

Intersecting issues of gender, 'race', and migration in the changing care regimes of UK, Sweden and Spain

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Abstract

Research that analyzes the relationship between welfare regimes and migration tends to be ungendered, or focus mainly on labour market processes. Much of the work on changing welfare regimes that looks at gender and care only draws ethnicity or migration into its analysis in passing. And research on migration, gender and citizenship, particularly on domestic service, while it acknowledges the gap in social provision that domestic and care workers fill, tends not to address the varied and changing context of welfare regimes in any detail. However, the trend towards the employment of migrant workers as domestic workers and carers in private homes provides a fascinating lens on the ways in which all these issues are enmeshed.

The paper is in two parts: The first half outlines some of the issues that research on migration/gender and domestic/care work raises and how they have implications for welfare and care policies, and from this, develops a case for a welfare perspective on the global economy of care and a post-colonial perspective on care. The second half draws on data from a qualitative study of migrant domestic care workers and their employers in London, Madrid and Stockholm,¹ and tentatively explores how far the relationship between 'family', 'nation' and 'work' is being reshaped in three historically different welfare/care/migration regimes – UK, Sweden and Spain. It focuses in particular on the similarities in and differences between the practices and moral understandings that attend the employment of private domestic/child care workers in the three cities. The paper concludes by raising some theoretical and policy questions about how we understand work and care in 'adult worker' welfare regimes.

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Introduction

The broad context for this paper is the inter-relationship between three developments: first, the increase in women's involvement in the labour market and the associated move away from the male-breadwinner model to the 'adult worker' model underpinning the welfare provision of many Western states (Lewis, 2001); second, the ways in which these states' policies for care provision have responded to this (Daly, 2002; Michel and Mahon, 2002); and, third, the changing features and patterns of post-colonial migration (Castles and Miller, 2003). While there are generalizing features attached to these developments, there are also specific state-by-state variations in current and past policies and cultural practices, such as the longer history of women's employment in the Nordic and Central and Eastern European states, or the different histories of colonialism or (im)migration between Western and Southern Europe.

Narrowing in on this broad context, the focus of this paper is on the increased employment of migrant women as care/domestic workers in private homes in Europe, as this provides an empirical instance to explore the connections between some of the general *and* specific features associated with each of the three developments above. One link is the way in which the increased employment of women in the labour market in European countries has created a demand for child care provision which has, in part, been met by the increased transnational movement of women migrants into care and domestic work. Recent research from the USA (Hochschild, 2000; Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002) has identified this as a 'global care chain' in which women from poorer regions of the world migrate to care for the children and households of employed women in the West in order to support their own children who they leave in the care of female relatives. Along with similar research in Europe (Anderson and Phizacklea, 1997, Phizacklea, 1998, Kofman et al, 2000, Anderson, 1997 and 2000; Lutz, 2002), this has exposed the highly oppressive nature of such work and the ways in which migration rules and regimes render women vulnerable through lack of citizenship status to work in the underpaid and undervalued grey economy of household labour.

While this research usually identifies the lack of public care provision to be a link in the chain (see Parrenas, 2005:29; Kofman et al, 2000), there is little cross-national research that analyzes the relationship between changing welfare/ care regimes and the employment of private care and domestic workers (but see Yeandle and Ungerson, 2002; Ungerson, 2003; Williams, 2004; Gavanas, Tobio and Williams, forthcoming). As such, as Kofman argues, 'the role of migrant labour in changing and supporting welfare regimes urgently needs to be explored' (Kofman et al 2005:19). One example of this relationship can be seen in changes in the way, in some areas, care provision is subsidised, in particular, from providing care services (or no services) to providing cash payments to buy in care. There are two main types of policy development that are important here: first, the provision of cash payments, tax credits or tax incentives to pay child minders,

relatives or domestic workers, for their services. In relation to child related care, for example, the UK and Spain, Finland and France have all introduced some form of cash provision to buy in help. Second, there forms of 'direct payments' which allow older people or disabled people to buy in support and assistance, for example, in the UK, Netherlands, Italy and Austria. Both of these types of provision encourage the development of a particular form of home-based, often low-paid commodified care or domestic help, generally accessed privately through the market. There thus appears to be, directly or indirectly, a relationship between the development of such policies and the employment of migrant women as domestic/care workers.

It is the extent and nature of this relationship that constitutes the intellectual puzzle at the centre of this paper and the empirical study on which it draws. That said, the dynamics of such a relationship are complex because of the national specificities associated with it. Employment of migrant women for domestic and care work is greater in some countries than others and is subject to different *migration regimes* – immigration policies, forms of regulation, and paths and histories of emigration and immigration differ between countries (Castles and Miller, 2003). *Care regimes* also differ, that is, the extent and nature of public and market care provision, women's employment and policies facilitating work and care (Daly, 2002; Leitner, 2003). Furthermore, strategies around using 'substitute' or 'personal' care are also influenced by dominant national and local cultural discourses on what constitutes appropriate child care, or elder /disabled support (Kremer, 2002, Williams 2004, Gavanas and Williams, 2003; Pfau-Effinger, 2005; Haas, 2005). These sub-national variations may also be constituted through differences and inequalities of class, ethnicity and location (Duncan, 2005). In other words, the variations of '*care cultures*' within and across countries, which may or may not be congruent with formal care policies, add a further complexity in determining the nature of the relationship between welfare/care regimes and migration regimes in the case of privately employed domestic and care workers.

The research project on which this paper draws is studying the UK, Spain and Sweden as examples of contrasting welfare regimes, care regimes and migration regimes, as well as having variable rates of employment of migrant women in care/domestic work (UK-medium; Spain- high; Sweden – low). The project has involved ethnographic work and interviews in London, Madrid and Stockholm with employers of and employees in private domestic/care work (the employees were mainly, but not exclusively for reasons explained later, migrant women). In principle this provides the possibility to explore further the generalities and specifics of the three changing areas of women's employment, care policies (and cultures) and migration patterns.

