

From Social Reproduction Theory Perspective Georgian Migrant Domestic Workers in Unye/ORDU

Toplumsal Yeniden Üretim Teorisi Perspektifinden Unye/Ordu'da Gürcü Göçmen Ev-işçileri

Fatma Özlem Tezcek*

Abstract: Historically, capitalist social production and reproduction relations have close interaction with patriarchal gender hierarchies. This interaction has been transformed dramatically. Especially, the interaction between patriarchal gender roles and capitalist reproduction relations has been examined and debated by the distinct branches of feminist movement. In this paper, I will investigate this interaction via activities of migrant women domestic workers in Turkey which, I believe, represent essential features of the recent global dynamics of capitalism such as informalization, feminization of un/under-paid work force, feminization of immigration, globalization of domestic works. I will introduce the results of my field research about life and working conditions among migrant domestic workers in Ünye, Ordu Province of Turkey, in the Black Sea region. I have conducted semi-structured, face to face interviews with a certain number of Georgian migrant women. This method is consistent with many of the qualitative approaches pioneered and adopted by feminist researchers.

Keywords: Women, Social Reproduction, Migration, Georgian Domestic Workers.

Öz: Tarihsel olarak kapitalist üretim ve yeniden üretim ilişkileri, ataerkil toplumsal cinsiyet hiyerarşileri ile yakın etkileşim içindedir. Bu etkileşim dramatik bir şekilde değişim göstermektedir. Özellikle ataerkil toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ile kapitalist yeniden-üretim ilişkileri arasındaki etkileşim feminist hareketin çeşitli oluşumları tarafından incelenmekte ve tartışılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'de bu etkileşimi temsil ettiğini düşündüğüm somut bir örnek olan Gürcistanlı, göçmen ev-içi işçilerin yaşamlarını, çalışma süreçlerini inceleyeceğim. Bu incelemenin; enformelleşme, ücretsiz/ücretli işin kadınlaşması, göçün kadınlaşması, ev-içi işçilerin küreselleşmesi gibi küresel kapitalizmin güncel görünümüleriyle yakın ilişki içinde olduğunu düşünüyorum. Çalışmada, Ordu ili Unye ilçesinde çalışan Gürcistanlı, göçmen ev-içi işçilerin yaşam ve çalışma koşulları hakkında yaptığım araştırmanın sonuçlarını sunacağım. Araştırmada Gürcistanlı, göçmen ev-işçisi kadınlarla yarı-yapılandırılmış, yüz-yüze, derinlemesine görüşmeler düzenlenmiştir. Bu yöntemin niteliksel araştırma yöntemlerini uygulayan birçok feminist araştırmacı tarafından kullanıldığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın, Yeniden Üretim, Göç, Gürcistanlı Ev-İşçileri.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Kapitalizmin tarihi boyunca ataerkil kültürel/toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri(i) dikkat çekici biçimlerde değişim göstermiştir. Toplumsal olarak, üretim ve yeniden üretim ilişkilerini içeren kapitalist birikim süreci kâr odaklı, bencil (eril) bireye özgü biçimde toplumsal cinsiyet hiyerarşilerini yeniden-oluşturmak için ataerkil/geleneksel toplumsal cinsiyet kültürüyle karşılıklı-etkileşim içine girmektedir. Bu bağlamda, özellikle, ataerkil toplumsal cinsiyet kültürü ile kapitalist yeniden-üretim ilişkileri arasındaki karşılıklı-etkileşim feminist hareketin çeşitli oluşumları tarafından incelenmekte ve tartışılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, bu karşılıklı-etkileşim, güncel ataerkil kapitalizmin küresel dinamiklerini temsil eden göçmen kadın ev-işçilerinin etkinlikleri/yaşamsal deneyimleri yoluyla incelenecektir. Enformelleşme, ücretsiz/ücretli işin kadınlaşması, göçün kadınlaşması, ev-içi işçilerin küreselleşmesi ise ataerkil kapitalizmin diğer güncel temsillerinden bazılarıdır. Dünya göç literatüründe, 1980'lerden beri özellikle zengin/gelişmiş ülkelerde hızlanan, belirginleşen bir eğilime dikkat çekilmektedir: Bakım krizi veya toplumsal yeniden-üretim krizi. Gelişmiş ülkelerde tarihsel olarak feminist mücadelenin de etkisiyle kadın istihdamının artışıyla birlikte, geleneksel kültürün kadına yüklediği bakımı da içeren toplumsal yeniden-üretim ilişkileri sürdürülemez hale gelmiş ve bir tür kriz hali ortaya çıkmıştır. İşte bu aşamada, küresel göçün hızla kadınlaşmaya başladığı, fakir/azgelişmiş/gelişmekte-olan ülkelerdeki kadınların zengin/gelişmiş ülkelere göç ederek, bu ülkelerde çalışan kadınların yerine düşük ücretli biçimde bu yeniden-üretim sorumluluklarını aldıkları dikkati çekmektedir. Bu durum bize kapitalizmin gelişmesiyle birlikte ataerkil kültürün yok olmadığını ama ekonomik sistemin gereklilikleriyle karşılıklı etkileşim içinde yeniden biçim aldığını göstermektedir. Gelişmiş ülkelerde temel olarak geleneksel/ataerkil cinsiyet rejimi değişmemekte, kadınlar ve erkekler üretim (fabrika, ofis) ve özellikle de yeniden-üretim (ev-içi) alanlarına ilişkin sorumlulukları eşit biçimde almamakta, cinsiyet hiyerarşisi bozulmamakta ve yeniden üretim alanına özgü sorumluluklar halen “kadına ait” görülmektedir. Küresel göçün kadınlaşmasıyla birlikte zengin/gelişmiş ülkelerdeki çalışan kadınlar yeniden-üretim sorumluluklarını hiyerarşik olarak altlarındaki fakir/azgelişmiş ülkeden gelen göçmen kadınlara devretmektedirler. Diğer taraftan, fakir/azgelişmiş ülkeden göç eden ev işçisi kadın arkasında, kendi ülkesinde, bakımı da içeren yeniden-üretim faaliyetlerinin sekteye uğradığı, kriz içinde bir aile (kendi ailesini) bırakmaktadır. Genel olarak gelişmiş ve azgelişmiş/gelişmekte olan ülkelerde devletlerin Neoliberal politikaları benimseyerek sosyal refah devleti olma özelliğini kaybetmesi ve özelleştirmeler yoluyla toplumdaki gelir eşitsizliğinin, yoksulluğun hızla arttığı ve özellikle de alt-sınıflara mensup işsiz, fakir ailelerde kadınların üzerindeki yeniden-üretim (aile-ev-içi) sorumluluklarının ağırlaştığı dikkati çekmektedir. Yoksul ülkelerde kadınların ailelerini

