
Early-career academics' cross-border mobilities

Gender relationships within and beyond a transnational workplace

Dissertation presented at the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, University of Neuchâtel, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Social Sciences

by

Martine Schaer

Approved by the doctoral committee:

Prof. Janine Dahinden | Laboratoire d'études des processus sociaux, Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland | Supervisor

Prof. Nicky Le Feuvre | Université de Lausanne, Switzerland | Committee member

Prof. Miranda J. Lubbers | Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain | Committee member

Prof. Kyoko Shinozaki | Universität Salzburg, Austria | Committee member

Defended on April 16, 2021

University of Neuchâtel

IMPRIMATUR

La Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de l'Université de Neuchâtel, sur les rapports de Mme Janine Dahinden, directrice de thèse, professeure, Laboratoire d'études des processus sociaux, Université de Neuchâtel ; Mme Nicky Le Feuvre, professeure, Institut des sciences sociales, Université de Lausanne ; Mme Miranda J. Lubbers, professeure, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Autonomous University of Barcelona; Mme Kyoko Shinozaki, professeure, Abteilung Soziologie und Kulturwissenschaft, Universität Salzburg autorise l'impression de la thèse présentée par Mme Martine Schaer en laissant à l'autrice la responsabilité des opinions énoncées.

p.o. P. 

Neuchâtel, le 16 avril 2021

Le doyen
Pierre Alain Mariaux

Abstract

This dissertation examines *academic transnational mobility* through the experiences of early-career academics moving across borders to take up academic positions at universities abroad. In many countries, early-career transnational mobility has become a normative imperative, a necessary prerequisite to pursue an academic career and secure stable academic employment. At the same time, academic labor markets have become increasingly transnationalized and the number of temporary (and part-time) positions has risen considerably, generating increased competition for permanent positions and contributing to the casualization of academic employment.

This dissertation adopts a gender-constructivist perspective, which maintains that, in their social practices and interactions, individuals (re)produce or transform gender representations that are structurally anchored in their wider social and institutional environment. This gender lens is implemented through a life-story approach and ego-centered social network analysis. This conceptual framework makes it possible to encompass the different domains of life and to investigate how these may interfere with academic transnational mobility. It also allows the ways in which academics' decisions and practices are embedded in their social networks and wider social environments to be scrutinized.

The dissertation draws on biographical and qualitative egocentric network interviews conducted with early-career academics from various national backgrounds at the University of Zurich in Switzerland and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in the United States. Research participants had obtained their PhD within the last ten years and were holding academic positions at various levels. For those in a relationship, semi-structured interviews were conducted with their partners. Drawing on and combining these different sets of qualitative data, several analyses were conducted, leading to four articles that constitute the core of the dissertation.

The results presented in this dissertation bring new insights that challenge or nuance a number of ideas often taken for granted. First, by showing that academics moving abroad with their partners perform a diversity of gender configurations, this dissertation supports the idea that there is no straightforward relationship between couples' gender arrangements and academic transnational mobility. Transnational mobility does not unequivocally undermine gender-(un)equal relationships between partners, nor does it necessarily favor (un)equal relationships either. This result contributes to recent scholarly discussions that question the overemphasis of the work-family approach to explain why female academics tend to be less transnationally mobile than their male counterparts, which makes it difficult to see that gender relationships are, indeed, progressively shifting.

Second, by highlighting the negative effects that mobility may have on the people concerned, the results presented in this dissertation challenge the tendency in mobility studies to focus on the bright side of mobility and to indulge in a romanticized conception of mobility. Academics' narratives reveal the many obstacles they face along their mobile trajectory, constraining them to complicated family arrangements involving sometimes the *satellite mobility* of people around them. The results emphasize that the price to pay as one pursues an academic career on the move may be perceived by the academics as overly expensive and with no guarantee of obtaining a stable academic position, contributing to a sense of *mobility fatigue* and precarity.

Third, this dissertation questions the often-taken-for-granted idea that mobility abroad equates to the building of academic transnational networks. The analysis of the academics' social networks shows that highly mobile academics did not develop more transnational academic networks than less mobile academics. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that transnational academic ties can be developed through other means than the mobility of the early-career academics, namely thanks to the mobility of higher-ranked academics who themselves travel across borders to give talks, lectures, or for their sabbatical.

Finally, this dissertation shows that the transnational career moves of young scholars are processes embedded in social relationships in complex and sophisticated ways. In particular, the support that higher-ranked academics provide to early-career scholars varies along gender lines. These results help nuance the idea of academic meritocracy, which assumes that academic hires are based purely on the evaluation of individual merit and excellence.

Keywords

Early-career academics – Transnational mobility – Gender – Academic careers – Social networks

Résumé

Cette thèse s'intéresse à la *mobilité académique transnationale* à travers les expériences de chercheur·x·e·s académiques en début de carrière qui s'engagent dans des mobilités transnationales en vue d'occuper des postes académiques dans des institutions à l'étranger. Dans de nombreux pays, la mobilité transnationale en début de carrière est devenue un impératif normatif, un prérequis nécessaire à carrière académique et à l'obtention d'un emploi stable dans le milieu. Dans le même temps, le marché du travail académique est devenu de plus en plus transnationalisé et le nombre de postes temporaires (et à temps partiel) a considérablement augmenté, générant une concurrence accrue pour les postes permanents et contribuant à la précarisation des emplois universitaires.

Cette thèse adopte une perspective constructiviste de genre, qui soutient que, dans leurs pratiques et interactions sociales, les individus (re)produisent ou transforment des représentations de genre qui sont structurellement ancrées dans leur environnement social et institutionnel plus large. Cette perspective de genre est mise en œuvre à travers une approche biographique et une analyse des réseaux sociaux égocentrés. Ce cadre conceptuel permet d'englober les différents domaines de la vie et d'étudier comment ceux-ci peuvent interférer avec la mobilité transnationale des jeunes chercheur·x·e·s. Il permet également d'examiner la manière dont les décisions et les pratiques de ces chercheur·x·e·s sont intégrées dans leurs réseaux sociaux et dans leur environnement social plus large.

La thèse s'appuie sur des entretiens biographiques et des entretiens de réseau menés auprès de chercheur·x·e·s de diverses nationalités à l'Université de Zurich en Suisse et à l'Université de Californie Los Angeles (UCLA), aux États-Unis. Les participant·x·e·s avaient obtenu leur doctorat depuis dix ans au maximum et occupaient des postes académiques de différents niveaux. Lorsqu'ils étaient en couple, des entretiens semi-structurés ont été réalisés avec leurs partenaires. L'analyse combinée des différents ensembles de données qualitatives produites, a donné lieu à quatre articles qui constituent le cœur de cette thèse.

Les résultats présentés apportent de nouvelles connaissances qui remettent en question ou nuancent un certain nombre d'idées souvent considérées comme allant de soi. Tout d'abord, en montrant que les chercheur·x·e·s qui se déplacent à l'étranger avec leur partenaire mettent en œuvre des configurations de genre diversifiées, cette thèse soutient l'idée qu'il n'existe pas de relation directe entre les arrangements genrés des couples et la mobilité académique transnationale. La mobilité transnationale n'affaiblit ni ne favorise nécessairement la mise en œuvre d'arrangements (in)égalitaires entre les partenaires. Ce résultat contribue aux récentes discussions académiques qui remettent en question l'importance excessive accordée parfois à la conciliation travail-famille pour

expliquer que les femmes sont moins mobiles que les hommes, et qui ne paie pas assez attention au fait que les rapports sociaux de genre se modifient effectivement.

Deuxièmement, en soulignant les effets négatifs de la mobilité sur les personnes concernées, les résultats présentés dans cette thèse remettent en question la tendance des études sur la mobilité à se focaliser sur ses aspects positifs et à en donner une image romantisée. Les récits des chercheur·x·e·s révèlent les nombreux obstacles auxquels iels sont confronté·x·e·s tout au long de leur trajectoire de mobilité, les contraignant à des arrangements familiaux compliqués impliquant parfois la *mobilité satellite* de personnes de leur entourage. Les résultats soulignent que le prix à payer pour poursuivre une carrière académique en mobilité peut être perçu par les chercheur·x·e·s comme démesuré, et ne garantissant en rien d'obtenir un poste stable. Les coûts répétés de la mobilité contribuent ainsi à l'émergence d'un sentiment de lassitude et de précarité.

Troisièmement, cette thèse remet en question l'idée répandue selon laquelle la mobilité transnationale équivaldrait à la construction de réseaux académiques transnationaux. L'analyse des réseaux sociaux des chercheur·x·e·s montre que les très mobiles d'entre eux n'ont pas développé davantage de relations académiques transnationales que les peu mobiles. En outre, l'analyse révèle qu'il est possible de développer des liens transnationaux par d'autres biais, notamment grâce à la mobilité de professeur·x·e·s et chercheur·x·e·s confirmé·x·e·s qui se déplacent eux-mêmes transnationalement pour donner des conférences, des cours ou lors de leur congé sabbatique.

Enfin, cette thèse montre que les mouvements de carrière transnationaux des jeunes chercheur·x·e·s sont des processus qui s'inscrivent dans les relations sociales de manière complexe et subtile. En particulier, le soutien que les professeur·x·e·s apportent aux jeunes chercheur·x·e·s varie selon le sexe de ces dernier·x·e·s. Ces résultats contribuent à nuancer l'idée de méritocratie académique qui suppose que le recrutement des chercheur·x·e·s académiques repose uniquement sur l'évaluation de leur mérite individuel et de leur excellence.

Mots-clés

Jeunes chercheurs académiques – Mobilité transnationale – Genre – Carrières académiques – Réseaux sociaux

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	9
List of figures	11
List of tables	11
Chapter 1 Introduction	13
1.1. The genesis of a dissertation: From subjective experience to academic endeavors	13
1.2. The genealogy of academic mobility	17
1.3. Transnational mobility in contemporary academia	19
1.3.1. The uneven flows of mobile academics from a global perspective	20
1.3.2. Gaps in statistics about academic transnational flows	22
1.3.3. The structural changes of academia as a workplace	23
1.3.4. Mobility as a key aspect of academic careers	30
1.4. Dissertation outline	32
Chapter 2 Theoretical background	39
2.1. A constructivist perspective of mobility through a gender lens combining several approaches	39
2.2. Theorizing academic transnational mobility	43
2.2.1. The temporal dynamics of mobility trajectories	44
2.2.2. Situating early-career academic transnational mobility: Academics as highly skilled movers?	47
2.2.3. Transnationalism and new mobilities	51
2.3. Bringing gender in: Academic transnational mobility as a gendered phenomenon	56
2.3.1. Academia as a gendered occupational field	57
2.3.2. Migration/mobility studies and gender	63
2.3.3. Applying a constructivist gender perspective to academic mobility	67
2.4. Encompassing the complexities of human life	69
2.4.1. A life-story approach: Capturing human lives diachronically and synchronically	70
2.4.2. Ego-centered social network analysis: Looking into and beyond the academic workplace	72
Chapter 3 Methodology and methods	79
3.1. A constructivist and interpretive methodology	79
3.2. A methodological framework based on a triangulation of perspectives	80
3.3. Constructing the phenomenon under study	81
3.3.1. Defining the study population	81
3.3.2. Choosing the university sites	83
3.4. Methods of data co-production: different types of qualitative interviews	85
3.4.1. Biographical interviews	85

3.4.2.	Ego-centered network interviews	88
3.4.3.	Semi-structured interviews with partners	92
3.5.	Doing the field.....	92
3.5.1.	Constructing a sample: Purposive sampling strategies.....	92
3.5.2.	Recruiting participants.....	95
3.5.3.	Interviewing participants	97
3.5.4.	Sample characteristics	101
3.6.	Analyzing data.....	108
3.6.1.	Methods of data analysis	109
3.7.	Ethical considerations.....	114
3.8.	Positionality and reflexivity	119
Chapter 4	Gender arrangements within mobile couples	127
4.1.	Foreword to the article	127
4.2.	Transnational mobility among early-career academics: gendered aspects of negotiations and arrangements within heterosexual couples	128
4.2.1.	Introduction	128
4.2.2.	Gender and academic mobility: theoretical lenses	129
4.2.3.	Methodology	133
4.2.4.	Results: three ideal-typical patterns of mobility.....	134
4.2.5.	Discussion: multiple gender configurations in a context of mobility.....	146
4.2.6.	Conclusion: Are gender relations shifting towards less inequality?.....	149
4.2.7.	References	151
Chapter 5	Mobility fatigue and academic precarity	155
5.1.	Foreword to the article	155
5.2.	From mobility attractiveness to mobility fatigue: The impact of repeated transnational mobility on the lives and aspirations of early-career academics.....	155
5.2.1.	Introduction	155
5.2.2.	Conceptualizing cross-border mobility in neoliberal academia	157
5.2.3.	Methodology	162
5.2.4.	Between precarity and privilege: Three academics	163
5.2.5.	Entangled challenges in the quest for stability	174
5.2.6.	Conclusion.....	181
5.2.7.	References	182
Chapter 6	Transnational mobility networks.....	187
6.1.	Foreword to the article	187
6.2.	Transnational mobility networks and academic social capital among early-career academics: beyond common-sense assumptions.....	187
6.2.1.	Introduction	187

6.2.2.	Methodology	191
6.2.3.	Mobility, proportion of transnational ties, and academic social capital	200
6.2.4.	The meanings and dynamics underlying network composition	202
6.2.5.	Conclusion.....	215
6.2.6.	References	217
Chapter 7	Social ties and transnational career moves	221
7.1.	Foreword to the article	221
7.2.	Early-career academics' transnational moves: The role of vertical social ties in accessing academic positions abroad.....	221
7.2.1.	Introduction	221
7.2.2.	Theoretical background: Social networks, job acquisition, and gender	223
7.2.3.	Methodology	227
7.2.4.	Vertical ties matter but not all are equally valuable	230
7.2.5.	Transnationalized job markets.....	239
7.2.6.	Institutional resources as complementary elements	243
7.2.7.	Conclusions	248
7.2.8.	References	252
Chapter 8	Conclusion.....	255
8.1.	Key findings and contributions to the academic literature	257
8.1.1.	Challenging the one-sided vision of transnational mobility	259
8.1.2.	The complex relationship between gender and academic transnational mobility	264
8.2.	Research limits and new directions	270
8.2.1.	The exiters of academia.....	270
8.2.2.	The immobile survivors in academia.....	272
8.2.3.	The professors' point of view	273
8.3.	Political implications	275
8.3.1.	Rethinking the mobility imperative.....	275
8.3.2.	Getting rid of the glass maze?	276
Appendices		279
	Appendix I – Biographical interview guidelines.....	279
	Appendix II – Memento of questions for biographical interview (mobile academics).....	285
	Appendix III – Network interview guidelines – Ongoing mobility	291
	Appendix IV – Network interview guidelines – Past mobility	295
	Appendix V – Consent form UCLA (version for mobile academics).....	299
References		301

Acknowledgements

The long journey toward this dissertation would not have been possible without the support of many people.

First of all, I would like to express my warmest thanks to the research participants, both the academics and their partners, who agreed to be interviewed and gave me many hours of their time. Without them, and without the trust they placed in me and their willingness to share their personal experiences, this dissertation would not have been possible.

My thanks also go to Janine Dahinden, my PhD supervisor, for the confidence she has shown in me, even before the concrete start of this dissertation, by being available to listen to my first ideas and proposing the development of a larger project to finance this work. I would also like to thank her for her continued support throughout the subsequent stages of this work. This dissertation owes much to the quality of her comments, which are always insightful and inspiring.

Thank you to the members of the jury, Nicky Le Feuvre, Miranda J. Lubbers, and Kyoko Shinozaki, for agreeing to serve as expert reviewers for my thesis. I found their detailed comments and thoughtful suggestions extremely helpful in the final stages of this work.

I have been fortunate to be surrounded by great colleagues throughout my years at the LAPS. In particular, I would like to express my gratitude to Joanna Menet, whose friendship and encouragement have been extremely valuable in carrying out this work, as well as to Cédric Jacot, Joëlle Moret, Faten Khazaei, and Marion Schulze, all of whom have been available to read and discuss drafts of preliminary results and have also helped me with literature references and conceptual ideas. My thanks go to all my other colleagues at the LAPS, especially to Matthieu Bolay, Aurélien Petzold, and Alice Sala, with whom I have shared an office at one time or

another. Our exchanges, over our computers or over a cup of coffee, have been a source of inspiration in this process.

Thank you to Daniel Moure, who copy edited the four articles at the core of this dissertation, and to Susan Ryan, who edited the four chapters that form this dissertation's *chapeau*.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Martin von Arx. Without our overseas adventures, the very idea for this dissertation topic would not have been sparked or grown into what it is today. His unfailing support and presence allowed me to traverse the various rope-lengths necessary to reach the summit of this project. Thank you.

List of figures

Figure 1.1: Instructional positions in US academic institutions, 1975-2014	26
Figure 1.2: Academic staff (FTE) in Swiss universities, 1980-2019.....	27
Figure 1.3: Academic staff proportions in Swiss universities, 1980-2019.....	28
Figure 1.4: Postdoctoral scholars in US academic institutions by broad fields, 1980-1998.....	29
Figure 2.1: Proportion of men and women in a typical academic career, students and academic staff, EU-28, 1999-2016.....	58
Figure 6.1: Ego's and alters' geographical locations at t0 and t1.....	197

List of tables

Table 3.1: Interviews conducted at the two university sites	100
Table 3.2: Sociodemographic characteristics of the academic interviewees	102
Table 3.3: Academic characteristics of the academic interviewees	105
Table 3.4: Academic positions held by the academic interviewees.....	106
Table 3.5: Transnational mobility characteristics of the academic interviewees	107
Table 3.6: Background characteristics of the interviewed partners	108
Table 6.1: Mobility characteristics of interviewees (ego)	195
Table 6.2: Sex and transnationality characteristics of alters and “professors” (proxy)	198
Table 6.3: Network transnationality and academic social capital by groups	204
Table 6.4: Alters' role relationships and “professors” (proxy) by location variable and by mobility degree.....	206
Table 7.1: Interviewees' age, year of PhD, and discipline.....	228
Table 7.2: Interviewees' countries of origin and PhD	229

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. The genesis of a dissertation: From subjective experience to academic endeavors

June 2010. On a late Friday afternoon, I enter a tall building on campus, one of the homes of the Biology department at Cornell University in New York. I walk down to the large stairwell hall in the first basement where, as every week, members of the different research groups take turns inviting their colleagues from the other groups and their families for cheap beer, pizza, and informal socializing before the weekend. PhD students, postdocs, professors of the department are attending, joined by their spouses and children, all currently living in the area, many coming from other US states or from abroad. A small crowd swarming with international scholars and their significant others. I see my partner in the back; he's talking and laughing with our new friends. Among them, his colleagues from the Biology department – a postdoc from Germany, a grad student from India, another grad student from the United States – and the Belgian girlfriend of the US grad student, herself doing a PhD in a social sciences department. I pick up a beer from the cooler and join their group.

It's been more than one year already. One year since I arrived in the United States with my partner in the spring of 2009. He had obtained a postdoctoral fellowship to do a research stay at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. I had obtained a Master's degree in social anthropology a little more than a year earlier. I was ready for a change and I fancied the adventure of living in another country for a while. We left Switzerland thinking that we would spend one year in the United States, maybe two, and then go back to Switzerland. We ended up staying almost three

years in Ithaca and then moved to Arizona, where my partner had obtained another temporary position. In the end, he spent five years in the United States, while I returned to Switzerland one year before him to start working on the research project of which this dissertation is a part.

I left Switzerland with the idea that I would find work in the United States. “I’m resourceful and I won’t be picky. I’m going to find something, for sure,” I believed. After my first year in Ithaca, I had to face the obvious: the economic crisis had passed that way, jobs were scarce, and none of my applications were making it through. I found everyday life boring and felt a deep disillusionment about my professional prospects, whatever they might be. I was experiencing firsthand what being the “accompanying spouse” of an early-career academic can be like.

Located in what I felt was “the middle of nowhere” (i.e., upstate New York), Ithaca is a small city of about 30,000 inhabitants and home to Cornell University, which counts about 24,000 students. As a typical US college town, a large part of Ithaca’s economic and cultural fabric is linked to the university. Because many Cornell students and staff come from other states or from abroad, often with partners or families, the university organizes social activities that “spouses” were welcome to attend. I joined the evening English classes intended for “international spouses”. In small classes made up by and large of female international spouses, and under the guidance of a local teacher, we reviewed English grammar rules, week after week, and read Philip K. Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

It had been for more than one year that I had been dreaming myself, dreaming of finding my own professional purpose. By this time, we had decided to stay for at least another year, but I still couldn’t seem to fit in there. At the same time, the young social anthropologist that I was began to notice a lot of “interesting stuff” going on there. The idea of doing a PhD had been running through my mind since I finished my studies, and I had developed an interest in gender

and mobility issues. Observing the small world around me, academics and their partners discussing their experiences, projects, ambitions, frustrations, difficulties, and joys, aroused my intellectual curiosity and gave me “ideas”. I decided to get back in touch with Janine, professor at the University of Neuchâtel. “This microcosm of international academics is really interesting and deserves to be studied more closely, in terms of mobility and gender,” I emailed her, “I would be most interested to try to develop a research study about it. Do you see a possibility?” A few days later, Janine wrote back. Her message sounded optimistic and ended with, “Why don’t we Skype soon?”

Many months later, after several Skypes and a visit to Switzerland, my once vague ideas had taken a whole new turn and were now integrated into a larger research project, of which my dissertation was a part. It was clear from early on that in my dissertation, I would seek to understand the transnational mobility of young academics through the subjective experience of the involved actors, taking a constructivist gender perspective. As a result of the reading that I did then to elaborate my dissertation proposal and contribute to the larger research proposal in which my dissertation fits, my ideas became more refined and a general research question emerged. This research question still occupies a central position in my dissertation and can be expressed as follows:

How is the transnational mobility of early-career academics affected by gender dynamics, and conversely, how are gender dynamics (re)produced or transformed by early-career academics in the context of their mobility?

In early 2013, after funding had been secured for this project and the research team had been formed, the winding journey of conducting research and of “doing one’s PhD” could start. And with the writing of these pages, the latter is now coming to an end.

Thus, the experiences of my partner, of my friends in Ithaca and later in Tucson, Arizona, as well as my own experience following my partner abroad resonate with the experiences that early-career academics and their partners shared with me in long interviews conducted as part of this dissertation. My firsthand experience of academic mobility as a “tied mover” shapes my identification with this dissertation’s topic and my positionality as a researcher investigating this topic. It is part of the “me” who listened (and asked questions) to the interviewees and interpreted the data. Very much like, as I argue later in the dissertation, personal and professional lives are embedded in each other and should be analyzed as a whole, I see my personal and my academic connections to the research topic as a whole. What happens in one domain of life nurtures, influences, and shapes what happens in other domains of life.

The renewed interest that I have experienced during the various stages of the research process about transnationally mobile early-career academics confirmed that my “antennae”¹ as a young anthropologist in Ithaca were not mistaken and had correctly perceived that some sociologically interesting phenomena were going on there. I hope that readers of this dissertation will share this opinion and find these pages worthwhile.

In the next sections of this introduction, I briefly present the historical backdrop of transnational academic mobility before depicting some important characteristics of contemporary academic mobility flows and discussing the recent changes that have occurred in academia over the past decades. This first introductory chapter ends with an outline of the dissertation.

¹ Metaphor used by Janine Dahinden in her methods classes to encourage students to engage in their project. I also use the term here as a nod to my partner, who was studying plant-insect interactions and, in particular, how plant odors, which are perceived by moths through their antennae, affect insect behavior.

1.2. The genealogy of academic mobility

Academic transnational mobility has become a dominant trope in contemporary academia in European countries and beyond (e.g., Bauder, Hannan and Lujan 2017; Robertson 2010; Welch 1997). However, scholars engaging in geographical mobility is not a new phenomenon. It has a longstanding history, the roots of which point in various geographical directions and date back to different periods of time. In classical antiquity, peripatetic scholars moved around the different regions of the Ancient Greek civilization for teaching purposes, and since the emergence of the first universities in several major European cities at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, the *peregrinatio academica* marked the lives of masters and students of the clergy and of the nobility throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Welch 1997; 2008). Such academic mobility was not limited to the Western world. The Arab world and pre-unification Confucian China also provide examples of geographically mobile scholars. Welch (2008) notes, for instance, that monks and Confucian scholars, as well as students from different East Asian areas, traveled to centers of scholarship in the Chinese empire (see also Kim 2009).

However, being able to trace a (discontinuous) genealogy of academic mobility does not mean, of course, that the phenomenon has been uniform across time and space. As Kim (2009: 388) rightly points out, “the modes of mobilities of both academics and students in the early medieval period and the local recontextualizations remind us that it is the forces of change and the patterns of mobility which are of interest, not just the mobilities themselves”. In her sociohistorical outline of transnational academic mobility, Kim (2009) shows how the expansion of colonial empires affected the mobility of academics, in particular with the transfer of academic expatriates in the colonies in order to teach local elites. At the same time, in European metropolises, and with the advent of nation-states, universities became state institutions.

These changes affected academic transnational mobility, as academics found themselves in institutions often locked into their national “cultures” and structures.

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, Germany created internationally renowned research centers that attracted academics from different European countries as well as from the United States and Japan, which in turn influenced the development of university systems in these countries. In the early 20th century, universities in various countries set up (transnational) exchange programs for professors. But while the academic world had an appreciable transnational dimension, the rise of nationalism in Germany and Japan put the brakes on these developments. During the interwar period, many academics left Germany due to the rise of Nazism and found refuge largely in the United States and the United Kingdom, and after World War II, the Cold War and the fierce competition between the United States and the Soviet Union had an impact on the whole world, again affecting transnational academic mobility. At the same time, the United States became the main pole of academic mobility, where “there was money (and principles for taking foreign academics) offered by both government and non-government actors such as the Rockefeller Foundation” (Kim 2009a: 399). Yet, the dominant position of the United States did not remain unchallenged (Bauder, Lujan and Hannan 2018). The 1990s saw the end of the Cold War, and in its wake, the advent of an enlarging European Union, gradually integrating countries from the Eastern bloc. At the same time, the European Research Area was established, attesting to a strong political will from European governments to strengthen research exchanges and networks across the European Union, in particular by encouraging the “free circulation of researchers and knowledge”² and with the overall objective to increase Europe’s competitiveness vis-à-vis the United States.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/era_en (accessed 25.09.2020).

Framework programs – for instance, FP7, Horizon 2020 – were simultaneously implemented in order to fund and foster research in the European Research Area.³ In parallel, and following the 9/11 attacks, the “war against terror” (Larsen 2008) introduced new partitions of the global world, which also contributed to the reconfiguration of academic mobility flows.

Recent political developments – such as the ban, signed by US President Donald Trump, that blocked the entry into the United States of citizens from seven predominantly Muslim countries, or mobility restrictions linked to Covid-19 measures – are new elements whose impacts on academic mobility flows remain to be specified, both regionally and globally, including in terms of the new inequalities emerging from these reconfigurations.

Overall, characterized by the globalization of neoliberal economies, the advent of knowledge societies, the growing transnationalization of social realities, increased speed of movement, and enhanced technology, the contemporary world has been described as involving radical changes from previous modern eras. It gave rise to influential theories of globalization through the metaphorical prisms of the *risk society* (Beck 1992 [1986]), *network society* (Castells 1996), or *liquid modernity* (Bauman 2006 [2000]) and provided a new context for migration and mobility worldwide, and for academic transnational mobility in particular.

1.3. Transnational mobility in contemporary academia

Academic transnational mobility is thus not a new phenomenon, but the contemporary conditions which emerged in the 1980s provide a new backdrop against which this phenomenon is taking shape today, both at the macro level – framing contemporary trends of

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/history-horizon-2020> (accessed 25.09.2020).

transnational academic mobility – and at the micro level of transnationally mobile academics’ subjective experiences.

1.3.1. The uneven flows of mobile academics from a global perspective

Academia has become a worldwide system and is today often described as a global academic marketplace (e.g. Bauder 2015; Enders and Musselin 2008). At the same time, with the liberalization of markets and trade policies, and under the effect of new recruitment strategies in the higher education and research sectors, transnational academic mobility flows have been on the rise over the past decades (Bilecen and Van Mol 2017; Kim 2009). The academic world is, however, far from being seamless and is hierarchically structured along global patterns of economic inequalities. As with other forms of mobility, transnational academic mobility flows are unevenly distributed (and oriented) across the globe, reflecting international geopolitical and power hierarchies linked in particular to countries’ colonial histories and to supranational mobility agreements between countries (Bauder, Lujan and Hannan 2018; Connell 2017; Gerhards, Hans and Drewski 2018; Nikunen and Lempiäinen 2018). Predominant patterns take shape – for instance, from global South to global North, within the global North, as well as between European countries making up the Schengen area, and between North American countries (United States, Canada, and Mexico) – with each of these patterns reflecting further asymmetries within themselves (Bauder, Lujan and Hannan 2018; Fahey and Kenway 2010b). In this global picture, it should be emphasized that academic centers of *excellence* (in terms of reputation and rankings) that are attractive to academic scholars from the peripheries and from other centers are usually located in global North countries (Nikunen and Lempiäinen 2018), and that since World War II, the United States have been the main destination of academic mobility flows (Auriol 2010; Kim 2009).

Besides powerful geopolitical and historical circumstances, other important factors contribute to stratifying transnational academic mobility. Language affects academics' mobility insofar as English-speaking countries attract academics from both English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries (or regions), all the more that English has become the current academic *lingua franca*. Non-English-speaking countries particularly attract academics from countries speaking the same (or a similar) language (Bauder, Lujan and Hannan 2018). The Swiss academic landscape, for instance, reflects the country's plurilingual composition in different regions, with important proportions of foreign-born academics coming from neighboring countries where the same languages are spoken (Fumasoli and Goastellec 2015b).

Flows of transnational academic mobility also vary across disciplines, whose academic employment and career advancement practices value geographical mobility differently. While in previous decades transnational mobility was primarily associated with disciplines making universal knowledge claims – such as physics and biology –, more recent trends suggest that the importance of mobility has extended to other areas, like the social sciences, where the nature of knowledge is more context-dependent and practices more place-specific. Hence, today, academic mobility has become a more generalized feature of academic careers in all disciplines and in many countries (Ackers 2004; Jöns 2007).

Gender is another important factor affecting transnational academic mobility (Bauder, Lujan and Hannan 2018; Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019; Welch 2008). It represents one core aspect of this dissertation that I discuss in detail in the next chapter (2.3).

Finally, the structure of academic employment (and the nature of contracts) also contributes to shaping academic transnational mobility. Academic work, as well as “many aspects of university systems and career structures remain national in character, and academic practices

continue to be firmly enshrined in national and regional contexts” (Bauder 2015: 91). As the situation of academics varies significantly between countries, as well as between institutions within the same country, academics, junior and senior, may engage in mobility under different circumstances and with different motivations (see e.g. Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019; Enders and Musselin 2008).

1.3.2. Gaps in statistics about academic transnational flows

In spite of a marked interest on the part of universities and countries in recruiting international scholars and promoting mobility, the mobility of academics is still inadequately documented statistically. To date, while higher education institutions and countries have been collecting data on transnational *student mobility* for several decades, significant statistical gaps remain about the global flows of academic career-related mobility of PhD holders (Morley et al. 2018; OECD 2019; Van Mol 2014).⁴ This may seem surprising in view of the many countries that have developed immigration policies and implemented supranational agreements that are conducive to this type of mobility (Kim, Twombly and Wolf-Wendel 2012; OECD 2008; Tremblay 2005). At the national level, various studies document incoming and outgoing flows and make it possible to highlight important disparities across countries. In Japan, for instance, 5% of professors in 2013 are foreign born. The proportion amounts to 3% in Spain for the academic year 2012-2013 and 9% in France for that same year (de Wit et al. 2015; Morley et al. 2018). Nationalities are not available for professors in the UK, but Kim (2009) found that 27% of academic staff in the UK (2005-2006) are from abroad. In the United States, 28% of professors in 2003 are foreign born (Kim, Twombly and Wolf-Wendel 2012). In Switzerland, higher education institutions are among the most internationalized, with an overall 51% of professors

⁴ For the United States, see: <https://opendoorsdata.org/> (accessed August 16, 2020).

of foreign origin in 2019 (SEFRI [2020]).⁵ These numbers suggest the increasingly globalized nature of competition for professorial appointments, particularly in highly internationalized institutions.

1.3.3. The structural changes of academia as a workplace

Over the past decades, identified by governments and supranational bodies as prerequisites for economic growth and “national prosperity in modern conditions” (Connell 2019: 223), the higher education and research sectors – in short, academia – have been undergoing structural transformations aimed at “establishing competitiveness as the central norm of the scientific field” (Benninghoff 2011: 48, my translation). In Europe, for instance, the Bologna Declaration, signed in 1999 by 29 European countries, including Switzerland, is part of these neoliberal initiatives aimed at reforming academic education and research systems and at increasing Europe’s competitiveness as a regional research area, particularly with regard to the United States.⁶

In recent years, there has been much talk of neoliberalism and, in its adjective form, the term has been widely used alongside that of contemporary academia or university. In academic literature, what neoliberalism means may vary significantly, particularly across disciplinary approaches. Applied to academia, Hearn (2017) emphasizes that the term often refers to a wide array of organizational reforms that have taken place in universities, to varying extents and in differing national contexts, sometimes since the 1980s, more broadly a decade later, and in close connection to processes of increasing internationalization of and competition between academic institutions. As a result, academic institutions and academic work have become

⁵ <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/education-science/personnel-institutions-formation/degre-tertiaire-hautes-ecoles.assetdetail.12467346.html> (accessed 25.09.2020).

⁶ <http://www.ehea.info/page-ministerial-conference-bologna-1999> (accessed 25.09.2020).

increasingly oriented towards productivity, performance and excellence (Benninghoff 2011; Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019; Münch 2014).

Hence, in many countries, academic policies have become increasingly oriented toward global market forces, and universities have gradually implemented managerial principles that involved the establishment of criteria for evaluating academic quality and for making comparisons between academic systems, institutions, and individuals (Münch 2014). Quality evaluation criteria have been largely based on quantification practices and focus essentially on publications, acquisition of research funding, and international connections (Benninghoff 2011; Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019). Based on this type of metrics, in 2003, the University of Shanghai published its first *Academic Ranking of World Universities*.⁷ Other organizations quickly followed with their own rankings, such as Times Higher Education⁸ or QS-Quacquarelli Symonds.⁹ These rankings reinforced competition between institutions, which in turn also affected academic work and academic employment conditions as individual “academics are expected to contribute to the overall performance of their university” (Enders and Musselin 2008: 140).¹⁰ The implementation of institutional assessment of the university’s academic staff reflects this expectation. Yet, the tendency to measure research outputs based on quantitative metrics has raised many criticisms among academic actors, institutional as well as individual, who questioned the ability of such criteria to provide fair and accurate assessments. In 2012, these critics led the American Society for Cell Biology and a group of editors of scholarly journals

⁷ <http://www.shanghairanking.com/aboutarwu.html> (accessed 1.09.2020).

⁸ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/about-the-times-higher-education-world-university-rankings> (accessed 1.09.2020).

⁹ <https://www.topuniversities.com/about-qs> (accessed 1.09.2020).

¹⁰ While my focus here is on academic employment, it is important to note that these managerial logics in universities also impacted non-academic employment, notably with the outsourcing of various activities to service-providing (and profit-oriented) companies (Connell 2019).

to publish the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), proposing general principles to evaluate research without resorting to journal-based metrics.¹¹

In many national academic systems, scholars have observed a stagnation (or a relative decrease) of permanent academic employment, combined with an augmentation of temporary academic employment (Bryson 2004; Enders and Musselin 2008; Gallas 2018; Gill 2014; Goastellec and Pekari 2014; Singer 2004). The degree and the structure of these changes may vary significantly across countries. Yet, couched in general terms, temporary positions have been on the rise and result from the combined effect of the budget restrictions faced by institutions and the expansion of third-party funding, both underpinned by neoliberal principles.

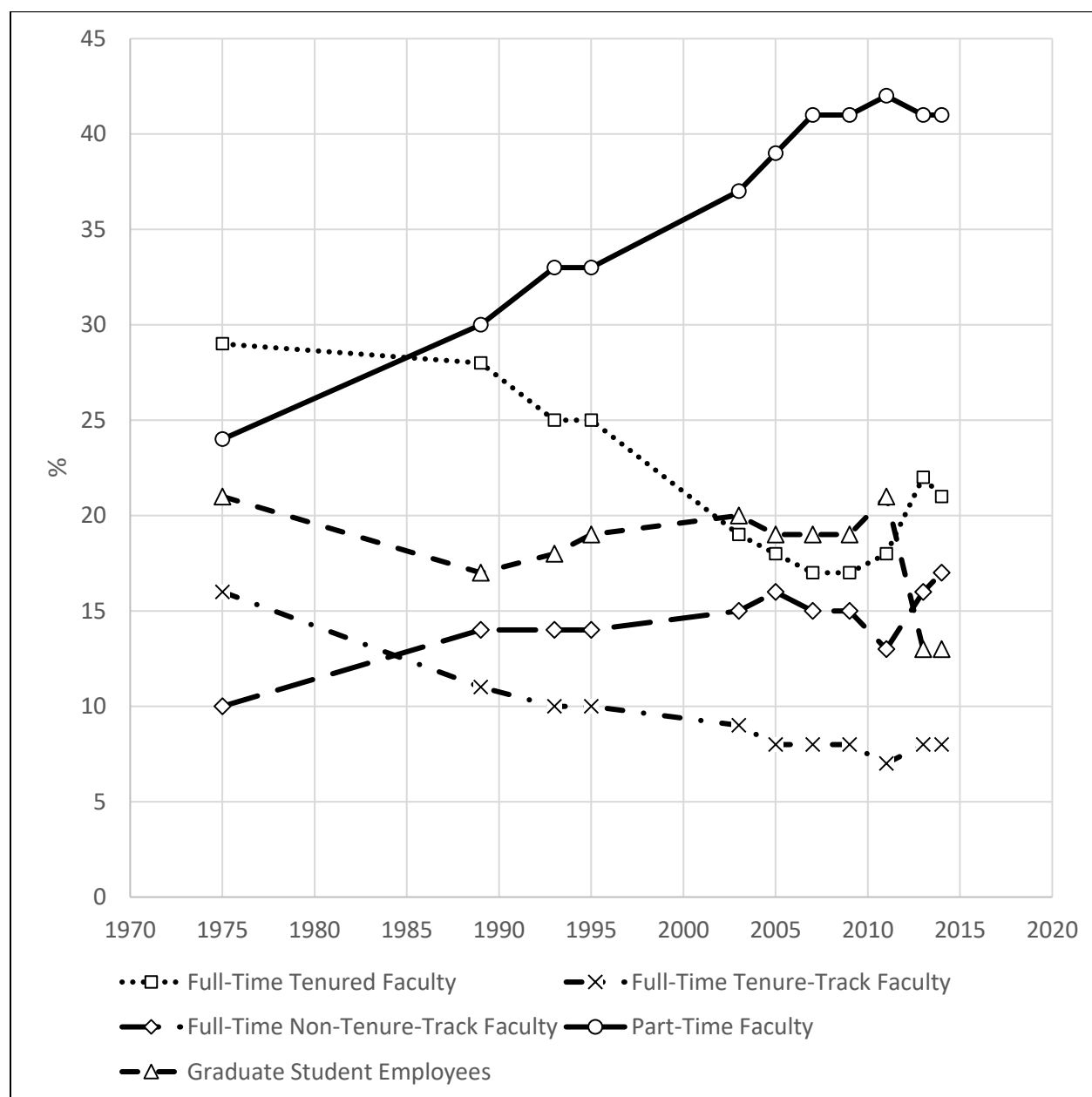
The crisis in the welfare systems affected universities' institutional budgets and created pressure to cut costs, notably "by assigning teaching and research activities from permanent staff to temporary staff" (Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019). These temporary (and often part-time) employment conditions are typically less remunerated than permanent, open-ended positions and often do not include social benefits. This is notable in the US academic system, where an increased need for teaching staff due to higher education massification has been largely handed over to adjunct (non-tenure-track) faculty and part-time instructors hired on temporary contracts (Enders and Musselin 2008; Gallas 2018). On the basis of IPEDS data¹², Shulman and colleagues (2016) highlight what they call the "decline of the tenure system" in US academia over the last few decades, showing that while tenured and tenure-track faculty

¹¹ <https://sfdora.org/> (accessed 25.09.2020).

¹² <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data> (accessed 12.01.2021).

positions accounted for 45% of academic instructional staff in 1975, they represented only 30% in 2014 (see Figure 1.1) (see also GAO 2017).

Figure 1.1: *Instructional positions in US academic institutions, 1975-2014*



(Source: IPEDS data center. Figure based on Shulman et al. (2016:14))

But the proliferation of temporary positions is also due to the increase of third-party funding, which has led to the mushrooming of project-based research positions funded by national agencies and other organizations funding academic research, particularly in global North

countries (Enders and Musselin 2008; Fumasoli and Goastellec 2015a). An important change regarding academic activities has been the growing demand on academics to obtain funding for their own research, leading to the rise of project-based funding, allocated on a competitive basis and leading to the creation of fixed-term positions for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. Switzerland is a telling example of this trend. There has been a marked rise in fixed-term and research-only positions while permanent positions remain relatively scarce, which has led to the emergence of what some have called a “postdoctoral bubble” (Bataille and Sautier 2019) (see Figures 1.2 and 1.3).

Figure 1.2: Academic staff (FTE) in Swiss universities, 1980-2019

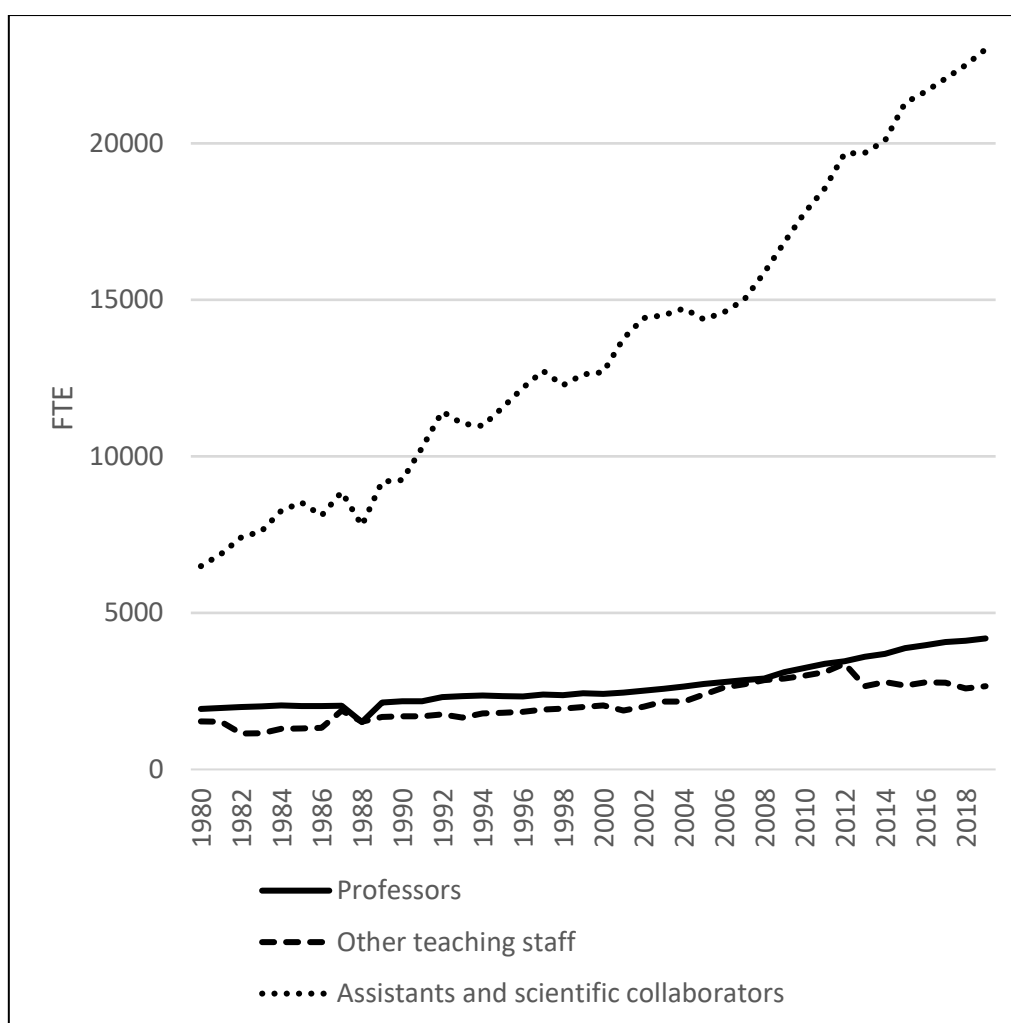
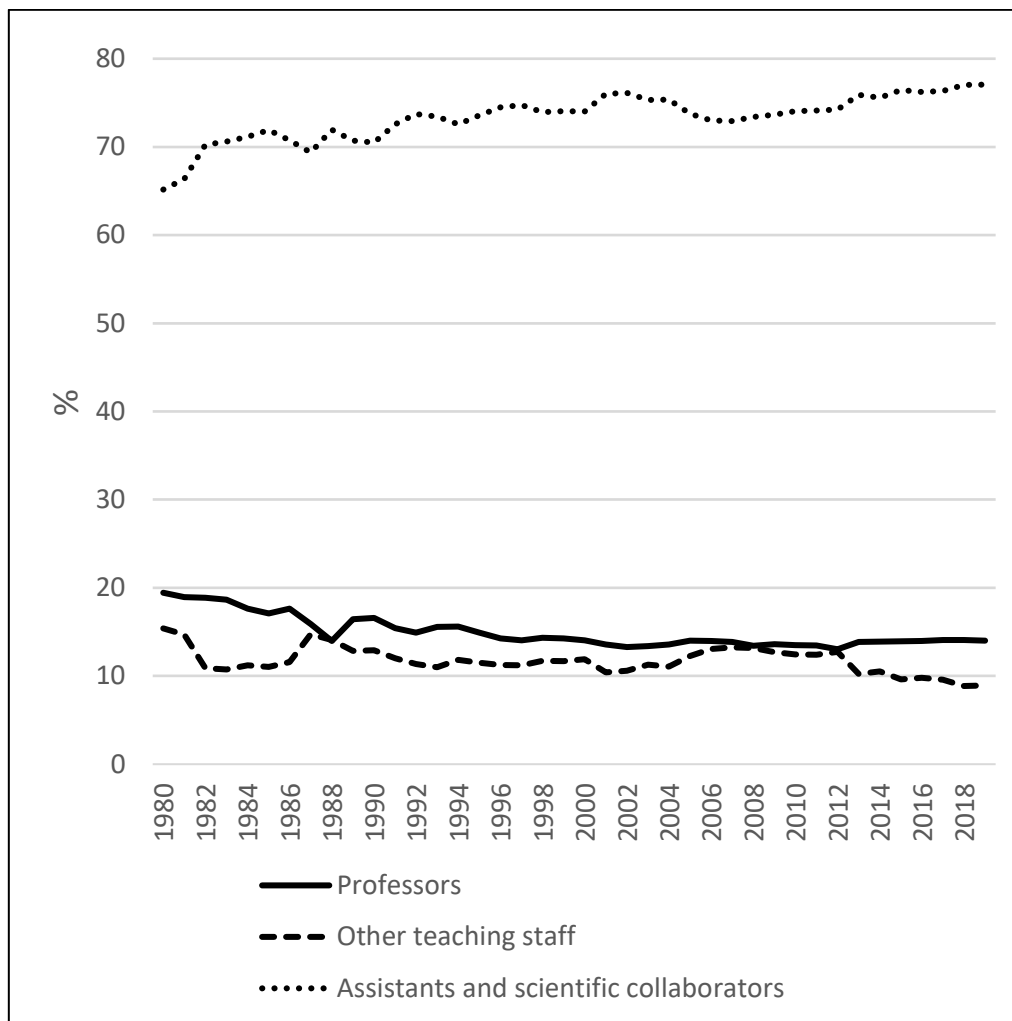


Figure 1.3: *Academic staff proportions in Swiss universities, 1980-2019*



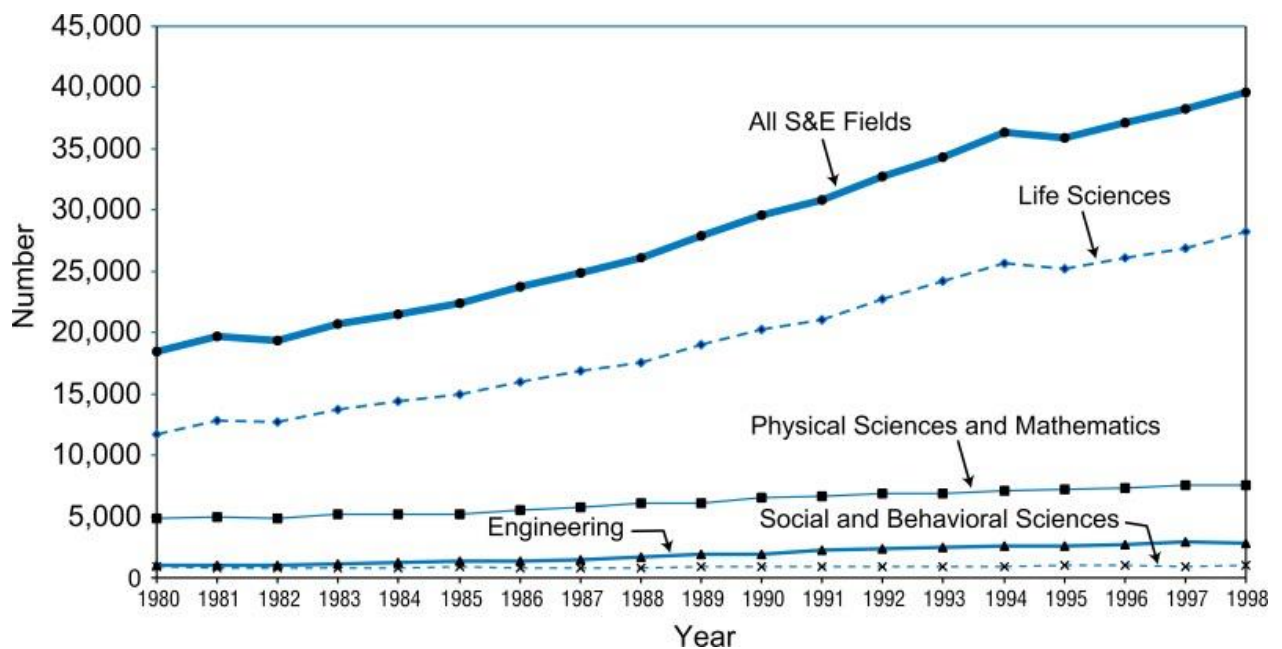
(Source: Federal Statistical Office, 2020)¹³

This trend not only contributes to the casualization of academic employment but also to the extension of the intermediary career stage based on temporary positions (Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019; Franssen and de Rijcke 2019). The US National Academy of Sciences (2000) also points to increasing numbers of postdoc positions in the United States (see Figure 1.4) and argues that this growth, coupled with periods of weakening labor markets – both inside and outside academia – for PhD holders has contributed to the lengthening of the postdoctoral training period. The lack of statistical data on postdocs at the national level, including baseline

¹³ https://www.pxweb.bfs.admin.ch/pxweb/fr/px-x-1504040100_105/px-x-1504040100_105/px-x-1504040100_105.px (accessed 1.09.2020)

data such as the number of postdocs in US universities, whether they earned their PhDs in the United States or elsewhere, makes it a real challenge to estimate their proportions relative to other academic (instructional) positions (see e.g. McConnell et al. 2018; National Academy of Sciences 2000). McConnell and colleagues (2018) report that tenured and tenure-track faculty positions are now estimated to represent a meager 15% of postdoc career outcomes.

Figure 1.4: Postdoctoral scholars in US academic institutions by broad fields, 1980-1998



(Source: Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering, 1980–1998. Figure retrieved from National Academy of Sciences (2000: 8))¹⁴

Thus, the two trends – the increase of project-based research positions and the increase of contingent instructional positions – coexist in the United States, as well as in many academic systems (Fumasoli and Goastellec 2015a). In the UK, academic positions became progressively less secure in the 1990s, after academic tenure was removed in 1988 (Kim 2011). Academic employment in the UK has since been marked by an increasing proportion of temporary and

¹⁴ The Figure comprises only postdoctoral scholars who obtained their PhDs in US institutions. The authors (National Academy of Sciences 2000) estimate that the total population of Sciences and Engineering postdocs in US universities in 1998 amounted to about 52,000 (as opposed to 39,000 postdocs with a US PhD as shown in Figure 1.4).

part-time positions, including contracts by-the-hour (Ackers and Oliver 2007; Bryson 2004; Enders and Musselin 2008). Similar trends can be observed, for instance, in Australia (Enders and Musselin 2008), in European countries (Fumasoli and Goastellec 2015a; Loher and Strasser 2019), and in Latin American countries (Kim 2011).

1.3.4. Mobility as a key aspect of academic careers

A major feature of academic policies, in particular in the global North, is the so-called *internationalization* of universities and higher education institutions. Knight (2003: 2) provides an often-quoted definition of internationalization as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education”. However, in a logic of competition to obtain a share of global educational and research markets, and to build an international reputation, internationalization policies essentially emphasize economistic goals, and in practice, aim particularly at recruiting “international” students and scholars (Stier 2004). The consequence of this (materialistic) understanding and implementation of internationalization is that academia remains dominated by “Western science” and “embed[s] a narrow knowledge system that reflects and reproduces social inequalities on a global scale” (Connell 2017: 10; see also Teichler 2004).

In conjunction with macro-level economistic arguments, academic policies promoting internationalization emphasize the enriching nature of mobility for individuals as a means to broaden their scientific horizons, build transnational networks, and develop new academic (and other) skills (Stier 2004). At the same time, the model of a local career has been discredited and, in order to avoid “inbreeding”, academic institutions have sometimes implemented formal rules forbidding the hiring of their own doctorates or have made transnational mobility a prerequisite for obtaining a position (Ackers 2008; Enders and Musselin 2008). As a result, these policies have contributed to making *mobility*, especially transnational mobility, a normative

imperative, and in many countries, mobility has come to represent professional and symbolic capital necessary for a successful academic career (Ackers 2008). In Switzerland, for instance, in particular in the natural sciences, one is now very unlikely to secure a permanent professorship without first having been abroad.¹⁵

The importance of transnational academic mobility in a context of globalized economic competition is made visible in the institutional infrastructures aimed at encouraging this form of mobility. Over the past decades, national, supra-national, and philanthropic research funding agencies have developed numerous programs to promote academic mobility between countries. The Swiss National Science Foundation, for instance, offers various opportunities that aim to fund the mobility of young academics (*Postdoc.Mobility*), in addition to funding schemes for senior academics who must, notably, have conducted 12 months of research abroad to apply (*Eccellenza*).¹⁶ At a European level, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions run an Individual Fellowships program for “experienced researchers looking to give [their] career a boost by working abroad”.¹⁷ The Fulbright Foundation in the United States, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation in Sweden are further examples¹⁸, among many others, of agencies offering funding schemes that support the transnational mobility of incoming and/or outgoing academic scholars (see also Bauder 2015).

In addition to these agencies funding research and researchers, and promoting transnational mobility, universities – in particular, those that are internationally recognized as centers of

¹⁵ See also Ackers (2008) who mentions several institutions, notably in Poland, Portugal, and Sweden, where experience abroad is formally required to apply to post-doctoral appointments, and further argues that “even where it is not a formal requirement, it may be deeply engrained in institutional culture” (Ackers 2008: 420).

¹⁶ <http://www.snf.ch/en/funding/careers/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed 28.08.2020).

¹⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/actions/individual-fellowships_en (accessed 28.08.2020).

¹⁸ <https://www.cies.org/programs> (accessed 28.08.2020); <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/bewerben/foerderprogramme> (accessed 28.08.2020); <https://www.swgc.org/the-foundations.aspx> (accessed 28.08.2020).

excellence – offer support services to international scholars, which typically include assistance with visa applications and other administrative or legal procedures, help with arranging access to housing and to schools for children, workshops on how to fill out taxes, and social events to build new friendships. The two universities where I conducted fieldwork provided such services (see 3.3.2, where I discuss the choice of the university sites). As an internationally oriented university, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) has a *Center for International Students & Scholars*¹⁹ providing these different kinds of resources. Although more modest in size, the University of Zurich also has its own *International Scholars Center*²⁰.

Thus, in political and academic circles, transnational academic mobility has been widely praised and perceived as a phenomenon with positive effects, economically (for the host countries), institutionally (as a feature contributing to institutions' reputation and 'excellence'), as well as individually (as an enriching experience for mobile individuals, both at the personal and academic level). Academic scholarship on mobility (academic and otherwise) tends to reproduce this positive bias toward mobility, as studies that consider mobility a resource predominate. Thus, as a whole, this literature often overlooks the potentially negative aspects of mobility and fails to address the ways in which *immobility* may be a resource as well (Chapter 5).

1.4. Dissertation outline

This dissertation has been conducted against the backdrop of the larger research project *Transnational Mobility of Academics in the Early Stages of their Careers: Transforming or*

¹⁹ <https://www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu/> (accessed 14.08.2020).

²⁰ <https://www.isc.uzh.ch/en.html> (accessed 28.08.2020).

*Reproducing Gender Regimes?*²¹ led by Prof. Janine Dahinden and carried out in collaboration with Alina Toader and Cédric Jacot.

The format of this dissertation is a PhD thesis by articles. It is based on a collection of four articles, which form the core of the dissertation. Each article analyzes, from different angles, different aspects of the transnational mobility of early-career academics and contributes in its own way to answering the overarching research question of *how early-career academics' transnational mobility is affected by gender dynamics, and conversely, how this type of mobility contributes to (re)produce or transform such dynamics*. These four articles make up chapters 4 to 7. The ordering of the articles does not follow the chronology of their elaboration or respective publication, but rather reflects a progression in the themes and focuses adopted in each of them. The first article focuses on intra-couple negotiations and arrangements undertaken by academics and their partners in the context of their joint transnational mobility. The second article adopts a broader starting point as it analyzes how academics balance competing aspirations and demands pertaining to the different domains of their mobile lives. The third article scrutinizes the composition of mobile academics' networks and the role of transnational ties within them, whether family, friends, or academic relations. Finally, the last article narrows and reorients the focus by looking, again, at a particular type of relationship, this time within academia, between early-career academics and their higher-ranked counterparts. The four articles are preceded by two introductory chapters (2 and 3) providing the conceptual and methodological frameworks of this dissertation and are followed by a concluding chapter (8).²²

²¹ The project was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (project number: 143179) from February 2013 to July 2016.

²² The decanal directive states that "the minimum number of articles is three, of which at least two have been accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal [...]. At least one of the three articles will be written

Introductory chapters

Chapter 2 introduces the general epistemological and theoretical perspectives that undergird this dissertation. It reviews the literature on transnational academic mobility and gender from these perspectives, and provides the general research questions. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodological choices that have guided the research process and present the methods of data production and analysis.

Chapter 4 – article 1

The first article, “Transnational mobility among early-career academics: gendered aspects of negotiations and arrangements within heterosexual couples” examines the mobility experiences of early-career academics and their partners and seeks to understand the gendered mechanisms underlying their mobility patterns. This article answers the research question: *How is gender articulated through the mobility patterns of young academics and, conversely, how does this specific type of mobility reinforce or transform gender relations?* Drawing on three case studies that are part of the corpora of qualitative data produced in the framework of two sites of fieldwork (University of Zurich and University of California, Los Angeles), the article analyzes the negotiations and arrangements of mobile couples. The qualitative data comprise biographical and egocentric network interviews that I conducted with early-career academics from these two universities and semi-structured interviews with their partners. Each case study represents a different pattern of how gender is entangled with mobility. The findings reveal how gender is ‘done’ and ‘undone’ by the academics and their

by the doctoral student alone”

(https://www.unine.ch/files/live/sites/lettres/files/accueil/UNINE_FLSH_directive_these_article.pdf, accessed 25.09.2020, my translation).