In developing this cross-national comparison in these terms, the study is not only attempting to fill a gap in research on migrant domestic workers (as well as supporting those who argue for a more detailed gendered approach to the political economy of

migration – Phizacklea, 1998 ²), but illustrating and exploring the significance of *care* practices and policies. Change in policies around care, as a number of scholars have argued, provides a unique lens on much that is changing within welfare states and across welfare regimes (Daly and Lewis, 2000; Williams, 2001; Mahon and Michel, 2002). But just as the research on global care chains notes the existence of state policies on care but does not draw them into its analysis, a similar process can be seen in much of the care scholarship, with exceptions identified earlier: that is, while they note the significance of migrant care labour, they do not develop the implications for its analysis - implications which would need to be to set welfare/care regimes within the context of the geo-political inequalities associated with a global economy of care. The following section sets out some of the main points and arguments from work on the global economy of care in relation to migrant domestic/care workers; it then elaborates what sort of issues an analysis of a welfare perspective on the global economy of care might yield. This is followed by an application of some of this analysis to the project on migrant child care work in the UK, Spain and Sweden focusing on similarities and differences in the three countries' care and migration policies, and a comparison of the practices and moral understandings that attend the employment of private domestic/child care workers in the three capital cities. The conclusion raises some questions and dilemmas about how we understand policies to enable people to work and care.

Domestic/care work and the global economy of care

Research on migrant women in the global economy of care has revealed a number of different dimensions and arguments. To start with, there are the effects of geopolitical inequalities on women in the countries of emigration. The application of neo-liberal policies to assure the payment of external debts in poor countries, the associated destruction of local economies, and little or no state support, has led to increases in unemployment and poverty and pressure on women to assume a breadwinner role. Migration has traditionally been a strategy to cope with poverty, but the increased proportion of women is a new phenomenon. Many women migrate to take service and care related work in the West in order to support their families through remittances sent home. According to the IMF, at the beginning of the 1990s, remittances sent home by migrant workers were 65 billion dollars, some 20 billion more than official overseas global aid programmes (Travis, 2000). In this way care work has become a valuable export both to those individual families and their countries as well as an important import to richer countries (Yeates, 2004; Parrenas, 2005). Migration may also provide women with the chance to escape a violent marriage or an oppressive regime. Economies of care operate regionally as well as globally: women migrate to work as maids across the countries of South and South East Asia. Following wars, EU enlargement, and the effects of political changes in Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union on women's economic opportunities, there has been an increase in

² An argument that still needs waging – see for example the articles in Volume 74, Supplement 1, August 2003 of *Political Quarterly* on migration which has little mention of gender.

migration of women from these countries to Western Europe in search of work (Heinen, 2002; Lutz, 2002). Added to this are increases in 'working tourism' of young women and men (e.g. from Australia and South Africa to Western Europe).

Analyses of global care chains proved different perspectives. Some focus on the oppressive and exploitative nature of the work and how it has led to new forms of racialised and classed inequalities between women (Phizackela and Anderson, 1997; Anderson, 2000). Following this logic to a more conspiratorial end, one newspaper article in a British newspaper named it 'Western feminism's dirty little secret' (Toynbee, 2003). Others have focused on the irony of a predicament that is shared by both the women employing domestic/care workers and those workers themselves: caring and earning responsibilities; an unreconstructed sexual division of labour in the home; and insufficient public provision. However, as Parrenas points out: 'Women do not uniformly experience the gender inequities of globalization. Moreover, the shared injustices brought by the privatization of care have not become a convenient platform of alliance for women' (2005:29).

Other work argues that the oppressive nature of their experiences must not deflect from an account of the agency of the women migrants themselves and of the complex and diverse strategies which migration and domestic/care work entail, from women who see domestic work as a stepping stone to a better life (Lutz, 2002). Related to this, there is the argument that to focus on domestic and care work ignores the fact that the as well as a feminization of migration there has been a diversification to include skilled, professional as well as unskilled workers, and this applies to women as well as men (Kofman et al, 2005).

The employment of maids, nannies and domestic helps in middle and upper class homes had been common in most parts of Europe but had practically disappeared by the 1960s and 1970s except in the homes of the privileged elite. It then started to reemerge from the 1980s. The changes that brought this about include the development pressures to supply labour and pressures to demand it. However, Sassen's analysis of 'global cities' adds a different perspective. She identifies the ways in which these cities have been formed by the movement of multinational firms and migrant workers into the major cities of the world (Sassen, 1991). Applying a similar analysis to London, Bruegel found that high land values led to attempts to cut labour costs, creating low paid jobs which homestate workers refuse and which then fall to migrant workers. At the same time, multinationals also attract higher paid elite workers whose consumption practices depend upon labour-intensive services - restaurants, laundries, and private domestic services. Bruegel found that male and female workers constitute *both* elite and low paid service workers, but the differences lay in the latter's minority ethnic or migrant status, although a small minority of migrant women workers are also part of the elite labour force (Bruegel, 1999).

The complexity of multiple relations of gender, class, ethnicity, nationality and migration caught up in the employment of domestic/care workers is compounded by the diversification of their employment conditions, making generalization quite risky and comparison even riskier. The employment of domestic and care workers in the home takes many different forms: employees may provide housework or child care or both; they may live in or live out; they may work a few hours a week, a few hours a day, or full time, often very long hours; their work may involve acting as a carer or cleaner for an older, frail person or a disabled person, or it may involve being their personal assistant, in and outside the house. An employee may be self-employed, or 'undeclared' – where they receive cash-in-hand and part of the grey economy, or they may work for a private agency, or for a local authority. As migrant workers, they may be working under a special permit (say, as an 'au pair') or they may be undocumented. The work is usually undertaken by working class, minority ethnic, or migrant women, or pre-qualified younger women, but who undertakes it is influenced by both national migrant labour arrangements, national and local traditions of domestic service and child care preferences, and immigration, as well as competing female employment sectors. This complexity and diversification has led some to attempt more systematic analyses that identify more precisely the processes and structures involved in global care chains. Yeates (2004), for example, develops a gendered framework from global commodity chain analysis that breaks down the processes involved in 'production' of migrant labour, in the networks which enable it, and the structures of governance which support or constrain it. This attempt to be more systematic about the social, cultural and policy context that might give rise to use of such labour is also the aim of the study that informs this paper.

Different accounts suggest different political strategies: Hochschild focuses on reducing the need for women to migrate (2000). Some call for an expansion of public services to obviate the need for such work (Tronto, 2002), while other research shows how strategies for the regulation of care work result in different experiences and employment conditions for those, migrant or homestate women who undertake it (Ungerson 2004). A different perspective sees the development of home based domestic and care work as part of a more general increase in the employment of people in household services over the last ten to twenty years – childcare, care of older people, domestic cleaning and laundering, catering, and household maintenance and gardening. In Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland and the UK, show that, there have been average *annual* increases in childcare workers, childminders, domestic service workers, and catering workers of between 1% and 8% (Cancedda, 2001). Indeed, the emergence of these activities as new jobs has been encouraged through local labour activation policies in Europe and European structural funds. As such, some argue that such work needs validation as *work*, to have proper training and job progression attached to it, and improvements in citizenship and employment status for migrant workers going into it (Cancedda 2001), while Anderson and O'Connell Davidson point to the need to have co-ordinated policies that deal with the multifaceted vulnerabilities connected to migration,

gender, ethnicity, employment and class, and the conditions that gives rise the to buying cheap labour (2003). By contrast, as the experience of Sweden illustrates below, there are others who see the private employment of domestic or care services as innately demeaning and anti-egalitarian.