geçindirebilmek için küresel göç sürecine girmeleri kendi devletleri tarafından da döviz gelirleri elde edebilmek bağlamında desteklenmektedir. Çalışmada, Ordu ili Ünye ilçesinde çalışan Gürcistanlı, göçmen ev-içi işçilerin yaşam ve çalışma koşulları hakkında yapılan araştırmanın sonuçları sunulacaktır. Bu bağlamda Gürcistanlı, göçmen ev-işçisi kadınlarla yarı-yapılandırılmış, yüz-yüze, derinlemesine görüşmeler düzenlenmiştir. Bu yöntemin niteliksel araştırma yöntemlerini uygulayan birçok feminist araştırmacı tarafından kullanıldığı tespit edilmiştir. 1991 yılında Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla birlikte, iç siyasi çatışmaların, bölgesel savaşların ve ekonomik krizin içine giren Gürcistan'da uzun dönemli ciddi bir işsizlik ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu süreçte Gürcü erkeklerin yanı sıra Gürcü kadınların da iş bulabilmek amacıyla ülke dışına göç etmeye başladığı görülmüştür. Gürcistan'a coğrafi yakınlığı ve tarihsel bağların yanı sıra son dönemde iki ülke arasında uygulanan kolay vize rejimi sayesinde Türkiye, Gürcü kadın ve erkeklerin göç alternatifleri arasında bulunmaktadır. Türkiye'ye göç eden Gürcü kadınlar genellikle Karadeniz'de fındık, çay işçiliği, bavul ticareti, ev-içi bakım işleri, tekstil işçiliği, seks işçiliği gibi işlerde çalışmaktadırlar. Türkiye'ye göç ederek, Ünye'de ev işçisi olarak çalışan Gürcü kadınlarla yaptığımız derinlemesine görüşmelerin sonuçları, dünya literatüründeki tespitlerle yakın benzerlikler içermektedir. Düzensiz göç koşulları nedeniyle Türkçe bilen Gürcü kadın sayısı oldukça azdır. Kaçak çalışmanın verdiği tedirginlik içerisinde toplum içerisinde dikkat çekmemeye çalışmakta ve sosyal olarak içinde buldukları toplumdaki izole bir hayat yaşamaktadırlar. Göç süreçlerinin çeşitli aşamalarında sömürüye, tacize, çeşitli türdeki şiddete maruz kalmaktadırlar. Bununla birlikte ev-işleri, bakım hizmetleri için genellikle işveren ailenin yanında kalan bu kadınlar haftanın bir günü izin kullanmakta ve bu izin günlerinde civardaki diğer Gürcü kadınlarla buluşmaktadırlar. Teknolojinin de verdiği imkanlarla Gürcü göçmen kadınlar arasında enformel ataerkil bağların (networks) kurulduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ünye'deki Gürcü ev-işçileri her Çarşamba günü Pazar yerinde buluşarak Gürcistan'a götürmek üzere mal/malzeme/eşya satın almakta ve birbirleriyle sosyalleşmektedirler. Yatılı ev-işçiliği Gürcü kadının emeğinin daha fazla sömürülmesine yol açmaktadır. Dünya göç literatürüyle uyumlu şekilde işveren ailenin evinde kalan Gürcü bakıcı kadının iş saatleriyle dinlenme saatleri arasında belirgin bir ayırım kalmamıştır. Bu durum sıklıkla Gürcü kadının iş saatlerinin dışında da çalışmasına ve bunun karşılığını ücret olarak alamamasına yol açmaktadır. Dünya göç literatüründe “aileden biri gibi” deyimini de Gürcü kadının işveren aile içinde duygusal ve bedensel/fiziksel olarak harcadığı zaman ve emeğin artmasına, yani işgücü sömürü oranının yükselmesine yol açmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, yukarıda kısaca vermeye çalıştığımız somut örneklerin detaylı bir biçimde, bu deneyimleri yaşayan Gürcü kadınların bizzat kendi ifadeleriyle aktarıldığı makalede, küresel kapitalizmin yarattığı ekonomik eşitsizliklerin somut olarak yarattığı