My dissertation comprises two articles I have written with co-authors, which have been published in peer-reviewed journals, as well as two articles I have written alone, which are currently in the peer-review process. These four articles form a coherent whole, each one providing answers to the general question at the core of this dissertation.

partners throughout their mobility trajectories, and how these couples' negotiations and practices are closely entangled with gender representations that are structurally anchored in labor markets and discursively expressed within the wider social environment. As such, the article questions the dichotomy between economic men and social and cultural women sometimes reproduced in studies on so-called highly skilled mobility and suggests how important transformations with regard to gender relations are occurring.

Chapter 5 – article 2

The second article, "From mobility attractiveness to mobility fatigue: The impact of repeated transnational mobility on the lives and aspirations of early-career academics" addresses the research question: *How are early-career academics' experiences of precarity produced within the context of the academics' transnational career trajectories?* To answer this question, the article focuses on three case studies, comprising biographical and qualitative egocentric network interviews with academics at the University of Zurich and the University of California, Los Angeles, complemented in one case by a semi-structured interview with a partner. The paper examines how early-career academics experience repeated transnational mobility and deal with its implications on their and their family members' personal lives. The analysis shows that the repetitive nature of mobility associated with fixed-term appointments is a significant aspect of academic precarity and provides insights into the compromises made by academics as they try to balance competing aspirations and demands pertaining to the different domains of their mobile lives.

Chapter 6 – article 3

The third article is entitled "Transnational mobility networks and academic social capital among early-career academics: beyond common-sense assumptions". The widespread assumption that mobility contributes to academic excellence, in particular because it allows academics to

build transnational academic networks, is the backdrop of this article, which answers the research question: *In which ways is the academic social capital of transnationally mobile early-career academics connected to their degree of cross-border mobility?* Based on biographical interviews and an analysis of the egocentric mobility networks of early-career academics at three universities (Zurich, Cambridge, and UCLA), the article examines the composition of these academics' networks at different times and discusses the role of transnational ties within them. The findings reveal that increased mobility does indeed result in more transnational networks, but it does not increase academic social capital. The additional transnational ties mainly consist of transnational kinship and friendship relations. Furthermore, the mobility of early-career academics triggers various forms of mobility among their family members. Finally, early-career academics can build transnational academic ties without necessarily becoming mobile themselves, thanks to the mobility of higher-ranked academics.

Chapter 7 – article 4

The fourth article is entitled, "Early-career academics' transnational moves: the role of social networks in accessing academic positions abroad". This chapter answers the research question: *When early-career academics are preparing for their upcoming career move abroad, how does gender affect the distribution of academic career-related resources provided by higher-ranked academics in their networks?* Drawing on biographical and qualitative egocentric network interviews with early-career academics at the University of Zurich and the University of California, Los Angeles, the article shows that transnational career moves of young scholars are processes embedded in social relationships in complex and discreet ways. The analysis reveals that mainly one type of ties is of importance, vertical ties with higher-status academics, but that the support they provided varied significantly along gender lines and depending on other institutional resources. On the one hand, traces of strong male support networks are still

present in the processes of accessing academic positions. On the other, academic labor markets' digitalization, fellowship schemes and dual-career support provide institutional resources to advance in one's academic career that put vertical ties in a secondary role.

Concluding chapter

Chapter 8 (conclusion) connects the findings of chapters 4 to 7 to answer the overarching research question of my dissertation and situates these findings within current debates on the gendered mechanisms of academic mobility. Finally, I discuss the limits of the dissertation and reflect on potential avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical background

In this chapter, I briefly outline the epistemological stance adopted in this dissertation before presenting the different theoretical perspectives and main concepts that guided my research process and constitute the background of the four articles at the core of the dissertation.

2.1. A constructivist perspective of mobility through a gender lens combining several approaches

In this dissertation, I adopt an interpretive and constructivist epistemological stance, embracing the view that social reality is neither singular nor objective but socially constructed by actors who interpret and make sense of their experience and of the broader socio-historical contexts in which their lives are embedded (Schwandt 2000; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012). In line with this epistemological stance, this work aims to achieve a better understanding of *academic transnational mobility*, based on individual accounts from involved actors, namely early-career academics and their partners.

This epistemological stance is reflected in the different theoretical perspectives that I draw on and in how I implemented them methodologically. The interconnections between gender and academic transnational mobility lie at the heart of my dissertation and consequently, my theoretical framework draws from two vast (and interdisciplinary) scholarships, gender studies and migration and mobility studies, which have developed separately but also have overlaps (for a recent and in-depth discussion of the commonalities, differences and linkages between these two areas of research, see Amelina and Lutz 2019).

In this dissertation, I consider both gender and transnational mobility as socially produced phenomena, resulting from social actors' practices embedded in wider social, political, historical, and institutional circumstances and symbolic structures. Stemming from the consideration that gender is a fundamental principle of social organization and a crucial mechanism of social inequality (Scott, Crompton and Lyonette 2010; Scott 1986), a gender perspective constitutes the main prism through which I look at the academics' transnational mobility. Because the role of gender may change over the course of their life stories, as may their mobility practices, and because social networks play an important role, both in shaping gender relations and mobility practices, this gender lens is implemented through a life-story approach and ego-centered social network analysis. This combination of perspectives makes it possible to shed light on the gendered mechanisms of transnational academic mobility while at the same time showing that gender does not always emerge as a salient theme.

As I briefly mentioned in Chapter 1, this dissertation grew out of my primary interest in how gender and transnational mobility interconnect, and this is reflected in its chief research question: *How is the transnational mobility of early-career academics affected by gender dynamics, and conversely, how are gender dynamics (re)produced or transformed by early-career academics in the context of their mobility?* This overarching and dialectical research question can be unfolded into several strands of sub-questions, revealing different processes implicitly contained therein and which I consider particularly interesting to explore within a gender perspective associated with a biographical approach and social network analysis. Within a biographical perspective, the question arises as to how early-career academics have developed the idea of engaging in an academic career and in transnational mobility. This question implies that insights be gained on how these processes are related to the academics' overall life-stories. Tackled from a gender perspective, these processes may reveal gender

dynamics that play a more or less prominent role, depending on the contexts and circumstances. Also embedded in a biographical dimension is the question of how the academics' experience of mobility might transform over time and the reasons that led to these possible changes.

In terms of practices, the first question relates to how the academics decided on and organized their career and mobility. Concretely, this question entails understanding with whom the academics discussed, negotiated, and arranged their career and mobility, and to what kinds of arrangements these negotiations led. These are, again, all processes which are potentially embedded in complex gender dynamics. Along the way, academics surely encountered difficulties, obstacles or challenges, and one should not only identify what kind of difficulties and challenges these are, but also gain insights into how the academics addressed them, potentially overcame them, and the role that gender might have played in these processes. Looking further at the interpersonal interactions that academics have with their social environment, these questions also relate to how academics "do" or "undo" gender and how this might influence their mobility decisions and experiences. Conversely, how do the academics' mobility decisions and experiences affect their way of "doing" or "undoing" gender? These issues involve people with whom the academics interact interpersonally. These may be partners or other family members whose lives may be directly impacted by the academics' mobility. They also include people from academia, such as colleagues or supervisors, who provide advice, guidance or other kinds of support to the academics with regards to their mobility. Yet, interpersonal interactions between actors do not occur in a vacuum. This raises the subsequent question of understanding how wider social and historical circumstances in which the actors' lives are embedded affect how they "do" or "undo" gender.

Flowing from this interactional level, additional questions arise with regards to the academics' social networks. What about the composition of these networks? What kinds of relationships do these networks comprise, whether in terms of sex, role relationships, or the geographical location of their members? In turn, these questions lead to exploring the ways in which the specific compositions of the academics' networks may sustain or hinder transnational mobility and academic career, and again, to examine how gender might intervene in these processes. The dynamics of social networks are another aspect that point toward asking how the academics have developed ties with the different persons that have been (directly or remotely) concerned or involved in their mobility. And how have these relationships evolved over time (in particular, before and after mobility) and over space (as one moves from one country to another)? The contexts in which these relationships are created, developed and maintained are also of importance here, as are the ways in which these different processes might be gendered. Finally, the effects of these networks represent yet another aspect, leading to questions about the kinds of social relationships that intervene in mobility decision-making processes, and the ways in which they do so, namely, what resources or constraints circulate within these networks which are important with regard to academic mobility, and who provides what kinds of resources and in what contexts. Cross-cutting these last questions is again the role that gender might play in these processes.

These research questions guided my research process and, in particular, guided me in my exploration of the different areas of scholarships relating to my research topic. They also clarify the lines along which I selected the different theoretical approaches, on which I draw in this dissertation and which I discuss in the rest of this chapter.

2.2. Theorizing academic transnational mobility

Transnational (human) mobility essentially refers to the movements of individuals across borders, and there are a multiplicity of such movements, as people move transnationally for various purposes, involving varying distances, varying temporalities, implementing different mobility patterns, and with different legal statuses (Cachia and Maya Jariego 2018; Salazar 2016; Urry 2007). Likewise, academics engage in multiple forms (and patterns) of transnational moves associated with their academic activities. Regardless of their career stage, academics move across borders to attend conferences, present their work, deliver lectures, participate in research meetings, or conduct fieldwork. They may also relocate to other countries, temporarily or for a longer period, to take up positions abroad, fixed-termed or open-ended, or as fellowship recipients. Today, early-career academics in particular are increasingly engaging in transnational mobility (Bilecen and Van Mol 2017), and many do so at the urge of the normative imperative of mobility in order to gain “international experience” (Ackers and Oliver 2007; Jöns 2007; Morano-Foadi 2005). At the same time, career paths leading to permanent positions in academia often involve a transition period of post-PhD positions on fixed-term contracts. In a transnationalized academic marketplace characterized by the increasing prevalence of fixed-term positions and relative stagnation (or relative decrease) of permanent positions (Bryson 2004; Fumasoli, Goastellec and Kehm 2015; Singer 2004; Wöhrer 2014), early-career academics also engage in transnational mobility as they seize job opportunities where they arise, within but also often beyond national borders (Ackers 2008). This dissertation takes this latter type of mobility as a starting point and main focus, namely the movements of early-career academics who move across borders to take up positions or conduct fellowship activities at universities or tertiary-level institutions abroad. Thus defined, the transnational moves in which I am primarily interested represent one form of work-related

mobility²³. At this point, the question arises as to whether these academic transnational moves should be called *mobility* or *migration*. This is not merely a question of definition but also an ontological and epistemological one, as the discussion hereafter shows.

2.2.1. The temporal dynamics of mobility trajectories

Although I have not yet touched on the methodological considerations that guided this work (Chapter 3), this section starts with a descriptive output, to which I return in the conceptual discussion that follows.

Vignette 2.1.: *The dynamics of mobility trajectories through the life course*

Nadia grew up in Belgium. After her bachelor's degree, she moved to France for her master's degree and then to the Netherlands to do her PhD. She could have moved to Canada, but it seemed too far away at the time, all the more so because her then-boyfriend, from Belgium, had relocated in the UK. After her PhD, Nadia accepted a one-year postdoc contract in the United States. That was the only academic opportunity she received at the time and she wanted to pursue academia. Furthermore, the relationship with her boyfriend was not going well and did not stop her from moving this far. She left for one year with the idea of preparing for the next step, notably by applying to fellowships to join the research group of a professor in the UK with whom she wanted to work. During that year, however, she separated from her boyfriend and, as she spent time with her new colleagues in the United States, she met her future husband, then a graduate student. Nadia's academic plans soon took a new turn as it became clear that she and her husband would, from then on, make their career moves together. Nadia extended her postdoc for another year while her husband finished his PhD, and both applied to academic positions and fellowships in the United States. Nadia declined an offer that she received from a university in an area of the country where there would be no option for her husband and decided to follow him to a different location, where he had been awarded a fellowship. Nadia was optimistic that she would find something there herself, and in fact, she quickly got a postdoc position. After a few years, Nadia obtained a tenure-track assistant

²³ While I used this definition of *academic transnational mobility* as a criterion guiding my sampling strategy (Chapter 3), my data obviously contain information about other forms of academic moves.

professorship in yet another area in the United States, where she and her husband relocated. Her husband held fixed-term positions, obtained grants, and was able to pursue his research activities at their new location. However, as a dual-career academic couple, they were still looking for a situation in which both could hold stable research positions. At some point, they obtained two professorships at the same university in the UK. They were about to move there with their first child when Nadia's husband fell gravely ill. This resulted in them having to give up these positions and stay in the United States, where Nadia's university rehired her for the same assistant professorship. Her husband had come a long way and experienced a long recovery. At the time of the interviews, Nadia had been living in the United States for about a decade and she was on the verge of getting tenure. Her husband had resumed his academic activities but was, however, still on temporary contracts. They had one child, were expecting their second, and were still applying to academic positions in the United States, determined to find stable employment for both of them.

Literature about academics on the move predominantly speaks of academic transnational *mobility*, but some scholars also use the term *migration*, notably in combination with *mobility* in order to distinguish academics' short-term moves (mobility) from their longer-term or permanent moves (migration). This reflects a broader and increasingly common understanding of the meanings of mobility and migration in recent years, both among policymakers and social science scholars, which considers mobility as temporary and reserves migration to refer to (permanent) settlement (Hui 2016; Moret 2018; Pellerin 2011).

According to this line of reasoning, one could consider that the temporary character of early-career academics' moves distinguishes them from what is commonly understood as migration (permanent settlement) and would suffice to justify the use of the term *mobility*. However, as I have learned from the stories of my research participants, and as Nadia's trajectory (Vignette 2.1) illustrates, early-career academics sometimes extend their stay abroad well beyond what they had initially anticipated. The morphology of their transnational moves then resemble a

permanent migration more than a temporary mobility, without it being possible, however, to assert its definitive character. Other research participants experienced repeated mobility episodes, as they moved across borders from one fixed-term position to the next, and overall, the academics I interviewed reflected a wide array of mobility trajectories. In their study about French highly skilled workers in London, Ryan and Mulholland (2014: 587) pointed out the inadequacy of the “simplistic binary of permanent settlement versus mobility” to account for the complexity and the dynamism of mobility trajectories. They suggest instead “a continuum of emplacement whereby migrants gradually extend their stay while, at the same time, keeping future options open” (Ryan and Mulholland 2014: 587-588). Very much like these French highly skilled workers in London, my research participants had developed their mobile trajectories with sometimes little anticipation – or in substantially different ways from what they had envisioned initially – as they responded to opportunities and dealt with constraints arising along their paths. While I agree with Ryan and Mulholland that the migration-mobility dichotomy is indeed too simplistic to account for the different mobility temporalities (and the meanings that actors assign to these temporalities), I am wary of the metaphor of a continuum, which connotes linearity and fails to capture the diverse and intricate morphologies of individuals’ mobile trajectories. Furthermore, I argue that it is redundant, if not confusing, to use two terms, as a binary or along a continuum, to describe a variety of movements. On the one hand, where should one place the cursor stating that up to a certain threshold, one should speak of mobility and thereafter of migration? Vignette 2.1 about Nadia’s trajectory also highlights how the vagaries of life may influence people’s (im)mobility trajectories, transforming temporary movement into a long-term stay, while such stillness does not seem “final” since a new cross-border move is organized and then canceled at the last minute. On the other hand, such debate

confines migration and mobility to the descriptive remit and brings no added analytical or theoretical value.

While the messiness of social realities suggests that there are no analytical benefits to using both terms, neither as a binary nor along a continuum, more importantly, the migration/mobility terminology reflects political (and normative) conceptions about the categorizations of people on the move (and their geographies), to which I now turn.

2.2.2. Situating early-career academic transnational mobility: Academics as highly skilled movers?

Research on academic transnational mobility often considers academics as highly skilled workers. This seems, at first glance, a reasonable way to proceed. After all, academics scholars hold PhDs, which are among the highest academic credentials in tertiary-level education. However, *highly skilled* is not – nor, for that matter is *low skilled* – a self-explanatory epithet. Rather, and particularly in its connections with mobility and migration, its usage in the academic literature – as a category of analysis – reproduces racialized and ethnicized hierarchies established by governments and policymakers between different categorizations of people on the move. The reproduction of these distinctions in academic literature is furthermore concomitant with the development of different strands of research. In this context, I maintain that associating academic mobility to highly skilled mobility presents a number of limitations.

Firstly, historically, international labor (or work-related) migration has been an important and long-standing strand of research in the study of international migration (King 2012). Research in this field has developed along two main lines, focusing on two broad categorizations of cross-border movers, unqualified workers and (highly) qualified workers, and generating two distinct fields of research, each developing along proper theoretical concerns. On the one hand, the study of labor migration has long been directed towards unqualified immigration for

permanent settlement with a strong focus on the consequences of immigration for receiving countries regarding integration issues (Dahinden 2009; Faist 2013). On the other hand, since the 1960s, highly skilled workers began to be incorporated into the study of international migration, investigating this form of movement through the lens of brain drain (Gaillard and Gaillard 1998; Iredale 2001; Koser and Salt 1997). From this time on, the temporary migration of highly skilled workers has been on the rise (Iredale 2001), and migration scholars have become increasingly aware that international migration is heterogeneous in its composition and in its forms. Alongside the diversifying morphologies of migration, researchers have tended to reproduce categories (and the meanings assigned to them) used by the nation-states, in particular in their usage of the terms of *migration* and *mobility* when referring to the moves of different categories of workers. As Weinar and Klekowski von Koppenfels (2020) have demonstrated, cross-border movements of workers from the Global North were predominantly viewed as temporary mobility, whereas Global South workers were perceived as permanent migrants and as a problem (Anderson 2019). While this usage is anchored in the erstwhile reality of Global North highly skilled workers who moved temporarily for career purposes, qualifying Global North workers' moves of mobility became the norm, irrespective of its temporary or permanent character and furthermore assuming that these workers were all (highly) skilled. At the same time, individuals from the Global South were invariably referred to as *migrants*, independent of their skill level and the temporality of their stay. Hence, the migration/mobility binary has tended to conflate Global North individuals with highly skilled workers engaging in temporary mobility and welcomed by receiving states, while Global South individuals were perceived as low-skilled workers moving as permanent migrants. While the former are negatively connoted, highly skilled people on the move are the subject of positive connotations. The normative conceptualizations of the two categories (including the

conflations that they entail) reveal their socially constructed and hierarchized nature, and how they are informed by racializing and ethnicizing biases (Faist 2013; Weinar and Klekowski von Koppenfels 2020).

Secondly, while the reproduction of such understanding of social realities in academic literature has been criticized by migration scholars since the 1980s (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013), it is only more recently that scholars have started to pay more attention to the diversity of so-called highly skilled movers and have sought to demonstrate empirically that highly-skilled and unqualified workers' movements across borders may not be as different as it was often assumed (Weinar and Klekowski von Koppenfels 2020). In the same vein, if one considers that expatriates are often regarded as the epitome of highly skilled mobility, it is far from clear that the mobility of academics resembles more the mobility of so-called highly skilled individuals as opposed to unqualified workers. Academics are indeed highly qualified in terms of educational credentials. But they move with very little corporate support and in relatively precarious contexts – from one fixed-term and relatively low-paying job to the next (except when they move to take up a professorial position) – a characteristic which distinguishes them, for instance, from highly skilled professionals moving within multinational enterprises (Ackers 2003; Iredale 2001).

Thirdly, it appears that the study of highly skilled mobility has long concentrated on questions of brain drain, at first on its impact on emigration countries – and in particular on developing countries (Gaillard and Gaillard 1998; Iredale 2001) – then, since the 1980s, in its associations with the expansion of international trade and the globalization of production (OECD 2002; Salt 1992). The dominant rhetoric has tended to conceive of individuals' brains as resources pertaining to nation-states that can gain or lose them in a zero-sum game (Fahey and Kenway

2010a) and is thus anchored in one form of methodological (or epistemological) nationalism. At the micro-level, this strand of research tends to consider highly skilled movers as so-called rational (male) individuals, making decisions and moving alone, while ignoring factors pertaining to their individual biographies, families, and wider social contexts. Some researchers have criticized this narrow focus on the workplace and on career trajectories (e.g., Kofman and Raghuram 2005, see discussion below, 2.3.2).

Fourthly, all these types of work-related migration/mobility represent specific facets of globalization and are linked with the transnationalization of labor markets, although they may take on very different morphologies. Migration scholars agree (e.g., Massey et al. 1993) that the movements of people can only be understood as being anchored and conditioned simultaneously with *structural factors* (i.e., migration policies, economic conditions) as well as *social networks* and *individual practices and biographies*. Studies dealing with the mobility of highly skilled individuals often reduce their theoretical ambition to *one* of these dimensions, focusing in general on socio-economic transformations. It is apparent that globalization processes facilitate the mobility of young academics, but they cannot explain why people leave, with whom they leave, who is going where, who is included in or excluded from this form of mobility, nor in which way it is gendered, all questions which have been dealt with extensively within migration theory with regard to unqualified workers (Vertovec 2010).

Finally, academic policy discourses typically do not speak of migration to refer to academics' cross-border moves, nor do my research participants consider themselves as migrants. They instead speak of academic mobility and see themselves as international or foreign scholars, depending on the national contexts. Therefore, I would find it somewhat outlandish to use migration, which is not an emic term emerging from my data, as an analytical category, while

at the same time scholars have been calling for de-migrantizing migration research (Dahinden 2016) and for the use of the concept of migration to describe specific social processes pertaining to the migrantization of mobility (Heil et al. 2017; Hui 2016; Schapendonk 2020; Schapendonk, Bolay and Dahinden 2020).

For all these arguments, I maintain that it is not fruitful, from a social science perspective, to distinguish different categories of workers on the basis of their alleged level of skills (and of their geographies) when it comes to investigating their (cross-border) moves. In this dissertation, I use mobility as an analytical category, while I simultaneously distance myself from an analytical (mainstream) migration perspective, which tends to migrantize the movements of unqualified workers in opposition to the moves of their so-called highly skilled counterparts. Instead, I speak of mobility because my perspective is informed by the mobilities paradigm, as I discuss in the next section, and not because I consider *a priori* that academics are highly skilled. I adopt a different epistemological stance, one that makes it possible to overcome conflating binaries between the unproblematic mobility of highly skilled individuals versus the problematic migration of unqualified individuals. However, drawing on theoretical and empirical insights from migration studies remains helpful to understand the transnational mobility of early-career academics, for instance, with regard to gender and social networks, as I will discuss later (2.4.2).

2.2.3. Transnationalism and new mobilities

In recent decades, the temporalities and velocities of migration have significantly diversified (King 2012; Robertson 2014). At the same time, new perspectives have been introduced, renewing the conceptual frameworks in migration research: the transnational approach and the new mobilities paradigm.

The transnational approach has been a dominant paradigm in migration studies since the 1990s. It has extended the conceptual framework beyond settled migrants to short-term movers and circulation generally, and it has highlighted the transnational character of mobile people's experiences and practices, which take place not only in the receiving country but extend transnationally (Dahinden 2017; King 2012). Since the seminal work of Glick Schiller and colleagues (1992; 1995), several successive phases have been identified as forming the "historical trajectory" of transnationalism (Dahinden 2017), which led to renewed definitions of transnationalism as a new concept, a new area of investigation, and a new perspective. Dahinden (2017: 1482), for instance, defines as transnational a perspective "adopting an explicitly de-nationalized epistemological stance and concomitant methodologies in order to investigate and theorize cross-border social phenomena by non-state actors. Such cross-border phenomena are understood as the outcome of particular processes that are embedded in multi-layered structures (political, economic, social) at simultaneously local, national and supranational scales and the agency of non-state actors." With its emphasis on a de-nationalized epistemology (and methodology) and its broad understanding of non-state actors' cross-border movements, this definition suggests many convergences with the mobilities paradigm that emerged a decade after "transnationalism", albeit, as Hui (2016) emphasizes, (transnational) migration studies and mobility studies adopt different ontological positionings. The mobilities paradigm, which emerged at the turn of the 21st century, aims to connect mobilities to social theory and to the global processes of social and economic transformations by including all forms of mobilities into the same research paradigm. It not only encompasses research on human mobilities of all kinds but also non-human mobilities of objects, ideas and information (Urry 2007). The mobilities paradigm emphasizes the interconnections of these mobilities with each other, as well as with immobilities and stillness (Sheller 2011). Hence, this

new approach to mobility brings together (and overlaps with) research from different fields, including international migration and highly skilled mobility studies, but it differs in its epistemology. The mobilities paradigm de-sedentarizes the classic conceptual frameworks of the social sciences, considering mobility, in its variety, as the new normal (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013). By reversing the sedentarist perspective underlying the social sciences, it challenges taken-for-granted congruences between people and places (Salazar 2016). However, it does not mean that mobility is everything. Rather, it suggests an interrogation, without presupposing sedentariness as the norm, into how mobilities and immobilities co-exist and are interconnected in different contexts (Cresswell 2010; Sheller and Urry 2006).

While my focus in this dissertation is specifically on human mobility and does not comprise non-human forms of mobilities, I draw on the mobilities paradigm in diverse ways. The mobilities paradigm is not intended to represent a general and absolute theory explaining everything. As Sheller and Urry put it (2006: 210), the mobilities paradigm “suggests a set of questions, theories, and methodologies rather than a totalizing description of the contemporary world”. In this dissertation, I take a specific form of mobility as an entry point – PhD holders moving abroad to take up an academic position – which I consider through the analytical lens of mobilities. The mobilities and the transnational lenses help me to think about the phenomenon at the core of this dissertation with regard to the following aspects:

First, as I briefly mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (2.2), academic mobility takes on different shapes, follows different rhythms and temporalities, and spans various spatial scales. It is therefore fruitful to address the variety of academic mobilities through an inclusive lens, which makes it possible to bring to light possible connections and interdependencies between them. Including all mobility types in the same conceptual framework is helpful to understand

the links between different types of academic mobility and to understand the interdependencies that may connect academic mobility with the mobility of others. The academics' (and their partners') stories provide insights into other forms of (non-academic) moves, transnational or not, that are closely or more distantly interconnected to academics' mobility. The tied-mobility of partners comes easily to mind in that regard and overlaps with empirical and theoretical insights from migration studies about tied-migration (see 2.3.2). But there is also *satellite mobility* (Chapter 6), which pertains to the academics' social networks and involves different types of moves performed by members who have sometimes played an important role in the realization of the academics' relocation abroad. And lastly, the cross-border movements of other academics, in particular of higher-ranked scholars, also represent forms of mobilities interconnected with the moves of early-career academics and contribute to the transnational character of their social networks (Chapter 6). Thus, replacing sedentariness with mobility as the new normal also makes it possible to reflect on the entanglement between transnationality and mobility. Because the people with whom a mobile individual is connected are also moving, focusing solely on a given individual's mobility imperfectly reflects the transnationality of that individual's network.

Second, the mobilities paradigm conceptualizes mobility as an element of social differentiation and inequality, as access to mobility is unevenly distributed among people (Cresswell 2010; Sheller 2011). Such uneven distribution may occur along different lines. Among these are the different immigration policies and regulations, which treat nationals from different countries unequally. Furthermore, in the global academic market, the place where early-career scholars have obtained their PhDs also unevenly affects their access to mobility (and to a position abroad), depending on the position that countries (and specific institutions) occupy on global geopolitical hierarchies (Morley et al. 2018). A few of my research participants originally came

from Global South countries (Table 3.2). Among them, four obtained PhDs in Global North countries (to this end, one of them first had to complete a second master's degree before starting her PhD in a Global North country, and another one, who had already obtained a PhD in her country of origin, completed a second PhD in the Global North country where she relocated) (Table 3.3). Only one had obtained her PhDs in a Global South country and moved to continue her career in post-PhD positions in the Global North²⁴. That I was not able to identify more participants who did their PhD in Global South countries before moving to pursue their career in the Global North is, in itself, very telling of global power relations between countries and of academia's global stratification. Zippel (2017) developed the concept of .edu bonus to account for the fact that academic nationality can become more salient than gender, race or ethnicity in certain contexts (in her case, US-based scholars in academic settings abroad). Furthermore, intersecting with lines of social differentiation that reflect dominant social hierarchies, other dimensions of unequal access to mobility exist amongst academics based on their biographical circumstances and individual structures of opportunity (Wissink and Mazzucato 2018) (Chapter 6).

Third, academia is increasingly transnationalized, including as a labor market. Mobility has become a cornerstone of policy discourses in academia and is viewed as a key mechanism through which internationalization and academic excellence occur (Morley et al. 2018). Following the argument made by Sheller (2011: 2) that mobilities are "the *sine qua non* of globalization", without which "social processes could not take place at a global scale nor be imagined as such", Robertson (2010: 641) notes that "mobility is all the rage in academia too".

²⁴ At the time of interviews, this participant was experiencing problems with obtaining stable academic employment because, as she explained to me, her publication portfolio, albeit substantial, partially comprised work published in Spanish, which was not recognized within the academic system where she had relocated.

However, the (over)valorization of mobility is not only the work of political and higher education circles (1.3.4). Critical scholarship has pointed out the tendency in academic research to celebrate mobility and to indulge in a romantic view of it. Such criticisms emerged in the mid-1990s, before the introduction of the mobilities paradigm (Teichler 1996). However, under the impetus of studies related to this new paradigm and that have conceptualized the competence of mobility as a form of capital (e.g., Kaufmann, Bergman and Joye 2004), academic literature on mobility has renewed its predominant focus on the positive aspects of mobility and by doing so has overall largely overlooked the potential downsides of mobility. Recently, scholars have highlighted the need to explore how “mobility becomes bounded and interacts with immobility and inequality in a variety of contexts” (Gutekunst et al. 2016: 23; see also Schapendonk et al. 2020). Wyss (2019b), for instance, investigated how repeated mobility affected migrants with precarious legal status, both in terms of positive effects, as it allowed them to avoid detention or deportation, and simultaneously in terms of negative effects, as it prevented them from accessing support services and added more instability to their already precarious living conditions. Yet, the idea that mobility should not necessarily be seen as positive and rewarding seems to be limited for now to research about people in marginalized positions (such as refugees or asylum seekers), and it has not yet gained ground in research on more privileged categories of people. The *mobility fatigue* (Chapter 5) expressed by some of the academics I interviewed and the high cost that repeated mobility has had on their personal lives show that the downsides of mobility are by no means exclusive to the disadvantaged.

2.3. Bringing gender in: Academic transnational mobility as a gendered phenomenon

An important cross-cutting perspective to my PhD is a gender perspective. Investigating academic transnational mobility as a gendered phenomenon intersects and draws on two

broad areas of research, namely academia/academic career and gender, and migration/mobility and gender. In the next sections, I review these two areas of research and clarify my use of gender.

2.3.1. Academia as a gendered occupational field

Although inequalities between men and women have been significantly reduced over the last decades in Global North countries and beyond, female academics continue to face disproportionate difficulties in advancing their careers and remain largely underrepresented in top academic positions. Beyond cross-national and cross-disciplinary variations, a similar pattern of gender asymmetries in academic careers can be observed in many countries. At the undergraduate level, the number of women has increased considerably, and women now account for overall half of the undergraduate student population (European Commission 2009; NSF 2007; OFS 2009; UNESCO 2007). However, their proportions decline as one moves up the ladder of academic education and ranks, and only 24% of top academic positions in Europe (European Commission 2019)²⁵, 23% in Switzerland²⁶, and 32% in the United States²⁷ are occupied by women (see also Figure 2.1). The literature interpreting the increasing gap between men and women throughout career stages in academia – graphically illustrated by the infamous “scissors” diagram (Figure 2.1) – offers two broad theoretical approaches (Mason and Goulden 2002). The “work versus family” approach focuses on the effects of the sexual division of labor that assigns domestic and childcare tasks to women and the role of (main) breadwinner

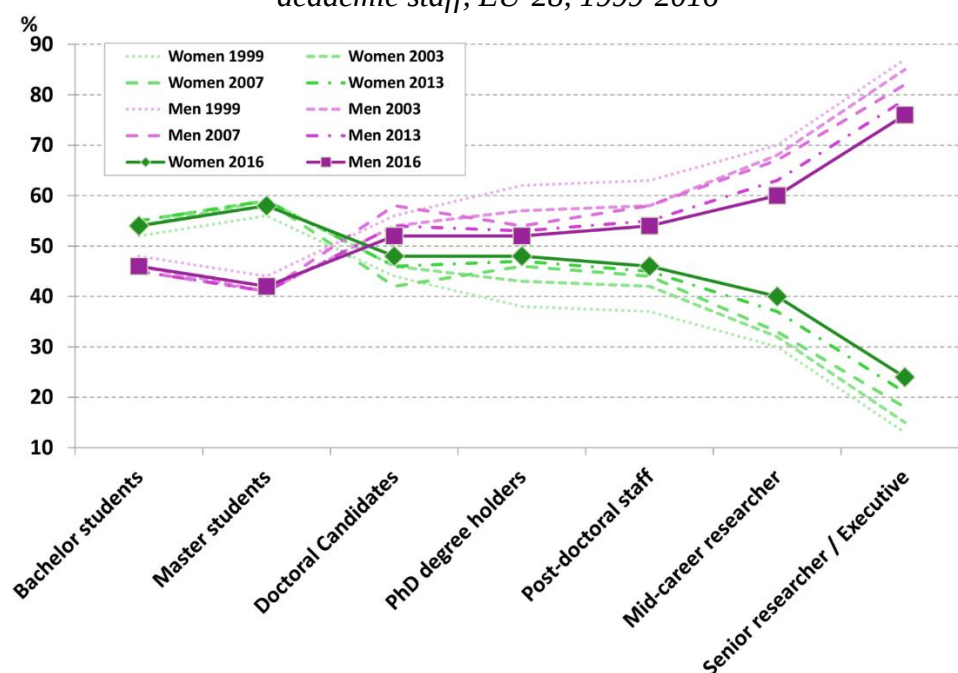
²⁵ Proportion of women among grade A academic staff in 2016 (EU-28 average). Grade A staff is defined as the highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted.

²⁶ Proportion of women holding professorships in higher education institutions in 2019. Federal Statistical Office: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/education-science.assetdetail.12467346.html> (accessed 26.09.2020).

²⁷ US: Proportion of female professors in universities and four-year colleges in 2016. The proportion has been calculated from data on Table 315.20: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_315.20.asp (accessed 26.09.2020).

to men. In the 19th century, the institutionalization of the separation between the spheres of production and reproduction configured the workplace around a male career model (Beck 1992 [1986]; Scott 1986) that forced women to choose between work and family. Proponents of the “work versus family” approach of academic careers analyze, in particular, the different normative temporalities that conflict with each other when women try to reconcile career and family (e.g., Sanchez-Mazas and Casini 2010). Second, the “glass ceiling” approach focuses on patterns of overt or hidden discriminatory obstacles that stand in the way of women’s path to the top. As Marry (2003) rightly points out, these perspectives are not necessarily contradictory and tend to be combined in most of the recent literature.

Figure 2.1: *Proportion of men and women in a typical academic career, students and academic staff, EU-28, 1999-2016*



(Source: European Commission, She Figures, 2015, 2018)²⁸

Reflecting on feminization processes and the glass ceiling that women face within academia and other male-dominated professions, Le Feuvre (2009) identified four interpretative

²⁸ <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/worldwide/japan/status-update-gender-equality-research-careers-europe-she-figures-2018> (accessed 4.08.2020).

frameworks adopted by researchers to understand the mechanisms that have blocked women's access to prestigious positions. A first approach, which Le Feuvre termed the "patriarchy approach", attributes the academic glass ceiling to the gendered character of universities, which have been historically constructed as male bastions structured around stable and deep-seated representations of male-oriented models of career. The male-dominated normative model of excellence or the androcentric definition of sciences, for instance, are aspects that have been investigated within this approach (Carvalho 2010; Herschberg 2019; Herschberg, Benschop and van den Brink 2016; Rosende 2010; van den Brink and Benschop 2012a). Adopting a "feminitude approach", other researchers interpreted women's success in male-dominated professions as their ability to develop specific feminine niches by taking advantage of their feminine particularism. A third, "inverted socialization" approach considers how successful women "gendered" in masculine ways at their workplace – while at the same time remaining single and without children – and therefore were able to melt into the mold of professional success defined by previous generations of men. Finally, a fourth approach builds on the constructivist perspective of gender as a social construct that is (re)produced and transformed in social interactions. This suggests that the gender regimes structuring academia as a workplace, as well as other domains of human life, may be contested, (re)negotiated, and transformed through the practices and interactions of women and men.

These different approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In my dissertation, I adopt a constructivist-interactionist approach to gender (2.3.3). Yet, as I am interested in the actors' practices, I also consider how these practices are embedded in and reflect the wider social contexts, hence mobilizing a "patriarchy approach". Both of these approaches are consistent with my overall epistemological stance. As analytical lenses, I reject the "feminitude" approach, which assumes an essentialist view of men and women, and I have reservations about the

“inverted socialization” approach, which I believe pays insufficient attention to structural and interactional aspects that are inherent to any socialization process (but see Derks, Van Laar and Ellemers 2016 who emphasize how organizational dynamics constraint women leaders' behaviors). However, I acknowledge that in the interviews, as categories of practice, the research participants mobilized rationales pertaining to all four of these approaches to make sense of their (and others') careers.

Thus, my dissertation dovetails studies that have examined the gendered dimension of academic careers by adopting a constructivist gender perspective centered on actors, along with a patriarchy approach. Investigating the career aspirations and practices of postdocs in Switzerland, Bataille and colleagues (2017) showed that male and female academics may leave academia while conforming to conventional assumptions about gender roles – women in order to free up time to take care of their children and men in order to take up more rewarding and financially secure positions outside academia – but also while challenging such assumptions, for instance, when men quit academia because they find that an academic career is not compatible with their well-being and that of their families. In the same vein, Beaufraÿs and Kraiss (2005; Kraiss 2002) studied the mechanisms of the academic glass ceiling in Germany by exploring the different roles played by academic career structures, the symbolic violence in social interactions in academia, and the role of mentors in advancing one's career. The earlier work of Bagilhole (1993) on successful female academics in the UK similarly combines a patriarchy and a constructivist-interactionist approach of gender to examine how institutional processes contribute to women's discrimination in academia.

Another strand of literature contributes in important ways to show how gender as a social structure operates and produces systemic inequalities in academia. This scholarship examines

the detrimental effects of gender stereotypes on women in academia by building on insights from cognitive sciences and social psychology, which have shown that qualities recognized as masculine²⁹ are given more value than qualities recognized as feminine³⁰, and that men are generally judged to be more professionally competent than women (Ridgeway 1997; Webster 2003). This research investigates different academic processes, such as publishing, obtaining funds, being hired or promoted. For instance, researchers who studied letters of recommendation have highlighted that letters for male academics applying to medical professor positions were longer, contained more terms of praise, and had fewer doubt-raisers than letters for female applicants (Trix and Psenka 2003). In chemistry, letters for male applicants to professor positions contained more standout adjectives, yet were not significantly different in terms of length and tentative language compared to letters written for female applicants (Schmader, Whitehead and Wysocki 2007). In their two-part study on the content and influence of letters of recommendation for academics applying to professorial positions at an American university, Madera and colleagues (2009) found that female applicants were more likely to be described as communal and male candidates as agentic, and that relational characteristics were negatively correlated with hiring decisions. Intrigued by the significantly lower success rate of female applicants for postdoctoral fellowships at the Swedish Medical Research Council in the 1990s, Wennerås and Wold (1997) investigated the evaluation system of this funding scheme and found that female applicants had to be 2.5 times more productive than men to receive the same competence score. In a recent study conducted in health research in Canada, Witteman and colleagues (2019) observed that gender differences in grant allocation were due to the fact that female principal investigators were rated less favorably

²⁹ e.g., being assertive, confident, ambitious, daring, or outspoken.

³⁰ e.g., being affectionate, helpful, kind, sensitive, tactful, or caring.

than males. Monitoring its own evaluation system in grant allocation, the Swiss National Science Foundation (2019) has observed a similar bias against female applicants in the way external reviewers assess their CVs. These results are in line with earlier studies that highlighted the impact of gender on the assessment of CVs of academics applying to jobs or tenure (Steinpreis, Anders and Ritzke 1999). Other studies have shown that women are held to higher standards in writing in peer-review processes in publishing (Hengel 2020) and that journal editors are little aware of how gender bias might influence their work (Lundine et al. 2019). Furthermore, when two (or more) authors share authorship of a publication to which they contributed equally, women are less often in the first position, even after controlling for alphabetical order (Broderick and Casadevall 2019). Student evaluations of teaching are another element that plays a role in academics' career outcomes and have been shown to put women at a disadvantage. MacNeill and colleagues (2015) highlighted the double standard of students' gendered expectations. As students expect female professors to be more accessible and helpful, their ratings sanction female professors when they fail to do so and do not reward them when they do. Male professors, on the contrary, are not sanctioned when they do not demonstrate these traits and are positively rated when they do. Other researchers have emphasized the extra burden felt by female professors who receive more demands and favor requests from students than their male counterparts (El-Alayli, Hansen-Brown and Ceynar 2018).

Finally, career theory also generated insightful research that can be listed under the heading of a patriarchy and constructivist gender approach. This literature is discussed further below (2.4.2).

2.3.2. Migration/mobility studies and gender

As I mentioned earlier (2.2.2), research has tended to consider highly skilled people as if they were isolated (male) individuals making their mobility decisions on their own and circulating alone, rendering networks and families invisible. Kofman and Raghuram (2005), for instance, put forward that studies on skilled mobility have predominantly concentrated on the workplace and on career trajectories, leaving aside the incorporation of familial relations and wider social networks. Such an individualistic approach does not, however, take into consideration the complex processes underlying mobility, nor their articulation with gender aspects. Skilled, mobile persons, just as unqualified migrants, are socially embedded and their movements are shaped by family relations and larger social networks. Even more, the model of the rational and work-oriented male reproduces the dichotomy between economic man and social and cultural woman. In other words, the body of work that has focused on highly skilled workers has largely ignored family migration and tied-migration amongst skilled migration and has not yet adequately addressed the changing role of mobile women in contemporary labor markets (Raghuram 2004), aspects which have been theorized in the migration and gender literature (e.g., Kofman 1999; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Morokvasic-Müller, Erel and Shinozaki 2003; Pessar and Mahler 2003).

An increasing strand of research focuses specifically on academic mobility and brings to light that the institutionalization of geographical mobility in academic career paths has stratifying effects that produce or reproduce gender inequalities. Mobility, as a key aspect nowadays in academic career progression, has been considered mainly within the “work versus family” approach described above. Some scholars have linked the “academic mortality of females” (Krais 2002) to the new normative of mobility for early-career scholars and have interpreted it as an outcome of conflicting imperatives associated with productive and reproductive work.

The assignment of reproductive labor to women has a direct impact on their career and, by the same token, on their (academic) mobility. Indeed, the findings of various studies converge to indicate that the necessity of geographical mobility for academic success has been contributing to the “leaky pipeline” and explains, along with other possible reasons, why women are affected by higher dropout rates than men in the race to high-ranking academic positions (Ackers 2003; Ackers 2004; Ackers and Gill 2008; Leemann 2010; Leemann, Dubach and Boes 2010; van Anders 2004). As Ackers (2008: 430) notes, “not all researchers are equally footloose” and, in a context in which mobility abroad may have a decisive impact on career advancement, “requiring mobility may give rise to discriminatory outcomes”. Of course, such discrimination may develop along different (and intersecting) lines. Comparing the situations of men and women, a body of research has shown that female academics are less geographically mobile than their male counterparts (Marwell, Rosenfeld and Spilerman 1979; Moguérrou 2004; Rosenfeld and Jones 1987) and that the presence of parental responsibilities inhibits the propensity of female academics’ mobility to a much greater extent than it does to men (Ackers 2003; Ackers and Gill 2008; Jöns 2011; Netz and Jaksztat 2017; Shauman and Xie 1996). Ackers (2003), for instance, put forth on behalf of research with young academics within the European Union that whereas young, single male and female academics have similar patterns of mobility, the proportion of women starts to decline as soon as they develop stable relationships and have children, while the impact of these relations is lower among men. A survey of young French PhD graduates found that married women were less internationally mobile than single women during the postdoc period, especially when the United States was the destination, whereas for men, no significant difference is observed (Moguérrou 2004). Leeman and Boes (2015) obtained similar results about academics in Switzerland and observed that “when planning their own professional and private future, young women academics feel a

greater obligation to consider their partner's plans and employment situation" (Leemann and Boes 2015: 213). In her longitudinal study about former visiting researchers in Germany, Jöns (2011) showed that the mobility of female academics declines after the average age of 35 to a greater extent than men's mobility, a finding that she attributes to traditional gender roles in which the care for children rests predominantly on women's shoulders.

Hence, asymmetries between men's and women's propensity for mobility widen with the development of durable partnerships and with parenthood – as well as with the presence of responsibility for elderly relatives (Scheibelhofer 2008; 2010). But academic mobility patterns do not only indicate differing flexibility to engage in mobility. They also highlight other differences. Another finding of Jöns' (2011) study is that male academics were more often accompanied by their partners and families in their mobility than female academics, who more often moved on their own. While this suggests a less favorable situation for women academics, such finding does not concern only academics, as primary-movers, but has implications for their partners and families as well – for instance, when they engage in tied-mobility to follow the academics. Research has shown that tied-movers may face major difficulties in finding a job corresponding to their qualification and experience a devaluation of their professional knowledge (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007). Other studies have also shown that, compared to male academics, female academics more frequently follow their partners to new locations as tied-movers (Bronstein 2001; Ledin et al. 2007) and are more likely to be married to academics or other career-oriented professionals, and thus more likely to experience dual-career situations in which both partners are confronted with high demands of mobility while trying to advance in their careers (McNeil and Sher 1999; Rusconi and Solga 2007). Ackers (2003; 2004) observed that academics and their partners responded to the tensions of combining academic mobility and partnerships in different ways. Some partners accompanied the academics while others

stayed behind – or moved to a different country – and managed a long-distance relationship, at least for some time (see also Green 1997 about dual-career household mobility within the UK).

Globally, these findings suggest the existence of gendered roles and gendered relationships, which influence academic mobility and put women at a greater disadvantage. In this context, female (and male) academics may balance the costs of academic mobility, parenthood, and of their partners' own professional prospects in diverse ways. While some may manage to “do it all”, others may either delay or renounce having children, or delay or renounce engagement in mobility (and possibly fail to progress in their career), or decide to leave academia when they start a family. Evidently, these responses – and their implementations – are gendered and may contribute to the disproportionate leak of women from the academic pipeline.

Most of this literature is quantitative (or involves mixed methods) and there is a lack of research that aims to understand the mechanisms underpinning academic mobility. However, since Kofman and Raghuram's (2005) call to expand the focus beyond the professional sphere and to not reduce women to the domestic sphere, a (still modest) body of qualitative studies has paid more attention to the role of gender in academic mobility. For instance, in her study about mobile academics and professionals in the financial sector in Germany, Shinozaki (2014) has moved beyond the workplace and beyond conceptualizations of gender that reproduce stereotypical representations about men and women. She analyzes the actors' experiences and strategies by making visible their agency and paying attention to how structural conditions may play a role in the actors' intra-family negotiating when combining mobility, career and family demands. Other studies about academic mobility that adopt a similar approach include,

notably, Leung (2014; 2017), Shinozaki (2017), Nikunen and Lempiäinen (2018), and, moving beyond the workplace but without a gender approach, Fusulier and colleagues (2014).

2.3.3. Applying a constructivist gender perspective to academic mobility

As the review of these two fields of research suggests, while research on careers and academia has yielded in-depth insights about the gendered mechanisms underpinning academic careers and has contributed to theorizing gender, research on academic mobility often appears to be limited to a narrow conception of gender, with the exception of the recent body of qualitative literature mentioned above. Many studies in this field are still characterized by an essentialist conception of gender, focusing on women and men as statistical variables in data production and analysis. A gender approach, as I understand it in this dissertation, focuses instead on the question of how gender asymmetries are products of the social orders, in institutional and socio-political processes, in networks and representations, and how it produces and transforms those at the same time. I do not consider gender as an “aspect” (or variable) of the study of people on the move, but as a central organizational principle in the decision-making, organization and experience of mobility, and in the lives of actors in general.

This dissertation adopts a constructivist gender perspective. Gender is not used here as a biological characteristic, nor as a categorical attribute of individual or collective actors. Rather, gender can be described as the social construction and production of the feminine and the masculine (a dichotomous and relational matrix) or, as Scott (1986: 1067) puts it, “gender is a constitutive element of social relationships, based on perceived differences between the sexes”. Underpinning these differences lie further normative assumptions about cisgender identity and heterosexuality. Gender is related to identities and subjectivities on the one side, but also produces systems of domination and subordination on the other side (Butler 1990; Héri-tier 1996). It involves norms and practices through which power is implemented and

inequalities produced. Gender is reflected in the division of labor, in social institutions and networks, in social representations, ascriptions, and behavioral expectations, and, in general, in the social status of men and women.

This constructivist perspective maintains that gender is actively (re)produced and transformed in social practices and interactions – “doing”, “redoing”, and “undoing” gender (Risman 2009; West and Fenstermaker 1995) – and that gender systems of domination, or gender regimes (Connell 1987), are open to change. As Le Feuvre (2009: 10-11) emphasizes, “what men or women should be or do thus varies over time and place, but the idea that they should be and do radically different things is what constitutes the structural and symbolic basis of the differentiation process”.

Such a gender approach opens up new ways of understanding the mobility of early-career academics. First, it overcomes monolithic and universalistic conceptions of the feminine and the masculine and makes it possible to analyze practices without the urge to identify them with one sex category (a woman’s mobility is... a man’s mobility is...). As feminization rates have increased in academia (and other occupational fields), Le Feuvre (2009) observed that research no longer focused only on the mechanisms through which women were excluded but started to investigate the mechanisms through which women were potentially included and reached high-ranking positions. Along the same lines, I contend that it is essential to consider the mechanisms through which female academics potentially engage in academic mobility. Furthermore, I find it similarly essential to also consider men’s practices and not to focus on women’s mobility only. Indeed, expressions such as the “wife sacrifice” – which the literature considers a “career sacrifice” conceded by female academics but which may also be seen as a “family sacrifice” among women who decide not to have children in order to progress in their

careers (Kofman and Raghuram 2005) – suggest that research on academic mobility often fails not only to consider men’s practices, but also to consider women’s practices in their diversity, and to show how and when the practices of men and women move away from normative gender assumptions, attesting to the interplay of diverse masculinities and femininities (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Hearn 2004).

Furthermore, this approach paves the way for a better understanding of possible transformations of gender orders (Connell 1987; Matthews 1984), since it suggests that, through their practices and interactions, actors may contest and transform prevailing patterns of ideological and material practices through which forms of masculinities and femininities are produced and reproduced and power relations between men and women organized and reorganized (Pilcher and Whelehan 2004). As female and male actors (re)negotiate intra-family roles and work-family arrangements, men might become increasingly unable (or unwilling) to claim the place of the breadwinner and to relegate children-related tasks to women.

Finally, this perspective provides the opportunity to investigate how gender affects the various life dimensions relevant to mobility strategies, thereby linking this specific type of mobility to overall migration theory.

2.4. Encompassing the complexities of human life

The gender perspective adopted in this dissertation is implemented through a life-story approach and social network analysis. These complementary conceptual approaches, operationalized along methodological lines that have been developed in conjunction, make it possible to encompass the different domains of life and to investigate how these may intersect with academic transnational mobility. Furthermore, these approaches provide conceptual standpoints that allow the ways in which academics’ decisions and practices are embedded in

their social networks and affected by wider social and structural circumstances, including at the transnational level, to be scrutinized.

2.4.1. A life-story approach: Capturing human lives diachronically and synchronically

Academic careers and related transnational mobility are intrinsically part of the life-stories of early-career academics embarking on this path, while at the same time intersecting with other outcomes and circumstances of the academics' everyday lives and life cycles. A life-story approach makes it possible to investigate social phenomena through the subjective perspective of the actors in the overall context of their lives. In Rosenthal's words (2007: 49), social phenomena "are tied to people's experiences and [...] have biographical meaning for them". Life-stories thus do not only elicit what events people experienced, but also how they experienced them, what meaning they attributed to their experiences at the time, and what meaning they attribute to them today, in the biographically constructed context of their lives (Erel 2007; Rosenthal 2007).

Such an approach entails a number of theoretical assumptions. Investigating social phenomena in the overall context of individuals' lives rather than as discrete episodes of their lifetimes makes it possible to reconstruct the processes that led to that phenomena's origination, maturation and development, based on the idea that former outcomes may influence later actions (Mayer 2009; Rosenthal 2007). In this dissertation, I aim to gain a better understanding of the actors' academic transnational mobility in the process of becoming and transforming. Pursuing an academic career means having a specific (gendered) lifestyle, which is interiorized by the academics in due course of their socialization into academia and (re)produced (or transformed) in their social interactions. To decide on an academic career and on mobility is also anchored more largely in the academics' overall biographical experiences and courses of action.

A life-story approach spans the different domains of life and thus allows the researcher to examine how outcomes pertaining to different domains interlock and may influence everyday life and life-cycle practices, and sometimes represent imperatives that are difficult to reconcile (Mayer 2009; Nohl et al. 2014). As mentioned above (2.3.2), female academics have been shown to be less transnationally mobile than their male counterparts, especially when they are married and have children. Transition to parenthood has been identified as an important turning point towards (greater) gender inequality within heterosexual couples, notably in the field of life-course studies (Krüger and Levy 2001; Le Goff and Levy 2016). Interpreted through the lens of “work versus family” hypotheses (Mason and Goulden 2002), the lower mobility of female academics results from the gendered division of labor and the asymmetrical distribution of domestic work, which is mainly the responsibility of women. In order to gain a better understanding of the complexities of managing one’s life, of how actors respond to opportunities and challenges arising from their participation in different social fields – here, for instance, how they respond to imperatives associated with their career, mobility, and partnership/family (or personal lives) – it is critical to adopt a perspective that allows human lives to be understood in their multiple simultaneous dimensions (Krüger and Levy 2001).

While individuals’ lives consist of series of events, experiences, practices and feelings, these take place in relation to other people and are “embedded in webs of relationships, their own and other people’s” (Mason 2004: 177). A life-story approach’s focus is thus not merely on specific individuals – and their particular life-course – but also, and importantly, on others. People’s life-stories are “built through relationships they had and connections they made with other people – particularly but not exclusively those whom they saw as family and kin” (Mason 2004: 177). In line with Mason’s observations, individuals’ actions are understood as collective and may include partners, family members and other social relationships. Moving beyond the

push-pull models which dominated migration studies until the 1960s and considered migrants as individual and rational actors making their decisions alone, migration scholars have since recognized that migration decisions are not made individually but collectively, involving the members of the household or even larger social units (King 2012). In this dissertation, I consider academics to be relational actors who may “find themselves to be constrained by the practices and relationships of others” (Mason 2004: 178), and I investigate how their decisions and practices are discussed, negotiated and organized (or not) together with partners, family members, or members of their wider social networks.

Finally, as Erel points out (2007: 4), life stories are “a good vantage point for exploring the links between subjectivity and social structures”. Life-stories go beyond people’s life experiences and offer access to the wider circumstances and structural contexts framing these experiences, making it possible to examine interconnections between micro, meso and macro levels (Mayer 2009). “The goal of biographical research is not only to understand individual cases in the context of individual life histories, but to gain an understanding of societal realities or of the interrelationship between society and life history” (Rosenthal 2007: 62). By doing so, not only is access provided to the subjective experience and perspective of the actors, but also to the wider socio-historical contexts in which their experiences take place and how these may influence, enable, or constrain individuals’ decisions and actions.

2.4.2. Ego-centered social network analysis: Looking into and beyond the academic workplace

Social network analysis is, at the same time, a methodological tool that makes it possible to investigate the social structure and a theoretical lens through which to understand and interpret social realities. In Scott and Carrington’s words (2011: 5-6), social network analysis is “a way of conceptualizing and analyzing social life that guides the selection of the social

behavior data that are studied, influences the way these data are organized for analysis, and specifies the kinds of questions addressed". Social network scholars regard social life as being primarily constituted by relationships and patterns of relationships among actors, rather than by aggregates of isolated actors with certain characteristics and forming discretely bounded groups (Marin and Wellman 2011; Prell 2012). They seek to understand social practices as the results of actors' embeddedness and positionings in patterns of relations rather than, as Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994: 1414-1415) put it, by "appeal[ing] to such attributes as class membership or class consciousness, political party affiliation, age, gender, social status, religious beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation, psychological predispositions, and so on". Hence, this approach makes it possible to move beyond essentialist interpretations of individuals' actions and provides a privileged vantage point to scrutinize the ways in which academic transnational mobility is gendered.

Social network scholars have observed that although social networks are now often regarded as playing an important role in mobility processes, research often continues to make metaphorical use of social networks, lacking the methodology that would allow for rigorous social network analysis (Bilecen, Gamper and Lubbers 2018). In this dissertation, I do not use social networks in a metaphorical sense (Mitchell 1974). I use social network analysis as a conceptual lens, which I operationalize with specific methodological instruments of data production pertaining to an ego-centered perspective of social networks, in order to understand how early-career academics' embeddedness in networks of social relationships may facilitate or constrain their transnational mobility³¹. I do so by focusing on a specific – albeit

³¹ Social network analysis has developed along two broad perspectives. The ego-centered perspective, which I use in this dissertation, focuses on the set of relationships of particular individuals (ego), here early-career academics. The sociocentric perspective, by contrast, investigates complete networks by considering all the relationships between the different actors constituting the network under study.

elastic – moment of the academics' careers, namely their current or most recent transnational mobility episode. Yet my approach is meant to be inclusive in the sense that I am interested in relationships pertaining to local and transnational contexts (Lubbers, Molina and McCarty 2020), and to the different domains of the academics' lives (see 3.4.2).

As I indicated above, a gender perspective is transversal to my dissertation and implemented through ego-centered social network analysis and a biographical approach. With respect to social network analysis, research has shown the ways in which social networks are gendered, uncovering differences between men and women's networks in terms of structure, composition, and effects (Dahinden 2010; Moore 1990; Smith-Lovin and McPherson 1993). In particular, these studies have revealed that homogeneity marked the composition of interpersonal networks, as actors tend to establish relationships with others who share certain similar characteristics – e.g., sex, ethnicity, social background, age, sexuality, but also values or leisure activities – and homophily has been highlighted as an important principle structuring and determining social networks (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001).

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that social networks are not just interconnections between “concrete” entities, such as persons or organizations, but that they are also “networks of meanings” (White 1992) as they convey ideas, norms, values (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994). Therefore, gender representations circulate within social networks and are (re)produced, contextualized or transformed by social actors in their interactions. These representations affect (and are affected by) the structure of networks, but also their composition and how, in turn, social resources are transferred between social actors. Such gendered meanings within social networks are of relevance in understanding academic mobility and academic careers in general. Social relationships can be understood as conduits of different kinds of support (e.g.,

emotional, practical, financial, professional), thereby shaping, sustaining or impeding the transnational career moves of early-career academics. In other words, to whom the academics turn when they need support, who gives them what kind of support and in what contexts are all social practices underpinned by normative conceptions assigned differently to different relationships (see also: Dahinden 2010).

While migration scholars have been combining social network analysis with a gender perspective since the 1990s (Dahinden 2010; Hagan 1998), the transnational academic mobility of early-career scholars has only rarely been investigated within such a perspective (but see Scheibelhofer 2008; 2010), even though it makes it possible to gain insights about who is leaving, with whom, where to, and in what ways transnational academic mobility and academic careers are gendered.

Two fields of research investigating social networks and relationships are particularly relevant to this dissertation: social network analysis on employment and career processes on the one hand, and career theory and organizational research focusing on social professional ties on the other.

