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SSIS SERIES SAGE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY: 71

Sage

1

Introduction

Senior Home Care for Sale: Agency-Brokered Transnational Live-in Care in Europe[1]

Brigitte Aulenbacher, Helma Lutz, Ewa Palenga-Möllenbeck and Karin Schwiter

1. Introduction

This edited collection brings together studies and analyses that engage with the profound changes in senior home care provision in Europe associated with the commodification and marketisation of care. It focuses on the rapid recent proliferation and growth of agencies that transnationally broker home care services and workers to middle- or upper-class households, promising affordable and appropriate care for seniors according to individual needs.

The brokerage of live-in care work has created transnational care chains, arrangements and markets that span the continent. It capitalises on migration caused by wealth differentials and social inequalities between sending and receiving countries. Transnational care brokerage is embedded in distinct labour, welfare and care markets. The agencies' business models are based on gender and migration regimes, labour and social policies and the concomitant supra-, inter-, trans- and national regulations. Increasingly, agencies try to shape these regulations in their own interest. They have become powerful players in many national economies and welfare systems.

However, agency-brokered senior home care provision is also highly contested, as is evidenced by care struggles and labour disputes that concern both the quality of care and the working conditions. Care workers' organisations and trade unions have entered the field, raising public awareness of the poor working conditions that stand in stark contrast to the agencies' promise of delivering decent or even good care based on their current business models.

The collection reflects upon this configuration by bringing together different strands of research addressing the phenomenon of brokered care provision and care work.

2. Reflections on a New Contested Mode of Senior Home Care Provision

The four parts in this collection each present a specific focus area in the context of senior home care brokering, which include processes of commodification and marketisation, the transnationalisation of care work, the private household as a workplace and the contestation of the live-in care arrangement. All four themes document far-reaching changes in care provision and care work.

2.1 The Commodification and Marketisation of Care and Care Work

For a long time, care – including home care – was primarily discussed in terms of a substantial yet neglected precondition of the capitalist economy. This economy's contradictory accumulation-, profit- and market-driven mode of production is based on but simultaneously destroys the social (and ecological) reproduction of human and non-human nature, and thus its own fundament, by cannibalising it, as Fraser (2022) puts it. Furthermore, in the dualistic order of modern capitalist societies, home care in particular used to be associated with privacy, family, intimacy and femininity. From this perspective, it neither seemed to constitute work or labour nor was it of any economic interest beyond its regenerative and recreational function, not least with regard to the availability of labour power and human capital (Bakker and Silvey, 2008; Klinger, 2013). And despite a long history of commodification of domestic work from colonial times until today (Lutz, 2010, 2018), the interest in analysing the private household in general and home care in particular as part of the capitalist economy has been rather moderate thus far (Geissler, 2018).

However, this has changed in the current era of globalisation. In addition to the traditional, more or less informal 'commodification' of domestic work, new forms of transnational 'marketisation' and 'corporatisation' of domestic services have emerged around the globe which are strongly interwoven with the establishment of a new migration industry (Farris and Marchetti, 2017; Michel and Peng, 2017; see also Marchetti, 2022). In this context, agencies, as new care sector actors, have come to play a leading role in the supra-, inter- and transnational provision of – nationally embedded – domestic services and market creation. They are giving shape to this rapidly increasing industry and seek to establish it as a new sector of the capitalist economy (see Chapter 3 by Mercille and Chapter 5 by Gábriel and Katona).