işsizlik ve fakirlikle başa çıkmada ataerkil toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin önem kazandığı dikkati çekmektedir. Ailenin yoksullukla başa çıkabilmesinde kadın sorumluluk almakta, çeşitli türde tacize ve şiddete maruz kalarak göç etmekte, ailenin yeniden üretimi alanında (temizlik, yaşlı/çocuk/bebek bakımı, v.b.) iş bulmakta ve kazandığı parayla kendi ülkesinde kalan ailesinin ayakta kalmasını (kendisini yeniden üretmesini) sağlamaktadır.

Introduction

Feminist political economy has given us a crucial tool for uncovering and analysing 'invisible' household activities which are based on hierarchical gender relations historically: namely the concept of social reproduction. This concept refers to the processes involved in maintaining and reproducing people, specifically the laboring population, and their labor power on a daily and generational basis (Laslett and Brenner, 1989). It is directly related with the provision of food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, childcare, elderly care and basic safety. It is also linked to the transmission of knowledge, cultural identities from generation to generation (Elson, 1998; Bezanson and Luxton, 2006)¹.

Since the 1980s, we have witnessed the internationalisation of the capitalist accumulation process in both advanced and developing countries. Recently, changing dynamics of the capital accumulation process have also put enormous amount of pressure on domestic labor globally and as a result, increasing demand for paid domestic labor has triggered women's migration to affluent countries from the South. Neoliberal state policies also contribute to this female migration process

¹ Unpaid/domestic labour has always been the most critical site of feminist inquiry in order to uncover the oppression of women in patriarchal capitalist societies. During the 1960s and 1970s, there were serious discussions among /between feminists and Marxists. For instance; in 1960s Italy, autonomist Marxists tended to focus on the role of working-class struggle against capitalists that was taking place in both factories and in communities, rather than emphasizing the importance of Communist Party politics. The emphasis on worker autonomy and working-class struggle in what became known as the "social factory" instead of the factory workplace became front and center (Teepie Hopkins, 2017: 133). In addition to that, in the 1970s, there was a major discussion among Marxist/socialist feminists known as the "domestic labour debate". Marxist feminists were divided on how to analyze the position of women, domestic labour, and the reproductive activities of women in capitalism. The core issue they discussed was whether domestic labour has a/an value/exchange value or use value i.e. whether domestic labour is productive or unproductive in terms of its contribution to producing surplus value. While autonomist Marxist feminists Maria Dalla Costa, Selma James and Silvia Federici were insisting that unpaid domestic labor has an exchange value, Margaret Benston, Lise Vogel, Paul Smith and others disagreed with this argument and asserted that unpaid domestic labour has only use value (Vogel, 2013 and Smith, 1978). In the 1970s, Canadian scholars of feminist political economy, while encompassing both liberal and socialist currents, have had a commitment to putting working-class women and their labour at the hearth of their analysis. One of their main preoccupations has been an examination of women's work, both paid and unpaid, the relationship between the two, and of the ways in which the sex/gender divisions of labour are central to women's subordination (Luxton, 2006: 20). Recently, Tithi Bhattacharya has made important contributions to this theory. In capitalist societies, two types of necessary activities/relational processes namely production of goods/services and reproduction of labor power, may be separate in a strictly spatial sense, but they are actually united in the theoretical and operational senses. Indeed, sometimes the two processes may be ongoing within the same space (Bhattacharya, 2017: 74).

via the withdrawal of state services such as daycare and elementary education and the privatization of domestic work.