The first one has highlighted the importance of social relationships on employment and career processes. Granovetter's ground-breaking work (1973; 1983) about the value of weak ties in locating employment opportunities has generated widespread interest and led to a burgeoning area of research on how individual action benefits from access to and use of social networks in labor markets and beyond. While considerable attention has been placed on the beneficial effects of social networks in labor markets and career progression, more recently, network scholars have investigated network inequality, focusing on the differing outcomes of networks among individuals through gendered (and racialized) differences. Some studies analyzed the

structural differences between men's and women's professional networks, suggesting that these influenced gendered career paths (Ibarra 1997). Other studies found that women's professional networks were less resourceful than men's networks because network members used discriminatory criteria based on gender stereotypes to provide resources (Gray et al. 2007; McDonald 2011; McDonald and Day 2010; McGuire 2002).

The other one, career and organizational research, has also generated a significant stream of research about the role of social (professional) relationships on career processes and their implications in terms of gender inequality, in academia or in other professions (Gersick, Bartunek and Dutton 2000). Although research in this area does not apply social network analysis per se, it studies social processes that are intrinsically relational. Kanter was one of the first authors to bring gender into the studies of social processes in the workplace. In *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1977 [1993]), she showed how stable and long-term ties with sponsors were crucial to career promotion but excluded women from resources useful to career advancement. This work has become a classic and has inspired much future research, both in organizational and social network research (Lewis and Simpson 2012), including several studies focusing on the academic workplace showing that academic careers are processes embedded in social relationships in complex and sophisticated ways. In the 1980s, for instance, Rose (1985; 1989) analyzed the professional networks of assistant professors in the United States and found no difference in the size of men's and women's networks, but highlighted that women's networks were less effective than men's at providing friendship and helping them build their professional reputation. In the UK, Bagilhole and Goode (2001) highlighted that behind the apparent neutrality of individual merit, academic men benefited from formal and informal relationships with other men. Yet, such social support remained largely invisible, allowing men to still appear self-sufficient, whereas women appeared "needy" when they tried

to develop their own support networks. In their longitudinal study of male and female academics' relationships in a UK university, Fisher and Kinsey (2014) found plentiful evidence of male homosocial bonding, which was likewise unacknowledged by the actors but contributed to promoting and maintaining male interests. Van den Brink and Benschop (2014) shed light on how networking practices in the recruitment of professors in the Netherlands were underpinned by a masculine model of career success and contributed to the persistence of gender inequalities in academia (see also van den Brink and Benschop 2012b).

Overall, these different bodies of research investigate numerous occupational fields in different national contexts, yet they tend to focus exclusively on workplace relationships. In my dissertation, I move beyond this national framing by considering the social relationships of academics at the transnational level and in the context of mobility. Furthermore, I aim at a fuller picture, encompassing not only the workplace but also the other domains of life. For this purpose, applying a gender perspective along with social network analysis – which is not limited to professional relationships – and a life-story approach represents a useful and relevant combination of lenses, making it possible to overcome the critique raised by gender scholars about the lack of attention paid to social relations and wider social environments in the literature about skilled transnational mobility (Kofman and Raghuram 2005), as well as in the literature on career and employment.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and methods

3.1. A constructivist and interpretive methodology

This dissertation implements a constructivist methodological strategy in line with the ontological and epistemological approach outlined in the previous chapter, which considers that social facts are not external, objective, facts that can be “gathered” or “collected”, but that the social world is a “subjectively experienced” construct (Mottier 2005: [4]). Actors produce understandings and interpretations about their experiences and their realities, which they may share with the researcher in a situation of interpersonal interaction, such as, for instance, an interview (Kvale 1996: 124 sqq.). Interviews represent “mutual construction[s] of meaning” (Mottier 2005: [4]) between researcher(s) and participant(s). Therefore, in the following, I use the expressions of data “production” or “co-production” – as opposed to data “collection” – to convey the constructed nature of data.

The methodological framework of this dissertation was designed to provide answers to the research questions guiding the research process (2.1). Putting emphasis on how social actors understand, interpret and make sense of their practices, relationships, and the socio-historical contexts in which their experiences are embedded, this dissertation implements a qualitative-interpretive approach involving various types of qualitative methods of data production (Denzin and Lincoln 2018; Flick 2018a). This qualitative-interpretive methodology is most appropriate for the research questions as it makes it possible to investigate in depth the subjective

meanings that individuals attribute to their mobility, to their career, to their academic and wider social environments, and to how these meanings are gendered.

3.2. A methodological framework based on a triangulation of perspectives

Because this work fits into a larger research project (1.4), the methodological framework and the methods implemented in this dissertation were broadly outlined beforehand at the level of the larger project. Further methodological reflections and specifics regarding the methodological procedure were elaborated, obviously, during the entire research process, individually as well as jointly with the other members of the research team.

The methodological principle of triangulation is at the heart of the methodological frame implemented in this dissertation. Originally conceptualized in the 1970s as a strategy of validation in qualitative research, “playing methods off against each other” (Flick 2018b:447), triangulation concentrated upon the convergence of results from different methods. It thus, intentionally or inadvertently, “assume[d] *one* reality and *one* conception of the subject under study, independent of the special methodical approach” (ibid) and reflected rather (post)positivist conceptions of “reality” (Flick 2018a; 2018b). In the decades that followed, this conception faced criticisms, which led to redefining triangulation consistently with constructivist epistemologies. Fielding and Fielding (1986), for instance, put forth that triangulation consisted of “combin[ing] theories and methods carefully and purposefully with the intention of adding *breadth* or *depth* to our analysis but not for the purpose of pursuing ‘objective’ truth” (Fielding and Fielding 1986: 33, my emphasis). This latter conception of triangulation is the one adopted here. The methodological frame of this dissertation aims at producing different (partial) accounts about the *transnational mobility of early-career*

academics by tackling, or better said, constructing this phenomenon from various perspectives and with different methods.

In accordance with these reflections, different qualitative methods of data production were implemented, in different university sites, in order to investigate the subjective meanings that early-career academics and their partners attribute to their experiences of mobility, their academic trajectories, and to the contexts surrounding them.

3.3. Constructing the phenomenon under study

The social phenomenon of *early-career academics' transnational mobility* is at the heart of this dissertation. Consistent with the constructivist approach followed, I view the phenomenon under study as (co-)constructed and not given; a process in which the researcher(s) plays an important role, which needs to be reflected upon and accounted for. In the following, I expose how I defined the study population, how I chose the fieldwork sites, and the sampling strategies that were implemented to construct a qualitatively relevant sample.

3.3.1. Defining the study population

First, as I discussed in the previous chapter, the *transnational mobility of early-career academics* is understood here as one form of work-related mobility across borders. As such, it refers to academics holding a PhD and moving across borders to take up academic positions – or conduct fellowship activities – at universities or tertiary-level institutions abroad. Such delineation of *academic transnational mobility* does not comprise other forms of academics' cross-border moves, such as, for instance, short stints abroad undertaken to attend conferences or give talks in different contexts. It also does not include stays abroad to carry out fieldwork, even though such stays may last for longer periods. Finally, it does not comprise so-

called *transnational (or international) student mobility*, insofar as my focus is on people on the move who have already obtained their PhD and aim to pursue a career in academia.

Second, in the context of the changes that took place in academia in recent years (Chapter 1), and in particular the increasing pressure to engage in mobility, I am interested in gaining insights into how mobility affected, potentially in highly diversified ways, recent generations of academics. I use the expression “recent generations of academics” as an equivalent to the terms *relève académique* in French or *akademische Nachwuchs* in German, which namely refer to junior academics who, without clearly defined time limits, will (or might) reach a professorial status in the upcoming years. Rather than setting temporal limits to these “recent generations” in terms of biological age, I operationalized this notion in terms of academic age. Therefore, for the purpose of this dissertation, *early-career academics* were defined as PhD holders who had obtained their doctorate *within ten years* prior to the study and who were holding an *academic position at any level*, from postdoctoral researcher to tenured professor. These criteria were set in order to concentrate on early-career academics without making assumptions about the career stage they “should” have reached within a specific number of years. This allows academics with different career and mobility trajectories to be included, whether quickly appointed to stable positions or repeatedly holding temporary (precarious) positions.

Third, as I have argued in the previous chapter, this type of mobility cannot be adequately scrutinized if the methodological design of the study focuses only on so-called primary movers. Academics do not act and make decisions alone as if they were isolated individuals (Kofman and Raghuram 2005), and the methodological design of this dissertation takes into account that the career and mobility trajectories of academics affect and involve other individuals, their partners in the first place. Hence, the partners of academics were regarded as being part of the

phenomenon and of the population under study. This definition is also congruent with the constructivist gender perspective adopted in this dissertation. In order to understand the gendered mechanisms underpinning mobility practices and experiences, it is indispensable to produce the perspectives of both the academics and, if they are in a relationship, their partners, in order to throw light on the negotiation processes taking place between them. As I will show in Chapter 4, the negotiations and arrangements performed by academics and their partners in a context of mobility highlight different patterns of gender relationships, within which actors' practices may deviate from conventionally gendered representations about the feminine and the masculine.

Finally, although I use the expression *transnational mobility* repeatedly (and deliberately) in my dissertation, I recognize that this expression conveys an idea of movement that may be confusing. Once the physical relocation across borders has taken place, what transnational mobility really means is *staying* abroad. The fact that *a priori* antonymous expressions may be used as synonyms says a great deal about the difficulty to conceptually delineate the mobile/sedentary dichotomy, which can only imperfectly reflect the experiences of the individuals comprising the population under study.

3.3.2. Choosing the university sites

We had decided early on, during the writing of the larger research proposal, to conduct fieldwork at different university sites located in distinct countries. I use *fieldwork* as a generic term that extends to all research methods where the researcher directly interacts with those who are under study (England 1994). The expression *university site* accounts for the fact that fieldwork was not merely conducted “within” the selected universities – with academics affiliated to these institutions – but extended to academics' partners, the vast majority of whom had no direct connection to the universities.

I carried out fieldwork at the University of Zurich (UZH) in Switzerland and at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) in the United States. A third university, the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, was part of the larger research project. I did not conduct this third fieldwork and this dissertation builds upon the data from the two fieldworks I carried out, with the exception of the analysis based on network data calculations, which relies on the combined data from all three fieldworks (Chapter 6).

A number of criteria guided the selection of the universities. First, it was a deliberate choice from the outset to include academics from a broad range of disciplines, including humanities and social sciences, and not to focus on scholars from disciplines in which transnational mobility has been a more common phenomenon for a longer time. Hence, each university had to comprise departments in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Second, the universities had to enjoy some degree of international renown and attract international scholars, so that their staff would include academics from multiple countries and with varied mobility trajectories. Third, they had to represent different academic systems as well as different national and local contexts. This was important insofar as the contexts may strongly influence the academics' mobility experience, as well as their partners' experiences, including their propensity to accompany the academics or not (Green 1997; Marwell, Rosenfeld and Spilerman 1979). The diversity of contexts also reflects the diverse gender regimes (Connell 1987) that the academics (and their partners) are confronted with while "doing" or "undoing" gender at different places. Finally, because the larger research project included, as a primary step, an online survey addressed to the universities' academic staff, the selected universities had to give their prior consent to this survey.³² In the United States, several universities

³² The online survey was conducted from October 1 to November 15, 2013 in the three participating universities (University of Zurich, University of Cambridge, University of California, Los Angeles). It was addressed to these

declined, notably arguing that their staff was already (too) frequently surveyed, before UCLA finally agreed to take part.

3.4. Methods of data co-production: different types of qualitative interviews

The empirical data were co-produced by implementing different types of interviews – biographical and network interviews with academics; semi-structured interviews with their partners – which I present in the next sections.

3.4.1. Biographical interviews

Biographical data production instruments, such as biographical narrative interviews, provide multilayered accounts of the actors' life-stories and allow "an in-depth analysis of experiences, changing views, sudden changes of plans, expectations, and perceptions" (Heil et al. 2017: 3). Concretely, during the first meeting with the academics, I conducted biographical narrative interviews following the three-step procedure developed by Rosenthal (2007). The first sequence of the interview started with an initial question aimed at triggering a narration. Rosenthal (2007) recommends formulating a very broad question that invites the interview participants to tell their whole life stories. Hence, the initial question of the biographical interview was formulated as follows:

I am interested in the life stories and life experiences of academic researchers who are in the early stages of their academic careers. Today, we are doing the

universities' academic staff in humanities, social sciences and STEM disciplines, who had obtained their PhD from 2003 onwards and were holding an academic position at one of these universities for the academic year 2013-2014. The results of this survey have been published in:

- Toader, Alina, Janine Dahinden, and Martine Schaer. 2016. *Locality and transnational mobility in the early stages of academic careers: the importance of family and professional networks*. MAPS Working Paper, 2016/5. Neuchâtel: Université de Neuchâtel, MAPS.
- Toader, Alina, and Janine Dahinden. 2018. "Family configurations and arrangements in the transnational mobility of early-career academics: Does gender make twice the difference?" *Migration Letters* 15:67-84.

biographical interview, and for this, as a first question, I would like to ask you to tell me your family story and your personal life story. I am not interested only in your experiences as an academic, but in your whole life story and anything that occurred from your childhood until now. You can take all the time you need for this. I will listen to you first, and I will make some notes for afterward. But to start, I would like to let you tell your life story.

This first sequence of narration was followed by a second sequence in which I asked “internal” narrative questions, that is, questions regarding topics that the interview partner had raised in the first part and about which I was interested in hearing more because they were relevant to my research questions. At this point, my aim was to avoid introducing new topics from the outside. In a third sequence, I asked “external” narrative questions about topics that had remained unaddressed.

I had developed written guidelines beforehand corresponding to this three-step procedure (Appendix I). With the exception of the initial question, which I always enunciated in the same way, the guidelines only delineated the overarching structure of the interview. As part of these guidelines, I had also developed a series of “screening filters” about processes (e.g., negotiation, decision-making, doubt) or themes (e.g., career, family, mobility) to which attention should be paid during the interview and which, if they emerged, should prompt me to further inquire about these topics.

An important objective of the biographical interview was to leave interviewees the latitude to elaborate their life stories freely. In turn, the researcher would improvise and pick up on the topics raised by the interviewee. For that reason, I did not use the written guidelines during the biographical interviews. However, I had also established a comprehensive list of questions

(Appendix II) that I used as a checklist, generally at the very end of the interview, as I found this made it easy to end the interview smoothly, while at the same time allowing me to verify that I had not overlooked anything.

While conducting the biographical interviews, it proved sometimes challenging to respect the three-step procedure described above. After the initial question, as I said, I let the interview participants speak freely for as long as they wanted to on their life stories. While certain interviewees took their time and evidently felt comfortable with this format, others interrupted their narration before they shared much about themselves. Furthermore, the stories I was listening to were not all equally readily understandable, and in some cases, I found the participants' storytelling particularly intricate, confusing, and difficult to follow.

In both these instances, I realized over the course of the interviews that being pragmatic and intervening to help the interviewees to construct a comprehensive and comprehensible narrative about their lives before moving to the second sequence was the most efficient way to conduct this type of interview, as opposed to remaining strictly silent during the first sequence. When the research participants were reserved in telling their life stories, I intervened to encourage them to share their experiences in more detail, starting over from their early years. For instance, I asked, "You told me you grew up in [city name], could you tell me more about your childhood and your family, about your siblings if you had any?" In so doing, they felt encouraged to immerse themselves in their past and confident that their childhood was also an aspect of their lives in which I was interested. I applied the same pragmatic logic when I found myself baffled by the participants' storytelling. Rather than bite my tongue just to find myself becoming increasingly confused about the succession of life events they were

describing, at some point, I opted to intervene, asking the interview participants for clarification, yet trying not to depart from their manner of sharing their stories.

3.4.2. Ego-centered network interviews

While the interview procedure ended here with the (few) research participants who had not been transnationally mobile after their PhD (see 3.5.1 below), I met the mobile academics a second time to conduct an ego-centered network interview along the lines proposed by Dahinden (2005; see also Hollstein and Straus 2006; McCarty et al. 2019).

Before conceptualizing the network interview guidelines, it was necessary to first define, on the basis of the research questions (2.1), what network – or portion of network – should be studied. Social network boundaries are not “naturally” given. Rather, it is up to the researcher to draw these boundaries and delineate the network portion which she aims at studying (Degenne and Forsé 1994). Indeed, whichever the network perspective, sociocentric or ego-centered, it is not the entire network that is investigated, but a part of it. As Lazega puts forth, a social network “is defined methodologically (for technical reasons) as a set of specific relations (e.g., collaboration, support, advice, control or influence) among a finite set of actors” (Lazega 1998: 8, my translation). Thus, the methodological delineation of the specific network portion under study is guided by the research questions and by operational issues. In the following, I present the specific network on which this dissertation focuses, the ego-centered “mobility network” of academics, and the lines along which this network was delimited. I then outline the techniques chosen to produce network data and how these techniques were operationalized.

By definition, an ego-centered network focuses on the network of relationships of a specific individual, *ego*. My interest in how mobility affected early-career academics (and their partners) and how possible resources or constraints enabled or hampered their (and their

partners') mobility led me to circumscribe the portion of network relevant to my dissertation based on a particular episode of their academic trajectory: their ongoing or most recent experience of transnational mobility. This portion of network, which might be termed *mobility network*, was further conceptualized as comprising all persons (*alters*) who supported ego in this particular episode, which was itself defined as comprising the period before mobility (i.e., the mobility decision-making process), the period while abroad, and, for those who moved back to a previous country, the period since they have returned.

Defined in this way, the network was understood as a set of supportive relationships. It was then necessary to operationalize the notion of social support. Social support can be, and has been, categorized in many different ways. For the purpose of this dissertation, social support is defined as "the supply of tangible or intangible resources [that] individuals gain from their network members" (Song, Son and Lin 2011: 6). With regard to its content, social support can be divided into different forms or dimensions of support. In particular, I operationalized social support along the following dimensions: emotional support (empathy, liking, encouragement), instrumental support (goods, services), financial support, professional support (resources, tangible or intangible, related to professional activities and career advancement), and general support (potentially any of the preceding dimensions with regard to broadly defined situations, such as the "decision-making process of mobility").

Among the various ways of eliciting ego-centered networks qualitatively (Altissimo 2016; Ryan 2015a; Schapendonk 2015; Schiffer and Hauck 2010), I opted for a procedure implementing a *name generator* and a *name interpreter* (Dahinden 2005). An important reason for this choice is that it represents a very systematic manner of eliciting networks, producing data that can not only be analyzed qualitatively but also quantitatively, although, admittedly, it requires time-

consuming efforts to code qualitatively produced data into quantitative variables (3.6). In this procedure, a name generator constitutes the interview's first part. It comprises a series of situational questions asked to ego in order to elicit alters relevant in the given situations. These situations aimed to cover the different dimensions of social support that I had identified as relevant with regard to my research questions. The name generator used in this dissertation aimed at generating all alters involved in the decision-making process of ego about their upcoming mobility, as well as all alters who supported ego during their stay abroad and, potentially, after ego's return. Such alters could represent any role relationship to ego. In other words, alters could be family members, partners, friends, neighbors, academic advisors, hierarchical superiors, peers, persons from mentoring or institutional programs, and so on. The second part of the interview, the name interpreter, comprised questions about all alters elicited through the name generator. The name interpreter questions aimed at understanding the dynamics (history), quality, frequency and intensity of relationships between ego and each alter, as well as the context of their meetings. The name interpreter ended with questions about the alters' socio-economic background (sex, age, nationality, current place of living, family situation, current professional activity or position, educational level and field) (Appendices III and IV).

There are two different versions of the guidelines for the network interview, one for academics experiencing ongoing mobility at the time of interview and another for those who had returned to the country where they had obtained their PhD (past mobility). Additionally, in the United States, I created a third version ad hoc for academics who had moved to the United States several years ago and had since then moved internally across the country. These different versions were carefully elaborated to ensure data comparability (Appendices III and IV).

During the fieldwork, I systematically transcribed the biographical interviews as soon as possible – with the assistance of master’s students – in order to prepare the network interviews on their basis. My purpose was essentially to have the data of the biographical interview fresh in my mind for possible follow-up questions during the network interview. But also, the definitive delineation of the network (and the phrasing of some of the questions) depended on circumstances narrated in the biographical interview. Finally, if something had remained unclear or appeared to be missing in the transcription of the biographical interview, I could ask the interviewee to clarify these points at the beginning of our second meeting.

My defining of the academics’ mobility network and its operationalization in the data production tools primarily highlight the beneficial aspects of social networks by focusing on supportive alters and the resources they provided to ego in the context of their mobility. Still, one question in the name generator considers unsupportive, discouraging alters with regards to ego’s mobility by asking: “Before leaving, during your decision-making process, who discouraged you from moving here and taking up this position [or funding opportunity]?” (question 1.2b, Appendices III and IV). The interviewees’ answers to this question, as well as other parts of their narratives – sometimes prompted by follow-up questions on my part – made it possible to not only investigate the positive qualities of the academics’ networks, but also to understand the extent to which these positive qualities were in fact limited and even possible actions by alters that were not meant to provide encouragement or support.

Social networks may indeed have negative consequences. As Portes (1998) emphasized, the same relationships that provide benefits to some individuals implicitly exclude others by the same token. This unequal distribution of social resources has been the focus of many research studies investigating gender and racial inequalities in labor markets (2.3.2), and it also underlies

the results I present in Chapter 7. Another negative effect of social networks identified by Portes (1998: 16) is the “demands for conformity” that participation in social networks necessarily generates. In Chapter 4, I allude to this aspect, showing how conventional gender representations expressed by their alters may weigh on the academics and their partners who opted for a less conventionally gendered lifestyle, thus confronting them with some “gender trouble”.

3.4.3. Semi-structured interviews with partners

When the academic participants were in a relationship, which I learned during the first (biographical) interview, I asked them if they would agree to me contacting their partners to include them in the study. With partners who agreed to participate, I conducted semi-structured interviews that I prepared on the basis of the biographical and network interviews previously conducted with the academics. The interview with the partner aimed at discussing aspects related to my research questions and included questions about the partner’s interpretation of the mobility of the academic, the discussions and negotiations that took place within the couple, and the effects of such mobility on their own professional and personal lives.

3.5. Doing the field

3.5.1. Constructing a sample: Purposive sampling strategies

In accordance with my qualitative-interpretative frame, I followed different qualitative sampling strategies aimed at providing representative results in a theoretical way – in contrast to statistically representative results based on samples accurately reflecting the distribution of features of the larger populations they represent. In other words, while the different cases qualitatively sampled with these techniques represent specific social realities, historically and geographically anchored, their results do not merely *describe* those specific realities but also

involve analytical operations that link empirical data and theoretical concepts and whose relevance extends beyond the cases in and of themselves (Schwandt and Gates 2018). Thus I combined different sampling techniques to ensure that “the study and its results cover the theoretically relevant aspects of the issue” (Flick 2018a: 604).

Regarding early-career academics, I implemented a purposive sampling strategy combining several techniques. As a first step, I followed a homogeneous sampling strategy, looking for research participants who met the three broad criteria defining the study population: (1) holding a PhD for no longer than ten years; (2) having moved to a different country at least once after the PhD to take up an academic position or as a research fellow³³; and (3) occupying an academic position at one of the selected universities. Aside from these homogeneous characteristics, I followed a heterogeneous, maximum variation strategy, seeking to include early-career academics representing variation in terms of sex, level of academic position, academic discipline, career and mobility trajectory, family situation (e.g., single, in a relationship, with or without children, whose partner and/or children followed or not), country of birth, country of PhD. Achieving variation and saturation were the main strategies concerning the selection of research participants in this phase. While I could identify some of these characteristics before the interviews (e.g., sex, discipline, academic position), others (typically those related to private or family matters) generally emerged only during the interviews. I complemented this maximum variation strategy with extreme case sampling, seeking to include cases that were rare or unusual (both statistically and normatively), like, for instance, female

³³ In principle, I was looking to include academics who had moved abroad for a minimum period of one year. Yet, a small number of the academics I interviewed had shorter experiences of mobility, either because they interrupted their stay abroad earlier than anticipated or because the one-year period in question was in fact an “academic” year and did not include the months of the summer break, or because I had not realized before the interview that the person had in fact planned a mobility of only a few months. In addition, a number of my interviewees were on an “ongoing” mobility, which was scheduled to last for more than a year but which had started less than one year before the time of the interviews.

academics followed abroad by their male partners. Uncommon cases are not only heuristically interesting *per se* to learn about the mechanisms at play regarding these cases themselves. Their investigation also puts other (more common) cases into perspective. As Olivier de Sardan puts it:

[T]he field survey treats the exception, the ‘negative case’, with the same attention as the modal case. The distance from common behaviors or ordinary speech is then a powerful revealer or indicator of both the norms and the modalities of deviations from norms. (Olivier de Sardan 1995: 99, my translation)

Following the same heuristic principle about the value of the “negative case”, I extended the sampling strategy to include (a small number of) academics who had not been transnationally mobile after the PhD but who otherwise met the other criteria defining the study population. Indeed, these non-mobile academics might nonetheless be impacted by the pressure of being on the move and investigating their cases could lead to new insights about the mechanisms at play in “non-mobile” as well as in “mobile” career trajectories.

When the interviewed academics were transnationally mobile and were in a relationship, whether living together with their partner or geographically separated, I considered including the partners in the study. I did so whenever both participants – the academic and their partner – agreed. With partners, I followed a purposive sampling strategy as well, focusing on those who were directly affected by the academics’ mobility experiences (homogeneous purposive sampling) and seeking maximum variation beyond this screening criterion. In line with my research questions, which focus on mobility and how it is articulated with other domains of life, I did not include partners who were not concerned by the academics’ mobility, whether that was because the academics represented non-mobile cases or because since the relationship

started, the academics had not been mobile anymore, and no new move was foreseen at that point. Furthermore, and for obvious ethical reasons, I included only partners who were still in a relationship with the academics at the time of interviews and did not consider including ex-partners in the sample. Thus, when the academics were in a relationship at the time of interview with a partner affected by their previous, past or potential future mobility, I invited the partners, with the academics' prior consent, to take part in an interview.

3.5.2. Recruiting participants

I implemented these sampling strategies at the two university sites where I conducted fieldwork, Zurich and UCLA. At each university, I kept track over time of the characteristics of the cases emerging from the fieldwork and tried to reach potential participants representing cases that were still missing in my sample. The fieldwork periods were predefined beforehand. However, once in the field, I decided to extend the fieldwork at UCLA for one month – as research participants had been harder to convince – in order to ensure maximum variation sampling.

Concretely, I looked for research participants in Zurich and UCLA mainly on the basis of the universities' websites, which I browsed, one department after the other, looking for academics from various disciplines who matched (or so it seemed) the broad criteria defining the study population and, as fieldwork progressed, who potentially corresponded to diversified cases in light of the criteria of heterogeneity I had defined.

Once I had identified potential research participants, I invited them by email to take part in the study. I started these invitation emails by briefly introducing myself as a doctoral student from the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland who is working on a project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. I mentioned without further details that the project was about

the transnational mobility and career trajectories of academics, and I provided, if they wanted further information, a link to an abstract of the research project published on the University of Neuchâtel website. I then specified the source(s) where I had found their contact and other information on them (i.e., their department's website and, if any, other professional websites that I consulted). I also indicated the profile of research participants I was looking for (see 3.7 for a discussion about ethical considerations). Finally, I invited them to take part in my study and specified what their participation implied, namely two face-to-face interviews, first a biographical interview and then a network interview, each lasting 120 minutes at the most. I offered to schedule and space out the interviews at their convenience and briefly ensured confidentiality and anonymity.

Before starting the first fieldwork, which was at the University of Zurich, I expected to encounter difficulties in finding academics ready to make themselves available twice for lengthy interviews. However, such difficulties did not materialize, and although some of the invited academics declined, enough of them agreed to participate in the interviews for the fieldwork to be carried out smoothly and lead to the constitution of a heterogeneous and interesting sample of cases. At UCLA, in contrast, recruiting participants proved to be much more challenging. At first, and with rare exceptions, my invitation emails remained completely unanswered, apparently ignored by the addressees. This continued until my meeting with UCLA's Vice-Provost for Diversity, who offered to be mentioned as a referral in my invitation emails. As I implemented her proposal, I started getting replies. Although recruiting participants remained, even with the Vice-Provost's support, more demanding at UCLA than had been the case at the University of Zurich, I managed to carry out the fieldwork successfully at UCLA and, as stated above, to construct a maximum variation sample including some very valuable extreme case variations. It seems that introducing myself as a doctoral student from a little-

known university in Switzerland made me recognizable and trustworthy to academics at the University of Zurich but clearly much less so at UCLA. In addition to what I interpret as a lack of symbolic capital on my part towards UCLA academics, they themselves often pointed to their own lack of time as the main reason for declining to participate. Among the academics who agreed, several asked that we meet on weekends or public holidays, the only time they could “make it”, a demand that was not made by the academics I interviewed at the University of Zurich.

Additional to this purposive strategy based on the universities’ websites, I was referred to some (few) academics by previous research participants whom, in accordance with a snowball sampling strategy, I had asked if they knew anyone with a particular profile that I was still missing. Finally, I contacted and included in the sample a few academics (two at Zurich and two at UCLA) who had participated in the preliminary online survey part of the larger research project and who had provided their address on this occasion in order to be contacted for the qualitative interviews.

3.5.3. Interviewing participants

The interviews with the academics were all carried out in the physical presence of the interviewees. Likewise, I conducted most of the semi-structured interviews with their partners in their physical presence, as they had followed the academics in their moves and were present on site. In three cases, I conducted the interviews via Skype with partners who were located in another country.

I let the research participants with whom I met physically choose the location of the interviews. Most often, I interviewed the academics on university premises, at their offices, or in seminar rooms. In a few cases, I met them in cafeterias and, exceptionally, in coffee shops outside the

universities. The interviews with partners were generally conducted in coffee shops, sometimes at their offices or homes.

The interviews were scheduled (and spaced out) depending on the interviewees' availabilities. Except in one case, in which the biographical and network interview took place on the same day, I aimed at having a minimum of one full week after the biographical interview in order to prepare the network interview on the basis of the transcription of the former interview. A longer time lag between the two or three interviews (when I interviewed partners) proved to be heuristically useful as it happened that the research participants' situations sometimes had changed in the meantime and the successive interviews made it possible to gain information about such dynamics.

The vast majority of academics who participated in the study had scheduled sufficient time for the interviews (i.e., a two-hour time slot, as I had indicated in the invitation email). It happened exceptionally that a participant informed me on the spot that we would have to interrupt the interview earlier. In those cases, I managed to complete the interview at the next meeting, either at the beginning of our second meeting (for the network interview) or by scheduling a third meeting to complete the interview process. In a last case, an interview prematurely suspended could not be completed later on. Overall, unlike other researchers studying "up", I found the research participants quite respectful of my time (Odendahl and Shaw 2001) and of my research methodology (van den Brink and Benschop 2012b).

Most of the interviews were carried out in English, a predominant language in academia, which never proved to be problematic with the academics. A small number of interviews were conducted in French, and in one case, in Spanish, with a partner who did not feel sufficiently at

ease in English. On average, biographical and network interviews lasted 1 hour 45 minutes. The semi-structured interviews with partners were shorter and took about a full hour on average.

Table 3.1 presents the types and number of interviews that I conducted at each university site, as well as the dates of fieldwork for both sites. Regarding UZH, the interviews were carried out between December 2013 and July 2014. I interviewed 16 academics, 14 of whom were or had been *transnationally mobile* after their PhD, while two had not. Furthermore, I conducted semi-structured interviews with seven partners of the interviewed academics and two interviews – biographical and network – with one additional partner who happened to be an academic as well and matched the criteria defining the study population. I counted this person as one of the 14 transnationally mobile academics interviewed at the University of Zurich. At UCLA, I interviewed 20 academics. Among them, 16 were or had been transnationally mobile and four had not. I conducted semi-structured interviews with six partners. Furthermore, two academics were in a relationship with partners who were themselves transnationally mobile academics. Following the same procedure as in Zurich, I conducted biographical and network interviews with them, and I thus counted them as part of the 16 transnationally mobile academics interviewed at UCLA. In total, at Zurich and UCLA, three (female, heterosexual) academics did not want me to contact their husbands for an interview. The reasons they gave was that their partners did not have time or were not the type to talk about personal matters. In yet another case, the idea to conduct an interview with a partner was eventually abandoned for linguistic reasons.

Table 3.1: *Interviews conducted at the two university sites*

INTERVIEWEES	ACADEMICS		PARTNERS
Type of interview	Biographical	Network	Semi-structured
UZH			
No of interviews	16	14	7
Dates of fieldwork	From December 2013 to July 2014		
UCLA			
No of interviews	20	16	6
Dates of fieldwork	From September 2014 to March 2015		

All interviews were tape-recorded (with the interviewees' informed consent) and fully transcribed.³⁴ The transcripts were made in the language of the interviews with the help of master's students from the University of Neuchâtel. I translated the excerpts quoted in this dissertation to English when the original was in another language. Furthermore, out of respect for the interviewees, the quotations were slightly modified when necessary. Potential errors in grammar were corrected and filler words that are used in speech but sound odd in writing were deleted, while carefully avoiding altering the speaker's meaning.

At the end of the fieldwork process, I was feeling "bored" with my data, a boredom that I was pleased to interpret as a possible sign of data saturation (Morse 1995). Indeed, and despite the fact that I had been unable to include some extreme cases (for instance, academics – men or women – who moved abroad without their children), the diversity of cases that were co-produced during my fieldwork certainly tended to cover the field "as wide [...] as possible" (Flick 2018a: 182). At a later stage, when I was analyzing my data, I had confirmation about another saturation principle, namely the richness of the data, which allowed building analyses "as deep as possible" (ibid: 182).

³⁴ Except, in network interviews, the part that consisted of filling up the table with socio-demographic information about the alters, which was recorded but not transcribed.

3.5.4. Sample characteristics

In total, I conducted interviews with 36 academics and 13 (non-academic) partners. I interviewed male and female academics in almost equal numbers. Table 3.2 presents the background characteristics of the academic interviewees, broken down by university site and by sex. The academic sample included interviewees who had grown up in a variety of countries, including countries of the Global South, although in small numbers, as I discussed earlier (2.2.3). At the time of interviews, participants were between 29 and 46 years old, with a majority in their thirties. The interviewees' family situation is presented for two specific moments in time: when the academics embarked on their (most recent) transnational mobility episode and at the time of the interviews. The amount of time elapsed between these two moments can vary greatly among interviewees. For some, it may be a few months, while for others, it may be several years. Furthermore, being in a relationship at both the time of mobility and the time of interviews does not mean that the relationship is with the same partner on both occasions. These two moments provide snapshot information but do not inform on the detailed dynamics of the family situation (such as possible relationship break-ups in between). In my sample, most academics were in a relationship at the time of their most recent move abroad and two-thirds of them moved with their partners. All academic interviewees who had children moved with them.

Table 3.2: Sociodemographic characteristics of the academic interviewees

	UZH		UCLA		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
N	9	7	10	10	36
Country where grew up					
<i>European countries</i>					
Belgium	1	-	-	1	2
Denmark	1	-	-		1
France	1	-	1	1	3
Germany	1	1		1	3
Italy	-	2	2		4
Poland	-	-	-	1	1
Sweden	-	-	-	2	2
Switzerland	3	1	1		5
United Kingdom	1	-	1	1	3
<i>North America</i>					
United States	1	1	3	1	6
<i>Central and South America</i>					
Argentina	-	1	-	-	1
Brazil	-	-	1	-	1
Mexico	-	-	-	1	1
<i>Other countries</i>					
India	-	-	1	-	1
Israel	-	-	-	1	1
Russia	-	1	-	-	1
Age group (at time of interview)					
29-30	1	1	-	-	2
31-35	4	2	5	4	15
36-40	2	4	3	4	13
41-46	2	-	2	2	6
Family situation (at time of most recent transnational move)					
Not in a relationship	1	-	2	-	3
In a relationship (married or unmarried)	7	6	5	9	27
Partner moved with academic ^{a, b}	4	4	5	6	19
No children	7	4	5	7	23
Children (1-2)	1	2	2	2	7
N/A ^c	1	1	3	1	6
Family situation (at time of interview)					
Not in a relationship	1	-	1	-	2
In a relationship (married or unmarried)	8	7	9	10	34
No children	5	2	5	6	18
Children (1-3)	4	5	5	4	18

^a Includes partners who commuted between two countries or did not stay over the whole period.

^b Includes partners in dual-academic couples with whom I had conducted biographical and network interviews with both partners.

^c No post-PhD transnational mobility.

The sample is largely comprised of heterosexual participants (not displayed in Tables). At UZH, none of the academics I interviewed came out as homosexual during the interview process. At UCLA, two male academic interviewees indicated that they were in a relationship with a same-sex partner and two female academic interviewees were in a same-sex relationship together³⁵. None of the homosexual interviewees had children at the time of the interviews. One of the (male) academics expressed his intention to consider adopting a child with his partner once his employment situation has stabilized. The sample of academic interviewees (and of partners) is thus only moderately varied in terms of gender as a notion inclusive of LGBTQI+ identities and sexual orientations insofar as my sample is dominated by heterosexual cisgender participants. While I have endeavored to distance myself from hetero-normative conceptions of gender in the analysis of my data, admittedly, the stories of LGBTQI+ individuals are not, or marginally, part of the stories presented in this dissertation (and still not in ways that make these identifications primarily meaningful, or so I believe).

Chapter 4, in which my co-authors and I discuss three different gender configurations performed by the academics and their partners – cisgender heterosexual men and women – in a context of joint mobility, concludes on the need to examine other types of gender configurations, and specifies “such as ‘partners living apart’, ‘commuting primary mover’, and ‘commuting tied mover’” (p. 150). In retrospect, I would have been well inspired to add examples of gender configurations of couples that depart from the heterosexual and cisgender pattern insofar as their couple arrangements would obviously also shed light on the different ways of “doing” and “undoing” gender in a context of mobility.

³⁵ The two of them are part of the academic sample, as they both matched my sample criteria (3.5.1).

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 present the academic characteristics of the academic interviewees in terms of their discipline, year of PhD, country where they obtained their PhD, and academic position. The academic position is provided, again, in two distinct moments: the position held at the time of mobility (in other words, the position for which the academics moved to another country), and the position they held at the time of the interviews. Again, the length of time between the two moments differs among interviewees.

Table 3.3: *Academic characteristics of the academic interviewees*

	UZH		UCLA		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
N	9	7	10	10	36
Discipline³⁶					
Humanities	1	1	2	1	5
Social sciences	3	3	2	3	11
Natural sciences (incl. math)	4	4	5	4	17
Engineering and technology	-	-	1	2	3
Year of PhD					
2003-2006	4	2	4	2	12
2007-2010	2	3	2	4	11
2011-2013	3	2	4	4	13
Country of PhD					
<i>European countries</i>					
Austria	-	-	-	1	1
Belgium	-	-	1	-	1
Denmark	-	-	1	-	1
Finland and Russia ^a	-	1	-	-	1
France and Switzerland ^b	1	-	-	-	1
Germany	1	-	-	-	1
Italy	-	1	1	-	2
Netherlands	-	-	-	1	1
Sweden	-	-	-	2	2
Switzerland	3	3	2	1	9
United Kingdom	1	-	-	2	3
<i>North America</i>					
United States	3	2	5	1	11
<i>Other countries</i>					
Israel	-	-	-	1	1
Mexico	-	-	-	1	1

^a The interviewee who obtained her PhD in Finland had a previous PhD obtained in Russia.

^b Co-awarded degree jointly from a French and a Swiss institution.

³⁶ Because of the interdisciplinary nature of some departments or research fields, or the fact that the discipline of a department to which an academic was affiliated did not necessarily correspond to the discipline with which that academic identified, I established disciplinary affiliation based on the statements of my interviewees. Thus, an engineer working in an archaeology department is listed under “Engineering and technology”, while an engineer who worked in a math department and considered himself primarily as a mathematician is listed under “Natural sciences (incl. math)”. This, and the fact that the University of Zurich does not have a specific *Fakultät* or “school” entirely dedicated to engineering and technology explains why the UZH sample does not include any academic in these broad fields of research.

Table 3.4: *Academic positions held by the academic interviewees*

	UZH		UCLA		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
N	9	7	10	10	36
Position (at time of most recent transnational move)					
<i>Fixed-term</i>					
Postdoc (hire)	3	3	1	3	10
Postdoc (fellowship)	2	-	3	5	10
Postdoc (dual-career resource)	-	-	-	1	1
Senior researcher	2	-	-	-	2
Visiting scholar	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Open-ended</i>					
Tenure-track assistant professor	-	1	2	-	3
Tenured (associate or full) professor	1	2	-	-	3
N/A ^a	1	1	3	1	6
Main position (at time of interview)^b					
<i>Fixed-term</i>					
Postdoc	5	1	3	6	15
Lecturer	1	-	-	1	2
Senior researcher	1	3	-	-	4
Assistant professor (SNSF ^c /Adjunct)	1	-	2	-	3
Visiting scholar	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Open-ended</i>					
Continuing lecturer	-	-	1	-	1
Tenure-track assistant professor	-	1	-	2	3
Tenured (associate or full) professor	1	2	2	1	6
Professor in residence ^d	-	-	1	-	1

^a No post-PhD transnational mobility.

^b In a few cases, the academics held two distinct appointments.

^c In Switzerland, SNSF assistant professorships are professorial fellowships funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Funding is allocated for a four-year term that is extendable by two years. Since 2018, SNSF professorships have been replaced by the Eccellenza funding scheme.

^d Position funded at 25% by the university. The remaining 75% are to be financed by third-party funding obtained by the professor.

Table 3.5: *Transnational mobility characteristics of the academic interviewees*

	UZH		UCLA		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
N	9	7	10	10	36
Mobility					
Ongoing	6	5	5	9	25
Past	2	1	2	-	5
No mobility	1	1	3	1	6
Length of mobility^a					
> 1 year	1	3	3	2	9
1-2 years	3	2	2	2	9
3-5 years	4	1	-	4	9
7 years and more	-	-	2	1	3
N/A ^b	1	1	3	1	6
Country of mobility					
<i>Ongoing mobility</i>					
Switzerland	6	5	-	-	11
United States	-	-	5	9	14
<i>(Most recent) past mobility</i>					
Egypt	1	-	-	-	1
Germany	-	1	-	-	1
New Zealand	-	-	1	-	1
Spain	-	-	1	-	1
United Kingdom	1	-	-	-	1
N/A ^b	1	1	3	1	6

^a The length of ongoing mobility was calculated from when the academics' mobility started until the time of interview.

^b No post-PhD transnational mobility.

Background information about the interviewed partners is presented in Table 3.6. A large majority of the interviewed partners were accompanying or had accompanied the academics in their transnational moves. A few others had stayed behind or moved elsewhere. Among those who joined, some had quit their jobs to follow the academics abroad (not displayed in Table), while others were able to move as dual-career couples and managed to pursue their own career while abroad. The variation achieved in the cases represented by the partners overlapped with the variation in the academics' family situations.

Table 3.6: *Background characteristics of the interviewed partners*

	UZH PARTNERS		UCLA PARTNERS		TOTAL
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
N	3	4	2	4	13
Age (at time of interview)					
29-30	-	1	-	1	2
31-35	2	1	1	1	5
36-40	1	1	-	2	4
41-46	-	1	1	-	2
Country where grew up					
<i>European countries</i>					
Belgium	1	-	-	1	2
Denmark	-	1	-	-	1
France	-	-	1	-	1
Italy	1	-	-	-	1
Switzerland	-	1	-	-	1
UK	-	1	-	-	1
<i>North America</i>					
US	1	1	-	2	4
<i>Other countries</i>					
India	-	-	-	1	1
Mexico	-	-	1	-	1
Couple configuration (at the time of mobility)					
Long-distance relationship	2	-	1	-	3
Moved with academic	1	3	1	4	9
N/A ^a	-	1	-	-	1
Educational level					
Bachelor	-	-	1		1
Master	1	2	1	3	7
PhD / MD	2	2	-	1	5

^a The relationship between the academic and his partner started only months after the academic had moved to another country, while the partner was, at the time, living in yet another country.

3.6. Analyzing data

I did not follow an iterative process of data production and analysis. Instead, I started thorough analyses of the data only once the fieldwork was completed. However, while this is not, strictly speaking, analysis – nor an iterative process in the sense of grounded theory (e.g., Charmaz 2001) –, the researcher is already digesting the data during the data production phase, a process that Olivier de Sardan describes as a form of latent interpretation:

Throughout the entire fieldwork period, the researcher is constantly interpreting, over the course of the meetings, observations and interviews, albeit in a latent rather than explicit way. The phase of data production can thus be analyzed as an incessant restructuring of the problematic in contact with the data, and as a permanent rearrangement of the interpretative framework as the empirical elements accumulate. (Olivier de Sardan 1995: 95, my translation)

In my case, I was indeed transcribing the tape-recorded interviews as the fieldwork progressed, which certainly helped me to become “familiar” with the data, all the more so as I prepared subsequent interviews about a same-case study on the basis of the previous one(s). I also took notes in writing immediately after each interview, describing first impressions about the interview process and content. As time went by, I felt impregnated by the former interviews, which oriented some of the questions I asked participants in subsequent interviews. Additionally, the informal contacts that I had developed with academics during fieldwork also contributed to such impregnation of the “field” and latent interpretations I made about it. At UCLA, for instance, I maintained regular contact with one of the research participants, who introduced me to his friends. Like him, they were transnationally mobile academics, and I attended dinners and other social events with them, during which we discussed our respective experiences of mobility as academics or partners of academics on the move. Such exchanges certainly contributed to my reflections and latent interpretation of my data.

3.6.1. Methods of data analysis

The transcribed interviews that I conducted at the university sites of Zurich and UCLA form the first-hand data on which this dissertation is based. In addition, calculations regarding network composition characteristics presented in Chapter 6 also included the *network data* (see below)

about academics at the University of Cambridge, the third university site included in the larger research project in which my thesis is integrated (1.4).

The four articles forming the core of this dissertation implied different analytical procedures as well as various procedures of data processing and data organization. Yet, they all involved, albeit to varying degrees, triangulating data from the different interviews, mutually informing the same case study. Reconstructing case studies on the basis of their respective interviews was, thus, a first step in the qualitative analyses I conducted for Chapters 4 and 5. Regarding Chapter 6, the coding of interview data into network variables evidently did not require the case studies to be reconstructed but involved some degree of triangulation insofar as the information encoded into these variables required that I resort to data from the biographical or semi-structured interviews in a few cases.

Overall, the interviews were all included at some point in my analyses, either centrally or marginally, even when I have built my argument around the stories of a smaller number of interviewees, as is the case in the two articles based on case studies (Chapters 4 and 5). The stories of these other interviewees are not directly available to the readers (no description summarizing their narratives, no quoted excerpts), yet they are in the analytical background and did play a role in the data analysis by informing the detailed analysis of stories that were more central to the analysis. For instance, the interviews with academics labeled as “non-mobile” in my sample (i.e., those who did not move to take up a position abroad in the years following their PhD), which I have not analyzed per se, contributed to the analysis of the narratives of academics labeled as “mobile”, thus shedding light on shared features, but from the opposite angle of immobility. The reasons invoked by interviewees for not being mobile bring to the fore the sometimes-insurmountable challenges that mobility may represent for

academics in committed relationships. This was certainly the case for one of the female interviewees, a mother of a child from a former relationship and of another one with her current partner. She was unable to see how she could engage in transnational mobility without taking her first child away from its father. Furthermore, her current partner held an exceptional professional position that he would not be able to find anywhere else. At the time of the interviews, this academic described her professional situation as being in a professional deadlock. She had been told that her lack of transnational mobility was a major flaw in her CV, one that was keeping her from accessing more stable employment. While her situation as a female academic confirms the findings of previous studies that have pointed out that female academics' propensity to be mobile is heavily affected by their involvement in relationships and their care responsibilities, the stories of other non-mobile academics in my sample indicate that these challenges also concern male academics. Given the choice between several job offers, a male non-mobile interviewee explained that he had refused a prestigious position far away and accepted a less attractive position that allowed him to stay in the same area. Moving would have meant for his partner to leave her already well-established career or they would have to give up living under the same roof, which the couple did not consider an option as they were about to start a family. This interviewee's story provides insightful information on the analysis of gender mechanisms. It shows that actors' practices develop along complex lines, where the resources they rely on play an important role and may, in turn, contribute to their gender "undoing". Furthermore, this case study has also contributed to the emergence of the idea that immobility (or the competence of being immobile) is a resource (or a capital), as it shows how the opportunity to stay put allowed this academic to avoid the high cost of academic mobility for those it concerns (Chapter 5).

Analyses of case studies

Reconstructing case studies on the basis of their respective interviews was a first important step in the qualitative analyses I conducted for Chapters 4 and 5. Each case study was informed by a number of interviews. In the case of dual-academic couples where I had conducted biographical and network interviews with both partners, a case study comprised four interviews (two biographical and two network interviews). A case study about a mobile academic whose partner I interviewed was comprised of three interviews (one biographical, one network and one semi-structured interview). When I interviewed a mobile academic without interviewing their partner, if any, the case study was comprised of two interviews (one biographical and one network interview). Finally, in the case of non-mobile academics, their case study was comprised of only one biographical interview.

In a second step, I proceeded inductively from the case studies that I had reconstructed, comparing them, identifying similarities and differences, and regrouping transversal aspects that emerged in the process (Bertaux 2010; Flick 2014). I then selected specific case studies that I believed were good examples to scrutinize further the social mechanisms and processes uncovered so far. Engaging in deeper analysis, I started to link such mechanisms and processes with concepts and theories external to the data. At the same time, I regularly returned to the rest of my data in order to refine interpretations by comparing the selected case studies not only to each other but also in light of the other interviews in the empirical data set. These back and forth movements between the different case studies, with the rest of the data set, and with theoretical insights from previous research, allowed general mechanisms to emerge and led to the construction ideal-types (Weber 1992 [1904]) in Chapter 4, which can be theorized at a more general level.

While part of the analysis was internal to my corpus of data, external elements were also included. Life-story elements reflect the wider social contexts in which the actors' lives are embedded and should also be analyzed, in particular as they allow insights to be gained into how institutional or societal circumstances may affect individual biographies (see also Bertaux 2010). It should be clarified here that while I interviewed academics at two university sites (Zurich and UCLA), in this dissertation, I provide only limited information about these local contexts because the academics' geographical trajectories extend well beyond the specific location where they were at the time of the interviews. Rather, their experiences as mobile academics are situated in multiple (local, national, institutional) contexts. Therefore, I provide contextual information on a pragmatic "case-by-case" basis in the different articles, but I do not provide extensive and "thick descriptions" of the university sites where I conducted fieldwork and interviewed the research participants (see also Schapendonk 2020).

Adopting quantitative social network tools to explore network composition

The first part of Chapter 6 explores the composition of academics' mobility networks. This chapter implements a qualitative mixed-method design that combined different types of analysis. In particular, in order to apply calculations and develop measures about network composition, my co-authors and I first had to construct variables and encode the narrative data from the network interviews (when necessary, complemented with data from the biographical or semi-structured interviews) into a database developed to this end with the statistical software platform SPSS. This database contained *network data*, as we called them, namely more than 300 variables about 40 egos and 710 alters, that were encoded from the narratives of the network (and sometimes other) interviews.

These network data were then analyzed quantitatively with SPSS, following an inductive approach insofar as we were not testing a set of previously elaborated hypotheses, as in typical

quantitative analysis, but were exploring what the crossings of different sets of variables highlighted. Step by step, through this inductive exploration of the network data, a path was mapped out, which led to the identifying of different key aspects of the composition of the academics' mobility networks that we then further conceptualized in terms of academic social capital, as we showed how academic social capital variables were linked, or not, to other important characteristics of these networks, such as mobility degree and network transnationality (Chapter 6).

Qualitative social network data analysis

Returning to the narratives of the network interviews, I also conducted a qualitative network analysis. Results from this analysis represent the second part of Chapter 6, as well as Chapter 7. Again, while I predominantly used the transcriptions of the network interviews, I also integrated data from the biographical and semi-structured interviews in the analytical process. I first reconstructed descriptive case studies about the interviewees' networks, about the alters they mentioned, and the relationships the interviewees had developed with them, and I focused in particular on the resources that circulated along these ties. I wrote multiple detailed memos about different aspects emerging from these networks and made several attempts to structure the preliminary results along different lines before seeing gender dynamics emerge as a key mechanism in the distribution of social support from higher-ranked academics. I discuss this moment in more detail in the conclusion (Chapter 8).

3.7. Ethical considerations

Prior to starting the fieldwork at UCLA, I was required to seek approval from the university's ethical review board, a procedure that was not necessary at the University of Zurich. However, beyond this formal difference of procedure between the two universities, I respected the same

ethical standards with research participants from both university sites, with the sole difference that research participants gave their informed consent orally in Zurich, while such consent was obtained in writing at UCLA with the signing of an informed consent form (Appendix V). I gave participants similar information and ensured the same guarantees at both university sites. The guarantees stated that all information they shared with me would be treated confidentially and that they would remain anonymous. I informed them about their right to not respond to a question and to withdraw their participation at any time. I asked them for permission to tape-record the interviews, which they all accepted without hesitation. Two participants (one in Zurich and one at UCLA) asked to receive a copy of the transcriptions of the biographical interviews (and, for one of them, of the recording as well). The first one did so out of personal curiosity and the other to pass it on to his children as memories of his life. I granted both their requests.

Regarding the recruiting of academics, as I said, I mainly identified them on the internet. Because academics are often “visible” on the websites of the departments (or institutes, or research groups) in which they work, it was relatively easy to find academic staff members’ names, positions held, and email addresses. In many cases, additional information about their academic curriculum was also readily available, such as years and places where they had obtained their PhDs, master’s degrees, sometimes including where they had done a postdoc or held other academic positions, and in some instances, there was even a full-text curriculum vitae. In other cases, however, the departments’ websites provided only the academics’ names, merely attesting that if the website was up to date, these academics were working at the department. This matter gave rise to ethical reflections about how I could proceed further and find enough information indicating whether these academics corresponded to the population under study and possibly to other criteria accounting for maximal variation. How much farther

than the universities' websites could I search the internet for this type of information while still respecting the academics' privacy? Or, to put it bluntly, where does the researcher's legitimate curiosity end and cyber-stalking start? These reflections led to the decision to restrict online searches to professional networking sites only, such as LinkedIn, Academia, ResearchGate, as well as websites of other universities where the academics were visible. Websites or networking platforms, like Facebook, that displayed private information were deemed off-limits, and I consistently disregarded them in my searches. Later, when I contacted potential participants by email and invited them to take part in my study, I explicitly indicated where (on which websites) I had found their contact details and other information about their academic trajectory.

Whether this was done in oral or written form, I was committed to ensuring the participants' confidentiality and anonymity. During fieldwork, keeping the participants' identities secret from persons other than the members of the research team was relatively straightforward. It required, in particular, that all interview data (and all related documents) were kept in a restricted-access file on a secured server. Master's students who collaborated on the transcriptions were provided with audio files. These files did not disclose the participants' names, but they did contain biographical information that made the interviewees potentially recognizable. The transcribers were thus required to treat these and the transcription files with strict confidentiality and to delete them from their computer after their work was completed. At the university sites, ensuring confidentiality also meant not revealing previous participants' identities to new participants who, sometimes intrigued and curious, asked me who else from their university I had interviewed before them. For obvious reasons, in the case of couples where I interviewed both partners, each of them knew about their partner's participation in my study. My main concern with them was ensuring transparency and that their participation was

voluntary and informed. As I already noted, I first sought permission from the academics before contacting their partners. When they refused, I did not insist or inquire about their reasons to do so. When they accepted, I contacted their partners, to whom I indicated that I had already interviewed their partner – the academic – and was interested to hear about their own perspective on mobility and how it potentially affected them.

In contrast to my experience during the fieldwork, I found it extremely challenging to anonymize the qualitative data and ensure that the participants remained unidentifiable when communicating (qualitative) findings. While a number of conventional measures were easy to implement, such as referring to the participants by fictitious names, others demanded further considerations in order to “balance two competing priorities: maximising protection of participants’ identities and maintaining the value and integrity of the data” (Saunders, Kitzinger and Kitzinger 2015: 617). These considerations led me to withhold information about the academics’ discipline, and even to take an extra step and not disclose whether they were from the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, or engineering and technology. I also omitted personal details, about the participants themselves and about people they mention. For instance, I withheld the sex of the participants’ children, or referred to the partners’ occupations in broader terms, revealing only what I believed was necessary to make the analysis transparent to my audience. Preserving data integrity without compromising the participants’ anonymity proved to be particularly difficult in matters of geographical locations. It seemed relatively inconsequential to hold back the specific cities or even regional places alluded to by the interviewees. However, disguising or modifying countries, both of which I tried, made it completely impossible to grasp the broader contexts in which the participants (or the persons they mentioned) were embedded. Hence, I decided to disclose the countries where narrated events took place but to withhold smaller geographical units. I contend that by doing

so, I was not succumbing to methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002), but rather that I positioned the cursor on the larger unit I believed I could work with to maintain the participants' anonymity without completely decoupling their narratives from the geographical – as well as historical, social and political – contexts in which the narrated events took place. By the same token, I decided not to disclose the name of the universities or research institutions to which the academics had been affiliated, nor the ones they mentioned for other reasons. While I revealed the names of the university sites where I did fieldwork, I withheld their names in the quotes and in my own descriptions and analyses in order to even out the different university contexts alluded to by the research participants.

Finally, keeping the participants' identities anonymous became particularly challenging when biographical case studies were at the core of the analysis. Chapter 4 focuses on three case studies depicting the mobility trajectories of three couples (three academics and their partners). Although personal and other specifics were withheld, readers of the paper who knew of these participants' life experiences could still potentially identify them. I thus sent to these participants the parts of the manuscript with the descriptions and quotes about "their" case study and asked them individually whether they would consent to the manuscript being published, even though I could not fully ensure that they would remain anonymous. I am thankful that they all answered positively.

I would like to conclude this section by briefly referring to the importance of "doing justice to participants" (Flick 2018a: 144). During fieldwork, I had offered to keep the research participants informed of my results, a proposition that all of them welcomed and that, I believe, made me all the more cognizant, throughout the analysis and writing processes, of the respect that I owed to every one of them by writing honestly (Mertens 2014), anchoring my

interpretations in the data and not indulging in any personal judgements. I believe I did so, and I hope the participants feel that way, too.

3.8. Positionality and reflexivity

The epistemological stance adopted in this study means that the researcher's positionality is a feature of the research process. Positionality does not only refer to how the researcher delineates and reflects upon her own social positionings, identifications and backgrounds, and how these may influence data production and interpretation. It also affects how the researcher is perceived by research participants, and thus how the researcher's positionality affects her access to and interactions with them (Carling, Bivand Erdal and Ezzati 2014; Leung 2015).

Qualitative research is a highly interactional process and much has been written about the asymmetrical power relationships between the researcher(s) and those who are researched. Some authors, reflecting upon "macro" tendencies, emphasized that such asymmetries reflected social scientists' inclinations to study "down" rather than "up" (Nader 1972; Römhild 2017). Others, focusing on "micro" situations, such as interpersonal research encounters, pointed out that because the researcher(s) and participant(s) have different roles in the research process, the relationship between them reflects asymmetrical power relationships in which the researcher defines the situation and decides the questions (Kvale 1996), although these asymmetries are dynamics and can change over the course of fieldwork encounters (England 1994).

In the context of this dissertation and, *a fortiori*, during fieldwork, my position is that of a doctoral student interested in and interviewing a privileged category of people on the move. I am studying "up" in two respects. First, in the sense that my research participants fall into a category of mobile people who are essentially welcome in receiving countries (2.2.2). This is a

backdrop that informs the ways in which the participants perceive themselves and feel perceived by others during their mobility. It also informs power hierarchies between them and their social environments, including between them and me during the interviews. Second, in the sense that they are PhD holders whose academic credentials, positions, and statuses are thus higher than mine. In terms of academic hierarchies, I am studying “up” in any cases with academic participants, while this was only partially the case with their partners who had not all obtained doctoral degrees (see Table 3.6).