Domestic service provision in Europe is, on the one hand, part of this global shift towards a new migration industry that has discovered the private household as a profitable part of the capitalist economy and includes it in the value chain (see Chapter 2 by Palenga-Möllenbeck). On the other hand, European countries harbour a unique senior home care industry that is characterised by its specific brand of commodification, marketisation, corporatisation and its underlying short-term circular migration patterns (see, for example, Aulenbacher et al., 2021; Bahna and Sekolová, 2019; Horn et al., 2021; Katona and Melegh, 2020; Weicht and Österle, 2016). Against the backdrop of diminishing welfare provisions, the introduction of workfare concepts and the establishment of social investment states, care gaps have developed. They have widened due to the erosion of erstwhile intergenerational and gender arrangements coinciding with the transition from the male breadwinner to the double earner or adult worker model. Furthermore, they are accelerated by new pluralistic modes of living both within and outside the heteronormative family concept, by austerity schemes following the financial crisis as well as by demographic change and the increasing share of the population requiring senior care provision (Aulenbacher et al., 2014; Dowling, 2021; Emunds et al., 2021; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). As part of the capitalist economy, senior home care brokerage by specialised agencies is a reaction to the increasing demand for care. It creates a new mode of domestic service provision that corresponds to the neoliberal agenda by marketising care and care work in line with the idea of individual and familial instead of societal care responsibilities (Tronto, 2017; see Chapter 6 by Aulenbacher and Prieler). Although this new mode of care provision displays a lot of similarities across Europe, the specific care arrangements differ from country to country.

2.2 The Transnationalisation of Care and Care Work

Care work migration includes different patterns of migration and mobility: long-term migration projects, circular mobility, transit and return migration. The existing literature generally suggests that the transnational care market is supplied with migrant caregivers from countries in the Global South (e.g., Fraser, 2022: 70). This also plays a role in Europe (see Chapter 10 by Martínez-Buján and Moré and Chapter 18 by Fouskas). However, it is not the most significant case in the European context, where the majority of care workers are European citizens, with many of them even being from the EU. Despite the 30 years since the Iron Curtain in Europe came down, the EU accession of Central and Eastern European countries is still in progress: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia joined in 2004, followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 and Croatia in 2013. Other candidates like Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Ukraine are preparing for accession. While the legal and social regulations of the European Union apply to all states that have joined, living and working conditions still differ considerably amongst EU member states: the asymmetry between so-called 'old' and 'new' Europe is visible as a geopolitical pattern, a divide along the former Iron Curtain. With regard to home care workers, this manifests as a division between sending countries in the East and receiving countries in the West, which results in a 'care drain' from Central and Eastern Europe and a 'care gain' in Western and Southern Europe (Bludau, 2015; Gottschall et al., 2022; Katona and Melegh, 2020; Solari, 2018). These care chains reveal a divided Europe (Lutz, 2018) in which care-importing nation-states collaborate with agencies in sending countries and/or tacitly tolerate the emerging grey zone of an informal care market. This care divide between Western and Eastern Europe relates to both historical hierarchies and forms of racialisation that are sustained within the EU through structural and everyday exclusion (Palenga-Möllenbeck, 2022). It is based on the 'semi-peripheral' status of Central and Eastern Europe as receiving and sending region of care work (see Chapter 7 by Hrženjak and Breznik) and the 'peripheral' whiteness of Central and Eastern European care workers (Safuta, 2018), a hierarchy that supports a tendency towards 'care extractivism' (Wichterich, 2016) from the latter region.

Yet, new theoretical approaches are currently being discussed that go beyond the usual global centre versus periphery models and allow for transnational perspectives on care markets: it was in the context of anthropological studies that such perspectives were developed, alongside the concept of migration industry and infrastructural approaches to mobility (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). Adopting the perspective of the sending contexts, social and political scientists are considering in particular institutional approaches to transnational labour (Shire, 2020) and welfare markets (Ledoux et al., 2021). In addition, current studies of border and mobility regimes under the conditions of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic substantiate a well-founded critique of this political economy of a European East-West divide in social reproduction and its lack of sustainability (Leiblfinger et al., 2020; Schilliger et al., 2022).