This article aims to analyze the individual migration experiences of Georgian domestic workers with reference to the basic principles of social reproduction theory. The paper arises out of these two critical questions: Concretely, how can we see the specificities of interaction between capitalism and patriarchy with regards to unequal relations of gender, class and race relations during the migration process? As an important part of this interaction, to what extent can we observe that women's domestic work is problematically separated from paid work? From a critical feminist perspective, by imposing this artificial distinction, capitalist patriarchy leads to gender violence to secure the existing power relations and the acquired interests in both workplace and household.

In the light of these questions, this paper first examines paid domestic work. Then it introduces the gendered migration to Unye/ORDU from Georgia.

Paid Domestic Work: Migrant Women in the Neoliberal Era

In the West, basically, this period can be identified by ‘the crisis of care’. Unlike the Keynesian social welfare state, the neoliberal state has withdrawn from most of its responsibilities for social reproduction. Nancy Fraser argues that the new accumulation regime, which can be characterized by its globalizing and neoliberal tendencies, promotes state and corporate disinvestment from social welfare. The regime also supports the increasing employment of women in various economic sectors. By doing this it reduces the reproductive capacity of families and leads to the commodification and marketization of reproductive activities. This situation also creates hierarchy among women. Women from wealthy families, educated and high-paid jobs can purchase these reproductive services from the market. On the other hand, women from poor families do these jobs in the market for low wages. Therefore, the latter has to put the reproductive needs of her family on the shoulders of other female relatives (mothers, sisters, etc.) (Fraser, 2009; 2017).

The commodification of carework has also strengthened the ‘feminisation’ of international labor migration. In the West, during the 1950s and 1960s, most of the migrant workers were men who were regarded as the breadwinner of the family. Yet, in the last three decades, the share of female immigrants in this process has been increasing significantly. In 2003, in total, half of the world’s 120 million legal and illegal migrants were women (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2003). According to the United Nations, in 2019, the number of immigrants in the world was 272 million, 48% of which were women (UN, 2019).

Grace Chang (2000) also argues that public social services are demolished simultaneously in developed and developing countries. This was no accident. International organizations such as the IMF and World Bank have led to the privatization and marketization of public social services in developing countries through the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs). In developing countries, women from poor families migrate to developing countries to meet the reproductive needs of their families by earning money and in this way commodify their bodies to meet the reproductive needs of wealthy families (at low wages) (Chang, 2000: 16).

Today, migrant domestic workers face specific dangers such as cultural/patriarchal degradation of domestic work, domestic violence, precarious recruitment processes (including passport retention and contract substitution² as well as charging of excessive fees), the absence of adapted assistance and protection mechanisms, the social and cultural isolation they can face at the destination due to language and cultural differences, isolated work conditions, lack of advance and accurate information on terms and conditions of employment, absence of labor law coverage and/or enforcement in the country of destination and immigration laws (ILO, 2015).

Sedef Arat-Koç argues that female immigrants from poor countries meet the reproductive needs of families in rich countries through maids, babysitting, elderly care, sex work. However, they are not allowed to take their own children with them while migrating, and the reproduction needs of their families cannot be met due to the absence of migrant women (Arat-Koç, 2006).

Moreover, this international gendered migration process displays unequal patterns of race, ethnicity and class relationships. However, approaches to racism differ in respect to the context. In the US case, Mignon Duffy argues that the degradation of domestic work is related to racial-ethnic power relations between female servants and their masters in previous centuries (Duffy, 2007).

While racism and ethnic discrimination in paid housework are more visible in some contexts and less in others, the interlocking of the workplace and home creates common precarious conditions for almost all domestic workers. In the case of migrant domestic workers, the definition and realization of work and home as "the same space" is the sharpest and most striking example of the intersection of social production and reproduction spatially. Especially migrant domestic workers who stay at their bosses' houses (live-in domestic workers) cannot leave the house at the end of the workday. These women, who cannot leave the house they work for, have to spend extra

² According to ILO, the most straightforward modality of contract substitution is when the worker signs a contract in his/her country of origin, and on arrival in the country of destination he/she is asked/required/coerced to sign a new contract (ILO, 2019).

effort physically and emotionally and cannot get the equivalent of this labor in terms of wages (Teple Hopkins, 2017; Anderson, 2002).

Furthermore, the economic contributions of these migrant domestic workers to their families and countries of origin must be considered seriously. Actually, developing country administrations with foreign currency debt to their corporate creditors in developed countries, support the migration of women rather than men to developed countries to work as migrant workers. This is because women tend to save at a higher rate than men and send almost all of their wages to their home country. These remittances have positive effects on the economic well-being of immigrant women's families, children and relatives, as well as reducing the foreign currency need of the homeland (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2003; Einstein, 2009: 150-160).