Recent discussions on researcher positionality have emphasized the plurality of the concept of positionality, involving various intersecting systems of social categorization, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and class (Amelina and Faist 2012; Faist 2012; Nowicka and Ryan 2015; Shinozaki 2012). These authors have also highlighted the relational and dynamic nature of these multiple positionalities, all of which are co-constructed and re-shaped by the actors throughout their encounters. Positionality or, better said, “multi-positionalities” (Ryan 2015b), also interweave with categories of social differentiation that are not part of dominant social power relationships but that are relevant to the interacting actors in the situation in which they find themselves (for a discussion about different forms of ‘otherness’ that can be identified in the context of conducting research, see Fawcett and Hearn 2004).

Yet, in migration research in particular, but not only, the categories of ethnicity and nationality have held a dominant place. This “ethnic lens” in migration studies has been criticized by migration scholars and proponents of a transnational perspective (Glick Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen 2006), as has been the methodological nationalism underlying the research design of many studies (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002). Bringing together a transnational approach and a feminist reflexive approach, Shinozaki (2012) examined her fieldwork

experiences in Germany with domestic workers from the Philippines. She identified multiple power asymmetries between her research participants and herself, which could work to reverse power asymmetries generated by their respective national backgrounds and allowed her to question the overriding role often *a priori* assigned to nationality to understand the experience of people on the move and the power hierarchies at play during fieldwork. Ryan (2015b) engaged in a similar endeavor – also combining feminist reflexive and transnational approaches – when she deconstructed the statuses of insider and outsider often used in migration research. In doing so, she highlighted the fluidity of insider and outsider statuses, but also the multiplicity of categorizations to which these might refer, indeed far more than nationality or ethnicity alone.

At our first face-to-face encounter, the participants in my research study, academics and partners, met a white woman in her early forties, who spoke English with a French (or Swiss-French) accent. By email, I had previously introduced myself as a doctoral student in social sciences, coming from the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland, who was interested in transnational mobility and career trajectories of academics. While these characteristics may influence how interviewees “interpreted” me, it was often difficult for me to “guess the content of those interpretations” (Cassell 2005: 171). While recruiting participants, as I noted earlier (3.5.2), my affiliation to a Swiss university lacking international reputation did not make me recognizable or credible to academics at UCLA, with the exception of those who had studied or worked in Switzerland. During fieldwork, similarly to what Ryan (2015b) experienced in her own research, participants often showed little curiosity about me. This was, I believe, largely due to the nature of my fieldwork, based on interviews and involving no further participation on my part in the lives of the research participants. It is a fact that in most cases, the time periods scheduled for the interviews, in particular with the academics, did not allow for additional

discussion, other than to say thank you and goodbye. In rare cases, I had lunch or dinner with an academic interviewee, and I sometimes spent time with their partners after we finished the interviews. In those cases, I often discussed with them my personal experience as an accompanying spouse of an academic. Yet, these discussions, during which I revealed aspects of my personal background that had previously remained unknown to my participants, usually took place after the actual interviews were over.

In a few instances, I believe I could “catch a glimpse of how an interviewee constructed [my] identity” (Ryan 2015b: [14]). This was the case, for example, when one academic interviewee, born the same year as me – I could make the connection since I had read his online CV, but he was unaware of the fact – explained to me how his mobility experience in past years was altogether different from today’s, since at the time, the internet had only just emerged, Skype didn’t exist, nor did smartphones. Clearly, our relative positions with regards to our academic status – he as a professor, and I as a doctoral student – led him to assume that he was evoking a time that I was too young to recall. Beyond this anecdote, more realization of how participants interpreted me came up only later. I was already at an advanced stage of the analysis of my data when I became aware that male professors tended to describe their social relationships with other academics, in particular with senior male professors, at greater length than female professors or interviewees who held lower academic positions. Was the fact that I was a female doctoral student playing a role in that? Did they perceive me as “unthreatening” and disclosed information that they would have withheld from an interviewer with a different profile, as other researchers say they experienced (e.g., England 1994; van den Brink and Benschop 2012b)? Or were other features playing a role in how they framed their narrative, not so much related to how they identified me but rather linked to their assertive style of presenting themselves as

male professors who deserved their academic status and had no reason to keep a low profile, as I suggest in Chapter 7?

In addition to my own positionings and identifications, and how these are interpreted by my interviewees, another aspect influencing research encounters is the framing of the study to the participants. As I stated above, I introduced my research topic in broad terms in my invitation emails, in the consent form (at UCLA), as well as orally before actually starting the interviews. In these preparatory steps, I deliberately avoided framing my topic in terms referring to my interest in a gender perspective. I did so with the intent of not influencing the academics' participation in my study according to the credit that they possibly gave – or not – to “gender”. Another reason was that I wanted to avoid the interviews being “overly” framed in gender terms. My objective was to be in a position to grasp how gender issues *emerged* from the participants' narratives, rather than to impose gender as a theme to be discussed during the interviews. Of course, academics who read the abstract of the project (to which I had provided a link in my first email), and those at UCLA who received my invitation email with a referral from the Vice-Provost for Gender and Diversity, had learned (or had an indication) of my interest in a gender perspective. These interviewees were sometimes eager to inquire what I thought, for instance, of gender equality policies in academia. While I found it convenient not to have to address these questions before starting the interview per se, I noticed that even when that happened, it did not lead to interviews formatted around a gender argument. Two elements contribute, I believe, to explaining this observation. First, the biographical interview started with a broad initial question asking interviewees to share their whole life stories. This question required the interviewees to reactivate recollections, starting with their early childhood, which “distracted” them from arguments about gender equality measures. Second, when asked to engage in a “gender argument”, I readily emphasized how important it was to me to first gain

an understanding of the research participants' experiences, thus refocusing the discussion on my interest in hearing *their* stories.

Finally, as a result of the epistemological and theoretical approaches on which I relied to elaborate my research design, I did not consider the national category as one of relevance to understanding the ways in which academics' cross-border mobility and gender interplay. Consequently, defining the study population did not involve focusing on a particular national group, and my sampling strategy aimed instead to include participants reflecting a (maximum) diversity of nationalities (see Table 3.2). In the same vein, I did not focus solely on one mobility (or host) country but carried out interviews with academics in two universities in different countries, some of whom had moved to these very countries, while others were back there after transnational mobility in yet another country (see Table 3.5). Such research design makes it possible to overcome methodological nationalism and to avoid overemphasizing the importance of national and ethnic categories. This is undoubtedly an important reason why, during the interviews, I did not seem to encounter power hierarchies based on my and my research participants' national backgrounds. Indeed, as the overarching research question of this dissertation suggests, as well as the way I presented my research study to the participants, their national background was not the focus of my research interests. Some might argue that because of this research design, I may have overlooked the national category. After all, it was not a theme that I had listed among my "screening filters" for the biographical interview (3.4.1). But one can also hypothesize, I would argue, that conducting a study involving specific national categories, say, "*Italian academics in the United States*", has a performative effect on the participants. To the extent that the very design of the study insinuates that being Italian in the United States is of central interest to the researcher, one can assume that during their encounters with the researcher, the participants may want to (or feel that they have to)

position themselves according to these national categories, thus potentially overplaying nationality in the researcher-researched power relationship as well. Rather than deciding in favor of one or the other research design, I find it more important to emphasize here the necessity of transparently reflecting on the research approach adopted so that the situated dimension of the knowledge produced is made explicit, although I recognize that such a stance reflects many methodological discussions about positionality that “fail to go further than reflexivity” (Shinozaki and Osanami Törngren 2019: 2).

CHAPTER 4

Gender arrangements within mobile couples

Schaer, Martine, Dahinden, Janine & Toader, Alina (2017). Transnational mobility among early-career academics: gendered aspects of negotiations and arrangements within heterosexual couples. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Special issue on 'International Academic Mobility and Inequalities' edited by Başak Bilecen and Christof Van Mol, 43(8): 1292-1307. [doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2017.1300254](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1300254).

4.1. Foreword to the article

This first article is also the first one I wrote for my thesis. I presented the first version at the international conference “Transnational Academic Spaces” held at Bielefeld University, Germany, on March 27, 2015, shortly after my return from the second fieldwork in Los Angeles. The conference resulted in the publication of a special issue of the *Journal for Ethnic and Migration Studies*, of which this article is a part. During this process, I presented later versions of the article, first at the NCCR – LIVES Research Day “Familles transnationales” held at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, on June 19, 2015; second at the conference “Researchers Crossing Borders: Transnational Scientific Mobility” held at the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Portugal, on September 10-11, 2015.

I analyzed data from my own fieldwork (Zurich and Los Angeles) and wrote a large part of the article. Janine Dahinden, second author, discussed the findings with me on several occasions and also contributed to the writing, in particular to the theoretical part and the conclusion. Alina Toader was part of the research project team at the time.

4.2. Transnational mobility among early-career academics: gendered aspects of negotiations and arrangements within heterosexual couples

4.2.1. Introduction

Today, transnational mobility is often presented as an indispensable element in the career trajectories of young academics. In many countries, stays abroad at other universities are considered a necessary part of an academic career, the rationale being that, in order to be successful, academics must establish transnational scientific networks and broaden their academic horizons by experiencing different academic contexts (see also Bilecen and Van Mol 2017). However, the transnational mobility of young academics has important effects in terms of gender inequality within academia, and this form of mobility has a highly gendered character. Most studies conducted in this field point to the fact that women academics are less mobile than men, and the ‘imperative of mobility’ has been identified as an important factor contributing to the maintenance of gender inequality within academia (e.g. Ackers 2004; Jöns 2011). However, to date little is known about the mechanisms through which these gender inequalities are (re)produced, contested, or transformed in the context of academic transnational mobility. This paper contributes to tackling this research gap by asking how gender is articulated through the mobility patterns of young academics and, conversely, how this specific type of mobility reinforces or transforms gender relations. We address this question by focussing on the negotiations and arrangements of mobile academics and their partners in the context of their broader social environment.

We first present our theoretical lenses, followed by a short description of the methodology. At the core of the paper are three case studies that are described and analysed with regard to the gendered negotiations and arrangements within the couples. These empirical case studies highlight the complex gendered (re)configurations enacted by early-career academics and their

partners in a context of mobility. We argue that throughout the mobility trajectories, gender is 'done' and 'undone' (Deutsch 2007; West and Zimmerman 1987) by academics and their partners. As such, we identify important transformations that are taking place with regard to gender relations. Gender dynamics within mobile couples are diversifying, and they contribute to the shifting and blurring of gender boundaries, although academics and their partners are grappling with complex underlying processes related to structural issues and historically anchored gender representations. We argue that, when it comes to academic mobility, gender inequalities take on new shapes and acquire a complexity that goes beyond the 'traditional' representations of gender inequality we often find in the literature.

4.2.2. Gender and academic mobility: theoretical lenses

Despite the significant improvement in recent decades in gender equality in higher education in all European countries and beyond, women are still having difficulties in getting ahead in research careers (European Commission 2016; Le Feuvre 2015; NSF 2015). The literature interpreting the increasing gender gap in successive stages of an academic career, referred to as the 'leaky pipeline', offers two main theoretical approaches (Mason and Goulden 2002). The 'work versus family' hypothesis focuses on the effects of the institutionalisation of the sexual division of labour, which assigns women responsibility over childcare and men the role of breadwinner, thereby directly impacting academic careers. The 'glass ceiling theory' identifies patterns of overt or hidden discrimination that stands in women's way to the top. A third explanation focuses on the 'imperative of mobility' for academic career progression. Indeed, several studies indicate that the necessity of geographic mobility for academic success partly explains why women often drop out en route to top positions (e.g. Ackers 2003; 2004; Ackers and Gill 2008; Leemann 2010; Leemann and Boes 2015; van Anders 2004). Research on gender and academic mobility has shown that female academics tend to be less geographically mobile

than men. For example, Jöns (2011) observes that although the gender ratio of international scholars in the United States has been diminishing in recent decades, it still amounted to 65% men versus 35% women in the 2008–2009 academic year, suggesting that women have more difficulty in engaging in transnational mobility. Other studies depict the important impact of family ties upon the propensity for mobility. The proportion of female mobile academics starts to decline when they develop affective and family ties, while the impact of these ties is lower among men (Ackers 2003). Furthermore, married women are also less transnationally mobile than single women during the postdoc period, whereas for men no significant difference is observed (Moguérou 2004). These gender-differentiated patterns of mobility not only concern the academics as primary migrants, but also extend to their partners and families. Compared to men, female academics are more likely to be married to other academics and to experience the so-called dual-body problem, in which the partners – both confronted with a high demand for mobility – have to coordinate their career plans (McNeil and Sher 1999; Rusconi and Solga 2007). Female academics also more frequently follow their partners to a new location as so-called tied migrants (Ledin et al. 2007) without always finding a job corresponding to their qualifications and experiencing a devaluation of their scientific knowledge (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007).

However, even though these studies point to sharp gender inequalities as regards the mobility of academics, we argue that there is a need to tackle this topic further. We still do not understand the mechanisms through which these gender inequalities are produced, reproduced, or potentially transformed by transnational mobility. To provide answers to this question, we propose to link insights from migration and gender theory with the analysis of the mobility of highly skilled people.

The transnational mobility of early-career academics is generally understood as a specific type of highly skilled migration that has to be located within broader economic processes of global restructuring, such as the development of 'knowledge societies', the internationalisation of education and the standardisation of education programmes in universities (Bell 1973; Sassen 1991). Although the morphology of the movements of early-career academics is different from that of settled, unqualified migrants, we argue that it is theoretically fruitful to link it with insights from migration and gender theory (for a similar argument, see also Findlay 1996; Sondhi and King 2017).

This endeavour is important in two regards for our purposes. First, research on highly skilled migration often focuses on the workplace and on career trajectories, dealing with highly skilled migrants as if they were isolated – usually male – individuals circulating alone (Kofman and Raghuram 2005). Aside from a few recent and notable exceptions (e.g. Leung 2013; Ryan and Mulholland 2014a; Shinozaki 2014), family migration, tied migration, and larger social networks have largely been ignored in this field of study, while they have been extensively theorised and studied in the gender and migration literature. Social and family networks are considered by the latter as particularly important to understanding why people leave and with whom, who is going where, who does and does not migrate, and in which ways these processes are gendered (Boyle and Halfacree 1999; Dahinden 2010; Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Mahler and Pessar 2006). We argue that these insights can help us understand the complex gendered processes underlying the mobility pattern of academics. That is why we are interested here in couples and their negotiations and arrangements, and on how these negotiations and arrangements are linked to mobility practices.

Second, studies on highly skilled migration have been criticised for often following the model of a rational and work-oriented male that reproduces the dichotomy of the productive man and the reproductive woman. This underlying bias is not only problematic as such, but also, and more importantly, indicates that studies on highly skilled migration have not yet adequately addressed the changing role of mobile women in contemporary labour markets (Raghuram 2004). Studies tend to overwhelmingly represent women as ‘trailing wives’. By doing so, research not only neglects women’s role as primary migrants, but also reduces them to ‘passive’ followers without further investigating their life experiences as tied movers. More recently, work by Ryan and Mulholland (2014b) on highly skilled migrants in London’s financial sector has provided new insights into wives’ experiences of mobility by revealing their active role in developing new social ties.

Our argument dovetails with those recent bodies of research that explore the role of family in the strategies of highly skilled migrants and challenge a terminology that tends to reproduce gender stereotypes.

A gender perspective allows us to understand the conditions under which men and women academics potentially engage in mobility as primary migrants or tied movers, and to consider men’s and women’s practices in their diversity, attesting to the interplay of different gender representations and practices. We apply a constructivist gender perspective (Butler 1990; Lutz 2010), which maintains that gender is actively reproduced and transformed – ‘done’ and ‘undone’ (Deutsch 2007; Risman 2009; West and Zimmerman 1987) – in social practices and interactions. In other words, we focus on the interactional level and explore how academics and their partners perform gender in ways that may reproduce or challenge gender differences. By including practices that do not conform to conventional conceptions of the masculine and

the feminine, we highlight the diversity and variability of gender configurations and thus gain insight into the question of the reproduction or transformation of gender inequalities.

4.2.3. Methodology

This paper is based on a study conducted at the University of Zurich (Switzerland), the University of California, Los Angeles (U.S.A), and the University of Cambridge (UK), consisting of qualitative interviews with early-career academics and, when in a relationship, with their partners. The universities have been selected to ensure a level of diversity in terms of local and national academic contexts. Early-career academics are defined as scholars who have obtained their PhDs within the past 10 years and who hold an academic position ranging from a postdoctoral position to a tenured professorship. In total, 52 academics and 19 partners were interviewed between December 2013 and April 2015.

The three case studies presented here involve academics who moved abroad with their (opposite-sex) partners on a fixed-term contract (or fellowship) and who had not yet secured a permanent position. They were selected because they provided interesting examples of how the decision to move together was made and what effect it had on the partners. Beyond these commonalities, the case studies illustrate three different ideal types – in Weber's sense (1992 [1904]) – of mobility patterns, and they allow us to gain a better understanding of the gendered mechanisms that facilitate or constrain transnational mobility and the impact of mobility upon the couples' gender configurations.

Each case study is composed of three tape-recorded interviews: a biographical narrative interview (Rosenthal 2007) and a narrative network interview with the academic, complemented by a semi-structured interview with the partner. The interviews were conducted in English in the first two case studies and French in the third. In the latter case, the

quotations were translated to English by the authors. We applied a reconstructive and thematic data analysis strategy (Flick 2009) focussing on the couples' transnational mobility, in particular regarding the discussions they had among themselves or with other members of their social environment, their decision-making processes, the arrangements they came up with, their personal reflections regarding their common mobility, and their observations regarding its meanings. Each case was first reconstructed and analysed on its own, resulting in a particular ideal type. The cases were then compared to allow for generalisations regarding the gendered aspects of this type of mobility.

4.2.4. Results: three ideal-typical patterns of mobility

This section presents the results of the case studies one by one. Each case study starts with a brief outline of the academic's trajectory. We then examine the gender aspects of their discussions, negotiations, and arrangements with their partners in greater detail, focussing on what emerged as turning points in their common experience of mobility and highlighting the specificities of their gender configurations. The length of time between their decision to become mobile and the interviews varies between the case studies.

'From dual-career mobility to a conventional gender configuration': Leo and Elisa³⁷

Leo grew up, studied, and obtained his PhD in Switzerland. He then did a first postdoc at a Swiss university before going to the UK for a second postdoc. His wife, Elisa, is a medical doctor. She moved with him to the UK, where she worked at a university hospital. Their first child was born during their two-year stay abroad. A few years ago, they moved back to Switzerland, where they have been living since. They now have three children. Elisa works part-time in her medical specialty and Leo holds another fixed-term postdoctoral position.

³⁷ All names are fictitious, and some personal details and locations have been changed or withheld when considered necessary in order to ensure the research participants' anonymity.

The negotiations between Leo and Elisa regarding whether to go abroad were based on the core consideration that both would pursue their professional careers. Because Leo was thinking of doing a postdoc abroad after his PhD, he and his wife discussed it and were willing to move together. But Elisa had not yet completed her medical specialisation, and she considered it too early for her to move at the time because it would require her to quit her postgraduate assistantship, which she believed would have a negative impact on her career. Unwilling to leave on his own, Leo decided to delay his mobility and pursue a first postdoc in Switzerland. Because Elisa later received confirmation that work done abroad would count towards her medical specialisation title, the couple decided to move together as soon as Leo had obtained funding and finished his first postdoc. Once he got the fellowship to join a UK university, Elisa looked for a position there and found one matching her training requirements.

Leo and Elisa represent a typical case of a dual-career couple in which the partners manage to negotiate among themselves and within their respective institutional contexts in order to be mobile together while both having the possibility to pursue their professional careers. At this point, they were thinking and acting within what we could call a 'gender-equal configuration': although Leo induced the move, their mobility was organised such as not to be detrimental to Elisa's career. Beyond their willingness to negotiate together and their ability to set up an arrangement that would take into account the professional prospects of both of them, the structural context also worked in their favour. For instance, the fact that the medical association in Switzerland recognises, under certain conditions, training work done in the UK facilitated their mobility.

Leo and Elisa had their first child during their stay abroad. After a short maternity leave, Elisa went back to work part-time. They easily found a place for their child at the day-care of the

hospital where Elisa worked. Access to day-care infrastructure allowed Leo and Elisa to work and pursue their professional goals, thus illustrating the impact of structural contexts on individuals' practices – and couples' configurations. However, an asymmetric pattern anchored in the sexual division of labour and deep-seated representations regarding 'natural mothering' developed: after they had their first child, it was Elisa who reduced her work hours and combined her professional activities with her role as a parent.

After a two-year stay in the UK, Leo, Elisa, and their child moved back to Switzerland. Leo had not quite finished his research activities, and he probably could have extended his stay in the UK. But as Elisa was on unpaid leave and had to return to her job in Switzerland, Leo decided to move back as well. Finding a day-care in Switzerland turned out to be extremely difficult. Since Elisa had to work full-time and he was jobless, Leo decided to stay at home and take care of their child, postponing his job search until they had obtained a day-care spot. With Elisa as the primary earner and Leo as the primary caregiver, their family configuration after returning to Switzerland did not conform to conventional parenting roles. However, the interviews show that this configuration changed radically thereafter.

One year after returning to Switzerland, Leo started a new postdoc there. In the following years, he and Elisa had two more children. Elisa changed jobs several times, because, as she explains, she had to deal with sometimes difficult superiors in a male-dominated profession where it was hard to obtain a part-time position. Furthermore, she adds that she found herself caught in a tense situation with both Leo and with her colleagues, as her professional and family obligations conflicted with each other:

If I had to do extra hours, I asked my colleagues, 'Could I leave today? I have to pick up the kids and if I don't leave in ten minutes I'll be stuck in traffic on the

Autobahn and I'll be late', and then I have to call [Leo]: 'Can you go and get them? I'm late', and then I always got these [comments] from him and the others. [My colleagues say], 'It's always you who has to leave', and [Leo] says, 'You can't be organised; that's why I have to leave my stuff and go earlier', so I was always caught in these struggles. [Partner interview]

Eventually, Elisa obtained a part-time position in her medical specialty that allows her to better combine work and family and that she herself considers as 'actually the best option for when you have a family' [Partner interview].

We observe here that Elisa adapted her work situation to her family constraints, reducing her working time in order to free up time for her domestic obligations. As for Leo, he also considers that his life has changed as a result of having children:

Before, let's say, I was working between eleven and 13, 14 hours a day. And of course, you are completely free, you can organise yourself, it's not a problem whatsoever, you can go there over the weekend if it can speed up your experiments and stuff. And when you have a family, you better not do that anymore [laughs], because it may be that your wife doesn't agree with it. So I of course work quite a bit less, and also weekends are weekends now, so I really stay at home. [Biographical interview]

The change for Leo appears to be in that he has lost the flexibility to work long days and extra hours on weekends. However, he says that the pressure comes from his wife and he has not really adapted his work schedule in order to be more family oriented.

Leo and Elisa's current way of organising their family life is consistent with the statistical tendency in Switzerland among couples with children: the man works full-time while the

woman works part-time and takes care of the children (OFS 2014; Tettamanti 2016). Their gender configuration now follows the sexual division of labour that attributes the responsibility for domestic work to women. Elisa is well aware of this fact:

I think it's also about how you, yeah, it's still this model you have in your mind of which responsibilities belong to women and which ones belong to men, I think. His [responsibility] is to go to work and help in the evening. But get the tires changed, wash the car, inside and out, it's all my business, do the insurance, do the payments, and I have to ask him, 'Could you do this? Could you do this?' And so it's also about discussing these things as your family model changes from kid to kid, or from one life stage to another. [Partner interview]

Parenting – and not mobility – seems to have been the crucial factor, the turning point, in the changes to their gender configuration, from gender-equal to 'reversed' roles, and then to conventional gender roles within the family. The changes have come step by step, or, as Elisa says, 'from kid to kid'.

This case study exemplifies the ideal-typical pattern 'from dual-career mobility to a conventional gender configuration' in which the partners manage to maintain gender-equal arrangements in a situation of mobility as long as they do not have children. However, over their life course, it is as if hegemonic gender arrangements catch up with them. Becoming parents constitutes a turning point in that regard, as structurally anchored and internalised conventional roles resurface at this point. Structural elements such as the (un)availability of childcare facilities and external contingencies related to men's and women's jobs also contribute to enabling or hampering gender-equal arrangements (for a similar argument, see Chesley 2011).

‘Female primary mover – male tied mover’: Amy and Jeremy

Amy grew up and studied in the United States. She met her husband Jeremy in graduate school, where they both obtained PhDs. She then wanted to pursue a career in academia, while he did not. Because she obtained a two-year postdoctoral position in Switzerland, they moved to Switzerland together. They then went back to the United States and soon after, Amy’s advisor in Switzerland offered her an *Oberassistentin* position³⁸ in his department if she was willing to relocate to Switzerland. Amy and Jeremy eventually decided that she should accept. Jeremy quit his job in the United States and they both recently moved back to Switzerland.

The interviews indicate that Amy and Jeremy never tried to organise their mobility as a dual-career couple, but as couple in which the female partner’s career is given priority to the detriment of the male partner’s professional prospects. The career perceived as more constraining in terms of geographical flexibility is prioritised in the common trajectory of the couple, regardless of gender considerations. Indeed, Jeremy recalls that it was clear to both of them early on that Amy’s willingness to pursue an academic career implied being mobile, and that he would follow her:

As the relationship got serious and we started to think further ahead, it was sort of by default that we would follow wherever she went, because it’s much more difficult to have a career in academia if you are fixed, if you are, you know, stuck in one place. [Partner interview]

The interviews reveal that Amy’s professional aspirations were an important aspect of the couple’s discussions, and that their decision to move back to Switzerland was based on several considerations. First, they both realised that they would need to relocate anyway because of

³⁸ In Switzerland, an *Oberassistent-in* position is a fixed-term position as a senior teaching and research associate (see: <http://www.uniterm.uzh.ch/lists.php?char=O>, accessed 20.01.2017).

the lack of academic opportunities for Amy where they lived in the United States. Second, as Amy explained, she would have struggled to find another professional career if they had decided to stay. Third, Jeremy indicated that, overall, they were both unhappy during that period in the United States. He eventually concluded that, by going back to Switzerland, the situation would be better for at least one of them, and that it was the best option for them as a couple.

However, they both anticipated that it could be challenging for Jeremy to find a job there. Amy says she was truly concerned about Jeremy's situation as a tied mover, and she mobilised the people she knew in Switzerland to talk about it and find out about job opportunities for him. Before moving, they figured that he might be able to teach in bilingual or international high schools that wanted native English speakers.

The following spring, Amy moved back to Switzerland, joined by Jeremy a couple of months later. He had asked his employers in the United States for permission to finish his work from Switzerland, but as they refused Jeremy quit his job. Since his return to Switzerland, he has come to realise that not speaking German is a bigger obstacle to finding work as a teacher than they had expected. The interview with Jeremy indicates that the uncertainty of his professional prospects weighs heavily on him, a situation that also worries Amy:

So now we are really in the middle of a bit of crisis mode because he had given the impression that working was not so important to him, but now he's realised it's actually more important than he thought and he feels useless, and, yeah. It's a bad, bad situation to be in. [Network interview]

In other words, Amy and Jeremy are confronted with a mobility constraint often experienced by tied movers, namely their employability in the country of destination. However, in their

atypical gender configuration, in which the male partner follows his wife, the negotiations and 'gender troubles' take on a particular form.

The interviews also reveal that their social environment reacted in particular ways as regards their atypical – 'genderly undone' – configuration. Amy and Jeremy are aware that they represent a rather unusually gendered mobility pattern compared to friends and colleagues who engage in mobility, as observed here by Jeremy:

I don't think I know anyone else who has followed the wife... I am trying hard to think, but... I can't think of a single example right now, where they have followed the wife's career. [Partner interview]

Jeremy explains that, while their American friends who have completed PhDs understand the need to be mobile in order to pursue an academic career, their non-academic friends did not understand their decision to move back to Switzerland for Amy's career. One of Jeremy's best friends was particularly derogatory about their mobility decision, as Amy recounts:

I didn't have conversations with him, but I know that, based on what [Jeremy] told me, he was very, very discouraging and rather mean about the whole thing [laughs]. He said this ridiculous thing like, 'It sounds like [Amy] is just doing this for status'. [Biographical interview]

Amy also had an arduous conversation with one of her friends in the United States:

She was more like, you know, 'Your husband is here, your friends and family are here, you need to figure out something to make your life work here, rather than, you know, dragging your husband'. It was sort of like a 'you are being a bad wife' conversation [laughs], yeah, pretty sexist, really. [Biographical interview]

Even though part of this lack of understanding is probably about mobility as such – leaving the country and moving abroad – it is also marked by normative gender expectations about what men and women should do. These expectations also appear more or less implicitly in the attitudes Jeremy faced at his job when he decided to quit:

I'd never had anyone say something like, 'How could you follow your wife for her job and give up your own?' But [Amy] and I have talked about it a lot, and I think she's probably right that I wouldn't have gotten quite as much grief from [my employer] about it if I was a woman and I had said, you know, 'My husband has a great opportunity to continue this project in [Switzerland], so we are moving'. They probably would have said, 'Yeah, okay, that makes sense'. But I didn't get any of that. [Partner interview]

The attitudes and gendered representations of their social environment have in turn had an impact on how Amy and Jeremy deal with their mobility situation, even though it is difficult to tell where the pressure comes from, as Jeremy explains:

It can be really hard to tell sometimes if the pressure one feels, to go back to gender roles, is really there, or if it's all self-inflicted. Because I never viewed it like, 'Well, you know what, I made a sacrifice, I moved to Switzerland again for Amy because she loved her job, and that's okay'. Instead I always feel [...] like I've somehow failed because here I am unemployed rather than, 'Well, I was a good husband, good partner, for agreeing to come here'. And I think that that must somehow be wrapped up in being a guy [...]. I just don't know if it's all in my head or if sometimes you pick up on things from other people that they do

expect me to have a job and be the one bringing in the bread and all of that

[long pause]. [Partner interview]

This case study represents the ideal type of the ‘female primary mover – male tied mover’ mobility pattern. It exemplifies an atypical gender configuration in that it does not correspond to prevailing representations of gender relations and gender roles anchored in the broader societal context. It represents a ‘gender-troubled’ configuration: Amy and Jeremy are struggling with these gender representations, which they have internalised, and which are also expressed in their environment.

‘Male primary mover – female tied mover’: David and Miriam

David grew up and studied in France up to the master’s level. He then did a PhD in Belgium, where he met his wife Miriam, who was doing a master’s at the same university. After his PhD, he did a first postdoc in France, commuting weekly between Belgium and France for a year. He then obtained a three-year postdoctoral fellowship and is currently conducting the first part of this fellowship in the United States. Miriam quit her job in Belgium and moved with him to the United States.

When they decided whether to move abroad, David and Miriam illustrated the configuration of a couple in which one of the partners is career driven, while the other considers changing professions without having clear career prospects. As such, their mobility pattern shares similarities with the one described in the second case study, but with important differences related to gender.

The interviews reveal that the idea of being mobile initially came from David. Wanting to pursue a career in academia after his PhD, he wrote a fellowship proposal for a three-year postdoc in Belgium, including a one-year stay at a university in the United States. The idea of moving

abroad was thus in the air, but it did not result in much discussion, and David could not imagine any downsides to an experience abroad for Miriam, as he recalls:

Somehow, we didn't discuss it very much because I did not really offer her much of a choice, you know [...]. I don't know, it seemed to be such a positive experience, you know, to be able to leave [...], that I couldn't really see how it could be a problem. [Biographical interview]

As for Miriam, she recalls that, while she was surprised at first when David announced his intention to be mobile, she then came to agree that she would follow him if the opportunity arose. She also states that she really disliked the job she had before leaving and was considering shifting her professional orientation altogether. However, like Jeremy, she expresses some reluctance about being a tied mover:

But the fear of moving to the States, that was different, like, 'Ah, I will be losing my independence', because even if this job [in Belgium] was a shitty job, it allowed me to be completely, well completely, almost completely independent, you know? We were each paying a more or less equal part of the rent; I was paying a bit less because, well, also proportionally with my income, and yeah, and I had money to do what I wanted, and do my own stuff, yeah. [Partner interview]

Thus, before being mobile, both partners worked and performed the 'breadwinning' duties more or less equally. Their mobility as a couple resulted in one of the partners becoming financially dependent on the other. Miriam worries that their gender configuration, in which the male partner is the sole – or main – breadwinner, will cause her to lose her financial independence. As for David, he seems to be comfortable with their new configuration.

When Miriam arrived in the United States, she immediately applied for a work permit, as her visa status allowed her to do so. The process takes several months, and David explained that, in the meantime, Miriam could possibly find small jobs or take classes to stay busy, emphasising that there was no pressure on her to have an income. As for Miriam, she stated that the first months of their stay were really hard because she did not know what to do and experienced moments of depression. At some point, she befriended a woman working at a store that was looking for a part-time employee. Miriam jumped at the opportunity. This part-time job has allowed her to not only break out of her isolation, but also recover some financial independence:

And for me, it feels good, too, because I'm not always depending on [David]. I left with some savings, but, well, savings are gone fast. [...] I know that I depend on [David] financially, somehow, because he'll make...so he's probably always made more money than I have, but well, just being able to tell myself, 'I'm contributing, actually'. And I can go out with my girlfriends without asking [David], 'Hey, can I have some money?' [Partner interview]

When it comes to having children, David and Miriam both say they want to become parents one day. But Miriam explains that she does not feel ready yet and expresses concern at becoming a mother before finding her own professional focus and being able to support her family financially. In doing so, she resists the gendered representations of work–family arrangements presented by her former colleagues, who suggested that she take advantage of not working while in the United States to have children. As she states, she does not want her stay in the United States to be a maternity experience.

This case study exemplifies a modification of the couple's gender configuration towards asymmetrical roles between the partners in the context of mobility. It exemplifies the ideal type of the 'male primary mover – female tied mover' mobility pattern. Although their joint decision to move together did not involve difficult discussions, their gender configuration in mobility is still questioned by the female partner. While David has clear ideas about a career and expects his wife to follow him, Miriam is afraid of losing her financial independence and struggles with the idea of having a child in their new gender configuration as a mobile couple. This ideal type also demonstrates that being a female tied mover does not necessarily entail having conventional gender values, but that women might develop particular strategies in trying to get out of the dependency induced in such situations.

4.2.5. Discussion: multiple gender configurations in a context of mobility

The three case studies depict very different ways in which the academics and their partners organise their common trajectories in a situation of mobility, each case study representing a different ideal-typical pattern of how gender is entangled with mobility. Through the analysis, we have gained insight into how these gender configurations are discussed, negotiated, and (re)arranged between the partners in the context of their broader social and institutional environments. Our case studies do not entirely confirm earlier studies: mobility does not inevitably reinforce conventional gender practices. It can lead into a variety of patterns, including atypically gendered configurations.

The first ideal type, 'from dual-career mobility to a conventional gender configuration', shows how couples may successfully manage to coordinate two careers equally while engaging in mobility. However, there are some limits to this dynamic, resulting in what we could refer to as a 'rebound of convention' over time: parenting is an especially important turning point in a couple's dynamics (Yavorsky, Kamp Dush and Schoppe-Sullivan 2015). Having children – and

here that is not directly linked to mobility – can activate historically anchored representations about the partners' roles as fathers and mothers, slowly changing the gender relations within the couple towards more conventional ideas of the masculine and feminine. At the same time, the successive changes in Leo and Elisa's gender configuration point to the connection between the individual and interactional levels, on the one hand, and the wider structural environment, on the other.

The second ideal type, 'female primary mover – male tied mover', represents an unconventional gender configuration. This case study provides insight into the conditions under which women are able to move abroad as primary movers followed by their tied partners and the 'gender struggle' such an atypical configuration triggers. The male partner's dissatisfaction with his professional situation prior to mobility may be a decisive factor for the realisation of this pattern. This interpretation needs to be investigated further, but the professional 'footlooseness' of the male tied partner – either because he is unfulfilled by his job or because his work activities are geographically transferable – appears to be a critical factor in the implementation of this mobility pattern, as has been observed in other interviews and suggested by Ackers et al. (2000).

The third ideal type, 'male primary mover – female tied mover', is a more widespread pattern of tied mobility than the second. It has often been emphasised in the literature on highly skilled mobility and resulted in terms such as 'trailing wife' and 'sacrificed wife' (Raghuram 2004). However, we argue that without considering the tied partner's experience or the negotiations within the couple, an important research gap remains. The results here shed light on the subjective experiences of female tied movers and on the mechanisms at work in this situation. We observe that this pattern is not implemented without resistance from the female tied

partner, resistance that in turn questions gender representations that reproduce the dualism between paid and unpaid work, productive and reproductive labour.

Moreover, several crosscutting elements emerge from the case studies. First, mobility can trigger a transformation in a couple's gender dynamics and cause the partners to rearrange their gender configuration more asymmetrically in a way that favours the career of the primary mover at the expense of that of the tied partner. In this regard, the structural context in which mobility unfolds contributes to shaping partners' personal and professional experiences. This context includes regulatory and social hurdles such as visa and work-permit requirements, the recognition of credentials and qualifications, and language needs, and their impact varies depending on the national or local contexts and on individual circumstances (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007). The case studies show that not speaking the language might jeopardise the partner's ability to enter the local job market, whereas mutual recognition of credentials and qualifications across countries facilitates a partner's ability to move together with a primary mover in an egalitarian configuration. These structural factors impact tied movers regardless of their gender. Second, these gender configurations are an object of discussion and negotiation among the couples and within their social environments. We have observed some 'gender trouble' as the academics or their partners expressed their discomfort, annoyance, or struggle regarding certain aspects of the gender arrangements in which they are engaged. Third, depending on who follows whom, the discourses differ. Depending on their gender, primary movers express different feelings and attitudes regarding their tied partners' experience of difficulties. Men can adopt a rather protective – paternalistic – attitude towards their female partners' following them, whereas women can express concern – and even guilt – about their male partners doing the same. These different attitudes can be interpreted as gendered expressions of feelings, which are a reflection of deep-seated conventional gender

representations. Such an interpretation is confirmed by other interviews and by research on highly skilled mobility (Shinozaki 2014). Finally, it is important to note that social environments are gendered, which in turn has an impact on the actors and enables or constrains the couples' negotiations and arrangements. Indeed, couples that develop atypically gendered mobility patterns – female primary mover and male tied mover – have to struggle against deep-seated gender representations that they have internalised and are confronted with externally. Stereotyped ideas about the masculine and the feminine – a useless man (because he is not working) and an over-ambitious woman (because she pursues her career) – are real challenges for such couples and can hamper their attempts to enact 'genderly undone' arrangements. In a similar vein, the social environment might reduce a female tied mover to her potential role as mother – given that she is not working – and she might have to struggle against such representations.

4.2.6. Conclusion: Are gender relations shifting towards less inequality?

Drawing on three case studies, this paper focuses on the gendered negotiations and arrangements of mobile couples and explores how gender is 'done' and 'undone' by the academics and their partners throughout their mobility trajectories. Applying such a 'doing' and 'undoing' gender approach (Deutsch 2007; Risman 2009; West and Zimmerman 1987) has allowed us to emphasise the importance of social interactions and provided us with a theoretical framework that makes it possible to explore the diversity of couple configurations, including atypically gendered configurations that challenge prevailing representations of the masculine and the feminine.

By depicting how gender is 'done' and 'undone' within couples and how these couples' negotiations and arrangements are enabled and constrained by the structural context and gendered societal expectations, we have shed light on individuals' resistance to or struggles

against the gender arrangements they set up as a couple. We have also shed light on individuals' discourses and attitudes, which vary according to their gender. Gender relations are dynamic, and this approach has enabled us to grasp the variability of gender arrangements over time. Indeed, mobility may represent a moment of transition in a couple's trajectory. However, we have shown that (re)arranged gender configurations do point to a variety of patterns. As such, our findings suggest that the causal connection between the mobility requirement and the leaky pipeline is not as clear as other research has indicated, but rather show that important transformations with regard to gender relations are occurring and that mobility does not inevitably reinforce conventional gender practices. Nonetheless, becoming parents stands out as a key turning point in a couple's configuration: it can cause the partners to conform more closely to 'traditional' conceptions of motherhood and fatherhood. Several authors (e.g. Deutsch 2007; Risman 2009) have highlighted the importance of the structural level in the process of doing and undoing gender. Change at the interactional level may be influenced by change at the structural level and, conversely, change at the interactional level has the potential to translate into structural change (Chesley 2011). Our results confirm the connection between these two levels, but the ways in which these levels are entangled needs to be investigated further.

Overall, our findings fit into larger debates on gender inequality. Some scholars have argued that progress towards gender equality has stalled (England 2010) and that, despite the many changes in how gender is enacted at the individual and interactional levels, the overall structure of social life has remained unchanged (Lorber 2000). In this regard, this paper supports the view that mobile academics and their partners engage in diversified gender practices, follow multiple gender conceptions, and sometimes challenge some gender conceptions while contesting or resisting others. As gender relations within couples change, female academics

also engage in mobility as primary movers followed by tied partners. Conversely, male academics might also increasingly face reluctance from their female partners in following them, blurring the gender boundaries between men and women. However, these dynamics require further investigation, for instance by including other ideal-typical gender configurations, such as 'partners living apart', 'commuting primary mover', and 'commuting tied mover'. This further investigation would make it possible to deepen our understanding of the articulation between gender relations and academic mobility.

4.2.7. References

- Ackers, Louise. 2003. *Managing Work and Family Life in Peripatetic Careers : the Experiences of Mobile Women Scientists in the EU*. Leeds: Centre for the Study of Law and Policy in Europe, University of Leeds.
- . 2004. "Managing Relationships in Peripatetic Careers : Scientific Mobility in the European Union." *Women's Studies International Forum* 27(3):189-201.
- Ackers, Louise, and Bryony Gill. 2008. *Moving People and Knowledge : Scientific Mobility in an Enlarging European Union*. Cheltenham [etc.]: E. Elgar.
- Ackers, Louise, Debbie Millard, Heloisa Perista, Isabel Baptista, Vera Gustafsson, and Martha Blomqvist. 2000. *The Participation of Women Researchers in the TMR Marie Curie Fellowships*. [S.l.]: [s.n.].
- Bell, Daniel. 1973. *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bilecen, Başak, and Christoph Van Mol. 2017. "Introduction: International Academic Mobility and Inequalities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1241-55.
- Boyle, Paul, and Keith Halfacree (Eds.). 1999. *Migration and Gender in the Developed World*. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Chesley, Noelle. 2011. "Stay-at-home Fathers and Breadwinning Mothers : Gender, Couple Dynamics, and Social Change." *Gender and Society* 25(5):642-64.
- Dahinden, Janine. 2010. "Are you who you know? : A network perspective on ethnicity, gender and transnationalism : Albanian-speaking migrants in Switzerland and returnees in Kosovo." Pp. 127-47 in *Identity Processes and Dynamics in Multi-Ethnic Europe*, edited by Charles Westin, José Bastos, Janine Dahinden, and Pedro Góis. [Amsterdam] Amsterdam University Press.
- Deutsch, Francine M. 2007. "Undoing Gender." *Gender and Society* 21(1):106-27.

- England, Paula. 2010. "The Gender Revolution : Uneven and Stalled." *Gender and Society* 24(2):149-66.
- European Commission. 2016. *She Figures 2015*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Findlay, Allan M. 1996. "Skilled International Migration : a Research Agenda." Pp. 285-93 in *Geography and migration*, edited by Vaughan Robinson. Cheltenham [etc.]: E. Elgar.
- Flick, Uwe. 2009. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Jöns, Heike. 2011. "Transnational Academic Mobility and Gender." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 9(2):183-209.
- Kofman, Eleonore, and Parvati Raghuram. 2005. "Gender and skilled migrants : into and beyond the work place." *Geoforum* 36:149-54.
- . 2015. *Gendered Migrations and Global Social Reproduction*. Basingstoke [etc.]: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Le Feuvre, Nicky. 2015. *Contextualizing Women's Academic Careers in Cross-National Perspective*. Trento: University of Trento.
- Ledin, Anna, Lutz Bornmann, Frank Gannon, and Gerlind Wallon. 2007. "A Persistent Problem : Traditional Gender Roles Hold Back Female Scientists." *EMBO Reports* 8(11):982-87.
- Leemann, Regula Julia. 2010. "Gender Inequalities in Transnational Academic Mobility and the Ideal Type of Academic Entrepreneur." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):609-25.
- Leemann, Regula Julia, and Stefan Boes. 2015. "Transnational Academic Mobility from the Perspective of Gender Inequality: Researcher Flows and Knowledge Construction in Europe." Pp. 201-20 in *Shaping of European Education: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, edited by Martin Lawn and Romuald Normand. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Leung, Maggi W.H. 2013. "'Read Ten Thousand Books, Walk Ten Thousand Miles' : Geographical Mobility and Capital Accumulation among Chinese Scholars." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38(2):311-24.
- Lorber, Judith. 2000. "Using Gender to Undo Gender : A Feminist Degendering Movement." *Feminist Theory* 1(1):79-95.
- Lutz, Helma. 2010. "Gender in the Migratory Process." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36(10):1647-63.
- Mahler, Sarah J., and Patricia R. Pessar. 2006. "Gender Matters: Ethnographers Bring Gender from the Periphery toward the Core of Migration Studies." *International Migration Review* 40(1):27-63.
- Mason, Mary Ann, and Marc Goulden. 2002. "Do Babies Matter ? The Effect of Family Formation on the Lifelong Careers of Academic Men and Woman." *Academe* 88(6):21-27.
- McNeil, Laurie, and Marc Sher. 1999. "Dual-Science-Career Couples : Survey Results." Accessed January 20, 2017. <http://www.physics.wm.edu/~sher/survey.pdf>.

- Mogu  rou, Philippe. 2004. *A Double Gender-Family Inequality Phenomenon in the International Mobility of Young Researchers*. Dijon: IREDU.
- NSF. 2015. *Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering 2015*. Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation.
- OFS. 2014. *ESPA en bref 2013 : l'enqu  te suisse sur la population active*. Neuch  tel: Office f  d  ral de la statistique.
- Raghuram, Parvati. 2004. "The Difference that Skills Make : Gender, Family Migration Strategies and Regulated Labour Markets." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(2):303-21.
- Ria  o, Yvonne, and Nadia Baghdadi. 2007. "Understanding the Labour Market Participation of Skilled Immigrant Women in Switzerland : The Interplay of Class, Ethnicity and Gender." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 8(2):163-83.
- Risman, Barbara J. 2009. "From Doing to Undoing : Gender as We Know It." *Gender and Society* 23(1):81-84.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2007. "Biographical Research." Pp. 48-64 in *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber F. Gubrium, and David Silverman. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Rusconi, Alessandra, and Heike Solga. 2007. "Determinants of and Obstacles to Dual Careers in Germany." *Zeitschrift f  r Familienforschung* 19(3):311-36.
- Ryan, Louise, and Jon Mulholland. 2014a. "Trading Places : French Highly Skilled Migrants Negotiating Mobility and Emplacement In London." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40(4):584-600.
- . 2014b. "'Wives Are the Route to Social Life' : An Analysis of Family Life and Networking amongst Highly Skilled Migrants in London." *Sociology* 48(2):251  67.
- Sassen, Saskia. 1991. *The Global City. New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Shinozaki, Kyoko. 2014. "Career Strategies and Spatial Mobility among Skilled Migrants in Germany : The Role of Gender in the Work-Family Interaction." *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 105(5):526-41.
- Sondhi, Gundjan, and Russell King. 2017. "Gendering International Student Migration: An Indian Case-Study." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
- Tettamanti, Manuel. 2016. "Devenir parent en Suisse: une situation paradoxale ?" Pp. 109-29 in *Devenir parents, devenir in  gaux: transition    la parentalit   et in  galit  s de genre*, edited by Jean-Marie Le Goff and Ren   Levy. Zurich [etc.]: Seismo.
- van Anders, Sari M. 2004. "Why the Academic Pipeline Leaks : Fewer Men than Women Perceive Barriers to Becoming Professors." *Sex Roles* 51(9/10):511-21.
- Weber, Max. 1992 [1904]. "L'objectivit   de la connaissance dans les sciences et la politique sociales." Pp. 117-201 in *Essais sur la th  orie de la science*, edited by Max Weber. Paris: Presses pocket.
- West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender and Society* 1(2):125-51.

Yavorsky, Jill E., Claire M. Kamp Dush, and Sarah J. Schoppe-Sullivan. 2015. "The Production of Inequality : The Gender Division of Labor Across the Transition to Parenthood." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77(3):662-79.

CHAPTER 5

Mobility fatigue and academic precarity

Schaer, Martine (in revision). “From mobility attractiveness to mobility fatigue: The impact of repeated transnational mobility on the lives and aspirations of early-career academics” A revised version of this paper has to be resubmitted to *Population, Space and Place* by July 27, 2021.

5.1. Foreword to the article

I presented the first version of this article at the EASA 2018 Biennial Conference held on August 14-17 at Stockholm University, Sweden, to which I was invited as a keynote speaker at the “Early Career Scholars Forum”. I gave a similar presentation at the NCCR – On The Move Research Day “La mobilité des chercheur/se-s: genre et classes sociales” held on March 28, 2019, at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

This is the revised version that I resubmitted to *Population, Space and Place* on October 31, 2020, and for which I have been asked to submit further revisions by July 27, 2021.

5.2. From mobility attractiveness to mobility fatigue: The impact of repeated transnational mobility on the lives and aspirations of early-career academics

5.2.1. Introduction

Academic mobility has increased significantly over the past few decades (Bilecen and Van Mol 2017), and neoliberal policies in academia have placed increasing pressure on early-career academics to remain flexible, mobile, and competitive (Münch 2014). While academics sometimes engage in cross-border mobility to take permanent positions, in the early stages of

their career such mobility usually involves fixed-term positions or fellowships, which academics accept in order to improve their curriculum vitae and remain competitive in their pursuit of stable employment.

Over the last decade, these changes and their effects on the lives of academics, in particular those in early career stages, have become increasingly debated by academics themselves, often drawing on the notion of precarity or its older cognate precariousness (Loher and Strasser 2019). So far, however, empirical studies on academic precarity have paid only marginal attention to the role of transnational mobility on academics' experiences of precarity. This paper contributes to recent discussions on academic precarity by providing insights into how early-career academics' experiences of precarity are produced within the context of their transnational career trajectories.

Furthermore, research on the mobility of academics and other so-called knowledge workers has long concentrated on macro-questions of brain-drain and brain-gain, tending to conceive of individuals' brains as resources pertaining to nation-states, which can gain or lose them (Fahey and Kenway 2010). At the micro-level, these qualified movers are still too often considered rational (male) individuals who make decisions and move alone, while neglecting their individual biographies, families, and wider social contexts. As scholars have noted, there is a need to understand academics' mobility experiences in a more encompassing manner (e.g. Kofman and Raghuram 2005). Academics engaging in mobility are not only embedded in academic contexts and career processes. Their mobility also involves other domains of their lives. Mobility intersects with biographical, social, and structural circumstances, as well as gendered dynamics. This paper attempts to understand how academics articulate competing aspirations and demands pertaining to the different domains of their lives in a context of

transnational mobility, what trade-offs they are prepared to make, and what compromises they are willing to implement.

To understand these issues, I explore the subjective experiences of academics who have moved across borders for academic purposes several times, and I focus on three case studies that include biographical and qualitative network interviews with academics and, in one case, a semi-structured interview with a partner.

I first present the theoretical background before describing the methodology. The trajectories of three academics provide descriptive inputs that I analyze with regard to the opportunities and constraints these academics faced while developing their careers across borders. I discuss how their mobility affected their everyday lives, paying special attention to biographical, social, and structural circumstances. The analysis demonstrates that the repetitive nature of mobility associated with fixed-term appointments is a significant aspect of academic precarity, and that academics believe that the repeated effort and sacrifice involved often do not lead to academic stability.

5.2.2. Conceptualizing cross-border mobility in neoliberal academia

Over the past few decades, the academic world has become increasingly transnationalized and competitive, undergoing major transformations that have affected academic work and employment conditions and, in turn, the living conditions of academic scholars (Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019; Enders and Musselin 2008). Two aspects of these transformations are particularly relevant to this paper – the rise of temporary employment and the imperative of mobility as essential to an academic career.

Academic fixed-term (and part-time) positions are on the rise in many countries, and stable employment is becoming scarcer in comparison (Bryson 2004; Enders and Musselin 2008;

Gallas 2018; Gill 2014; Goastellec and Pekari 2014; Singer 2004). With the crisis of the welfare state in the 1990s, and under pressure to reduce costs, universities have hired growing numbers of temporary staff, a more flexible and less remunerated workforce whose employment conditions often do not include social benefits (Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019: 20). This is notable in the US academic system, for instance, where the increased need for teaching staff due to the massification of higher education has largely been handed over to adjunct (non-tenure-track) faculty and part-time instructors hired on temporary contracts (Enders and Musselin 2008; Gallas 2018). But the proliferation of temporary positions is also due to the increase in third-party funding, which has led to the rise of project-based research positions (Enders and Musselin 2008; Fumasoli and Goastellec 2015). Switzerland is a telling example of this trend: there, the rise of fixed-termed and research-only positions has led to the emergence of a “postdoc bubble” (Bataille, Le Feuvre and Kradolfer Morales 2017).

At the same time, transnational mobility is increasingly presented as indispensable to a successful academic career. As a result of the widespread emphasis on the enriching nature of (transnational) mobility and the concomitant discrediting of local careers in academic policies and circles, mobility has come to represent professional and symbolic capital formally or informally required for a career in academia (Ackers 2008; Enders and Musselin 2008). Many early-career academics, urged by the normative imperative of mobility, thus engage in cross-border mobility in order to gain “international experience” (Leemann and Boes 2015; Morano-Foadi 2005). As Jöns (2007) has argued, the mobility imperative varies across countries and disciplines. In Switzerland, for instance, one is very unlikely to secure a professorship without having been abroad, especially in the natural sciences. In the United States, in contrast, the mobility imperative does not so much pertain to transnational mobility as to inter-institutional mobility. Furthermore, academic careers typically involve an unstable phase consisting of fixed-

term positions. This “probationary” period, as Le Feuvre and colleagues (2020) refer to it, has become longer, and many young academics engage in transnational mobility as they move from one fixed-term position to the next, following job opportunities within an academic marketplace that is increasingly transnationalized, competitive, and unpredictable (Ackers and Oliver 2007; Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019). As these observations suggest, academic mobility is an integral part of academic careers on normative grounds – one must gain international experience – as well as structural grounds – one must take job opportunities where they arise. Academics are thus pressured to be on the move, sometimes repeatedly and at high personal cost.

While academics are in a privileged position relative to other workers, and while their working and living conditions may differ significantly among them and across countries, for the last 20 years their experiences have been increasingly apprehended through the lens of precarity (e.g. Gill 2010; Ivancheva 2015; Loher and Strasser 2019; Murgia and Poggio 2019; Peacock 2016; Pérez and Montoya 2018). Precarity – economic uncertainty and its impact on other social realms – is often presented as a new and increasingly widespread phenomenon. Yet, as Neilson and Rossiter (2008) have demonstrated, precarity has in fact been the norm across time and space, and job security was an exception that characterized Western states in the postwar era. While the presumed normality of job security (and of Fordist and Keynesian labor relations) is a socio-historical construct, Loher and Strasser (2019) have convincingly argued that it is nonetheless an integral part of precarity as a subjective experience. Normality provides a geographically and historically situated reference on which individuals – themselves differently positioned – may draw when they interpret their own life experiences. Drawing on Loher and Strasser’s theoretical contribution, I consider precarity a useful concept through which to analyze the connections between academics’ subjective experiences of instability and

unpredictability, on the one hand, and the broader institutional and structural contexts in which they are embedded, and which may depart to a greater or lesser degree from their expectations of normality, on the other.

Whereas scholars have begun exploring the connection between precarity and people's experiences of (transnational) mobility (Cangià 2018; Paret and Gleeson 2016; Wyss 2019), scholarship on academic precarity at best mentions the effects of mobility in passing. Mobility and its contribution to precarious experiences in academia have not yet been investigated empirically, and there is a lack of understanding of the interconnection between mobility and precarity in this realm. This paper contributes to filling this gap and approaches academics' transnational experiences from a mobilities perspective (Urry 2007). By conceptualizing mobility as an element of social differentiation and inequality, mobilities studies have shown that mobility is an important asset in many circumstances (e.g. Moret 2016) and that its uneven distribution among different categories of people has stratifying effects (Cresswell 2010; Sheller 2011). While these are undeniably important findings, mobility studies have been criticized for overly emphasizing the positive effects of mobility, sometimes blinded by a romanticized view of mobility, and failing to recognize its potential downsides. In her study about migrants with a precarious legal status in Europe, Wyss (2019) has demonstrated the ambiguous nature of mobility, showing how ongoing mobility enables migrants to avoid detention or deportation while simultaneously preventing them from accessing support services, adding more instability to their already precarious living conditions. In light of these results, Wyss pleads for more empirical research that investigates both sides of the mobility coin – the benefits *and* the inconveniences it may entail.

Scholars have also criticized the narrow focus on the workplace and career-related contexts that researchers often adopt when investigating the mobility of so-called highly skilled (usually male) individuals, thereby neglecting their families and wider social networks (Kofman and Raghuram 2005; Shinozaki 2014). In other words, these studies view these mobile professionals as economic agents rather than “active social and political agents, negotiating, interpreting, contesting their social worlds” (Robertson 2010: 5-6). Furthermore, when studies on academics and other qualified workers do extend their focus beyond work-related aspects, they tend to relegate family and domestic matters to the realm of the feminine and consider women only as “trailing wives” (Shinozaki 2014). Researchers have only recently started to acknowledge the changing role of mobile women (and men) in contemporary labor markets, and to investigate the diversity of arrangements implemented by individuals on the move (including female primary movers and male tied-movers) as they try to coordinate the different dimensions of their lives with each other, and with those of their loved ones (Raghuram 2004; Shinozaki 2014; author 2017).

Gender inequality in academia is not a new phenomenon. Female academics continue to face disproportionate difficulties in advancing their careers and remain largely underrepresented in top academic positions in many countries. Indeed, the “probationary” period, during which many early-career scholars are pushed out of academia, affects women more negatively than men (European Commission 2019; OECD 2019). In his study on the impact of fixed-term employment on academics in the United Kingdom, Bryson (2004) found that female academics have more difficulty in transitioning to more secure positions, notably because women’s competences are undervalued and they receive fewer opportunities and less support. Female academics have also been shown to be less mobile than their male counterparts, especially when they are engaged in stable relationships or have parental responsibilities (Ackers and Gill

2008; Jöns 2011; Leemann and Boes 2015; Netz and Jaksztat 2017). Mobility has thus been interpreted as contributing to the difficulties of reconciling competing imperatives associated with productive and reproductive work and affecting women more than men (Krais 2002; Leemann and Boes 2015). However, as Bataille and colleagues (2017: 326) have observed, male and female postdocs' decisions about whether to pursue an academic career do not result in a clear divide between "work-committed men who stay and succeed in the academy and care-committed women who leave and 'leak.'"

This paper lies at the convergence of these different debates. It investigates how academics' subjective experiences of repeated mobility are affected by wider historical, social, and political contexts, by their family relationships and their wider social embeddedness, and by their particular life stories and biographical circumstances. In so doing, it examines the different effects of mobility as well as the diverse and evolving practices of actors in a context of mobility.

5.2.3. Methodology

The case studies at the core of this paper are part of a larger study that includes qualitative interviews conducted with early-career academics at the University of Zurich (Switzerland) and the University of California, Los Angeles (USA) between December 2013 and April 2015. I interviewed academics who had obtained their Ph.D. within the previous ten years, held an academic position (at any level, from postdoc to professor), and had moved abroad at least once after their Ph.D. I met twice with each of them – the first time for a biographical interview (Rosenthal 2007) and the second for a qualitative network interview (Dahinden 2005). When the academics were in a relationship, and if they and their partners agreed, I conducted semi-structured interviews with partners as well. Furthermore, I interviewed a few academics who had not been transnationally mobile after their Ph.D. in order to gain insights into their

biographical and career trajectories as well. All interviews were tape recorded and fully transcribed.