Developing a welfare perspective on the global economy of care and a post-colonial perspective on welfare

Developing a welfare perspective on this is important, as I have argued above, because it begins to identify something more complex than a simple 'lack' of social provision in child (or elder) care, but that care policies themselves may directly or indirectly facilitate the employment of migrant women as care workers. In its turn this allows us to identify cross-national convergences and divergences. This perspective needs also to be a two-way process: to develop a welfare perspective on the global economy of care, and a post-colonial perspective³ on welfare, in general and care, in particular.

In order to begin this I want to resurrect a framework that I have used to understand the socio-cultural contexts which shape and are shaped by the policies and practices of welfare states (Williams, 1989; 1995). This proposes that the welfare state exists in a dynamic relationship to three interconnected domains – the 'Family-Nation-Work' triad. *Family*, *Nation* and *Work* are shorthand terms which signify the conditions, organisation and social relations of social production including caring and intimacy ('Family') of the nation-state and the population ('Nation') and of production and of capital accumulation ('Work').⁴ All the four areas - Family, Nation, Work, and Welfare State - are characterised by forms of organisations, current and historic social relations of power, discourses and practices and, associatedly, forms of mobilisation and resistance,.

The social relations, conditions, forms of organisation, discourses, exclusions and inclusions operating within these three spheres are intermeshed with each other, although this nature of these inter-relationships is specific over time and place. For example, in many European countries, early twentieth century discourses of nationhood and motherhood intersected such that citizenship for some women (and their access to social rights) becomes defined almost exclusively in terms of their role in peopling the nation, and this in its turn constructed men's citizenship in terms of their roles as warriors and workers. Not only are the dynamics of the three spheres interconnected but each is subject to constant shifting, both separately and in relation to one another. In

³ 'Post-colonial' refers to the significance of shifting geo-political relations over time and across space, and draws attention to the way social and cultural differences are inscribed and reinscribed with gendered, racialised and other forms of hierarchy.

⁴ The terms are simply representative of the domains and are not meant to imply acceptance of their dominant form. Thus, 'family' refers to dominant discourses and forms of organization of social reproduction (say, of heteronormativity) as well as to the practices and claims (say, of lone parenthood or same-sex relationships) which may challenge this.

this way, these contextual reference points of Family-Nation-Work allow us to see the intersections of axes of multiple relations of power, and how these may differ over time and place.

To go back to the global economy of care, the case of migrant domestic care workers illustrates how unpaid and paid care practices and provision, in particular and welfare citizenship and welfare practices, in general, are subject to the changing nature of work (in terms of gender and also rise in service jobs for example), of families (ageing population, increase in female breadwinners, 'care deficit', etc). and the changing internal and external boundaries of the 'nation'. The inclusion of a critical understanding of nation is particularly important here. Not only is this a neglected area of welfare state analysis generally (Williams, 1995), but it allows us to understand the dynamics between the (external) international geo-political context in which nation-welfare-states exist and (internal) processes of inclusion and exclusion. This is particularly important when we look at care policies, for in developing an argument that we don't really understand what is happening to welfare restructuring unless we look and care policies (Daly, 2002; Mahon, 2002) there is a tendency to focus primarily on gender and class equity. The *internal* aspect on Nation refers to the nation-imaginary, and how this influences the (multi) cultural frame through which care practices and provision are constituted. Who and what are 'families', who cares for whom, and who and what are 'the nation', are interconnected questions whose practice vary over time and place. The *external* refers to the changing administrative boundaries of nation states (such as enlargement of the EU), the history and current nature of economic, cultural and political relationships between nation-states, as well as movement of capital and labour associated with this. This suggests that there are many more dimensions to the global economy of care than just the provision of low cost, commodified labour of migrant domestic/care workers. In terms of the internal aspects, there are issues to do with the effects that the minoritising of ethnicity, culture and religion have upon the experience of caring and receiving care. Reynolds, for example, shows how British Caribbean mothers draw upon an ethnic identity of strong independent and capable motherhood (Reynolds 1998). The racialised/mono-cultural/multicultural context of care provision not only means accounting for the processes of inclusion and exclusion in the organisation and delivery of those services, but also of the ways in which changing regimes of care provision reconstitute, for better or for worse, existing racialised and gendered divisions of labour through both employment practices and policies generally but also through the employment of minority ethnic groups in the health and welfare services. The deregulation of public services for day care has led, for example, to an increase in working-class and minority and migrant women employed as private nannies, and as cleaners and low paid workers in private care institutions (Kofman et al, 2005).

The formal recruitment of migrant labour into the health and welfare services is one part of such an analysis and affords an interesting example of the relationship between geo-political inequalities and social expenditure costs. In 2000 in the UK the international recruitment of nurses, teachers and doctors meant that 31% doctors and 13% nurses

were non-UK born; in London this was 23% and 47% respectively. Half of those workers contributing to the recent expansion of the National Health Service had qualified abroad. Recruitment to teaching is also high; one recruitment agency in London said without migrant teachers London schools would fall apart (Glover et al, 2001:37). Campaigns aimed at nurses from India and the Philippines have recruited into both the health service and private agencies and nursing. In France a quarter of all hospital doctors are foreign or naturalized, and concentrated in the least desirable specialisms and in Germany nurses are recruited from Eastern Europe (Kofman et al, 2000).

These strategies allow Western European countries to keep their public expenditure costs down, whilst other (usually poorer) countries bear the costs of workers' training and their dependants. In addition, migrants overall make a fiscal contribution (Glover et al, 2001). However, this is not a new phenomenon, and the historical paths of these processes is a further issue for analysis. In the 1950s and 1960s in Britain, the recruitment of labour from the colonies provided both cheap labour for the new institutions of the welfare state, and met a labour shortage which otherwise would have had to be filled by married women, thus disrupting the normative practice of the male breadwinner society where women were assumed to have primary responsibilities to the home and children (Williams, 1989, 1995). Similar strategies were followed later in Germany and Switzerland, where guest workers were brought in. Sweden, with a different gender, migration and labour history, opted for the recruitment of women rather than migrants into the labour market in the 1960s. Of course this is not the whole story, for these workers in Europe were often pathologised and marginalized in the process. They may have been allowed to build the post-war welfare states but they were not always deemed eligible to receive their services. This example compares well with the use of migrant domestic labour today, except that the context now assumes an 'adult worker' model for welfare policies, where the employment of migrant women mitigates the disruption to Western normative family and care practices by women taking up paid employment.