Current research has identified the diverse challenges of developing a more sustainable care economy in Europe (Aulenbacher et al., 2021). In-home care, the formalisation of employment relations and informality have remained closely intertwined (Evans and Tilly, 2016; see Chapter 6 by Aulenbacher and Prieler and Chapter 2 by Palenga-Möllenbeck). On the one hand, informality promises efficiency, flexibility and a low threshold in recruiting workers. Especially in crisis situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic, less formalised forms of brokering and organising senior home care offer informal ways of dealing with the collapsing European mobility regime (see Chapter 9 by Ezzeddine). At the same time, the lack of regulation entails the typical dangers of precarious work. This is evidenced by the fact that care workers are protected by labour law in only very few employment models across Europe, as analysed in this volume. Behind neoliberal government policies and intermediaries' promises of professional and high-quality care, we can observe a de-facto deterioration of working conditions and well-being for migrant care workers and their families. In sum, these developments further exacerbate asymmetries and care divides within Europe.

2.3 The Household as a Workplace

The private household as a workplace is a central but controversial issue in the analysis of care markets: brokering agencies emphasise that they can guarantee to seniors in need of care that they can remain

in their own household, thanks to the help of care migrants' services. They present the live-in care setting as a prolongation of care recipients' self-determined, household-based homemaking, thereby neglecting the fact that the household simultaneously and temporarily constitutes a workplace and living space for the migrant carer (Boocagni, 2017). The household turns out to be a – frequently – problematic mix of personal routines in the private space, the 'order of things' (Kaufmann, 1999) and establishing rules pertaining to (the handling/use of) objects, daily routines and emotions (see Lutz, 2011). It is, therefore, important to illuminate the often highly divergent views of agencies and caregivers concerning daily tasks and ideas/rules on household and life management. Families and relatives of care recipients are also involved in the process of negotiating the distribution of work. The main points of disagreement concern the distinction between work and leisure and how these are defined in an arrangement of almost around-the-clock presence and on-call availability (see Chapter 11 by Giordano and Chapter 13 by Bruquetas-Callejo). An investigation of the household as a workplace must take into account the disparity in the understanding of 'presence' between care workers and their employers/ family members/brokering agencies. According to Amorosi (Chapter 12), brokering agencies may function as conflict managers who must convey to family members that they must not disproportionately burden the care worker. The dilemmas associated with live-in care as a source of income are manifold: as the private household is protected by law and is hardly scrutinised, working conditions are rarely inspected, which heightens the likelihood of exploitation, isolation, subordination and discrimination of the workers (see Chapter 15 by Lutz and Benazha). Ultimately, we can deduce that those who work in a private household may well be denied the security, protection and well-being that a home provides (see Hussein et al., Chapter 14). In order to understand the dilemmas associated with the household as a place of income generation, it is important to include the workers' perspective when investigating work ethics, payment and living conditions.

2.4 The Contestation of Live-in Care

The precarious labour conditions prevalent in home care have always been contested. A long history of labour organising efforts documents

the struggles of domestic workers worldwide (Fish, 2017). At a global level, these efforts eventually led to the adoption of Convention 189 on 'Decent Work for Domestic Workers' by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2011. While this adoption of global labour standards for domestic work marks a milestone in the fight for decent work, only a minority of countries have signed the convention to this day.

Compared to most other sectors of the economy, labour struggles have proven to be particularly difficult when the workplace is a private household. Firstly, workers do not regularly meet and interact at a common workplace like factory or office workers but remain isolated from each other (Chau, 2020). Furthermore, since their workplaces are 'hidden' in private homes, they often remain invisible as workers on political agendas (Strauss and Xu, 2018). Secondly, care work requires close personal relationships between caregivers and care recipients. These relationships can create 'prisoner-of-love dilemmas' (Folbre, 2001) that prevent care workers from claiming their employment rights. Thirdly, work in the household is predominantly performed by women and migrant workers, motivating the deployment of sexist, racist and ethnicising narratives to legitimise substandard working conditions (England, 1997). Each of these obstacles is exacerbated in the case of live-in care workers, as the live-in arrangement makes it particularly difficult to leave the workplace and meet with other workers (Yeoh and Huang, 2010).