I have adopted a case-study approach (Zittoun 2017) to analyze the subjective experiences of three academics who engaged in repeated transnational mobility while pursuing their academic careers. Such an approach makes it possible to investigate mobility in the overall context of the interviewees' lives rather than as discrete episodes, and to reconstruct the processes that led interviewees to become mobile and how their experiences of mobility further developed in different contexts. Three case studies were selected as emblematic examples of the growing tendency among young academics to undertake successive cross-border mobility episodes, especially in the early stages of their career. Together, these case studies condense the broad spectrum of issues that emerged from the interviews, while at the same time highlighting different forms of instability and precarity. I first reconstructed single cases based on the biographical and network interviews with the academics, complemented, in one case, by a semi-structured interview with the partner. I next analyzed the cases separately and then compared their results with each other and in light of the other interviews conducted as part of this study (Flick 2018).³⁹

5.2.4. Between precarity and privilege: Three academics

The portraits present the trajectories of academics who experienced several episodes of cross-border mobility. In their most recent cross-border move, two of them moved to take up short-term (one-year) postdoctoral positions, the third one to take up a (tenured) professorship.

³⁹ The interviews were conducted in English or French. In the following, I have translated the quotations in French into English. People's names are fictitious, and the names of institutions and locations, as well as the academics' disciplinary fields, have been withheld in order to ensure research participants' anonymity.

Marie's laid-back experience of academic uncertainties and living-apart arrangements, but with shifting priorities

Marie is from France. After her master's, she conducted several brief and poorly paid research assignments in different countries and continents before moving to Austria for her Ph.D. Luc, her now husband, was willing to join her in Austria. However, his limited German was a serious obstacle to his finding a job there, and he decided to pursue his career in France instead, and later, temporarily, in Japan. After her Ph.D., Marie had the opportunity to move to the United States for a postdoc. The United States appeared to Marie and Luc an ideal destination because Luc would be able to integrate into the labor market right away. Luc's multinational corporation in France was willing to transfer him to its US branch. Unfortunately, shortly before Marie's departure, Luc's company unexpectedly renounced its offer to transfer him because of the costs and administrative burden associated with his visa. Because Marie's initial appointment was for only one year, they decided it was not worth it for Luc to start the lengthy process of applying for the visa he could obtain as a dependent of Marie. He stayed in France, and he later moved to the UK, where he had accepted a new position. When I met Marie, she was finishing her postdoc, which had been extended in the meantime. She was about to join Luc in the UK and hoped that she might find another postdoc there. Although she had not heard back from the universities she had approached, she was hopeful about the possibility of reuniting with her husband while pursuing their careers.

Marie and Luc both described their past and future possible moves in positive terms despite the repeated disappointment of not having been able to move together. Marie also appeared to tolerate the instability and insecurity associated with an academic career path rather well. When I asked her whether, before starting her Ph.D., she had been concerned about needing to move from one short-term research job to the next, she answered:

No, because it was really cool [laughs]. I traveled all over Northern Europe, Austria, South Africa. No, the benefits far outweighed [the disadvantages].

(Biographical interview)

The fact that those jobs were poorly paid did not worry Marie, nor did she seem annoyed that her current university did not reimburse her moving expenses to the United States, in spite of what her fellowship stipulated:

\$2,000 from the fellowship was assigned for my moving costs. [...] I could have asked for that money when I arrived, but I didn't have an invoice amounting to \$2,000. And they are very, very complicated about reimbursing expenses here. In the end, the money was spent [on lab supplies]. [...] In October I'll stop getting paid, and [my advisor] will pay for my rent instead. I mean, the money, I won't see it [...], but, on the other hand, in October I won't be spending my own savings.

(Network interview)

Marie's stay in the United States caused her to lose certain benefits in France, including unemployment benefits. She said that she worried about anything serious happening to her, as she would soon find herself without health insurance as a result of being between jobs (and between countries). But on various occasions, and although she did mention a number of "disillusionments" about her academic environment, Marie made clear that she was not particularly worried about her professional and financial situation:

I follow opportunities. I never had a plan such as "within the next ten years, I have to become at least an assistant professor." No, I don't have that ambition. My ambition is to enjoy what I do, to enjoy where I am and the people I work with. I

didn't become a scientist to make money [laughs]. I would have chosen something else. (Biographical interview)

Marie had so far invested her passion and effort into her academic career. However, she believed that she might do something completely different in the future:

Maybe in ten years we'll meet again and I'll own a bakery. I don't know. You asked me about my life story, well, my mother changed professions 15 times. My father, in contrast, always had a steady job. [... But] she could have supported [my siblings and me] without my father's income. (Biographical interview)

Luc stated that he had tried to develop an "international career" once he realized that Marie's career would require her to be repeatedly mobile, because he was not willing to renounce his own professional prospects:

It's highly unlikely that [Marie] will come back to France, at least in the near future. [...] She spends a few years here, a few years there, and so on. And, well, I wasn't ready to sacrifice my career for her, just as I wouldn't ask her to sacrifice her career for me. So the goal was to become as mobile as possible in order to be able to follow her if necessary. (Partner interview)

Although both said that they enjoyed being on the move, they also stated that from then on, they wished to move together, as a couple, as Marie indicated:

Let's say, from [ages] 20 to 30, it was career first and family second. And now.... Well, people tell me, "Yeah, it's because you want to have kids." I say, "No, I want to be able to ask myself whether or not I want kids." Right now, I can't raise that question. So maybe I won't have kids, but it will be my choice, it won't be imposed on me. (Biographical interview)

Marie also referred to her grandparents' experience to put her own experience into perspective:

[They] were 40 years old when they married, and they were between 40 and 45 when they had children. So sometimes I say to myself, "Well, there's no hurry!"

[Laughs] (Biographical interview)

Marie and Luc were a particularly enthusiastic tandem as regards their mobile lifestyle, even though it implied substantial compromises. Luc oriented his career in order to be able to follow Marie in her moves. Marie emphasized that she wanted to be able to determine whether she wanted children or not, a situation she did not consider herself to be in at the time. Moreover, while she appeared highly invested in her academic life, the prospect of doing something completely different in the future did not seem to worry her.

Marc's fatigue regarding the personal costs of his mobility, and his determination to limit further compromises for his career

Marc grew up and studied in France up to the master's level. Motivated by a professor and his own aspirations for a different experience, he moved to the United States for his Ph.D. He then moved to Switzerland, where, for five years, he worked as a postdoc on yearly contracts before obtaining a senior research and teaching position, a fixed-term appointment he was about to start when I met him. His mobility experiences, he felt, had heavily affected his personal life. Following his move to the United States, his relationship with his partner in France deteriorated and they broke up. When he later moved to Switzerland, Marc's new partner in the United States looked for a position in Switzerland. She found a position in Germany, which made the distance between them shorter but still required a long-distance relationship. Adding to the geographical separation, the instability and unpredictability of his academic career led to their separation:

The typical career path [after the Ph.D.] is to do postdocs for two, three, maybe four years [...], change countries, change topics, leave. [...] It's very uncommon to stay at the same place, so there's always this Sword of Damocles. [...] It's a combination of circumstances that makes things more difficult [in a relationship]. In this case, I think the uncertainty, the fact that one always had short-term contracts, didn't help. (Biographical interview)

Over time, this contractual precarity began to weigh heavily:

[My postdoc] was one of these extendable positions in which your contract is renewed on an ad hoc basis. [...] They renewed it every year, but each time for only one year. [...] When I started, I was 28, I didn't care that it was for one year, it didn't matter. It would last a year, and afterwards, if it was over, I'd still have time to find something else. I'd leave, go elsewhere, find something else. But now I'm older, and I'm tired of it. I don't see things from the same angle anymore. (Biographical interview)

Contractual precarity also affected practical, otherwise trivial, aspects of everyday life:

It even makes daily life more complicated, small things like, for instance, "Do I sign for a two-year cell phone plan, or for only one year?", "Do I buy a half-price train pass for two years, or for one?" And then you also have to lie because it's hard to find a flat [here], I guess like in many cities in Switzerland, and I always lied to the landlords, saying, "No, it's okay, I have a permanent job." [...] Otherwise, I wouldn't obtain the flat, they wouldn't give it to me. So it's small things like these that are hard. (Biographical interview)

Marc stated that his disappointment in an academic career developed only gradually:

There was a crisis when my ex-partner, who was American, left. That was a catalyst; I was fed up with sacrificing everything. At the same time, the pay is good here, that's not the problem. But we work a lot, a lot of hours, and we don't get paid for overtime, we have fixed wages. We devote a lot of personal time to this career and we get little in return. I don't know, it came step by step, little by little. And now I'm at the point where I don't feel like making sacrifices anymore. I just want a stable situation, because as a postdoc, even with hard work, I might not find something afterwards. It's kind of a lottery. I'm aware that it can all stop.

(Biographical interview)

Having shifted, as he said, from "I absolutely want to have an academic career" to "I want to quit," Marc explained that he had now established clear limits to how much he would sacrifice to stay in academia:

If within the next few years, let's say five years, I don't find a [stable] position in academia, it's time to move on, to think about something else. For now, I don't have a strategy, or the strategy is to try to make it work, while setting a limit. [...] A friend of mine goes from one job to the next, he's a postdoc, he's the same age as me, and for the last three years he's only been getting very short jobs, short contracts, a few months here, a few months there. [...] I say to myself, "If this is it, it's not what I want." If things start going in that direction, like, "I have a job for three months, I need to find another job for a few months," just to, he has children, so just to feed his kids, no, it's over, I need to find something more stable.

(Biographical interview)

Marc also felt himself stagnating, both personally and professionally, compared to his non-academic friends:

They got married, they're having children, they have a stable situation, they work in companies in which their careers advance. And I really have the feeling that I've remained at the same level during that time. As for self-image, postdoc.... I've been a postdoc for six years, and I'm going nowhere. (Biographical interview)

Under such circumstances, Marc found it overly difficult to reconcile continuing in academia and engaging in further mobility, on the one hand, with his desire to found a family, on the other:

Now, I'm at a point in my career, but above all in my life, when I would like to settle down, also maybe start a family, things like that. And starting a family and having to move to other countries to pursue an academic career, I don't think those things are compatible. [...] Having an academic career isn't something I want 100 percent anymore. I now have other priorities. (Biographical interview)

Marc was now living with his new partner in Switzerland, and he emphasized that he did not want mobility to jeopardize this relationship as well:

I don't want to have to leave again and screw things up [laughs], because it happens once, that's okay, it happens. But it's happened to me several times, and I think that's enough. I've learned my lesson! (Biographical interview)

Marc repeatedly experienced how difficult it could be to reconcile a mobile academic career with one's personal life. His account illustrates the heavy price that mobility can impose on personal relationships, and he concluded that, from then on, he would prefer to refuse another

cross-border move and preserve his relationship, even if doing so required him to leave academia altogether.

Lisa's ambivalence about her academic success involving costly family arrangements, but taking time before deciding

Lisa is from Germany, where she studied up to the master's degree. She began participating in exchange programs abroad in high school. She moved to Switzerland for her Ph.D. and met her now husband, Ralph, during an internship in Germany. At different times during and after her Ph.D., she could have accepted jobs outside academia and opted for a different career. Yet, as she emphasized, she consciously decided to pursue a career in academia:

I felt like I chose this option, in also knowing that it produces a lot of uncertainty and risk. [...] But it was my own choice, and I felt that made it much easier for me to live with this risk and uncertainty. I mean, of course I've also been very lucky, I haven't really had much of the downsides of the risk and all that. (Biographical interview)

Although she applied for a long list of jobs over the years, she indicated that she only considered positions that interested her and was not ready to stay in academia at any cost:

I always felt there was a limit to what I'm willing to do. I will not teach for €200 a semester. Before I do that, I'm going to quit academia. I'm not so set on academia that I'm willing to do everything for it. I felt like there's some limit of self-respect. There's plenty of interesting jobs outside academia, and if it doesn't work out, I'd rather get out sooner rather than later. (Biographical interview)

After her Ph.D., she managed to coordinate her postdoctoral stay in the United States with her husband's, who was also willing to gain international experience. They worked (and lived) in

different cities and met mostly on weekends. When they returned to Germany, where they found jobs in different places, they moved in together in a city halfway, both commuting to their workplaces. They had two children over the following years. Because her academic position was fixed-term, Lisa applied for the next job and was offered a professorship in Switzerland. Although she emphasized that it was a great opportunity, she also felt compelled to accept it:

I felt I had no choice to some extent. [...] The thing is, if you refuse [such an offer], who else will hire you at [German university]? They will all think you're stuck there, I mean, if you don't take such a good offer, what will it take for you to leave, right? So, I mean, it's not so easy to refuse. (Network interview)

The whole family subsequently relocated to Switzerland. Ralph, however, kept his job (and a small apartment) in Germany, where he spent half the week. Because of insufficient daycare, Lisa's mother traveled from Germany every week to take care of her grandchildren for two days. Ralph's flexible work schedule and "very understanding" bosses, as Lisa described them, also contributed to making such family arrangements possible. When a child was sick, for instance, Ralph could decide to work from Switzerland or work on another day. However, Lisa emphasized that she felt torn between her professional commitments, which she fully enjoyed, and the constraints they imposed on her family:

I feel like I'm constantly asking myself: "I have this wonderful job that I enjoy so much, and I mean I really, really like this job, but am I not asking too much of my family in return?" (Biographical interview)

In addition to the emotional costs, these arrangements had significant financial implications:

Financially, it's suicide, one salary in Germany, plus an apartment there, plus the commuting costs. As I'm saying, we're paying more for daycare than the money he earns. [...] As a family, I think we could do this, but the problem is that we can't do it financially, and that's frustrating. (Biographical interview)

Lisa stated that, in the medium term, she and her husband might decide to change their current situation, including having Ralph look for a job in Switzerland. However, because he worked in government, he was unlikely to obtain the same kind of job in Switzerland, let alone regain such a position in Germany if they should one day decide to return there. Indeed, returning to Germany seemed all the more likely to Lisa as the political context in Switzerland added to her feeling of uncertainty. Apart from the acceptance of the popular federal initiative "against mass immigration" in 2014 and the threat it posed to the bilateral Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between Switzerland and the European Union,⁴⁰ political discussions regarding the possible expulsion of foreign nationals who committed serious crimes were also a source of concern for Lisa:

The whole *Ausschaffunginitiative* [expulsion initiative], how they've made it much easier to kick foreigners out now. I mean, I hope that will never happen, but do I know that my kids will never have some conflict with drugs or something? And then they might be kicked out of this country where they grew up, which they don't know anything else but they can't live here anymore. And it's all these

⁴⁰ In December 2016, the Swiss Parliament preserved its bilateral agreements with the European Union and adopted a "minimal" law that did not impose quotas, contrary to what the initiative had called for (see e.g. https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/eu-swiss-relations_brussels-sees-progress-in-relations-with-bern/42786022, accessed October 11, 2020).

things, it's kind of like, I don't know, I'm putting them in a position that could easily be rectified if they grew up in Germany. (Biographical interview)

Another possibility for the future would be for the whole family to live in Germany and for Lisa to commute to Switzerland for work. However, Lisa did not consider it a viable option to spend part of the week in Switzerland and leave her husband by himself with their children. He would find it stressful, she said, and she would miss them. Alternatively, she might instead consider looking for a (less attractive) position in Germany:

[My current department] is one of the best departments I could be at. It's very clear that any position in Germany would probably not be as good as this one. So I find at this point it's very much this trade-off between "I'm very, very happy professionally, but for my private life it's a difficult situation." [...] It depends on how things really evolve, but I've considered taking a position that's not as good as this one here just so we can be [together]. (Biographical interview)

For the time being, Lisa and Ralph decided to wait before making a decision. They still had three years until their oldest child started primary school, by which time, Lisa said, they should have decided where they would like to stay "permanently."

The various possibilities Lisa foresaw all had disadvantages and failed to integrate two fulfilling full-time jobs, a family, and cross-border mobility in a satisfactory way over the long term.

5.2.5. Entangled challenges in the quest for stability

The emergence of precarity

As the portraits indicate, academics often embrace transnational mobility with a certain enthusiasm, at least initially. Many interview partners emphasized the attractiveness of

mobility and depicted their stays abroad as rewarding experiences, even when they required tough compromises in other aspects of their lives. Yet, the attractiveness of mobility shifted over time, and academics expressed, albeit to varying degrees, a growing sense of fatigue with subsequent, ongoing, and potential future arrangements arising from their mobility. This change of attitude toward mobility is an important result emerging from the stories of mobile academics. It illuminates how precarity is produced over time in the logic of their career, through a succession of mobility and short-term contracts that characterize their (years-long) search for academic stability. The repeated nature of job-to-job mobility in an unpredictable and highly competitive transnational marketplace, and the compromises that such mobility repeatedly entailed, ultimately led the academics portrayed here to either consider renouncing their academic career (in full or in part) or delay other projects (like founding a family). No single episode in their mobile trajectories per se seems to have discouraged them. Rather, it was the serial (and long-term) character of challenging temporary episodes that wearied them and rendered their experiences frustrating and unsustainable in the longer run (for a similar argument, see Ackers and Oliver 2007).

At the time of the interviews, Marc's narrative conveyed a strong sense of precarity, and he was considering leaving academia. As other researchers have noted (Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019), academics cope with insecurity and instability in the hope of future rewards. Marc, like other interview partners, expected that hard work would pay off (and lead to secure employment). This expectation reflects the imaginary of a Fordist normality and labor relations organized around a two-way exchange between workers and employers. In Marc's case, his sense of precarity was not so much about his income. Rather, it related to the increasing imbalance between the high price he had paid to remain in academia and the little he had received in return (in terms of stability). Marc's frustration extended beyond professional

concerns and, relative to his non-academic friends who had settled down, started families, and advanced in their careers, he felt himself stagnating and unable to plan ahead with regard to his other aspirations. Marie, in contrast, seemed less concerned about her unstable situation when she stated that in a few years she might well quit academia and open a bakery. She mobilized her mother's experience, who changed jobs multiple times, to substantiate her claim. In so doing, she challenged the representation of a stable career as normal. Furthermore, she was about to move to join her husband and, at that point, was fully optimistic about more favorable arrangements in the future. Lisa, finally, had obtained a permanent and fulfilling professorship and occupied a stable and privileged position in academia. Her experience nonetheless shows that, even for those who succeed career-wise, it remains difficult to combine competing aspirations.

Different mobility regimes

Transnational mobility takes place within the context of a world divided into nation-states, and people's cross-border moves are facilitated or hampered by state policies that regulate entry into their national territories. In general terms, academics and knowledge workers benefit from favorable mobility regimes (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013) insofar as countries tend to consider them valuable to their economies (Tremblay 2005). Yet, individuals may encounter critical difficulties even when they belong to categories of movers that are a priori welcome. Marie, who moved to the United States as an academic scholar, and Luc, who planned to move within a private-sector corporation, needed different types of visas to pursue their professional activities in the United States. Without his employer's sponsorship, Luc could not obtain the visa he was hoping for. While he could have opted to move instead as a dependent of Marie, he was deterred by the lengthy and expensive process involved in obtaining a visa and work permit. Other research participants moved to the United States with their partner under a

dependent visa. These couples experienced first-hand the impracticalities of reconciling the relative slowness of the administration issuing work authorizations with the short-term nature of contracts in academia.

As for Marc and Lisa, they moved to Switzerland as European citizens, under the bilateral Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between Switzerland and the European Union. These rights also applied to Lisa's husband. But other aspects of the mobility regime framing their experience in Switzerland concerned them. The political context and possible changes in policies affecting non-citizens could have a direct impact on Lisa's family and made her question whether she should remain in Switzerland with her family in the longer term.

Academic career structures and labor markets

When Lisa applied for the professorship in Switzerland, her position in Germany was a fixed-term junior professorship and, as she pointed out, she therefore "had to" find the next job. She also made clear that, had her position been tenure-track (or permanent), she would not have applied for jobs in the first place, at least not at that point. Lisa's experience illustrates how the nature of academic positions (and related retention policies) in universities influences academics' propensity to engage in (further) cross-border mobility (Ackers 2008). Furthermore, although the offer Lisa received was a good opportunity, she nevertheless emphasized that she could not decline it without sending a negative signal to potential academic employers in the future.

Labor markets beyond academia and the possibility for academics to transfer their skills to these sectors also affect their experiences. Academics in disciplines that offer interesting jobs in the private and governmental sectors typically find it easier to cope with academic instability (Bozzon, Murgia and Poggio 2019). As Lisa indicated, she had several opportunities to transfer

to other sectors that offered her safe and interesting alternatives outside academia. In this regard, she was in an advantageous position to attempt an academic career and set limits of self-respect below which she would quit academia. In contrast, Marc's colleague, working in another discipline and being a third-country national in Switzerland, probably had few options but to stay in the academic sector even on very precarious contracts so as not to run the risk of having to leave the country altogether.

Marie's and Marc's trajectories also suggest this connection between contractual insecurity and the need to engage in transnational mobility, although both had a specific destination in mind and got the position (or fellowship) they were considering. Other interviewees said they were under much more stress when it came to finding the next position, applying in different countries and not knowing until much later where they would have to relocate (see also Author, forthcoming). Thus, when opportunities arise, academics feel that they are expected to show their readiness to be mobile or risk being perceived as not really wanting an academic career or not demonstrating "their 'deservingness' of full membership [in] the academic community" (Le Feuvre, Bataille and Sautier 2020: 3).

The professional circumstances for accompanying partners also have a strong impact on the experiences of couples moving jointly. These include in particular the employment situation and the market structure, but also mechanisms of recognition of job seekers' cultural capital. These mechanisms include not only the official recognition of credentials and qualifications, but also the recognition of their skills, qualifications, and professional experience by potential employers. Linguistic requirements and the labor-market situation also affect the actors to varying degrees (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007). Lisa's husband worked in a sector whose particularities made it structurally difficult for him to relocate to another country without

changing careers. Luc was unable to secure a job in Austria because he did not speak German well enough. Marc's partner in the United States found a position matching her professional expectations, but in a neighboring country, and still away from Marc.

Gender arrangements among couples

Marie, Marc, and Lisa were all three engaged in dual-career relationships with both partners pursuing professional careers. These gender-equal arrangements made it challenging for partners to follow primary movers. Ralph did not completely relocate, but instead commuted between Germany and Switzerland; Luc did not follow Marie because he could not work in either Austria or the United States; and Marc's partner moved closer to him, although not to the same place. As other studies have shown, dual-career relationships are particularly difficult to reconcile with transnational career paths (Shinozaki 2014; Author et al., 2017).

Living-apart configuration among couples was common to other interviewees as well. While this configuration, as participants themselves put forth, recognizes the possibility for each to pursue their professional aspirations, yet it subtly reflects deep-seated and widespread representations about the feminine and the masculine. Indeed, and as has been suggested by others (Ackers et al. 2000), it seems that the professional "footlooseness" of the male tied partner – whether because he is unfulfilled in his job or because his work activities are geographically transferable – is a critical factor enabling men (in heterosexual couples) to follow their female partners. Among my interviewees, male partners who had followed their academic wives without having a job at the destination had to confront stereotyped ideas about men – useless when not working – and women – over-ambitious when they pursued careers (Author et al., 2017). These arrangements again suggest the sophisticated interconnections between biographical circumstances, external constraints, and gender dynamics (see also Chesley 2011).

Gendered institutions and policies

Gender norms and representations circulate in actors' wider social environments, but they also underlie institutions and policies, at the local and national levels. In Switzerland, a majority of couples with school-age children comprise men working full time and women working part time (or not working) and taking care of the children (OFS 2014). This pattern of gender relations has been described as a modified version of the male breadwinner/female carer model (Le Feuvre, Bataille and Sautier 2020) and is notably reflected in Swiss family and tax policies, which in turn – in a dialectical movement –, constrain the practices and experiences of actors. Lisa complained about these conventionally gendered policies and representations she encountered in her daily life in Switzerland, including insufficient and expensive childcare, an income-tax system that she depicted as unfriendly to dual-earner couples, and negative representations within her wider social environment about career women having children.

Although Lisa and Ralph successfully met the challenge of coordinating their family and dual-career situation in organizational terms, their arrangement, as Lisa emphasized, was not financially sustainable in the long run, even though they both held stable and well-paying positions. The intricacies of their arrangements demonstrate how structural elements such as the (un)availability of childcare, external contingencies related to one's own and one's partner's professional activities, and instrumental support provided by members of one's (core) social network might contribute to shaping the – enabling or constraining – contextual framework within which individuals make and implement their decisions.

Moreover, individuals are better able to reconcile gender-equal arrangements with mobility (and in general) when they do not have children. When Lisa considered the options to balance work and family, the one she viewed as most viable entailed adapting her work situation to her family constraints, thus moving toward a more conventional family arrangement. Gender was

certainly not the only factor at play, but research has shown that having children constitutes an important turning point in couples' dynamics (Tettamanti 2016; Yavorsky, Kamp Dush and Schoppe-Sullivan 2015) in which structurally anchored and internalized conventional gender roles resurface.

5.2.6. Conclusion

This paper has examined how the experiences of academics who engage in repeated episodes of cross-border mobility may create a sense of precarity. It has shown that the repetitive nature of compromises made by academics (and their partners) to overcome the challenges encountered along their mobile trajectories plays an important role in this regard. The interviewees' narratives all express some sense of insecurity, frustration, or uncertainty about the future. Precarity ensues when the repeated pressure to be mobile at the end of fixed-term contracts comes at a price perceived as disproportionate to the returns. Indeed, academics may come to view the arrangements and compromises they make in pursuit of their career in the expectation of stable employment as sacrifices made in vain. The analysis suggests that precarity is not primarily a result of economic instability – although this result does not imply that in other circumstances academics in unstable employment do not confront severe economic hardship – but of the increasing misalignment between the effort invested and the scarcity of stable prospects. However, as Lisa's experience demonstrates, successfully securing a permanent position does not mean that all sources of frustration vanish.

In the course of their mobile trajectories, academics thus made significant compromises to pursue their careers. Combining biographical and network methods has been particularly suited to scrutinizing how academics' mobility experiences intersect with other outcomes and circumstances of their everyday lives and life cycles, and are interconnected with broader (meso and macro) processes. This methodological design made it possible to understand

individuals' actions as socially embedded, and in particular to take academics' partners into account.

Overall, this paper has highlighted different facets of mobility. While being transnationally mobile makes it possible for academics to access academic opportunities, including stable employment, the findings also show how mobility may negatively affect the lives of academics (and their partners). Indeed, as Wyss (2019) has argued in her study on migrants with precarious legal status in Europe, my findings similarly suggest that for academics also, *staying put* (or *immobility*) may be an important asset for those who can afford it, because of the stability it entails.

Finally, the downsides of repeated job-to-job mobility do not only affect academics and their families. As academics consider leaving academia (or moving to a less fulfilling position elsewhere) in order to obtain more stability and reconcile different domains of their lives, academic institutions are impacted as well and might lose important resources in the process. In a system in which recruitment is supposedly based on performance and merit, it is legitimate to question the imperative of mobility – and the temporary nature of the contracts with which is it often associated – which seems to lead academic institutions to instead select individuals according to biographical and structural circumstances that are irrelevant to academic performance and expertise. The effects of precarious contracts and repeated cross-border mobility seem uneven, if not discriminatory, for academics. It is also unsatisfactory, if not detrimental, to academic institutions, insofar as it might cause them to fail to attract or retain valuable academics on the basis of criteria unrelated to scientific quality and merit.

5.2.7. References

Ackers, Louise. 2008. "Internationalisation, Mobility and Metrics: A New Form of Indirect Discrimination?" *Minerva* 46(4):411-35.

- Ackers, Louise, and Bryony Gill. 2008. *Moving People and Knowledge : Scientific Mobility in an Enlarging European Union*. Cheltenham [etc.]: E. Elgar.
- Ackers, Louise, Debbie Millard, Heloisa Perista, Isabel Baptista, Vera Gustafsson, and Martha Blomqvist. 2000. *The Participation of Women Researchers in the TMR Marie Curie Fellowships*. [S.l.]: [s.n.].
- Ackers, Louise, and Liz Oliver. 2007. "From Flexicurity to Flexequality?: The Impact of the Fixed-Term Contract Provisions on Employment in Science Research." *International Studies of Management and Organization* 37(1):53-79.
- Bataille, Pierre, Nicky Le Feuvre, and Sabine Kradolfer Morales. 2017. "Should I stay or should I go? The effects of precariousness on the gendered career aspirations of postdocs in Switzerland." *European Educational Research Journal* 16(2-3):313-31.
- Bilecen, Başak, and Christoph Van Mol. 2017. "Introduction: International Academic Mobility and Inequalities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1241-55.
- Bozzon, Rossella, Annalisa Murgia, and Barbara Poggio. 2019. "Gender and precarious careers in academia and research: macro, meso and micro perspectives." Pp. 15-49 in *Gender and Precarious Research Careers*, edited by Annalisa Murgia and Barbara Poggio. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Bryson, Colin. 2004. "The Consequences for Women in the Academic Profession of the Widespread Use of Fixed Term Contracts." *Gender, Work and Organization* 11(2):187-206.
- Cangià, Flavia. 2018. "Precarity, Imagination, and the Mobile Life of the 'Trailing Spouse'." *Ethos* 46(1):8-26.
- Chesley, Noelle. 2011. "Stay-at-home Fathers and Breadwinning Mothers : Gender, Couple Dynamics, and Social Change." *Gender and Society* 25(5):642-64.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2010. "Towards a Politics of Mobility." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28:17-31.
- Dahinden, Janine. 2005. *Prishtina - Schlieren: albanische Migrationsnetzwerke im transnationalen Raum*. Zürich: Seismo.
- Enders, Jürgen, and Christine Musselin. 2008. "Back to the Future? The Academic Professions in the 21st Century." Pp. 125-50 in *Higher Education to 2030 - Vol. 1: Demography*, edited by OECD. Paris: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- European Commission. 2019. *She Figures 2018*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Fahey, Johannah, and Jane Kenway. 2010. "International academic mobility: problematic and possible paradigms." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):563-75.
- Flick, Uwe. 2018. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Fumasoli, Tatiana, and Gaële Goastellec. 2015. "Global Models, Disciplinary and Local Patterns in Academic Recruitment Processes." Pp. 69-93 in *Academic Work and Careers in Europe: Trends, Challenges, Perspectives*, edited by Tatiana Fumasoli, Gaële Goastellec, and Barbara M. Kehm. Cham [etc.]: Springer.

- Gallas, Alexander. 2018. "Introduction: The Proliferation of Precarious Labour in Academia." *Global Labour Journal* 9(1):69-75.
- Gill, Rosalind. 2010. "Breaking the silence: The hidden injuries of neo-liberal academia." Pp. 228-44 in *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*, edited by Roisin Ryan-Flood and Rosalind Gill. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- . 2014. "Academics, Cultural Workers and Critical Labour Studies." *Journal of Cultural Economy* 7(1):12-30.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, and Noel B. Salazar. 2013. "Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(2):183-200.
- Goastellec, Gaële, and Nicolas Pekari. 2014. "Reforming Faculties' Careers: The Swiss Labor Market Between Universalism and Particularism." Pp. 189-206 in *Reforming Higher Education: Public Policy Design and Implementation*, edited by Christine Musselin and Pedro N. Teixeira. Dordrecht [etc.]: Springer.
- Ivancheva, Mariya P. 2015. "The Age of Precarity and the New Challenges to the Academic Profession." *Studia Europaea* 40(1):39-47.
- Jöns, Heike. 2007. "Transnational mobility and the spaces of knowledge production: a comparison of global patterns, motivations and collaborations in different academic fields." *Social Geography* 2:97-114.
- . 2011. "Transnational Academic Mobility and Gender." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 9(2):183-209.
- Kofman, Eleonore, and Parvati Raghuram. 2005. "Gender and skilled migrants : into and beyond the work place." *Geoforum* 36:149-54.
- Krais, Beate. 2002. "Academia as a Profession and the Hierarchy of the Sexes : Paths out of Research in German Universities." *Higher Education Quarterly* 56(4):407-18.
- Le Feuvre, Nicky, Pierre Bataille, and Marie Sautier. 2020. "Probationary or second-class citizens? Postdoctoral experiences in the Swiss context." Pp. 65-101 in *Gendered Academic Citizenship: Issues and Experiences*, edited by Sevil Sümer. Cham [etc.]: Springer International Publishing.
- Leemann, Regula Julia, and Stefan Boes. 2015. "Transnational Academic Mobility from the Perspective of Gender Inequality: Researcher Flows and Knowledge Construction in Europe." Pp. 201-20 in *Shaping of European Education: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, edited by Martin Lawn and Romuald Normand. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Loher, David, and Sabine Strasser. 2019. "Politics of precarity: neoliberal academia under austerity measures and authoritarian threat." *Social Anthropology* 27(S2):5-14.
- Morano-Foadi, Sonia. 2005. "Scientific Mobility, Career Progression, and Excellence in the European Research Area." *International Migration* 43(5):133-62.
- Moret, Joëlle. 2016. "Cross-border Mobility, Transnationality and Ethnicity as Resources: European Somalis' Post-migration Mobility Practices." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42(9):1455-72.
- Münch, Richard. 2014. *Academic Capitalism : Universities in the Global Struggle for Excellence*. New York [etc.]: Routledge.

- Murgia, Annalisa, and Barbara Poggio (Eds.). 2019. *Gender and Precarious Research Careers: A Comparative Analysis*. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Neilson, Brett, and Ned Rossiter. 2008. "Precarity as a Political Concept, or, Fordism as Exception." *Theory, Culture and Society* 25(7-8):51-72.
- Netz, Nicolai, and Steffen Jaksztat. 2017. "Explaining Scientists' Plans for International Mobility from a Life Course Perspective." *Research in Higher Education* 58:497-519.
- OECD. 2019. *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- OFS. 2014. *ESPA en bref 2013 : l'enquête suisse sur la population active*. Neuchâtel: Office fédéral de la statistique.
- Paret, Marcel, and Shannon Gleeson. 2016. "Precarity and agency through a migration lens." *Citizenship Studies* 20(3-4):277-94.
- Peacock, Vita. 2016. "Academic Precarity as Hierarchical Dependence in the Max Planck Society." *HAU Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6(1):95-119.
- Pérez, Marta, and Ainhoa Montoya. 2018. "The Unsustainability of the Neoliberal Public University: Towards an Ethnography of Precarity in Academia." *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares* 73(1):1-16.
- Raghuram, Parvati. 2004. "The Difference that Skills Make : Gender, Family Migration Strategies and Regulated Labour Markets." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(2):303-21.
- Riaño, Yvonne, and Nadia Baghdadi. 2007. "Understanding the Labour Market Participation of Skilled Immigrant Women in Switzerland : The Interplay of Class, Ethnicity and Gender." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 8(2):163-83.
- Robertson, Susan L. 2010. "Critical response to special section: international academic mobility." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):641-47.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2007. "Biographical Research." Pp. 48-64 in *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber F. Gubrium, and David Silverman. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Sheller, Mimi. 2011. "Mobility." *Sociopedia.isa*:1-12.
- Shinozaki, Kyoko. 2014. "Career Strategies and Spatial Mobility among Skilled Migrants in Germany : The Role of Gender in the Work-Family Interaction." *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 105(5):526-41.
- Singer, Maxine. 2004. "The Evolution of Postdocs." *Science* 306(5694):232.
- Tettamanti, Manuel. 2016. "Devenir parent en Suisse: une situation paradoxale ?" Pp. 109-29 in *Devenir parents, devenir inégaux: transition à la parentalité et inégalités de genre*, edited by Jean-Marie Le Goff and René Levy. Zurich [etc.]: Seismo.
- Tremblay, Karine. 2005. "Academic Mobility and Immigration." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 9(3):196-228.
- Urry, John. 2007. *Mobilities*. Cambridge [etc.]: Polity Press.
- Wyss, Anna. 2019. "Stuck in Mobility? Interrupted Journeys of Migrants With Precarious Legal Status in Europe." *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* 17(1):77-93.

- Yavorsky, Jill E., Claire M. Kamp Dush, and Sarah J. Schoppe-Sullivan. 2015. "The Production of Inequality : The Gender Division of Labor Across the Transition to Parenthood." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77(3):662-79.
- Zittoun, Tania. 2017. "Modalities of Generalization Through Single Case Studies." *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science* 51:171-94.

CHAPTER 6

Transnational mobility networks

Schaer, Martine, Jacot, Cédric & Dahinden, Janine (2020). Transnational Mobility Networks and Academic Social Capital among Early-career Academics: Beyond Common-sense Assumptions. *Global Networks*, Special issue on 'How qualitative social network analysis can offer new opportunities in transnational migration research' edited by Janine Dahinden and Louise Ryan. doi: [10.1111/glob.12304](https://doi.org/10.1111/glob.12304).

6.1. Foreword to the article

This article is the result of different types of analyses. It was written cooperatively with Cédric Jacot and Janine Dahinden, with each author contributing in different ways. I did the fieldwork, analyzed the narrative data and the network data, and wrote a large part of the article. The analysis of the network data (SPSS database) was conducted together with Cédric Jacot, who contributed to the writing of these results. Janine Dahinden discussed the findings multiple times with Cédric Jacot and me. She also contributed to the writing of the article, mainly the introduction and the conclusion, and assisted with theory. I presented the results of the network data analysis at a research day workshop titled “Highly-Skilled Migration, Diasporas and Digital Technologies”, which was held at the EPFL, Switzerland, on November 10, 2016.

6.2. Transnational mobility networks and academic social capital among early-career academics: beyond common-sense assumptions

6.2.1. Introduction

Transnational mobility among academics has increased significantly in recent decades (Bilecen and Van Mol 2017), and it is increasingly presented as indispensable for a successful academic career (see e.g. Ackers and Oliver 2007; Leemann and Boes 2015; Morano-Foadi 2005). We

define *academic mobility* here as cross-border movements on the part of academics to take up a position or conduct fellowship activities at a tertiary-level institution abroad. This definition excludes international student mobility and short stints abroad to attend conferences or conduct fieldwork.

In the early stages of their career, many academics, urged by the *normative imperative of mobility*, integrate stays abroad into their career path. The premise behind this imperative is that academic mobility contributes to academic excellence because it allows scholars to build transnational academic networks. Obviously, mobility is but one aspect of academic excellence, with publication record and research grants being the most obvious others. But in Switzerland and elsewhere, academic mobility has increasingly become an indispensable prerequisite for academic positions and funding⁴¹ (Ackers 2008; Bauder, Hannan and Lujan 2017). The existence of a relationship between mobility (stays abroad) and the development of transnational academic networks is often taken for granted, including in the academic literature (Bauder 2015; Lutter and Schröder 2016), and there is a lack of empirical research on the subject.

Recently, a few studies have begun to investigate the mobility-network nexus, with particular regard to collaboration and knowledge networks and focusing on specific countries. In their study about Portuguese scientists, Fontes and colleagues (2013) showed that academic mobility does not always favour transnational knowledge network formation and is not the only means of developing such networks. Investigating how French academics' geographical trajectories might influence their collaborations, Bernela and Milard (2016) found that job-to-

⁴¹ The Eccellenza fellowship program of the Swiss National Science Foundation, for instance, requires that applicants have conducted 12 months of research abroad (<http://www.snf.ch/en/funding/careers/eccellenza/Pages/default.aspx#Participation%20requirements>, accessed 06.06.2020). At the European level, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions run an Individual Fellowships program for “experienced researcher looking to give [their] career a boost by working abroad” (https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/actions/individual-fellowships_en, accessed 06.06.2020).

job mobility does no more to promote the development of co-authorship networks than other mechanisms. Focusing on mobile academics in Singapore, Wang and colleagues (Wang et al. 2019) observed an increase in academics' local collaborations after a cross-border move, but at the expense of their transnational collaborations. In contrast to these findings, Scellato and colleagues (2015) examined the collaboration patterns of migrant and non-migrant scientists in 16 countries and found that migrant scientists (foreign-born or returnees) have larger transnational-collaboration networks than their non-migrant counterparts.

While these studies have shown mixed results about how mobility affects network production and persistence, their focus is on collaboration and knowledge transfer. In this paper, we are instead interested in understanding academics' networks with regard to the resources embedded in them. Concretely, we ask the following question: how is the academic social capital of transnationally mobile early-career academics connected to their cross-border mobility, and how does their mobility influence their network transnationality?

This paper is part of a special issue about the new opportunities that *qualitative* social network analysis (SNA) offers for transnational migration research. It brings together a transnational perspective (Dahinden 2017) with tools developed in quantitative SNA that are here adapted to qualitative SNA. As a result of the transnational turn in the 1990s (Faist, Fauser and Reisenauer 2013; Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1992), it has become more common for migration studies to focus on various dimensions of transnationality and their underlying networks. However, they rarely go beyond a metaphorical use of the term *transnational network* (exceptions include Bilecen and Amelina 2017; Dahinden 2005; Dahinden 2013; Herz and Olivier 2012; Lubbers, Verdery and Molina 2018). *A contrario*, our qualitative approach to SNA makes it possible to systematically produce and analyse data about interpersonal

relationships and generates detailed knowledge about the characteristics of networks, including their transnational aspects. In this vein, this paper uses qualitative SNA tools to investigate the *composition of early-career academics' transnational networks*. Concretely, we examine the academic social capital that early-career academics accumulate as a result of their mobility. Following the work of Bourdieu (1980), Coleman (1988), and Lin (1999), we use a network approach to social capital that defines *social capital* as the social resources embedded in ego-centred social networks. Because we are specifically interested in academics' ability to pursue their career, we do not focus on their overall social capital, including all subdomains of life, but instead on their *academic* social capital, defined as all social relationships that have provided the early-career academics with academic resources related to their career advancement. Hence, we investigate whether early-career academics who were particularly mobile accumulated more academic social capital than their less mobile counterparts.

This paper is based on interviews with 40 early-career academics at three universities (Zurich, Cambridge, and UCLA). We employed a qualitative mixed-method design combining different types of qualitative data: data triangulation makes it possible to understand not only the network composition – and the role of transnationality and academic social capital in it – but also the underlying meanings and mechanisms at play (for a similar argument, see Ryan and D'Angelo 2018). Our mixed-method design overcomes two well-known criticisms of network analysis. First, it makes it possible to avoid structural determinism and the neglect of meaning making and dynamics that have been identified as major weaknesses of *quantitative* SNA (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Schweizer 1996). Second, it makes it possible to go beyond a metaphorical understanding of networks.

In the following, we first discuss the methodology. Next, we present the composition of early-career academics' networks that emerged from the name generator and interpreter tools (network data). Our findings indicate that the connections between transnational mobility and academic social capital – as an aspect of academic excellence – are much less straightforward than often assumed. While increased mobility results in more transnational networks, it does not lead to enhanced academic social capital. Furthermore, additional transnational ties mainly consist of transnational kinship and friendship relations, and the mobility of early-career academics triggers various forms of mobility among their family members. Finally, early-career academics can build transnational academic ties without necessarily becoming mobile themselves, thanks to the mobility of other higher-ranked academics. In other words, similarly to what scholarship on international migration has theorized for other groups, whether highly skilled or not (Raghuram 2004; Ryan and Mulholland 2014), professional academic realms are densely interconnected with kinship and family networks, which can be considered a form of indirect academic social capital in that they often enable early-career academics' mobility.

6.2.2. Methodology

Qualitative mixed-method design

Our study focuses on early-career academics who had obtained their PhD a maximum of ten years prior to the research study and who had moved to a university abroad after their PhD, either as a job-to-job move (for fixed-term or permanent positions) or as a visit move (to conduct fellowship activities). They held positions at all academic levels, from postdoctoral positions to tenured professorships. We included three universities from different countries: the University of Zurich (Switzerland), the University of Cambridge (UK), and the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA, USA). We chose these universities because they contain faculties

in the humanities, the social sciences, and STEM disciplines and enjoy some degree of international renown, making them attractive to international scholars.

We used a qualitative mixed-method design, which required meeting with the academics twice. In the first session, we conducted a biographical narrative interview (Rosenthal 2007) to understand each academic's mobility trajectory by reconstructing its genesis and interpreting it in the overall context of their life, their social relationships, and the wider societal context. Biographical interviews offer diachronic insights into the interviewees' mobility and academic experiences and the social relationships involved.

The second session consisted of a two-step network interview (Dahinden 2005; Perry, Pescosolido and Borgatti 2018) (see appendix). We first grasped the interviewee's *mobility network* in a systematic way using a name generator. The name generator consists of situational questions to elicit all social relationships (alters) relevant to the mobility of the interviewee (ego), whether regarding decisional, instrumental (including financial), professional, emotional, or general support. Academics who experienced several stays abroad after their PhD were interviewed specifically about their most recent – ongoing or past – experience of mobility. The questions referred to different periods, in particular the one immediately before this mobility experience (decision-making period, organization of mobility), hereafter referred to as “time-zero” (t0); and the period during this mobility (upon arrival and after having settled down), hereafter referred to as “time-one” (t1). Second, through a name interpreter, we collected socio-demographic data about the alters and information about the interviewees' relationships with them. As is usual in qualitative SNA, the interviewees were invited throughout the network interview to discuss in detail the meanings and contents of their social ties, triggering open-ended narrations that connected elicited alters to the

interviewees' overall lives and wider societal contexts. The systematic procedure – name generator and interpreter – structuring the qualitative network interviews made it possible for these data to be encoded into a statistical database (network data). The biographical interviews and the narratives of the network interviews were combined to construct case studies that were subsequently analysed individually and thematically.

This paper draws upon interviews carried out with 40 academics at the three universities between December 2013 and April 2015. The interviews took place in English or, in a few cases, French and were tape recorded and fully transcribed. Quotations in French were translated into English. The network data encompass information about 40 egos and 710 alters, for an average of 17.75 alters per ego. We analysed these data with SPSS in order to evaluate the links (or lack of thereof) between key parameters (or variables) and provide insights into the networks' composition. The analysis of the narratives from the biographical and network interviews provides a deeper understanding of the mechanisms at play in the academics' networks, and of the underlying meanings of their relationships.

Purposive sample

We followed a purposive sampling strategy, including early-career academics representing a variety of profiles in terms of sex, family situation, academic position, and area of research. This allowed us to identify the social processes involved in early-career academics' mobility and construction of transnational networks. The academics were identified on the universities' websites or, in a few cases, referred to us by other interviewees. They were individually invited via email to take part in the interview process. This sampling procedure is appropriate for the qualitative approach we followed.

Our sample (40 academics) comprises 20 women and 20 men between the ages of 30 and 50 at the time of interviews, with a majority (33) in their thirties; 24 academics were from the natural sciences and engineering, and 16 from the humanities and social sciences. About a quarter of our sample (11) were in a “permanent” – tenured or tenure-track – position at the time of interview. The remaining three-quarters (29) were employed under fixed-term conditions. In terms of family status, 34 were involved in a relationship (married or unmarried) when their mobility started. Of these, 27 had moved with their partners. When their mobility started, nine had children. All academics who had children moved with them. At the time of the interviews, 36 interviewees were involved in a relationship (married or unmarried); by this time, 20 had children.

Table 6.1 summarizes the mobility characteristics of the interviewees. We defined transnational mobility in relation to the country where they had obtained their PhD. At the time of the interviews, 33 academics were currently mobile (i.e. not in the country in which they had pursued their PhD), even though some had arrived years earlier and had not moved (transnationally) since then; the remaining 7 had returned to the country of their PhD after one (or several) stays abroad. The length of mobility of currently mobile academics was calculated from when their (last) mobility started until the time of interview. The length of mobility in our sample thus ranges from less than one year to up to ten years. Yet, because t1 focuses on the period *upon arrival and after having settled down*, we avoid the possibility that the length of time spent abroad affects the analysis of the network data.

Table 6.1: Mobility characteristics of interviewees (ego)

	Total
N	40
Mobility type	
Ongoing mobility	33
Past mobility	7
Length of ongoing or most recent past mobility	
< 3 years	25
3-5 years	11
7 years and more	4
Mobility degree	
Low mobile	20
Male	12
Female	8
Highly mobile	20
Male	8
Female	12

Concepts and their operationalization

Based on the network data, we explored the composition of the academics' networks, and we built specific indicators and variables to this end.⁴²

Mobility degree is a synthetic indicator of the degree of interviewees' transnational mobility. It is based on the number of previous and ongoing stays abroad for an academic position (i.e. doctoral positions or any post-PhD academic positions, including when funded by fellowships). This variable has two modalities: *low-mobile academics* and *highly mobile academics* (see Table 6.1). The former did all of their academic education (including their PhD) in the country where they grew up and thereafter moved abroad once for a post-PhD position. The latter moved abroad twice or more, either a first time for their PhD and then (at least) a second time to

⁴² Obviously, our qualitative sampling strategy does not allow for inferential statistics. The quantitative results of the network data are descriptive statistics and cannot be generalized to the overall academic population within the selected universities.

another country for a post-PhD position, or after their PhD to take up positions abroad, at least twice and in different countries.⁴³

Network transnationality degree refers to the proportion of transnational ties in one's personal network. This variable also has two modalities, *low* and *high*. It was construed based on the median value of the proportion of transnational ties for all participants. Figure 1 illustrates the geographical – i.e. local and transnational – categories of alters with reference to ego at both times. Alters were coded as *local* ties when located in the same country as ego and as *transnational* ties otherwise. We further distinguished *transnational* ties into three subgroups, transnational ties located in ego's *upcoming country*, in ego's *prior country*, and in a country other than these, namely *third countries*. In other words, alters mentioned in regard to a question referring to t0 (period before mobility) were coded as *transnational – upcoming country* if they were in the country where ego would be at t1 (during mobility); alters mentioned in regard to a question referring to t1 (during mobility) were coded as *transnational – prior country* if they were in the country where ego was at t0 (before moving); alters, whether mentioned in regard to t0 or t1, were coded as *transnational – third countries* if they were located in any country other than ego's upcoming or prior countries (see Table 6.2). Moreover, because ego's countries of reference changed over time, alters mentioned for t0 and for t1 were coded as *local* for one of the time periods and as *transnational* for the other, unless they themselves moved across borders in the meantime.

Apart from these indicators, we built a proxy and specific variables to measure *academic social capital*. In line with a network approach to social capital (Bourdieu 1980; Lin 1999), we focused,

⁴³ Consistently with our calculation based on *transnational moves to take up a position abroad*, when academics moved to a position abroad and then to another one within the same country, we did not count the second move as *mobility*. By the same token, when academics commuted between their country of residence and the country where their position was located, this counted as *one* mobility.

regarding *academic* social capital, on social relationships providing academics with resources useful for career progression, including information, advice, and encouragement related to academic vacancies, funding opportunities, or career strategies. These resources are typically provided by higher-ranked academics who may act as supervisors, mentors, or referees for early-career academics, or who have far more distant relationships with them, while also being “gatekeepers” for academic positions (van den Brink and Benschop 2014). Hence, we used “*professors*” as a proxy for academic social capital. Professors are a valuable proxy for academic social capital because they have the capacity to hire (junior) academics, act as referees, and partake in faculty hiring committees, and junior academics may capitalize on these relationships in order to access academic opportunities, whether these relationships represent weak or strong ties.

Figure 6.1: Ego’s and alters’ geographical locations at t0 and t1

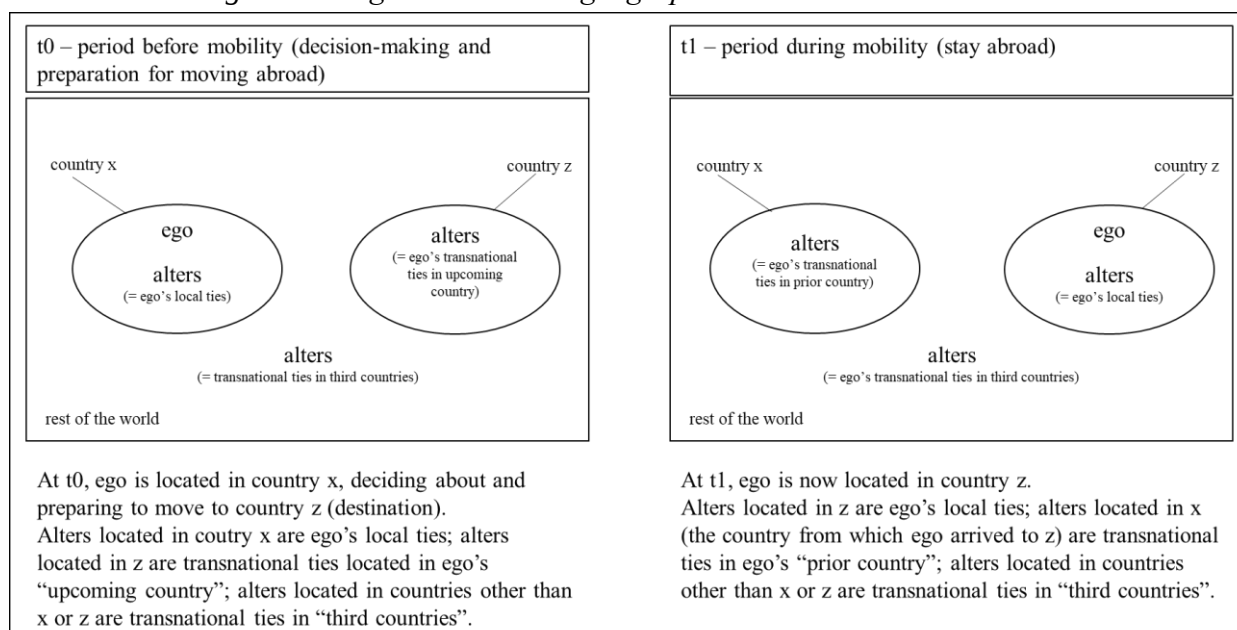


Table 6.2: Sex and transnationality characteristics of alters and “professors” (proxy)

	Alters			Professors			% of subgroup total ⁴⁴
	(No)	(%)		(No)	(%)		
Overall networks:							
All ties	710	100		220	100		31
Female	321	45		70	32		22
Male	385	54		149	68		39
Unknown sex	4	1		1	1		25
By time:							
At t0 ⁴⁵							
All ties	383	100		121	100		32
Local	235	61		73	60		31
Transnational	148	39	100	48	40	100	32
Upcoming country	95	25	64	37	31	77	39
Third countries	53	14	36	11	9	23	21
At t1							
All ties	401	100		105	100		26
Local	252	63		76	72		30
Transnational	149	37	100	29	28	100	20
Prior country	76	19	51	16	15	55	21
Third countries	73	18	49	13	12	45	18

Concretely, we defined as “professor” any alter holding a professorship or equivalent position (including assistant professors) who (previously, currently, or potentially) had a professional link with ego.⁴⁶ Thus, because the interviewees’ networks contained people who helped them in their most recent mobility (t0) and who were relevant during that mobility (t1), all of whom might be relevant for future moves as well, the “*professor*” proxy allowed us to grasp actual and potential social capital at the same time. Academic social capital was then measured

⁴⁴ This column displays the proportion of professors among all alters for a specific subgroup, such as for instance the proportion of female professors among all female alters.

⁴⁵ As regards t0 (period of decision-making regarding and organizing the upcoming mobility), we filtered out alters mentioned by the interviewees but with whom they had never had contact before the hiring process. When these alters were mentioned for t1 again, they were included in our calculations for t1.

⁴⁶ We purposefully excluded professors whom we could not be sure represented academic social capital for ego, such as for instance a neighbour who occasionally takes care of ego’s children and happens to be a professor in an altogether different discipline.

according to a procedure common in network research (Dahinden 2013; Flap 2002; Van der Gaag and Snijders 2004), for which we developed three indicators of academic social capital based on the “*professor*” proxy.

- a) *Volume* indicates the number of “*professors*” (as defined above) mentioned by ego.
- b) *Multiplexity* indicates the proportion of “*professors*” mentioned for more than one dimension of support. This indicator is based on the hypothesis that when a relationship is multiplex, it is more probable that alter is willing to make their resources available to ego. Hence, the higher the proportion of multiplexity within a network, the higher the potential for ego to access academic social capital. The dimensions were built by grouping the name-generator questions into five dimensions of support: decisional, instrumental, professional, emotional, and general.
- c) *Diversity* refers to the distribution of the proportion of local and transnational “*professors*”. Networks composed of diverse social ties and resources provide more social capital and increase an individual’s chances of attaining their goals. We operationalized diversity in terms of the geographic dispersion – local and transnational – of ties with “*professors*”. The closer these proportions are to a 50-50 split, the higher the diversity indicator. Conversely, the further from a 50-50 split, the lesser the diversity indicator (values are given in % and are comprised between 0 and 100, where 0 = no diversity at all, and 100 = local and transnational ties equally represented).

Finally, we analysed the distribution of role relationships between the interviewees and their alters. The variable *role relationship* has four modalities corresponding to four main groups of relationships: (1) *family*, (2) *friends and acquaintances*, (3) *people from academia*, and (4)

others. When several role relationships applied, roles were coded according to the most significant one.⁴⁷

Analysis of network data

To describe our empirical results, we chose median rather than average values because of skewed distributions. As median values do not provide a comprehensive description of the data, we performed Mann-Whitney U tests in order to compare the extent to which distributions might differ significantly across groups and gain supplemental information in explaining our findings. Finally, we completed the analysis by qualitatively exploring the shape of the distributions, and we calculated three-section frequency tables for variables whose distributions were highly polarized (namely the *multiplexity* and *diversity* variables measuring academic social capital). Table 6.3 displays all of these results.

6.2.3. Mobility, proportion of transnational ties, and academic social capital

Our network data show a positive relationship between the academics' degree of mobility and the proportion of transnational ties in their network. The networks of highly mobile academics are more transnational than those of low-mobile academics; this is valid for t0 and t1. Table 6.3 displays the proportion of transnational ties in networks by degree of mobility. The test results confirm the findings based on median values. The distribution of the proportion of overall *transnational ties* and *transnational ties in third countries* are significantly different between low- and highly mobile academics at both t0 and t1. Moreover, there is no significant difference as regards *transnational ties in upcoming country* at t0 or as regards *transnational ties in prior country* at t1.

⁴⁷ Furthermore, academic colleagues with whom the interviewees developed friendship ties were coded as *people from academia* when the relationship implied professional aspects as well.

Thus, a higher degree of mobility goes together with a higher proportion of *transnational ties*, especially, as shown in Table 6.3, of *transnational ties in third countries*. This first output from the network data raises the question of whether the higher network transnationality of highly mobile academics translates into more academic social capital.

Our data show no convincing link between the two. Table 6.3 displays the values of the academic social capital measures by degree of network transnationality. At t0, the volume and quality of academic social capital of academics with a low degree of network transnationality and academics with a high degree of network transnationality are similar. This interpretation is confirmed by the tests, which conclude that there are no significant differences between the two groups, and by the distribution tables, which present a very similar proportion for each of the three sections. At t1, the results are less clear. Academics with a low degree of network transnationality tend to have a higher volume of academic social capital (median 3) than their counterparts (median 2), but they have lower values for the quality indicators (for both *multiplexity* and *diversity*). However, a closer look at the distribution tables suggests that these differences are due to a threshold effect, as values are distributed more equally between the two groups than what the median values suggests. This is notably due to a high proportion of zero values for both. The frequency tables show that a similar pattern of distribution can be observed qualitatively, although the proportions are not quite the same. Finally, the statistical tests also do not show any significant differences between low- and highly transnational academics; however, the test result for the *diversity* variable is not strong.

Hence, we conclude that a higher degree of transnationality does not translate into more academic social capital. This finding raises the question of whether the degree of mobility itself affects academic social capital such as we have defined it.