Two further issues are caught up in the relationship between welfare, care and 'nation'. The first is associated with the care responsibilities not just of first generation migrants but of the 'diasporas of care' generated from permanently settled and second and third generation migrants, whose families extend across continents, and patterns of familial and non-familial obligations are transnational (Chamberlain, 2000, Mason, 2004), an issue rarely considered when social policies appeal to 'community care' or to 'family duties'. Second, the internationalization of capital is also re-shaping the new international mixed economy of care as increasingly the organisations setting up long term care residential institutions are internationally based (Holden, 2002).

Care policies and the employment of domestic/ care work in UK, Spain and Sweden

The research project is based on semi-structured interviews in London, Madrid and Stockholm with a total of 47 'employees' (women working in providing child care/domestic work in private households) 34 'employers' (mothers and fathers employing people to do such work). The two groups were not personally connected to each other. Managers and workers in 21 employment agencies for household/care work were also interviewed. Some of these groups act as advocacy organizations for migrant workers, and the researcher did participant observation at organizations in London and Madrid as well as in a social centre for au pairs and barnflickor in Stockholm.

Cities were chosen because, as the references above to Sassen's and Breugel's work suggests, these have higher concentrations of migrant labour. UK, Spain and Sweden were chosen for three primary reasons: initially because they belong to three contrasting welfare regimes types but we were more interested in their differences in histories of, and current policies for care, in this instance, for child care, and in female (especially mothers') employment, and policies for combining work and care; and third, their differences in migration regimes, that is, past patterns of migration, current immigration rules with specific reference to the employment of migrant workers as care workers and domestic workers in the home. Partly as a consequence of these configurations, the differences between the three countries' reliance on *migrant* women as au pairs, nannies, 'maids' and domestic workers, was relevant to the study, especially in the extent to which such employment had become normalized, or normalized for certain social groups. In addition, of course, all three are EU member states and subject to the directives around women's employment and work/life balance, although their degree of variation illustrate the extent of national sovereignty within the EU. Our analysis also seeks to place an emphasis on the interrelation between these structural factors and the cultural histories and practices attached to migrant employment, gendered and ethnic relations, and social reproduction practices (see Haas, 2005).

Comparable statistics in the area of migration and household based work are difficult to find. First national statistics are compiled differently, for example, in OECD statistics, 'foreign' equals 'foreign born' in Sweden, but 'foreign national' in Spain and UK. Second, much of the work is carried out in the grey and informal economy by migrants who may be undocumented or illegal, so remains statistically hidden. OECD figures for the employment of 'foreigners' by sector in 2001-2 shows that employment in households it was 14.8% in Spain (second highest after Germany at 17.2), 1.3% in the UK and statistically insignificant in Sweden. However, in Sweden such employment tends to be particularly hidden for reasons explained later. In assessing the characteristics of domestic workers across Europe, the European Foundation reports that in the Netherlands, ethnic minority workers in cleaning services represent twelve to twenty percent with eight percent in private households, in Finland, 11% of home helps belong to linguistic minorities (5% are Swedish speakers), in Italy, 28% registered cleaners are non-EU citizens (and in Rome they are 70.5%), and in Spain, 32% domestic service

workers are non-EU, and in France - 14.3% immigrants work in personal services (compared with 7.9% total economically active population). 40% non-Austrian workers work in cleaning jobs with 22.9% non-Austrian women compared with 7.3% Austrian women in cleaning work in Vienna (figures drawn from the mid - late 1990s : Cancedda 2001:51). The overall picture is of an increase of migrant women, documented and undocumented, employed in domestic service.

In almost all the childcare and migration policy respects, UK, Spain and Sweden occupy different positions with Spain and Sweden at two ends and UK in the middle. To start, then, in the middle: historically, the UK's post-war welfare state was built around a 'strong' male breadwinner model (Lewis, 1992); since the New Labour administration in 1997, however, it has moved not only in terms of the acceptance, indeed, encouragement of women's, employment, but also from an assumption of child care provision for working parents being an individual responsibility to an acknowledgement of the need for state support, albeit mainly through the mixed economy and mainly focused on eradicating child poverty and enhancing children's educatability - the 'social investment' model (Lewis, 2003; Lister, 2003; Williams, 2004, 2005). Care work is generally low paid and there is a shortage of workers in this area. New Labour's main policies as far as work and care are concerned include parental leave (under pressure from EU Directive), limited paternity leave, the right to 'reasonable' time off for dependants and to ask for flexible working hours. Free nursery care for children aged 3-5 (pre-school) has been introduced in the most deprived areas, with entitlement to part-time day care for all 3-5 year olds. Working families within an income range that includes professional workers, can claim an income-related child care tax credit of up to 70% (80% from 2006) off the costs of child care. Included in this are costs for an approved child carer, domiciliary worker or nurse from a registered agency who provides the care in the home⁵. It does not include relatives. This is significant because in terms of childcare culture and practices, many women, especially working class women, tend to work part-time and to use informal care, particularly grandmothers or partners. In fact, statistics on the arrangements for childcare used by working mothers (full-time and part-time) in Britain only show between 2 and 4% using nannies or unregistered childminders, although around 20% would ideally choose a daily or live-in nanny from the formal childcare options (Bryson et al, 2000, pp. 90-94). 65% of women aged 16-59 worked in 2001 but only 26% worked full time and 39% part-time. Qualitative work finds mixed care cultures with mother/work identities differentiated in terms of class, ethnicity and place (Duncan et al, 2003), nevertheless the tradition of mother substitute preference, the positioning of mothers as consumers of services, and the reliance on the private market and voluntary and informal sectors create the cultural conditions for the moral acceptance of private employment in the home. (With regard to support for disabled and older people, the policy of direct payments to buy in care services reinforces this).

⁵ This was not available in 2004 when fieldwork was done in London, but it means that it is possible to get a significant tax break for employing a nanny.

Most domestic and child care work, outside the metropolitan centre, is done by white working class homestate⁶ young women or older women; Gregson and Lowe's study found that over a third of middle class dual career families in the early 1990s employed some sort of domestic help often on an undeclared 'cash-in-hand' basis (Gregson and Lowe, 1994:41).