For all these reasons, the household as a workplace has served as an incubator for innovative organising strategies. They range from exchanging knowledge and providing mutual support remotely, via social media groups (see Chapter 9 by Ezzeddine) to challenging narratives of subservience with public theatre performances (Pratt and Johnston, 2013). Rather than joining traditional trade unions, live-in care workers participate in ethnic/national expat community groups (Amrith, 2018) or religious communities (see Chapter 18 by Fouskas). This resonates with the feminist call to widen the perspective of labour studies beyond workplace organising and conceive labour struggles as part of struggles around social reproduction (Schwiter et al., 2018). Community groups often offer mutual support not just with regard to labour issues but also in matters of everyday life. In expanding the perspective of labour studies, various chapters in this book thus shed light on novel strategies and spaces of resistance within ethnic/national

community networks of mutual support (see Chapter 19 by Schilliger and Chapter 9 by Ezzeddine).

In the case of Europe, the circular migration design further complicates organising efforts and labour struggles, as workers often only stay in a particular household for a few weeks at a time before being replaced by another worker. Even more so than in other world regions, this circular migration between European countries reinforces the expectation that live-in care workers are available to client households almost around the clock (see Chapter 16 by Emunds). In such a context, it is clear that efforts to improve working conditions cannot solely rely on the successful organising of affected workers. In this sense, this book represents an urgent appeal to policymakers and agencies alike (see Chapter 17 by Schwiter and Villalba Kaddour) to take action to ensure decent working conditions in live-in care.

3. Mapping the Transnational Brokering of Senior Home Care Provision in Europe

This volume presents results from different strands of research in various countries that examine the interplay of care brokers, migrant care workers, care recipients and their relatives, differing policies in these countries and their transnational interwovenness. The collection covers those European countries in which agency-brokered senior home care provision has become a relevant factor. It fleshes out similarities and differences in the various national frameworks for the organisation of care provision. It explores patterns of care mobility within and between regions. It deals with the preconditions and effects of care, care provision and care work – and with the ways in which the former influence our understanding of the latter – in both receiving and sending countries.

The chapters in this book present a multi-perspective analysis consisting of a variety of theoretical and empirical approaches. This illustrates the heterogeneity of research in European sociology, political science, anthropology and geography. Moreover, it inevitably involves a heterogeneous terminology covering the very different phenomena in the field of agency-brokered live-in care. These phenomena are embedded in the respective care regimes, and agencies fulfil different tasks. They function as intermediary, introductory, placement, posting, sending or employer agencies, and they might

incorporate a variety of distinct for- and non-profit organisations. Naturally, the terminology of the individual chapters takes the given situation in the different countries into account. However, the term brokering or brokerage has increasingly come to serve as an overarching term in the research field. We, therefore, too, use it here as a generic term that highlights what all these agencies have in common regardless of the differences between their specific modes of care provision: their key role as brokers of care services and care workers in transnational markets.

3.1 Care Markets, Care Provision, Working Conditions and the Role of Brokering Agencies

The first part of the book analyses the marketisation of live-in care by focusing on the creation of new care markets and the role of agencies providing their services. On the one hand, care brokerage and, in particular, the recruitment of carers are organised transnationally while, on the other, care markets are embedded in the social security systems of distinct national welfare states. The articles explore the relation between the marketisation, formalisation and professionalisation of agency-brokered care provision and the simultaneously persisting informal organisation of care and care work.

In Chapter 2, *Ewa Palenga-Möllenbeck* applies the value chain approach to the field of live-in care and analyses the diversification of agencies that are active in this sector in *Poland*. She reconstructs the development from the informal commodification of domestic work to the professionalised recruiting and posting of care workers, based on the example of Polish agencies that provide additional services like transport, counselling etc. and their German partner organisations, both part of a new transnational value chain. Palenga-Möllenbeck's in-depth study reveals the contradictory objectives of providing decent work for carers and affordable services for care recipients and shows how the latter becomes dominant in the unequal relations between Polish and German agencies.