Georgian Migrant Domestic Workers in the Black Sea Region of Turkey

Today, Turkey is both a migrant-sending and receiving country. Until the 1990s, Turkey was sending immigrants to Germany and other European countries. Then, due to restrictive migration policies launched by the European countries, the Turkish immigrant workers have shifted their direction from Europe to oil-rich Middle Eastern Countries and then, to the Commonwealth of Independent States including the Russian Federation. Turkey also experienced the immigration of ethnic Turks from Bulgaria in the late 1980s because of political pressures occurring there and irregular migration inflows increased from various countries nearby in the period after 1990 (Toksöz and Ünlütürk, 2003).

Georgia as an ex-Soviet Union member country has faced several wars which prevent its citizens from living a stable life. After the fall of the Communist regime, the economic and social transition to capitalism has been quite painful in terms of employment possibilities, improving industrial capacity, and household income. Therefore, poor living conditions are one of the main reasons for growing emigration from the country (Zurabishvili and Zurabishvili, 2010).

On the other hand, according to the treaty between Georgia and Turkey which entered into force in 2011, Georgia citizens can enter into Turkey for a stay of up to 90 days without a visa (with their national identity card) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, 2020). By this agreement, Turkey, without the hassle of complicated bureaucratic procedures for Georgians, has become a country that can be migrated easily.

A large percentage of migrants employed in Turkey work informally for unqualified jobs that can be taken up by domestic laborers. Gulay Toksoz and Cagla Unluturk (2003) also argue that immigrant women work for wealthy families in Turkey. In addition to that, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute data, in recent years, the number of women graduated from a university

has been increasing gradually. As the education level of women increases, labor force participation rates and employment rates increase accordingly. In 2017, 72% of university graduate women joined the labor force and 59% were employed. In addition, although the fertility rate has decreased slightly in recent years, the number of elderly populations has been increasing steadily. In the light of these statistical data, I would suggest that recently, upper-middle class, university graduate, and married women have been working at a higher rate in wage jobs in various sectors. In these upper-middle-class families, husband and wife can earn enough income to employ immigrant carers and/or cleaning ladies at their home³.

Georgian Women as Migrant Domestic Workers in Ünye

The field research has been conducted in Ünye, a small town of Ordu Province, in the Black Sea Region of Turkey since May 2018⁴. So far, I have interviewed 9 Georgian women (Louize is 71, Magan is 44, Matela is 57, Dali is 67, Mziye is 58, Mariam is 39, Anna is 29 years old, Sopio is 53 years old and Gulisa is 62 years old⁵). The research does not claim to represent all Georgian women, migrate to the Black Sea Region and work as domestic workers. As Hattatoğlu (2008) stated, this qualitative research tries to create information by considering women's individual experiences and voices. Through semi-structured and in-depth interviews, I attempted to uncover their personal experiences throughout this migration process, their perceptions about the whole system, their living and working conditions, and their problems as migrant women.

However, during the conduct of the field work, I experienced considerable difficulty in accessing Georgian interviewees. Firstly, it was not possible to reach them through legal organisations and associations since they are not organised. They are mostly invisible in the public sphere. Secondly, these women hide themselves due to their lack of legal status. Therefore, in this research, I used snowball sampling method in order to reach these women. All the women to whom

³ Current statistics on female migration are far from sufficient. However, during the first six months of 2019, the entry-exit visa demands at the Sarp land border gate between Turkey (the black sea region) and Georgia were approximately 1.4 million according to official statistics. The information obtained from the Border Police Authority verifies that the most frequent entrants and exits from the Sarp border gate are the Georgians (85%) followed by the Armenians and then the Azeris. Kyrgyz and Turkmen are entering and exiting to a lesser extent (Ulukan and Ulukan, 2012: 6). In addition to shuttle trade (which refers to the activity in which individual entrepreneurs buy goods in Turkey and import them for resale in street markets or small shops in Georgia. Often the goods are imported without full declaration in order to avoid import duties), Georgians come to harvest hazelnuts and tea which are important products of the Black Sea geography, to cut wood, to take care of the elderly and children, to work in unregistered works in construction, or sex work. Strikingly, all these works, except illegal construction works, are mostly performed by Georgian women. Overall, official statistics show that in 2018, the 35% of foreigners who demanded entry visa to Turkey come from Georgia, Russia and Ukraine (except OECD citizens). Actual numbers were 2.069.392 Georgians, 5.964.613 Russian and 1.386.934 Ukrainian in 2008 (MCT, 2018).

⁴ In February 2019, the official ethical approval for this field research has been obtained from the Social Sciences Ethical Committee, Ordu University.