Immigration policies and migration paths are framed by Britain's imperial history. After the war there was an open policy to citizens of the Commonwealth but since the 1970s it has become tied more closely to patriality and much more restrictive, and recently this policy has been ratcheted up by panics around first, asylum seeking, and, second, the 'war on terror'. The policy is now of 'managed migration' which meets the twin goals of improving economic competitiveness and social cohesion, with an attempt to move away from multiculturalism towards assimilation (Williams, 2003). The effect has been to differentiate more clearly in terms of skills, with greater rights to the greater skilled (Kofman et al, 2005). Crawley (2002) estimated 14,300 foreign domestic workers in the UK in 2000. These are mainly live-out workers. However, unlike Spain, the UK does not have a quota for domestic workers. While residents of EU member states are free to enter the UK as au pairs, there is also an arrangement with the EU candidate countries (Turkey, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria) along with Andorra, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Macedonia, Monaco and San Marino for women aged 17-27 to become 'au pairs' to sponsoring families for two years as long as they do not have recourse to public funds (recommended payment of £55 p.w. for five hours work for 5 days, plus board and lodging), and for domestic workers who are accompanying named foreign nationals entering UK (such as diplomats). In addition, working holidaymakers, who are citizens between 17 and 30 from the new Commonwealth, may enter the UK without an entry clearance. A recent concession following demands from migrant workers' organizations was for the right to change employer once in the UK. After 4 years continuous working it is possible to apply for indefinite leave to remain (www.workingintheuk.gov.uk). However, the household remains exempt from much employee protection including the Race Relations Act. Our research found that the most common types of migrant domestic/care workers in London were au pairs from European/ Eastern European countries, domestic workers from non-EU countries (such as the Philippines, India, and Sri Lanka), and nannies from South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The informal hierarchy in terms of pay and status was nanny-au-pair-domestic worker, and au pairs and domestic workers often tried to move up a category after a few years in the UK. In May 2004 EU enlargement opened up the area to many more women from Central and Eastern Europe and this appears to have disrupted the market, as one nanny/au pair agency manager said:

This has changed the nanny world: they are willing to combine childcare with domestic work. The term nanny used to refer to a qualified child carer, but it doesn't mean anything now. Girls come

⁶ I use this term to denote British nationality and residence regardless of ethnicity.

over as au pairs and stay. Now employers can get childcare and cleaning for less than 9 pounds per hour -- they love it!

One of the most significant aspects in Spain's case is the recent increase in both female migrant workers and in female employment generally combined with the relative paucity of public provision for childcare. Between 1993 and 2003 women's employment jumped from 31.5% to 46.8% (OECD 2005), and this has been especially high in the younger age groups. Also, by the mid 1990s, half of the age group from 25-49, worked full-time, a higher proportion than Germany, the UK or the Netherlands (Tobio, 2001). The main public support is pre-school programmes for children aged 3-6; however, the principle behind such programmes is more to do with combating social exclusion and enhancing working class opportunities than assisting working mothers (Valiente, 2002). No provision exists for the under 3s. As with school, the hours are much shorter than the working day, and the holidays longer. Grandmothers are a main resource for working mothers. Tobio makes the point that this is not an essential feature of an imagined Southern European welfare model but a strategy to help ease the transition of women's increased employment, a strategy which can only have a short life span as the present generation of working mothers will not be in a position to provide the same help for their daughters (Tobio, 2001). Working mothers have a right to 16 weeks of paid leave and 4 can be taken by the father, and women can take up to 3 years voluntary unpaid leave, although the proportion of women entitled to such leaves remains relatively low (41% in 1998 – Flaquer, 2002). In 2003 a new subsidy of 100 Euros was introduced for all others with a child under 3. Child care cultures favour one-to-one mother substitute care, but at the same time, as Tobio's research finds, women have strong identities as workers, though they also have an equally strong sense of individual responsibility for finding that childcare solutions (Tobio, 2001). In this way both culture and policy favour the employment of private care workers in the home.

Equally as dramatic has been Spain's shift from a country of emigration to one of immigration, although patterns of migration also, like the UK, relate to Spain's colonial past. (Interestingly, emigration of Spanish women to the UK in 1954 meant there were twice as many Spanish women with work permits as men and even by 2001 women made up 59% of all Spanish-born migrants in the UK). As well as having the second highest rise in women working (second to Ireland), Spain's proportions of women 'foreigners' in paid work are some 12% higher than for Spanish women, whereas in both Sweden and the UK it is the other way round (SOPEMI, 2003). Most significant in the Spanish immigration policy has been the regularization of illegal immigrant workers over the years combined with immigration based on quota allocations only, and these include domestic/care workers. Since 2002, entry through the quota system can only be granted to migrants from countries where there are bilateral agreements: currently Ecuador, Colombia, Morocco, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Poland, and Romania (Devitt, 2005). There are also agreements for au pairs under 25 years to stay with Spanish speaking families. The status in domestic/care workers goes down from

'externas' (live out), to hourly paid workers, to 'internas' (live in). Hiring such workers is normalized practice for middle class and even some working class mothers, although differences lie in whether they are able to employ someone full time or just for a few hours. Tobio comments that,

'Even if immigration is not explicitly presented as part of reconciliation policies, several indicators like the relative importance of immigrant quota for domestic workers, which represents more than half the whole annual quota for all occupations (Secretaría de Estado de Inmigración y Emigración 2003) or the 100 euro subsidy which is received by all working mothers with a child below three since 2003, allow the hypothesis of indirect state support for this kind of resource' (Gavanoas, Tobio and Williams, forthcoming).

Sweden has had a constantly high female employment rate since the 1960s; in 2003 it was 72% in (OECD, 2005) with the dual earner family as the norm. In contrast to both the UK and Spain, high quality publicly financed child care provision universally available is seen to underpin principles of gender and class egalitarianism, and there is widespread support and use of these services (Bergqvist and Nyberg, 2002). Most families use pre-school or day centres for their 1-5 year olds whose charges were capped in 2002. Mothers can take 12 months' earnings-related parental leave and a further 3 months at flat rate, and one month is reserved for the father. Mothers of young children have the option of working (long) part-time hours. Allowances to look after children at home were introduced by the Conservative government in 1994 but did not last, though they are part of political debate. (Assistance allowances exist for disabled older people). While there is support for public provision and for full female employment, there is also continuing unequal gender distribution of labour in the household (Bjornberg, 2002). In a survey on work/care reconciliation policies in Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, Swedish women reported higher levels of dissatisfaction with being able to combine work and care responsibilities, and Swedish men were more concerned that their work responsibilities made it difficult for them to carry out their family commitments (Cousins and Tang, 2004; Haas, 2005).