Again, a close look (see Table 6.3) reveals no link between the degree of mobility and academic social capital. Academic social capital indicators are distributed rather equally across the degrees of mobility at both times. Low-mobile academics even have more academic social capital than highly mobile academics in terms of volume (median number of professors of 3 versus 2). At t1, low-mobile academics have a higher proportion of multiplex ties with professors (median 42% versus 7%). However, the frequency tables indicate that the difference in median values for diversity at t1 is again due to a threshold effect, since both tables show an equal repartition of the proportion for each of the sections. Lastly, the statistical tests do not confirm that the differences between the two groups are significant for any of the academic social capital variables at either t0 or t1.

In sum, this result indicates that highly mobile academics do not possess more academic social capital. They do, however, have a higher proportion of transnational ties in their network. These findings raise two additional questions. Who comprises the supplementary transnational ties, and how can we understand the meanings and dynamics of this network composition?

6.2.4. The meanings and dynamics underlying network composition

The distribution of role relationships between the interviewees and their alters, as revealed by the network data, and the analysis of the biographical interviews and the narratives of the network interviews make it possible to identify some of the mechanisms involved in the dynamics connecting (or not) cross-border mobility, network transnationality, and academic social capital.

Durable ties with family and friends, but fading ties with professors

Table 6.4 illuminates why the higher proportion of transnational ties in highly mobile academics' networks does not translate into more academic social capital: the large majority

(three-quarters) of their *transnational ties in third countries* consist of family or friends, both at t0 and t1. These ties provided multiple types of resources but no *direct* academic support.

The narratives of the biographical and network interviews provide additional knowledge about these transnational relationships in third countries. First, these family and friendship ties were strong, long-term relationships with people whom the academics had known all or most of their lives.⁴⁸ These alters have remained in the countries where the academics grew up and studied, and which they left when they engaged in successive episodes of mobility. Second, in the few cases in which highly mobile academics kept ties with transnational professors in third countries, these were predominantly former supervisors located in the country where the academics grew up and studied. In the few cases when they were not located in this country, they had either moved to other countries themselves or were still located in the same country where the interviewees had met them during a previous mobility episode (for instance, an academic exchange as part of their study program).

⁴⁸ The family members mentioned included parents, siblings, and spouses/partners in a long-distance relationship with ego. In a few cases, interviewees also mentioned in-laws living abroad.

Table 6.3: *Network transnationality and academic social capital by groups (continued on next page)*

	Sex			Mobility degree			Transnationality degree		
	Female	Male		Low	High		Low	High	
	Median (N=20)	Median (N=20)	M-W ^a	Median (N=20)	Median (N=20)	M-W	Median (N=20)	Median (N=20)	M-W
t0									
Number of alters	10	8	n.s.	9.5	8	n.s.	9	8	n.s.
Network transnationality (%)									
Transnational ties	37	38	n.s.	29	47	*	17	56	
Transnational ties – upcoming country	19	17	n.s.	23	17	n.s.	17	32	
Transnational ties – third countries	0	2	n.s.	0	15	**	0	21	
Academic social capital									
Volume	3.5	2	n.s.	3	2	n.s.	2.5	3	n.s.
Multiplexity (%)	33	17	n.s. [°]	29	23	n.s.	23	25	n.s.
Diversity (%)	Distribution table ^b (%)	0	15	45	20	40	30	30	
		]0;100[	75	45	70	50	60	60	
		100	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Diversity (%)	50	40	n.s.	50	50	n.s.	50	50	n.s.
Diversity (%)	Distribution table (%)	0	25	40	25	40	30	35	
		]0;100[	50	45	60	35	45	50	
		100	25	15	15	25	25	15	

n.s. = non significant ; ° = p < 0.1; * = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01

^a Mann-Whitney U test^b The distribution tables summarize in three sections the proportions of individuals at each end (0 and 100 values) and the proportions of individuals in between (end values excluded).

Table 6.3: *continued*

	Sex			Mobility degree			Transnationality degree		
	Female	Male		Low	High		Low	High	
	Median (N=20)	Median (N=20)	M-W ^a	Median (N=20)	Median (N=20)	M-W	Median (N=20)	Median (N=20)	M-W
t1									
Number of alters	11	8	*	8	10	n.s.	7	9.5	n.s.
Network transnationality (%)									
Transnational ties	38	25	n.s.	25	41	*	17	45	
Transnational ties – prior country	22	11	n.s.	24	13	n.s.	14	30	
Transnational ties – third countries	8	0	n.s.	0	20	**	0	20	
Academic social capital									
Volume	3	2	*	3	2	n.s.	3	2	n.s.
Multiplexity	42	0	n.s.	42	7	n.s.	0	38	n.s.
Distribution table ^b (%)									
0	30	65		45	50		55	40	
]0;100[	45	15		30	30		30	30	
100	25	20		25	20		15	30	
Diversity	0	0	n.s.	0	0	n.s.	0	25	n.s. [°]
Distribution table (%)									
0	55	70		65	60		75	50	
]0;100[	40	15		25	30		20	35	
100	5	15		10	10		5	15	

n.s. = non significant ; ° = p < 0.1; * = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01

^a Mann-Whitney U test^b The distribution tables summarize in three sections the proportions of individuals at each end (0 and 100 values) and the proportions of individuals in between (end values excluded).

Table 6.4: *Alters' role relationships and "professors" (proxy) by location variable and by mobility degree*

	Low-mobile academics		Highly mobile academics	
	Ties (no)	Ties (%)	Ties (no)	Ties (%)
t0				
Local ties	138	100	97	100
Role relationship (most significant)^a				
Family	59	43	27	28
Friends, acquaintances	11	8	13	13
People from academia	67	49	53	55
Other	1	1	4	4
Academic social capital^b				
"Professors" (proxy)	44	32	29	30
Transnational ties – upcoming country	54	100	41	100
Role relationship (most significant)				
Family	2	4	5	12
Friends, acquaintances	12	22	16	39
People from academia	40	74	20	49
Other	0	0	0	0
Academic social capital				
"Professors" (proxy)	23	43	14	34
Transnational ties – third countries	7	100	46	100
Role relationship (most significant)				
Family	3	43	24	52
Friends, acquaintances	0	0	10	22
People from academia	4	57	12	26
Other	0	0	0	0
Academic social capital				
"Professors" (proxy)	1	14	10	22
t1				
Local ties	133	100	119	100
Role relationship (most significant)				
Family	18	14	18	15
Friends, acquaintances	38	29	34	29
People from academia	72	54	63	53
Other	5	4	4	3
Academic social capital				
"Professors" (proxy)	43	32	33	28
Transnational ties – prior country	43	100	33	100
Role relationship (most significant)				
Family	25	58	13	39
Friends, acquaintances	5	12	8	24
People from academia	12	28	12	36
Other	1	2	0	0
Academic social capital				
"Professors" (proxy)	9	21	7	21
Transnational ties – third countries	7	100	66	100
Role relationship (most significant)				
Family	2	29	33	50
Friends, acquaintances	1	14	17	26
People from academia	4	57	16	24
Other	0	0	0	0
Academic social capital				
"Professors" (proxy)	2	29	11	17

^a Proportions are rounded to the unit; hence, percentages of the different *role relationship* categories do not always total 100%.

^b Professors are mainly categorized as *people from academia*, but they may also fall under another (most significant) *role relationship* category.

The interviewees turned to these professors in third countries at t0, while considering their upcoming (transnational) career move. They asked them for formal academic support, such as recommendation letters and sometimes career advice. However, these professors were rarely mentioned again at t1, which suggests that these relationships faded over time, or at least became dormant. Indeed, throughout their mobility episodes and career stages, the interviewees' research interests sometimes shifted substantially, thus rendering former supervisors less relevant to their career, as Marc's experience illustrates. While considering moving from the UK to Switzerland, Marc, a highly mobile academic, contacted his former PhD supervisor in the United States:

I needed a [recommendation] letter from him to be able to move. And I was like, "Hey, I intend to go to [name of institution...], and I need a letter from you for that". (Network interview)

Later in the interview, asked about his current relationship with this professor, Marc answered:

I have less and less contact with him, just because he's far away and because we followed different directions in terms of our research interests [...]. He developed an altogether different research topic, and I didn't take that path. (Network interview)

The same finding holds for low-mobile academics who, as they progress through their career, turn less to supervisors from their early days in academia, even though they might be geographically closer to them. Overall, this suggests that, along their (highly or low-mobile) career trajectories, academics often do not maintain strong or long-lasting relationships with former supervisors situated in a relatively distant past, especially when their research interests have drifted apart.

When closer relationships with former supervisors from the early days were maintained, whatever their locality, it was either because the relationship had become more personal (and multiplex) while still sharing research interests, or because those professors were located in interviewees' past countries to which they were eager to return. The professors were then mobilized for advice about how to reintegrate into this specific academic labour market.

Transnationally mobile long-term friends

Some of the interviewees' long-term friends, whom they had met during their childhood or youth, themselves engaged in transnational mobility. While the persons at both ends of the relationship were transnationally mobile, they managed to maintain a vivid relationship at a distance, meeting physically whenever possible. Eva developed a highly mobile career path. She moved from Poland to the UK to do her PhD. During her PhD, she did an academic exchange in Switzerland and, after graduating, moved to the United States as a postdoc. Asked about the people she turned to to discuss personal concerns after her arrival in the United States, Eva recalled:

Via Facebook, my few friends that are close friends [...], that are still my very good friends from [...] high school [one still living in Poland, the other two] living abroad. Those were the people I contacted regarding my changes in life and concerns. Those are people that I stay in touch with on a regular basis; they knew I was moving. So obviously, the first thing after I landed, I already got messages. "Did you arrive okay?" "How is everything?" (Network interview)

These friends from high school all went to different universities in Poland and followed different educational paths. Like Eva, two of them moved abroad. Eva kept in touch with her friends mostly by phone and Facebook, and they visited each other when possible. To emphasize the

strength of her ties to her network of friends, Eva added: “We are almost like *Sex in the City*, except not in the same city” (Network interview).

Like Eva, Nicole has been highly mobile and stayed in touch with close transnational ties located in different countries. After her Master’s in France, Nicole conducted short research assignments in different countries before relocating to Austria for her PhD while her now husband moved to Japan for his own career. Afterwards, she moved to the United States for a postdoc. There she maintained frequent contact with her husband and her best friend from France, who had herself moved to Switzerland:

I talk to my husband every day on Skype, as well as with my friend who is now in [Switzerland], three-hour Skype-conversations [laughs]. [...] Skype made my stay a lot easier. Essentially, on Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., well, I do little but skype, talk to everyone, discuss. I even prepared my wedding on Skype [laughs]. (Network interview)

These excerpts show that long-term friendships may very well persist despite physical distance and repeated mobility. Furthermore, these long-lasting connections allow emotional support to flow transnationally, all the more so thanks to electronic means of communication and social media. However, the resources provided to the interviewees by strong and durable transnational relationships were not limited to this type of resource. They also comprised on-hand practical support, as we will show in the next section.

Transnationally mobile kinship ties: Tied mobility and satellite mobility

The analysis of close transnational kinship ties leads to two main findings. First, when interviewees were in – married or unmarried – relationships before moving, in 80% of the cases their partners moved with them. These joint mobility experiences, sometimes involving their

children, required the couples to negotiate and organize their gendered configurations, as we have shown elsewhere (Schaer, Dahinden and Toader 2017).

Second, the qualitative analysis reveals the presence of what we refer to as *satellite mobility*, cross-border moves of close family members organized around the mobility of the interviewees in order to provide them with instrumental support. Indeed, although they were located in countries other than those in which the interviewees currently were, transnational family members travelled across borders in order to help them *in situ*, regardless of their degree of mobility. When Fabio moved from Denmark, where he had just finished his PhD, to the United States, where he was about to start a postdoc, his parents travelled from Italy to Denmark to attend his PhD defence and help him move out. Then, joined by Fabio's brother, they all flew to the United States and helped Fabio settle down in his new place:

My parents actually came for the defence, and they also helped me move out and all these things. [...] My parents actually packed everything, because then I also realized that we shipped stuff that could have stayed in Denmark [...]. My head was somewhere else because of the thesis, the defence and whatever. So they did that, and my father took care of booking the plane tickets to come to the US. We all came together. [...] So, yes, they helped me a lot. And when we came here, I looked on Craigslist for houses, or for places, and when I chose one they helped me move in all my stuff and clean everything up. (Network interview)

Transnational family ties also provided another type of instrumental support when they travelled to help care for the interviewees' children. Living in Switzerland with his wife and child, Marc appreciated his father-in-law's readiness to travel from Denmark for that purpose.

Similarly, Irina, who moved to Switzerland for a position after she had obtained her PhD in Finland, received support from her mother, who travelled from Russia in order to help with the baby when Irina returned to work after her maternity leave. Making this type of resource available is obviously demanding. Nevertheless, the academics' degree of mobility does not influence the propensity for close transnational family members to provide interviewees with on-hand practical support. Rather, such support is contingent on alters' opportunity to travel across borders (for instance in terms of time – e.g. being retired – right to enter the country, willingness to travel, health and financial circumstances). Moreover, the frequency of such support is linked to the geographical distance between ego and alter, which renders such transnational support regular or occasional.

These examples show that academics' mobility triggers cross-border moves on the part of close transnational family ties. Lisa's experience demonstrates that this satellite mobility may be quite complex. After repeated mobility episodes in Europe and to the United States, Lisa moved to Switzerland for a professorship. She and her children subsequently relocated in Switzerland. Her husband, however, kept his job in Germany and spent half a week in Switzerland and the other half in Germany. To overcome the insufficient day care, Lisa relied on her mother's help to take care of their children:

We have three days in day care, and I'm very lucky that my mother comes down for two days a week right now [...] from Germany. That's quite a commitment on my mother's part, right? (Biographical interview)

Her husband's flexible work schedule also helped make this family arrangement possible. When a child was sick, for instance, he could decide to work from home or go to work on another day. Being flexible as well, Lisa could then take turns with him. As Lisa herself emphasized, her

mobility would not have been possible if members of her network had not also been mobile: her children, who moved with her; her husband, who commuted weekly between Germany and Switzerland; and her mother, who travelled to take care of her grandchildren.

These results demonstrate the need to incorporate familial relationships and wider social networks into the study of career trajectories. Indeed, academics engaging in cross-border mobility to pursue their career do not move as isolated individuals, nor are they isolated when they seek to reconcile their professional and family lives. Other people in their network partake in the decision-making process and the arrangements deriving from it. In this sense, family and friendship networks might be considered indirect academic social capital as they enable academics to pursue their career abroad.

Transnationally mobile professors and co-presence encounters

The normative imperative of mobility stems notably from the belief that mobility allows academics to build transnational academic networks. The narrative data, however, show that interviewees often established relationships with transnational professors in contexts in which they were not necessarily mobile themselves. This finding shows that transnational academic networks may also develop in other ways. While we do not dispute that transnational mobility (experience abroad) may be fruitful in many ways, we question the assumption that holding a position (or conducting fellowship activities) abroad necessarily leads to more academic social capital than positions or fellowships that do not involve a transnational move. Furthermore, non-mobile early-career academics may develop transnational networks through the mobility of other (higher-ranked) academics, and may be able to capitalize on these relationships at a later point.

Enzo is an emblematic example of a low-mobile academic who developed useful transnational relationships with professors. Enzo was born and educated in Italy. He did one stay in France and another in the United States during his undergraduate studies, but he otherwise completed all of his academic education at the same prestigious institution in Italy, including a short postdoc. He then moved to the United States, where he had obtained a tenure-track professorship. Enzo considered his relationships with four professors particularly helpful at that stage of his career. Two transnational professors from the United States were particularly involved and advised Enzo throughout the application process. Recalling one of them, Enzo explained:

[He] basically coached me on how to handle the interview process, on how to prepare for questions that concerned teaching [...]. [He] had me do mock interviews, and then told me that I had to study syllabi, so I did spend a lot of time studying syllabi from American universities that I found online, and tried to adapt my ideal syllabus to those that I was reading online. So I was coached, and that was really essential, as I found out later [...]. I know that my colleagues, my current colleagues, were particularly impressed with the way I handled the questions that concerned teaching. They did not expect a European who had never taught in the US before to be so well prepared. (Biographical interview)

As well, Enzo stated that all four letters of recommendation were from professors in and/or from the United States. In addition to the two above-mentioned US professors, those letters came from the former supervisor of his undergraduate stay in the United States and from his PhD advisor. What is interesting here is how Enzo met and developed ties with these four professors. Enzo's PhD advisor was from the United States. He held a dual-professorship and

was teaching in Italy and the United States. Enzo met him in Italy, in the institution where he studied, and the transnational mobility of this professor was therefore crucial in his encounter with Enzo. Second, Enzo met the two professors who helped him throughout the application process while they were visiting his institution in Italy. Indeed, throughout his PhD studies, Enzo had often met with US scholars who visited his university:

[My PhD advisor] would always invite American scholars to come to give talks, and since he was so busy, he always asked me to look after them, so I established other relationships with them. (Biographical interview)

After Enzo's first encounter with one of the US professors, their relationship developed further, as the professor became a member of Enzo's dissertation committee. The other US professor happened to be in Italy again for a sabbatical precisely when Enzo was applying for professorships. Enzo's relationship with the fourth professor was one that he established through his own mobility, during an undergraduate stay in the United States.

Enzo's case echoes other interviewees' experiences: they frequently developed relationships with professors who themselves engaged in cross-border moves, whether for sabbaticals or to teach at summer schools, take up new appointments, attend conferences, or give talks. Through their mobility, these established academics were an active part of the transnationalized dimension of academia and made it possible for even not (so) mobile academics to experience physical co-presence (Urry 2003) and establish relationships with them.

Two mechanisms seem to have played an important role in Enzo's ability to establish useful relationships with transnational professors. First, the university (or department) he studied at evidently benefits from a reputation that ensures regular visits from established scholars from

the United States. Had he studied at a peripheral university, he would not have been able to develop academic social capital to the same extent without being mobile. Second, he had the opportunity to develop personal relationships with these visiting professors while he was spending time with them, not only in academic settings, but also in more informal contexts. Having established these informal ties, Enzo could count on these professors' support when he needed it. This network dynamic relates to what is commonly referred to as "old-boy networks". Research has shown the benefits associated with access to such informal networks with high-status (male) alters, and the ways in which such networks are gendered or racialized (McDonald 2011), as women and minorities tend to be excluded from informal conversations and opportunities that make it possible to establish these kinds of relationships.

6.2.5. Conclusion

This special issue asks how qualitative SNA can offer new opportunities for transnational migration research. Our response to this question is threefold. First, our empirical study does not support the assumption that transnational mobility results in enhanced academic social capital. While early-career academics who experience a greater degree of transnational mobility do indeed have more transnational networks than academics with fewer mobility experiences, their higher proportion of transnational ties consists mainly of family and friends, not professional contacts. This finding is important for two reasons. First, it reveals a blind spot in the study of academics' transnational mobility – the role of family and friendship ties. Second, and more importantly, it challenges the common-sense assumption that transnational mobility is an indicator of academic excellence, an assumption that funding institutions and universities in several European countries draw upon when they formally require experience abroad to apply for funding or postdoctoral appointments (see also Ackers 2008).

Second, our study demonstrates the advantages of a mixed-method design involving qualitative SNA. The triangulation of the network data with the narratives of the biographical and network interviews makes it possible to uncover the dynamics underlying the networks identified. The higher proportion of transnational ties among highly mobile academics' networks is due to old and well-established ties with family members and friends in the country of departure or sometimes elsewhere. These ties become transnational following the mobility of the academics and they continue to be invested, emotionally and time wise, throughout the academics' mobility trajectories. These results are not surprising. Migration scholars have long shown the importance of kinship and friendship in migration processes (Boyd 1989; Gold 2005). However, research on academic mobility has often neglected these aspects and presented academics as isolated economic actors, and not as individuals embedded in social networks. If we want to understand current transformations in globalizing labour markets like academia, we must include all social networks and fields, and not just professional ones, in our analysis.

Furthermore, family members sometimes become mobile themselves due to early-career academics' mobility, a phenomenon we refer to as *satellite mobility*. These family members engage in mobility in order to support the academics with childcare and other practical and emotional needs. While migration-induced care chains (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Parrenas 2001) have raised considerable interest among scholars, these kinds of *mobile* transnational care arrangements have rarely been theorized. Yet the support early-career academics receive through the satellite mobility of family members is sometimes decisive in enabling them to be mobile, and can thus be considered indirect academic social capital.

Third, this analysis calls into question the normative imperative of mobility from another angle. We have shown that transnational academic networks can also be established in ways other

than through the mobility of the immediate academics concerned. It has been argued that non-migrants or sedentary people can be transnational and have transnational relationships within their networks (Carling 2008; Dahinden 2013). We have built upon this insight to gain a deeper understanding of the interconnections between actors' transnationalism and their (im)mobility practices. Because people with whom a mobile individual is connected are also moving, focusing solely on a given individual's mobility only imperfectly reflects the transnationality of that individual's network. Academics with low (or no) mobility may be able to establish equally important and powerful transnational ties with other academics due to the latter's transnational mobility. This physical co-presence allows early-career academics to build up academic social capital without necessarily being mobile themselves, if they are at renowned institutions pertaining to global North-dominated knowledge networks.

Our results raise two issues that require further investigation. First, longitudinal methods could open up new avenues of research on this type of mobility by capturing longer-term dynamics in academic networks. Second, it would be useful to conduct comparative research including academics who do not engage in this form of mobility. The analysis of the networks of non-mobile academics could provide deeper insights into the questions raised in this article.

Finally, our results are highly relevant politically. In Switzerland, for instance, most funding schemes for early-career academics require transnational mobility, whether in the past or the immediate future. We believe that actors in charge of academic policy may want to reconsider their strategy in light of our results.

6.2.6. References

Ackers, Louise. 2008. "Internationalisation, Mobility and Metrics: A New Form of Indirect Discrimination?" *Minerva* 46(4):411-35.

- Ackers, Louise, and Liz Oliver. 2007. "From Flexicurity to Flexequality?: The Impact of the Fixed-Term Contract Provisions on Employment in Science Research." *International Studies of Management and Organization* 37(1):53-79.
- Bauder, Harald. 2015. "The International Mobility of Academics : A Labour Market Perspective." *International Migration* 53(1):83-96.
- Bauder, Harald, Charity-Ann Hannan, and Omar Lujan. 2017. "International Experience in the Academic Field: Knowledge Production, Symbolic Capital, and Mobility Fetishism." *Population, Space and Place* 23(6):13 p.
- Bernela, Bastien, and Béatrice Milard. 2016. "Studying Co-Authorship Network Dynamics throughout Geographical Trajectories of Researchers: What Part Does Mobility Play?" *HAL : archives ouvertes*:23 p.
- Bilecen, Başak, and Anna Amelina. 2017. "A Network Approach to Migrant's Transnational Biographies." in *No. 12*, edited by Diversity and Migration" Working Paper Series "Gender. Frankfurt am Main: Goethe Universität.
- Bilecen, Başak, and Christoph Van Mol. 2017. "Introduction: International Academic Mobility and Inequalities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1241-55.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1980. "Le capital social : notes provisoires." *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 31:2-3.
- Boyd, Monica. 1989. "Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New agendas." *International migration review* 23(3):638-70.
- Carling, Jorgen. 2008. "The Human Dynamics of Migrant Transnationalism." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31(8):1452-77.
- Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94(Suppl.):95-120.
- Dahinden, Janine. 2005. *Prishtina - Schlieren : albanische Migrationsnetzwerke im transnationalen Raum*. Zürich: Seismo.
- . 2013. "Cities, Migrant Incorporation, and Ethnicity: A Network Perspective on Boundary Work." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 14(1):39-60.
- . 2017. "Transnationalism Reloaded: the Historical Trajectory of a Concept." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(9):1474-85.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Arlie Russell Hochschild (Eds.). 2003. *Global Woman : Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. London: Granta Books.
- Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Jeff Goodwin. 1994. "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency." *American Journal of Sociology* 99(6):1411-54.
- Faist, Thomas, Margrit Fauser, and Eveline Reisenauer. 2013. *Transnational Migration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Flap, Henk. 2002. "No Man is an Island: The Research Programme of a Social Capital Theory." Pp. 29-59 in *Conventions and Structures in Economic Organization : Markets, Networks and Hierarchies*, edited by Olivier Favereau and Emmanuel Lazega. Cheltenham [etc.]: E. Elgar.

- Fontes, Margarida, Pedro Videira, and Teresa Calapez. 2013. "The Impact of Long-term Scientific Mobility on the Creation of Persistent Knowledge Networks." *Mobilities* 8(3):440-65.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda Green Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton. 1992. "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration." Pp. 1-24 in *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity and Nationalism Reconsidered*, edited by Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Christina Szanton Blanc. New York: New York Academy of Science.
- Gold, Seven J. 2005. "Migrant Networks: A Summary and Critique of Relations Approaches to International Migration." Pp. 257-85 in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Inequalities*, edited by Mary Romero and Eric Margolis: Blackwell Publishing.
- Herz, Andreas, and Claudia Olivier. 2012. "Transnational Social Networks—Current Perspectives." *Transnational Social Review* 2(2):115-19.
- Leemann, Regula Julia, and Stefan Boes. 2015. "Transnational Academic Mobility from the Perspective of Gender Inequality: Researcher Flows and Knowledge Construction in Europe." Pp. 201-20 in *Shaping of European Education: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, edited by Martin Lawn and Romuald Normand. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Lin, Nan. 1999. "Building a Network Theory of Social Capital." *Connections* 22(1):28-51.
- Lubbers, Miranda Jessica, Ashton M. Verdery, and José Luis Molina. 2018. "Social Networks and Transnational Social Fields: A Review of Quantitative and Mixed-Methods Approaches." *International migration review* 0(0):1-28.
- Lutter, Mark, and Martin Schröder. 2016. "Who becomes a tenured professor, and why? Panel data evidence from German sociology, 1980-2013." *Research Policy* 45(5):999-1013.
- McDonald, Steve. 2011. "What's in the 'old boys' network? Accessing social capital in gendered and racialized networks." *Social Networks* 33(4):317-30.
- Morano-Foadi, Sonia. 2005. "Scientific Mobility, Career Progression, and Excellence in the European Research Area." *International Migration* 43(5):133-62.
- Parrenas, Rhacel Salazar (Ed.). 2001. *Servants of globalization : women, migration and domestic work*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Perry, Brea L., Bernice A. Pescosolido, and Stephen P. Borgatti. 2018. *Egocentric network analysis : foundations, methods, and models*. Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press.
- Raghuram, Parvati. 2004. "The difference that skills make: gender, family migration strategies and regulated labour markets." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(2):303-21.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2007. "Biographical Research." Pp. 48-64 in *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber F. Gubrium, and David Silverman. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Ryan, Louise, and Alessio D'Angelo. 2018. "Changing times: Migrants' social network analysis and the challenges of longitudinal research." *Social Networks* 53:148-58.
- Ryan, Louise, and J. O. N. Mulholland. 2014. "French connections: the networking strategies of French highly skilled migrants in London." *Global Networks* 14(2):148-66.

- Scellato, Giuseppe, Chiara Franzoni, and Paula Stephan. 2015. "Migrant scientists and international networks." *Research Policy* 44(1):108-20.
- Schaer, Martine, Janine Dahinden, and Alina Toader. 2017. "Transnational Mobility among Early-Career Academics: Gendered Aspects of Negotiations and Arrangements within Heterosexual Couples." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1292-307.
- Schweizer, Thomas. 1996. *Muster sozialer Ordnung. Netzwerkanalyse als Fundament der Sozialethnologie*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag.
- Urry, John. 2003. "Social Networks, Travel and Talk." *The British Journal of Sociology* 54(2):155-75.
- van den Brink, Marieke, and Yvonne Benschop. 2014. "Gender in Academic Networking: The Role of Gatekeepers in Professorial Recruitment." *Journal of Management Studies* 51(3):460-92.
- Van der Gaag, Martin, and Tom Snijders. 2004. "Proposal for the Measurement of Individual Social Capital." Pp. 199-218 in *Creation and Returns of Social Capital. A New Research Program*, edited by Henk Flap and Beate Völker. London and New York: Routledge.
- Wang, Jue, Rosalie Hooi, Andrew X. Li, and Meng-hsuan Chou. 2019. "Collaboration patterns of mobile academics: The impact of international mobility." *Science and Public Policy* 46(3):450-62.

CHAPTER 7

Social ties and transnational career moves

Schaer, Martine (in review). Early-career academics' transnational moves: The role of social networks in accessing academic positions abroad. Submitted for publication in Elif Keskiner, Michael Eve & Louise Ryan (Eds.), *Revisiting Granovetter: new conceptualisations of the social ties of migrants and their children in the labour market*. IMISCOE-Springer Series.

7.1. Foreword to the article

This contribution is part of an edited book to be published in the peer-reviewed IMISCOE Research Series under the title *Revisiting Granovetter: new conceptualisations of the social ties of migrants and their children in the labour market*. The book is edited by Elif Keskiner, Michael Eve and Louise Ryan. The manuscript included in this dissertation has been reviewed internally by the editors and other authors contributing to the book. This version was sent for external review together with the other chapters comprised in the book proposal. I presented preliminary results of the qualitative social network analysis on which this contribution is based at the LAPS – Work in Progress Session held on May 17, 2020 at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

7.2. Early-career academics' transnational moves: The role of vertical social ties in accessing academic positions abroad

7.2.1. Introduction

Moving across borders to take up academic positions abroad is one form of occupational mobility (or migration), one that is often presented as constitutive of an academic career. At

the same time, academia has become an increasingly transnationalised and competitive marketplace in which recognition of one's academic achievements is a key rule of the game (Münch 2014) and recruiting procedures involve recommendations from academic referees (Bagilhole and Goode 2001).

Research has highlighted the importance of social relationships in employment and career processes and the role of networks in the reproduction of gender inequalities. Social-network scholars have shown that even when women occupy positions similar to those of men and have access to comparable networks, their networks are less resourceful than men's (Gray et al. 2007; McDonald 2011; McGuire 2002). Occupational and career research has brought to light the interactional mechanisms underlying these differences. In particular, it has shown that gendered representations of men as more competent than women are (re)produced in academia, in interpersonal interactions and workplace practices, and affect the distribution of social resources in different institutional and national contexts (Bagilhole and Goode 2001; Fisher and Kinsey 2014; van den Brink and Benschop 2014). However, there is still a lack of understanding of the gendered mechanisms through which social resources are distributed within early-career academics' transnational social networks.

Drawing on biographical and qualitative egocentric network interviews conducted with early-career academics of different nationalities working in Switzerland or the United States at the time of the interviews, this chapter investigates the distribution of career-related resources provided by higher-ranked academics to early-career scholars within a transnationalised occupational field. The research question guiding the analysis is: *When early-career academics are preparing for their upcoming career move abroad, how does gender affect the distribution of academic career-related resources provided by higher-ranked academics in their networks?*

To address this question, I focus on the relationships between early-career scholars and higher-ranked academics, the contexts in which these relationships develop, and the resources that circulate within them. I do so by mobilising the concepts of *tie strength* (Granovetter 1973; Granovetter 1983) and *tie direction* (Ryan 2011; Ryan 2016), which I develop further by showing that the strength of vertical ties is underpinned by subtle and hardly visible gendered mechanisms.⁴⁹

The chapter begins with an outline of the theoretical background. It then describes the methodology before discussing the empirical findings. The analysis reveals that subtle gendered practices generate variations in the distribution of academic resources, but also that digitalisation and institutional resources such as fellowships and dual-academic-career support may help counter the influence of vertical ties and their gendered effects.

7.2.2. Theoretical background: Social networks, job acquisition, and gender

Network research has demonstrated the importance of social relationships in employment and career processes. Granovetter's (1973) ground-breaking work about the value of weak ties in finding a job led to significant research on how individual action benefits from access to and the use of social networks, in labour markets and beyond. Granovetter (1973) defined tie strength on the basis of the intensity, frequency, intimacy, and reciprocity of contacts, and similarities among the actors involved (see also Ryan 2016, Keskiner, Eve, and Ryan this book). According to Granovetter, weak ties are useful in getting a job if they connect to high-status actors who are "well placed in the occupational structure" (1983: 207). In these conditions, he argues, weak ties are more likely than strong ties to act as "bridges" and provide valuable

⁴⁹ Thus, this chapter focuses on the processes underlying the *distribution* of academic social resources within a transnationalised occupational field. It does not address the subsequent *effectiveness* of the resources early-career academics received.

resources to actors at the other end of the relationship. It follows that weak ties are not all equally valuable (not all weak ties act as bridges), and that strong ties may act as bridges as well, although Granovetter suggests that this is rather unlikely (1983). In her study on Polish migrants in London, however, Ryan (2016) showed that strong ties do indeed act as bridges and provide useful resources for Polish migrants' professional prospects.

Questioning whether tie strength is an adequate measure to capture the relative positionings of the actors involved in a relationship, Ryan (2011; Ryan 2016) has proposed new ways to conceptualise bridging ties based on their direction, namely their verticality – connecting actors differently positioned in a social hierarchy – and their horizontality – connecting actors in similar social locations. Ryan contends that “the most advantageous ties are vertical, bridging substantial distance, connecting an actor to someone who has more resources” (2016: 4). While it is theoretically fruitful to introduce tie direction in order to account for social distance – because it makes it possible to distinguish analytically between relationship quality per se and the relative positioning of the actors involved – Ryan's conceptualisation of tie direction does not adequately address the role of gender dynamics in actors' relative positioning. The first aim of this chapter is thus to contribute to current debates on tie strength and direction by “bringing gender in” (Pessar and Mahler 2003).

Since the 1980s, social-network scholars have demonstrated the ways in which networks are gendered, uncovering differences between the structure, composition, and effects of men's and women's networks (McPherson and Smith-Lovin 1982; Moore 1990). They have shown that interpersonal networks are marked by homogeneity, since actors tend to establish relationships with others who share some similar characteristics. Furthermore, social networks do not merely connect “concrete” actors, but are also “networks of meanings” (White 1992),

because they convey ideas, norms, and values (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994). As a result, gender representations circulate within networks and are (re)produced or transformed by social actors in their interactions.

More recently, network scholars have begun investigating the role of networks in the reproduction of gender (and other social) inequalities in labour markets and career progression. Their research has demonstrated that structural differences between men's and women's networks contribute to gendered career paths (Ibarra 1997). It has also found that even when women occupy positions similar to those of men and have access to comparable networks, they receive less instrumental support from their colleagues than men do (McGuire 2002). Drawing on a nation-wide survey of employed individuals in the United States, McDonald (2011) highlighted complex variations in accessing social resources useful in getting a job. He found no difference in the number of unsolicited job leads received by men and women with structurally similar male networks, but observed that male job seekers received more job-finding assistance than their female counterparts, indicating that male network members were more likely to provide this kind of support to men than to women.

These and other studies (e.g. Gray et al. 2007; McDonald and Day 2010) have found that women's professional networks are less resourceful than men's and indicate persistent gender inequalities in labour markets and workplaces. This phenomenon needs to be studied further. In particular, the aforementioned studies predominantly adopt quantitative methodologies, and there is still a lack of understanding of the gendered mechanisms through which professional resources are distributed within social networks in a transnational context. The second aim of this chapter is to fill this gap by employing insights from career and organisational theory in a qualitative social-network analysis.

Career theory and organisational research have generated a significant stream of research about the role of social relationships in career processes and their implications in terms of gender inequality (Gersick, Bartunek and Dutton 2000). In her study on the corporate workplace, Kanter (1977 [1993]) showed that stable and long-term ties with sponsors were crucial to career promotion but excluded women. This work inspired further research, including studies on the academic workplace. Rose (1985; 1989) analyzed the professional networks of assistant professors in the United State. She found no difference in the size of men's and women's networks, but she did find that women's networks were less effective than men's at helping them build a professional reputation. In the UK, Bagilhole and Goode (2001) showed that behind the apparent neutrality of individual merit, academic men benefited from relationships with other men. This social support remained largely invisible, allowing men to appear self-sufficient, whereas women appeared "needy" when they tried to develop their own support networks. In UK universities, Fisher and Kinsey (2014) found evidence of male homosocial bonding, which remained unacknowledged by the actors but contributed to the promotion of male interests. Van den Brink and Benschop (2014) demonstrated that networking practices in the recruitment of professors in the Netherlands were underpinned by a masculine model of career success that contributed to the persistence of gender inequalities in academia.

This chapter builds on this research in scrutinising the subtle and often hardly visible gendered mechanisms that frame the ways in which social relationships develop in the workplace and how resources flow through these networks. Focusing on the practices of the actors makes it possible to illuminate gendered mechanisms in social-network processes and how they affect tie strength and tie direction.

This chapter adopts a constructivist gender perspective. *Gender* is not used here as a biological characteristic or as a categorical attribute of actors. The term refers to the social construction of the feminine and the masculine, a dichotomous and relational matrix underpinned by further normative assumptions about cisgender identity and heterosexuality. Gender relates to identities and subjectivities, but it also produces systems of domination and subordination (Butler 1990; Héritier 1996). It involves norms and practices through which power is implemented and inequalities are (re)produced. Gender is reflected in the division of labour; in social institutions and networks; in social representations, ascriptions, and behavioural expectations; and in general in the social status of men and women.

7.2.3. Methodology

This chapter draws on biographical and qualitative egocentric network interviews conducted with 14 early-career academics at the University of Zurich in Switzerland, and 16 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in the United States. I followed a purposive sampling strategy, including academics who had obtained their PhD no more than ten years earlier, had moved to a different country at least once after their PhD, and represented maximum variation in terms of sex, academic position, academic discipline, nationality, mobility trajectory, and family situation. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 present the background characteristics of the interviewees. I met each interviewee twice. I conducted a biographical narrative interview (Rosenthal 2007) in the first meeting and a qualitative network interview (Dahinden 2005) in the second. The network interviews were intended to capture the *mobility network* of the interviewees (*egos*), namely all persons (*alters*) involved in their mobility decision-making process, as well as those who supported them during their stay abroad and, if applicable, after their return. Concretely, the interviewees were invited to consider all kinds of ties, close or distant, inside or outside academia (e.g. family members, partners, friends, academic peers,

supervisors, people from institutional programmes). The interview procedure included a name generator and a name interpreter, through which I sought to trigger narratives about the elicited alters in order to understand their relevance in the different contexts in which they were mentioned, as well as the quality and dynamics of their relationship with the interviewees.

Table 7.1: Interviewees' age, year of PhD, and discipline

	UZH		UCLA		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
N	8	6	7	9	30
Age (at time of interview)					
29-30	1	1	0	0	2
31-35	4	2	4	4	14
36-40	2	3	2	3	10
41-45	1	0	1	2	4
Year of PhD					
2003-2006	4	1	2	1	9
2007-2010	2	3	1	4	9
2011-2013	2	2	4	4	12
Discipline					
Arts and Humanities	1	1	1	1	4
Social Sciences	3	2	2	2	9
Natural Sciences	2	5	4	3	14
Engineering and	0	0	2	1	3

All interviews were tape-recorded and fully transcribed. I reconstructed single case studies – or dual case studies when interviewees were in a relationship with another academic also included in my sample. I wrote detailed notes about the elicited networks, their composition, the nature of the relationships, and the ways in which interviewees were – or were not – able to capitalise on them.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The interviews were conducted in English or French. In this chapter, quotations originally in French have been translated into English. People's names are fictitious, and the names of specific institutions and locations have been withheld to ensure interviewees' anonymity.

Table 7.2: *Interviewees' countries of origin and PhD*

		UZH	UCLA	Total
N		14	16	30
Country where grew up				
<i>Europe</i>	Belgium	1	1	2
	Denmark	1	0	1
	France	1	2	3
	Germany	2	1	3
	Italy	1	2	3
	Poland	0	1	1
	Sweden	0	2	2
	Switzerland	3	1	4
	UK	1	1	2
<i>North America</i>	US	2	2	4
<i>Central and South America</i>	Argentina	1	0	1
	Mexico	0	1	1
<i>Other countries</i>	India	0	1	1
	Israel	0	1	1
	Russia	1	0	1
Country of PhD				
<i>Europe</i>	Austria	0	1	1
	Belgium	0	1	1
	Denmark	0	1	1
	Finland/Russia ¹	1	0	1
	France/Switzerland ²	1	0	1
	Germany	1	0	1
	Italy	1	1	2
	Netherlands	0	1	1
	Sweden	0	2	2
	Switzerland	4	3	7
	UK	1	2	3
<i>North America</i>	US	5	2	7
<i>Other countries</i>	Israel	0	1	1
	Mexico	0	1	1

¹ The interviewee who obtained her PhD in Finland had a previous PhD from Russia.² Degree awarded jointly by a French and a Swiss institution.

The methodological design of this study avoids methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002) by not focusing solely on one national group. Instead, I endeavoured to select a diverse sample of academics with different geographical backgrounds and trajectories. However, academics from the Global North make up the large majority of my sample (see Table 7.2), as research participants predominantly come from European and North American

countries (25 out of 30), and even more of them obtained their PhD in Europe or North America (28 out of 30). The difficulty in finding academics at the University of Zurich or UCLA who had earned their PhD in a Global South country before pursuing their academic career in the Global North reflects global economic and geopolitical inequalities (see e.g. Bauder, Lujan and Hannan 2018).

7.2.4. Vertical ties matter but not all are equally valuable

The analysis revealed that persons mentioned by the interviewees as having given them academic support in obtaining a position abroad were almost all professors or higher-ranked academics with equivalent positions. These were often interviewees' former or current advisors, mentors, or more distant scholars at the same institution or elsewhere. Relative to the interviewees, they were vertical connections who occupied advantageous locations, in particular in terms of occupational status and reputation.

The role played by these vertical ties in the academics' transnational career moves varied between interviewees. While some interviewees attributed a prominent place to higher-ranked academics in their stories, others portrayed them as discreet members of their network. A deeper analysis revealed that these variations were shaped along gender lines and in combination with other resources to which the interviewees had access.

Multiplex vertical ties

This sub-section presents the cases of Enzo and Marc, who were able to rely on multiplex vertical support at the time of their most recent transnational career moves. Their stories echo the experiences of other male interviewees.

After his PhD and a brief postdoc in Italy, Enzo moved to the United States, where he had obtained a tenure-track professorship. During the interviews, Enzo emphasised that he viewed

his relationships with several (male) professors in or from the United States as particularly helpful at that stage of his career. At a time when Enzo had felt utterly disillusioned by the Italian academic system, a US professor encouraged him to apply in the United States. He later invited Enzo to present his work in the United States and paid for his travel expenses. Eventually, he gave Enzo personalised advice and feedback at various stages of the application process:

He looked at my materials, he helped me put together a CV that was more in line with American conventions, and he looked at my writing sample. He really knocked himself out to help me out. (Bio_In)

The two had become acquainted during the professor's earlier visit to Enzo's university in Italy. Throughout his PhD studies, Enzo had multiple occasions to meet US scholars invited by his PhD advisor, who would then ask him to look after these guests during their visit. This is how Enzo met another US professor who later happened to be in Italy once again for a sabbatical precisely when Enzo was applying for positions in the United States. Enzo explained that this other US professor also helped him during this process:

[He] coached me on how to handle the interview process, on how to prepare for questions that concerned teaching. [... He] had me take mock interviews, and then told me that I had to study syllabi, so I did spend a lot of time studying syllabi that I found online from American universities, and tried to adapt, you know, my ideal syllabus to those that I was reading online. (Bio_In)

Before his move to Switzerland, Marc similarly benefitted from multiple and repeated support from higher-ranked academics even though he was not looking for a job at the time. Lin (2008: 53) refers to this process as the informal workings of social capital, in which "ties in social

networks [may] provide routine but unsolicited job information, which may eventually become critical in getting a better job, without the actor's actually searching for that or indeed any job". Originally from Belgium, Marc had moved to the United States for his PhD. He then went to the UK for a postdoc, before moving again to take up a more senior (fixed-term) position in Switzerland. Exchanges about Marc between a professor in the UK and another one in Switzerland resulted in Marc's receiving a direct job offer from the Swiss-based professor, which Marc declined. Shortly afterwards, the Swiss-based professor contacted Marc again, informing him about another vacancy at a Swiss university and providing him with additional information, including the composition of the hiring committee. Marc recalled:

[The Swiss-based professor] told me: "There's this vacancy, you should apply for it; these are the members of the committee". He helped me a little, he gave me some advice. And I know that at this point, I sent my application like any other candidate. But I also knew that I had someone behind [me], following up, and obviously, this increases your chances significantly. So it's not that he made his contacts work for me, he just... I submitted my application and was assessed like everyone else. (Net_In)

While Marc readily acknowledged that being able to set the scene in advance helped him prepare adequately and reduce uncertainty, he did not think it distorted the selection process, but underlined instead that his competence was assessed fairly, the same as for any other applicant. He concluded that, as he said he later observed, the Swiss-based professor was simply "very good at identifying suitable candidates".

Enzo and Marc stated that, except for recommendation letters, they did not receive support from their PhD advisors. Four referees wrote recommendations for Enzo: the two

aforementioned US professors, his PhD advisor in Italy, and another former advisor in the United States. According to Enzo, their reputations and connections to US academia played in his favour.

One characteristic of Enzo's and Marc's support networks is that several male professors provided them with a combination of valuable resources throughout the process. Enzo was encouraged by one professor to apply in the United States, which enabled him to embrace career prospects he had not dared to consider. In addition, that same professor invited Enzo to present his work in the United States, giving him the opportunity to gain professional visibility with a new audience and providing financial support to that end. Later, Enzo could count on repeated advice and assistance from this and another professor to adequately prepare and present himself as a valuable candidate. By word of mouth between professors, Marc first received a direct job offer, followed by information about another vacancy and guidance during the application process.

Another crucial characteristic of their support networks is the repeated nature of some professors' support, who provided recurring support during various stages of the process and maintained regular contact with the interviewees. Enzo explicitly stated that he was "constantly in touch" with one professor during the application and hiring processes, and both Enzo and Marc described numerous occasions on which they received encouragement, information, advice, and other resources from vertical ties with male higher-ranked academics.

A third characteristic is the high degree of commitment shown by the professors who supported them. As Enzo said of one of those professors, "He really knocked himself out [...]". In both cases, the interviews reveal that the professors not merely possessed resources that were useful to the interviewees, but also were eager to share them.

In sum, these characteristics indicate that vertical ties, in particular if they include higher-ranked academics other than PhD supervisors, provide valuable resources when undertaking a transnational career move. At the time of resource transmission, the relationships between early-career interviewees and supportive professors seem to correspond to what Granovetter (1973; Granovetter 1983) and other scholars have defined as strong ties, especially when one considers multiplexity (multiple types of support provided by a same alter), time (contact frequency), and commitment (willingness to provide support). Furthermore, these vertical ties are not only upward-oriented (with academics occupying higher positions in the academic hierarchy), but also outward-oriented, insofar as they provide useful resources in finding a position beyond one's current institution.

The uneven distribution of vertical support

Comparing these stories about strong support from higher-ranked (male) academics with the stories of other interviewees reveals the gendered workings of these vertical relationships.

Reaching the end of her PhD in Finland, Irina attended an international conference at which, she recalled, a (male) professor informed her about an upcoming vacancy at a Swiss university:

He told me: "The advertisement isn't out yet, but I want to let you know about this opening [in Switzerland]". And I didn't know then that he would actually be part of the selection committee, which he was. And then, after a couple of months [...] the advertisement was on [a website...] where all sorts of conference announcements and job advertisements like this get put. (Net_In)

It was not the information given by the professor to Irina that was valuable – shortly afterwards, Irina saw the vacancy advertised online – so much as the personal encouragement that came along with it:

He was just friendly and encouraging, that was important for me at that moment. [...] I was probably just a bit hesitant because the job description was a little bit broad in that they didn't mention, for instance, whether they were looking for an assistant or an associate or a full professor. [...] But maybe because [he] told me that it was okay for me to apply in the first place, I wasn't hesitant any longer, because I knew they'd consider me anyway. (Net_In)

The incentive effect of this encouragement in the initial steps of Irina's job search echoes Enzo's experience. In both cases, they felt legitimized to apply for the position available. In Irina's case, however, the professor provided her with "one-time" support, whereas the encouragement Enzo received was the first of a series of supportive resources from his vertical connection. Furthermore, although the professor who informed Irina was part of the hiring committee, he did not, in contrast to Marc's vertical connection, provide further guidance on how to prepare for the interview process or tell her who else was on the committee. This is not to say that this professor did not support Irina's candidacy during committee discussions behind closed doors: he might well have. But in their interactions with these younger scholars, and in the amount of resources they provided directly, the professors acted quite differently in Irina's and Marc's cases, albeit in other regards the two situations are rather similar.

Another interviewee, Nadia, also mentioned a useful and opportune resource provided by a professor when she was finishing her PhD in the Netherlands. While she had started looking for a postdoc abroad too late and was approaching the end of her PhD without having landed the next position, a visiting professor at her university offered her to join his laboratory in the United States. She explained:

The postdoc at [US university] just fell in my lap really, because my then-future postdoc advisor was just spending a year [at my university], and so he said, “Why don’t you come with me?” And so I was, “Okay, I’ll think about it”, and [laughs], but then, you know, there wasn’t much thinking to do. [...] That was pretty much the only thing available at the time. (Net_In)

This excerpt describes another instance of one-time support from a single professor. While Nadia was able to capitalise on her relationship with the visiting professor, her narrative portrays a very different situation from the ones depicted by Enzo and Marc. Again, the point here is not to assess the effectiveness of the support provided, but to gain insights into what is at play in interactions between early-career academics and higher-ranked scholars who support them.

Luc, from France, provides another example that contrasts with the support received by Enzo and Marc. As he was finishing his PhD in the United States, his (female) PhD supervisor recommended him to a (male) colleague in Switzerland. She had lived in Switzerland herself and had known this colleague for many years. She seized the opportunity of a conference to tell him about Luc, as Luc explained:

He had just settled and was looking for postdocs, so they started discussing it and [my PhD advisor] told him: “I have this PhD candidate who will graduate soon. Why not set up an interview?” And a few months later, there was a conference in [Canada], which my PhD advisor and this professor were attending, and so I went there too, for an interview, rather informal. [...] He contacted me a few weeks later and asked me whether I was interested in the position, and I answered [yes]. (Net_In)

Taken together, these experiences illuminate different ways in which higher-ranked professors may support young academics' career moves, showing more or less commitment, offering single or multiple types of resources, on a one-off basis or repeatedly. These variations in vertical support raise questions about the nature of the relationships between early-career and higher-status academics. To understand why vertical ties provide better returns in some cases than others, I now turn to the contexts in which interviewees established first and subsequent contacts with higher-ranked academics.

The strength of informal socialising

The interviewees who benefited from strong multiplex ties appeared to have numerous opportunities to develop more personal relationships with professors in contexts beyond formal academic ones. Urged by his PhD advisor to look after invited scholars, Enzo was regularly presented with casual occasions to create personal connections with external professors and establish, as he emphasised, "other relationships with them". Marc's encounters with the Swiss- and UK-based professors also took place in informal contexts, outside the confines of the university. Marc had first met the Swiss-based professor at a summer school in the United States and later also by chance in bars and for private celebrations. Marc had also first met the UK-based professor in the United States. Afterwards, while Marc was in the UK, the two kept in touch regularly. Marc visited him on several occasions and once spent a week at his place, during which they discussed common research interests, but also personal concerns, such as Marc's frustration about his position. In brief, Enzo's and Marc's interactions with supportive professors, which took place not only in a formal academic setting, but also in informal settings, including bars and private parties, allowed them to develop more personal relationships.

In contrast, female interviewees had few, if any, opportunities to socialise informally with male professors. Nadia, for instance, met her future postdoc advisor in the department where she was doing her PhD. She did not develop a strong professional connection, let alone a more personal relationship, with him:

I hadn't worked with him. We worked on related subjects but not directly, you know. I had my PhD project [...]. He was a professor in the department, you know, he'd just arrived, or barely, and so.... (Net_In)

Irina explained that she did not personally know the professor who informed her about the vacancy in Switzerland. She made clear that she mostly knew him through his published work, and that the conference was the first time they spoke to each other.

These examples echo the experiences of other female interviewees who, when asked about the contexts in which they interacted with higher-ranked academics, mentioned summer schools, international conferences, and other academic settings such as their university department. In very rare instances, female interviewees mentioned more informal contexts. This was the case for Nicole, who, approaching the end of her PhD in Austria, met her future US postdoc advisor when he gave a talk at her university. She knew his work, and his visit was an opportunity to meet him in person. Nicole recalled that a senior female colleague in charge of the guest lectures offered her to look after him during his visit:

She told me: "He comes in three weeks, on such and such a day [...]. He'll be all yours, work it out". That's how I met him personally. During that day when I was in charge of him, he met all the students, but I had more opportunities to talk to him. Then there's always a dinner in the evening, to which students are not

always invited, but [my colleague] told me: “Come with us!” And that’s when we discussed the possibility [of me doing a postdoc in his lab]. (Net_In)

Unlike Enzo, who was regularly extended opportunities to socialise with guest professors, Nicole depicted this opportunity as a special favour that was set up with the explicit purpose of allowing her to meet and discuss postdoctoral prospects with this professor. Nicole further emphasised that thereafter her senior colleague “was always there” for her – but “from a distance”, because “she had already done enough” by letting her look after this professor during his visit. Nicole’s narrative conveys a quite different sense of entitlement to receiving support from higher-status academics from that expressed by Marc, who, after describing the personalised guidance he received, clarified that this was fair because he was subject to the same selection process as everyone else.

Other interviewees mentioned supportive female advisors. But they did not indicate encounters with female professors other than their advisors. Unsurprisingly, the interviewees’ networks comprised fewer female than male professors, reflecting the unequal distribution of professorial positions between men and women throughout academia in general (see e.g. European Commission 2019). Furthermore, the interviews do not provide examples of informal relationships between (male or female) early-career academics and female professors, or between female early-career academics and male professors.

7.2.5. Transnationalized job markets

While most interviewees applied to more than one position when preparing their next career move, some of them applied to as many openings as they could find, and in numerous countries. The interviews reveal that early-career academics in some disciplines could rely on a digitally integrated transnational marketplace, which simplified both information searching and

application processes. For example, when Fabio was looking for a postdoc after finishing his PhD in Denmark, he applied to multiple openings in Europe, the United States, Australia, and Japan. He was not sure if he was “good enough” and anxious about his chances of finding a postdoc. He was thus willing, he said, to “accept just whatever”. Fabio applied online, by means of two websites with an international scope that gathered academic openings in his field. Because the online application process was centralised and convenient, Fabio even applied to positions he would not have considered otherwise:

You can upload your files, like your application and your CV, and then you check the positions that you want to apply for so that they’re able to see your files. It’s really easy to apply through this website. You can apply to a lot of places, in that kind of mindless way: you just check [boxes]. (Net_In)

It thus came as a surprise when a renowned university in the United States contacted Fabio. He did not remember having applied there, he said: it was “just some click that you do because you have the possibility of doing it”.

Very much like Fabio, other interviewees relied on similar websites with an international scope to apply to many positions in different countries. In Jack’s field, such a website encompasses vacancies in academic, industry, and government sectors, and all employers follow the same yearly recruiting schedule. At the end of his PhD, Jack applied to 111 open positions across the world.

Other academics, in contrast, had to invest much more effort to learn about vacancies, which were advertised separately, in different media platforms, and according to different schedules. At the end of his PhD in the UK, William was worried that he would not find an academic position. Like Fabio and Jack, he had a large portfolio of applications:

I did a PhD, and then I realised that, at some point, I was going to run out of money again [laughs], and so I started applying furiously for postdoctoral [and teaching] positions. I applied to lots of places, I applied to several in the UK, five or six; I applied to five or six jobs in the States, a couple in France, three in Germany, one in the Netherlands, one in Belgium. (Bio_In)

He found the job openings online, but there were no websites that integrated the employment market in his field. The process of finding (and applying to) vacancies was therefore much more complicated and, as another interviewee noted, “less transparent”, because one cannot be sure that one has spotted all existing vacancies.

These stories reveal specific characteristics regarding access to resources from academic ties. First, the interviewees did not mention additional professors apart from their current advisors and did not access external social resources in their search for a position. No direct offer “fell in their lap”, as it did in Nadia’s case. But also, they were not provided with direct social resources to help them enter a specific labour market, in contrast to Enzo, for instance, who benefitted from various resources to gain visibility and recognition in the United States and prepare himself according to US academic specificities. Although the academic marketplace has become increasingly transnationalised, “academic practices continue to be firmly enshrined in national and regional contexts” (Bauder 2015: 91) and higher-ranked academics are simultaneously located both transnationally and locally. The resources they provide may be highly localised, and the value of those resources may vary across academic labour geographies (Waters 2009), as Enzo’s case demonstrates. He was provided direct resources to help him enter the US academic marketplace, and he may have benefitted from the transnational and US-based reputation of his referees.

Second, interviewees with such large and geographically scattered application portfolios appear to have minimally mobilised their PhD advisors in the process of getting a job abroad. They essentially asked them for letters of recommendation. William emphasised that only after he received an offer for a postdoc in Switzerland did he learn that one of his PhD co-advisors was “a good friend” of the professor in charge of the position. While William’s advisor may well have put in a good word for him, he did not provide him with personalised advice about how to “act” with his Swiss friend. This suggests that, apart from subtle gendered mechanisms, other structural features may be at play in framing interpersonal relationships. Differing norms and practices may permeate different academic systems – whether national, institutional, or disciplinary – notably regarding recruitment and promotion. Some systems are potentially more prone to patronage than others, which may in turn affect how higher-status academics interact with young scholars (see also Gray et al. 2007).

Third, these academics engaged in a large-scale, market-oriented and transnational job search with minimal support from higher-ranked academics. But this market-oriented search also seems to have been underpinned by gendered mechanisms. Strikingly, none of the female interviewees engaged in such an “all-out” application process. While several did apply to vacancies in different countries, the geographical scope of their application process was more restricted. These female academics – as well as a number of male interviewees – carefully considered their destinations from the start of the process. As I have shown elsewhere, negotiations between academics and their partners are gendered (Schaer, Dahinden and Toader 2017), and women who wish to pursue an academic career face conventionally gendered representations and expectations from their closer and wider social environments, which may create obstacles to their strategies. Nevertheless, it remains entirely possible that male interviewees who applied “all out” would have declined an offer if it were irreconcilable with

other aspects of their lives, notably their partners' employment prospects. In other contexts, male interviewees indeed indicated that their partners' career was equally important to theirs and that they would have declined an offer abroad had their partners not also found a job matching their expectations. These observations suggest that gender relations are evolving, as men may find it increasingly difficult to find partners willing to follow them (see also Le Feuvre 2009). In addition, academic men have been shown to decline academic opportunities, not because of a lack of ambition, but because they found them too costly for their and their partners' well-being (Bataille, Le Feuvre and Kradolfer Morales 2017).

7.2.6. Institutional resources as complementary elements

Fellows' independence

Fellowships are an important institutional resource that early-career academics may mobilise when preparing the next step in their career. About one-third of the interviewees moved abroad as fellowship recipients, after successfully applying to funding schemes that financed their salary stipend and some other expenses. Funding programmes often require recipients to move to another country for all or part of their fellowship to an institution (and a supervisor) that agrees to host their research stay. The narratives of academics who moved as fellowship recipients depicted a career step essentially centred on fellowship requirements (in particular writing their own project proposal and finding a host abroad) and in which previously established ties with higher-ranked academics played a secondary role.

After his PhD in Switzerland, Florian obtained a fellowship and moved to the United-States for a postdoc. A year earlier, upon his PhD advisor's suggestion, he had travelled to the United States and presented his work at different universities where his advisor had connections, exploring whether he might want to do his postdoc at any of these institutions. Like other male interviewees, Florian was offered the chance to gain visibility at US universities, an opportunity

that was financed by his (male) PhD advisor, who put him in contact with (male and female) members of his own (transnational) network. This “tour” allowed Florian to establish preliminary contacts with US-based professors, one of whom he contacted later, and who agreed to host and supervise him.