⁵ All names are pseudonyms.

I spoke helped me in accessing other women. I observed that Georgian women developed their own informal ties with other Georgian women since they have relatives and friends in Ünye.

Another difficulty I experienced during this research was the language which we communicated with. Many of these women cannot speak proper Turkish due to irregular conditions of their migration process, and specifically uncertainties, risks and isolation that they experience during their stay in Turkey. Two interviewees who speak Turkish were Magan and Mariam.

Patriarchal Networks established by Cultural Proximity: Muslim and Christian Georgians

As emphasised in migration studies, migration processes are determined by social networks, ties and distinct identities. Through their individual and collective agency, migrants can actively challenge structural constraints such as poverty, social exclusion and government restrictions (Castles and Miller, 1998: 39; Salazar Parrena, 2015:5; Sadunashvili, 2016). Similarly, in my field research, I found that Georgian domestic workers come to Turkey as migrants through patriarchal social networks. During our conversation Magan said:

In Georgia, I was trained formally as a mathematics teacher. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Georgia has become an independent state and the regime has changed in 1991. It was like an earthquake. The factory in our province was closed. Unemployment increased. At least one person from every home in Georgia started to go abroad as an immigrant. I worked for six months in a post-office and a hospital for two years. Then, when I was 22, I was married to a Muslim Georgian rooted Turkish guy, whose nickname is Apo and he was almost 45 years old. He is now 65 years old.

This old and rich guy was an agricultural landowner. Apo also has some business relationships with Georgia. Periodically he visits Georgia, and his Georgian relatives and friends request him to find wealthy and safe Turkish families which can provide suitable and secure working conditions for their female family members as domestic workers. As far as I observed, Apo has relatively large familial and blood-based networks, and functions as a mediator between Turkish families and Georgian domestic workers. Almost twenty years ago, during one of his visits to Georgia, he met young Magan and they got married. Magan is his second wife. They live in Ünye and this couple has organised an informal Georgian domestic workers network in Ünye. During my interviews, Magan and Apo helped me with translation.

Likewise, another story was told by Mariam. She said: “My family struggled with absolute poverty during the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. Therefore, my mother started a small-scale

commercial mediation and visited neighbourhood countries such as Turkey. Like many Christian Georgians, historically, my family have strong blood relations with Muslim Georgians who mostly live in the Black Sea region of Turkey. First, for almost 10 years, my mother worked as a domestic care worker in Ünye apart from doing some small trade jobs. During that time, I joined my mother and started to work as a domestic care worker, as well. In Ünye, we rented a tiny apartment. After a while, my mother went back to Georgia and I continued to work as a domestic care worker in Ünye.”

As far as I understand, the mother has relatively strong traditional familial and business networks in Turkey and these social networks keep Mariam safe in Ünye/Turkey. From my point of view, this is a sign of strong solidarity between Mariam and her mother.

Women's Strategies to Cope with Poverty in the age of Global Patriarchal Capitalism

The two most repeated reasons for coming to Turkey were that their salary in Georgia was extremely low or/and they cannot find a job, so they could not make a living there. Many of them talked about their financial debts such as banking loans or/and credit card debts. When the youngest interviewee a 29 year-old woman named Anna first came to Turkey from Georgia, she was 21 years old. She said:

When I was 18 years old, I opened up a small bijouterie store via banking loan and at the end, I went bankrupt, and started irregular migration to Turkey in order to raise adequate money via being employed in child and elderly care. Since then, I have kept coming to Turkey and continued to raise money for my debts.

Except Anna, Mariam and Mziya, all interviewees are married, they have children and some of them also have grandchildren. Louisa, 71 years-old, has kept coming to Turkey for more than ten years. She said:

I am a middle school graduate. When I was young, I used to pick vegetables in Georgia and sell them to the market. I have three sons and a daughter. Two sons immigrated to Ukraine. My other son was engaged in agriculture in Georgia. I came to Ünye for the first time in 2014. I have been providing care to elderly women in need of care. My husband is an unemployed truck driver and likes drinking alcohol. He set fire to our house for some reasons recently. We no longer have a house. So, I have to work and raise money to help my family”. She looked so miserable at that moment. In addition, 57-year-old Matela was in a similar situation. She said: "I have been coming here for more than fifteen years. Every time I came here, I told myself this was the last time, but my family's debts didn't run out. That's why I have to work here.

In this regard, I noticed that the biggest concern of all these women is the welfare of the family members they left in Georgia. These women have been coming here for many years. They have various troubles. Even when they get older, they keep working and can't retire properly. They send most of their savings to their families in Georgia. This suggests that the impact of patriarchal culture on women in Georgia may be strong. In this context, according to Torossian, Gerber and Gonalons-Pons (2016: 7), historically, Georgia's gender regime has been one of "classic patriarchy" characterized by patrilineal extended households where senior men have most authority and senior women have variable sway limited to domestic affairs.