The solution of privately employing domestic/care workers has been the subject of public debate since the mid 1990s when a proposal was put to Parliament to make domestic work subject to tax exemption (Platzer, 2003; Williams and Gavanoas, 2004; Gavanoas, Tobio and Williams, forthcoming). The so-called 'maid debate' (*pigdebatten*) has evoked moral repudiation of domestic service because of its association with a traditional, patriarchal and pre-egalitarian class society. The view is that one should be responsible for one's own dirt. At the same time, however there are those who argue (and this emerged in our research where this debate framed the way employers and agencies talked about the work) that this response is anti-feminist in that it sustains the invisibility of domestic work, especially given that there is no moral repugnance associated with hiring plumbers to do dirty jobs and or for receiving tax deductions for doing house alterations. It is also seen as anti-feminist for not facing up to the problem of employee 'burnout' which affects women with care and work responsibilities. And

people cite Finland as a Nordic country which has moved in this direction (where child home care and private day care allowances exist). A further argument that came up from the a manager of a domestic worker and au pair agency was that the attitude was hypocritical because a grey market for domestic work has existed for a long time, and now with the emergence of what is called a 'white' market of agencies promoting it, it is becoming more visible as well as more common for the average Swede (*'medelsovensson'*), to want this service.

Our research found that there are several different groups doing this sort of work: au pairs who now mainly come from Germany, Finland and Eastern Europe (Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Ukraine), but also from the Philippines, Morocco and the US; *'barnflickor'*, young school leavers from rural parts of Sweden wanting to take a 'gap year' before higher education or work, who live in; and undocumented migrant domestic workers who live-out. The invisibility of the work makes it difficult to provide statistics but Platzer (2002) estimates formal application by au pairs to number around 1000 p.a. No quotas exist for domestic workers, only for seasonal workers on 3 month stays. Before EU enlargement, some Eastern European women used this as a way to enter Sweden to work. Since the early 1970s there have been increasing restrictions on immigration with work permits limited to areas of labour need, coupled with integrationist measures for resident migrant workers. There have also been concerns about increasing racism and that recently that settled migrants have lower employment rates than Swedes. 1999 legislation outlawed racial discrimination at work (Devitt, 2005).

Discourses of work, family and nation amongst employers of domestic/care services in London, Stockholm and Madrid

The following, very initial reading of the research data concentrates on the employers—who they are, what their perceived needs are for employing domestic/care workers, and their employment and family practices. This is not to discount the employees' experiences and practices, but to explore, comparatively, the structural and cultural contexts and discourses which shape the process of employing. It also draws on interviews with the employment agencies. Our samples were, as far as possible, purposively selected to ensure that the employment of the main different types of employee was covered in each country. We focused on employment for *child care* but cleaning and care work could not be entirely separated. Indeed, parental employment of domestic workers was often as much to do with help with child care as was employing carers.

Who are the employers and why do they employ?

The overriding similarities of the employers in the three cities were that first, it was women who managed the employment, second, the majority of these women were in employment, usually full-time, and usually partnered with another full-time earner and they saw this as a strategy to manage their responsibilities for work, care and household labour. There were one or two exceptions to this in each of the cities – either a full time

at-home mother, or a divorced or single parent. But the main point is that while some of the employing households may have been wealthy, their reasons were expressed as less to do with status or leisure and more about 'coping' or managing time and the stress of competing pressures, or about their children's needs: *'I get no more free time. We have a nanny 8 to 6pm, which is when I get home. I get time to change my clothes from work'* (C., an employer, London).

There was a certain similarity in the jobs of the women employers in the three cities – accountant, lawyer, doctor, owning a business, with husbands often in similar fields. Mostly they worked in the private sector, and this was most marked in Sweden, (as distinct from the public sector which is the major employer of women). It was interesting that for Stockholm and London these were in male dominated areas where one might expect less flexibility and family-friendly policies. In Madrid, however, there was more spread across other employment statuses, including a secretary and a bank worker, reflecting Tobio's observation that in Spain the private employment of carers and cleaners is a more normalised and generalised strategy for working mothers (Gavanas, Tobio and Williams, forthcoming). In Sweden and the UK, where domestic employment was less general, it was, nevertheless, common amongst the networks and in the neighbourhoods where the employers lived. Families in London passed au pairs on to families they knew from their children's schools, for example. For the most part, the workers were just one of the resources that were used for child care. In Madrid, domestic live-in or live-out workers were more likely to be complemented by grandmothers and where possible by pre-school provision. Au pairs were far less in evidence in Madrid, but much more in Stockholm and London. In London, nannies were often used for children under 2 and the mother would move on to an au pair once the children started going to school or to pre-school. These London mothers generally had no family support living locally, or if they did, they were also working. They preferred one-to-one care for young children for both practical and emotional reasons. This was seen as even more important when there was more than one child, as one child might be at nursery and another at home so there was all the collecting and dropping off to do, usually within working hours.

Stockholm parents generally employed either 'barnflickor' (school leavers from rural areas – a form of homestate au pair who were generally undeclared workers) or au pairs from Eastern Europe. However, most of the agencies for au pair and home-based help said there was a growing grey market of undeclared (no tax or insurance) domestic workers organised through agencies who middle class families employed just for cleaning, in spite of the intense moral disapproval that such activity attracted. All the Stockholm mothers interviewed used public pre-school provision and would not think of substituting home care for day care. Nevertheless, the reasons they gave for employing au pairs and barnflickor was because they wanted shorter hours for their children in day care (some said the ratio of staff to children had worsened), having someone available to care if the child got sick so they didn't have to take time off work,

and more time to spend with the children and their partners when they got home from work. People's reasons were often expressed as indignant justifications in the light of the 'maid debate', as E. an employer said: *"the maid debate doesn't look at the conditions for those [employers] involved: my only options would be not to have children or to sell my business. Everything is not black or white."*⁷A., another employer, suggested there were so few women leaders in business because of the ethical and practical difficulty being able to employ workers in the home, and pointed out that there was no equivalent moral outrage against undeclared building workers.