Based on studies of business interests, Chapter 3 by *Julien Mercille* contemplates how agency-brokered home care provision in *Ireland* is interrelated with and gains from social policy measures. Although the marketisation of senior home care is a relatively recent phenomenon, Mercille describes a remarkably diverse range of modes of care

provision – 'underground economy', platforms, domestic private providers as employers of live-in and live-out carers and transnational agencies as intermediaries of live-in care with client families acting as employers. The business model of the domestic private providers, in particular, is challenged by the Working Time Directive, the minimum wage and lawsuits brought against them by carers. While such measures do contribute to regulating the working conditions in the sector, regulatory grey areas emerge as well.

Notwithstanding the significance of agency-brokered care provision, Chapter 4, written by *Martina Cvajner*, investigates the persistence of the informal brokerage of care workers. She reconstructs distinct waves of care migration from *Ukraine* to *Italy* and shows how care workers established their own modes to get in touch, inform about households and place incoming care workers. Although philanthropic organisations entered the scene, the informal modes of brokering and placing care workers have remained dominant. Comparing the 'pioneers', 'early adopters' and 'followers' of the established mode of labour migration and informal brokerage, Cvajner diagnoses a remarkable change in working conditions.

In Chapter 5, *Dóra Gábriel* and *Noémi Katona* draw on research on social reproduction and the post-communist marketisation of care and care work and present a typology of care intermediaries in *Hungary*. They distinguish between informal networks, online platforms, matchmaking companies, brokering agencies and companies as employers. Their tasks as well as the regulation of their activities vary greatly, covering a wide range from facilitating informal contacts up to professional care provision combined with regular employment. Elaborating on the relation between the formalisation of the service, the quality of care and the level of social security for the care workers, Gábriel and Katona identify new professionalised companies that target wealthy client families.

From a Polanyian, Foucauldian and neo-institutionalist perspective, Chapter 6 by *Brigitte Aulenbacher* and *Veronika Prieler* discusses the contested live-in care model in *Austria* and investigates the role of the 'good agencies' striving to improve care services under the banner of a neoliberal self-employment model. Aulenbacher and Prieler illustrate how the marketisation of live-in care is paralleled by the formalisation of care services while brokering agencies continue to benefit from the persistent informal negotiation of working conditions. The interplay of

formalisation and informality and the gap between decent care and poor working conditions are leading to countermovements that could possibly change the Austrian model.

3.2 Transnationality, Mobilities, Border Regimes and Care Chains

The second part of the book examines the ways in which transnationality, mobilities, border regimes and care chains affect the everyday lives, work, care arrangements and political struggles of care workers. The case studies presented here focus on various countries and highlight different aspects of the transnational division of care work within and between European regions and countries. They reveal how care is becoming a geopolitical resource and a source of unequal opportunities in life for people involved at different ends of the care chain across Europe.

In Chapter 7, *Majda Hrženjak* and *Maja Breznik* describe the case of *Slovenia* as a destination, transit and sending country for migrant care workers. Given these care chains into and out of the country, both beginning and ending there Slovenia is classified as a country of the 'semi-periphery' for which care mobility is an important resource. In one such chain, highly qualified workers from *Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina* work in Slovenian households and residential care homes, where they are de-skilled by labour and migration regimes. As a result, many move on to *Italy* and *Austria*, where domestic workers receive better pay. In another such chain, Slovenian seniors are cared for in cross-border infrastructures and private residential care in *Croatia*.

In Chapter 8, *Zuzana Uhde* traces the emergence of a new gendered division of reproductive labour inside the EU in Central and Eastern Europe. This process was supported by a historical East-West hierarchisation, which is reflected in today's care mobility, in everyday de- and re-bordering and through subtle forms of discrimination as well as structural exclusions and inclusions through EU citizenship rights. The increasing presence of agencies placing *Czech and Slovak* workers in *Germany and Austria* further aggravates the exploitation of care workers and 'care extractivism' in the region. According to Uhde, this new transnational economy leads to a 'distorted emancipation' that entails new opportunities in life only for those women who are in the advantaged position of being supplied with care work from Central and Eastern Europe.