In our speech, Gulisa showed me the pictures of her grandson and son, which she carefully placed on her phone. She said:

You see, I work for them. I'm 62, but I'm still working. My husband died years ago. I talk to my grandson almost every day. Yesterday he asked for toys again. Of course, I have to buy that toy for my grandson. Eight years ago, my son came here as an immigrant and stayed with me. I got him a job. He worked here for four years and saved up. Then he returned to Georgia. He bought a vehicle and has started a shuttle service to schools for transportation to students. Then he got married and my grandson was born. Wages in Georgia are very low, and I support my son's family financially.

Another noteworthy factor is that although most of these women are well educated, they cannot find a job in Georgia related to their education. Therefore, these women immigrate to Turkey and are able to find a job in low-status occupations such as domestic work and elderly care. In accordance with the findings of Irmak Bircan (2013), Nilay Etiler and Kuvvet Lordođlu (2010), Őenay Gökbayrak (2009), Selmin KaŐka (2005-2006) and Çađla Ünlütürk-UlutaŐ (2010), this social and geographical movement refers to "the contradictory class mobility" in the global labor market (Salazar Parrenas, 2015: 117-158). In this regard, Mziya is a remarkable example. She, 58 years old, was an engineer and worked for an international company in Georgia in the past. She said:

After the closedown of the company, I had become unemployed. In 1996, I came to Turkey for the first time in order to make money via buying and selling some stuff in bazaars. Since then, I have been doing this work in addition to working as a care worker.

Similarly, Sopio, 53, was trained as a primary school teacher. She said:

I have two sons. My husband was beating me when he drank. My mother and father saw my husband beating me and told me I had to divorce him. I finally divorced him. When I first came to Turkey, I worked in a textile workshop in Istanbul, then came to Unye and I started working as a domestic worker. I'm working for more than 20 years in various jobs in Turkey. My sons grew up. I bought

them a house in Georgia. I'm trying to guarantee their future". When I asked her if she wanted to go back to teaching, she said sounding troubled: "never mind, don't even think about it.

In addition, Mariam is a well-educated woman and speaks Turkish very well. She said: "I graduated from a university in Moscow and trained as an English teacher. I worked as a teacher in Georgia for about 5 years but decided to quit my job due to the low salary and worked as a domestic care worker in Ünye." At the end of our conversation, I asked Mariam if she wanted to go back to Georgia, and she was sure she would not return to her country.

Mariam was 12 years old, when the Georgian Abkhaz conflict started in 1992-1993. For over half a century, the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict has persisted in the region. When the war ended, it left behind traumas, distrust among people, displacements and barriers to economic development. A peace process, initially mediated by the UN (the United Nations), and since 2008 co-mediated by the EU (the European Union), UN and OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), has not resulted in any serious progress towards a negotiated peace. This war left traumatic effects on Mariam's memory. She said:

My family was quite wealthy due to my father's high rank position as a civil servant. I, first, lost my father at the very beginning of the war and then my mother, uncle and grandmother protected us (me, my younger sister and cousins) against poverty, and the violence of gangs (abduction, killings, rapes, etc.). When heavily armed gangs raided our house, they were hiding us in the basement which had a secret door under the carpet. I have some other traumatic experiences such as seeing dead people lying in streets, food shortages, facing dreadful poverty, absence of common law and order, and the feeling of insecurity.

Harsh Working and Living Conditions: Invisible, Insecure, and somehow Inhuman

Live-in domestic workers are in the category of paid labor. They perform reproductive activities of an affluent family within the framework of power relations established in a hierarchical order. Yet, at the same time, they have to meet their own reproductive needs (food, sleep, dress, free time, dating) in the employer's home. In this process, domestic workers are subject to both exploitation and oppression in the context of working hours, the content of the work, individual daily activities and the relationships/affections within the family. Since these women live in the place they work, not only is their labor within certain hours, but also their entire social / human existence is subject to commodification.

With reference to M. Foucault's theoretical structuring emphasizing power, control, discipline and resistance Nicole Constable (2007) argues that controls are not simply directed at the product of a domestic worker's labor but extend into her most private domains. Her body, her

personality, her voice and her emotions may be subject to her employer's control (Constable, 2007: 90).

In my research, most of the interviewees were live-in domestic workers. Dali (67 years old) was looking after and living with a very sick and 90 year-old disabled woman (generally lacking consciousness and just lying in the bed without moving). She said:

Every morning I get up early and clean my lady, and throughout the day I am feeding and comforting her, cooking foods and cleaning the house. I earn 600 dollar per month and sending most of it to my family back in Georgia. My husband died in the civil war and due to weak employment conditions in Georgia, I felt obligated to provide money for my children and grandchildren and I have been irregularly migrated to Turkey as a care worker since 1996.