Although all the women in all the countries had strong identities as waged workers, they had equally strong identities as mothers, but in the UK and Spain they were *more* likely to feel guilty about leaving their children in the care of others. In all countries they also operated within unequal gendered divisions of labour at home. When this was combined with demanding work, buying in help was their strategy which least disrupted this fragile equilibrium. This does not mean that men were not involved at all in household care and work. In both Stockholm and London they were, but it was more that negotiated settlements had been reached within households which were too fragile to challenge. The pressure was to achieve and maintain a happy and stress-free household. In Sweden, as one agency manager put it, *'even though morals [against hiring "maids"] are still an issue, people don't want to argue or stress about cleaning either'* (Gavanas, 2005transl). This was similar to the findings of Gregson and Lowe (1994) in their study of the use of domestic workers in middle class dual earner families in Britain in the 1990s. They found that the division of labour did not remain totally unreconstructed, rather, there was a sharing of certain tasks (such as cooking, shopping, the school run) and a relegation of the most labour-intensive tasks (cleaning, ironing) to the female management of paid, and female, domestic labour. The difference however in Sweden is that this culture ran counter to care policy.

In all countries the flexibility of employing a live-in domestic worker, au pair or barnflickor was not only about juggling work and home but about costs and what you could get for your money. *'Nannies are expensive. The ideal is to have an au pair who does everything'* (London, agency manager) (This was reflected back by an experience recounted by one of the employees: Carrie, an Australian nanny told how

'My last full time position I was actually fired from which is quite upsetting for me because I think I'm very good at my job and[...] What I found out later was that actually they wanted to employ someone to do all the cleaning and the nannying [and] she was living in the house as well which meant she was working 7 til 7 and she was only being paid £200 a week I found out later whereas they were paying me £375 a week and their cleaner £240 a week').

⁷ All Swedish quotations are translated by Anna Gavanas. Interviews in Sweden were conducted in Swedish except where English was an easier language for the interviewee. In Spain the interviews were conducted in Spanish with a translator present.

Employers in Sweden similarly sought cheaper workers except it was workers from the so-called 'white' (above board) agencies who were expensive, and barnflickor and undeclared au pairs who were cheaper. In Spain, the differentiation was more explicitly determined by (in)security of citizenship status with newly arrived migrants waiting for papers as the most vulnerable, only able to command a lower wage. These hierarchies were also racialised as I describe later.

Ambivalences in the family-work nexus

The moral context of hiring a home-based worker seemed to have some bearing on how the employer understood the relationship with their employee. In Sweden, as already described, moral disapproval created a tangible sense of angst in many of the employers. In the UK, there was an acute awareness of the need to recast the relationship out of traditional servitude. Often the terms 'help' and 'helper' were used to avoid this connotation. In Spain, such angst or discomfort was not so apparent and moral concerns focused on the particular relationship rather than the general place of domestic service in society. These differences reflected how the relationship between employer and employee were understood. In Sweden, employers showed great concern that about treating their employee properly: A. said it was *'a deal between two equal parties'*. Because the employee was spending time in their house and looking after their children it was important they were happy and made to feel *part of the family*. At the same time, they should not be too familiar as that crossed the boundaries of their privacy. Only two Swedish employers said it should be a professional relationship, and compared their position with their employee to the role they had at work. The London employers also talked a great about the need to treat their employees properly but also were aware of the difficulties: *'There's this thing that "they should be part of your family" but they're not. But you can't treat them as an employee. I treat them as friends, but expect them not to be hanging around. One came in watching TV with me in the evening! That's my private time!'*. However, the employer/employee relationships in Madrid were often marked by more professional distance which acknowledged the difference in status between the two parties. Some employees would address the employer in the polite way: 'usted' or 'senora', while their employer would use the familiar 'tu'. In some homes employees wore uniforms; in addition, domestic tasks were treated much more as acquired skills rather than dispositions. In spite of this formality there was still a view amongst some employers that they treated their employees as part of the family.

Not surprisingly, the employees did not see things in the same way. In Stockholm barnflickor found 'niceness' disarming and it made them feel they could not assert themselves when they felt they were being treated unfairly. In London, many employees felt a professional relationship gave them a better standing. In Madrid, however, employees felt demeaned by the impersonality of their employers. Such ambivalences reflect the tension between relationships of contract and those of care and duty, as Anderson and O'Connell Davidson point out : *'the introduction of market relations into the private home can be experienced as deeply disturbing by employers'* (2003:33). It is

also the fact that the work that many employees did involved caring for the children of their employers, therefore to some extent it was in the interests of the employers to keep their employees happy in order that their children were kept content. Indeed as Gavanas points out (Gavanas, Tobio and Williams, forthcoming) children were indirectly the ground for negotiation, and one way a nanny or au pair might find some autonomy was in gradually 'gaining ground' in her care of the children. This might start out as employees just being told what to do, then they would begin to set limits, and then be in control of or have fuller knowledge of the children's schedules, moods, and wishes and so on, and be in a position to advise the mother/employer. In Spain some employees 'took over' because they assumed greater skill and capacity, in line with the tendency to treat domestic work as requiring skills, and as a response to the more 'professional' employer/employee relationship. By contrast, in Sweden, few employees were able to get beyond the first stage of gaining ground for their very hidden-ness generated greater dependence on their employers. This hidden-ness also militated against any collective agency, as the co-ordinator for a social center for barnflickor and au pairs pointed out: *'It's more difficult to negotiate over people and workplaces that supposedly "don't exist"!*

These disturbances created by this family-work nexus were evident in the sorts of trade-offs the employers articulated in the difficulties they faced. They were seeking value for money as consumers as well as managing the emotional and organizational relationships of a household, and combining this with the imperative of paid work. They wanted value for money but no hassle. For the Spanish employers, it was cheaper to hire a live-in newly arrived migrant woman without papers because they then avoided paying social security, however, what they felt they risked was honesty and reliability on the part of the worker. For the employers in the UK, it was cheaper to have a live-in au pair, but what this involved was an invasion of privacy and a lot of effort in keeping everyone happy (*'Family relations take more effort'* – K, employer). For the Swedish employers, employing someone in the first place went against the moral grain, and employing an undeclared worker was morally reprehensible, but this was weighed against the disruption of work in family relations. Furthermore, discourses of 'race' and the nation-imaginary were played through all of these sets of relations.

Discourses of 'race' and the nation-imaginary

In all three countries differences in rates of pay between different types of job were compounded by national/ ethnic hierarchies often based upon racialised stereotypes. This hierarchy was also influenced by how well the worker spoke the language of the country in which she worked and the assumed compatibility of her nationality with her employer's. This is illustrated by Jennie, a Slovakian au pair:

'..my friend was working for one family, she was from Slovakia and she was getting quite good money, she had about £60 a week. She worked about 30 hours or something like that, babysit twice a week and she asked me if I knew someone who could exchange with her and I knew about one girl who was looking for a job but she was from Thailand; she was a lovely girl and I brought her there for an interview and this lady enquired her to work 40 hours week, do four babysitting a

week for £45 and I said, like are you kidding me? Is that just because that person's from Thailand and that person was from Slovakia?