Petra Ezzeddine's Chapter 9 also takes a close look at *Czech* live-in carers working in *Germany*, this time from the micro-perspective of workers' moral and everyday economies. She describes how they coped with the uncertainties of the changing mobility regimes during the COVID-19 pandemic and made moral and practical decisions regarding their care bonds, work and mobility. Furthermore, social media have come to play a central role in the brokering of care work, by allowing the workers to share up-to-date information, job offers and best practices. Social media has also become a means to organise the struggle for better policies and working conditions.

Chapter 10 by *Raquel Martínez-Buján* and *Paloma Moré* outlines the case of agencies brokering migrant workers to *Spanish* care homes. Although non-governmental organisations (NGOs), unions and churches have been important formalised and informal actors in the sector, the commercial sector has been growing steadily. The factors that contributed to this development include the economic crisis of 2008, changing migration, labour and care regimes (such as the admission of private placement in domestic work in 2012) and the COVID-19 care crisis. Agencies employ technocratic narratives of formalisation, professionalisation and qualification to shed the image of domestic work as a form of servitude. As the authors demonstrate, however, the working conditions agencies offer are worse than those commonly found in domestic work in the absence of an intermediary.

3.3 Worlds Apart: The Household as a Workplace

The third part of the collection is dedicated to the frequently observed disparity between the perspectives of brokering agencies and the experiences of migrant care workers' regarding actual working conditions, working time and work circumstances. These discrepancies have a significant impact not only on the organisation of the daily routine in care recipients' households but also on the vulnerability and well-being of migrant carers.

Chapter 11 by *Chiara Giordano* focuses on the working conditions and wages of migrant live-in senior carers in *Belgium* and the way agencies deal with the work setting in private households, marked by the blurred boundaries between work and leisure. Using Karen Davies's (1994) distinction between clock time (understood as linear and measurable) and process time (referring to time that is non-linear

and unpredictable in nature), Giordano demonstrates how brokering agencies refuse to recognise periods of silence, mere presence, company as well as activities stretched over long lapses of time as genuine working time. She investigates the underlying logic and concludes that care workers have little to no possibility to redefine their working times.

Chapter 12 by *Lucia Amorosi* investigates brokering agencies' function as conflict managers in *Italy*'s live-in care sector. As she describes care recipients and their families have more recently tended to outsource the entire management of the employment relationship to intermediaries, as a result of which conflict resolution becomes a key element of brokering agencies' activities. Amorosi notes that the complete control over domestic workers' schedules and workers' reduced bargaining power are part of the overall selling strategy. She concludes that care corporatisation does not overcome domestic workers' invisibility but enhances it.

In Chapter 13, *María Bruquetas-Callejo* analyses the ways in which live-in migrant care workers, agencies and family care managers shape live-in care arrangements in the *Netherlands*. These three parties form a 'triangular relation' interacting in complex ways. Again, the focus is on the question of how different actors negotiate working hours and free time and how, in doing so, they refer to or disregard labour legislation. Adopting a sociology of law perspective (Crowe et al., 2018), Bruquetas-Callejo demonstrates that the specification of working hours is not in compliance with Dutch labour law but rather unfolds in the shadow of the latter.

Chapter 14 by *Shereen Hussein, Agnes Turnpenny* and *Caroline Emberson* deals with the role of intermediary agencies in protecting or hindering individual live-in care workers' well-being in *England*. They show that care work in residential settings operates within an increasingly fragmented, scarcely resourced system, including limited funding, time and peer/management support. Based on Amartya Sen's (1985) capability approach, the authors propose a dynamic framework for the conceptualisation of care workers' vulnerability and well-being that consists of three dimensions: mental/emotional well-being (burnout and exhaustion, satisfaction and motivations and managing loss and grief), physical well-being (work-related injuries, sleep quality and impact on health behaviours) and financial/material well-being (having enough money to meet needs, pay and benefits and job security).