Dali was living with this overly disabled woman in that house. She could even hardly leave the house for a short period of time in order to buy some food. Basically, she couldn't go out during the day or night.

The day off is generally Wednesday for live-in Georgian domestics in Ünye. Every Wednesday, the traditional bazaar is established in Ünye. All Georgian domestic workers gather in this bazaar, doing some shopping and sharing their experiences, feelings, anger, sadness, vulnerability with each other. When I asked about her working conditions, she told one of her memories that proved her complete isolation at the workplace. Dali said:

Last winter, on one Wednesday, I did not feel well. I was alone by myself at home and there was nobody to realise my problem. Therefore, I decided to go out and visit my Georgian women friends. At the time I met with them, I suddenly fell down to the ground, lost my consciousness for a while. Immediately, my friends took me to a private hospital. It turned out that I was seriously sick and needed treatment for a while. The fees were expensive in private hospitals. I did not prefer to spend my money for this treatment. I was worried about her my grandchildren's living conditions in Georgia. Instead, I took some basic medication and went back home to my lady.

Rhacel Salazar Parrenas (2015) also emphasizes a strategic tactic which imposes, exacerbates and perpetuates unequal relations of power between domestic workers and their employers. It's "one of the family discourse". First, it is rooted in the feudal conception of domestic workers as servants bound to the master for life. Second, it blurs the status of the domestic worker as a paid laborer, so employees are able to bargain less for better working conditions. Their duties become complicated with "family" obligation and considered by employers a "labor of love" because of their close relationship. Third, it conceals the existence of their own families (Salazar Parrenas, 2015: 142).

Gulisa, 62, has changed two families in the last eight years. For the past three years, she has been caring for an 85-year-old wealthy woman. She says:

I looked after an old and sick woman previously. However, I had to sit in my room in that family when guests came home. I was not allowed to talk to the guests. I was not allowed to eat with the family. I didn't have work insurance as most Georgian women did not. I don't have such problems in my present family. The old woman's children treat me very well. I can sit at the same table with them and eat. Sometimes they buy me gifts. I can sit with the guests. They provided me with work insurance, and they support me in obtaining a Turkish citizenship certificate. But there's a lot of work to do at home. I can't leave the old woman alone. So I can't take care of myself, I can't go out. I'm off on Wednesdays. But I shop for the house and buy the old woman's medicine. I only have two or three hours of free time. Sometimes I get so depressed.

Gulisa also has very serious health problems. Most importantly, hernia has developed in her groin and she needs surgery. Gulisa says the old woman's daughter, who is a doctor, will help her, but she has not had an operation yet.

Conclusions

The main purpose of this article was to prove that inequalities related to gender, race and class reinforced by patriarchal culture are important variables in explaining contemporary capitalist economic and social realities. The economic and social realities we live in arise not only from the sphere of production, but also from the sphere of reproduction. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze unequal relations of gender, ethnicity and class in the field of reproduction in order to understand current economic realities.

In this study, I focused on Georgian immigrant women working in domestic jobs such as cleaning, cooking, child and elderly care. I determined that these immigrant women working in Ünye were paid by middle class and wealthy families with mostly well-educated women. The process by which these Georgian women migrate to Ünye is the result of inequalities related to class, ethnicity and gender that arise from a unique interaction of global capitalism and patriarchal culture. First, Georgia and Turkey are two countries that are dominated by classical patriarchal culture in gender relations. Second, Turkey and Georgia have integrated into the capitalist system in different ways and therefore, the economic and social relations between the two countries are in a hierarchical order.

Third, in both countries, the responsibility for capitalist reproduction activities is given to women, not the state, companies or men. However, there is a hierarchical difference between income levels among women in the two countries. The hierarchical difference between the income

levels of women in these two countries triggers both the emergence of migration and the commodification of reproductive activities and the hierarchical division of labor among women. The existence of informal cultural/ethnic networks shows that reproductive activities are not widely commodified in Turkey yet and capitalist market relations in this area have not been yet institutionalized, but they have continued at the stage of “formation” through patriarchal culture.

Finally, as I discussed above, live-in domestic workers are in the category of wage/paid labor. They perform reproductive activities of an affluent or upper-middle-class family within the framework of power relations established in a hierarchical order. Yet, at the same time, they have to meet their own reproductive needs (food, sleep, dress, free time, dating) in the employer's home. In this process, domestic workers are subject to both exploitation and oppression in the context of working hours, the content of the work, individual daily activities and the relationships/affections within the family. In addition, one concrete example of the daily gender discourse which legitimates gender, class and racial oppression/exploitation is “one of the family” discourse.

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