Florian’s partner, Elsa, finished her PhD at about the same time as him and also applied to a fellowship to do a postdoc in the United States. Her description of the support she received in the process contrasts with those of Florian and other male interviewees, for instance when she explained how she found her host professor:

I went [online] through the departments and looked at each individual professor, and looked at what they were researching, and then I made a list. I had a list of ten people. Then I started contacting these people. There was one guy in [my field], and I contacted him. He didn’t reply immediately. And [another] guy in [my field] wrote back that he wasn’t interested. (Net_In)

At this point, Elsa turned to her PhD advisor:

I mentioned that [professor who did not answer], and then he said, “Oh yeah, right, I know him”. But he wouldn’t contact him especially for me. He just said, “Yeah, just write them again”. (Net_In)

The US professor eventually replied that he agreed to host Elsa for her postdoc. Although Elsa portrayed her PhD advisor as generally supportive of her career, he did not appear to provide direct support at this stage. The ways in which Florian and Elsa were able to capitalise on their social relationships with professors reflect gender disparities similar to those previously described. Florian was readily extended encouragement and instrumental (including financial) support by his PhD advisor, who sent him on a talk tour in the United States. Elsa, in contrast,

received quite moderate support from her (male) PhD advisor, who, even when she turned to him because she had difficulty in reaching a professor he knew, did not offer to help.

Yet, finding a host professor abroad did not seem to depend on the interviewees' previously established ties with higher-ranked academics. Ingrid and Nola, another dual-career academic couple in my sample, wanted to move to the United States after finishing their PhDs in Sweden. Ingrid recalled that she did a lot of research online to find appropriate host institutions, professors, and funding schemes, and that her PhD advisor did not help her. Her wife Nola recounted that she too was left on her own in this process:

I told [my PhD advisor] from the very first time we had a meeting, me and him, when he was my main supervisor, that my goal was to get a postdoc in the US. So he was very aware of that, although he didn't contribute much to me achieving my goal, other than me getting my PhD. [...] He never helped me with the applications for grants or anything like that, or contacts.... In that way, he did nothing. (Net_In)

These stories echo those of other fellowship recipients, who also found a host professor on their own. In contrast, when Pierre was preparing his fellowship proposal, he was reluctant to contact potential host professors directly. He really wanted a professor from his network to establish the first connection between him and a professor abroad. To this end, he created a list of US-based professors who potentially knew his current or former supervisors in Europe, whom he then asked if they could put him in contact with these professors. When I asked Pierre what he thought of the possibility of contacting these potential host professors without being introduced by his advisors, he answered: "I didn't even try, for any of them. I didn't want to blow my chance, you know, it's really important to be recommended in this profession"

(Net_In). Notwithstanding Pierre's belief that it was important to be "recommended", the interviews suggest that, for fellowship recipients, being able to capitalise on (previously established) relationships with professors does not lead to significantly different results from not being able to do so.

In contrast to academics who applied "all out" and were left with little leeway regarding their destination, fellowship recipients were able to "choose" their destination from early on. Admittedly, this choice was constrained by the need to be hosted by a professor and convince funding institutions that the institution was appropriate for their career. Nevertheless, the narratives of fellowship recipients clearly indicate greater latitude in planning their upcoming career move, including in terms of timing, and including when they were in dual-career academic couples.

Spousal vertical ties

Although much rarer, dual-career support is another institutional resource that may be crucial in a transnational career move. It is obtained on a case-by-case basis through hiring negotiations conducted with an institution's representatives. Dual-career support varies significantly across countries and universities. It is not always formally institutionalised, and transparent procedures are often lacking.⁵¹ Access to dual-career support not only implies institutional resources, but also involves strong ties with high-ranking academics, insofar as it is negotiated through – or jointly with – one's academic spouse. Dual-career support is often presented as intended to overcome the "two-body problem". However, it is not only academics in dual-career relationships who may experience this problem, but also universities, which may be concerned about missing opportunities to recruit "excellent" academics because of their

⁵¹ But see the programme at the University of Michigan, which is often cited as an example: https://www.provost.umich.edu/programs/dual_career/ (accessed 17.05.2020).

spousal ties. Hence, this support is generally available only when at least one of the partners is hired for a professorial position.

Gary and Linda provide an interesting example. Linda was already a well-established (tenured) professor in a renown US university when she was offered a prestigious research position in Europe. At the time, her husband, Gary, had not yet obtained a position corresponding to his expectations. Together, they discussed how this opportunity for Linda might work for them as a dual-career academic couple. As Gary put it, he would essentially need to “find a job nearby”. A Swiss-based professor played an important role in this context. He had been Linda’s postdoc advisor years before and had since left the United States and taken up a professorship in Switzerland. Having heard about Gary’s situation, he informed Gary about academic vacancies in Switzerland. When Gary was later shortlisted for a professor position, the Swiss-based professor, who was part of the hiring committee, informed him about a few “issues” he saw in his candidacy because of his “dual-body problem”. The professor proposed raising this issue during Gary’s hiring interview so that he could deal with it frontally. Gary accepted this offer and the professor intervened during his interview:

[He] asked: “You’re married to Linda [last name], who’s also [an academic] who has an offer at [university]. How do you foresee handling this if you get this job?” And so I said, “Well, we’d live in [European city] and I’d come here every week, for say three days or something like that”. I said this in the interview. [...] And it turns out [...] nobody liked it. (Net_In)

Pessimistic about his chances of getting the position, he was surprised to receive an offer from the head of the hiring committee:

[He] called up and said, “Well, it’s unanimous that you’re the top choice, so we’d like to hire you for this job, but we have one reservation, which is that we want you to live here, and therefore we were wondering if we can test how feasible it would be to try to make your wife an offer too”. (Net_In)

Gary and Linda’s story demonstrates how dual-career academic couples may capitalise on their relationship and make joint career moves. Their experience shows that established academics also mobilise academic ties when considering a (transnational) career move. The support provided to Gary by the Swiss-based professor played a role in this process. Though Gary referred to this support explicitly, he nonetheless emphasised, like Marc, that he did “all the work” himself, making clear that it was his individual merit that counted in his recruitment.

Gary provided a detailed account of his relationship with the Swiss-based professor and the ways in which he intervened to help him. His narrative echoes those of other male interviewees and suggests that (some) men expect and are unabashed about receiving support from higher-status men (see also Bagilhole and Goode 2001), while women are much more tempered in portraying their vertical ties.

7.2.7. Conclusions

Drawing on the notions of tie strength (Granovetter 1973; Granovetter 1983) and tie direction (Ryan 2011; Ryan 2016), this chapter has examined the relationships between early-career scholars and higher-ranked academics and the resources that circulated within these relationships in support of the former’s transnational career move. As previous studies have shown, the distribution of social career-related resources is gendered (Fisher and Kinsey 2014; van den Brink and Benschop 2014) and women’s professional networks are less resourceful than those of men in similar positions (McDonald 2011; McGuire 2002; Rose 1989). My work

confirms several of these studies' results while pushing the notions of tie strength and tie direction.

First, this chapter has shown that the strength of vertical ties is gendered. Traces of strong male support networks mark access to network resources when searching for academic positions abroad. Martin (2001) observed that male support is subtle and discreet, and that it remains largely unacknowledged by the actors. My data demonstrate instead that it remains widespread in academia: it emerged recurrently, in small touches, throughout the data. Both male and female early-career academics have access to vertical ties with higher-ranked academics, and both benefit from these connections, but the vertical ties between men are stronger and provide more resources.

Second, access to strong and multiplex vertical ties is affected by subtle and discreet gendered mechanisms. Having opportunities to socialise informally emerges as one such important mechanism. The analysis has demonstrated that interactions with higher-ranked academics in contexts that extended beyond the workplace made it possible for early-career academics to develop stronger vertical relationships that in turn provided more resources than vertical relationships restricted to formal academic settings. Female (and some male) interviewees appeared to be excluded from such opportunities. These informal boundaries follow "unspoken rules of interactions [that] make gender inequality possible and highly resistant to change" (McGuire 2002: 303-304) and reproduce heteronormative representations defining the (in)appropriateness of cross-sex interactions. As previous studies have found, informal socialising in the workplace may be a delicate practice for cross-sex actors who may worry about being perceived as having romantic or sexual interests (Gersick, Bartunek and Dutton

2000). In the present context marked by the #MeToo movement, men and women may still be far from able to socialise informally within and beyond the workplace without raising suspicion. Researchers have identified another important gendered mechanism underlying the uneven distribution of career-related resources: higher-ranked actors treat women differently because they do not trust women as having the potential to be successful (McDonald 2011; McGuire 2002). These practices relate to social representations of men as more professionally competent than women and are consistent with the gendered character of universities, which have been historically constructed around stable and deeply entrenched representations of male-oriented career models (Le Feuvre 2009; van den Brink and Benschop 2014). These practices indicate that if same-sex relationships between men in male-dominated contexts provide access to better support than cross-sex relationships, this cannot be reduced to homosociality insofar as men also benefit from being members of the dominant gender group (McDonald 2011).

This chapter contributes to theoretical debates about the strength of vertical ties. I have attempted to show that the social distance that vertical ties bridge in academic career moves involves (transnational) academic hierarchies. My findings are consistent with Ryan's observation that the willingness of a vertical tie "to take an interest, share resources and invest time and energy" (2016: 15) in the relationship is an important aspect of what make these ties valuable. However, my study shows that only (some) men have access to strong vertical multiplex ties, while women and other men do not. This finding indicates that this willingness is framed by mechanisms beyond relational idiosyncrasies between two isolated individuals and reflects gendered structural barriers.

In parallel, the analysis has demonstrated that vertical ties with higher-ranked academics play a secondary role when early-career academics mobilise other career-related resources. The extent to which the academic marketplace has been digitalised differs across disciplines and countries. Yet, digitalisation not only contributes to the transnationalisation of academia, but is also of utmost importance in the career moves of some early-career academics, allowing them to access information that would otherwise be scattered across websites and national systems, and to maximise their chances of pursuing their academic career. Websites with a global scope may function as a bridge and replace (or compensate for the lack of) vertical social ties.

Fellowships and dual-academic-career arrangements are further institutional resources that complement the strength of vertical ties. Insofar as they enabled some interviewees to move as dual-career academic couples and appear less marked by gender dynamics, these resources may contribute to greater gender equality in academia. Furthermore, these findings suggest that it is important in social-network analysis to account for institutional and wider social contexts in which network practices between actors take place. This observation calls for further network research that includes institutions in the research design and does not focus merely on interpersonal relationships (see also Herz and Altissimo forthcoming).

In this paper, I have adopted a gender perspective to interpret the stories and experiences of early-career scholars. Choosing a theoretical approach means leaving out others, since it is not possible to make sense of all the complexities of social realities at once. The interpretations that I have presented here do not suggest that other categories of social differentiation, such as class, ethnicity or race, are irrelevant in these stories. Bringing those into the analysis requires further research but will undoubtedly provide a deeper understanding of the ways in

which different social inequalities are entangled. In particular, my findings suggest that being in a renowned university that attracts well-established visiting scholars is a fruitful way to develop vertical ties that may provide career-related resources later on. This observation implies that global and inter-institutional power hierarchies within academia contribute to the uneven distribution of vertical support. This uneven distribution requires further investigation in order to understand how it intersects with gender (and other social) dynamics.

7.2.8. References

- Bagilhole, Barbara, and Jackie Goode. 2001. "The Contradiction of the Myth of Individual Merit, and the Reality of a Patriarchal Support System in Academic Careers : A Feminist Investigation." *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 8(2):161-80.
- Bataille, Pierre, Nicky Le Feuvre, and Sabine Kradolfer Morales. 2017. "Should I stay or should I go? The effects of precariousness on the gendered career aspirations of postdocs in Switzerland." *European Educational Research Journal* 16(2-3):313-31.
- Bauder, Harald. 2015. "The International Mobility of Academics : A Labour Market Perspective." *International Migration* 53(1):83-96.
- Bauder, Harald, Omar Lujan, and Charity-Ann Hannan. 2018. "Internationally mobile academics: Hierarchies, hegemony, and the geoscientific imagination." *Geoforum* 89:52-59.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Dahinden, Janine. 2005. *Prishtina - Schlieren : albanische Migrationsnetzwerke im transnationalen Raum*. Zürich: Seismo.
- Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Jeff Goodwin. 1994. "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency." *American Journal of Sociology* 99(6):1411-54.
- European Commission. 2019. *She Figures 2018*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Fisher, Virginia, and Sue Kinsey. 2014. "Behind closed doors! Homosocial desire and the academic boys club." *Gender in Management* 29(1):44-64.
- Gersick, Connie J.G., Jean M. Bartunek, and Jane E. Dutton. 2000. "Learning from Academia: The Importance of relationships in Professional Life." *Academy of Management Journal* 43(6):1026-44.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6):1360-80.
- . 1983. "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited." *Sociological Theory* 1:201-33.

- Gray, Mia, Tomoko Kurihara, Leif Hommen, and Jonathan Feldman. 2007. "Networks of exclusion: job segmentation and social networks in the knowledge economy." *Equal Opportunities International* 26(2):144-61.
- Héritier, Françoise. 1996. *Masculin, Féminin. La pensée de la différence*. Paris: O. Jacob.
- Herz, Andreas, and Alice Altissimo. forthcoming. "Beyond relationships to persons: understanding transnational im/mobility through structures of diverse relationships."
- Ibarra, Herminia. 1997. "Paving an Alternative Route: Gender Differences in Managerial Networks." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 60(1):91-201.
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 1977 [1993]. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic books.
- Le Feuvre, Nicky. 2009. "Exploring Women's Academic Careers in Cross-National Perspective : Lessons for Equal Opportunity Policies." *Equal Opportunities International* 28(1):9-23.
- Lin, Nan. 2008. "A network theory of social capital." Pp. 50-69 in *The handbook of social capital*, edited by Dario Castiglione, Jan W. van Deth, and Guglielmo Wolleb. Oxford [etc.]: Oxford University press.
- Martin, Patricia Yancey. 2001. "'Mobilizing Masculinities': Women's Experiences of Men at Work." *Organization* 8(4):587-618.
- McDonald, Steve. 2011. "What's in the 'old boys' network? Accessing social capital in gendered and racialized networks." *Social Networks* 33(4):317-30.
- McDonald, Steve, and Jacob C. Day. 2010. "Race, Gender, and the Invisible Hand of Social Capital." *Sociology Compass* 4(7):532-43.
- McGuire, Gail M. 2002. "Gender, Race, and the Shadow Structure: A Study of Informal Networks and Inequality in a Work Organization." *Gender and Society* 16(3):303-22.
- McPherson, Miller, and Lynn Smith-Lovin. 1982. "Women and Weak Ties: Differences by Sex in the Size of Voluntary Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology* 87(4):883-904.
- Moore, Gwen. 1990. "Structural Determinants of Men's and Women's Personal Networks." *American Sociological Review* 55(5):726-35.
- Münch, Richard. 2014. *Academic Capitalism : Universities in the Global Struggle for Excellence*. New York [etc.]: Routledge.
- Pessar, Patricia R., and Sarah J. Mahler. 2003. "Transnational Migration : Bringing Gender in." *International Migration Review* 37(3):812-46.
- Rose, Suzanna M. 1985. "Professional networks of junior faculty in psychology." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 9(4):533-47.
- . 1989. "Women biologists and the 'old boy' network." *Women's Studies International Forum* 12(3):349-54.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2007. "Biographical Research." Pp. 48-64 in *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber F. Gubrium, and David Silverman. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Ryan, Louise. 2011. "Migrants' Social Networks and Weak Ties: Accessing Resources and Constructing Relationships Post-Migration." *The Sociological Review* 59(4):707-24.

- . 2016. "Looking for Weak Ties: Using a Mixed Methods Approach to Capture Elusive Connections." *The Sociological Review*:19 p.
- Schaer, Martine, Janine Dahinden, and Alina Toader. 2017. "Transnational Mobility among Early-Career Academics: Gendered Aspects of Negotiations and Arrangements within Heterosexual Couples." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1292-307.
- van den Brink, Marieke, and Yvonne Benschop. 2014. "Gender in Academic Networking: The Role of Gatekeepers in Professorial Recruitment." *Journal of Management Studies* 51(3):460-92.
- Waters, Johanna L. 2009. "Transnational Geographies of Academic Distinction: The Role of Social Capital in the Recognition and Evaluation of 'Overseas' Credentials." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 7(2):113-29.
- White, Harrison C. 1992. *Identity and Control*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Wimmer, Andreas, and Nina Glick Schiller. 2002. "Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences." *Global Networks* 2(4):301-34.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have approached the transnational mobility of early-career academics from a constructivist perspective based on actors' subjective experiences and including different theoretical lenses. Specifically, I mobilized a mobilities lens and adopted a constructivist approach of gender, which was implemented by means of a life-story perspective and social network analysis. The articulation of gender, the life story, and a social network approach is an innovative contribution of my dissertation to the literature on academic transnational mobility. It makes it possible to shed light on complex and subtle gender mechanisms but also to acknowledge that gender does not always emerge as a salient mechanism of social processes. My conceptual design had methodological implications. First, I did not focus on a specific national context, nor on a specific national group, but I considered early-career academics with different geographical backgrounds and trajectories in order to understand how they moved within a transnationalized occupational field (see also Amelina 2013). Second, a biographical perspective made it possible to approach the interviewees' experiences synchronically, spanning across different domains of life, as well as diachronically, from their genesis to the present time (of interviews). Third, I sought to grasp the research participants' mobility networks, including all members of their networks who supported them with regard to specific situations related to their (most recent or ongoing) mobility experience, whatever these members' geographical locations, role relationships to the interviewees, or strength of such relationships.

This research design has thus endeavored to transcend a compartmentalization of the phenomenon under study along national lines or the focus only on one domain of life at the expense of others, two research practices that have been criticized by gender and migration scholars (Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Krüger and Levy 2001; Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002). Yet, the purposive sampling strategy that I implemented, albeit seeking maximum variation in terms of geographical backgrounds and transnational trajectories, resulted in a sample comprising an overwhelming majority of academics from Global North countries or who had obtained their PhD in a Global North country. In turn, the findings and reflections that I have presented in this dissertation are essentially on and from the Global North, drawing on experiences of academics predominantly from and transnationally circulating within Global North countries. Likewise, although I strived to diversify the profiles of male and female academics, my sample includes very few participants who do not fit the dominant heteronormative model. To my knowledge, with the exception of four who presented themselves as homosexual, all interviewees were cisgender and heterosexual. These limitations in the variation in my sample reflect (more than they cause) some of the limitations of this dissertation, as I discuss below (8.2.4).

The research procedure has led to qualitative empirical findings that contribute to current debates in several regards. The different analyses that I conducted approached the data from various angles and have yielded four articles that make up the empirical heart of this dissertation, each providing insights into the main question that has guided this work, and which was formulated as follows:

How is the transnational mobility of early-career academics affected by gender dynamics, and conversely, how are gender dynamics (re)produced or transformed by early-career academics in the context of their mobility?

In the following sections, I discuss my key findings and how they contribute to the academic literature. I then address the limits of this dissertation and suggest avenues for future research before briefly outlining the political implications of my findings.

8.1. Key findings and contributions to the academic literature

Gender has emerged as a key aspect of the findings exposed in Chapters 4 and 7, which focused on the dynamics at play between actors at the interactional level, namely between early-career academics and their (cross-sex) partners (Chapter 4), and between early-career academics and (often male) higher-ranked scholars supporting them in their upcoming career moves (Chapter 7). In contrast to the findings presented in these two chapters, gender did not arise as a chief result in Chapters 5 and 6 but emerged more marginally. Indeed, as gender scholars have put forth (Hirschauer 2001; Kotthoff 2003), gender is not everywhere and is not always a relevant mechanism in actors' interactions and practices. Furthermore, I argue that letting gender appear *marginally* allows a dichotomic "either/or" view of research in social sciences to be overcome, with "mainstream" social sciences research that does not include gender sitting on one side and gender studies that primarily focus on gender sitting on the other. Instead, I find it quite valuable to produce (and publish) findings that address gender in the margins while these findings mainly point to other mechanisms. I would like to see in this the possibility of encouraging "mainstream" social scientists to also include gender in their research design, as one mainstream lens among others.

Putting Chapters 4 and 7 – where gender dynamics emerge saliently – side by side allows additional contrasts to arise. The interviewees often thematized, albeit to varying extents, that their arrangements as mobile couples involved negotiations with their partners, in which gender representations about the status of each within the couple were discussed. The interviewees expressed various feelings and attitudes towards gender (a)symmetries within their couple, confronting comments from their entourage about their decisions and arrangements as mobile couples, and variably able to mobilize (or not) unequally accessible resources embedded in their broader environment (social, institutional, or otherwise). In contrast, the academic interviewees remained remarkably silent on how they felt about possible gender (a)symmetries in their interactions with higher-ranked academics who supported them or about reactions to these vertical relationships coming from their entourage.

By the same token, in my experience as a researcher who analyzed these data, I found gender dynamics emerged rather easily from the data on arrangements within mobile couples. While the analytical process obviously required back-and-forth movement between data and literature, the results about gender configurations of mobile couples were gradually unfolding and the various pieces of my analytic puzzle were falling into place smoothly. Yet, the presence of gender dynamics in the relationships between early-career academics and higher-ranked scholars emerged very differently from the analysis. After I had written long descriptions about the resources, social and otherwise, mobilized by the interviewees when they were preparing their upcoming career move, I set about structuring these descriptions and, in doing so, selected case examples illustrating what I had called at the time different *strategies* in mobilizing resources. I was soon to realize that all the cases that I had identified as “good” examples of strong vertical social support were about male interviewees. At first, I thought that I had myself engaged in gender-biased sex selection of my examples. Baffled and somewhat

vexed to note that I was myself so biased, I returned to my data and looked for similar examples about female interviewees. I had a eureka moment when I realized that the social resources they received from higher-status academics were systematically much more modest. From there on, I could carefully follow the breadcrumb trail emerging from the data and piece things together, in particular realizing that (some) men had access to informal socializing whereas none of the women did. At the same time, I discovered published research about similar findings that I had not known about until then, which helped me to hone my interpretations.

Following on from this idea that conducting research requires being open to surprise and the unobvious, in the next sections, I discuss the main results of this dissertation, how they contribute to current debates in the relevant research fields, at times confirming findings of previous research and at other times bringing to light new insights and questioning taken for granted ideas.

8.1.1. Challenging the one-sided vision of transnational mobility

Studying transnational mobility from a social constructivist perspective made it possible to distance oneself from a normative conception of mobility. On the one hand, my findings question the mobility imperative stemming from the value assigned to mobility as one of the facets of academic excellence. On the other hand, by highlighting the costs that mobility entails for the involved actors, they question the tendency in mobility studies to examine only the bright side of mobility.

Mobility and the building of transnational networks

The findings presented in this dissertation converge with those of previous studies that have criticized the tendency in academic policies and circles to consider transnational mobility (i.e., stays abroad) as a criterion reflecting academic excellence (e.g., Ackers 2008; Bernela and

Milard 2016). My findings contribute to these debates by bringing new empirical insights showing that transnational mobility does not necessarily equate with the building of academic transnational networks. In Chapter 6, the analysis highlighted that the degree of mobility of the research participants is not connected to the importance of their transnational academic networks. Furthermore, the findings indicate that transnational academic networks can be developed through other means than the mobility of the immediate academics concerned, namely thanks to the mobility of higher-ranked academics who themselves travel across borders to give talks, lectures, or for their sabbatical. This alternative way of developing academic networks across borders is not without its own limits. These are, on the one hand, bound up with power inequalities structuring the global knowledge economy. It is indeed imperative to be located in a reputed (and wealthy) academic institution that has the power to host visiting professors and renowned scholars in order to be in a position to build transnational academic networks in this way. On the other hand, gender appears as another driver of inequality, here to the disadvantage of women who, being excluded from informal socialization contexts, have fewer occasions to establish strong relationships with these transient academics.

Despite these limitations, the facts remain that early-career transnational mobility does not automatically guarantee the development of durable transnational academic networks and that such networks may develop without young academics embarking on year-long stays at universities abroad. In this respect, some scholars have pointed out that other types of academic mobility undertaken by young researchers, such as attending international conferences, also allows academic networks to develop across borders (Bernela and Milard 2016). Finally, virtual mobility provides yet another opportunity for transnational networking,

which Storme and colleagues (2016) have shown to be an effective means of sustaining academic networks over time. With the current increased recourse to online meetings resulting from COVID-related restrictions, opportunities for fruitful collaborations as well as knowledge and resource exchange to take place without actors physically crossing borders could indeed multiply.

Immobility as a resource?

This dissertation fits into academic debates that have questioned the tendency in academic research to celebrate and indulge in a romantic view of mobility. Such criticisms were already made in the mid-1990s (Bauder 2015; Teichler 1996). Other authors observed that mobility was often either lauded or viewed as exploitative (Presskorn-Thygesen 2015). More recently, scholars have started to call for more nuanced accounts of mobility, investigating empirically how it affected people, both in terms of positive and negative effects, depending on the circumstances and the contexts (Wyss 2019b).

The results presented in Chapter 5 highlight the different obstacles and the high cost of academic mobility for the academics themselves and for their partners and families. The interviewees' stories about successive episodes of mobility describe a picture very different from a romanticized experience of mobility. Although research participants were often attracted by mobility at first, the results emphasize that the price to pay as one pursues an academic career on the move may be perceived by the actors as overly expensive and with no guarantee of obtaining a stable academic position, contributing, along the way, to a sense of mobility fatigue and precarity.

Extending the reflections on the negative impact of mobility on the people concerned, as well as the fatigue and the feeling of precarity associated with the reiterated challenges imposed by

repeated mobility, what these results suggest is that immobility, the ability to stay put and avoid mobility, may also represent a resource (or capital) from which the actors, if they have access to it, can derive benefits (Chapter 5). The idea of immobility as a resource to which not everyone has equal access could also be observed during COVID-19 lockdowns. These measures have been implemented to varying degrees and for varying periods of time in many countries since the beginning of 2020 and have demonstrated that not everyone was presented with an equal opportunity to work from home while preserving the entirety of their income and remaining protected against infection. Others had to pay a high financial price for their forced immobility, and still others, especially those working in so-called essential occupations, had no possibility of staying at home but had to venture outside their homes to work.

With these results, my dissertation extends research endeavors that have been recently undertaken by Wyss (2019a; 2019b) and other scholars (Gutekunst et al. 2016) who aim to de-romanticize mobility studies by accounting for both the positive and the negative effects of mobility. While indeed academics may often draw benefits from their mobility, this is not necessarily the case, and more importantly, it does not come without having to strike a sometimes fragile and complex balance between competing demands coming from different areas of life. In addition, the few scholars who have tackled this research agenda to date have examined how repeated mobility may negatively affect marginalized mobile individuals with precarious legal status (but see Sautier forthcoming). What I show in this dissertation is that the adverse impact of mobility may also concern relatively privileged people whose mobility is welcomed by host countries and institutions. With these results, I contribute to a more nuanced vision of mobility (and immobility) while also joining the voices of scholars who have criticized research designs that use political categories as analytical categories, thus reproducing

normative distinctions between different groupings of people. Not only do these distinctions make little sense (if at all) analytically, in addition, because of the conflations that underlie them (unqualified migration of unwanted individuals from the Global South vs. highly skilled mobility of welcome individuals from the Global North), their use in research has led to the development of two distinct research fields that have developed mainly along different conceptual lines, as I discussed in Chapter 2. However, I find it essential not to let oneself be confined within the theoretical thinking of a specific field, but to approach social processes and phenomena by learning also from the advances made in other fields and to allow cross-fertilization of knowledge and mutual theorizing between fields. I would like to believe that my contribution about the downsides of academic transnational mobility, bringing up the mobility fatigue ensuing from repeated mobility episodes and suggesting that immobility can also, like mobility, be considered a resource or capital, represent small steps in this direction.

Finally, repeated mobility and constantly renewed arrangements seeking to combine mobility with professional and personal projects may also cause academics to feel a certain lassitude in front of compromises that do not satisfy them. In turn, this may cause them to leave academia (or move to a less interesting position elsewhere) to better accommodate other family members or to not risk jeopardizing their amorous relationship once again. By highlighting the high cost paid by some academics as they engaged in repeated cross-border moves, as well as the mobility fatigue that ensued, my findings also suggest that the imperative of transnational mobility imposed by many institutions (as a condition to accessing certain positions or certain funding schemes) may come at a high cost to higher education institutions. They may lose important resources (scholars) if academics quit, are discouraged or are unwilling to go further in the sacrifice of their personal life for their career.

8.1.2. The complex relationship between gender and academic transnational mobility

This dissertation has paid close attention to social relationships. Following an (already long made) plea by gender and migration scholars (Kofman and Raghuram 2005), I have argued that research on academic mobility must pay due attention to the ways in which actors' decisions and actions are embedded in social networks, not only *within* but also *beyond* the workplace, in order to shed light on the interconnections between gender and transnational mobility, which span across the different domains of human life. The findings presented in this dissertation demonstrate the potential of a qualitative mixed-method design like the one implemented here, combining a biographical and a social network approach and including the academics' partners in the data production process. The triangulation of the different data made it possible to uncover not only the shifting nature but also the fixity of gender boundaries in the context of academic transnational mobility.

The shifting boundaries of gender in academic mobility

Overall, my findings support the idea that there is no straightforward relationship between gender and transnational mobility. Transnational mobility does not unequivocally undermine gender (un)equal relationships, nor does it necessarily favor (un)equal relationships either; conversely, the gender-equal or gender-unequal nature of relationships does not unequivocally affect academic transnational mobility in a unique way. My dissertation thus contributes to recent discussions in research that question the predominance of the work-family approach to explain the progressive loss of female academics on the way to top academic positions (Bataille, Le Feuvre and Kradolfer Morales 2017; Sautier forthcoming). I agree with these researchers that an overemphasis on this approach precludes an examination of the complex and subtle gender mechanisms and how gender boundaries are shifting.

Focusing on three case studies of academics who moved abroad with their partners, Chapter 4 demonstrates that the gender configurations of these mobile couples point to a diversity of patterns, including patterns that challenge conventionally gendered representations about the feminine and the masculine. The chapter discusses the conditions under which female academics are accompanied by their partners in their mobility and how dual-career couples manage to move abroad together and both pursue their professional careers. In Chapter 5, I have shown the different hurdles that academics, men and women, confront along their mobility trajectory and the sophisticated arrangements and sacrifices that academics sometimes make in order to be mobile. By shedding light on the actors' arrangements, and on the conditions under which men and women may become mobile in the early stages of their careers, the findings presented in these two chapters challenge the stereotypical imagery conveyed by many studies investigating female and male academics' propensity for mobility.

Various (mainly quantitative) studies on academic mobility have compared female and male academics' propensity to be transnationally mobile. Overall, their results converge and show female academics to be less mobile than their male counterparts when they are engaged in stable relationships or have children. In other words, being in a couple and being a parent affects the mobility of female academics more than that of male academics. If we take these results at face value, they do not mean at all – in fact, far from it – that all women are irrevocably prevented from moving abroad if they have a partner or children, nor that none of the men are prevented from moving abroad in similar circumstances. Yet, this emphasis on female academics being less mobile than male academics has contributed, as Sautier (forthcoming) rightly argues, to the framing of mobility as a “women's problem”. In turn, this simplistic framing has influenced gender equality policies (see 8.3.) but also contributed to the overemphasis of the work-family lens in gender research about academic mobility, thus

preventing an understanding of (other) subtle and hidden gender mechanisms at play in these processes.

The effects of the articulation between gender and mobility are therefore unpredictable. Still, the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 identified some of the circumstances under which gender-equal relationships and transnational mobility might go hand in hand, even when academics are involved in relationships and/or have children. For academics involved in a relationship and those among them who do not envisage a long-distance relationship, the *unrootedness* of the partner is a crucial element in the couples' joint mobility. Such *unrootedness* hinges on various parameters embedded in and shaped by biographical, social, and structural circumstances. These include, among others, whether the partners are employed or not, whether they would find similar employment at the destination, whether immigration and employment policies allow partners to work, whether the couple has the financial resources to compensate for the partner's possible unemployment at the destination. As such, these conditions affect all partners, men and women. Yet, these conditions are subtly gendered insofar as migration regimes have been shown to be gendered (Marchetti and Salih 2017). As have professions, both horizontally and vertically (Boni-Le Goff and Le Feuvre 2017). Representations about the role of women and men are also gendered, and the list goes on. With regards to academics having children, having access to affordable daycare services or being able to rely on relatives ready to step in are important conditions. What I have called satellite mobility (Chapter 6) is one of these conditions making academic mobility possible. Family members engaging in mobility to follow or to provide on-hand support may be considered indirect academic social capital, namely social resources that indirectly allow the academic to pursue their academic career across borders.

Some things never change?

Academics make their mobility decisions with their partners and other people important to them, and their mobility may involve their partners, as well as satellite mobility, following complex arrangements. In addition to these important relationships, professional relationships also play a role in the academics' mobility. As I have shown in Chapter 7, academic (transnational) career moves are processes embedded in social relationships in intricate and subtle ways. Higher-ranked academics provide early-career academics with diverse resources important to their career advancement. Moreover, female early-career academics appear to be excluded from informal socializing with higher-ranked scholars, and the resources provided by the latter to younger academics are unequally distributed, with women tending to receive less support than (some) men. By showing that social relationships with higher-ranked scholars do play a role in career progression, these findings point to the normative gendered injunctions affecting interpersonal relationships in the workplace and to the socially constructed nature of individual merit and excellence, whose so-called and often taken-for-granted "objectivity" needs to be challenged. My findings thus contribute to the different strands of research that investigate, through different theoretical lenses, the gendered dimensions of academic careers and academic institutions.

While there are signs, as I mentioned above, that gender relationships are changing, notably in intra-family arrangements, and that gender boundaries are shifting, gender relationships in academia appear to be much less affected by changes, underpinned by mechanisms that remain little acknowledged beyond gender studies research focusing on this topic. A striking difference between Chapters 4 and 7 lies in the fact that while couple arrangements point to a diversity of patterns and to practices that challenge conventionally gendered representations about the feminine and the masculine and move toward more gender-egalitarian

arrangements, the interviewees' stories about their relationships with higher-status academics and the support they received from them do not indicate that they questioned or contested, at any point, the ways in which these relationships could reflect gender dynamics. In Chapter 4, I have argued that changes were indeed taking place at the individual and interactional levels and that these changes might in turn lead to changes at the structural level. The findings presented in Chapter 7, however, have somewhat dampened my initial optimism. The interviews did not suggest that early-career academics were actively contesting nor questioning gender asymmetries at the interactional level in the workplace. Yet, with the feminization of the academic profession and the (slowly) growing access of female academics to top positions, one would expect to observe greater progress towards gender equality in academia.

These observations point to the important role that organizational contexts and the resources and constraints embedded within them play in how gender is performed – done and undone – by actors whose practices and representations may contribute to the maintenance of these organizational contexts, underpinned by gender dynamics that remain both unchanged and invisible. But if actors have more latitude to undo gender in the private realm than in academia, how can we understand this differing leeway? In particular, how can we understand the apparently very limited latitude to undo gender in academia?

The exclusion of early-career women from informal socializing with higher-ranked (male) colleagues constitutes one facet of the answer to this question. Yet, further research would be necessary to provide more conclusive answers. Such research could, for instance, tackle this issue from the perspective of the higher-ranked academics, as I discuss below (8.2.3). In addition to scrutinizing what is at play (and at stake) from a gender perspective in the relationships between early-career and higher-ranked academics, other widespread practices

in academia have been shown to be highly gendered. The principle of third-party evaluation (or peer review) of the knowledge produced by academics, as well as of their individual academic competence, is a cornerstone of academia as a whole and of academic careers in particular. Processes of evaluation do not only occur during hiring processes, when individuals' merit and excellence are obviously assessed by potential future employers. Evaluation is deeply anchored within other institutionalized settings that are fundamental to the academic profession (and to a successful academic career), in particular publishing and raising research funds. The evaluation process behind these practices is affected by systemic gender bias, as the thriving body of research that I have presented in Chapter 2 has shown.

I find it important to emphasize here that excellence and interpersonal relationships are intrinsically linked. The study that Bagilhole and Goode (2001) provide is a telling example in this regard. Investigating the gender dimension of academic careers in UK universities, the two authors highlighted how men benefited from a patriarchal support system without asking for it, thus perpetuating the hegemonic idea of individual merit, while women were excluded from these support networks and appeared weak if they asked for support or tried to build their own networks. These findings not only reveal the thin edge women have to move along as they pursue their careers, but they also show how institutionalized gender representations contribute to rendering invisible the support received by men. Meanwhile, the support received by women is not only visible but also negatively interpreted by the actors' wider academic environment.

Literature has developed multiple metaphors to refer to the complex institutional and informal barriers that academic (and other professional) women face in the workplace and in their career: the infamous *glass ceiling*, which refers to the disproportionate loss of female

academics along the academic ladder. There is also the *glass partition* (Elsesser and Peplau 2006), which describes the barriers to cross-sex friendship at work and the *glass fences* (Zippel 2017), which refers to the barriers that hamper female academics' participation in international collaborations. Using the same metaphorical thinking, Williams (2013) called the mechanisms facilitating men's ascension to top positions in highly feminized occupations the *glass escalator*. All these glass metaphors suggest a sophisticated but invisible *glass maze* that is transparent and persistently structuring, facilitating or impeding the professional careers of individuals. Add to this glass maze the mechanisms of inequality linked to the mobility imperative, those related to the work-family factor, and the gendered normative injunctions that influence the development of social networks and the way resources circulate within them, the result is an impressive set of mechanisms that work against women. Each of these mechanisms may indeed play a very modest role on its own. But once they are added together, they point to the (systemic and gendered) accumulation of disadvantages, which works against women's advancement to higher positions and explains the slow progress observed in academia with regard to gender equality.

8.2. Research limits and new directions

8.2.1. The exiters of academia

It is a limitation of this dissertation not to include the exiters: those who exit academia and those who exit a relationship.⁵² In Chapter 3, I explained that I excluded academics' former partners from the study for ethical reasons, even though they could have been affected by

⁵² I borrow the term "exiter" from Nicky Le Feuvre who made use of it when she commented on an earlier version of this work.

academic mobility in diverse ways and could offer enlightening information on this phenomenon.

By contrast, the lack of research on PhD holders who have left academia, in particular those who have embarked on the postdoctoral journey before quitting, is not due to ethical concerns, but rather, I believe, for practical and conceptual reasons. On the one hand, the exiters of academia are not easy to locate and reach. Finding them and including them in a research study, whatever the sampling strategy, certainly requires sustained efforts. On the other hand, but closely related to the previous point, conceptualizing exiters as a unit of analysis does not speak for itself and is more elusive insofar as they comprise a (transnational) scattering of individuals spread across a variety of paid or unpaid labor sectors. This may contribute to explaining why those who “leaked” from the academic pipeline have rarely been investigated to date and why research overall has predominantly focused on those who stay, those who hold on, in the academic career (but see Bataille, Le Feuvre and Kradolfer Morales 2017).

To the best of my knowledge, there is a lack of statistical data on these exiters, not to mention in-depth qualitative research that would start, as I have done in this dissertation, from the point of view of the actors involved and look at the various dimensions of their experiences and how these intertwine. In Switzerland, for instance, we know almost nothing about these exiters statistically. In a recent study, new PhD holders – those who have had their degree for one year or less – have been found to have a lower unemployment rate compared to other university graduates (CCSI 2015). The same study also put forth that in several employment sectors, “a doctorate makes complete sense in specialist areas, [but] there were some reservations about holders of PhD degrees in the humanities and social sciences” (ibid: 5). These results certainly raise questions that point to further avenues of research: What are the subjective experiences

of academic exiters? How do they interpret their exiting of academia? How can we understand these experiences and interpretations in light of the wider social and historical circumstances in which the actors' lives are embedded? And how are these processes gendered?

Reconnecting with the participants that took part in this dissertation could provide an interesting starting point (among others) to pursue this research avenue and would additionally facilitate the localization and identification of potential participants, to which I alluded above. Above all, it would provide the opportunity to capture in the longer term the changes that occur on a mobile personal and professional trajectory. Some of the research participants may still be in academia, having reached stable employment or not, having engaged in further mobility or not. Others may have left academia and turned to other horizons, professionally and otherwise, with or without additional episodes of mobility.

8.2.2. The immobile survivors in academia

My primary focus in this dissertation was on academics who engaged in transnational mobility after their PhD and, furthermore, who engaged in a particular type of mobility that involved them taking up positions (or conducting fellowship activities) at an academic institution abroad. While I did interview a few academics who had not been mobile according to this definition, my data are limited in that regard and do not allow for an in-depth understanding of the conditions under which academics might resist this form of mobility while still successfully pursuing their academic career.

Investigating these so-called non-mobile academics' support networks would certainly provide deeper insights and allow some of the gaps in this dissertation to be filled. Chapter 6 showed that highly mobile academics did not have more academic social capital than less mobile academics. But how does the composition of non-mobile academics' networks compare to the

networks of highly mobile and less mobile academics? What social resources, career-related and otherwise, flow in the networks of non-mobile academics, and who provides them with these resources?

Furthermore, it would be fruitful to adopt a more inclusive approach to the different forms of academic mobility when including so-called immobile academics in the study. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, scholars engage in multiple forms of academic mobility. In her paper on early-career Swiss-based academics, Sautier (forthcoming) challenges the dichotomy which, under the normalizing impact of the mobility imperative, opposes mobile academics with their immobile counterparts. A more integrative approach allowed her to gain insight into the im/mobility experiences and practices of academics and to examine the ways in which their mobilities might become sticky or stretchy, depending on individual characteristics and wider social and historical circumstances. With regards to those I have called “the immobile survivors in academia” in the title of this section, an important question that future research could address is: How and under which circumstances do these survivors successfully resist the mobility imperative (to take up a position abroad) and advance their career (securing stable employment in academia)? What practices of academic im/mobility do these survivors perform? And how are their practices facilitated or constrained by gender dynamics? Such an approach would also make it possible to explore the conditions under which im/mobility can be considered a resource (or a capital).

8.2.3. The professors’ point of view

The findings presented in Chapter 7, where I analyze how higher-ranked academics supported early-career academics in their transnational career moves, are limited to the perspective of the latter. Examining the perspective of the former would make it possible to overcome the current blind spot in my study and gain insights into the hidden mechanisms of support. How

do higher-ranked academics, men and women, use their social networks to provide support to younger scholars? Whom are they supporting, with what intensity, and with what kind of resources? How do they interpret their practices in these processes? In what ways do they consider these processes gendered? These questions address the other side of the supportive relationships that I presented and discussed in Chapter 7.

Focusing on higher-ranked academics would also allow an examination of taken-for-granted ideas about their relationships and the support they provide to early-career academics. Two such ideas seem particularly relevant here and would be best studied with social network analysis. The first one is the idea that women in leadership positions distance themselves from their junior female colleagues and thus contribute to reinforcing the glass ceiling. This behavior has been coined “the queen bee phenomenon” and has been the subject of research that builds (more often than not, I believe) on stereotypical gender representations that assume men are competitive but women are (or ought to be) collaborative (Derks, Van Laar and Ellemers 2016). Thus, the first question to ask in that regard is: In what ways are women less available to give support to early-career female academics? As Derks and colleagues (2016) suggest, particular organizational dynamics, such as highly male-dominated contexts, may affect women leaders and contribute to what is perceived as a lack of solidarity toward their female colleagues or subordinates. This observation leads to a second question: Under what conditions are higher-ranked female academics more or less available to give support to early-career female – and male – academics?

The second taken-for-granted idea that could be tackled from a social network approach refers to informal socializing. Why do female higher-ranked academics engage less in informal socializing? A common assumption in that regard lies in the work-family explanation: parental

and domestic responsibilities primarily rest on women; hence, they have no time to partake in informal socializing after working hours. As I mentioned above, this explanation certainly plays a role for a number of women, but that alone cannot explain the (apparent) extent of the phenomenon. Other possible explanations are probably to be sought in other directions. Wright (2016), for instance, suggests that workplace interactions are constrained by gendered and heterosexual norms, in which “sexuality [i]s never far from the surface, containing the potential to disrupt or unsettle everyday interactions” (Wright 2016: 358-359). In the same vein, Elsesser and Peplau (2006) find that workers are concerned that their friendliness might be mistaken for sexual or amorous interests. These concerns, they argue, are a barrier to the development of cross-sex friendships in the workplace. Today, in the current post #MeToo context, and although this movement is undoubtedly a step forward in many regards, one could wonder whether the tensions that have emerged in its wake might contribute to further restricting the relationships between men and women in the workplace. In what ways do these tensions (long-standing or more recent) affect higher-ranked men’s relationships with early-career female academics? While feminization processes are (slowly) taking place in academia, these tensions could thwart the progression toward gender equality that is taking place on other fronts. Further study of the normative gender conceptions that underlie interpersonal interactions in academia and circulate in academics’ social networks would certainly make an interesting contribution in that regard.

8.3. Political implications

8.3.1. Rethinking the mobility imperative

Some institutions appear to have started to reconsider the normative imperative of mobility. This is reflected, for instance, in the changes that the Swiss National Science Foundation has

recently adopted in its selection processes for funding programs, proposing a “broader definition of academic mobility that acknowledges the wide range of possible career paths [...] and] includes, for instance, international collaboration or industry experience”.⁵³ But as the mobility normative has become widespread, other institutions that have also signed the DORA declaration⁵⁴ need to follow this movement and implement evaluation criteria and academic policies that recognize the variety of academic mobilities rather than fetishize one of its forms. The effort could even be pushed further and take on board other aspects that may attest to the “internationalization” of academics. As Kofman (2020: 1) notes “the measurement of internationalisation [...] could include the extent to which [...] we use the theoretical, conceptual and methodological insights developed by others”. In an ideal world, this inclusion would overcome global inequalities in the production of knowledge and would be mindful not to neglect critical theories from the so-called periphery or Global South (see Connell 2014).

8.3.2. Getting rid of the glass maze?

Although universities today gladly flag themselves as “gender-sensitive” (universities have their own “gender equality” or “diversity” offices) and as “gender-neutral” (in particular through the assumption that meritocratic principles are not prone to gender bias), like other organizations in traditionally male-dominated occupational fields, they are not gender-neutral (Acker 1990; Boni-Le Goff and Le Feuvre 2017; Diezmann and Grieshaber 2019). As long as academic policies fail to adequately recognize and reflect upon the ways in which universities as institutions are structurally underpinned by unequal gender regimes and glass mazes, their “gender sensitiveness”, however well-intentioned it may be, misses its target. By tackling work-family conciliation as a women’s issue or designing mentoring programs intended to encourage the

⁵³ <http://www.snf.ch/en/researchinFocus/newsroom/Pages/news-200803-career-funding-the-researchers-overall-performance-counts.aspx> (accessed 21.09.2020).

⁵⁴ <https://sfdora.org/> (accessed 21.09.2020).

next generation of women scholars, universities consider only one element of the intricate gender equality equation. Furthermore, research has shown that these kinds of initiatives may lead to ambivalent results. Notably, they are often “seen as the opposite of career policies based on merit and individual advancement” (van den Brink and Stobbe 2014: 163).

The influence of gender biases that lead to the under-evaluation of women’s professional skills is all the more pervasive in academia as the peer-review process is structurally embedded in the production of academic knowledge and in the procedures for the allocation of funds. It is high time for institutions to acknowledge these biases and to consider raising awareness among the different academic actors and stakeholders in order to move toward a more gender-equal academia.

Appendix I – Biographical interview guidelines

Academic researcher – 1st interview – Biographical-narrative interview

Part 1: Main narration

Initial narrative biographical question:

- 1.1** I am interested in the life stories and life experiences of academic researchers who are at the early stages of their academic careers. Today we are doing the biographical interview and for this, as a first question, I would like to ask you to tell me your family story and your personal life story. I mean, I am not interested only in your experiences as an academic, but in your whole life story and anything that occurred to you from your childhood until now. You can take all the time you need for this, I will listen to you first and I will make some notes for afterwards. But to start, I would like to let you tell your life story.

Part 2: Internal questions

Questions to further develop issues that have been mentioned by the respondent in part 1 and that are relevant to our research questions.

When asking internal questions, ask for concrete examples, concrete situations, and concrete persons. We want to avoid general opinions and statements.

FILTERS FOR INTERNAL QUESTIONS	
PROCESSES	THEMES
Negotiation/Arrangement Decision-making Hesitation/Doubt Conflict/Rupture/Breakup Resource Difficulty/Obstacle/Constraint “I/We” articulation	Career Partner/Children/Family/Friends Mobility (transnational and national) Academic environment Gender (and other principles of social differentiation)

Part 3: External questions

Questions to ask if they have not yet been addressed in part 1 or 2. The questions should rather not be asked as written below, but rephrased and contextualized in terms of what the respondent said previously.

THEMATIC BLOCKS	
Career	Gender
Couple and Family Life	
Mobility	
Academic environment	

PURSUIING AN ACADEMIC CAREER

3.1 How did you develop the wish to pursue an academic career?

(What is your family background regarding an academic career? When did you start thinking about the possibility of pursuing an academic career? With whom did you discuss this possibility? What decisions did this possibility imply for you and for those around you? Were there any doubts or uncertainties? About what specific aspects? Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on this issue?)

3.2 What are the next steps you are considering to take as regards your academic career or after the ending of your current position (if current position is temporary)?

(What kind of positions are you ultimately aiming at? Are you currently applying for academic or non-academic positions, for grants or fellowships? What kind of positions and where? What are your criteria regarding these positions? With whom do you discuss and decide where you apply? Why are you not applying? What will these next steps imply for you and for those around you? Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on the discussions and decisions related to this issue?)

3.3 Do/Did you experience any major difficulties or obstacles to progress in your career?

[e.g. constraints related to or conflicting issues with: personal life and family obligations, mobility requirement, unfavorable job market, visa restrictions, personal doubts, academic organization, gender inequalities]

(What are/were they? How do/did you cope with or overcome these difficulties/obstacles? Does/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on these difficulties?)

3.4 On what type(s) of resources can/could you rely on to progress in your career?

[Financial resources (e.g. grants, fellowships); academic persons; private persons; human, cultural and symbolic capital (breakthrough, reputation of the university, lab or supervisor, favorable job market)]

3.5 Do you feel sustained in your career advancement?

(By whom? When? How? What are the outcomes? Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on this issue?)

COUPLE AND FAMILY SITUATION – FRIENDS

3.6 What is your family situation?

(Do you have a partner? What is his/her professional situation? How many children do you have and how old are they? Do you live together with your partner and/or with your children, or where do they live? Who takes care of the household and of the children?)

3.7 How do you manage to combine your personal (couple and/or family) life with your academic job and/or mobility?

(Who is concerned by these arrangements? With whom do you discuss how to combine your professional and your personal life? What arrangements do you come up with? What do these arrangements involve for you and those around you? What obstacles or difficulties are you confronted with and how do you overcome them? Do/did you renounce to some professional projects or opportunities because of personal or family reasons? Do/did you renounce to some

mobility projects or opportunities because of personal or family reasons? Does/did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on these arrangements?)

3.8 What are your next steps regarding your personal and family life?

(Do you plan to have (more) children? Do you anticipate renouncing to some career advancement because of personal or family reasons? Do you anticipate renouncing to or ending mobility because of personal or family reasons? Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on these plans?)

3.9 How do/did you maintain or develop relations with your friends in a mobility context (if respondent is currently experiencing mobility or did in the past)?

ENGAGING OR NOT IN TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY

QUESTIONS FOR MOBILE ACADEMICS

3.10 How did you feel about the possibility of going abroad?

(What is your family background regarding mobility? How did you feel about going abroad (or about moving within the country)? Do you feel that you had to do it for professional reasons? Were you attracted by the idea of going abroad? For what reasons did you move abroad? Did you once renounce to be mobile? For what reasons? Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on decisions related to your mobility or non-mobility?)

3.11 How did you develop the idea and make the decision of going abroad?

(When did you start thinking about this possibility? With whom did you discuss this possibility? What decisions did this possibility imply (for you and for those around you)? Were there any doubts or uncertainties? About what specific aspects? Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on decisions related to your mobility?)

3.12 With whom did you discuss the possibility of going abroad?

(What decision did you come to? What did this decision imply for you and for those around you?)

3.13 How did you organize your stay abroad?

(What were the resources you could rely on to organize a stay abroad? Were there any difficulties or obstacles to overcome to move abroad? Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on the organization of your stay abroad?)

3.14 With whom did you move or who did not move with you?

(What did this mobility imply for the person(s) moving (or not) with you? How did you negotiate this? How did you organize your personal (couple and/or family) life with your mobility?)

3.15 Would you consider the possibility of being mobile again in the future?

(For what reasons? Where? According to what criteria? With whom would you discuss this possibility? What would a future mobility imply for you and for those around you? Would you move alone or would other persons be moving with you?)

3.16 How is/was your experience abroad?

(What difficulties or obstacles are/were you confronted with? How do/did you overcome these difficulties/obstacles? Do/Did these difficulties involve other persons? What are/were the

experiences of these persons? Do/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on your experience abroad?)

- 3.17** Does/Did your experience abroad have specific positive or negative effects on your personal and/or on your professional life?

[e.g. regarding couple and family relationships, friendships, career advancement, professional opportunities, skills, positive or negative experiences]

QUESTIONS FOR NON-MOBILE ACADEMICS

- 3.18** How did you feel about the possibility of going abroad?

(What is your family background regarding mobility? Did you once renounce to be mobile? For what reasons? Do you feel that you would be in a better position if you had been mobile? Did the question of mobility never arise in your career so far? Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on decisions related to your mobility or non-mobility?)

- 3.19** How did you make the decision of not going abroad (if respondent had the opportunity but renounced)?

(What was this opportunity? With whom did you discuss it? What consequences (positive and/or negative) did your decision imply for you and for those around you? Were there any doubts or uncertainties? About what specific aspects? Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on decisions related to your non-mobility?)

- 3.20** Would you consider the possibility of being mobile in the future?

(For what reasons? Where? According to what criteria? With whom would you discuss this possibility? What would a future mobility imply for you and for those around you? Would you move alone or would other persons be moving with you?)

- 3.21** Does/Did your absence of experience abroad have specific positive or negative effects on your personal and/or on your professional life?

[e.g. regarding couple and family relationships, friendships, career advancement, professional opportunities, skills, positive or negative experiences]

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT AND BEYOND

- 3.22** How would you describe your work environment and/or your research field or discipline?

(What are its characteristics? Is it rather male dominated or gender balanced? Who are the persons you are interacting with at work?)

- 3.23** How would you describe your interactions with your colleagues at work?

(What kind of interactions do you have with your male and respectively female colleagues? Do you perceive differences in your interactions with your different colleagues?)

- 3.24** Do you perceive differences between the different universities where you have worked?

*[e.g. regarding working culture, university structure and organization, funding system, normative representations, behavioral expectations, child care facilities, gender equity]
(What are these differences? How do you interpret them?)*

- 3.25** Does/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on how you feel in your academic environment?

[e.g. regarding the department you are affiliated to, your research field or discipline, the university structure and organization, the funding system at a national or supranational level, normative representations, behavioral expectations, child care facilities, gender equity]

(How is it to be a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...] and working in academia? Does it play a role on your academic career, on your academic experiences? Does it play a role on how you feel sustained (or not) in your career advancement?)

- 3.26** Based on your experiences, what is the best way to pursue an academic career?

(What worked or did not work for you? What would you change if possible, what would you do differently? What do you identify as an important condition or element of your career advancement or career success?)

Final Part: Socio-demographic questions

If during the interview, any of these data about the respondent is still missing, ask the following:

- 4.1** Sex
- 4.2** Age – Year of birth
- 4.3** Country of birth
- 4.4** Nationality/ies
- 4.5** Family status (civil status, partner, children, age of children)
- 4.6** Educational trajectory (place and year of completion of Bachelor, Master, PhD and other academic degrees)
- 4.7** Current position (name of position, starting month and year, length/type, funding)
- 4.8** Mobility trajectory (where, when – month and year –, for how long, under what positions)

Appendix II – Memento of questions for biographical interview (mobile academics)

1. PURSUING AN ACADEMIC CAREER

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 1.1 | How did you develop the wish to pursue an academic career? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your family background regarding an academic career?• When did you start thinking about the possibility of pursuing an academic career?• With whom did you discuss this possibility?• What decisions did this possibility imply for you and for those around you?• Were there any doubts or uncertainties? About what specific aspects?• Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on this issue? |
| 1.2 | What are the next steps you are considering to take as regards your academic career or after the ending of your current position (if current position is temporary)? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What kind of positions are you ultimately aiming at?• Are you currently applying for academic or non-academic positions, for grants or fellowships?• What kind of positions and where?• What are your criteria regarding these positions?• With whom do you discuss and decide where you apply?• Why are you not applying? What will these next steps imply for you and for those around you?• Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on the discussions and decisions related to this issue? |
| 1.3 | Do/Did you experience any major difficulties or obstacles to progress in your career?
[e.g. constraints related to or conflicting issues with: personal life and family obligations, mobility requirement, unfavorable job market, visa restrictions, personal doubts, academic organization, gender inequalities] | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are/were they?• How do/did you cope with or overcome these difficulties/obstacles?• Does/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on these difficulties? |
| 1.4 | On what type(s) of resources can/could you rely on to progress in your career? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are/were they?• In what situation do/did you use them? |

[Financial resources (e.g. grants, fellowships); academic persons; private persons; human, cultural and symbolic capital (breakthrough, reputation of university, lab or supervisor, favorable job market]

1.5 Do you feel sustained in your career advancement?

- Does/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on accessing these resources?
- By whom?
- When?
- How?
- What are the outcomes?
- Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on this issue?

2. COUPLE AND FAMILY SITUATION - FRIENDS

2.1 What is your family situation?

- Do you have a partner?
- What is his/her professional situation?
- How many children do you have and how old are they?
- Do you live together with your partner and/or with your children, or where do they live?
- Who take care of the household and of the children?
- Who is concerned by these arrangements?
- With whom do you discuss how to combine your professional and your personal life?

2.2 How do you manage to combine your personal (couple and/or family) life with your academic job and or mobility?

- What arrangements do you come up with?
- What do these arrangements involve for you and those around you?
- What obstacles or difficulties are you confronted with and how do you overcome them?
- Do/Did you have to renounce to some professional projects or opportunities because of personal or family reasons?
- Does/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on these arrangements?

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 2.3 | What are your next steps regarding your personal and family life? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you plan to have (more) children? • Do you anticipate renouncing to some career advancement because of personal or family reasons? • Do you anticipate renouncing to or ending mobility because of personal or family reasons? • Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on these plans? |
| 2.4 | How do/did you maintain or develop relations with your friends in a mobility context? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do/did you maintain relations with friends in your “previous” country? • How do/did you develop new friendships in the country where you are currently living? |

3. ENGAGING IN TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 3.1 | How did you feel about the possibility of going abroad? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your family background regarding mobility? • How did you feel about going abroad (or about moving within the country)? • Do you feel that you had to do it for professional reasons? • Were you attracted by the idea of going abroad? • For what reasons did you move abroad? • Did you once renounce to be mobile? • For what reasons? • Does the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on decisions related to your mobility? |
| 3.2 | How did you develop the idea and make the decision of going abroad? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When did you start thinking about this possibility? • With whom did you discuss this possibility? • What decisions did this possibility imply (for you and for those around you)? • Were there any doubts or uncertainties? • About what specific aspects? • Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on decisions related to your mobility? |

- 3.3 With whom did you discuss the possibility of going abroad?
- 3.4 How did you organize your stay abroad?
- 3.5 With whom did you move or who did not move with you?
- 3.6 Would you consider the possibility of being mobile again in the future?
- 3.7 How is/was your experience abroad?
- 3.8 Does/Did your experience abroad have specific positive or negative effects on your personal and/or on your professional life?
- What decision did you come to?
 - What did this decision imply for you and for those around you?
 - What were the resources you could rely on to organize a stay abroad?
 - Were there any difficulties or obstacles to overcome to move abroad?
 - Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on the organization of your stay abroad?
 - What did this mobility imply for the person(s) moving (or not) with you?
 - How did you negotiate this?
 - How did you organize your personal (couple and/or family) life with your mobility?
 - For what reasons?
 - Where?
 - According to what criteria?
 - With whom would you discuss this possibility?
 - What would a future mobility imply for you and for those around you?
 - Would you move alone or would other persons be moving with you?
 - What difficulties or obstacles are/were you confronted with?
 - How do/did you overcome these difficulties/obstacles?
 - Do/Did these difficulties involve other persons?
 - What are/were the experiences of these persons?
 - Do/did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on your experience abroad?