Chapter 15 by *Helma Lutz* and *Aranka Benazha* explores the issue of the home as a workplace and its contradictory meaning for care recipients and caregivers in *Germany*. The authors demonstrate how brokering agencies apply the notion of homemaking as a core element in their website advertisements for live-in care services. They emphasise the merits of this arrangement for the care recipients, while neglecting the fact that the same home constitutes the workplace of the care worker. Following Paolo Boccagni's (2018) work on the private home as an emotionally charged social space, supposed to provide security, protection and well-being for its residents, Lutz and Benazha demonstrate that the workers frequently rather experience it as a place of isolation, subordination, exploitation and discrimination.

3.4 Contested Employment Rights, Fair-Care Initiatives and Labour Organising

Part four enlarges on strategies to improve the working conditions in live-in care. The chapters explore the potential and the limitations of an ethical assessment of live-in care, of fair-care initiatives brought forward by agencies and of labour organising efforts led by care workers themselves.

In Chapter 16, *Bernhard Emunds* undertakes an ethical assessment of the excessively long working hours prevalent in live-in care. He builds on the works of Axel Honneth and Immanuel Kant to conceptualise 'decent' and 'just' working conditions. The former defines an absolute minimum ethical standard for all societies worldwide. The latter refers to a society-specific level of what is codified as ethically acceptable in (national) labour law. Based on the example of *Germany*, Emunds concludes that the working hours in live-in care exceed the labour law stipulations to such an extent that they must be classified as 'unjust' and at times even 'indecent'.

What might a 'fair' live-in care arrangement look like? To explore this question, *Karin Schwiter* and *Anahi Villalba Kaddour* apply a 'Geographies of Justice' approach, which defines 'fairness' in dialogue with those affected. In Chapter 17, they trace the practical implementation of 'fairness' based on the example of an agency brokering live-in carers between *Romania/Slovakia* and *Switzerland*. Schwiter and Villalba Kaddour discuss the prospects of and limits to combatting the 'prisoner-of-love dilemma' by systematically scheduling and documenting working hours and involving additional care personnel. Furthermore, they explore the extent to which the separation from one's loved ones and the brain drain can be mitigated by so-called 'social remittances', shorter rotation intervals or 'borrowing workers'.

Theodoros Fouskas analyses the impact of the working conditions in live-in care on workers abilities to claim labour rights, care for their own health and organise with other workers. Chapter 18 draws on in-depth insights into the daily lives of *Filipina* live-in carers in *Greece*. Fouskas shows how their precarious work realities contribute to their individualisation and a lack of collective identity. Given their mistrust of community and labour organisations, he argues, most of them struggle on their own, refrain from claiming labour rights altogether and tend to neglect their own health. Instead, they prefer to find solace in religious groups that support them in bearing their burdens silently.

Are there any successful examples of care worker organising in Europe? In Chapter 19, *Sarah Schilliger* explores this question based on her concept of an 'infrastructure of solidarity'. Taking the example of a group of *Polish* care workers in *Switzerland*, she shows how appropriating shared spaces outside the household – in a parish hall, in court or in a Facebook group in virtual space – can build the foundations for collective organising. Furthermore, Schilliger argues, alliances with unions, affective relations of mutual aid and practices of sharing knowledge serve to bolster collective identity and resistance and empower care workers to individually negotiate improvements in their daily work realities.

3.5 Afterword

This book aims to present an in-depth analysis of transnational live-in care arrangements and care brokerage across Europe. The fifth part reflects commonalities and differences and brings the European live-in care models into dialogue with home care regimes in other parts of the world.

Chapter 20 by *Ito Peng* reflects on the transnational brokering of senior home care in Europe as a whole. She takes the well-known concept of global care chains as a starting point and proposes supplementing it with a global value chain perspective. Understanding human labour as a commodity within global supply chains invites a macro-economic view and highlights the key roles of brokering

agencies and the state in shaping transnational care markets. Furthermore, Peng shows that the East-West divide as well as the role of welfare states and social policies make Europe a unique case of migrant labour and care brokerage. Simultaneously, she sheds light on many commonalities with migrant labour brokerage in Asian countries: it builds on inequalities that arise from unequal access to resources and policies that privilege some at the cost of others.

As a whole, the book underlines the need to (re)build fairer, more just and sustainable forms of care provision around the globe.

Note

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