Workers at the Kalayaan organization in London, that acts as both advocate and agency, reported that employers' requests were based on national preferences with Philippinas at the top ("*people think that Philippinas are from a different planet where everybody cares about children*") and Africans at the bottom. Some employers felt that Latin Americans were more loving and expressive and Eastern Europeans more hard working, while Australians were seen as cheerful and flexible. Nonetheless, not all employers in London thought like this and two rejected the idea of nationality as a basis to choice and spoke more in terms of age, skills, and disposition, although class background was sometimes implicit in these descriptions.

This hierarchy was reflected in Spain amongst Spanish agencies (in Madrid these were often church based, or with organizations such as Red Cross, as well as private agencies) except that Latin Americans were considered slow and Moroccans untrustworthy (Tobio reports significant anti-Muslim sentiments – Gavanoas, Tobio and Williams, forthcoming). In Sweden this stereotyping was no less blatant, indeed often more so: *'it's easier with a Svensson than a Muhammed Ali'* one manager said, going on: *'Those from the Eastern European states are used to working and set high demands on themselves. I'd rather take someone from the Ukraine than Gambia- they're more similar to us Swedes. Those from Bangladesh are good, but we are incredibly fussy in Sweden! Those from Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine and White Russia are terribly good and similar to Swedish people...We've got very high demands here in Sweden and it's the same in these countries'*

This quotation illustrates how managers and employers positioned their own country in relation to those of the migrants'. While in Spain this emerged as an emphasis on workers being trained in the proper 'Spanish way' to do things. In Sweden, an assumption of Sweden standing at the top of the civilisation tree was both implicit and explicit. Swedes preferred Swedes, and if they couldn't get a Swede they had to 'settle' for a foreigner:

My [new] family wanted a Swedish girl, but the applicants were fat with no teeth and were weird. She couldn't get a girl with high education from Sweden so she settled for foreign girls'.
(agent)

Ironically this notion of Swedish superiority was often framed in terms of Sweden's commitment to egalitarianism. There was thus a notion of egalitarianism that reflected inwardly upon Sweden but could not encompass non-Swedes from other countries. Furthermore, it was this Swedishness which made for better employers and employees as Oskar a male employer explains:

'You need to command a person with Asian origin differently. You ASK a Swedish barnflicka to do things. That didn't work with a Philippina one. They need orders'.

There is a strange similarity in the arguments against the use of domestic workers and those who justified their employment: those against argue it runs counter to the Swedish values of egalitarianism, and those for argue that it is Swedish egalitarianism that could make Swedes better and more sympathetic employers and provide better employees. Less strange were the reactions of migrant employees in Stockholm to this attitude who found it condescending and patronizing. One Czech au pair was indignant that her employers assumed her backwardness (assuming, for example, she was not familiar with the internet) because, as she said, (drawing upon her own hierarchy), they assumed she was from Russia or *'from the jungle or something.'* Another Czech au pair resented the attitude that au pairing was some sort of international aid mission by Swedish families: *Some people want to 'help' the 'poor' girls. I'm not a poor girl!!'*

Finally, another concern expressed by agencies in both London and Stockholm was that Polish domestic workers were, since EU enlargement, setting up their own businesses, undercutting wages and working outside the tax and insurance systems. One Stockholm agency saw this as 'ethically incorrect' and was in favour of collaboration with the trade unions and imposition of a minimum wage in order to stop this sort of development. Here one could see a repeat of Swedish strategies over the last 40 years – an important defence of conditions of work within Sweden that dovetails uncomfortably with anti – migrant sentiment.

Conclusion

I have tried to use this study of the private employment of domestic/ care workers in the home to show how the developments of the adult worker model and associated policies for care in these three countries need to be understood in the wider context of the global economy of care as well, as in its narrower refraction of the intersections of class, 'race' ethnicity, gender and migration in care and employment practices at the local and domestic levels. Not only does it show how some significant new developments are taking place in these societies – for example, the first real acknowledgement of the need for public responsibility for child care in the UK; the rapid movement of Spanish mothers into work; and the revelation to public furore of both a grey and white economy of privately paid domestic/care workers in Sweden - but that all of these developments are connected by aspects of the global economy of care, the tensions inherent for women in the new 'adult worker' model, the limitations of the commodification of care, and the reconstitution of new racialised 'others'. It shows also how uneven are forms of power and equality, and access to citizenship rights, in these different countries in terms of 'race', gender and class.

It is important in theoretical terms to be able to account for these interconnections because that allows us to consider the what the policy implications are for the problems that these issues reveal, or at least, to see how complexly interlinked the problems are. But acknowledgement of complexity is as necessary a step as moral outrage, and there are many different sorts of moral outrages this issue generates. For if we need visibility

and regulation to attend to the vulnerability of migrant and domestic home workers, then we also need to ensure that those societies treat these workers with respect and as people, not simply units of labour quotas, or as inferiorized others. But this study also reveals the difficulties as women finally move wholesale into paid work. Commodification of care work, and consumerism of care users, whilst offering coping strategies, are caught up in their own contradictions: between market values and affective practices which jostle for pre-eminence on the site of home which is also work. Much more than the public provision of care services is necessary for any realisation of a 'universal caregiver model' as Fraser calls it (1997). What all countries show, but Sweden more clearly, is that the continuation of the male organisation of working hours and the unreconstructed division of labour in the home create pressures for men and women that public provision for care on its own cannot solve. But policies in these areas need also to be analysed with an understanding of egalitarianism which cannot, these days (if ever) be nation-bound. Without this we risk what I think of as the 'Woody Allen effect': that we are witness to (films of) men and women discussing and negotiating in fascinating and brilliant ways the contemporary condition of the relations of gender, sexuality and generation, whilst in the background shadowy figures clean and cook but appear to have no moral dilemmas or angst to call their own. A similar picture was painted by Oscar, a Swedish employer, as he described to Anna Gavanas, his experience of au pairs (taken from Anna's field notes):

'After a 12-hour plane ride his Philippina "au pair" had started out working right away when she arrived at Oscar's house. She had worked in Hong Kong for ten years as a domestic worker previously, and Oscar said that "she understood that she needs to show that she can deliver." She had worked 14 hours a day and "magically" kept the house of Oscar's family in perfect order, and there was always dinner on the table when they got home; "she was like a spirit in the house that was hardly noticed," Oscar marveled.'

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