[e.g. regarding couple and family relationships, friendships, career advancement, professional opportunities, skills, positive or negative experiences]

4. ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT AND BEYOND

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 4.1 | How would you describe your work environment and/or your research field or discipline? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are its characteristics? Is it rather male dominated or gender balanced? • Who are the persons you are interacting with at work? |
| 4.2 | How would you describe your interactions with your colleagues at work? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of interactions do you have with your male and respectively female colleagues? • Do you perceive differences in your interactions with your different colleagues? |
| | Do you perceive differences between the different universities where you have worked? | |
| 4.3 | [e.g. regarding working culture, university structure and organization, funding system, normative representations, behavioral expectations, child care facilities, gender equity] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are these differences? • How do you interpret these? |
| | Does/Did the fact of being a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...], play a role on how you feel in your academic environment? | |
| 4.4 | [e.g. regarding the department you are affiliated to, your research field or discipline, the university structure and organization, the funding system at a national or supranational level, normative representations, behavioral expectations, child care facilities, gender equity] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is it to be a man, a woman, a father, a mother, [...] and working in academia? • Does it play a role on your academic career, on your academic experiences? • Does it play a role on how you feel sustained (or not) in your career advancement? |
| 4.5 | Based on your experiences, what is the best way to pursue an academic career? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worked or did not work for you? • What would you change if possible, what would you do differently? • What do you identify as an important condition or element of your career advancement or career success? |

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

1. Sex
2. Age – Year of birth
3. Country of birth
4. Nationality/ies
5. Family status (civil status, partner, children, age of children)
6. Educational trajectory (place and year of completion of BA, MA, PhD and other academic degrees)
7. Current position (name of position, starting year, length/type, funding)
8. Discipline – Research field
9. Mobility trajectory (where, when – month and year – , for how long, under what positions)

Academic researcher – 2nd interview – Network interview

Mobility Network – Currently mobile academics

For respondents who are currently experiencing post-PhD transnational mobility.

The interviewer checks with the list of persons mentioned during the biographical interview.

Respondents name their alters the way they want, providing that it is made clear “whom” they talk about. The interviewer writes each alter’s name (or role) on a card, specifying the question number(s) for which alter was mentioned.

Introduction

Interviewer: Today, we are doing the network interview. We are going to focus on your mobility network and more specifically on the persons relevant to your mobility from [...] to [...] and your current experience in [...].

I will first ask you questions about who is relevant to you as regards certain issues or situations. And then, in a second phase, you will have time to tell me more generally about each person and about your relation with them.

The persons you mention may include family members, partners, friends, people from academia, staff from institutions or mentoring programs, acquaintances, etc. You may also mention resources, such as programs or grants for instance.

Name Generator

[The interviewee elicits names for each question and is encouraged to tell more about the specific situation and support from each mentioned alter as regards the contexts referred to in the questions.]

1. Decision-making process

[GENERAL]

Thinking of the time when you were deciding upon moving to [...] and taking up this [specify position or funding opportunity] at the university here, ...

1.1 With whom did you discuss your decision of taking up this position [or funding opportunity] here?

1.2a Before leaving, during your decision-making process, who encouraged you moving here and taking up this position [or funding opportunity]?

1.2b Before leaving, during your decision-making process, who discouraged you from moving here and taking up this position [or funding opportunity]?

[PROFESSIONAL]

1.3 How did you hear, or who did tell you, about this position [or funding opportunity]? (Or did someone contact you, and if yes, who?)

1.4a Before coming here, did you know or did you contact someone here at the university?

1.4b Before coming here, did you know or did you contact someone here in [city name] or in [country name]?

[GENERAL]

1.5 Is there another person somehow implicated in your decision-making who has not been mentioned yet?

2. Transition period (organization before leaving and situation upon arrival)

[Q2.1-2.3 do not need being asked as such during network interview. Information to answer these questions is available from biographical interview. Interviewer writes the names on cards prior to network interview.]

[GENERAL]

- 2.1** Who triggered this transnational mobility?
(Did you have a job or a funding opportunity abroad, or did you initially “follow” your partner or someone else?)
- 2.2** Who did move with you, or who joined you later?
(Did your partner move with you? Did your children move with you? Did other persons move with you?)
- 2.3** Who did not move with you?
[Here we are interested only in partners – whatever the marital status and co-habiting situation – and children].

[INSTRUMENTAL]

- 2.4a** What did you organize before leaving [city or country name]?
[Interviewee generates items, e.g. regarding housing, childcare, school, administrative formalities (visa, working permit, insurance, etc.)]
- 2.4b** What did you organize upon arriving in [city or country name]?
[Interviewee generates items, e.g. regarding housing, childcare, school, administrative formalities (visa, working permit, insurance, etc.)]
- 2.5a** Who helped you with item “1”?
- 2.5b** Who helped you with item “2”?
- 2.5...** Who helped you with item “...”?

[FINANCIAL]

- 2.6** Who financially supported your moving abroad, what financial resources could you count on to finance your moving abroad?

[EMOTIONAL]

- 2.7a** Before leaving, if you needed to discuss personal concerns about your moving abroad and taking up this position here, whom did you turn to?
- 2.7b** During the first weeks after your arrival, if you needed to discuss personal concerns about your mobility situation and your new position here, whom did you turn to?

[GENERAL]

- 2.8** Is there another person who somehow was implicated when you were organizing your move and your stay here and who has not been mentioned yet?

3 Current mobility situation at the time of interview

[INSTRUMENTAL]

- 3.1** Today, if you need practical help to solve the problems of everyday life, be it regarding administrative or organizational issues, whom do you turn to?
[Ask respondent to specify the problems and their contexts].
[If respondent has children and did not mention childcare, then ask 3.2].
- 3.2** Who takes care of the children while you are working or when you travel?
[In the “home” country for the ones who stayed and in the current country of residence for the ones who followed].

[FINANCIAL]

- 3.3** Today, if you are confronted with financial difficulties, or if your income is not enough for particular or exceptional expenses, whom do you turn to or what resources can you count on?

[EMOTIONAL]

3.4 Today, if you need to discuss concerns or worries of any kind, whom do you turn to?

[PROFESSIONAL]

3.5 Today, if you need to discuss professional issues or if you need professional advice, whom do you turn to?

[GENERAL]

3.6 Is there a person who is currently very important to you in any respect and who has not been mentioned yet?

[If yes, add this person on the cards].

Name interpreter

[Hand the cards with alters' names to the respondent.]

4 Name interpreter

[If during the name generator the interviewee has not fully addressed the ways in which each alter was relevant to him/her as regards the situational questions, the interviewer ask for further details now.]

[Then, the interviewer asks about each alter more generally:]

Now, I would like you to tell me more about each person mentioned on a card, starting with the first person you mentioned and so on.

4.4a When and on what occasion did you meet?

4.4b How long have you known each other?

4.5a On what occasions do you meet nowadays?

4.5b How often do you have contact with each other?

4.5c Do you meet face-to-face, on skype, or by phone?

4.6 How has your relationship developed?

4.7a What was this person doing at the time you met?

4.7b What is this person doing now?

4.8a Who is this person for you?

4.8b What kind of relationship do you have?

[The respondent talks freely about each generated name, describing the person and the relation he/she has with him/her. The idea here is to trigger a narrative and to grasp the factual information from that narrative.]

5 Socio-demographic information about the mentioned alters

[At the end of interview, fill out the table on separate sheet.]

- *The sex of alter*
- *The age of alter*
- *The nationality/ies and country of birth of alter*
- *The place where alter currently lives*
- *The family situation of alter (civil status and number of children)*
- *The current professional activity and position of alter*
- *The field of education and the educational level of alter*

Appendix IV – Network interview guidelines – Past mobility

Academic researcher – 2nd interview – Network interview

Mobility Network – Mobile academics in the past

For respondents who experienced post-PhD transnational mobility in the past.

The interviewer checks with the list of persons mentioned during the biographical interview.

Respondents name their alters the way they want, providing that it is made clear “whom” they talk about. The interviewer writes each alter’s name (or role) on a card, specifying the question number(s) for which alter was mentioned.

Introduction

Interviewer: Today, we are doing the network interview. We are going to focus on your mobility network and more specifically on the persons relevant to your mobility from [...] to [...] and then also on your current experience in [...].

I will first ask you questions about who is relevant to you as regards certain issues or situations. And then, in a second phase, you will have time to tell me more generally about each person and about your relation with them.

The persons you mention may include family members, partners, friends, people from academia, staff from institutions or mentoring programs, acquaintances, etc. You may also mention resources, such as programs or grants for instance.

Name Generator

[The interviewee elicits names for each question and is encouraged to tell more about the specific situation and support from each mentioned alter as regards the contexts referred to in the questions.]

3. Decision-making process

[GENERAL]

Thinking of the time when you were deciding upon moving to [...] and taking up that [specify position or funding opportunity] at the university there, ...

3.1 With whom did you discuss your decision of taking up that position [or funding opportunity] there?

1.2a Before leaving, during your decision-making process, who encouraged you moving there and taking up that position [or funding opportunity]?

1.2b Before leaving, during your decision-making process, who discouraged you from moving there and taking up that position [or funding opportunity]?

[PROFESSIONAL]

1.3 How did you hear, or who did tell you, about that position [or funding opportunity]? (Or did someone contact you, and if yes, who?)

1.4a Before going there, did you know or did you contact someone at the university there?

1.4b Before going there, did you know or did you contact someone there in [city name] or in [country name]?

[GENERAL]

- 1.5 Is there another person somehow implicated in your decision-making who has not been mentioned yet?

4. Transition period (organization before leaving and situation upon arrival)

[Q2.1-2.3 do not need being asked as such during network interview. Information to answer these questions is available from biographic interview. Interviewer writes the names on cards prior to network interview.]

[GENERAL]

- 4.1 Who triggered that transnational mobility?
(Did you have a job or a funding opportunity abroad, or did you initially “follow” your partner or someone else?)
- 4.2 Who did move with you, or who joined you later?
(Did your partner move with you? Did your children move with you? Did other persons move with you?)
- 4.3 Who did not move with you?
[Here we are interested only in partners – whatever the marital status and co-habiting situation – and children.]

[INSTRUMENTAL]

- 2.4a What did you organize before leaving [city or country name]?
[Interviewee generates items, e.g. regarding housing, childcare, school, administrative formalities (visa, working permit, insurance, etc.)]
- 2.4b What did you organize upon arriving in [city or country name]?
[Interviewee generates items, e.g. regarding housing, childcare, school, administrative formalities (visa, working permit, insurance, etc.)]
- 2.5a Who helped you with item “1”?
- 2.5b Who helped you with item “2”?
- 2.5... Who helped you with item “...”?

[FINANCIAL]

- 2.6 Who financially supported your moving abroad, what financial resources could you count on to finance your moving abroad?

[EMOTIONAL]

- 2.7a Before leaving, if you needed to discuss personal concerns about your moving abroad and taking up that position there, whom did you turn to?
- 2.7b During the first weeks after you arrival, if you needed to discuss personal concerns about your mobility situation and your new position there, whom did you turn to?

[GENERAL]

- 2.8 Is there another person who somehow was implicated when you were organizing your move and your stay there and who has not been mentioned yet?

3A. Past mobility situation after having settled down

[INSTRUMENTAL]

- 3A.1 After settling down (or during the last year you were there), if you needed practical help to solve the problems of everyday life, be it regarding administrative or organizational issues, whom did you turn to?
[Ask respondent to specify the problems and their contexts].
[If respondent has children and did not mention childcare, then ask 3.2].

3A.2 Who took care of the children while you were working or when you traveled?

[In the “home” country for the ones who stayed and in the past country of residence for the ones who followed].

[FINANCIAL]

3A.3 After settling down (or during the last year you were there), if you were confronted with financial difficulties, or if your income was not enough for particular or exceptional expenses, whom did you turn to or what resources could you count on?

[EMOTIONAL]

3A.4 After settling down (or during the last year you were there), if you needed to discuss concerns or worries of any kind, whom did you turn to?

[PROFESSIONAL]

3A.5 After settling down (or during the last year you were there), if you needed to discuss professional issues or if you needed professional advice, whom did you turn to?

[GENERAL]

3A.6 Is there a person who was very important to you in any respect during that mobility experience and who has not been mentioned yet?

[If yes, add this person to the cards].

3B. Current situation at the time of interview (back in the country of PhD)

[INSTRUMENTAL]

3B.1 Today, if you need practical help to solve the problems of everyday life, be it regarding administrative or organizational issues, who do you turn to?

[Ask respondent to specify the problems and their contexts].

[If respondent has children and did not mention childcare, then ask 3.2]

3B.2 Who takes care of the children while you are working or when you travel?

[In the “home” country for the ones who stayed and in the current country of residence for the ones who followed].

[FINANCIAL]

3B.3 Today, if you are confronted with financial difficulties, or if your income is not enough for particular or exceptional expenses, whom do you turn to or what resources can you count on?

[EMOTIONAL]

3B.4 Today, if you need to discuss concerns or worries of any kind, whom do you turn to?

[PROFESSIONAL]

3B.5 Today, if you need to discuss professional issues or if you need professional advice, whom do you turn to?

[GENERAL]

3B.6 Is there a person who is currently very important to you in any respect and who has not been mentioned yet?

[If yes, add this person on the cards].

Name interpreter

[Hand the cards with alters' names to the respondent.]

4. Name interpreter

[If during the name generator the interviewee has not fully addressed the ways in which each alter was relevant to him/her as regards the situational questions, the interviewer ask for further details now.]

[Then, the interviewer asks about each alter more generally:]

Now, I would like you to tell me more about each person mentioned on a card, starting with the first person you mentioned and so on.

4.4a When and on what occasion did you meet?

4.4b How long have you known each other?

4.5a On what occasions do you meet nowadays?

4.5b How often do you have contact with each other?

4.5c Do you meet face-to-face, on skype, or by phone?

4.6 How has your relationship developed?

4.7a What was this person doing at the time you met?

4.7b What is this person doing now?

4.8a Who is this person for you?

4.8b What kind of relationship do you have?

[The respondent talks freely about each generated name, describing the person and the relation he/she has with him/her. The idea here is to trigger a narrative and to grasp the factual information from that narrative.]

5. Socio-demographic information about the mentioned alters

[At the end of interview, fill out the table on a separate sheet].

- *The sex of alter*
- *The age of alter*
- *The nationality/ies and country of birth of alter*
- *The place where alter currently lives*
- *The family situation of alter (civil status and number of children)*
- *The current professional activity and position of alter*
- *The field of education and the educational level of alter*

Appendix V – Consent form UCLA (version for mobile academics)



UNIVERSITÉ DE
NEUCHÂTEL

MAPS
Maison d'analyse des
processus sociaux

Ebg de l'Hôpital 27
CH-2000 Neuchâtel
Switzerland

Martine Schaer
PhD candidate in social sciences
martine.schaer@unine.ch
+41 32 718 15 36

**Transnational Mobility of Academics in the Early Stages of their Careers:
Case Study at UCLA**

Informed Consent Document

You are being asked to take part in a research study about the career paths of young academic researchers. I am asking you to take part because you are holding an academic position at UCLA and you were awarded your PhD between 2004 and 2014. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding of the transnational mobility of young academic researchers and of its effects upon their personal and professional lives and that of their partners/spouses.

What I will ask you to do: If you agree to take part in this study, I will conduct two different types of interview with you: First a biographical interview and then a network interview. The biographical interview will be about your family story and your personal life story. The network interview will focus on the people of relevance to your mobility experience. Each interview will last 120 minutes at the most. With your permission, I would also like to tape-record the interviews.

Risks and benefits: I do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. There are no direct benefits to you participating in this study.

Your answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report that the research team makes public we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a password protected computer file or in a locked filing cabinet to which only the research team will have access. If I tape-record the interviews, the audio-recordings will only be used to transcribe the interviews.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions: The researcher conducting the interviews is Martine Schaer. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Martine Schaer at martine.schaer@unine.ch or at +41 32 718 15 36.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interviews tape-recorded.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____

UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES



Center for the Understanding of
Social Processes

Ebg de l'Hôpital 27
CH-2000 Neuchâtel
Switzerland
T: +41 32 718 14 80

www.unine.ch/maps

References

- Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies : A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender and Society* 4(2):139-58.
- Ackers, Louise. 2003. *Managing Work and Family Life in Peripatetic Careers : the Experiences of Mobile Women Scientists in the EU*. Leeds: Centre for the Study of Law and Policy in Europe, University of Leeds.
- . 2004. "Managing Relationships in Peripatetic Careers : Scientific Mobility in the European Union." *Women's Studies International Forum* 27(3):189-201.
- . 2008. "Internationalisation, Mobility and Metrics: A New Form of Indirect Discrimination?" *Minerva* 46(4):411-35.
- Ackers, Louise, and Bryony Gill. 2008. *Moving People and Knowledge : Scientific Mobility in an Enlarging European Union*. Cheltenham [etc.]: E. Elgar.
- Ackers, Louise, and Liz Oliver. 2007. "From Flexicurity to Flexequality?: The Impact of the Fixed-Term Contract Provisions on Employment in Science Research." *International Studies of Management and Organization* 37(1):53-79.
- Altissimo, Alice. 2016. "Combining Egocentric Network Maps and Narratives: An Applied Analysis of Qualitative Network Map Interviews." *Sociological Research Online* 21(2):152-64.
- Amelina, Anna. 2013. "Hierarchies and categorical power in cross-border science : analysing scientists' transnational mobility between Ukraine and Germany." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 13(2):141-55.
- Amelina, Anna, and Thomas Faist. 2012. "De-naturalizing the national in research methodologies: key concepts of transnational studies in migration." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(10):1707-24.
- Amelina, Anna, and Helma Lutz. 2019. *Gender and Migration: Transnational and intersectional projects*. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Anderson, Bridget. 2019. "New directions in migration studies: towards methodological de-nationalism." *Comparative Migration Studies* 7(36):1-13.
- Auriol, Laudeline. 2010. *Careers of Doctorate Holders : Employment and Mobility Patterns*. Paris: OECD Publications.
- Bagilhole, Barbara. 1993. "How to Keep a Good Woman down: An Investigation of the Role of Institutional Factors in the Process of Discrimination against Women Academics." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 14(3):261-75.
- Bagilhole, Barbara, and Jackie Goode. 2001. "The Contradiction of the Myth of Individual Merit, and the Reality of a Patriarchal Support System in Academic Careers : A Feminist Investigation." *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 8(2):161-80.
- Bataille, Pierre, Nicky Le Feuvre, and Sabine Kradolfer Morales. 2017. "Should I stay or should I go? The effects of precariousness on the gendered career aspirations of postdocs in Switzerland." *European Educational Research Journal* 16(2-3):313-31.

- Bataille, Pierre, and Marie Sautier. 2019. "Ce "qu'être postdoc" veut dire: cheminements postdoctoraux en Suisse, circa 2010." *Philosophia Scientiae* 23(3):35-66.
- Bauder, Harald. 2015. "The International Mobility of Academics : A Labour Market Perspective." *International Migration* 53(1):83-96.
- Bauder, Harald, Charity-Ann Hannan, and Omar Lujan. 2017. "International Experience in the Academic Field: Knowledge Production, Symbolic Capital, and Mobility Fetishism." *Population, Space and Place* 23(6):13 p.
- Bauder, Harald, Omar Lujan, and Charity-Ann Hannan. 2018. "Internationally mobile academics: Hierarchies, hegemony, and the geoscientific imagination." *Geoforum* 89:52-59.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. 2006 [2000]. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge [etc.]: Polity Press.
- Beaufaÿs, Sandra, and Beate Krais. 2005. "Femmes dans les carrières scientifiques en Allemagne : les mécanismes cachés du pouvoir." *Travail, genre et sociétés* 14(2):49-68.
- Beck, Ulrich. 1992 [1986]. *Risk Society : Towards a New Modernity*. London [etc.]: Sage.
- Benninghoff, Martin. 2011. "'Publish or perish!': la fabrique du chercheur-entrepreneur." *Carnets de bord* 17:47-58.
- Bernela, Bastien, and Béatrice Milard. 2016. "Studying Co-Authorship Network Dynamics throughout Geographical Trajectories of Researchers: What Part Does Mobility Play?" *HAL : archives ouvertes*:23 p.
- Bertaux, Daniel. 2010. *Le récit de vie*. Paris: A. Colin.
- Bilecen, Başak, Markus Gamper, and Miranda Jessica Lubbers. 2018. "The missing link: Social network analysis in migration and transnationalism." *Social Networks* 53:1-3.
- Bilecen, Başak, and Christoph Van Mol. 2017. "Introduction: International Academic Mobility and Inequalities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1241-55.
- Boni-Le Goff, Isabel, and Nicky Le Feuvre. 2017. "Professions from a Gendered Perspective." in *Oxford Encyclopedia for Business and Management*: Oxford University Press.
- Bozzon, Rossella, Annalisa Murgia, and Barbara Poggio. 2019. "Gender and precarious careers in academia and research: macro, meso and micro perspectives." Pp. 15-49 in *Gender and Precarious Research Careers*, edited by Annalisa Murgia and Barbara Poggio. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Broderick, Nichole A. , and Arturo Casadevall. 2019. "Gender inequalities among authors who contributed equally." *eLife* 8:e36399.
- Bronstein, Phyllis. 2001. "Older Women in Academia : Contemporary History and Issues." *Journal of Women's History* 12(4):184-201.
- Bryson, Colin. 2004. "The Consequences for Women in the Academic Profession of the Widespread Use of Fixed Term Contracts." *Gender, Work and Organization* 11(2):187-206.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge.

- Cachia, Romina, and Isidro Maya Jariego. 2018. "Mobility types, transnational ties and personal networks in four highly skilled immigrant communities in Seville (Spain)." *Social Networks* 53:111-24.
- Carling, Jørgen, Marta Bivand Erdal, and Rojan Ezzati. 2014. "Beyond the insider–outsider divide in migration research." *Migration Studies* 2(1):36-54.
- Carvalho, Carine. 2010. "Nomination des professeur·e·s à l'Université de Lausanne et préception des (in)égalités." Pp. 154-70 in *Le plafond de fer de l'université : femmes et carrières*, edited by Farinaz Fassa and Sabine Kradolfer. Zurich: Editions Seismo.
- Cassell, Catherine. 2005. "Creating the Interviewer: Identity Work in the Management Research Process." *Qualitative Research* 5(2):167-79.
- Castells, Manuel. 1996. *The Rise of the Network Society*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- CCSI. 2015. *'Dr. Arbeitslos'? L'insertion professionnelle des titulaires de doctorat en Suisse*. Berne: Conseil suisse de la science et de l'innovation.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2001. "Qualitative Interviewing and Grounded Theory Analysis." Pp. 675-94 in *Handbook of Interview Research : Context & Method*, edited by Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Connell, R.W. 1987. *Gender and Power : Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Connell, R.W., and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. "Hegemonic Masculinity : Rethinking the Concept." *Gender and Society* 19(6):829-59.
- Connell, Raewyn. 2014. "Rethinking Gender from the South." *Feminist Studies* 40(3):518-39.
- . 2017. "Southern theory and world universities." *Higher Education Research and Development* 36(1):4-15.
- . 2019. "Fields of struggle: University work and global change." Pp. 222-38 in *The Social Structures of Global Academia*, edited by Fabian Cannizzo and Nick Osbaldiston. Abingdon [etc.]: Routledge.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2010. "Towards a Politics of Mobility." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28:17-31.
- Dahinden, Janine. 2005. *Prishtina - Schlieren : albanische Migrationsnetzwerke im transnationalen Raum*. Zürich: Seismo.
- . 2009. "Migration and Mobility: Universality and Resulting Tensions." Pp. 359-76 in *Universality - From Theory to Practice*, edited by Beat Sitter-Liver. Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg.
- . 2010. "Are you who you know? : A network perspective on ethnicity, gender and transnationalism : Albanian-speaking migrants in Switzerland and returnees in Kosovo." Pp. 127-47 in *Identity Processes and Dynamics in Multi-Ethnic Europe*, edited by Charles Westin, José Bastos, Janine Dahinden, and Pedro Góis. [Amsterdam] Amsterdam University Press.
- . 2016. "A Plea for the 'De-migrantization' of Research on Migration and Integration." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39(13):2207-25.

- . 2017. "Transnationalism Reloaded: the Historical Trajectory of a Concept." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(9):1474-85.
- de Wit, Hans, Fiona Hunter, Laura Howard, and Eva Egron-Polak. 2015. *Internationalisation of Higher Education*. Brussels: European Union.
- Degenne, Alain, and Michel Forsé. 1994. *Les réseaux sociaux: une analyse structurale en sociologie*. Paris: A. Colin.
- Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.). 2018. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Derks, Belle, Colette Van Laar, and Naomi Ellemers. 2016. "The queen bee phenomenon: Why women leaders distance themselves from junior women." *The Leadership Quarterly* 27(3):456-69.
- Diezmann, Carmel, and Susan Grieshaber. 2019. *Women Professors: Who Makes it and how?* Singapore: Springer.
- El-Alayli, Amani, Ashley A. Hansen-Brown, and Michelle Ceynar. 2018. "Dancing Backwards in High Heels: Female Professors Experience More Work Demands and Special Favor Requests, Particularly from Academically Entitled Students." *Sex Roles* 79:136-50.
- Elsesser, Kim, and Letitia Anne Peplau. 2006. "The glass partition: Obstacles to cross-sex friendships at work." *Human Relations* 59(8):1077-100.
- Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Jeff Goodwin. 1994. "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency." *American Journal of Sociology* 99(6):1411-54.
- Enders, Jürgen, and Christine Musselin. 2008. "Back to the Future? The Academic Professions in the 21st Century." Pp. 125-50 in *Higher Education to 2030 - Vol. 1: Demography*, edited by OECD. Paris: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- England, Kim V. L. 1994. "Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality, and Feminist Research." *Professional Geographer* 46(1):80-89.
- Erel, Umut. 2007. "Constructing Meaningful Lives: Biographical Methods in Research on Migrant Women." *Sociological Research Online* 12(4):1-19.
- European Commission. 2009. *She Figures 2009 : Statistics and Indicators on Gender Equality in Science*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- . 2019. *She Figures 2018*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Fahey, Johannah, and Jane Kenway. 2010a. "International academic mobility: problematic and possible paradigms." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):563-75.
- . 2010b. "Thinking in a 'worldly' way: mobility, knowledge, power and geography." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):627-40.
- Faist, Thomas. 2012. "Toward a Transnational Methodology: Methods to Address Methodological Nationalism, Essentialism, and Positionality." *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 28(1):51-70.
- . 2013. "The Mobility Turn: A New Paradigm for the Social Sciences?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36(11):1637-46.

- Fawcett, Barbara, and Jeff Hearn. 2004. "Researching others: epistemology, experience, standpoints and participation." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 7(3):201-18.
- Fielding, Nigel G., and Jane L. Fielding. 1986. *Linking data: the articulation of qualitative and quantitative methods in social research*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Fisher, Virginia, and Sue Kinsey. 2014. "Behind closed doors! Homosocial desire and the academic boys club." *Gender in Management* 29(1):44-64.
- Flick, Uwe (Ed.). 2014. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*. Los Angeles [etc.]: Sage.
- . 2018a. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- . 2018b. "Triangulation." Pp. 444-61 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Franssen, Thomas, and Sarah de Rijcke. 2019. "The rise of project funding and its effects on the social structure of academia." in *The Social Structures of Global Academia*, edited by Fabian Cannizzo and Nick Osbaldiston. Abingdon [etc.]: Routledge.
- Fumasoli, Tatiana, and Gaële Goastellec. 2015a. "Global Models, Disciplinary and Local Patterns in Academic Recruitment Processes." Pp. 69-93 in *Academic Work and Careers in Europe: Trends, Challenges, Perspectives*, edited by Tatiana Fumasoli, Gaële Goastellec, and Barbara M. Kehm. Cham [etc.]: Springer.
- . 2015b. "Recruitment of Academics in Switzerland: e pluribus unum?" Pp. 145-61 in *Forming, Recruiting and Managing the Academic Profession*, edited by Ulrich Teichler and William K. Cummings. Cham [etc.]: Springer International Publishing.
- Fumasoli, Tatiana, Gaële Goastellec, and Barbara M. Kehm (Eds.). 2015. *Academic Work and Careers in Europe: Trends, Challenges, Perspectives*. Cham [etc.]: Springer.
- Fusulier, Bernard, Maria Del Rio Carral, Alexandre Baguette, and Christine Godesar. 2014. "Conjugalité/parentalité et carrières scientifiques à l'épreuve de la mobilité chez les couples de chercheur-e-s." Pp. [25] p. in *Distances et liens*, edited by Laura Merla and Aurore François. Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia - L'Harmattan.
- Gaillard, Anne Marie, and Jacques Gaillard. 1998. *International migration of the highly qualified : a bibliographic and conceptual itinerary*. New York: Center for Migration Studies.
- Gallas, Alexander. 2018. "Introduction: The Proliferation of Precarious Labour in Academia." *Global Labour Journal* 9(1):69-75.
- GAO. 2017. *Contingent Workforce: Size, Characteristics, Compensation, and Work Experiences of Adjunct and Other Non-Tenure-Track Faculty*. Washington D.C.: Government Accountability Office.
- Gerhards, Jürgen, Silke Hans, and Daniel Drewski. 2018. "Global inequality in the academic system: effects of national and university symbolic capital on international academic mobility." *Higher Education* 76(4):669-85.
- Gersick, Connie J.G., Jean M. Bartunek, and Jane E. Dutton. 2000. "Learning from Academia: The Importance of relationships in Professional Life." *Academy of Management Journal* 43(6):1026-44.

- Gill, Rosalind. 2014. "Academics, Cultural Workers and Critical Labour Studies." *Journal of Cultural Economy* 7(1):12-30.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton. 1992. "Towards a Definition of Transnationalism: Introductory Remarks and Research Questions." Pp. p. IX-XV in *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*, edited by Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton. New York: The New York Academic of Sciences.
- . 1995. "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 68(1):48-63.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, Ayşe Çağlar, and Thaddeus C. Guldbrandsen. 2006. "Beyond the ethnic lens: Locality, globality, and born-again incorporation." *American Ethnologist* 33(4):612-33.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, and Noel B. Salazar. 2013. "Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(2):183-200.
- Goastellec, Gaële, and Nicolas Pekari. 2014. "Reforming Faculties' Careers: The Swiss Labor Market Between Universalism and Particularism." Pp. 189-206 in *Reforming Higher Education: Public Policy Design and Implementation*, edited by Christine Musselin and Pedro N. Teixeira. Dordrecht [etc.]: Springer.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6):1360-80.
- . 1983. "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited." *Sociological Theory* 1:201-33.
- Gray, Mia, Tomoko Kurihara, Leif Hommen, and Jonathan Feldman. 2007. "Networks of exclusion: job segmentation and social networks in the knowledge economy." *Equal Opportunities International* 26(2):144-61.
- Green, A.E. 1997. "A Question of Compromise ? Case Study Evidence on the Location and Mobility Strategies of Dual Career Households " *Regional Studies* 31(7):641-57.
- Gutekunst, Miriam, Andreas Hackl, Sabina Leoncini, Julia Sophia Schwarz, and Irene Götz (Eds.). 2016. *Bounded Mobilities: Ethnographic Perspectives on Social Hierarchies and Global Inequalities*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.
- Hagan, Jacqueline Maria. 1998. "Social Networks, Gender, and Immigrant Incorporation: Resources and Constraints." *American Sociological Review* 63(1):55-67.
- Hearn, Jeff. 2004. "From Hegemonic Masculinity to the Hegemony of Men." *Feminist Theory* 5(1):49-72.
- . 2017. "Neoliberal Universities, Patriarchies, Masculinities, and Myself: Transnational-personal Reflections on and from the Global North." *Gender and Research* 18(1):16-41.
- Heil, Tilmann, Andrea Priori, Bruno Riccio, and Inga Schwarz. 2017. "Mobilities – Migratory Experiences Ethnographically Connected: An Introduction." *New Diversities* 19(3):1-11.
- Hengel, Erin. 2020. *Publishing while female: Are women held to higher standards? Evidence from peer review*. [S.l.]: [s.n.].
- Héritier, Françoise. 1996. *Masculin, Féminin. La pensée de la différence*. Paris: O. Jacob.

- Herschberg, Channah. 2019. *Through the gate of the neoliberal academy: The (re)production of inequalities in the recruitment and selection of early-career researchers*. [S.l.]: [s.n.].
- Herschberg, Channah, Yvonne Benschop, and Marieke van den Brink. 2016. *Gender practices in the Construction of Excellence*. Trento: University of Trento.
- Hirschauer, Stefan. 2001. "Das Vergessen des Geschlechts : zur Praxeologie einer Kategorie sozialer Ordnung." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie. Sonderheft* 41:208-35.
- Hollstein, Betina, and Florian Straus (Eds.). 2006. *Qualitative Netzwerkanalyse : Konzepte, Methoden, Anwendungen*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Hui, Allison. 2016. "The Boundaries of Interdisciplinary Fields: Temporalities Shaping the Past and Future of Dialogue between Migration and Mobilities Research." *Mobilities* 11(1):66-82.
- Ibarra, Herminia. 1997. "Paving an Alternative Route: Gender Differences in Managerial Networks." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 60(1):91-201.
- Iredale, Robyn. 2001. "The Migration of Professionals : Theories and Typologies." *International Migration* 39(5):7-26.
- Jöns, Heike. 2007. "Transnational mobility and the spaces of knowledge production: a comparison of global patterns, motivations and collaborations in different academic fields." *Social Geography* 2:97-114.
- . 2011. "Transnational Academic Mobility and Gender." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 9(2):183-209.
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 1977 [1993]. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic books.
- Kaufmann, Vincent, Manfred Max Bergman, and Dominique Joye. 2004. "Motility : Mobility as Capital." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28(4):745-56.
- Kim, Dongbin, Susan Twombly, and Lisa Wolf-Wendel. 2012. "International Faculty in American Universities: Experiences of Academic Life, Productivity, and Career Mobility." *New Directions for Institutional Research* (155):27-46.
- Kim, Terri. 2009. "Shifting patterns of transnational academic mobility: A comparative and historical approach." *Comparative Education* 45(3):387-403.
- . 2011. "Transnational academic mobility, knowledge, and identity capital." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):577-91.
- King, Russell. 2012. *Theories and Typologies of Migration: an overview and a primer*. Malmö: Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare.
- Knight, Jane. 2003. "Updating the Definition of Internationalization." *International Higher Education* 33:2-3.
- Kofman, Eleonore. 1999. "Female 'Birds of Passage' a Decade Later: Gender and Immigration in the European Union." *International Migration Review* 33(2):269-99.
- . 2020. "Unequal internationalisation and the emergence of a new epistemic community: gender and migration." *Comparative Migration Studies* 8:Art. 36.

- Kofman, Eleonore, and Parvati Raghuram. 2005. "Gender and skilled migrants : into and beyond the work place." *Geoforum* 36:149-54.
- . 2015. *Gendered Migrations and Global Social Reproduction*. Basingstoke [etc.]: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Koser, Khalid, and John Salt. 1997. "The Geography of Highly Skilled International Migration." *International Journal of Population Geography* 3:285-303.
- Kotthoff, Helga. 2003. "Was heißt eigentlich 'doing gender'? Differenzierungen im Feld von Interaktion und Geschlecht." *Freiburger Frauen Studien* 12:125-61.
- Krais, Beate. 2002. "Academia as a Profession and the Hierarchy of the Sexes : Paths out of Research in German Universities." *Higher Education Quarterly* 56(4):407-18.
- Krüger, Helga, and René Levy. 2001. "Linking Life Course, Work and the Family : Theorizing a not so visible Nexus between Women and Men." *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 26(2):145-66.
- Kvale, Steinar. 1996. *InterViews : An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Larsen, Marianne A. 2008. "North American insecurities, fears and anxieties: educational implications." *Comparative Education* 44(3):265-78.
- Lazega, Emmanuel. 1998. *Réseaux sociaux et structures relationnelles*. Paris: Presse universitaires de France.
- Le Feuvre, Nicky. 2009. "Exploring Women's Academic Careers in Cross-National Perspective : Lessons for Equal Opportunity Policies." *Equal Opportunities International* 28(1):9-23.
- Le Goff, Jean-Marie, and René Levy (Eds.). 2016. *Devenir parents, devenir inégaux: Transition à la parentalité et inégalités de genre*. Zurich [etc.]: Seismo.
- Ledin, Anna, Lutz Bornmann, Frank Gannon, and Gerlind Wallon. 2007. "A Persistent Problem : Traditional Gender Roles Hold Back Female Scientists." *EMBO Reports* 8(11):982-87.
- Leemann, Regula Julia. 2010. "Gender Inequalities in Transnational Academic Mobility and the Ideal Type of Academic Entrepreneur." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):609-25.
- Leemann, Regula Julia, and Stefan Boes. 2015. "Transnational Academic Mobility from the Perspective of Gender Inequality: Researcher Flows and Knowledge Construction in Europe." Pp. 201-20 in *Shaping of European Education: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, edited by Martin Lawn and Romuald Normand. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Leemann, Regula Julia, Philipp Dubach, and Stefan Boes. 2010. "The Leaky Pipeline in the Swiss University System : Identifying Gender Barriers in Postgraduate Education and Networks Using Longitudinal Data." *Swiss Journal of Sociology* 36(2):299-323.
- Leung, Maggi W.H. 2014. "Unsettling the 'Yin-Yang' Harmony : An Analysis of Gender Inequalities in Academic Mobility among Chinese Scholars." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 23(2):155-82.
- . 2015. "'Talk to Her, She is also Chinese': A Reflection on the Spatial-Temporal Reach of Co-Ethnicity in Migration Research." *FQS Forum : Qualitative Social Research* 16(2):Art. 13.

- . 2017. "Social Mobility via academic mobility: Reconfigurations in class and gender identities among Asian scholars in the global north." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(16):2704-19.
- Lewis, Patricia, and Ruth Simpson. 2012. "Kanter Revisited: Gender, Power and (In)Visibility." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 14:141-58.
- Loher, David, and Sabine Strasser. 2019. "Politics of precarity: neoliberal academia under austerity measures and authoritarian threat." *Social Anthropology* 27(S2):5-14.
- Lubbers, Miranda Jessica, José Luis Molina, and Christopher McCarty. 2020. "How do migrants' processes of social embedding unfold over time?" *Global Networks*.
- Lundine, Jamie, Ivy Lynn Bourgeault, Ketevan Glonti, Eleanor Hutchinson, and Dina Balabanova. 2019. "'I don't see gender': Conceptualizing a gendered system of academic publishing." *Social Science and Medicine* 235:112388.
- MacNell, Lillian, Adam Driscoll, and Andrea N. Hunt. 2015. "What's in a Name: Exposing Gender Bias in Student Ratings of Teaching." *Innovative Higher Education* 40:291-303.
- Madera, Juan M., Michelle R. Hebl, and Randi C. Martin. 2009. "Gender and Letters of Recommendation for Academia : Agentic and Communal Differences." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 94(6):1591-99.
- Mahler, Sarah J., and Patricia R. Pessar. 2006. "Gender Matters: Ethnographers Bring Gender from the Periphery toward the Core of Migration Studies." *International Migration Review* 40(1):27-63.
- Marchetti, Sabrina, and Ruba Salih. 2017. "Policing gender mobilities: interrogating the 'feminisation of migration' to Europe." *International Review of Sociology* 27(1):6-24.
- Marin, Alexandra, and Barry Wellman. 2011. "Social Network Analysis: An Introduction." Pp. 11-25 in *The Sage Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, edited by John Scott and Peter J. Carrington. Los Angeles [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Marry, Catherine. 2003. "Genre et professions académiques : esquisse d'un état des lieux dans la sociologie." Pp. 38-53 in *Réflexion sur l'accès, la promotion et les responsabilités des hommes et des femmes à l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales*. [S.l.]: [s.n.].
- Marwell, Gerald, Rachel A. Rosenfeld, and Seymour Spilerman. 1979. "Geographic Constraints on Women's Careers in Academia." *Science* 205(4412):1225-31.
- Mason, Jennifer. 2004. "Personal narratives, relational selves: residential histories in the living and telling." *The Sociological Review* 52(2):162-79.
- Mason, Mary Ann, and Marc Goulden. 2002. "Do Babies Matter ? The Effect of Family Formation on the Lifelong Careers of Academic Men and Woman." *Academe* 88(6):21-27.
- Massey, Douglas S., Joaquín Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J. Edward Taylor. 1993. "Theories of International Migration : A Review and Appraisal." *Population and Development Review* 19(3):431-66.
- Matthews, Jil Julius. 1984. *Good and Mad Women: The Historical Construction of Femininity in Twentieth-Century Australia*. Sydney [etc.]: George Allen & Unwin.

- Mayer, Karl Ulrich. 2009. "New Directions in Life Course Research." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35(1):413-33.
- McCarty, Christopher, Miranda Jessica Lubbers, Raphaele Vacca, and José Luis Molina. 2019. *Conducting personal network research : a practical guide*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- McConnell, Sean, Erica L. Westerman, Joseph F. Pierre, Erin J. Heckler, and Nancy B. Schwartz. 2018. "United States National Postdoc Survey results and the interaction of gender, career choice and mentor impact." *eLife* 7:e40189.
- McDonald, Steve. 2011. "What's in the 'old boys' network? Accessing social capital in gendered and racialized networks." *Social Networks* 33(4):317-30.
- McDonald, Steve, and Jacob C. Day. 2010. "Race, Gender, and the Invisible Hand of Social Capital." *Sociology Compass* 4(7):532-43.
- McGuire, Gail M. 2002. "Gender, Race, and the Shadow Structure: A Study of Informal Networks and Inequality in a Work Organization." *Gender and Society* 16(3):303-22.
- McNeil, Laurie, and Marc Sher. 1999. "Dual-Science-Career Couples : Survey Results."
- McPherson, J. Miller, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and James M. Cook. 2001. "Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27:415-44.
- Mertens, Donna M. 2014. "Ethical Use of Qualitative Data and Findings." Pp. 510-23 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, edited by Uwe Flick. Los Angeles [etc.]: Sage.
- Mitchell, J. Clyde. 1974. "Social Networks." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 3(1):279-99.
- Moguérrou, Philippe. 2004. *A Double Gender-Family Inequality Phenomenon in the International Mobility of Young Researchers*. Dijon: IREDU.
- Moore, Gwen. 1990. "Structural Determinants of Men's and Women's Personal Networks." *American Sociological Review* 55(5):726-35.
- Morano-Foadi, Sonia. 2005. "Scientific Mobility, Career Progression, and Excellence in the European Research Area." *International Migration* 43(5):133-62.
- Moret, Joëlle. 2018. *European Somalis' Post-Migration Movements: Mobility Capital and the Transnationalisation of Resources*. Cham: Springer Open.
- Morley, Louise, Nafsika Alexiadou, Stela Garaz, José González-Monteagudo, and Marius Taba. 2018. "Internationalisation and migrant academics: the hidden narratives of mobility." *Higher Education* 76:537-54.
- Morokvasic-Müller, Mirjana, Unmut Erel, and Kyoko Shinozaki. 2003. *Crossing Borders and Shifting Boundaries. Vol. I: Gender on the Move*. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Morse, Janice M. 1995. "The Significance of Saturation." *Qualitative Health Research* 5(2):147-49.
- Mottier, Véronique. 2005. "The Interpretive Turn: History, Memory, and Storage in Qualitative Research." *FQS Forum : Qualitative Social Research* 6(2):1-9.
- Münch, Richard. 2014. *Academic Capitalism : Universities in the Global Struggle for Excellence*. New York [etc.]: Routledge.
- Nader, Laura. 1972. "Up the Anthropologist - Perspectives Gained from Studying Up." Pp. 284-311 in *Reinventing Anthropology*, edited by Dell Hymes. New York: Pantheon Books.

- National Academy of Sciences. 2000. *Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience for Scientists and Engineers: A Guide for Postdoctoral Scholars, Advisers, Institutions, Funding Organizations, and Disciplinary Societies*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Netz, Nicolai, and Steffen Jaksztat. 2017. "Explaining Scientists' Plans for International Mobility from a Life Course Perspective." *Research in Higher Education* 58:497-519.
- Nikunen, Minna, and Kirsti Lempiäinen. 2018. "Gendered strategies of mobility and academic career." *Gender and Education*:1-18.
- Nohl, Arnd-Michael, Karin Schittenhelm, Oliver Schmidtke, and Anja Weiss. 2014. *Work in Transition: Cultural Capital and Highly Skilled Migrants' Passages into the Labour Market*. Toronto [etc.]: University of Toronto Press.
- Nowicka, Magdalena, and Louise Ryan. 2015. "Beyond Insiders and Outsiders in Migration Research: Rejecting a priori Commonalities." *FQS Forum : Qualitative Social Research* 16(2):Art. 18.
- NSF. 2007. *Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering*. Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation.
- Odendahl, Teresa, and Aileen M. Shaw. 2001. "Interviewing Elites." Pp. 299-316 in *Handbook of Interview Research : Context & Method*, edited by Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- OECD. 2002. *International mobility of the highly skilled*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- . 2008. *The Global Competition for Talent: Mobility of the Highly Skilled*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- . 2019. *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- OFS. 2009. *Femmes et hommes dans le système de Bologne : indicateurs reflétant les différences entre les sexes dans les hautes écoles universitaires*. Neuchâtel: Office fédéral de la statistique.
- Olivier de Sardan, Jean-Pierre. 1995. "La politique du terrain: sur la production des données en anthropologie." *Enquête* (1):71-109.
- Pellerin, Hélène. 2011. "De la migration à la mobilité: changement de paradigme dans la gestion migratoire: le cas du Canada." *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 27(2):57-75.
- Pessar, Patricia R., and Sarah J. Mahler. 2003. "Transnational Migration : Bringing Gender in." *International Migration Review* 37(3):812-46.
- Pilcher, Jane, and Imelda Whelehan. 2004. *Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies* London [etc.]: Sage.
- Portes, Alejandro. 1998. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24:1-24.
- Prell, Christina. 2012. *Social network analysis: History, theory & methodology*. Los Angeles [etc.]: Sage publications.

- Presskorn-Thygesen, Thomas. 2015. "The Ambiguous Attractiveness of Mobility: A View from the Sociology of Critique." *Ephemera : Theory and Politics in Organization* 15(4):725-53.
- Raghuram, Parvati. 2004. "The Difference that Skills Make : Gender, Family Migration Strategies and Regulated Labour Markets." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(2):303-21.
- Riaño, Yvonne, and Nadia Baghdadi. 2007. "Understanding the Labour Market Participation of Skilled Immigrant Women in Switzerland : The Interplay of Class, Ethnicity and Gender." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 8(2):163-83.
- Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 1997. "Interaction and the Conservation of Gender Inequality: Considering Employment." *American Sociological Review* 62(2):218-35.
- Risman, Barbara J. 2009. "From Doing to Undoing : Gender as We Know It." *Gender and Society* 23(1):81-84.
- Robertson, Shanthi. 2014. *The Temporalities of International Migration: Implications for Ethnographic Research*. Penrith: Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney.
- Robertson, Susan L. 2010. "Critical response to special section: international academic mobility." *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31(5):641-47.
- Römhild, Regina. 2017. "Beyond the Bounds of the Ethnic: For Postmigrant Cultural and Social Research." *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture* 9(2):69-75.
- Rose, Suzanna M. 1985. "Professional networks of junior faculty in psychology." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 9(4):533-47.
- . 1989. "Women biologists and the 'old boy' network." *Women's Studies International Forum* 12(3):349-54.
- Rosende, Magdalena. 2010. "Accès des femmes au professorat : quels sont les mécanismes cachés du pouvoir académique ?" Pp. 43-60 in *Le plafond de fer de l'université : femmes et carrières*, edited by Farinaz Fassa and Sabine Kradolfer. Zurich: Editions Seismo.
- Rosenfeld, Rachel A., and Jo Ann Jones. 1987. "Patterns and Effects of Geographic Mobility for Academic Women and Men." *The Journal of Higher Education* 58(5):493-515.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2007. "Biographical Research." Pp. 48-64 in *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber F. Gubrium, and David Silverman. London [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- Rusconi, Alessandra, and Heike Solga. 2007. "Determinants of and Obstacles to Dual Careers in Germany." *Zeitschrift für Familienforschung* 19(3):311-36.
- Ryan, Louise. 2015a. "Friendship-Making : Exploring Network Formations through the Narratives of Irish Highly Qualified Migrants in Britain." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41(10):1664-83.
- . 2015b. "'Inside' and 'Outside' of What or Where? Researching Migration Through Multi-Positionalities." *FQS Forum : Qualitative Social Research* 16(2):Art. 17.
- Ryan, Louise, and Jon Mulholland. 2014. "Trading Places : French Highly Skilled Migrants Negotiating Mobility and Emplacement In London." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40(4):584-600.

- Salazar, Noel B. 2016. "Keywords of Mobility: What's in a Name?" Pp. 1-12 in *Keywords of Mobility: Critical Engagements*, edited by Noel B. Salazar and Kiran Jayaram. New York [etc.]: Berghahn Books.
- Salt, John. 1992. "Migration Processes among the Highly Skilled in Europe." *International Migration Review* 26(2):484-505.
- Sanchez-Mazas, Margarita, and Annalisa Casini. 2010. "Femmes et plafond de verre académique : la disponibilité temporelle en question." Pp. 61-75 in *Le plafond de fer de l'université : femmes et carrières*, edited by Farinaz Fassa and Sabine Kradolfer. Zurich: Editions Seismo.
- Saunders, Benjamin, Jenny Kitzinger, and Celia Kitzinger. 2015. "Anonymising interview data: challenges and compromise in practice." *Qualitative Research* 15(5):616-32.
- Sautier, Marie. forthcoming. "Move or Perish? Sticky Mobilities in the Swiss academic context." *Higher Education*.
- Schapendonk, Joris. 2015. "What if Networks Move? Dynamic Social Networking in the Context of African Migration to Europe." *Population, Space and Place* 21:809-19.
- . 2020. *Finding Ways through Eurospace: West African Movers Re-viewing Europe from the Inside*. New York [etc.]: Berghahn.
- Schapendonk, Joris, Matthieu Bolay, and Janine Dahinden. 2020. "The conceptual limits of the 'migration journey': De-exceptionalising mobility in the context of West African trajectories." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* Ahead of print:1-17.
- Schapendonk, Joris, Ilse van Liempt, Inga Schwarz, and Griet Steel. 2020. "Re-routing migration geographies: Migrants, trajectories and mobility regimes." *Geoforum* 116:212-16.
- Scheibelhofer, Elisabeth. 2008. "Gender Still Matters : Mobility Aspirations among European Scientists Working Abroad." Pp. 115-28 in *Gendered Mobilities*, edited by Tanu Priya Uteng and Tim Cresswell. Aldershot [etc.]: Ashgate.
- . 2010. "Gendered Differences in Emigration and Mobility Perspectives among European Researchers Working Abroad." *Migration Letters* 7(1):33-41.
- Schiffer, Eva, and Jennifer Hauck. 2010. "Net-Map : Collecting Social Network Data and Facilitating Network Learning through Participatory Influence Network Mapping." *Field Methods* 22(3):231-49.
- Schmader, Toni, Jessica Whitehead, and Vicki H. Wysocki. 2007. "A Linguistic Comparison of Letters of Recommendation for Male and Female Chemistry and Biochemistry Job Applicants." *Sex Roles* 57(7/8):509-14.
- Schwandt, Thomas A. 2000. "Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism." Pp. 189-213 in *Handbook of qualitative research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Schwandt, Thomas A., and Emily F. Gates. 2018. "Case Study Methodology." Pp. 341-58 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage Publications.

- Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York [etc.]: Routledge.
- Scott, Jacqueline, Rosemary Crompton, and Clare Lyonette (Eds.). 2010. *Gender Inequalities in the 21st Century : New Barriers and Continuing Constraints*. Cheltenham [etc.]: E. Elgar.
- Scott, Joan W. 1986. "Gender : a Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *American Historical Review* 91(5):1053-75.
- Scott, John, and Peter J. Carrington (Eds.). 2011. *The Sage Handbook of Social Network Analysis*. Los Angeles [etc.]: Sage Publications.
- SEFRI. [2020]. *Les hautes écoles suisses*. Berne: Secrétariat d'Etat à la formation, à la recherche et à l'innovation.
- Shauman, Kimberlee A., and Yu Xie. 1996. "Geographic Mobility of Scientists : Sex Differences and Family Constraints." *Demography* 33(4):455-68.
- Sheller, Mimi. 2011. "Mobility." *Sociopedia.isa*:1-12.
- Sheller, Mimi, and John Urry. 2006. "The New Mobilities Paradigm." *Environment and Planning A* 38:207-26.
- Shinozaki, Kyoko. 2012. "Transnational dynamics in researching migrants: self-reflexivity and boundary-drawing in fieldwork." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(10):1810-27.
- . 2014. "Career Strategies and Spatial Mobility among Skilled Migrants in Germany : The Role of Gender in the Work-Family Interaction." *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 105(5):526-41.
- . 2017. "Gender and citizenship in academic career progression: an intersectional, meso-scale analysis in German higher education institutions." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(8):1325-46.
- Shinozaki, Kyoko, and Sayaka Osanami Törngren. 2019. "Researching across differences: Unsettling methodological discussions from a minority's perspectives." *Briefs on Methodological, Ethical and Epistemological Issues* 9:1-7.
- Shulman, Steven, Barbara Hopkins, Robert Kelchen, Sharon Mastracci, Mehmet Yaya, John Barnshaw, and Samuel Dunietz. 2016. "Higher education at a crossroads: The economic value of tenure and the security of the profession." *Academe* 102(2):9-23.
- Singer, Maxine. 2004. "The Evolution of Postdocs." *Science* 306(5694):232.
- Smith-Lovin, Lynn, and J. Miller McPherson. 1993. "You Are Who You Know : A Network Approach to Gender." Pp. 223-51 in *Theory on Gender / Feminism on Theory*, edited by Paula England. New York: A. de Gruyter.
- SNSF. 2019. *Gender Monitoring 2019: A Technical Report on Project Funding at the SNSF*. [Bern]: Swiss National Science Foundation.
- Song, Lijun, Joonmo Son, and Nan Lin. 2011. "Social Support." Pp. 116-28 in *The Sage Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, edited by John Scott and Peter J. Carrington. Los Angeles [etc.]: Sage Publications.

- Steinpreis, Rhea E., Katie A. Anders, and Dawn Ritzke. 1999. "The Impact of Gender on the Review of the Curricula Vitae of Job Applicants and Tenure Candidates: A National Empirical Study." *Sex Roles* 41(7/8):509-28.
- Stier, Jonas. 2004. "Taking a critical stance toward internationalization ideologies in higher education: idealism, instrumentalism and educationalism." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 2:83-97.
- Storme, Tom, James R. Faulconbridge, J.V. Beaverstock, Ben Derudder, and Frank Witlox. 2016. "Mobility and Professional Networks in Academia: An Exploration of the Obligations of Presence." *Mobilities*:20 p.
- Teichler, Ulrich. 1996. "Research on academic mobility and international cooperation in higher education: An agenda for the future." Pp. 338-58 in *Academic Mobility in a Changing World: Regional and Global Trends*, edited by Peggy Blumenthal, Craufurd Goodwin, Alan Smith, and Ulrich Teichler. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- . 2004. "The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education." *Higher Education* 48:5-26.
- Tremblay, Karine. 2005. "Academic Mobility and Immigration." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 9(3):196-228.
- Trix, Frances, and Carolyn Psenka. 2003. "Exploring the color of glass: letters of recommendation for female and male medical faculty." *Discourse and Society* 14(2):191-220.
- UNESCO. 2007. *Science, Technology and Gender : An International Report*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.
- Urry, John. 2007. *Mobilities*. Cambridge [etc.]: Polity Press.
- van Anders, Sari M. 2004. "Why the Academic Pipeline Leaks : Fewer Men than Women Perceive Barriers to Becoming Professors." *Sex Roles* 51(9/10):511-21.
- van den Brink, Marieke, and Yvonne Benschop. 2012a. "Gender practices in the construction of academic excellence: Sheep with five legs." *Organization* 19(4):507-24.
- . 2012b. "Slaying the Seven-Headed Dragon: The Quest for Gender Change in Academia." *Gender, Work and Organization* 19(1):71-92.
- . 2014. "Gender in Academic Networking: The Role of Gatekeepers in Professorial Recruitment." *Journal of Management Studies* 51(3):460-92.
- van den Brink, Marieke, and Lineke Stobbe. 2014. "The support paradox: Overcoming dilemmas in gender equality programs." *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 30(2):163-74.
- Van Mol, Christoph. 2014. *Intra-European Student Mobility in International Higher Education Circuits*. Houndmills [etc.]: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vertovec, Steven (Ed.). 2010. *Migration. Vol. I: Theories - Vol. II: Types - Vol. III: Trends - Vol. IV: Policies - Vol. V: Processes (Major Works series "Critical Concepts in the Social Sciences")*. London: Routledge.
- Weber, Max. 1992 [1904]. "L'objectivité de la connaissance dans les sciences et la politique sociales." Pp. 117-201 in *Essais sur la théorie de la science*, edited by Max Weber. Paris: Presses pocket.

- Webster, Murray Jr. 2003. "Working on Status Puzzles." Pp. 173-215 in *Power and Status*, edited by Shane R. Thye and John Skvoretz. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Weinar, Agnieszka, and Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels. 2020. *Highly-Skilled Migration: Between Settlement and Mobility*: Cham.
- Welch, Anthony. 1997. "The peripatetic professor: the internationalisation of the academic profession." *Higher Education* 34(3):323-45.
- . 2008. "Myths and Modes of Mobility: The Changing Face of Academic Mobility in the Global Era." Pp. 292-311 in *Students, Staff and Academic Mobility in Higher Education*, edited by Mike Byram and Fred Dervin. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Wennerås, Christine, and Agnes Wold. 1997. "Nepotism and sexism in peer-review." *Nature* 387(22 May):341-43.
- West, Candace, and Sarah Fenstermaker. 1995. "Doing Difference." *Gender and Society* 9(1):8-37.
- White, Harrison C. 1992. *Identity and Control*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Williams, Christine L. 2013. "The Glass Escalator, Revisited : Gender Inequality in Neoliberal Times, SWS Feminist Lecturer." *Gender and Society* 27(5):609-29.
- Wimmer, Andreas, and Nina Glick Schiller. 2002. "Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences." *Global Networks* 2(4):301-34.
- Wissink, Marieke, and Valentina Mazzucato. 2018. "In Transit: Changing Social Networks of Sub-Saharan African Migrants in Turkey and Greece." *Social Networks* 53:30-41.
- Witteman, Holly O., Michael Hendricks, Sharon Straus, and Cara Tannenbaum. 2019. "Are gender gaps due to evaluations of the applicant or the science? A natural experiment at a national funding agency." *The Lancet* 393(10171):531-40.
- Wöhrer, Veronika. 2014. "Early Career Researchers and Changing Working Conditions in Academia." *Higher Education Policy* 27(4):431-34.
- Wright, Tessa. 2016. "Women's Experience of Workplace Interactions in Male-Dominated Work: The Intersections of Gender, Sexuality and Occupational Group." *Gender, Work and Organization* 23(3):348-62.
- Wyss, Anna. 2019a. *Interrupted Journeys – Disrupted Control: Male Migrants with Precarious Legal Status and the European Migration Regime*. [S.l.]: [s.n.].
- . 2019b. "Stuck in Mobility? Interrupted Journeys of Migrants With Precarious Legal Status in Europe." *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* 17(1):77-93.
- Zippel, Kathrin. 2017. *Women in Global Science: Advancing Academic Careers through International Collaboration*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.