)activity and (inter)relationships, exacerbated and accentuated by the residential, social and existential confinement that multifaced exclusion imposes on them, women prostitutes tend to regard their lives as both physically and mentally painful, violent and claustrophobic” (Ribeiro and Sacramento 2005: 70). This continued

mobility, apparently created in this case through a restrictive migration policy, engenders a certain social representation of inactivity: “The transitory nature of their working lives clearly impacts on the forms and the content of how they use their off-duty time: it accentuates the perception that it is merely time spent waiting for the next move, an interval in which to do nothing, simply to be endured” (Ribeiro and Sacramento 2005: 74).

Kachia Téchio (2006) depicts the case of Brazilian women working in *casas de alterne*²¹ where they practice prostitution, who sometimes return home and are replaced in Portugal by a family member, either a sister or the mother, who then finds employment as a domestic worker or kitchen-aid. These practices sustain the *family migratory project*, and echo others, such as East-European female migrants’ experiences in Germany, who share positions in domestic services on a rotating basis (Morokvasic 1996). It is relevant to explore whether these different forms of mobility (individual circular mobility, circular mobility involving different family members, etc.) constitute resources (Morokvasic 1999).

Another pattern of mobility is exemplified by trafficking in human beings. The Portuguese definition of trafficking is rather restrictive. It is actually limited to prostitution and sexual relationships excluding forced labour, slavery or servitude which differs for instance from the broader conception of trafficking as defined in the additional protocol to the United Nations Convention against organised transnational crime (Sabino and Pereira 2005; Costa 2006). Basing their statement on an analysis of court cases, interviews conducted with informants of governmental and non governmental institutions, and immigrants’ life histories, the authors of the report “*O tráfico de migrantes em Portugal: perspectivas sociológicas, jurídicas e políticas*” (Peixoto et al. 2005; Sabino and Pereira 2005) advocate a broader definition of trafficking in human beings than the one adopted by Portugal. This is reflected in their report which encompasses labour trafficking, and trafficking in children and women. The authors also present and discuss the problematic distinction between *trafficking* and *smuggling* which would theoretically depend on the degrees of coercion, violence, exploitation and/or fraud deployed. They conclude the existence of a continuum describing trafficking, smuggling and “‘normal’ labour migration”, and the presence of different levels of the above mentioned fraudulent and violent characteristics along this continuum (immigrants may experience several of these states throughout their migratory trajectory). At an empirical level, they present the characteristics of the social networks involved in women’s trafficking: the complexity of their structure, ethnic and gendered composition; the degrees of coercion and violence deployed. By interviewing both members of institutions and members of NGOs it was possible to detect different social

representations regarding the nature of trafficking in women (consent and deception involved). The former consider women to be aware that their migration was for the purpose of working in prostitution; the latter stress that women were unaware that they would be forced to enter prostitution.

Concluding remarks

The literature mainly depicts a diversified female migration framework. Women who originate from Portuguese speaking African countries (PALOP), Brazil and East-European countries, for instance, present different polarities: the former are generally presented as older, more established migration streams formed, among other things, through family reunification and located in the unskilled strata of the workforce. The Brazilian stream is composed of two segments: an older one, with a balanced sex-ratio, more skilled, whose members are more likely to hold residence permits and a second one, more recent, mainly composed of men, less skilled and filling occupations which are less skilled than its predecessor. East-European migration is even more recent, initiated in the late 1990s, mainly composed of men, but also of women migrating on their own, generally skilled persons channelled into unskilled jobs. As a sign of these differences one can mention that female immigrants from Portuguese speaking African countries are more likely to be on welfare, a fact which mirrors a more consolidated migration, with longer residences in the country and the acquisition of legal statuses (as well as their vulnerability to unemployment) (Gonçalves 2006; Peixoto 2006).

Nevertheless, despite interesting case studies and research underlining women on the move, a few comparative and more systematic studies still represent new migrations on different axes:

- The way employment and migration policy distinctly affect immigrant men and women, and possibly differently, according to their country of origin, the length and duration of migration, leading to the acquisition of more or less stable status;
- The comparison between immigrant women and natives remains an understudied area (professional paths, resort to informality, etc.);
- The differences among East-European female migrants (their life and professional trajectories, the modalities of their social mobility, etc.) as already stated by Christiane Hellermann (2005), the same could apply to studies which do not always make

²¹ Clubs where women entertain men and may practise prostitution.

distinctions among African women. This homogenisation could contribute to giving a reified image of these immigrant women;

- The class and inter-ethnic relationships between domestic employees who may be highly educated (such as some East-European women) and their employers, a point which remains widely unexplored;
- The insertion of recent female immigrants in sectors of activity other than those traditionally expected to absorb this workforce (domestic and care services, prostitution) is also overlooked. Monographs about recent immigrant women in industry, agriculture, technical and skilled occupations for instance are still lacking;
- The way women handle transnational issues (their economic role as family headed-households, the care drain, pendular/circular mobility between different countries) as well as the subsequent social identification phenomenon. Little is known also about the gendered impact of such mobility patterns (do men and women experience them similarly?).

Two fields of study could be more precisely explored and deserve further development: the intersectionality issue (i.e. how do class/gender and ethnicity intersect) and a more systematic comparison among different kinds of the so-called “new”, or at least more diversified, mobility patterns (do they constitute a resource for women?). Achieving both could shed insight on the influence of class/gender and ethnicity intersections and new mobility patterns concerning the integration of recent female immigrants.

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